



**D<sup>3</sup> Consultants**  
DEDICATION.DEVOTION.DEPENDABILITY.

# Education Plus | D<sup>3</sup> Monthly Newsletter

May 2020, 12<sup>th</sup> Issue

+973 1755 1662    info@D3consultants.net    d3consultants.net

## SCHOOLS, SKILLS AND LEARNING: The impact of COVID-19 on education

The global lockdown of education institutions is going to cause major (and likely unequal) interruption in students' learning; disruptions in internal assessments; and the cancellation of public assessments for qualifications or their replacement by an inferior alternative.

This newsletter discusses what can be done to mitigate these negative impacts.

### IMPACT ON SCHOOLS

Going to school is the best policy tool available to raise skills. While school time can be fun and can raise social skills and social awareness, from an economic point of view the primary point of being in school is that it increases a child's ability. Even a relatively short time in school does this; even a relatively short period of missed school will have consequences for skill growth.

But can we estimate how much the COVID-19 interruption will affect learning? Not very precisely, as we are in a new world; but we can use other studies to get an order of magnitude.



### IMPACT ON FAMILIES

Families are central to education and are widely agreed to provide major inputs into a child's learning.

The current global-scale expansion in home schooling might at first thought be seen quite positively, as likely to be effective. But typically, this role is seen as a complement to the input from school. So, while global home schooling will surely produce some fun moments and some frustrated moments, it seems very unlikely that it will on average replace the learning lost from school. But the bigger point is this: there will likely be substantial disparities between families in the extent to which they can help their children learn. Key differences include the amount of time available to devote to teaching, the non-cognitive skills of the parents, resources, and the amount of knowledge.

Consequently, this episode will lead to an increase in the inequality of human capital growth for the affected cohorts.



## ASSESSMENTS

The closure of schools, colleges and universities not only interrupts the teaching for students around the world; the closure also coincides with a key assessment period and many exams have been postponed or cancelled.

Internal assessments are perhaps thought to be less important and many have been simply cancelled. But their point is to give information about the child's progress for families and teachers.

The loss of this information delays the recognition of both high potential and learning difficulties and can have harmful long-term consequences for the child. These effects are largest for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.



## GRADUATES

The closure of schools, colleges and universities not only interrupts the teaching for students around the world; The careers of this year's university graduates may be severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

They have experienced major teaching interruptions in the final part of their studies, they are experiencing major interruptions in their assessments, and finally they are likely to graduate at the beginning of a major global recession.

Evidence suggests that poor market conditions at labor market entry cause workers to accept lower paid jobs, and that this has permanent effects for the careers of some.



## SOLUTIONS?

The global lockdown of education institutions is going to cause major (and likely unequal) interruption in students' learning; disruptions in internal assessments; and the cancellation of public assessments for qualifications or their replacement by an inferior alternative.

What can be done to mitigate these negative impacts? Schools need resources to rebuild the loss in learning, once they open again. How these resources are used, and how to target the children who were hard hit, is an open question. Given the evidence of the importance of assessments for learning, schools should also consider postponing rather than skipping internal assessments.

For new graduates, policies should support their entry to the labor market to avoid longer unemployment periods.

