Age at Immigration, Social Boundaries, and the Adult Attainments of Child Migrants

Using US census data and instrumental variable methods, we examine several social and economic indicators that reflect the integration experiences of migrants who arrive in the before the age of 18. We find that age at arrival influences chances of dropping out of high school children who arrive after the age of eight. Second, the variation in educational attainment associated with age at arrival has important consequences for several adult behaviours that reflect integration into the American mainstream, notably English language proficiency and intermarriage, but to a lesser extent labour market engagement and work intensity. Third, we demonstrate the existence of social boundaries that constrain integration for some regional origin groups. The conclusion identifies directions for future research about the life cycle timing of migration and its long-term consequences.

Presentation presenter: Miles Corak
Day and Time: Sep 30 2011 - 14:05
Discussant: Shandre Thangavelu

An Evaluation of Alternative Matching Techniques for Use in Comparative Interrupted Time Series Analyses: An Application to Elementary Education

Attachment Size
Comparative interrupted time series (CITS) models attempt to identify the causal effect of a policy change on a treated group, such as a school, by determining the difference in outcome before and after the policy change, using the pre/post difference in the comparison group as the counterfactual. The motivation for the current study stems from application of a CITS to estimate the relationship between student achievement and implementation of a magnet school program which requires selecting as comparisons traditional non-magnet schools whose changes in achievement reflect the counterfactual. Unfortunately, no consensus exists on how to appropriately select a comparison group. To this end, we conducted a Monte Carlo simulation in which we compared four methods of selecting a comparison group, including all traditional public schools in the district, regression-based matching, propensity score matching, and a synthetic control group method. Based on a sample of 24 school districts, we performed a falsification exercise by randomly assigning one elementary school per district to hypothetical treatment status, selecting a comparison group, and testing for a statistically significant effect of the hypothetical treatment. This process was repeated 1,000 times. In most cases, the method that came closest to rejecting the true hypothesis of no effect at the conventional five percent significance level is the method that uses all other traditional public elementary schools in the district as the comparison group. We also provide separate analyses for varying district sizes and number of time periods of data available. These results should help future education researchers using CITS models think about which method to use in selecting an appropriate comparison group.

**Ethnic Disparities in Adolescent Body Mass Index in the United States: The Role of Parental Socioeconomic Status and Economic Contextual Factors**

This paper examined the importance of household and economic contextual factors as determinants of ethnic disparities in adolescent body mass index (BMI). Individual-level data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 for the years 1997 through 2000 were combined with economic contextual data on food prices, outlet density and median household income. The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method was used to examine the factors that could help explain ethnic disparities in BMI. Ethnic differences in household demographic, parental socioeconomic status (SES), and economic contextual factors explained the majority of the male black-white (63%), male Hispanic-white (78%) and female Hispanic-white (62%) BMI gap but only 44% of the female black-white BMI gap. We found that adding the economic contextual factors increased the explained portion of the ethnic BMI gap for both female and male adolescents: the economic contextual factors explained 13% and 8%, respectively, of the black-white and Hispanic-white BMI gaps for females and 28% and 38% of the respective male ethnic BMI gaps. Parental SES was more important in explaining the Hispanic-white BMI gap than the black-white BMI gap for both genders, whereas neighborhood economic contextual factors were more important in explaining the male BMI gap than the female BMI gap for both black-white and Hispanic-white ethnic disparities. A significantly large portion of the ethnic BMI gap, however, remained unexplained, particularly between black and white female
adolescents.

Experimental Estimates of the Impact of Labour Market Activities on Volunteering and Health

Joint work with Steven Lehrer

From Engineer to Taxi Driver: Occupational Skills and the Economic Outcomes of Immigrants

Attachment

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We examine the ability of male immigrants to transfer their occupational human capital using information from the O*NET and a unique dataset that includes both the last source country occupation and the first four years of occupations in Canada. We first augment a model of occupational choice and skill accumulation to derive predictions about the cross-border transferability of occupational human capital. We then test the empirical implications using the skill requirements of pre- and post-immigration occupations. We find that male immigrants to Canada were employed in source country occupations that required high levels of cognitive skills, but relied less intently on manual skills. Following immigration, they find initial employment in occupations that require the opposite. Regression analysis uncovers large returns to the quantitative skill requirements of Canadian occupations, but no returns to source country skill requirements. Finally, our empirical findings suggests that occupational skill gaps are detrimental to immigrants' earnings.

Immigration: Economics, Attitudes, and Policies

Preliminary title.

Immigration: Economics, Attitudes, and Policies

Presentation presenter: David Card
Key Turning Points in Canada’s Post-War Policy Evolution: Reflections of a Market Populist

Attachment  Size
Courchene - charlie final.pdf  308.76 KB
Details to follow.
Presentation presenter: Thomas Courchene
Day and Time: Oct 1 2011 - 12:45

Low-Income Support Receipt Amongst the Retired Population – An Analysis of the Incidence and the Dynamics

Attachment  Size
proposal_3.doc  67 KB
Gray-Finnie Presentation.ppt  129.5 KB
Given the scant labour market opportunities that are available for workers that are considered to be of normal retirement age or older (i.e 65 years or older), and given the shriveling safety net in the form of private pensions, the income security of retired Canadians is of grave concern. Our focus is on the receipt of low-income support benefits amongst this group. The primary topics of our project are the incidence of receipt of payment amongst this population and the dynamics of entries and exits from this state. Our analysis is in the spirit of the poverty/low-income literature that is fairly developed in regards to the working-age population, and we intend to borrow some of the empirical techniques that are applied in that literature in our analysis. In a point of departure from that literature, however, to take a retrospective approach by including in our analysis several phases of the life cycle. Our metric for low-income support is a direct measure of a governmental intervention that is designed to address poverty amongst the retired population, namely the GIS (guaranteed income security) benefit. The GIS regime is the only means-tested public retirement benefit that is targeted to the group of retired individuals and couples who are deemed to be the neediest, and thus constitutes a quintessential ‘safety net’ type provision. We estimate multivariate econometric models of the incidence of receipt among the eligible population, as well as hazard models of both entry and exit from that state.
Presentation presenter: David Gray
Discussant: Herbert Emery

Must affirmative action be permanent? The impact of
The impact of affirmative action on the behavior of targeted individuals is theoretically indeterminate: it can either raise or lower their investment in skill acquisition, thus diminishing or exacerbating a pre-existing negative stereotype. The impact of removing an existing affirmative-action program is similarly indeterminate. This paper uses a laboratory experiment to examine skill acquisition before and after affirmative action is introduced, and after its subsequent removal. We consider three parameterizations of a statistical discrimination model, with differing theoretical implications. Our results show qualitative treatment effects that are mostly consistent with theoretical predictions.

**Presentation**
- **Presenter:** Michael Kidd
- **Day and Time:** Oct 1 2011 - 09:30
- **Discussant:** Frances Woolley

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The Impact of Minimum Wages on Quit, Layoff and Hiring Rates

We investigate differences in quit, layoff and hiring rates in high versus low minimum wage regimes using Canadian data spanning 1979 to 2008. The data include consistent questions on job tenure and reason for job separation for the whole period. Over the same time frame, there were over 140 minimum wage changes in Canada. We find that higher minimum wages are associated with lower hiring rates but also with lower job separation rates. Importantly, the reduced separation rates are due mainly to reductions in layoffs, occur in the first 6 months of a job, and are present for unskilled workers of all ages. Our estimates imply that a 10% increase in the minimum wage generates a 3.9% reduction in the layoff rate. We present a search and matching model that fits with these patterns and test its implications. Overall, our results imply that jobs in higher minimum wage regimes are more stable but harder to get. For older workers, these effects almost exactly offset each other, resulting in little impact on the employment rate. One might conclude from the small impact of minimum wages on the employment rate that they do not affect the labour market for older workers but our results indicate this is not true.

**Presentation**
- **Presenter:** David Green
- **Day and Time:** Sep 30 2011 - 11:05
- **Discussant:** Nicholas Lawson

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The migration decisions of physicians in Canada: the roles of immigrant status and spousal characteristics

In this paper, we use data from the confidential master files of the Canadian Census over the years 1991-2006 to study the geographic mobility of immigrant and non-immigrant physicians who are already resident in...
Canada. We consider both inter- and intra-provincial migration, with a particular focus on migration to and from rural areas of Canada. We exploit the fact that it is possible to link individuals within families in the Census files in order to investigate the impact on the migration decision of the characteristics of a married physician’s spouse. Our results indicate that the magnitude of outflows is substantial and that the retention of immigrant physicians in rural areas and in some provinces will continue to be difficult. We find strong evidence that migration is a family decision, and spousal characteristics (education, age, years in Canada for immigrants) are important. As well, we find that large Canadian cities (mainly in Ontario) are the likely destination for the types of immigrant physicians typically able to be recruited to other areas, implying recruitment efforts of smaller provinces may have significant implications for the size of health care costs in larger provinces.

**Presentation presenter:** Christopher Worswick  
**Day and Time:** Sep 30 2011 - 15:05  
**Discussant:** Paul Hobson  

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