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The Employment Advantages of Skilled Urban Municipalities in Colombia

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This paper explores whether the agglomeration of human capital leads to social employment advantages in urban labor markets of Colombia. It compares employment opportunities in urban areas where the level of education differs while controlling for plausible confounders using census data for 1993 and 2005. Results show that employment opportunities are higher on average in skilled urban areas than in low-skilled urban areas. Recent literature has offered at least three explanations for this positive effect: human capital externalities, production complementarities, and consumption spillovers. To distinguish between them, I analyze the effect of an increase on the college share on the employment rate for different education groups. An increase in the supply of college graduates only affects the employment rates of primary and high-school dropouts. Human capital externalities and production complementarities explain the spatial employment differences in Colombia.

Este trabajo analiza si la aglomeración de capital humano en los municipios de Colombia genera beneficios sociales en términos de mayores oportunidades laborales, por medio del empleo de datos censales de 1993 y 2005. Los resultados muestran que la tasa de empleo es, en promedio, más alta en los municipios con una mano de obra más calificada que en aquellos municipios con una mano de obra poco calificada. La literatura ofrece, al menos, tres explicaciones para este resultado: las externalidades de capital humano, las complementariedades de producción y las externalidades de consumo. Para distinguir entre estas, se analiza el efecto de un aumento en la oferta de mano de obra calificada en la tasa de empleo de individuos con diferentes niveles de educación. Los resultados sugieren que dicho aumento tiene un efecto positivo en la tasa de empleo de individuos que no terminaron la secundaria o la primaria.

Fuente: https://www.banrep.gov.co/en/espe70-7