

Closing the Gender Gap: Evidence from Private School Participation in Free Secondary Education in Uganda.

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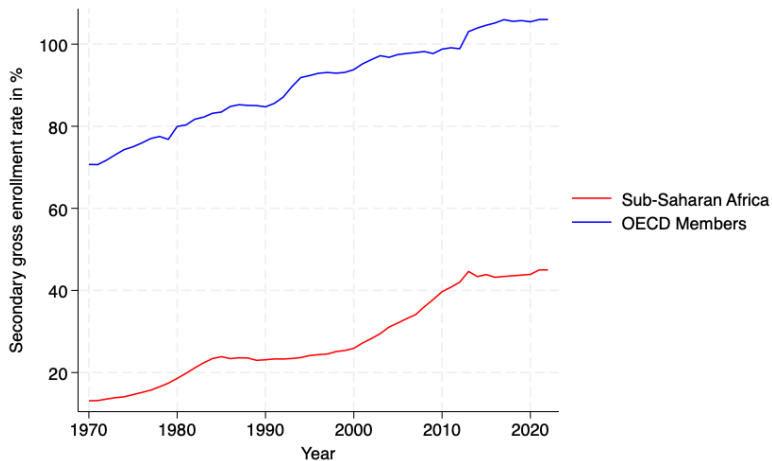
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Motivation

Figure 1: Secondary Gross Enrollment Rates in the OECD and Sub-Saharan Africa



Research questions:

- ① How can the reduction of schooling costs most effectively attract marginal constrained students to enroll in secondary education?
- ② What are the effects of reducing schooling costs on education and labor market outcomes?

Context - Universal Secondary Education in Uganda

- Uganda abolished school fees in secondary public and selected private schools in 2007.
- The government provided a capitation grant per student of USD 25 for lower secondary education and USD 45 for upper secondary education.
- Reduction in schooling costs by approximately 30%.

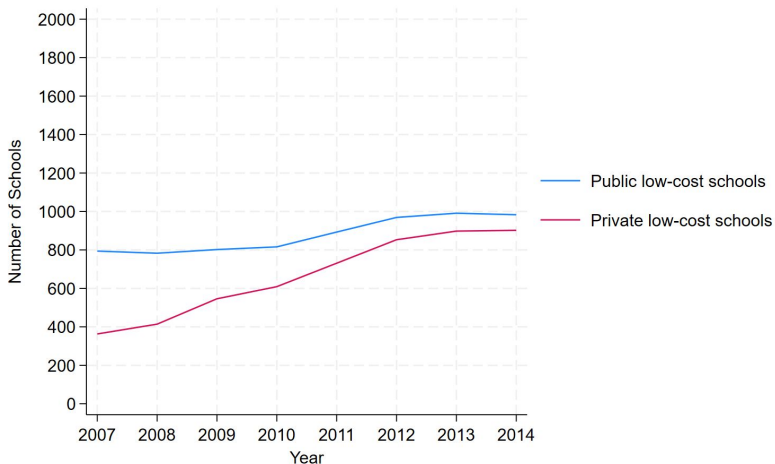
Private schools could apply to the program if they:

- are located in areas without access to public schools,
- and agreed not to charge additional schooling fees.

Context

- Increase in the secondary gross enrollment rate from 22% (2006) to 29% (2014).

Figure 2: Number of private and public low-cost schools



Data:

- World Bank LSMS.
- Annual School Census Data.

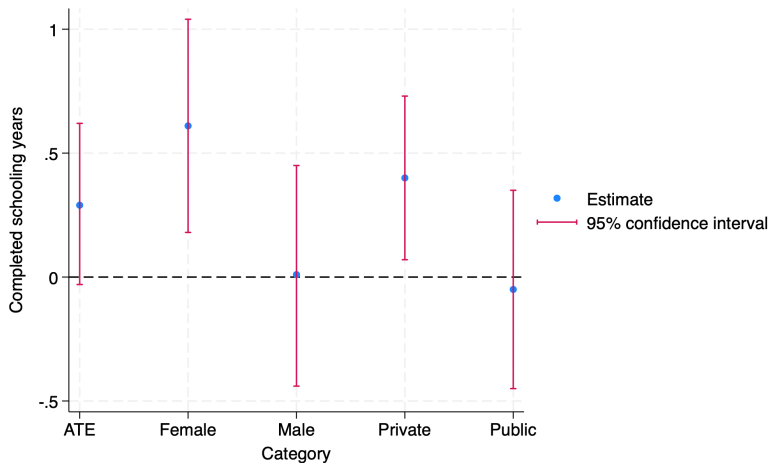
Empirical strategy:

- Variation in the exposure to public or private low-cost schools.
- Variation based on the birth cohort.

→ Difference-in-differences, triple difference-in-differences, and event-study design.

Main results

Figure 3: Main treatment effects



Gender gap:

- Stronger effects among poorer households.

Public schools - universal subsidies:

- Capacity constraints for public schools.
- Less female student demand.

Private schools - selective subsidies:

- Private schools adopt the subsidy scheme only if it generates sufficient student demand to be profitable.
- Located in (poorer) areas with higher female student demand.

Context matters! Selection matters!

Thank you for your attention!