

Abstract:

We examine the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on labor market activities among females during initial stage of the pandemic in South Korea. We exploit the fact that the first wave of the outbreak in South Korea was concentrated in a specific region to identify the casual effect of pandemic. We further explore whether the impact of COVID-19 outbreak on female labor supply differs across women who do and do not have young children. Applying a difference-in-differences framework on the Local Area Labour Force Survey, we find that the negative impact of the COVID-19 was larger for women with young children than for women without young children. The employment rate decreased by 6.9 percentage points among women with young children while the decrease in the employment rate among women without young children was three percentage points. Women with young children also reduced weekly working hours more than their counterparts without young children. Unlike that among females, the impacts of COVID-19 on the labor supply among males with young children and without young children were not different. The results suggest that women took a larger share of the increased childcare responsibility during the COVID 19 outbreak.