

The Impact of Women's Family Empowerment on Private Tutoring Expenditure: Evidence from CFPS

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Abstract

Private tutoring expenditure is an important part of household expenditure, and many studies have discussed its influencing factors. This paper attempts to analyze it from the perspective of women's family empowerment as generally mothers are more involved in children's education than fathers (NHES, 2001). When women have a higher level of empowerment, family decisions like private tutoring are more likely to reflect their preference. Thus, we believe that higher level of women's empowerment can increase the household expenditure on private tutoring as well as the probability of tutoring occurrence. This paper will verify these two hypotheses with Logit and Tobit models using data from CFPS (China Family Panel Studies).

Motivation

In response to the growing competition and the increase of household income, private tutoring expenditure has become an important household expenditure in China. For most of the time, private tutoring is regarded as a supplement of formal schooling. It can not only help children who fall behind to catch up, but also help those who perform well to keep competitive edge over peers. As it weighs larger and larger proportion on household expenditure, questions about its influencing factors arise. Numbers of studies attempted to document the effects of family socioeconomic status on children's tutoring experiences (Buchmann, 2002) because socioeconomically advantaged families are believed to have more economic resources and more willingness to invest in children's education (Becker, 1991). However, most of these studies focused on household level factors, including parental education, household income and family size. Relatively less research has focused on within-couple level factors and examined the effect of spouses' relative socioeconomic status on private tutoring.

The concept of women's empowerment has gained considerable attention since the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Power distribution within families is one of the major topics in this area. Resource theory believes that the distribution of family power depends on the relative resources of husband and wife. Family power would lean to the more "resourceful" spouse who has better income, education and social status and therefore, family decisions determined by family power would reflect the preference of the more "resourceful" spouse. Given that mothers pay more attention on children's education than fathers, when they have a higher level of empowerment, they might change the family decision on private tutoring. How does the women's family empowerment affect household expenditure on private tutoring, and to what extent? Does it increase the probability of tutoring occurrence?

Literature Review

Multiple studies have discussed that men and women are not only fundamentally different in bearing offspring, but also in raising and nurturing their children. Evidence from studies on women's empowerment implies that when women play a larger role in decision-making, household welfare increases (Sell and Minot, 2018). In addition, multiple studies have documented the effects of family socioeconomic status on children's tutoring experiences (Buchmann, 2002). However, no researchers combine women's empowerment and private tutoring together and analyze within-couple level effects.

Research design

Research Design:

Step1: We first will adopt Logit model to analyze whether the women's family empowerment has an impact on the occurrence of private tutoring.

Step2: We will use Tobit model to analyze the impact of women's family empowerment on private tutoring expenditure.

Dependent variables:

Logit model: Occurrence of private tutoring. 1 means it happened and 0 means it didn't happen

Tobit model: Private tutoring expenditure. 0 if there is no tutoring.

Independent Variables:

Female family empowerment. According to the CFPS family database of 5 questions: "household expenditure allocation decision maker", "savings investment insurance decision maker", "house purchase decision maker", "children discipline decision maker", "high price consumer goods decision maker", the main decision makers of these issues to measure female family empowerment. If the answer is male, the weight is 0; if the answer is female, the weight is 1.

Female family empowerment is obtained by adding the five questions.

Covariates:

Logarithm of total household income, logarithm of total household property value, father's years of education, mother's years of education and number of children.

Identification Strategy:

We introduce covariates as controlling variables to mitigate the effect of omitted variable bias.

Plan of the Research

Introduction and Literature Review (March 23), Data work and empirical strategy (April 10), Estimation and Result (April 17), Finish Write up (April 24)

Reference

- Sell, M., and Minot, N. (2018). What factors explain women's empowerment? Decision-making among small-scale farmers in Uganda. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 71, 46-55.
- Buchmann C. (2002). Getting Ahead in Kenya: social capital, shadow education, and achievement. *Research in the Sociology of Education*, 13, 133-59.