



Provincial governments can reduce food insecurity through social policies that improve household incomes

Li, Tim & Men, Fei "Provincial governments can reduce food insecurity through social policies that improve household incomes"
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What the researcher(s) did

The researchers examined the relationship between provincial policies (minimum wage, income tax rate for the lowest income bracket, welfare income amounts, etc.) and economic environments (unemployment rate, inflation, etc.), and household food insecurity among households with children from 2005 to 2018.

What the researcher(s) found

The odds of experiencing food insecurity declined when minimum wage increased, when welfare income increased, or when the income tax rate for the lowest income bracket decreased. The labour market conditions were also important for food insecurity, with increases in the unemployment rate associated with increased odds of food insecurity.

RDC Datasets used

Canadian Community Health Survey
(CCHS) 2005-2018

Policy areas this research can inform

- Children and youth
- Government
- Health
- Income, pensions, spending and wealth
- Labour

Policy implications of this research

These findings highlight the important role that provincial governments play in determining household food insecurity in their jurisdictions. The policies that shape household food insecurity are those that impact households' financial circumstances like changes in minimum wage, welfare income, and income tax rates. Reducing household food insecurity should be a priority for provincial governments since there has been plenty of research showing that food insecurity puts a substantial burden on health care utilization and spending. The findings of this study highlight that the provinces can do so through policies that raise the incomes of families with children.

Read the full article

Men, F., Urquia, M. L., & Tarasuk, V. (2021). The role of provincial social policies and economic environments in shaping food insecurity among Canadian families with children. *Preventive Medicine*, 148, 106558. doi:10.1016/j.ypmed.2021.106558.

