Too Hot To Hold: The Effects of High Temperatures during Pregnancy on Endowment and Adult Welfare Outcomes

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18 November, Friday | 12.00nn - 1.30pm | Ventus Evans Room

Exposure to extreme high temperature during pregnancy is associated with poor endowment (low birth weight). But whether such early life shock is related to welfare loss in adulthood is still left unanswered. Utilizing random temperature fluctuations across more than one hundred counties in China, we examine the relationship between temperature in utero and birth weight and further adult outcomes. One standard deviation of high temperature days during pregnancy triggers about significant loss of birth weight, and further decreases height and years in schooling. Other health and intelligence outcomes are negatively affected as well. Specifically, the impact is concentrated in second trimester. Our results indicate that the directly biological effect of temperature serves as the main mechanism behind this adverse influence. Such effect shows no gender difference, and both rainfall during pregnancy and weather in the previous year's growing season have no significant effect, ruling out the possibility of the food production channel. Our estimations suggest that temperature plays an important role on explaining the regional pattern of height and birth weight in China.

Seminar chaired by: Dr Yi Junjian, Assistant Professor, Dept of Economics, NUS
All are welcome! Light lunch will be provided.
Register at https://goo.gl/forms/0KullrV8rgEkPO4K2 by 17 Nov 2016.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Zihan Hu is a research masters student at the Economics Department in NUS. His research focuses on the fetal origin hypothesis and the one child policy in China.

Teng Li is a PhD student at Economics Department, NUS. His research focuses on the short- and long-term effects of environmental factors.