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LONG-TERM CONTEXTUAL EFFECTS IN EDUCATION: SCHOOLS AND NEIGHBORHOODS

ABSTRACT

This paper estimates the long-term impact of growing up in better neighborhoods and attending better schools on educational attainment. First, I use a spatial regression-discontinuity design to estimate school effects. Second, I study students who move across neighborhoods in Montreal during childhood to estimate the causal effect of growing up in a better area (total exposure effects). I find large effects for both dimensions. Combining both research designs in a decomposition framework, and under key assumptions, I estimate that 50-70 percent of the benefits of moving to a better area on educational attainment are due to access to better schools.

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