

Title: Job search behaviour in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract:

This study examines the effect of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on U.S. job search activity by developing sectoral and state-level job search indices. We document that Covid-19 has a significantly negative effect on job search, and that this effect varies across sectors and regions, being stronger in the other services, the leisure and hospitality sector, the trade, transportation, and utilities sector, the manufacturing sector, and in the West and Midwest regions. We also explore policy effects and observe that they helped reduce the negative effect of COVID-19 on job searches. Our results also indicate that the lower job search activity is more a national, rather than region-specific, phenomenon. Overall, our study suggests that COVID-19 does influence job search activities.

Data description:

Data on Covid-19 cases: We use U.S. overall COVID-19 cases and state-level COVID-19 cases from the COVID-19 Tracking Project website.

Data on daily job search: We Construct a set of new job search indices for US sectors and states based on Google search volumes.

JEL codes: E24; I10; J64

Keywords: COVID-19; Job search; Stay-at-home order; Pandemic; Google Trends