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Disentangling the Contemporaneous and Dynamic Effects of Human and Health Capital on Wages over the Life Cycle

Donna B. Gilleskie, Euna Han, Edward C. Norton

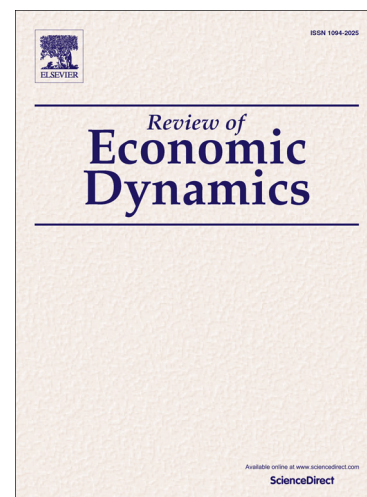
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Disentangling the Contemporaneous and Dynamic Effects
of Human and Health Capital on Wages over the Life Cycle

by

Donna B. Gilleskie
Department of Economics
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Euna Han
College of Pharmacy
Yonsei University

Edward C. Norton
Department of Health Management and Policy
Department of Economics
University of Michigan

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Abstract: We quantify the life-cycle effects of human and health capital on the wage distribution of women, with a focus on health capital measured by body mass. We use NLSY79 data on women followed annually up to twenty years during the time of their lives when average annual weight gain is greatest. We measure the wage impact of current body mass (i.e., the contemporaneous or direct effect) while controlling for observed measures of human capital (namely, educational attainment, employment experience, marital status tenure, and family size) and the impacts of an evolving body mass (i.e., the dynamic or indirect effects) on the endogenous histories of behaviors that produce these human capital stocks. We find significant differences in the contemporaneous and dynamic effects of body mass on wages by age, by race, and by wage level.

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