Trickle-Down Effects of Affirmative Action A Case Study in France

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Date:2022-08-01

Keyword:NA

Url:[click here](https://www.nber.org/papers/w30367)

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The introduction of a quota in the French chess Club Championship in 1990, an activity many players engage in next to playing in individual tournaments, provides a quite unique environment to study its effects on three levels. We find that women selected by the quota improve their performance. We show large spillover and trickle-down effects: There are more and better qualified women. International comparisons confirm that the results are unique to France and that there are no substantial adverse effects on French male players. We discuss the properties of this quota and how to implement it in other environments.