

"Birth Order, Maternal Time, and Child Outcomes: An Empirical Analysis"

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Individuals of higher birth order positions are more likely to have poorer outcomes than their counterparts of lower birth order positions. This negative relationship is suggested to be caused by differences in intrahousehold allocation of resources, wherein those of higher birth order positions are found to receive less resources as compared to their older siblings. Using a sample of children from the Child Development Supplement of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, this research looks at whether the negative relationship between birth order and children outcomes is due to differences in maternal quality time endowments. OLS regression results show that increase in the birth order position has a negative effect on various test scores, whereas maternal quality time input has a positive effect. However, once household-specific heterogeneity are controlled for, the maternal quality time variable loses its significance, while those of the birth order variables are retained, suggesting that birth order effects do not stand for differences in maternal time endowments. This is supported by a time-and-sibling difference approach, wherein child- and household-specific heterogeneity are controlled for. The latter approach is also used to test for the persistence of birth order effects in time, and results show that the negative birth order effects for letter word outcomes are diminishing in time.