Introduction:

the introduction should include: motivation, precise research questions, very short literature review, most important results, further proceedings

CHILDREN for a better World e.V. is a non-profit organization supporting social institutions for children and adolescents across Germany, such as youth centers. Their goal is to foster equality of opportunities for the youth in Germany. CHILDREN supports poor and disadvantaged families and young people in socially problematic areas. Furthermore, they fight child poverty and encourage the youth to engage in society. We call the institutions funded by CHILDREN organizations in the following. Organizations have to apply for funding from CHILDREN each year again. In the application process, CHILDREN requires the applicants to answer a survey which contains questions about outcomes related to CHILDREN’s programs as well as general information about the organization such as the yearly budget.

CHILDREN provided us with data from two of its flagship programs: Mittagstisch (we refer to this as Meals program) and Entdeckerfonds (Trips program). The organizations use money from the Meals program to finance meals, from breakfast to dinner, that they sell at concessionary prices to the children and adolescents that visit them. In the following, we call these children and youth who ultimately profit from CHILDREN's grants beneficiaries. The organizations also use money from the Trips program to make trips to nearby places usually unknown to the beneficiaries.

Previous research shows that childhood and youth are central in the development of character traits and future opportunities. Factors like education, stable family conditions, social contacts and mobility shape children and adolescents for their further life. Heckmann and Carneiro (2003) show that especially early family factors determine most of the gaps in high school attendance. Moreover, Deckers et. al. (2015) found, by experiments conducted in Germany, that children of higher educated parents are significantly more patient. Children from parents with lower income and a lower educational level typically have a lower weight at birth and are born in a later week of gestation, which are all indicators for bad initial conditions (Deckers et. al. 2015, Case et. al. 2002). Children that grow up in families with a low socio-economic status are often believed to be less mobile. This could have a negative influence on their character development. For example, Chetty et. al (2012) investigate for the US, that areas with more mobility are highly correlated with better primary schools, greater social capital and more stable family conditions. Furthermore, the results of Deckers et. al. (2020) provide evidence for the effect of the social environment on prosocial attitudes. Being supported by a mentor could result in a significant and persistent increase in the prosociality of elementary school children. Heckmann et. al. (2010) investigated a preschool education program in the US. The authors show that an investment in the improvement of the childhood conditions could have a high rate of return, even after controlling for possible distortions.

The aim of our project paper is to test whether CHILDREN’s programs positively influence the beneficiaries. We look at the associations between the subsidy CHILDREN provides and the share of beneficiaries with broadened everyday expertise and improved selfworth. Furthermore, we analyze the association between the measure of the healthiness of the meals the organizations offer and health-relevant outcomes of beneficiaries. The aim of our applied differences-in-differences estimation is to test whether the activities offered by the trips program have a positive effect on the participating children, measured through a change in selfworth and everyday expertise.

We find no profound connection between the subsidy CHILDREN provides and the effectiveness of the organizations regarding the share of beneficiaries with broadened everyday expertise and improved selfworth. On the other hand, focusing on health relevant variables, we obtain a positive association between the index of healthy diet criteria fulfilled by organizations and the share of beneficiaries who are less frequently ill. By using the differences-in-differences (DID) strategy, the estimates show that the participation in the trips program has a positive, but insignificant effect on the everyday expertise of beneficiaries. Strikingly, we observe a negative association between participating in the trips program and selfworth. However, the results of the DID estimation should not be overstated because of the small sample size.

The remainder of this project paper is structured as follows: Section XX describes the variable used for the empirical analysis. The summary statistics are presented in section XX. We explain the dimensionality reducing method factor analysis in section XX. The proceeding section XX reports different regression results. In section XX, we implement the differences-in-differences strategy to test for the effects of the trips program. Finally, section XX concludes and provides suggestions for CHILDREN.

Unless otherwise specified, we consider all variables to be metric, even if they are ordinal.

Conclusion:

Until now CHILDREN only influences whether organizations are supported and how much funding they receive to provide both the trips and the meals program. However, we find a strong positive correlation between the healthiness of the meals that organizations serve and health related outcomes of children and adolescents. During our visit of an organization in Augsburg, the employees told us that both the children and adolescents appreciate the healthy food and demand even more healthier meals. This might be one possible way for CHILDREN to improve the beneficiaries’ health without the necessity of spending particularly more money. In the yearly meetings, they could point out our results and mention their appreciation of the provision of healthy food. Moreover, CHILDREN could request that the organizations fulfill the DGE criteria for the provided meals. Due to the good relationship between CHILDREN and the supported social institutions, we think that the organizations are open to implementing this proposal.

On the basis of the processed dataset, we cannot measure the causal effect of the trips program on everyday expertise and selfworth of beneficiaries. However, measuring significant effects of CHILDREN’s trips program might be possible if the data structure will be adjusted. At this point, we recommend to directly ask the beneficiaries to answer the children specific questions of the survey. During our first meeting with CHILDREN we were informed that they already have collected data from children and adolescents directly, that caused additional workload. For instance, the organizations need to obtain the permission of the parents. Nevertheless, the individual level data are perhaps more precise.

The dataset contains several helpful features that made our analysis easier. For example, CHILDREN has asked for many survey questions from the supported organizations in every year across the whole observation period. Furthermore, the dataset includes variables regarding increased selfworth and broadened everyday expertise for both programs allowing a comparison of the meals and the trips program. Hence, we recommend to continue asking the same questions in every year and selected variables for both programs.

Even though this may lead to additional workload because they need the parents’ consent,

During our meeting with CHILDREN we were informed that they already tried to do that and that it is a big challenge that comes with a lot of work. Still should try because the data on the individual level might be more informing precise.

Problem selfworth und so, that not enough variation --> ask variables that have a potentially higher variation to actually measure effects

Faktoranalyse

This would increase the number of observations for every year

Ask questions that potentially have a higher variation

Es ist gut, dass die Variablen jedes j

Reduce the number of survey questions

with a larger dataset and

part of our project was the preparation and transformation of the raw data

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The main part of our project was the preparation, transformation and cleaning of the raw data to construct a final dataset for measuring the effect of CHILDREN’s programs.

This study examines the effect of CHILDREN’s trips program on the everyday expertise and selfworth of participating children and adolescents. The panel structure of the dataset allows us to implement a differences-in-differences approach to estimate the average effect of the participation in the trips program. According to our estimates, the

Hauptresultate

By using a differences-in-differences (DID) approach,

Furthermore, we construct two different treatment variable and compares the results of both