



Volkswirtschaftliches Proseminar
Bildungsökonomie / Economics of Education

Summersemester 2020

Dr. Marcello Pérez-Alvarez

Description:

A growing body of empirical work investigates education policies from an economics perspective. This so-called economics of education applies methodological and analytical tools from the economic literature to the analysis of education issues such as school management, tracking, technology use in the classroom, instruction time, teacher quality and technical education, among others.

This proseminar reviews some of the main topics within this field, covering measurement aspects, determinants and consequences of education outcomes. Analysis using data from both developed and developing countries will be discussed. The learning objectives are threefold. First, students are expected to understand the current state of the literature, reflecting on the lessons and (lack of) consensus that are relevant for their research question. Second, students will learn to apply economic concepts such as incentives, externalities and asymmetric information to education issues. Third, students will engage with experimental and quasi-experimental techniques that aim at quantifying causal effects.

Students are required to present one existing research paper and write a proseminar paper that investigates a specific research question, speaking to the three objectives mentioned above and drawing upon existing research papers, using the presented one as starting point. The proseminar papers should be analytical and critical, develop a coherent argument that is already presented in the introduction drawing own conclusions, and should go beyond the pure summary of existing literature. Own empirical work is not intended given the time constraints. Working language for both the presentations and proseminar papers is English.

Organizational issues:

The preliminary meeting will take place on April 23 from 09:00-11:00 in room 05.054.

Two students will be assigned to each of the 10 topics provided below. They will jointly present the assigned research papers on the 3rd (15:00-18:00) and 4th of July (9:00-18:00) in room 01.055. Each student is required to write the proseminar paper independently.

The deadline for handing in the proseminar paper is on August 14.

Participation in the preliminary meeting and during the presentations is mandatory.

List of topics

1 Measurement

Jacob, Brian, and Jesse Rothstein. 2016. "The Measurement of Student Ability in Modern Assessment Systems." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 30 (3): 85-108.

2 School management

Bloom, Nicholas, Renata Lemos Raffaella Sadun and John Van Reenen. 2015. "Does Management Matter in Schools?" *Economic Journal*, 125 (584), 647-674.

3 School tracking

Sari Pekkala Kerr, Tuomas Pekkarinen and Roope Uusitalo. 2013. "School Tracking and Development of Cognitive Skills." *Journal of Labor Economics*, Vol. 31 (3), 577-602.

4 Technology

Muralidharan, Karthik, Abhijeet Singh, and Alejandro J. Ganimian. 2019. "Disrupting Education? Experimental Evidence on Technology-Aided Instruction in India." *American Economic Review*, 109 (4): 1426-60.

5 Inputs: Instruction time

Lavy, Victor. 2015. "Do Differences in Schools' Instruction Time Explain International Achievement Gaps? Evidence from Developed and Developing Countries." *Economic Journal*, 125 (588): F397-F424.

6 The role of teachers I

Bau, Natalie, and Jishnu Das. 2020. "Teacher Value Added in a Low-Income Country." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 12 (1): 62-96.

7 The role of teachers II

Bietenbeck, Jan, Marc Piopiunik and Simon Wiederhold. 2018. "Africa's Skill Tragedy: Does Teachers' Lack of Knowledge Lead to Low Student Performance?" *Journal of Human Resources*, 53(3), 553-578.

8 Parents

Islam, Asad, 2019. "Parent-Teacher Meetings and Student Outcomes: Evidence from a Developing Country" *European Economic Review*, 111(C), pages 273-304.

9 Career and technical education

Bonilla, Sade. 2020. "The dropout effects of career pathways: Evidence from California." *Economics of Education Review*, 75: 101972.

10 Non-pecuniary returns to schooling

Oreopoulos, Philip, and Kjell G. Salvanes. 2011. "Priceless: The Nonpecuniary Benefits of Schooling." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 25 (1): 159-84.