



COVID-19 and the economic importance of in-person K-12 schooling

Simard-Duplain, Gaëlle and Siu, Henry E "COVID-19 and the economic importance of in-person K-12 schooling"
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What the researchers did

The authors assess the economic importance of K-12 schooling in Canada using two measures: the size of the sector and how central the sector is to the economy. They extend these measures by modelling a "new" sector – workers needing childcare in order to be available to work – which is not accounted for by conventional methods.

What the researchers found

In Canada, those needing childcare in order to be available to work contribute approximately 8.9% of GDP. Accounting for the role of in-person schooling in availing the economy of this labour, the researchers show that K-12 education represents the second largest sector in the economy, accounting for 11.5% of GDP. The extended modelling also places K-12 schooling as the most central sector in the economy.

RDC Datasets used

Canada's Census of Population, 2016
Canadian Symmetric Input-Output Tables, 2015

Policy areas this research can inform

- Children and youth
- Education, training and learning
- Families, households and marital status
- Income, pensions, spending and wealth
- Labour

Policy implications of this research

In-person K-12 schooling plays an important role in the economy because it allows parents to work and contribute to other sectors in the economy. The authors' extended modelling shows that the importance of K-12 schooling is not captured by conventional measures. These findings are important to inform decisions related to in-person school openings and closures affected by COVID-19. The results can also inform decisions regarding COVID-19 vaccine priorities and where to place school teachers on the priority list.

Read the full article

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