
NEWSLETTER

Will Internet Use Increase Farmers' Household Investment in Education? Micro Evidence from CHFS2019

By Cui, B. Y. & Cheng, Y. Q.

Correspondence to: Baoyu Cui, School of Economics, Anhui University, China.

E-mail: cbv00662003@aliyun.com

PUBLISHED in *Agricultural Technology Economics*, this study examines the impact of Internet use on rural households' investment in child education and its mechanism, using data from China Household Finance Survey data 2019 (CHFS2019). The results of the study are as follows:

- The benchmark regression reveals that the positive effect of Internet use on rural education outweighs the negative impact, and that the Internet use can significantly increase the farmers' investment in child education.
- The heterogeneity effect analysis indicates that for the Internet use plays a greater positive role in boosting farmers' educational investment among households with lower educational levels, lower income levels and lower educational investment levels. The Internet use increases the opportunities for academic success of rural children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The mediation effect test demonstrates that farmers' social capital and risk taking mediates the relationship between the Internet use and their investment in child education. The moderator effect test shows that a decline in public education satisfaction plays a positive moderating role in increasing farmers' investment in child education through the Internet use.

Based on the above findings, this study puts forward the following recommendations: (1) Increase the awareness of Internet use among farmers and their children; (2) Accelerate the integration of Internet and education through distance education and online tutoring; (3) Push the construction of information infrastructure in central and western China and in other backward rural areas, help disadvantaged farmers to improve their Internet literacy, and bridge the "digital divide"; (4) Educate farmers on the importance of the Internet use in child education and enhance their willingness of investment in education (5) Vigorously promote balanced distribution of educa-

tional resources in urban and rural areas and improve the farmers' satisfaction with public education.

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