

Discussion of:

Drivers of Effort:

Evidence from Employee Absenteeism

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- The draft I read was 6 month old.
 - Fairly preliminary
- Study on absenteeism in Denmark
 - Not sure I have any particular expertise on the topic
 - Casual empiricism

- Interesting and important theme
- Interesting data sets.
 - Particularly the hospital one

- Individual vs organizational characteristics:
 - Different from the prior ?
- Absenteeism is costly:
 - Correlation vs causality ?
 - Presentism
- Family firm matters:
 - Why ? No comparative statics.
 - Example: differential employee payment

Causes of Absenteeism

- Reasons:
 - Exogenous: flu, hit by a bus,.....
 - Life-related issues: alcoholism, kids, transportation,...
 - Work-related issues: back problems, psychological issues, cancers, accidents,.....
- Possible mechanisms unrelated to employee effort:
 - Selection on health or “social” behavior.
 - Better treatment of “dangerous behaviors”
 - Better job safety
 - Better transportation
- Helpful to look at “fun” days but may not be sufficient.

- Omitted variable:
 - Standard corporate finance controls but here more socio-economic ones
- Persistent matching
 - Bankruptcy ?
 - Infrastructure ?
- Regime switch:
 - Structural change ? Life cycle ?
 - Change in status

- Absenteeism is correlated with hospitalization.
 - Legitimate reason rather than effort-related ?
- Adjustment post sickness:
 - Extrapolating ROA effect (-2.5%)
 - Subsequent effort
- Why not focusing on the consequences of missing work rather than on the drivers of missing work ?
 - However, not significant among small firms.

- Interesting start on an important topic.
- I would like to see some more developments of an early draft.
 - Mechanisms
 - Identification
- Looking forward to a more mature version.
 - Refocus on the consequences of absenteeism.

Thank You