ADOLESCENT SPORTS PARTICIPATION, SOCIAL SKILLS AND ATTITUDES, AND THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

Abstract:

This paper investigates the hypothesis to which extent informal learning activities of youths during leisure contribute to shaping educational attainment as well as social and career aspirations. Specifically, we analyze the determinants of participating in sports during adolescence and the effects on educational attainment and youths' assessments of the determinants of social success and important future job characteristics. The detailed information in our representative panel data set taken from the German Socioeconomic Panel allows us to employ a flexible, matching based strategy to account for the self-selection of youths into sports. Our results suggest that participating in sports has a positive effect on educational attainment. It also influences youths' assessments of determinants of social success and important job characteristics. Being involved in sports increases the likelihood to rate good promotion possibilities and the possibility to interact with others or to help others as important job characteristics. Finally, participating in sports reduces the probability to consider unfair behaviors such as exploiting others and external circumstances such as family background and money as drivers of social success. Keywords: human capital, social skills and attitudes, career aspirations, leisure activities, sports, treatment effect.