

Siblings or Classmates? The Long-Run Effects of Gender Composition in the Family and at School

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Abstract

We investigate the long-term effects of youth gender interactions. Previous literature has considered the effects of gender interaction at school and at home in isolation from one another. Using administrative data on the Danish population we link schoolmates and siblings. We contribute to the literature by investigating whether having sisters or brothers at home may affect how the proportion of girls at schools impact on the production of education outcomes and permanent incomes. For identification we exploit the within grade variations in the proportion of female students across adjacent cohorts. We find that the education of females increases slightly with the share of girls in the schools, while there is no effect for males. For both females and males, entry earnings are lower when the share of girls at school is higher, but this effect fades away rapidly and there is no effect on permanent earnings. For females, the effect on educational outcomes is much higher when they have only brothers. Our results suggest that girls with only brothers may be more masculine and disruptive at school and benefit more from interacting with girls at school. Also, they may be less competitive at home. Their competitiveness may be stimulated by interactions with girls at school. Girls at home and at school may act as substitutes in the production of individual human capital.

Keywords: Educational production function, gender peer effects, long-term outcomes

JEL codes: I21, J16, J24