

Should We Chase for a Higher Education Degree Nowadays?

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1 A tentative topic of my presentation

Should We Chase for a Higher Education Degree Nowadays? An Analysis of Costs, Gains, and Degree Inflation.

2 Data Science Questions and Potential Metrics

1. What are the costs of obtaining higher education degrees?
 - Total Cost of Attendance for Different Degrees
 - Opportunity Cost
 - Average Total Loan Payments for Different Degrees(debt and interest)
 - Income Volatility
 - Risk of Unemployment
 - Debt-to-Income Ratio
2. What are the gains from obtaining a higher education degree?
 - Return on Investment
 - Averaging year of paying off student loans

- Net Income differential percentage
- Changes in Educational Requirements Over Time
- Ratio of Degree Holders to Job Openings
- Earnings Premium Over Time

3 Why the questions are important?

1. Economic and Social Relevance: In a rapidly changing job market, understanding the economic value of higher education is crucial for individuals making educational and career decisions.
2. Addressing Degree Inflation: With the rising phenomenon of degree inflation, it's vital to assess how the shifting requirements impact the long-term value of higher education. So we can have a deeper insight into educational and career plans.

4 Difficulties in answering the questions

1. Data Collection and Consistency: It is challenging to gather comprehensive and comparable data on tuition, income, and employment across different degrees and regions.
2. Quantifying Non-Financial Benefits: While the focus is on quantitative financial metrics, higher education also offers non-financial benefits (e.g., personal development, networking) that are difficult to measure but important to acknowledge.
3. Analyzing Degree Inflation: Quantifying degree inflation and its impact requires longitudinal data on job requirements, which may not be systematically available or comparable across industries and time periods.

5 Existing Works

1. "The Economic Value of College Majors" by Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce: This study provides an in-depth analysis of the earnings potential associated with different college

majors and degrees, offering insights into the financial returns of higher education investments.

2. "Education Pays" reports by the College Board: These reports offer comprehensive data on the benefits of higher education, including earnings differentials, employment rates, and other non-monetary benefits associated with higher education levels.
3. "Is College Worth It?" by Pew Research Center: This research explores public perceptions of the value of higher education in the U.S., alongside an analysis of earnings and employment data to assess the financial return of college degrees.

6 Datasets

References