Handbook on impact evaluation: quantitative methods and practices

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"…..This book reviews quantitative methods and models of impact evaluation. The formal literature on impact evaluation methods and practices is large, with a few useful overviews. Yet there is a need to put the theory into practice in a hands-on fashion for practitioners.

This book also details challenges and goals in other realms of evaluation, including monitoring and evaluation (M&E), operational evaluation, and mixed-methods approaches combining quantitative and qualitative analyses.

This book is organized as follows

- **Chapter two** reviews the basic issues pertaining to an evaluation of an intervention to reach certain targets and goals. It distinguishes impact evaluation from related concepts such as M&E, operational evaluation, qualitative versus quantitative evaluation, and ex-ante versus ex post impact evaluation.

- **Chapter three** focuses on the experimental design of an impact evaluation, discussing its strengths and shortcomings. Various non-experimental methods exist as well, each of which are discussed in turn through chapters four to seven.

- **Chapter four** examines matching methods, including the propensity score matching technique.

- **Chapter five** deal with double-difference methods in the context of panel data, which relax some of the assumptions on the potential sources of selection bias.

- **Chapter six** reviews the instrumental variable method, which further relaxes assumptions on self-selection.

- **Chapter seven** examines regression discontinuity and pipeline methods, which exploit the design of the program itself as potential sources of identification of program impacts.

- **Chapter eight** presents a discussion of how distributional impacts of programs can be measured, including new techniques related to quantile regression.

- **Chapter nine** discusses structural approaches to program evaluation, including economic models that can lay the groundwork for estimating direct and indirect effects of a program.

- Finally, **chapter ten** discusses the strengths and weaknesses of experimental and non-experimental methods and also highlights the usefulness of impact evaluation tools in policy making…..”

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