Distance Education, transforming realities: a look at insecure environments

1 INSECURITY

Latin America faces persistent challenges related to high crime rates, creating an environment marked by violence and insecurity. Ecuador has experienced a significant increase in violence in recent years, making it one of the most dangerous countries in the region.
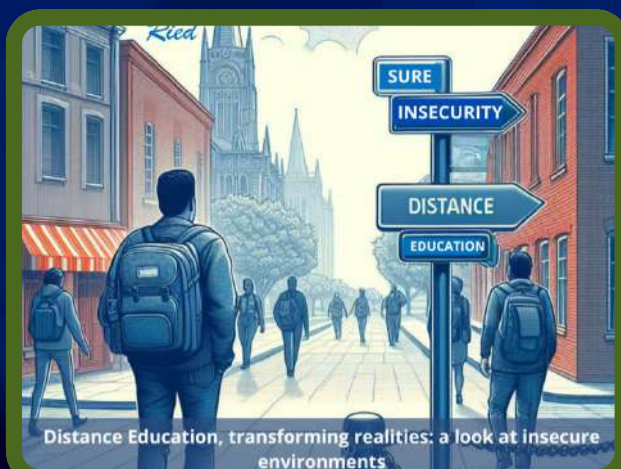
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2 STUDY OBJECT

This study addresses how insecurity and crime influence enrollment rates in higher education at the undergraduate level, specifically at the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL), by examining how distance education (DE) becomes a safer and more attractive option in areas affected by high rates of insecurity.

3 THE DATA

We use data on the number of students in the DE system provided by the Vice Rectorate of Distance Modality of the UTPL, in addition to homicide data by province between 2019 and 2022 obtained from the Ministry of the Interior of Ecuador.

4 MORE DATA

Also, the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the Higher Education sector is considered as a control variable.

5 THE ANALYSIS

As an econometric strategy, we used multilevel analysis and regressions for panel data, which confirm the hypothesis put forward: the homicide rate has a positive effect on enrollments in the UTPL's DE system at the provincial level.

6 RESULTS

These findings allowed inferring the significant influence of insecurity and violence on students' educational decisions, motivating the choice of safer educational modalities, such as distance learning.