Seminario de Economía Regional y Políticas Públicas - Segregation in education: the role of historical groups and the marriage market in Colombia

Seminario de Economía Regional y Políticas Públicas - Segregation in education: the role of historical groups and the marriage market in Colombia **Expositor(a)**
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Abstract
Inequality in access to high-quality education can hinder the ability of education to promote intergenerational mobility. Looking at the case of Colombia, one of the most unequal and least mobile countries in the world, we aim at evaluating whether contemporary differences in access to high-quality education have deep roots in the past. We use several past and contemporary sources to define social status attributes for several historical groups. Assuming that sufficiently rare surnames are part of the same extended family, we trace dynasties of indigenous, encomenderos (Spaniard colonial officers), 19th century slave-owners, and members of different educational, social and business elites of the 17th, late 19th the beginning of the 20th centuries. Using microdata from administrative sources, we observe contemporary outcomes on education and test if the historical status of each social group is associated with access to disadvantageous or privileged educational institutions. The results confirm that in several cases the original social status of the historical groups is highly associated with their contemporary performance in educational outcomes. We measure assortative mating and find evidence of contemporary homogamy within the historical elites and ethnic surnames. We conclude that the educational system in Colombia reproduces patterns of social exclusion that are rooted in the past.

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