Child Development

Faculty Member: Costas Meghir

Proposal Description:

Evidence shows that growing up in the adverse conditions emanating from poverty leads to permanent developmental deficits because of the lack of stimulation and appropriate nutrition. This in turn is partly responsible for long term deficits in human capital and earnings potential as well as for the intergenerational transmission of poverty. To address this problem interdisciplinary work combining, child development psychologists, medical doctors and economists have been designing policies to improve cognitive and socioemotional development by appropriate parenting programs that promote stimulation and nutrition at a very early age. From an economic point of view such interventions are designed to improve the human capital of children from poor backgrounds and thus improve their labor market outcomes and reduce the intergenerational transmission of poverty. We have been designing and testing appropriate interventions in various countries, including Colombia and India with the aim of understanding their effectiveness and examine their scalability as viable and sustainable policies. These projects have been funded by the NIH, the World Bank and Interamerican Development bank as well as a number of foundations.

The Research assistant will work with us to assist in this research program.

We have a wealth of data from four different experiments and this data needs to be well organized so that I can be used to its full potential. The RA will help organize the data from up to four different experimental studies to make sure it can easily be accessed and used by researchers making it easy to navigate over the information available and to extract data sets for analysis. The data consists of longitudinal household surveys over covering 2 - 4 years depending on the experiment. They contain a wealth of information on the household demographics and on their economic activity as well as detailed measures of child development from a very early age (6 months to 4 year olds). The RA may also have the opportunity to help with our new intervention that we are setting up in New Haven. Finally, they will provide general assistance activities, such as helping with the website.

During the time of the project the RA will have the opportunity to learn about this important and growing literature and how these issues are incorporated into the economics of human capital and skill acquisition.

Requisite Skills and Qualifications:

Prior coursework in statistics and econometrics (e.g., Econ 117), and some prior experience with Stata or R.

Award: Valerie Nguyen
Sabine Rosaya

Tobin Application Link: Tobin Application

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