

SCHOOLING OUTCOMES AMONG ORPHANS

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Abstract

The research brought here is a one of the most important research on institutionalized orphans and their psychology and education development. This study has been conducted by International Food Policy Research Institute of Washington DC on Malawy during 2009. Considering the tremendous increasing of the number of orphans associated with a sharp rise in prime-age adult mortality it has become a serious problem for these children to have health care and pre- and school education. The purpose of this presentation is to bring here the results of an important study which focused on investigating the impacts of orphaned on migration behaviors, development and schooling outcomes by using household panel data from Malawi. A few studies have considered psychology and health developmental of orphans. For realizing this study it has been used the Malawi Complementary Panel Survey conducted by the IFPRI between January 2000 and July 2004.. There has been analyzed regression and have been applied household models. It has been found that maternal orphans, as well as double orphans, tend to face higher mortality risks and lower schooling outcomes than paternal and non-orphans do. Similarly, the results have shown that maternal and double orphans tend to move to other institutions more frequently. Compared to adolescents orphans, the impact of younger orphans who enrolled in school after the introduction of universal free primary education in 1994 is more muted. So, it has been suggested that free primary education policies may have mitigated adverse shock from parental deprivation. More interestingly, it has been thought that the impacts of orphan hood on schooling outcomes are significantly gender-dependent.

Keywords: *orphan, institution, development, preschool, education*

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing body of literature examining the association between parental death and human development outcomes of children measured by school attendance and health conditions. Existing empirical studies based on cross-sectional data do not find concrete evidence of relation between orphan status and welfare outcomes of children. The results vary across countries and data sources. Some studies find a negative relationship between orphan status and school enrollment. While studies from cross-country are mixed, most studies based on panel data find significant negative correlation between being an orphan and schooling outcomes. The study brought here investigates the impacts of orphan hood and recent parental death on children's schooling outcomes using a household panel survey from Malawi. It contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical results regarding impacts of parental death on various children's welfare outcomes that are often overlooked in others studies. There have been applied three empirical methodologies to explore different aspects of impacts. First, it has been analyzed regression model with control for various sets of household and child characteristics. Second, there has been employed household fixed effect models to test the differential effects of orphanhood on welfare outcomes among different types of orphans living in the same household. Third, using the non-orphaned children at the baseline as a subsample, it has been examined the impact of recent parental death on schooling outcomes. Free education policies seem to have mitigated negative shocks arising from parental death, at least partially. While adolescents orphans did not fare well in schooling outcomes, in this study has been found a muted impacts of younger school-aged children who enrolled in school. More interestingly, the impacts of orphanhood on schooling outcomes are significantly gender dependent; orphaned boys tend not to attend schools relative to orphaned girls. Household wealth level significantly influences the severity of these impacts, at least for grade progression; the negative impact of being a maternal orphan is much larger for those in poorer household than those in wealthier ones. However, double orphans are less likely to progress through school grades than other children regardless of household wealth level.

Considering the literature reviews it is widely recognized that children face negative shocks on their welfare after their parental death. So another problem raised is that of household income shocks which can reduce children's schooling because of liquidity constraints. In addition, illness or death of parents may change their children's time allocation; the demand for their time to engage in income-earning activities and to care for an ill person may increase substantially, leading to a reduction in their school time. Furthermore, orphans may suffer emotional trauma or develop psychological problems, such as depression, anger, and fear, for their future. Traditionally, mutual cooperation systems, such as fostering children by kinship, extended family, and communities, have functioned well as risk-coping mechanism in all over the world. However, household institutions remains one of the greatest functioning mechanism for orphaned children.

Background and literature review

There has been a growing body of empirical studies examining the impacts of orphanhood on children's achievements in schools, but the results are mixed, depending on data sources, estimation methodologies, and specifications. Four generalized findings emerge from the existing studies. First, being an orphan is negatively correlated with his/her schooling outcomes. Second, several studies using panel surveys found that being an orphan, especially losing the mother, has a significant negative impact on child's schooling outcomes. Third, schooling outcomes for older children or adolescents are more likely to be negatively affected by parental death. Finally, contrary to common belief that girls are more vulnerable to shocks from parental death/disease, the empirical evidence is mixed. Few studies found a significant discrimination against girls in the welfare outcomes of orphans in this context.

Filmer (2006) found that the impact of orphanhood on school enrollment varies across countries. Johnson, Bicego and Rutstein (2003) found that being a double orphan significantly reduces the likelihood of school enrollment. Likewise, Case and Paxson (2004) found that orphans are less likely to enroll in school than nonorphans, with or without household fixed effects using 19 surveys from 10 countries. Similarly, Evans and Miguel (2007) found a significant and negative impact of orphanhood on school participation. They also showed that younger girls and children with lower test scores at the baseline are significantly less likely to participate in school after the death of parents. Sharma (2006) suggested that the impact of orphanhood on school enrollment is greater among higher-grade (older) children. In summary, a few studies focus on the differential impact by the type of orphanhood on school enrollment.

The study brought here uses two-period panel data from round 1 (2000) and round 5 (2004) of the Complementary Panel Survey (CPS). This study uses 431 households, which include school-aged children (6-18) in 2000. Since the study examined welfare outcomes of children and the data did not track individuals who left the household, they paid close attention to individual sample attrition as well as household sample attrition. The education in Malawi has an 8-4-4 system consisting of primary school, secondary school and tertiary education including university, technical training, and teacher training colleges. In general, children start formal education at primary school at the age of six and they are expected to complete primary education when they are 13 years old. Secondary education is 4 years from Form 1 to Form 4. Malawi has an exam-driven education system. Students have to pass certificate exams to graduate and to proceed to higher education. Analyzing schooling outcomes by orphan status it has been evidenced that non-orphans are more likely to achieve higher education than orphans do. School enrollment rates of orphans are 10 percent lower than those of non-orphans. Also, non-orphans are more likely to advance to higher grades than orphans. Among orphans, double orphans are the most disadvantaged both in terms of school enrollment and their grade progression, followed by maternal orphans. This suggests that losing mothers has larger negative impacts on schooling outcomes of children than losing fathers. The disparities between orphans and non-orphans are more severe for adolescents children. While more than 60 percent of non-orphaned children aged between 12 and 18 enroll in school, only 36 percent of double orphans are in school. Adolescent double-orphans also achieve the lowest grade progression. Thus, this may be a pseudo association driven by other community and household characteristics, such as household standards of living and regional differences in school infrastructure. In order to examine the impact of orphanhood they have employed multivariate regression.

Results

The results from community fixed-effect regression showed that being paternal and double orphans has a significant and negative effect on school enrollment. There was no significant gender discrimination, at least in school enrollment. As expected, household standard of living and education of household heads are important determinants of children's enrollment. Children living in poor households are less likely to enroll in school, probably because of a credit constraint. Also, households whose heads had non education tend to provide fewer investments in children's education. The impact of orphanhood on school enrollment may be different by the age of children. The results showed that maternal and double orphans who are 12 years or older are less likely to enroll in school. The impact of orphanhood seems to differ by the sex of the children. For boys, being maternal and double orphans have a negative impact on enrollment; however, there is no evidence that girls' school enrollment is affected by orphan status. In particular, the negative impacts of being maternal or double orphans are large for adolescents boys.

Table 1. Schooling outcomes by orphan status

	Enrollment rates in 2004		Grade prog. 2000 to 2004	
	Age 6 to 18	Age 12 to 18	Age 6 to 18	Age 12 to 18
Non-orphan	80.82	61.71	2.40	2.64
Maternal orph.	67.86	50.00	2.18	2.38
Paternal orph.	70.15	54.17	2.28	2.08
Double orph.	68.42	36.84	2.18	2.05

Source: Own computation from the CPI in 2000 and 2004 (rounds 1 and 5)

About grade progression, there has been no evidence of any significant gender difference about this topic. The education level of household heads was positively correlated with the grade progression of children. The impact of being maternal orphans on grade progression was significantly different by the household income levels. Maternal orphans living in poor households were less likely to complete the current grade and proceed the next. Among double orphans, the impact seemed to be different by sex of the children. Double orphaned boys are less likely to progress through school grades at the same speed as other children. Overall, the results for grade progression were similar to those of for school enrollment. The negative impact of being double orphans was large and robust. Without respect to the age of children, double orphans were more likely to have lower grade progression. In summing, the results of grade progression were similar to those of school enrollment. With respect to differential impact of parental death by the age of children, the result of grade progression was totally opposite to that of school enrollment. Younger children faced a significant negative impact on grade progression, while grade progression of adolescents was non influenced by parental death. This might be because young children are more likely to continue their schooling because of universal free primary education policy, even when they lose a parent.

As a conclusion, the study brought here examined the impact of orphanhood on school outcomes. As a whole, orphans tend to be more disadvantaged compared to non-orphans. It has been found that maternal and double orphans are more likely to have lower schooling outcomes than other children. In contrast, being paternal orphans has no significant and negative impacts on schooling outcomes. This findings were consistent with other studies based on household panel data. However, the magnitude of impacts of maternal and double orphanhood on schooling differs by characteristics of the children. Older children losing their mothers are more likely to face negative impacts on school enrollment.

Suggestions

The study suggested that investments in human capital are more affected by maternal death. Being a paternal orphan seemd not to have a significant impact on human capital envestments and mobility decision. Also, school enrollment decision of younger children was likely to be affected by orphan status because of the introduction of a universal primary education policy. More attention needed to be paid to improving the quality of education in Malawi. There was a crtically need to tackle the quality issues in the primary education. Furthermore, the government had to pay more attention to maternal orphans and their schooling outcomes. Considwring that study it should be said that our country has the same need to about orphans school enrollment and progression. There is necessary to bring up practices about orphans in Albania about their school outcomes. There is nothing to say about what they have done about the target, so, there it is a lot of work to do.

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