HAS DEMOCRATIZATION REDUCED INFANT MORTALITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA? EVIDENCE FROM MICRO DATA

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Abstract
Does democracy help babies survive in sub-Saharan Africa? By using retrospective fertility surveys conducted in 28 African countries, I compare the survival of infants born to the same mother before and after democratization to disentangle the effect of democracy from that of changes in population characteristics, which is infeasible with country-level statistics on infant mortality. I find that infant mortality falls by 1.2 percentage points, 12% of the sample mean, after democratization in the post-Cold War period. Relevant aspects of democracy appear to be the combination of multiparty elections and leadership change. (JEL: O15, O55, P16)

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