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EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

‘SCHOOL CHOICE AND CLASS-SIZE EFFECTS: UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF A TARGETED VOUCHER PROGRAM’

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ABSTRACT

We study the channels behind changes in school quality following a voucher reform in Chile. Estimating the relationship between schooling inputs and academic achievement is challenging when there is a significant level of choice. We take the endogeneity of student sorting and school characteristics into account and estimate a novel panel data model that allows for rich forms of observed and unobserved school, student and teacher characteristics. After the reform, class sizes were reduced substantially in public schools. We characterize the heterogeneity in returns to class size reductions and find large effects for several schools. This explains an important part of the increases we observed in the educational performance of public schools.



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