The Consequences of Teen Fatherhood: A Cohort Comparison of the NLSY79 & NLSY97

Reginald Covington (Cornell University); William Monson (Urban Institute); H. Elizabeth Peters (Urban Institute and Cornell University); Joseph P. Price (Brigham Young University); and Joseph J. Sabia (San Diego State University)

This work has been supported, in part, by a grant from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (P01HD045610), the Cornell Institute for the Social Sciences, the Cornell Population Program, and the Urban Institute.

Motivation and Background
- The US has the highest teen birth rates in industrialized world.
- Public costs of teen births reached $9.1 billion in 2004 (Hoffman, 2006)
- Literature has primarily focuses on women with a few papers on men
  - Men: Nock, 1998; Fletcher and Wolfe, 2010
- Uses many methods to get at selection
  - OLS
  - Propensity Score Matching
  - Sibling fixed effects
  - Instrumental Variables
  - aML
  - Instrumental Variables (IV)

Research Questions
- What are the consequences of having a teen birth on a variety of educational and economic outcomes and on civic engagement?
- What are the differences in effects for teen mothers compared to teen fathers?
- How have the consequences of teen parenthood changed across cohorts?
- How stable are the results across different methods used to account for selection into teen parenthood?

Data
- NLSY79
  - U.S. sample of 12,686 men and women born between 1957-1964
  - Initial interview 1979, respondents ages 14-22
  - Exclude respondents born before 1959
  - Round 23, latest round, respondent ages 44-51
- NLSY97
  - U.S. sample of 8,984 men and women born between 1980-1984
  - Initial interview 1997, respondents ages 12-17
  - Round 12, latest round, respondents ages 24-28

Conclusions
- Having a teen birth has negative consequences for a variety of outcomes
  - Some consequences are similar for men and women
    - Education
    - Civic engagement measures (except charitable giving)
  - Other consequences affect women primarily
    - Charitable giving
    - Poverty
    - Food stamp receipt
- Many results are robust across multiple methods to account for selection
  - Education
  - Charitable giving (for women)
- Other results become insignificant when using methods that account for unobservables
  - Civic engagement measures (except charitable giving)
  - Food stamp receipt
  - Poverty

Outcomes
- Education
  - High school graduation
  - Attended any college
- Economic
  - Employed
  - Log earnings
  - Income below poverty
  - Received food stamps
- Civic Engagement (only for NLSY97)
  - Donated to political, environmental, or community cause
  - Volunteer work
  - Pay attention to government and public affairs
  - Voted in the last election

Civic Engagement Results

Consequences of Food Stamps

Income Below Poverty by Age

Received Food Stamps by Age

Education Results