Social determinants of labor market status of ethnic minorities in Britain

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Abstract
The labor market behavior of ethnic communities in advanced societies and the social determinants of their labor market outcomes are important empirical issues with significant policy consequences. We use direct information on social interactions within multiple-origin ethnic minorities in England and Wales to investigate the ways different network-based social ties influence individual employment outcomes. We find that (i) “strong ties,” measured by contacts with parents and children away, increase the probability of self-employment, while “weak social ties,” measured by engagement in voluntary organizations, are more likely to channel members of ethnic minorities into paid employment; (ii) “ethnic networks,” measured by interactions between individuals of the same ethnicity, are positively associated with the likelihood to be self-employed, while engagement in mixed or nonethnic social networks facilitates paid employment among minority individuals. These findings hint at a positive role of social integration in the host society on labor market outcomes of ethnic minority groups.

Citation

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