

GLOBAL POVERTY & IMPACT EVALUATION (Fall 2009)

Research Presentation (Version 1, Oct 6, 2009)¹

Each student will be required to submit a research presentation. You are welcome to work in groups of up to 4 people. The proposal could be used as a research project, thesis, or to submit to a government agency/NGO. There are broadly speaking two types of proposals:

- A proposed new impact evaluation: This type of proposal will use new data and involving examining a program that has yet to be implemented.
- A retrospective impact evaluation: This type of research will involve existing data from a program that has already been implemented.

The research presentation will require four parts. You can use PowerPoint or any other software that produces slides.

- 1) The intervention / policy / program: What is the intervention that you want to evaluate? What is the population of interest? In this section, please describe in detail what is occurring and to whom it is occurring (i.e. school children are receiving free uniforms, young women are receiving access to free prenatal care). Also describe the outcomes that you intend to measure. If you are proposing a new evaluation, please describe how you intend to measure the outcomes. If it involves existing data, describe the variables that exist that measure this outcome. For example, if you want to measure educational outcomes, you might want to look at exam scores.
- 2) Research Design: In this section, you will propose which impact evaluation method you will use to determine the effect of the intervention. Explain briefly why you simply cannot compare people/schools/villages that receive the treatment vs. those that aren't (i.e. why can't you simply compare college graduates vs. high school graduates when looking at the effects of education on earnings? You can choose from the four we discuss in class (experimental methods, regression discontinuity, matching, diff-in-diff). Please mention what assumptions are required for the method you are using.
- 3) Data Analysis:
If you are proposing a new evaluation, we would like you to perform a power calculation in order to estimate the size of the sample required to detect a treatment effect. (Don't worry if you don't know what this is, we will be teaching it to you in class). These calculations are valuable and helpful. As an extension, you might be able to also estimate the cost of your evaluation.
If you are using existing data, you can provide summary statistics and do some regression analysis in STATA. By early November, you will have all the STATA code necessary to do the techniques.
- 4) Policy Implications: Explain what policy implications would result based on your findings. For new proposals, you will need to assume what policies would flow from different types of results. For studies using existing data, you can use the results from your regression analysis to explain what policies you would recommend.
- 5) **[Optional] Ethics:** Please consider any ethical problems with your proposed study. Is there the potential to harm any of the participants? What steps will you take to minimize this effect?

¹ This is the first draft of the research presentation requirement, it is subject to revision. If at anytime during the semester it is revised, we will inform students during both lecture and through email.

- 6) ****[Optional]** Externalities: If the intervention you are considering could effect those other than the treatment group, what type of effect might it have? How might this effect your results?

Specific Requirements:

You have two options.

- 1) You can put together a short presentation (10 slides max) and present it during one of the last two dates the class meets.
- 2) You can write a short proposal no more than 5 pages, double space (12 point font). This will be due on the last day of class.

Advice:

A research proposal using existing data will be more work and effort, but a far greater reward in learning. With existing data, you will have the experience of actually applying one (or more) of the techniques to actual data. If you decide to work with existing data, you will most likely apply one of the following methods: 1) Diff-in-Diff, 2) Propensity Score / Matching, 3) Regression Discontinuity.

A research proposal involving a new study is also a valuable exercise. The data analysis will be less work, but there will be a greater emphasis on convincing us why the evaluation will work. This type of proposal will also be helpful for those who want to propose evaluations to NGOs, government agencies, etc.

Please see Garret or Erick if you have additional questions.