

Abstract

This paper investigates the causal relationship between working adult mortality and children school withdrawal and subsequent child labor decisions using both fixed effects model and Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression. Most household shocks have been shown to affect children human capital development through the income effect, however in addition to the income effect mortality in a household can further deprive the children of parental care, nurturing and love which may also lead to children withdrawing from school. The study examines the potential heterogeneous impact of gender, age and birth order as well as the mitigating effects of a school feeding program in reducing school withdrawal and child labor. From the empirical analysis the study finds that female children are most affected by working adult mortality and are more likely to withdraw from school. Children with elder brothers and elder sisters are less likely to withdraw from school, and are also less likely to engage in child labor. Provision of child transfers such as school feeding program however, is able to mitigate against school withdrawal and child labor in addition to increasing female children school attendance. The school feeding program is also found to have indirect mitigating impact on secondary school children with younger brothers and sisters in primary school and who receive food under this program.

