



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Do U.S. State's Socioeconomic and Policy Contexts Shape Differences in Adult Disability?
By Jennifer Montez, et al. Population Research Center, University of Texas at Austin. Mar. 2017.
3 p.

<http://www.prc.utexas.edu/upload-files/prc-research-brief-2-3-montez-et-al-adult-disability.pdf>

"Disparities in adult disability across U.S. states are substantial. In many states as much as 20-30% of working-age adults report a disability. A substantial fraction of disparities in disability across states arises from 'extra-individual' factors (e.g., economic or social policies) at the state level.... Living in a state with strong economic output and a population that shares more equally in those fortunes are associated with

substantially lower disability rates.... States' investments in their populations through policies and strategies that encourage economic growth and reduce income inequality may lower the prevalence of disability in those states."

ECONOMY

***The Affordable Housing Crisis in Los Angeles: An Employer Perspective.* By Raphael Bostic. California Economy. May 3, 2017. 52 p.**

<http://caeconomy.org/reporting/entry/survey-shows-price-of-costly-housing-in-los-angeles-to-employer-employee-re>

"The survey results showed that nearly three-quarters of the responding employers acknowledged that the high cost of living is a challenge in retaining employees. And nearly two-thirds indicated that the high housing costs is taken into consideration when setting salaries. But often the salaries are not high enough to live near the workplace, which places additional burdens on the employees.... Supporting the production of workforce housing has proven to be an effective strategy, though few employers will be able to pursue this strategy."

EDUCATION

***Transitional Kindergarten in California: The Impact of Transitional Kindergarten on English Learner Students.* American Institutes for Research, May 2017. 12 p.**

<http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Transitional-Kindergarten-Impact-on-English-Learners-May-2017.pdf>

"This brief describes the impact of transitional kindergarten (TK) on English learner (EL) students in California. Key findings include: 1) TK improves mathematics knowledge and problem-solving skills for EL students, giving them almost a six-month advantage in problem-solving skills over EL students who did not attend TK. 2) TK also improves literacy skills for EL students, putting them ahead of their peers who did not attend TK by more than seven months at kindergarten entry. 3) Participating in TK gives EL students a substantial boost in their English language development, including in speaking skills, listening skills, and overall language proficiency. This benefit holds true for EL students from all language groups."

EMPLOYMENT

"Gendered Perceptions of Cultural and Skill Alignment in Technology Companies." By Alison T. Wynn, et al. *Social Sciences*, vol. 6 no. 2. (May 3, 2017) 28 p.

<http://www.mdpi.com/2076-0760/6/2/45>

This report asks "whether (and how) stereotypes continue to affect men and women once they enter the technology workforce. Using a novel survey of technical employees from seven Silicon Valley firms..., we show that men are more likely than women to believe they possess the stereotypical traits and skills of a successful tech employee. We find that ... women are less likely than men to believe they match the cultural image of successful tech workers, they are less likely to identify with the tech profession, less likely to report positive supervisor treatment, and more likely to consider switching career fields.... Our results imply that if we can broaden the cultural image of a successful tech worker, women may be more likely to feel like they belong in technology environments, ultimately increasing their retention in tech jobs."

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Consumer and Retail Choice, the Role of the Utility, and an Evolving Regulatory Framework: Staff White Paper. California Public Utilities Commission. May 2017. 14 p.

http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/uploadedFiles/CPUC_Public_Website/Content/News_Room/News_and_Updates/Retail%20Choice%20White%20Paper%205%208%2017.pdf

“California’s electric sector is undergoing unprecedented change, brought about by a sequence of innovation in technology as well as many incremental policy actions taken in several different decision-making arenas.... [T]he consequences of fast-scaling competition is that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and California Energy Commission (CEC) must now look at long held assumptions in their regulatory frameworks and examine the role of the electric utility at the center of this system, tasked with the primary responsibility for providing power and other services to all consumers within a geographic service area.” This paper is intended to “frame a discussion on the trends that are driving change within California’s electricity sector and overall clean-energy economy.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Who Runs for Mayor? Melissa Marschall, et al. Center for Local Elections in American Politics. May 2017. 16 p.

http://kinder.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/Kinder_Institute_for_Urban_Research/Programs/LEAP/Who%20Runs%20for%20Mayor%20FINAL.pdf

State-Level Elections Database: <http://www.leap-elections.org/Poll>

A review of roughly 8,000 mayoral races nationally reveals that between 2000 and 2016, over half of the mayoral races had only one candidate on the ballot, and 3% had no one officially running. In general, mayoral races were found to be non-competitive. “As a general rule, the smaller the town, the shorter the ballot. More populated cities were more likely to have multiple candidates running, with smaller, rural cities less likely to field even as many as two candidates.” Indiana was found to have the most competitive races, followed by California. ([CNN](#), May 25, 2017).

HEALTH

“Inequalities in Life Expectancy Among U.S. Counties, 1980 to 2014: Temporal Trends and Key Drivers.” By Laura Dwyer-Lindgren, et al. *JAMA Internal Medicine*. Online ahead of print. May 8, 2017. 9 p.

<http://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/2626194>

This report explores factors that produce a variation in life expectancy across the nation. “People are less likely to live longer if they are poor, get little exercise and lack access to health care, the researchers found. [Co-author Ali] Mokdad said the quality and availability of that health care—for example, access to screening for signs of cancer—has a significant effect on health outcomes. The United States, he said, needs to rethink how it delivers medical care, with a much greater investment in prevention, and a more holistic approach to creating healthy communities.... The new research echoes other findings in recent years that show that the United States is failing to keep up with improvements in longevity seen in other affluent nations.” ([Washington Post](#), May 8, 2017).

HUMAN SERVICES

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit: The Role of Syndicators. U.S. Government Accountability Office. Feb. 16, 2017. 25 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/690/682890.pdf>

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), the largest source of federal assistance for developing affordable rental housing, encourages “private-equity investment in low-income housing through tax credits. Developers of awarded projects typically attempt to obtain funding for their projects by attracting third-party investors willing to invest in the project (provide up-front cash) in exchange for the ability to claim tax credits. The developer sells an ownership interest in the project to one or more investors, or in many instances, to a syndicator acting as an intermediary between the developer and investors.” This report describes the characteristics of active syndicators and the role syndicators play in the LIHTC market.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online. By Alice Marwick, et al. Data & Society. May 15, 2017. 106 p.

<https://datasociety.net/output/media-manipulation-and-disinfo-online/>

“Internet subcultures take advantage of the current media ecosystem to manipulate news frames, set agendas, and propagate ideas. Far-right groups have developed techniques of ‘attention hacking’ to increase the visibility of their ideas through the strategic use of social media, memes, and bots—as well as by targeting journalists, bloggers, and influencers to help spread content. The media’s dependence on social media, analytics and metrics, sensationalism, novelty over newsworthiness, and clickbait makes them vulnerable to such media manipulation.... Media manipulation may contribute to decreased trust of mainstream media, increased misinformation, and further radicalization.”

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