
NEWSLETTER

The Influence of Grandparenting at the Preschool Stage on Human Capital Accumulation of Junior Secondary Students: An Empirical Analysis Based on the CEPS Data

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THE quality of family rearing in the preschool stage plays an important role in the accumulation of individuals' human capital. This study (published in *Studies in Preschool Education*) selected data from the China Education Panel Survey (CEPS) in the 2013-2014 academic year to examine the effects of preschool grandparenting on the cognitive and non-cognitive ability development of junior secondary students using a propensity score matching method.

The findings of the study are as follows:

- Preschool grandparenting considerably promotes cognitive ability of junior secondary students, but significantly inhibited their non-cognitive ability growth.
- In terms of urban-rural heterogeneity, preschool parenting has no significant facilitative effect on cognitive ability of rural junior secondary students, but considerably facilitates cognitive ability development of their urban peers. From the standpoint of family economic status, preschool grandparenting has no significant effect on cognitive and non-cognitive ability of junior secondary students from impoverished families; it has a considerable positive effect on cognitive ability of junior secondary students from non-impoverished families, but a significant inhibitory effect on their non-cognitive ability.

Based on the above findings, the study offers the following policy implications.

First, from the family's perspective, grandparenting in the preschool years may impede individual human capital accumulation in some respects, but the overall positive role of grandparents in the long-term development of their grandchildren should not be negated. Parents should recognize their own essential role in their children's development, increase their awareness of companionship, pay attention to communication with their children, and fo-

cus on developing their non-cognitive abilities in life practice. Meantime, grandparents should be encouraged to improve their ability in rearing, update their concepts of education in time, and place a premium on non-cognitive ability development of grandchildren.

Second, the government should invest more in the construction of public care institutions so that official nursery service can play a good complementary role to family care. It should also encourage the development of nonprofit childcare institutions and tap the potential of the nonprofit sector in providing childcare service.

Finally, school education should be given full play in improving human capital accumulation of students from rural areas and poor families, so as to offset the negative effects of preschool grandparenting on junior secondary students. At the same time, the development of non-cognitive skills should be incorporated into the teaching and learning process to boost the comprehensive and lasting competitiveness of junior secondary students in the future labor market.

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