

## **A Comparative Study of Parental Emigration and Children's Education**

The emigration of parents has become a common aspect of childhood experience in many parts of the world. Though it confers some economic benefits, there are several associated social costs for the children left behind. The present study adopts a comparative framework to assess how the net effect of parental emigration varies across migration streams (internal vs. international) and across two societies experiencing substantial migration (Mexico and Indonesia). The results suggest that children left behind by international migrant parents tend to be worse off in terms of educational attainment than those living with both parents. Internal emigration of parents carries a negative impact in many cases as well, though sometimes to a lesser degree than international emigration. In comparing children left behind in Indonesia and Mexico, it appears that the way the overall impact of parental emigration balances out depends on context: it is negative in Mexico, but is generally small and negligible in Indonesia. Possible explanations for this difference are discussed. In addition, the results suggest that the role of parental emigration varies by a child's sex and grade level.