

Disasters, Uncertainties, and Risk-Taking Behavior: The Importance of Confidence and Praise

Abstract

We study whether reducing uncertainties can increase risk-taking and learning in post-disaster settings. Using a randomized trial with 1,006 elementary school students in post-earthquake Myanmar, we evaluate interventions targeting confidence and social feedback. A success-recall intervention raises confidence but does not affect risk-taking or academic performance. However, combining confidence-building with teacher praise increases risk-taking and test scores, suggesting that learning investment after major shocks depends on addressing sources of uncertainty.

Key words: Risk, Non-Cognitive Skills, Confidence, RCT, Myanmar