



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI CAGLIARI

Economics Seminars

Friday 13 March 2026 at 12:00

Aula Magna Edificio Baffi

Facoltà di Scienze Economiche Giuridiche e Politiche - Viale Sant'Ignazio 74

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A Library in the Palm of Your Hand? A Randomized Field Experiment with Low-Income Children (with S. Anger, B. Christoph, A. Galkiewicz, S. Margaryan, F. Peter, M. Sandner)

Abstract. Reading comprehension is critical for academic success, yet children from disadvantaged backgrounds often engage in reading less frequently than their more advantaged peers. This study evaluates the impact of a randomized reading intervention targeting 11–12-year-olds from low-income households in Germany. Children received e-book readers with access to a large digital library of age-appropriate books. Results show a significant increase in reading engagement, leading to improvements in academic performance. Twelve months after the intervention, performance improved by 10.3% of a standard deviation, with effects persisting at 9.6% after 30 months. Additionally, the intervention positively impacted the socioemotional well-being of the children.