# Journées économiques des Outre-Mer - 2022



# Academic achievement among the youth in New Caledonia: Do peers matter?

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# Three originalities:

- Small island characterized by multi-ethnicity and pronounced socio-economic residential segregation between Kanak and non-Kanak inhabitants.
- Exhaustive administrative data on students' characteristics, classroom and school characteristics.
- GS2SLS procedure (Kelejian and Prucha, 1998, 1999) to identify peer effects and distinguish between *endogenous*, *exogenous* and *correlated* effects (Manski, 1993).

#### Data:

- Exhaustive data set of students enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade in New Caledonia in 2018
  - ➤ 4 198 students in a public or private school.
- **For each student**, we are able to determine :
  - His classroom.
  - His middle school (French "college").
  - Information on socio-demographic characteristics: place of birth, age, gender, occupational status of the household head etc.

#### **Estimation strategy:**

# We estimate the following model:

# $y_r = \alpha_r + \gamma x_r + \beta W y_r + \delta W x_r + \varepsilon_r$

- Where each element  $w_{ij}$  of matrix W is defined as follows:  $w_{ij} = \begin{cases} 1 \text{ if student } j \text{ belongs to the classrom of student } i \\ 0 \text{ otherwise} \end{cases}$
- ➤ To eliminate *correlated effects*, we pre-multiply Equation (1) by (/-W) and we estimate it by using a GS2SLS procedure proposed by Kelejian and Prucha (1998, 1999, 2010).

## **Results by Province:**

	School achievement			
	North	South	Loyalty Islands	
Wy	0.618	0.541***	-0.205	
	Vocational training			
	North	South	Loyalty Islands	
Wy	0.735***	0.785***	0.804***	
Observations	736	2,953	387	



### Manski's typology (1993, 2000):

- ➤ Endogenous effects: when a student's behavior is influenced by the behavior of his bets, resulting from interactions between peers.
- Exogenous effects: when a student's behavior is influenced by the characteristics of his peers, such as social or ethnic origin.
- ➤ Correlated effects: variables that affect both group and student's behaviors at the same time.

#### Variables:

#### **Dependent variables:**

- Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the student has obtained the GCSE with the highest honors (average score above 16/20).
- 2. Dichotomous variable indicating whether he makes the choice of a professional training for the next year

#### **Independent variables:**

- Individual socio-economic characteristics: Gender; age; country of birth; occupational status of the household head.
- Class level: % of "highest honors" successes in the GCSE; % of students born elsewhere (Metropolitan France, Wallis and Futuna, Vanuatu, French Polynesia etc.)
- School level: Private vs public.

# Results on the whole population:

Variables	School achievement		Vocational training	
	X	Wx	X	Wx
Constant	1.271***		-1.559***	
Boy	-0.0792***		0.0776***	
Age (in years)	-0.0705***		0.102***	
Country of birth (ref. France)				
New Caledonia	-0.134***		0.0622***	
Wallis and Futuna	-0.207***		0.0019	
Vanuatu	-0.204**		-0.0073	
Polynesia	-0.150**		0.0637	
Other	-0.116***		0.0777**	
Household head occup. status				
(Ref. Int. Prof.)				
Farmer	-0.0538	0.0436	0.0376	0.0590
Artisan, Business owner	-0.0287	0.0621	-0.0157	0.0152
Executive	0.0665***	0.135	-0.0269	0.0605
Employee	-0.0675***	0.0420	0.0129	0.0409
Blue-collar	-0.112***	0.0082	0.0575***	-0.0006
Retired	-0.0688**	-0.0545	0.0046	0.0076
Inactive	-0.0925***	0.0014	0.0912***	-0.0477
Undetermined	-0.0830***	-0.114	0.0831***	-0.0405
School fixed effects	Yes		Yes	
Wy	0.304		0.748***	
Observations	4,076		4 07	76

Source: Vice-Rectorate of New Caledonia (2018).

*Notes:* In this table, only the results for model 4 are shown. \* p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001.