

Anne Hoffmann

Department of Economics

“Maternal Education and Child Human Capital: Evidence from Indonesia”

Abstract

The formation of child human capital is essential for the individual's quality of life in adulthood. While several studies on developing countries have found strong correlations between maternal education and child human capital, we still lack knowledge about whether these are causal relations. This paper exploits one of the largest school construction programs on record taking place in Indonesia in the 1970s to estimate the effect of maternal education on child human capital. I use variation in program exposure as an instrument for maternal length of schooling. The results show little evidence of a causal impact of maternal education on child health despite strong cross-sectional correlations. In contrast, the results show positive spillover effects from maternal to child education, especially for girls. Moreover, I find that maternal schooling positively affects the decision of child immunization. Assortative mating is suggested to be an important potential mediator for the educational spillover effects.