Government, NGO and Social Support for Research

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Abstract:
In the last several years, we have been interested in the role social supports play in protecting people from the pathogenic effects of stress. By social supports, we scan the resources that are provided by other persons (cf. Cohen & Syme, 1985). Although others have investigated and in some cases found evidence for a "buffering" hypothesis—that social support protects persons from the pathogenic effects of stress but is relatively unimportant for unexposed individuals, there are difficulties in interpreting this literature. First, there are almost as many measures of social suppport as there are studies. Hence it is difficult to compare studies and to determine why support operates as a stress buffer in some cases, but not in others. Second, in the vast majority of work, support measures are used without regard to their psychometric properties or their appropriateness for the question under study. For example, studies using measures assessing the structure of social networks (e.g, how many friends do you have?) are seldom distinguished from those addressing the functions that networks might serve (e.g., do you have someone you can talk to about personal problems?). In fact, in many cases, structural and functional items are thrown together into single support indices resulting in scores that have little conceptual meaning.

1. Social Support for Research

Higher education institutions are challenged with increased competition, fiscal difficulty, increased demands for accountability, expansion of diverse needs from the student bodies, and opportunities and difficulties in pervasive new technologies.

A.Motivation

The design for this infrastructure is motivated through the analytical work in [3]. In this work, the authors analyze data from different sources in order to gain insights to the impacts of investment in high performance computing infrastructure upon research productivity of higher education institutions. In the study, there are approximately 190 institutions, and the aggregated institutional data is roughly 5Gb and comes from multiple sources. The process of transforming the data into a consistent view so that analysis can be performed is difficult and time consuming. As both the analytical workis enhanced and the amount of data is increased, runtime of statistical methods will take longer. For example, a data envelopment analysis [4] that is used for the evaluation of institutional productivity takes one minute for a data set of an academic department with two input and one output variables for 180 institutions. To gain a better statistical evaluation, it is necessary to run this analysis for a much larger set of institutions (roughly 4000 institutions in the U.S.) and across many different sets of input and output variables. Therefore, it is useful to have an infrastructure that could provide higher educational researchers with a unified view of the entire data regardless of sources as well as a strong computational support for complex and time consuming statistical analysis.

B.Vision

Our vision for this work is to design an infrastructure that will bring together the tools and the data and provide access to the researchers in the field of higher education institutional research. Our work improves upon these approaches through the followings:

- Mechanisms to curate and integrate data from different sources.
- Interface to a statistical framework to provide embedded complex statistical functions.
- Back-end connection to allow integration with high performance computing infrastructure.
- Open design to allow future extension and integration with infrastructure that supports big and unstructured data.

This work is based on the foundation of previous data framework that was built on proprietary tools. We extend the previous work through the new implementation using open source platform and the extension of the infrastructure to incorporate Big Data capability and high performance computational backend.

2. The role of non-governmental organizations in the social and the health system

The article presents the definitions, objectives, fields and tasks of non-governmental organizations in social life, health system and health policy. In addition, the article addresses the issue of effectiveness and quality of NGOs' activity. The term "NGOs" (Non-governmental Organizations) includes different categories of entities that operate not to obtain financial gain, and also do not belong to the government sector. Non-governmental Organizations' fields of activity were described in the International Classification of Non-Profit Organizations (ICNPO). NGOs are an integral part of a democratic society. Sociological sciences emphasize their importance in enhancing social integration, implementation of the principle of subsidiarity, building civil society, social dialogue and participatory democracy. The main tasks of NGOs in the health system are providing services and health advocacy. Provision of services includes medical, social and psychological services as well as, integration activities, care and nursing, material and financial support, educational and information services and training. Health advocacy is a combination of individual and social actions designed to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular health goal or program. An important task carried out by NGOs is participation in the formation of health policy. The increasing role of NGOs in providing social services and the participation in political processes, result in the need to confirm the validity and credibility of their operation. One of the ways could be to introduce the mechanisms to assess quality and efficiency, such as registration as a part of a legal system, self-regulatory activities (card rules, codes of ethics), certification, participation in networks, monitoring and audit.

3. Promoting Research and Development the Government's Role

The rationale for federal support for basic research is well established, but the best policy for implementing this principle remains open to debate.

The Nobel Prize–winning economist Robert E. Lucas Jr. wrote that once one starts thinking about long-run growth and economic development, "it is hard to think about anything else." Although I don't think I would go quite that far, it is certainly true that relatively small diferences in rates of economic growth, maintained over a sustained period, can have enormous implications for material living standards. A growth rate of output per person of 2.5% per year doubles average living standards in 28 years—about one generation—whereas output per person growing at what seems a modestly slower rate of 1.5% a year leads to a doubling in average living standards in about 47 years—roughly two generations. Compound interest is powerful! Of course, factors other than aggregate economic growth contribute to changes in living standards for different segments of the population, including shifts in relative wages and in rates of labor market participation. Nonetheless, if output per person increases more rapidly, the prospects for greater and more broad-based prosperity are significantly enhanced.

Over long spans of time, economic growth and the associated improvements in living standards reflect a number of determinants, including increases in workers' skills, rates of saving and capital

accumulation, and institutional factors ranging from the flexibility of markets to the quality of the legal and regulatory frameworks. However, innovation and technological change are undoubtedly central to the growth process; over the past 200 years or so, innovation, technical advances, and investment in capital goods embodying new technologies have transformed economies around the world. In recent decades, as this audience well knows, advances in semiconductor technology have radically changed many aspects of our lives, from communication to health care. Technological developments further in the past, such as electrification or the internal combustion engine, were equally revolutionary, if not more so. In addition, recent research has highlighted the important role played by intangible capital, such as the knowledge embodied in the workforce, business plans and practices, and brand names. This research suggests that technological progress and the accumulation of intangible capital have together accounted for well over half of the increase in output per hour in the United States during the past several decades.

Innovation has not only led to new products and more-efficient production methods, but it has also induced dramatic changes in how businesses are organized and managed, highlighting the connections between new ideas and methods and the organizational structure needed to implement them. For example, in the 19th century, the development of the railroad and telegraph, along with a host of other technologies, was associated with the rise of large businesses with national reach. And as transportation and communication technologies developed further in the 20th century, multinational corporations became more feasible and prevalent. Economic policy affects innovation and long-run economic growth in many ways. A stable macroeconomic environment; sound public finances; and well-functioning financial, labor, and product markets all support innovation, entrepreneurship, and growth, as do effective tax, trade, and regulatory policies. Policies directed at objectives such as the protection of intellectual property rights and the promotion of research and development, or R&D, promote innovation and technological change more directly. Activity, the case for government support of R&D within a given country is stronger.

4. How should governments provide support?

The economic arguments for government support of innovation generally imply that governments should focus particularly on fostering basic, or foundational, research. The most applied and commercially relevant research is likely to be done in any case by the private sector, as private firms have strong incentives to determine what the market demands and to meet those needs.

If the government decides to foster R&D, what policy instruments should it use? A number of potential tools exist, including direct funding of government research facilities, grants to university or private-sector researchers, contracts for specific projects, and tax incentives. Moreover, within each of these categories, many choices must be made about how to structure specific programs. Unfortunately, economists know less about how best to channel public support for R&D than we would like; it is good news, therefore, that considerable new work is being done on this topic, including recent initiatives on science policy by the National Science Foundation.

5. Conclusion

This re-examination of the role of government in education suggests that the growth of governmental responsibility in this area has been unbalanced. Government has appropriately financed general education for citizenship, but in the process it has been led also to administer most of the schools that provide such education. Yet, as we have seen, the administration of schools is neither required by the financing of education, nor justifiable in its own right in a predominantly free enterprise society. Government has appropriately been concerned with widening the opportunity of young men and women to get professional and technical training, but it has sought to further this objective by the inappropriate means of subsidizing such education, largely in the form of making it available free or at a low price at governmentally operated schools. The lack of balance in governmental activity

reflects primarily the failure to separate sharply the question what activities it is appropriate for government to finance from the question what activities it is appropriate for government to administer — a distinction that is important in other areas of government activity as well. Because the financing of general education by government is widely accepted, the provision of general education directly by governmental bodies has also been accepted. But institutions that provide general education are especially well suited also to provide some kinds of vocational and professional education, so the acceptance of direct government provision of general education has led to the direct provision of vocational education. To complete the circle, the provision of vocational education has, in turn, meant that it too was financed by government, since financing has been predominantly of educational institutions not of particular kinds of educational services.

The alternative arrangements whose broad outlines are sketched in this paper distinguish sharply between the financing of education and the operation of educational institutions, and between education for citizenship or leadership and for greater economic productivity. Throughout, they center attention on the person rather than the institution. Government, preferably local governmental units, would give each child, through his parents, a specified sum to be used solely in paying for his general education; the parents would be free to spend this sum at a school of their own choice, provided it met certain minimum standards laid down by the appropriate governmental unit. Such schools would be conducted under a variety of auspices: by private enterprises operated for profit, nonprofit institutions established by private endowment, religious bodies, and some even by governmental units. For vocational education, the government, this time however the central government might likewise deal directly with the individual seeking such education. If it did so, it would make funds available to him to finance his education, not as a subsidy but as "equity" capital. In return, he would obligate himself to pay the state a specified fraction of his earnings above some minimum, the fraction and minimum being determined to make the program self-financing. Such a program would eliminate existing imperfections in the capital market and so widen the opportunity of individuals to make productive investments in themselves while at the same time assuring that the costs are borne by those who benefit most directly rather than by the population at large. An alternative, and a highly desirable one if it is feasible, is to stimulate private arrangements directed toward the same end. The result of these measures would be a sizable reduction in the direct activities of government, yet a great widening in the educational opportunities open to our children. They would bring a healthy increase in the variety of educational institutions available and in competition among them. Private initiative and enterprise would quicken the pace of progress in this area as it has in so many others. Government would serve its proper function of improving the operation of the invisible hand without substituting the dead hand of bureaucracy.

Refrences

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