

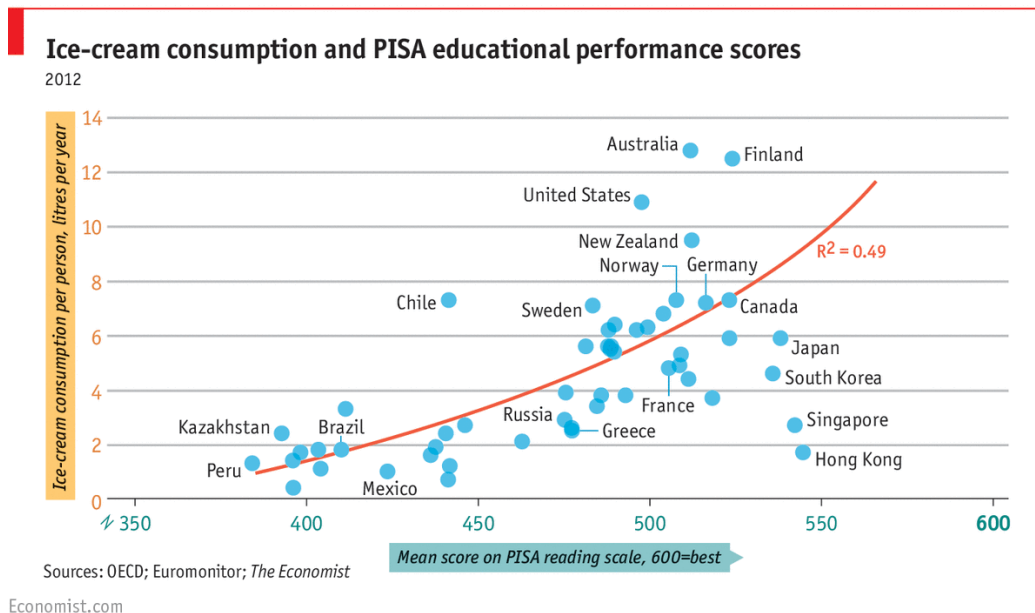


<http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2016/04/daily-chart>

Toute corrélation n'est pas bonne à exhiber ; toute corrélation n'est pas une indication de causalité ; une corrélation peut être victime du paradoxe de Simpson (ou encore) où une troisième variable vient ajouter de la confusion... Celle-ci au moins est savoureuse ! Et écrite avec tout l'humour anglais... (Marc Bourdeau, 16.04.01, Attention au poisson)

Ice cream and IQ

Apr 1st 2016, 10:37 by THE DATA TEAM



WITH school-exam season just around the corner, parents will be increasingly preoccupied with how to make their children sit down, keep quiet and study. Some will purchase hefty revision guides while others will turn to tutors for help. However number-crunching from *The Economist* might offer a rather sweeter solution. Ice cream consumption, it seems, has a strong relationship with reading ability, based on the OECD's PISA educational performance scores. Australia, for instance, scoffs 13 litres of gelato per year—more than any other country—and its children are among the most literate in the world. And it is not just sun-kissed states that show such a striking correlation. Finland, Canada and Sweden all top the PISA rankings and are avid consumers of frozen desserts. At the other end of the counter, an average Peruvian puts away barely a litre of the cold stuff each year and comes last in the rankings. Ice cream, it would appear, induces the opposite of “brain-freeze” in students.

There are, of course, outliers. Suitably Chile (by name and nature) eats a large amount of ice cream, yet that has had a mysteriously small effect on literacy. In well-off Asian countries, by contrast, children are book-rich but ice-cream poor. Such findings have tasty policy implications for parents and politicians alike. Though it may seem like an odd suggestion on a brisk early-April morning, year-round subsidised ice-cream for children could improve educational attainment. And ice-cream vans should park closer to libraries to help boost reading skills too. What a scoop.