

Education in Brazil

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INTRODUCTION

Why Education?

-No country can achieve sustainable economic development without substantial investment in human capital.

-Education raises people's productivity and creativity and promotes entrepreneurship and technological advances (e.g. Nubank, Cubo Itau).

-Plays a very crucial role in securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution.

-Relatively small improvements in the skills of a nation's labor force can have very large impacts on future economic well-being according to data collected by the OECD.

General Information on Brazilian Education System

- **Pre-school education (Educação Infantil)** is entirely optional. Nursing school is for children up to 3 years old and kindergarten for children from 4 to 6 years old.
- **Primary and lower secondary education (Ensino Fundamental)** or Fundamental Education is free and compulsory for children between the ages of 6-14.
- **Upper secondary education (Ensino Médio)** is ages 15 to 18. It is also free but not compulsory.
- **Higher education (Ensino Superior)** is provided at public or private universities. Higher education is free at public universities.



PUC-SP: Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo

Student Learning

What factors affect student learning gains?

—Infrastructure

In international studies, based on schools that are more homogeneous in terms of infrastructure, a low influence of school infrastructure on student performance is observed. In Brazil, by contrast, there is great variation between schools (Soares Neto et al., 2013). The difference in infrastructure among schools having the same socio-economic background can generate even more unequal learning among students (Soares et al., 2015).

—Academic environment of schools (measured by the proportion of students doing homework.)

It was found that doing homework, both because of its correlation with school effects and its impact on improving the chances of a student changing to higher levels of proficiency, is key to learning regardless of the factor of the socio-economic level of the families (Soares et al., 2015).

Economic Significance

- A study examined education's contribution to Brazil's economic growth and found that average education of the labor force has a large, positive and statistically significant effect on output (Lau et al).
- One additional year of average education per person of the labor force increases real output by approximately 20 percent (Lau et al).
- High dropout rates appear to stem from extreme poverty
- Quality education has the potential to bring about significant growth and poverty reduction

Wage Inequality

- According to one study, education can explain up to 50% of the wage inequality in Brazil .
- And the relationship between education and wage indicates how inequality in education can be transferred into inequality in wage.
- It is found that the wage gains from college education are significantly greater than wage gains from primary education.
- In addition, they found that wage gains from primary education are steadily decreasing over time while wage gains from college education are steadily increasing over time
- Educational assortative mating and economic inequality are likely to be endogenously determined (Torche, 2010)

Bolsa Familia

Bolsa Familia is a conditional cash transfer program (CCT) focused on health and education that has been implemented by the federal government of Brazil since 2003. The program attempts to both reduce short-term poverty by direct cash transfers and fight long-term poverty by increasing human capital among the poor through conditional cash transfers. It also works to give free education to children who cannot afford to go to school to show the importance of education.

Eligibility Criteria

- Families with monthly per capita income between R\$ 60,01 and R\$ 120,00, with children among 0 and 17 years old
- Families with monthly per capita income of up to R\$ 60,00, regardless of the family composition.

Conditionalities

- Education: school enrolment and minimum attendance of 85% for children and adolescents aged 6-15 years old and 75% for adolescents aged 16 and 17 years old
- Health: fulfillment of the vaccination calendar and the growth and development for children under 7 years old; prenatal care for pregnant women and monitoring of the lactating women

Effects

- Increased enrollment by about 5.5% (6.5%) in grades 1-4 (grades 5-8)
- Lowered dropout rates by 0.5 (0.4) percentage points in grades 1-4 (grades 5-8)
- Raised grade promotion rates by 0.9 (0.3) percentage points in grades 1-4 (grades 5-8).
- **Crime:** A robust and significant negative impact of *Bolsa Familia* on crime.



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CONCLUSIONS

Student learning

Academic Environment

-How might we improve learner preparation and produce motivated learners to foster a more positive academic environment?

- Provide early child nutrition, care, stimulation, and learning opportunities.
- Ensure that, where needed, remediation is the first step in further education and training

Infrastructure

- Invest in infrastructure to generate more homogeneous learning outcomes

Economic Significance

- Quality education has the potential to bring about significant growth and poverty reduction

Bolsa Familia

- Has had significant success in reducing both dropout and crime since it's implementation in 2003

References

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