

## Mini Course on Child Development

Costas Meghir

Understanding the process of human capital development and the way that interventions can affect outcomes is central to designing policies that can improve equal opportunity, reduce inequality and prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty. To study this problem we the economist needs a large toolkit: we need to understand the nature of the human capital production function, how parents make decisions on child investments and what they know and understand about the child production function and finally how interventions can affect outcomes. This short course will consist of three parts. First we will consider the estimation of Human capital production functions and we will consider some empirical results in this direction; second we will discuss dynamic economic models of parental investments and child outcomes; third we will discuss experimental evidence on interventions in Early Childhood development.

### **Lecture 1**

Early Childhood Development Interventions and Randomized Control Trials.

### **Lecture 2 (Thursday)**

Estimating the Production function of Human Capital – Linear and Nonlinear Factor Models

### **Lecture 3 (Thursday)**

Empirical Application to child development in India

### **Lecture 4 (If there is time)**

Marriage Markets and Child Development – Some ideas.

### **Selected References**

1. Estimating the Technology of Cognitive and Noncognitive Skill Formation  
Flavio Cunha, James J. Heckman, Susanne M. Schennach  
Econometrica 2010

2. Household Choices and Child Development  
Daniela Del Boca Christopher Flinn Matthew Wiswall  
The Review of Economic Studies, Volume 81, Issue 1, 1 January 2014, Pages 137–185
3. Estimating the Production Function for Human Capital: Results from a Randomized Control Trial in Colombia  
Orazio Attanasio, Sarah Cattan, Emla Fitzsimons, Costas Meghir, Marta Rubio-Codina,  
NBER Working Paper No. 20965  
May 2017
4. Human Capital Development and Parental Investment in India  
Orazio Attanasio, Costas Meghir, Emily Nix, NBER Working Paper No. 21740  
Revised in July 2017
5. Using the infrastructure of a conditional cash transfer program to deliver a scalable integrated early child development program in Colombia: cluster randomized controlled trial  
BMJ 2014; <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.g5785> (Published 29 September 2014)Cite this as: BMJ 2014;349:g5785  
Orazio P Attanasio, Camila Fernández, Emla O A Fitzsimons, Sally M Grantham-McGregor, Costas Meghir, Marta Rubio-Codina
6. Effects of early childhood psychosocial stimulation and nutritional supplementation on cognition and education in growth-stunted Jamaican children: prospective cohort study.  
Walker SP1, Chang SM, Powell CA, Grantham-McGregor SM, Lancet. 2005 Nov 19;366(9499):1804-7.
7. Labor market returns to an early childhood stimulation intervention in Jamaica  
Paul Gertler, James Heckman, Rodrigo Pinto, Arianna Zanolini, Christel Vermeersch, Susan Walker, Susan M. Chang, Sally Grantham-McGregor  
Science 30 May 2014, Vol. 344, Issue 6187, pp. 998-1001
8. The Marriage Market, Labor Supply and Education Choice, by P.A. Chiappori, M. Dias and C. Meghir NBER Working Paper, Forthcoming Journal of Political Economy