

Childbearing and Well-being: A Comparative Analysis of the European Community

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Abstract

This paper provides a comparative analysis of the impact of childbearing on individuals' wellbeing. The analysis is based on a sample of women drawn from the European Community Household Panel Survey. Several measures of wellbeing is derived. In particular we consider, household income, poverty status and various deprivation indices. We then apply Difference-in-Difference estimators combined with Propensity Score Matching techniques (DD-PSM) as a means to provide unbiased parameter estimates of the impact of childbearing events on these measures of wellbeing. The magnitude of these effects does not only depend on the measure of wellbeing, but also on the welfare regime under consideration.¹ There are for instance strong adverse effects on wellbeing in countries belonging to the Liberal welfare state (UK and Ireland) and only small effects among Social Democratic welfare states.

Keywords: Poverty, Deprivation indices, Childbearing, Difference-in-Difference Estimators, Propensity Score Matching, ECHP.

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³ The Swedish sample is in fact not longitudinal and is consequently excluded from our analysis.