

Berlin Applied Micro Seminar

Intergenerational effects of school entry policies

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Abstract:

This paper documents that school entry policies transmit across generations affecting not only maternal characteristics but also educational performance of their children. We identify these spillovers using registry data from the state of Florida and regression discontinuity design generated by school entry policies in maternal generation. Although, these intergenerational effects do not show up when examining fetal health they affect test scores as early as age 10, and persist through elementary and middle school. We argue that the cognitive deficiencies arise due to differential parental investments and exposure to poverty when in schooling. In particular, children of mothers born right after the school starting cutoff are less likely to attend pre-kindergarten, attend lower quality schools and are more likely to be on free or reduced price lunch in elementary and middle school. Assuming that school entry policies manipulate primarily maternal education we conclude that improving educational attainment of one generation could reduce inequality of subsequent generations.