

**Timeline**

August 2018-July 2021

**Study Type**

Randomized Evaluation

**Article Link**

<https://www.poverty-action.org/study/impact-entrepreneurship-training-using-ima...>

**Research Implemented by IPA**

Yes

# Learning to See a World of Opportunities

## Researchers

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## Abstract

Lockdowns and social distancing strategies in response to COVID-19 threaten small businesses, undermining a critical income source for vulnerable populations. Sudden economic hardship, psychosocial risks, and uncertainty about the future trigger stress and anxiety. Imagery could help as a tool to boost resilience in response to the pandemic by enabling individuals to recognize its temporariness, innovate, mentally simulate contingency plans, and practice steps to recover. Between July and December 2019, an interdisciplinary research team developed and implemented an entrepreneurship program combined with imagery techniques through an RCT in partnership with the local government of Bogotá. The sample comprises 1,967 current and aspiring entrepreneurs who have faced challenging life circumstances, including victims of conflict and forced displacement. Past traumatic experiences undermine the ability to simulate the future, so we expect these marginalized populations to benefit most from imagery. Through phone surveys six months and one-year post-intervention, we reveal whether imagery is an effective buffer strategy against the negative economic and psychological consequences of the pandemic.

Until results are published, data and survey instruments are available upon request.

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## Project Outcomes of Interest

Through our six-month and one-year follow-up phone surveys, we evaluate whether imagery training has built psychological and economic resilience among low-income

microentrepreneurs in response to COVID-19. Our first set of measures assess whether participants adopted imagery more frequently in their lives. We also measure psychological resilience, mental health and their interaction with imagery. Lastly, we provide descriptive evidence on the actions that entrepreneurs have taken to motivate the negative effects of the crisis in their businesses and households.

## Partners

Mayor's Office of Bogotá (Secretary of Social Integration of Bogotá)

## Impact Goals

- Build resilience and protect the financial health of families and individuals
- Build resilient and adaptable businesses and employment opportunities
- Improve women's health, safety, and economic empowerment

## Project Data Collection Mode

- CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing)

## Link to Pre-Registration

<https://www.socialscienceregistry.org/trials/4695>

## Results Status

No Results Yet