Making Policy with Data
An Introductory Course on Policy Evaluation

Policy Briefing

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Child Soldiers in Uganda

Background

- In 1986, southern rebels in Uganda overthrew a government and army dominated by a northern ethnic group, the Acholi.

- A handful of Acholi fighters refused to settle, however, and gathered under a spiritual leader named Joseph Kony to form the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

- The LRA received little public support to continue to fight. With few recruits and no material resources, the LRA immediately took to looting homes and abducting youth to maintain supplies and force.

Research Question: what is the impact of abduction by the rebel group Lord's Resistance Army on education of ex-combatants in Uganda?

Project Site — Blattman and Annan (2009)
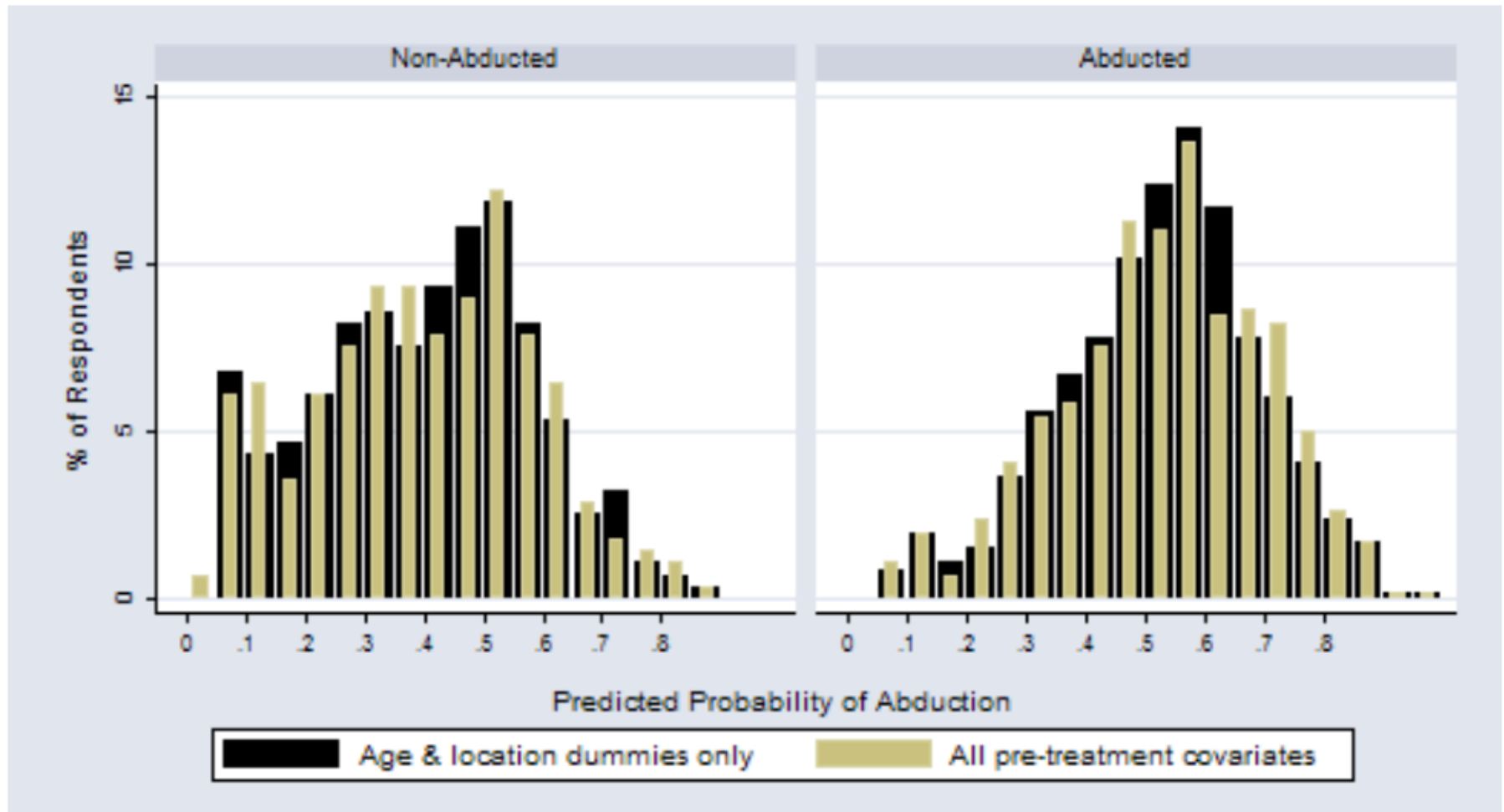
Identification Strategy: SOO

According to the logic by which abduction occurred, we will assume that abduction is indiscriminate, conditional on age and location.

Abduction was large-scale and seemingly indiscriminate; 60,000 to 80,000 youth are estimated to have been abducted and more than a quarter of males currently aged 14 to 30 in our study region were abducted for at least two weeks...

Youth were typically taken by roving groups of 10 to 20 rebels during night raids on rural homes. Adolescent males appear to have been the most pliable, reliable and effective forced recruits, and so were disproportionately targeted by the LRA. Youth under age 11 and over 24 tended to be avoided and had a high probability of immediate release.

Identification Strategy: SOO

According to the logic by which abduction occurred, we will assume that abduction is indiscriminate, conditional on age and location.

Matching

	mean.Tr	mean.Co	sdiff	sdiff.pooled	var.ratio	T pval	KS pval
C.ach	0.15	0.11	10.80	11.44	1.28	0.13	
C.akw	0.16	0.08	21.68	24.65	1.83	0.00	
C.ata	0.10	0.20	-32.55	-27.67	0.57	0.00	
C.kma	0.15	0.12	9.26	9.73	1.23	0.19	
C.oro	0.05	0.14	-37.92	-29.12	0.42	0.00	
C.pad	0.12	0.12	-0.20	-0.20	0.99	0.98	
C.paj	0.15	0.10	13.25	14.27	1.38	0.06	
C.pal	0.11	0.13	-5.21	-5.05	0.89	0.51	
age	21.37	20.15	24.24	24.49	1.04	0.00	0.00
fthr.ed	5.76	6.07	-8.59	-8.46	0.94	0.27	0.83
mthr.ed	2.09	2.49	-14.49	-13.31	0.73	0.09	0.33
orphan96	0.08	0.08	0.99	1.00	1.03	0.90	
fthr.frm	0.90	0.91	-3.83	-3.94	1.12	0.60	
hh.size96	8.09	8.70	-15.50	-14.62	0.80	0.06	0.04
educ	6.82	7.42	-21.34	-20.51	0.86	0.01	0.07

Table 1: Covariate Balance in Unmatched Data

Matching

Table 3: Covariate Balance in Exactly Matched Data

|	mean.Tr	mean.Co	sdiff	sdiff.pooled	var.ratio	T pval	KS pval
C.ach	0.17	0.17	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
C.akw	0.13	0.13	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
C.ata	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
C.kma	0.14	0.14	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
C.oro	0.06	0.06	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
C.pad	0.13	0.13	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
C.paj	0.16	0.16	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
C.pal	0.11	0.11	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	
age	20.82	20.82	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
fthr.ed	5.61	6.18	-16.37	-16.37	0.89	0.03	0.36
mthr.ed	2.15	2.52	-13.26	-13.26	0.74	0.09	0.38
orphan96	0.08	0.07	2.55	2.55	1.09	0.72	
fthr.frm	0.91	0.88	10.82	10.82	0.77	0.16	
hh.size96	8.06	8.88	-22.27	-22.27	0.68	0.01	0.00
educ	6.79	7.65	-32.12	-32.12	0.88	0.00	0.00

Effect on Education
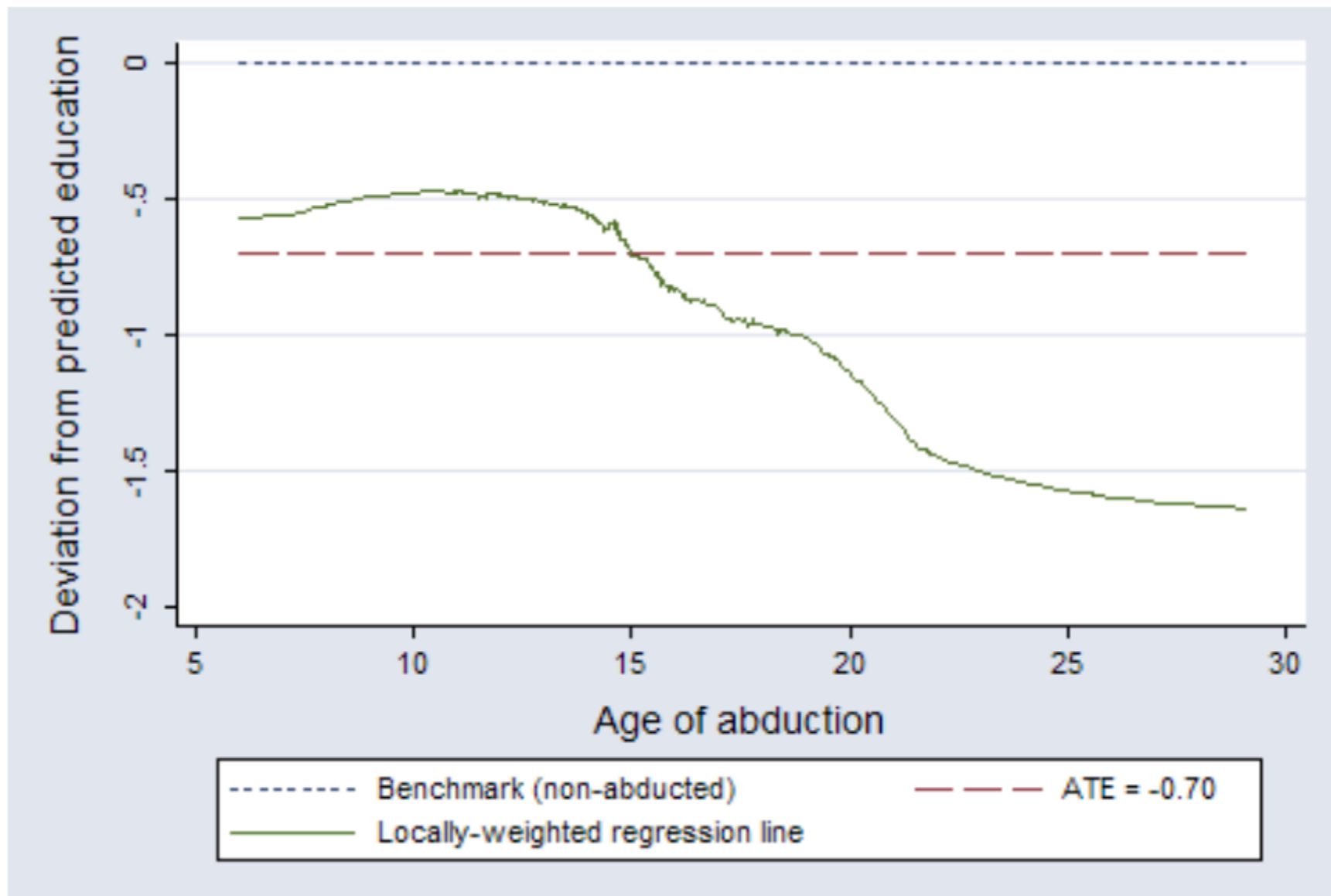
Effect on Wage
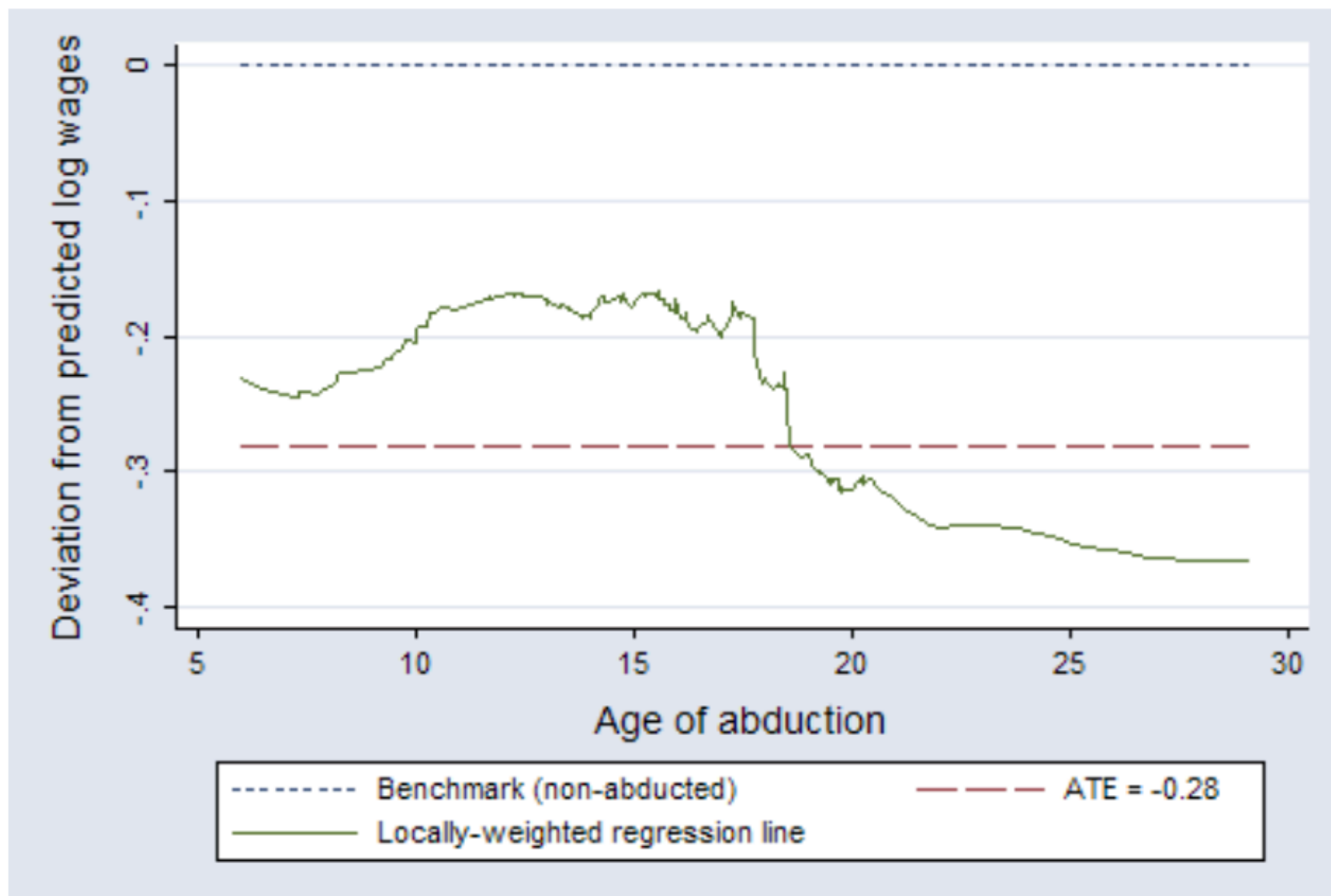
Effect on Distress
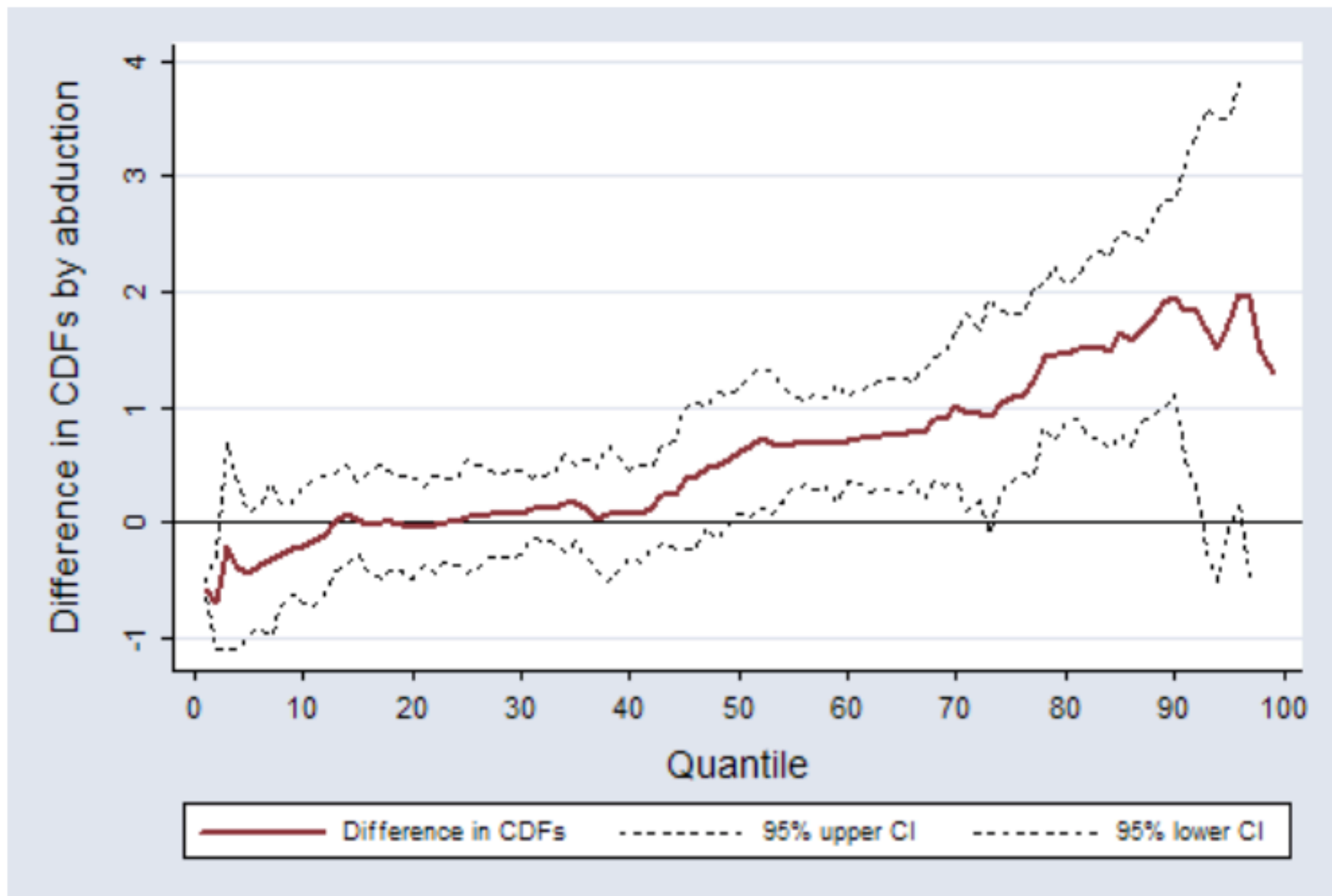
Causal Effects

Dependent variable	WLS estimate of ATE†	Matching estimate of ATE‡
Educational and labor market outcomes		
Educational attainment (in years)	-0.70 [0.13]***	-0.67 [0.19]***
Indicator for functional literacy	-0.15 [0.04]***	-0.17 [0.04]***
Indicator for any work in past month	0.00 [0.03]	-0.02 [0.04]
Indicator for capital- or skill-intensive work	-0.05 [0.01]***	-0.05 [0.02]**
Log (Daily wage)	-0.20 [0.14]	-0.28 [0.12]**
Psychosocial and political outcomes		
Indicator for physical fights	-0.01 [0.02]	0.00 [0.02]
Indicator for hostility	0.03 [0.01]***	0.03 [0.02]*
Index of social support	-0.23 [0.12]*	-0.25 [0.21]
Index of psychological distress	0.56 [0.22]**	0.58 [0.20]***