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Longer effect of pupil exclusion from school on labour market outcomes

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Objectives

The literature shows that time invested in education generally improves long-term labour market outcomes, although the size of the effect varies across contexts and demographic groups. While most research has focused on the impacts of increased instructional time, far less is known about the consequences of lost classroom time. Existing studies examine interruptions from weather events, natural disasters, strikes, and school calendar changes, but evidence on disciplinary exclusions is limited. This paper addresses that gap by examining the long-term labour market effects of school exclusions in England, using the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset to track pupils' exclusions, attainment, and socio-demographic characteristics, and is among the first to study the long-term consequences of exclusion beyond established short-term effects on test scores.

Methodology

We estimate regression models to isolate the association between exclusion and later labour market outcomes, controlling for confounding factors like background, prior achievement, and school context. We further use mother fixed effects models, comparing siblings within the same family to reduce bias from unobserved family characteristics, offering a closer causal interpretation.

Results

Our analysis shows that exclusion negatively affects both employment probability and wages at age 24. In the mother fixed effects model, this negative effect remains, though it is smaller, suggesting that family-level factors explain part of the relationship. However, exclusion still appears to have an independent detrimental impact on long-term labour market outcomes.

Conclusion

Exclusion has negative long-term consequences, including poorer labour market outcomes. These findings suggest that exclusion policies may need careful reconsideration.

