Spillovers in Childbearing Decisions and Fertility Transitions: Evidence from China's Family Planning Policies

Development Lunch
Event time: Monday, October 28, 2019 - 12:00pm

28 Hillhouse Ave., Room 106
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Abstract: This paper examines the spillover effects of policy-induced fertility changes in the 1970s in China. We exploit the facts that China’s family planning policies target only the ethnic majority, the Han Chinese, and that there are variations across localities in Han dominance, pre-policy fertility level, and the year since when family planning policies have been effective. We find statistically and economically significant spillover effects of the Han-targeting policies on completed fertility of ethnic minorities. Heterogeneity analyses suggest that spillovers operate through (i) the transmission of cultural norms and (ii) changes in the price of a child. These results provide evidence of social multipliers in population policies.

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