Does Cash for School Influence Young Women's Behavior in the Longer Term? Evidence from Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Andaleeb Alam, Javier Baez, Ximena Del Carpio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jbaez@worldbank.org">jbaez@worldbank.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing Theme</td>
<td>Education and Skills, Voice and Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>The project is ongoing but the analysis is complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention Category</td>
<td>Cash Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Social Protection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abstract**

The Punjab Female School Stipend Program, a female-targeted conditional cash transfer program in Pakistan, was implemented in response to gender gaps in education. An early evaluation of the program shows that the enrollment of eligible girls in middle school increased in the short term by nearly 9 percentage points. This paper uses regression discontinuity and difference-in-difference analyses to show that five years into the program implementation positive impacts do persist. Beneficiary adolescent girls are more likely to progress through and complete middle school and work less. There is suggestive evidence that participating girls delay their marriage and have fewer births by the time they are 19 years old. Girls who are exposed to the program later, and who are eligible for the benefits given in high school, increase their rates of matriculating into and completing high school. The persistence of impacts can potentially translate into gains in future productivity, consumption, inter-generational human capital accumulation and desired fertility. Lastly, there is no evidence that the program has negative spillover effects on educational outcomes of male siblings.

**Gender Connection**

Gender Focused Intervention

**Gender Outcomes**

Girls school attainment, labor force participation, child labor, decision making over family formation

**IE Design**

Regression Discontinuity

**Intervention**

The program is a conditional cash transfer program that targets female students in Punjab. Girls receive a stipend of approximately $3.5 per month if they are enrolled in grades 6-8 of government schools and have at least 80% attendance.

**Intervention Period**

2004-Present; program benefits are distributed quarterly

**Sample population**

The paper uses the school census which covers all public schools in Punjab. The study also uses a number of household surveys. Please see the paper for specific samples from each paper. The most relevant survey includes 30932 households in 2003 and 91280 in 2007/2008. The focus of the study is girls aged 12-19.

**Comparison conditions**

The program is targeted to districts with a literacy rate below a given cutoff of 40%. The study compares individuals from districts who are barely eligible to individuals from districts who are just ineligible.
### Unit of analysis
School and household level

### Evaluation Period
2003-2009; data come from an annual education census

### Results
After four years of implementation, girls are 3-6 p.p. more likely to complete middle school, girls have greater likelihood of transitioning to high school and completing at least one high school grade. There is a reduction in labor force participation for treated girls. Younger girls also work less than non-participants. Also, participant girls tend to delay their marriages and have fewer children. The program does not seem to have any spillover effects on boys in treatment communities.

The program was not rolled out randomly, therefore Instrumental Variables were used to as a correction. Length of exposure to the program is measured through a proxy, which likely is measured with error. Also, there may be compositional changes in the sample that could bias the results. The program may attract immigrants from control regions or students from private schools leading to contamination of the results.

### Primary study limitations

### Funding Source
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

### Reference(s)

### Link to Studies
[https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/3432](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/3432)

### Microdata