Himaz, Rozana; Oxford Brookes University
rhimaz@brookes.ac.uk

Authors:

Title: Do orphans have poorer non-cognitive outcomes during adolescence than non-orphans, and what are the consequences?

Nearly 140 million children under 18 years of age had lost one or both parents due to any cause of death in 2015 with around 43% of these children coming from Asia and 37% from Africa. Both single and double orphans are a vulnerable group with outcomes such as schooling, earnings when older and psychosocial wellbeing all potentially more negative compared with those for non-orphaned counterparts. However, little empirical evidence exists on the impact of orphanhood on outcomes such as social inclusion, peer relationships, bullying and self efficacy in adolescence. If orphans do step into adulthood with significantly poorer non-cognitive outcomes, this is likely to perpetuate into persistent inequalities in other spheres as well, such as labour market outcomes and substance use. Thus the issue situates in the 'Equality, Equity and Development' theme of the Conference and SDG target 10.2 (“… promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all …”).

This paper investigates empirically whether losing a parent in middle childhood (between ages 7 and 12) can have an effect on social inclusion and non-cognitive outcomes during adolescence at ages 15 and 19 using data for Ethiopia and India. The data come from five rounds of the Young Lives longitudinal survey, conducted in 2002, 2006, 2009, 2013 and 2016 for a sample of around 6000 children from poorer households across 20 sentinel sites each in Ethiopia and India (see https://www.younglives.org.uk/). The rich data set allows for the investigation of outcomes during adolescence pertaining social/economic inclusion measured through adapting the OECD's Better Life Index as well as bullying, peer relationships and self esteem. The paper will also investigate whether orphanhood and poorer non-cognitive outcomes in adolescence are associated with significantly poorer labour market outcomes, time use patterns and substance use as young adults aged 22. The investigation accounts for 'invisible' orphans i.e., those lost due to attrition between rounds, by using an inverse probability model that gives a higher weight to those children with characteristics similar to the attrited orphans.