

Social Networks in ITN adoption in India

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Abstract:

This study adds to the existing literature and current debate on empirically identifying social network effects by examining bed net adoption and usage in a malaria-endemic, 1 rural region of India following a randomized, controlled introduction of ITNs into a subset of each village. Since ITNs were exogenously introduced into a subset of each social network, we can generate credible estimates of social network effects. The four specific aims of this study are (1) to determine how social connections to households receiving the intervention affect bed net ownership and usage, (2) to determine whether female versus male social networks impact ownership and usage differentially, (3) to determine whether the mode of ITN distribution (free or through a micro-loan) impacts the effect of social learning through networks and (4) to evaluate the use of social network generators in rural India. We find some evidence of social network effects on per capita net ownership and suggestive effects on usage. Further study is required to estimate these effects and the underlying mechanisms with greater precision.