The Effect of Additional Job Placement Officers on Unemployment Duration – Lessons from a Pilot Project

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Abstract:

Delivering placement services is one of the main functions of employment offices. How they fulfill this function also depends on the number of job placement officers. Based on a large-scale pilot project, this paper analyzes the effect of raising the number of job placement officers on individual unemployment duration. We combine quantitative analyses of causal effects with qualitative implementation studies. Results indicate that more job placement officers are associated with shorter unemployment duration. We interpret the employment offices’ three different strategies to use the additional resources (job seekers orientation, employer orientation, process orientation) as possible causal mechanisms. Empirical analysis shows that the extent of the causal effect depends on the respective mechanism. Detailed analysis of the pilot project indicates that the higher number of job placement officers was important but only one among several conditions for its success.

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