

# **DISCUSSION:**

## **BETTER VISION FOR BETTER LEARNING?: EVIDENCE FROM AN RCT IN VIETNAM**

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# SUMMARY

## ○ Research question and design

- 안경 보급이 학력에 미치는 영향
- 베트남 초등학교 4 - 5학년생
- 학교 단위 RCT
- 1년 후 성적 변화도 측정 (ITT)

## ○ Findings

- 11% need eyeglasses but 9% have none
- Both reading and math test scores increased (0.16 to 0.22/23 s.d.)

## COMMENT I: UNDERLYING CAUSES

- Why not using eyeglasses?

- Limited resources (this paper)
- Lack of proper information
- Behavioral reasons

- \* e.g., studies on mosquito net usage, technology adoption

- Coping mechanism without the treatment

- Seat assignment

- \* front row - nearsighted

## COMMENT2: SCHOOL DYNAMICS

- Dynamics among students w.r.t. treatment
  - Possibly being bullied because of wearing eyeglasses
  - ITT varying over no./share of treated in a classroom
- Peer effects w.r.t. academic achievement
  - Rich literature on economics of education
  - More info needed: how to get assigned to classes, etc.
- School/Teacher responses
  - Classroom dynamics: classroom disruption
  - More info needed: any changes in curriculum, etc.

## COMMENT3: FAMILY RESPONSES

- Link to underlying causes

- limited resources: big but possibly only short-term TE
- lack of info: possibly big and long-term TE
- behavioral: small and short-term TE
- \* survey of parents

- Other responses

- educational investment
- spillover effects on other children

## COMMENT4: IMPLICATIONS

- Medical studies on eyesight

- evolution of eyesight among typical children (esp. Vietnamese)

- \* if new eyeglasses are needed every 6 months,

- this TE seems unsustainable

- Institutional background

- health care and access to hospitals

- social welfare system

- Economic implications

- implications for lifetime income

- risk of disability

# CONCLUSIONS

- Exciting and important work
- Further investigation may be beneficial
  - vs. another RCT...