Dr. Jenny Aker

Abstract

1/12/15 Faculty Recruitment Seminar

The returns to educational investments hinge on whether such investments can improve the quality and persistence of educational gains. We report the results from a randomized evaluation of an adult education program in Niger, in which some students learned how to use simple mobile phones (Project ABC).  In the short-term, students in ABC villages achieved test scores that were .19-.26 standard deviations higher than those in standard adult education classes, and standardized math test scores remained higher seven months after the end of classes. Using data collected two years after the program, we find that the differences in short-term learning outcomes remain, primarily for reading, and that ABC households had relatively higher levels of well-being. We improve the precision of these estimates by using a control function approach, incorporating information on the study sample's short-term outcomes.