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The Impact of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems on Families' Child Care Choices and the Supply of Child Care Labor

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Highlights

- Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) are increasingly deployed by U.S. states to monitor and improve the quality of non-parental child care settings.
- This paper draws on a variety of datasets to empirically characterize the way in which families and providers respond to the enactment of QRIS.
- Specifically, it exploits the differential timing in states' QRIS roll-out to examine two sets of outcomes: (i) families' child care choices and maternal employment and (ii) the supply and compensation of child care labor.
- Estimates from difference-in-differences models reveal that although QRIS induces families to shift from parental to non-parental care, economically disadvantaged families are more likely to use informal care, while their advantaged counterparts are more likely to use formal care.
- QRIS increases the supply of high-skilled labor, particularly within the center-based sector.
- States that administer a wage compensation program alongside their QRIS experience larger increases in child care supply and compensation as well as lower turnover rates than states operating a QRIS in isolation.

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