

# A Multidimensional Perspective on Education in Developing Countries

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## Impact section

Intergenerational education persistence in low income and lower-middle-income countries exhibited a declining trend following their independence, in particularly, after the 1960s. The mobility in education was made possible due to the huge changes in systems of education and investment in the accumulation of human capital. However, the intergenerational transmission of education remains one of the most debated topics in the literature given that the education of parents remains a strong determinant in the education of children in developing countries, coupled with the persistent school dropout. Some countries succeed in overcoming the poor educational attainment among children, while other countries still lag behind in doing so. This observed difference may arise from institutional barriers and system characteristics that are not easy to alter by the individuals themselves but calls for policy action.

The conception of this thesis originates from the growing need for policies that are more redistributive and targeted. Also, educational success of students being affected by their early life journey highlights the need for exploring household environments that potentially determines children's educational success. We therefore look at institutional factors and the deprivations faced by households. In this light, we first explore the causes of school dropout in developing countries to explore the most common factors. The factors found include lack of income, parents' education and employment status, living in a single-parent household, being an illegitimate child, age, region of residence and school performance.

We then investigate institutional characteristics and their association with intergenerational correlation of education to observe factors that can inform policy concerning measures aimed at educational attainment improvement. The sample includes 48 developing countries. This finding confirms the strong link between institutional factors and intergenerational correlation of education. Gross domestic product, female-male labour force participation, pupil-teacher ratio, primary school duration, compulsory years of education, and extent of voice and accountability are the factors that associate with intergenerational transmission of education. In addition, we empirically investigate a situation of one of these factors in one country, namely, the compulsory education law modification in Senegal in 2004. This law increased compulsory education from 6 years to 10 years. The analysis looks at the impact of the law on compulsory grades completion, as well as on post-compulsory secondary grades completion. The results show that the compulsory education policy significantly increased compulsory

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education completion, and improved post-compulsory grades completion. However, completion of the last post-compulsory grade in high school to obtain a secondary certificate is not affected.

Regarding household environment, we look at household deprivations for 27 developing countries. These deprivations include, child mortality, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing, and assets. An index is created with the deprivations. Our findings show a strong relationship between being deprived and the intergenerational correlation of education. This relationship is a little stronger for women as compared to the men.

A policy implication from this thesis is that in an effort to reduce school dropout and consequently to reduce the intergenerational correlation of education, institutional characteristics and households' circumstances should be taken into consideration. We therefore propose guidelines for progress towards improving the degree of independence of a child's educational attainment to his/her parent's educational level, and improving the pathway enabling children to exceed the educational level of their most educated parent in low income and lower-middle-income countries. Efforts should be made to ameliorate economic development, such as promoting more industrialization and training programs, and trade exchange in favour of technology import. Industrial improvement requires labour and education, which may in turn create more opportunities and a more higher education-oriented generation. An increase in GDP is therefore a vital input in improving on outcomes like employment, decent work and economic growth, and empowering educational decisions, investment, and actual mobility. In addition, education provision and the quality of education such as more teachers to student ratio, and many years of compulsory education so students spend more time at school obligatorily, contribute to increasing intergenerational mobility in education.

Access to basic education by households is also vital, as cost to school still act as hindrances to higher education. Despite the global acceptance of a free basic education, some basic learning institutions in low income and lower-middle-income countries still operate on fee collection. The governance structure such as voice and accountability should carefully be observed. In other words, the motivation to go to higher education also relates to how governance is handled in terms of freedom and rights to citizens to practice association, expression, and voting. In addition, attention should be paid to household inconvenient living

conditions that may affect school attendance and retention such as child mortality, school attendance, cooking fuel, housing, drinking water, electricity, sanitation, and assets. Besides enabling the availability of basic services, policies could motivate and encourage students for higher education earlier.

It is our recommendation that the analysis of intergenerational correlation of education in low income and lower-middle-income countries should use a multidimensional perspective, and importantly, that these countries also place strategic focus on the SDGs. Because focusing on one factor in isolation would not provide a richer picture of improving educational mobility but a combination of multiple factors as complements to one another is relevant to public policy.