

> Thursday, March 16th, 2023

12:00 – 13:30

IFLAME RESEARCH SEMINAR

**RESEARCH
SEMINAR**



EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

‘MORE BAD NEWS FOR MOTHERS: THE CHILD PENALTY IN MENTAL HEALTH’

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ABSTRACT

To assess gender equality in society it is important to understand how parenthood affects women relative to men. Labor economics has established that women still experience a child penalty in earnings. It is not clear to which degree gender inequality due to childbearing extends beyond the labor market and affects well-being. We combine administrative data from Austria and Denmark with a quasi-experimental event study approach to estimate the impact of the birth of their first child on parents' mental health. We find that mental health deteriorates for both parents after birth, but this effect is much more pronounced for women than for men. The motherhood penalty in mental health is stronger in Austria compared to Denmark. Longer periods of maternal leave exacerbate mental problems.

