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No. 164, 2002

Lloyd, Cynthia B., Cem Mete, and Zeba A. Sathar. "The effect of gender differences in primary school access, type, and quality on the decision to enroll in rural Pakistan," *Policy Research Division Working Paper* no. 164. New York: Population Council. ([PDF](#))

Abstract

The paper explores the effect of primary school access, type, and quality on the decision to enroll in rural Pakistan using a 1997 survey especially designed for this purpose. A unique contribution of the paper is the construction of gender-specific dimensions of school accessibility and school quality according to school type (i.e., public vs. private). Within the same village, girls and boys often face starkly different options for schooling in terms of distance, type, and quality. Public primary schools are segregated by sex; private schools, whose numbers have grown rapidly in recent years in response to rising demand and the inadequate supply of public schools, are more typically mixed. The decision to enroll in school and the choice of school type are modeled simultaneously using a nested multinomial logit model. Simulations of alternative scenarios in terms of school access (measured as whether or not a primary school is located in the village), type, and quality are used to express our findings. The presence of a public school for girls in the village makes an enormous difference for girls in primary enrollment given parents' reluctance for girls to travel far from home; for boys this is less of an issue because most villages have at least one public school for boys. We find that the addition of a private school option in a village that already has a public school has little impact on overall enrollment rates but rather leads to a redistribution of enrollment from public to private school. Girls' enrollment in public primary is particularly responsive to improvements in some aspects of school quality, in particular whether or not the teacher resides in the village. This would suggest that school quality is important not only for retention but also for enrollment.



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