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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the empirical relationship between ex-ante child mortality and fertility across eighteen developing countries using 69 Demographic and Health Surveys. To address the endogeneity problem between fertility and mortality, the interaction of global immunization coverage rate with initial year child mortality is used as an instrument. The estimated impact of ex-ante mortality on fertility is very significant. 2SLS estimate shows that one standard deviation in under-five mortality increases the population growth rate by 3.20 percentage points. This implies that the reduction in the under-five mortality rate is likely to increase the population growth rate in developing countries. From the policy perspective, our result questions on the importance of reducing child mortality rate as a policy to reduce the population growth as well as to increase GDP per capita in the developing countries.