

Colloque sur les politiques actives du marché du travail
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Discussion of Lalive's and Arni's work

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Issues re: Lalive's presentation

- Main question
 - « Are Social Networks an Effective Job Search Channel? »
 - A cheap RCT information treatment, prolonging a meeting with caseworker by 15 minutes
- The issue is important! In DK, at present almost 70% of all jobs are filled via 'informal channels'

Issues re: Lalive's presentation

- Lalive finds no overall impact of the information treatment
 - Distinction between strong & weak ties?
 - Additional information
 - 26 (control) vs 32 (treatment) slides
 - Did the same case workers conduct meetings for controls ... and can we be certain they did not reveal information on importance of informal channels?
 - Response rate of 40% on some questionnaires
 - problem for ext validity?

Issues re: Lalive's presentation

- Important finding:
 - information on importance of contacts helps women find jobs ...but is detrimental to job search of men!!
- Why?
 - Gender of case worker?
 - Behavioural differences btw men & women?
 - Different labour markets for men and women?
- To provide men and women with equal opportunities, we have to treat them differently!

Issues re: Arni's presentation

Research questions:

- Can coaching help 'older' workers?
- Does profiling information affect case workers' assessments and help the unemployed find employment?

Methodology: RCTs, register data AND repeated behavioral questionnaire

Issues re: Arni's presentation

- Coaching helps older workers, e.g. by reducing their reservation wages
 - Gender differences in behavioral reactions?
- Important new feature is the study of dynamics of behavioral changes!

Issues re: Arni's presentation

Profiling

- ...was also used in Denmark for a short period around 2003
 - Not well received by case worker and abandoned again after less than 1 year in operation
 - 'we knew it already' ...or 'makes no sense'
 - 'She has low job finding because she is female, uneducated and immigrant... but WHAT CAN WE DO?'
 - Targeting!?

Common issues

- Increasing reliance on randomized experiments - RCTs – for providing solid evidence on what works in social sciences
 - and in a few EU countries (e.g. France, Denmark, Sweden) and Switzerland
- ... is important:
 - Easily understandable methods and results
 - Internal validity (external)
 - Fosters an evidence based culture among policy makers – who do not understand matching estimators and duration models

Common issues

- Differential effects by gender:
 - why these large - apparently behavioural - differences?
 - Nature or nurture?
 - Behavioural differences in other dimensions?
- Repeated behavioral questionnaires in combination with register data and RCTs may shed light on these issues