

The value of unpaid childcare and paid employment by gender: What are the impacts of the low-fee universal child care program? ^[1]

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Abstract

This paper presents an estimate of unpaid childcare, other unpaid household activities and paid employment over time in the Canadian provinces for the period from 1998 to 2015. The estimates are then used to assess the effects of the low-cost childcare launched in Quebec in 1997 on paid employment. They are also used to examine the contribution of unpaid childcare and other unpaid household activities to well-being and welfare in Canada. As in previous studies, the paper finds that low-fee childcare in Quebec is associated with an increase in the employment rate of women and an increase in the use of paid childcare in Quebec. In addition, new results show there is little difference in the impact of low-cost childcare on the employment rate and the hours worked of mothers between immigrants and native-born Canadians, and between low-income and high-income households. These findings suggest that these groups faced similar barriers to access. In addition, the study shows that the introduction of low-cost childcare in Quebec does not appear to have had an effect on the use of unpaid childcare. The hours spent on unpaid childcare increased in Quebec and the other provinces for the period from 1998 to 2015, and the increase was similar in Quebec and the other provinces. The paper also finds that women accounted for about 60% of hours spent on unpaid childcare and other household activities in 2015, while men accounted for 40% of hours spent on these activities. However, the share of women in unpaid childcare and other unpaid household activities declined over time, and this is related to the increase in female labour force participation over that period. The value of unpaid childcare and the value of other unpaid household production were each estimated to be about 15% of the gross domestic product in Canada for 2015 and changed little over the period from 1998 to 2015.

Region: Canada ^[4]

Tags: child care ^[5]

unpaid care work ^[6]

women's labour force participation ^[7]

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