



Inter-generational effects of disability benefits: evidence from Canadian social assistance programs

P. 873-910

Kelly Chen - Lars Osberg - Shelley Phipps

Abstract

Individuals with disabilities face greater challenges in the labor market than able-bodied individuals, and a growing body of research is finding that their children also tend to have more developmental problems than the children of able-bodied parents. Can transfer payments help reduce this gap? In this paper, we present the first evidence on how parental disability benefits affect the well-being of children. Using changes in real benefits under ten disability benefit programs in Canada as an identification strategy and Statistics Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) as the data source on child outcomes, we find strong evidence that higher benefits lead to improvements in children's cognitive and non-cognitive development, as measured by math scores in standardized tests, hyperactive symptoms, and emotional anxiety behavior. The effect is larger on children with a disabled mother than on those with a disabled father.

Strategic parenting, birth order, and school performance

P. 911-936

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Abstract

Fueled by new evidence, there has been renewed interest about the effects of birth order on human capital accumulation. The underlying causal mechanisms for such effects remain unsettled. We consider a model in which parents impose more stringent disciplinary environments in response to their earlier-born children's poor performance in school in order to deter such outcomes for their later-born offspring. We provide robust empirical evidence that school performance of children in the National Longitudinal Study Children (NLSY-C) declines with birth order as does the stringency of their parents' disciplinary restrictions. When asked how they will respond if a child brought home bad grades, parents state that they would be less likely to punish their later-born children. Taken together, these patterns are consistent with a reputation model of strategic parenting.

Intra-household allocation of family resources and birth order: evidence from France using siblings data

P. 937-964

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Abstract

We examine the effect of birth order on education, occupation, and parental transfers using four cross sections of the French Wealth surveys conducted between 1992 and 2010. Estimates from ordered models confirm the presence of a first born advantage in education and occupation, the latter persisting to a lesser extent after controlling for education. Strikingly, parents are on average more likely to make transfers to first-born children, although the vast majority provides cash or property gifts to all of their children. This first-born advantage in transfers is uncorrelated with the likelihood of having attained a higher education or better occupation. Overall, our findings suggest that in France, the mechanism supporting the first born advantage may not stem from confluence effects or family resource dilution.

Parental ethnic identity and educational attainment of second-generation immigrants

P. 965-1004

Simone Schüller

Abstract

A lack of cultural integration is often blamed for hindering immigrant families' economic progression. This paper explores whether there are in fact long-term consequences by investigating intergenerational effects of parental ethnic identity on the next generation's human capital accumulation. Results based on longitudinal data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) indicate a positive role of both parental majority as well as minority identity. I find differential parental roles with impacts of majority identity working through mothers and minority identity effects being specific to fathers. While the positive effect of maternal majority identity appears to be closely related to language skills, the beneficial effect of paternal minority identity is consistent throughout various robustness checks and likely to be related to higher levels of children's feelings of self-esteem. Overall, the results point at integrated, rather than separated or assimilated family environments to be most conducive for educational success of the second generation.

Getting back into the labor market: the effects of start-up subsidies for unemployed females

P. 1005-1043

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Abstract

Low female labor market participation is a problem many developed countries have to face. Beside activating inactive women, one possible solution is to support the re-integration of unemployed women. Due to female-specific labor market constraints (preferences for flexible working hours, discrimination), this is a difficult task, and the question arises whether active labor market policies (ALMP) are an appropriate tool to help. It has been shown that the effectiveness of traditional (ALMP) programs—which focus on the integration in dependent (potentially inflexible) employment—is positive but limited. At the same time, recent evidence for Austria shows that these programs reduce fertility which might be judged unfavorable from a societal perspective. Promoting self-employment among unemployed women might therefore be a promising alternative. Starting their own business might give women more independence and flexibility to reconcile work and family and increase labor market participation. Based on long-term informative data, we find that start-up programs persistently integrate former unemployed women into the labor market, and the impact on fertility is less detrimental than for traditional ALMP programs.

Unexplored dimensions of discrimination in Europe: homosexuality and physical appearance

P. 1045-1073

Eleonora Patacchini - Giuseppe Ragusa - Yves Zenou

Abstract

We study labor-market discrimination of individuals with "specific" characteristics in Italy. We conduct a field experiment in two Italian cities: Rome and Milan, by sending "fake" CVs to real ads. We find that there is a strong penalty for homosexuals, i.e., about 30 % less chance to be called back compared to a heterosexual male and even more so if they are highly skilled. On the other hand, we find no penalty for homosexual females. We also find a beauty premium for females only but this premium is much lower when the "pretty" woman is skilled.

Do national cancer screening guidelines reduce mortality?

P. 1075-1095

Adam Leive - Thomas Stratmann

Abstract

The effectiveness of cancer screening is a salient health policy issue that remains unresolved. This article sheds new light on the benefits of population-wide cancer screening. We investigate changes in mortality after the introduction of screening guidelines for breast and prostate cancers in the USA and UK. We use differences in the timing of guideline adoption, differences in ages recommended for screening, and differences in which cancers are detectable by

screening to identify the effect of cancer screening guidelines. Our quadruple-differencing strategy finds a moderately sized mortality benefit from mammography and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening guidelines among recommended age groups and little change in mortality rates among age groups not recommended to receive screening. As a falsification test, we verify that prostate cancer rates among men did not fall after the introduction of mammography screening and breast cancer rates among women did not fall after the introduction of the PSA test .

Demographic consequences of HIV

P. 1097-1135

Martin Karlsson - Stefan Pichler

Abstract

In this study, we estimate the effect of the HIV epidemic on demographic outcomes in three countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. We apply the synthetic control group method and estimate the consequences for life expectancy, mortality, and birth rates. According to standard measures of fit, the method seems to perform well for all countries and outcomes. Our results show a large effect on life expectancy and mortality in two countries, and a small and insignificant effect on birth rates. The impact of the pandemic is very heterogeneous. In Mozambique, the impact of HIV on life expectancy and mortality appears to have been surprisingly small. This heterogeneity is not due to AIDS causing fewer deaths in Mozambique than in the two other countries. Instead, the net effect of HIV in Mozambique appears to be diminished by reduced mortality for other causes—in particular child mortality, respiratory infections, and injuries.

How natural disasters can affect environmental concerns, risk aversion, and even politics: evidence from Fukushima and three European countries

P. 1137-1180

Jan Goebel - Christian Krekel - Tim Tiefenbach

Abstract

We study the impact of the Fukushima disaster on environmental concerns, well-being, risk aversion, and political preferences in Germany, Switzerland, and the UK. In these countries, overall life satisfaction did not significantly decrease, but the disaster significantly increased environmental concerns among Germans. One underlying mechanism likely operated through the perceived risk of a similar meltdown of domestic reactors. After Fukushima, more Germans considered themselves as “very risk averse.” However, drastic German policy action shut down the oldest reactors, implemented the phaseout of the remaining ones, and proclaimed the transition to renewables. This shift in energy policy contributed to the subsequent decrease in environmental concerns, particularly among women, Green party supporters, and people living in close distance to the oldest reactors. In Germany, political support for the Greens increased significantly, whereas in Switzerland and the UK, this increase was limited to people living close to reactors.

Air quality and infant mortality in Mexico: evidence from variation in pollution concentrations caused by the usage of small-scale power plants

P. 1181-1207

Emilio Gutierrez

Abstract

This paper exploits the sharp change in air pollutants induced by the installation of small-scale power plants throughout Mexico to measure the causal relationship between air pollution and infant mortality, and whether this relationship varies by municipality’s socio-economic conditions. The estimated elasticity for changes in infant mortality due to respiratory diseases with respect to changes in air pollution concentration ranges from 0.58 to 0.84 (more than ten times higher than the Ordinary Least Squares estimate). Weaker evidence suggests that the effect is significantly lower in municipalities with a high presence of primary healthcare facilities and larger in municipalities with a high fraction of households with low education levels.
