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Selection, selection, selection: the impact of return migration

P. 535-563

Jackline Wahba

Abstract

The evidence on the impact of return migration on the sending country is rather sparse, though growing. The contribution of this paper is in addressing various selectivity problems while quantifying the impact of return migration on wages of returnees using non-experimental data. Using Egyptian household-level survey data, I estimate the wages of return migrants controlling for several selectivity biases arising from emigration choice, return migration choice, labor force participation choice, and occupational choice following return. The findings provide strong evidence that overseas temporary migration results in a wage premium upon return, even after controlling for the various potential selection biases. However, the estimates underscore the significance of controlling for both emigration and return migration selections. Ignoring the double selectivity in migration would overestimate the impact of return migration on the wage premium of returnees, as migrants are positively selected relative to non-migrants, but returnees are negatively selected among migrants.

Gender discrimination in the allocation of migrant household resources

P. 565-592

Francisca M. Antman

Abstract

This paper considers the relationship between international migration and gender discrimination through the lens of decision-making power over intrahousehold resource allocation. The endogeneity of migration is addressed with a difference-in-differences style identification strategy and a model with household fixed effects. The results suggest that while a migrant household head is away, a greater share of resources is spent on girls relative to boys and his spouse commands greater decision-making power. Once the head returns home, however, a greater share of resources goes to boys, and there is suggestive evidence of greater authority for the head of household.

Siblings' interaction in migration decisions: who provides for the elderly left behind?

P. 593-629

Tobias Stöhr

Abstract

In most poor countries, with high emigration rates, elderly people are dependent on their children for the provision of care and income. This paper is the first to explicitly model and estimate social interaction between siblings' migration decisions in such settings. The interaction consists of two effects with opposite signs; a chain migration effect that can cause traditional caregiving structures to break down and an opposing specialization effect that increases family members' incentives to remain at home and provide care when their siblings migrate. The estimates for Moldova, one of the countries with the highest emigration rates in the world, indicate that siblings' interaction strongly decreases their equilibrium emigration rates. Siblings' interaction is found to increase in line with the incentives that are assumed in the model. Hence, the paper provides evidence of the robustness of families' informal security arrangements to large-scale emigration and has important implications for policies that aim at the population left behind.

Migration and young child nutrition: evidence from rural China

P. 631-657

Ren Mu - Alan de Brauw

Abstract

The unprecedented large-scale rural-to-urban migration in China has left many rural children living apart from their parents. In this study, we examine the impact of parental migration on the nutritional status of young children in rural areas. We use the interaction terms between wage growth, by gender, in provincial capital cities and initial village migrant networks as instrumental variables to account for migration selection. Our results show that parental migration has no significant effect on the height of children, but it improves their weight. We provide suggestive evidence that the improvement in weight may be achieved through increased access to tap water in migrant households.

How do the foreign-born perform in inventive activity? Evidence from Sweden

P. 659-695

Yannu Zheng - Olof Ejermo

Abstract

Using a new database that matches patent applications by Swedish residents with demographic information from 1985 to 2007, we examine differences in inventive performance by individuals of foreign and domestic origins, in terms of quantity (probability of patenting, total number of patents per inventor) and quality (forward citations, probability of grant) of patents. We further compare adult and child immigrants with their Swedish-born counterparts. Holding other variables constant, we find that the immigrants are generally less likely to patent than the Swedish-born. Nonetheless, the general group of immigrant inventors, including those who migrated as adults, performs as well as the native inventors and therefore seems more positively selected. Compared with the Swedish-born, the immigrants who migrated as children are disadvantaged in both quantity and quality of patents, which may be linked to a lack of Sweden-specific human capital. Whether education was received in Sweden does not seem to make a difference for the immigrants who migrated as adults. In summary, this study provides an initial impression of the inventive performance, contribution and challenges of distinct groups of immigrants who have differing characteristics and backgrounds.

Immigration and crime: evidence from victimization data

P. 697-736

Luca Nunziata

Abstract

We exploit the increase in immigration flows into western European countries that took place in the 2000s to assess whether immigration affects crime victimization and the perception of criminality among European natives. Using data from the European Social Survey, the Labour Force Survey and other sources, we provide a set of fixed effects and instrumental variable estimations that deal with the endogenous sorting of immigration by region and with the sampling error in survey-based measures of regional immigration shares, whose implications in terms of attenuation bias are investigated by means of Monte Carlo simulations. Our empirical findings show that an increase in immigration does not affect crime victimization, but it is associated with an increase in the fear of crime, the latter being consistently and positively correlated with the natives' unfavourable attitude toward immigrants. Our results reveal a misconception of the link between immigration and crime among European natives.

School and neighborhood: residential location choice of immigrant parents in the Los Angeles Metropolitan area

P. 737-783

Crystal Zhan

Abstract

This paper studies how immigrant parents value education for their children in the United States when making residential decisions. Parent valuation of education is examined through the differential effects of school quality on the residential location choices of households with and without children. The analysis relies on data from the 2000 Census and focuses on the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area. The results suggest that immigrant parents place a positive weight on school quality when choosing residences. The weight assigned to school is positively associated with household

income and householder's education. The paper further explores variation across immigrants to get at the potential economic mechanisms for differential valuation of school quality. Number of school-aged children in the household, selective migration, and potential returns to education may explain variation in the emphasis immigrant parents place on school quality in residential location choices.

Assimilation in multilingual cities

P. 785-815

Javier Ortega - Gregory Verdugo

Abstract

We characterise how the assimilation patterns of minorities into the strong and the weak language differ in a situation of asymmetric bilingualism. Using large variations in language composition in Canadian cities from the 2001 and 2006 Censuses, we show that the differences in the knowledge of English by immigrant allophones (i.e., the immigrants with a mother tongue other than English and French) in English-majority cities are mainly due to sorting across cities. Instead, in French-majority cities, learning plays an important role in explaining differences in knowledge of French. In addition, the presence of large anglophone minorities deters much more the assimilation into French than the presence of francophone minorities deters the assimilation into English. Finally, we find that language distance plays a much more important role in explaining assimilation into French, and that assimilation into French is much more sensitive to individual characteristics than assimilation into English. Some of these asymmetric assimilation patterns extend to anglophone and francophone immigrants, but no evidence of learning is found in this case.

Life satisfaction of immigrants: does cultural assimilation matter?

P. 817-844

Viola Angelini - Laura Casi - Luca Corazzini

Abstract

To investigate empirically the association between a direct measure of assimilation with a host culture and immigrants' subjective well-being, this study uses data from the German Socio-Economic Panel. A positive, significant association arises between cultural assimilation and immigrants' life satisfaction, even after controlling for several potential confounding factors, such as immigrants' individual (demographic and socio-economic) characteristics and regional controls that capture their external social conditions. Finally, the strength of the association varies with time since migration; it is significant for "established" and second-generation immigrants but vanishes for "recent" immigrants.

Genetic distance, immigrants' identity, and labor market outcomes

P. 845-868

Asadul Islam - Paul A. Raschky

Abstract

Consistent estimates of the effect of immigrants' identity on labor market outcomes is complicated by the endogenous relationship between performance on the labor market and attitudes towards ethnic identity. This paper uses measures of genetic distance between immigrants' home and host countries as instruments for immigrants' identity. We find some evidence for adverse effects of home country identity on male immigrants' unemployment likelihood. Our results also suggest that a stronger host country identity only has a systematic effect on employment and job satisfaction. Overall, immigrants' identity appears to play only a negligible role in immigrants' labor market performance. Our analysis also shows the importance of accounting for endogeneity in the relationship between immigrants' ethnic identity and labor market outcomes.
