

Economics
Seminar
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SOUTH ASIAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS

Seminar

Gender Peer Effects in High Schools: Evidence from India

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Date: February 08, 2019
(Friday)
Time: 2:30 p.m.
Venue: FSI Hall, Akbar Bhawan,
Satya Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi

All are Welcome

ABSTRACT

This paper presents robust evidence about the existence of gender peer effects in high schools in India using a unique dataset. We use a new administrative dataset from the Central Board of Secondary Education which is the single largest board of education with an all-India presence. Identification of gender peer effects is achieved by exploiting variation induced by idiosyncratic changes in gender composition across cohorts within schools, in addition to controlling for ability and past inputs using a proxy variable. The proportion of female classmates in a student's cohort has a statistically significant and sizable positive effect on test scores of both male and female students. We find that peer effects vary non-linearly with the proportion of female students. Finally, we provide suggestive evidence on plausible mechanisms: some of the heterogeneous effects that we observe (across subject streams, ability distribution) suggests that gender peer effects do not operate primarily through ability or achievement spillovers rather improvement in classroom environment due to female students might play a key role.