Intrahousehold Bargaining and Girls' Time Spent on Unpaid Domestic Work

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Introduction

- Adolescent girls spend substantial amount of time on unpaid domestic work in rural Bangladesh ▸ fig1

- Differences in time spent in school and on unpaid domestic work by marital status

- Research question: Does empowering girls reduce their time spent on unpaid domestic work?

- Time spent on unpaid domestic work
  - ☞ Husband and wife in household bargaining model
  - ☞ Mainly in developed countries

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Conceptual framwork

- Intrahousehold bargaining (Manser and Brown 1980; McElroy and Horney 1981)

$$N = [U^g - V^g(\alpha^g)][U^o - V^o(\alpha^o)]$$

where α^i is threat point, anything that affects i's bargaining position in the household

- Girl's threat point can be noncooperative equilibrium (Lundberg and Pollak 1993; 1994)

- Bargaining seems matter for time spent on unpaid domestic work ▸ fig2

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BALIKA program

- Empowerment program: Bangladesh Association for Life
  Skills, Income, and Knowledge for Adolescents (BALIKA)
  - ☞ Three districts in rural southern Bangladesh ▸ fig3
  - ☞ Target over 12,000 adolescent girls aged 12–19
  - ☞ RCT: Three different treatment arms in each 24 clusters
  ▸ fig4
  - ☞ Timeline ▸ fig5
- Main impacts: All three arms similarly delayed girls' age at
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- Time-use data on adolescent girls ▸ fig1

  ☞ Diary over 30 activities in the previous day of the interview

  ☞ Similar collecting procedure as in ATUS

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Estimation results

- Main results ▸ fig6

- Heterogeneity

  ☞ Mainly from unmarried girls at baseline

  ☞ *Increase* in time spent on unpaid domestic work for

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Potential mechanisms

- Differential impacts on gender-awareness outcomes across treatment arms ▸ fig7

  ☞ Girls in gender-awareness and livelihood arms more agreed to the statement "Men and women should be equally treated"

  ☞ Girls in education arm more agreed to the statement "Wives should obey husbands" and "Women don't have right to divorce"

  ☞ Patriarchal gender norm and mobility matter in girls' time spent on unpaid domestic work ▸ fig8

- Schooling and learning are distinct concepts in South Asia

  ☞ Schooling signifies girls' status and may serve as a signal of being a good wife and mother

- The most important trait in the marriage market is obedience to one's husband in rural Bangladesh (Buchmann et al. 2023)

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Attrition

- No selective attrition between treatment and control groups

- Lee's (2009) bound is consistent with the findings, i.e., differential impacts on education and gender-awareness&livelihood arms on girls' time spent on unpaid domestic work

  ☞ Moreover, girls in education arm *increased* time spent in unpaid domestic work when attrition is taken into account

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Conclusion

- Reducing the burden of unpaid domestic work on girls is important

- Empowering girls in gender-awareness and income-earning is effective to reduce their time spent on unpaid domestic work

- Education&schooling is not effective (or even *increases*) reducing their time spent on unpaid domestic work
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- McElroy, Marjorie B., and Mary Jean Horney. 1981. "Nash-Bargained Household Decisions: Toward a Generalization of the Theory of Demand." *International Economic Review* 22 (2): 333–49
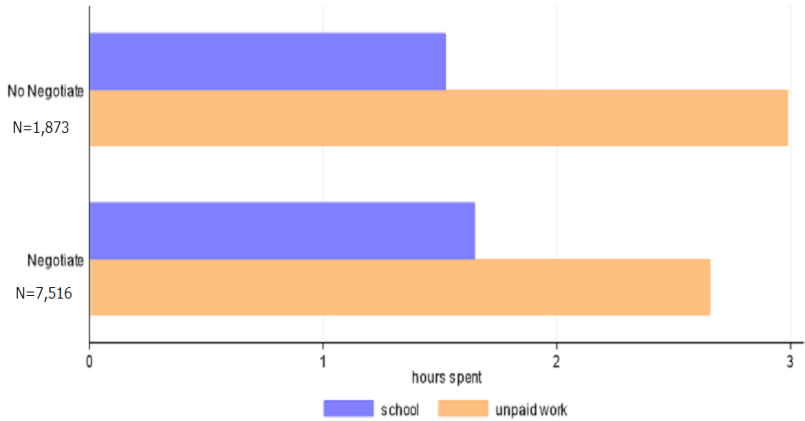
Time allocation in the previous day (24 hours) of the baseline interview

unmarried girls at baseline N=9,389

married girls at baseline N=2,212
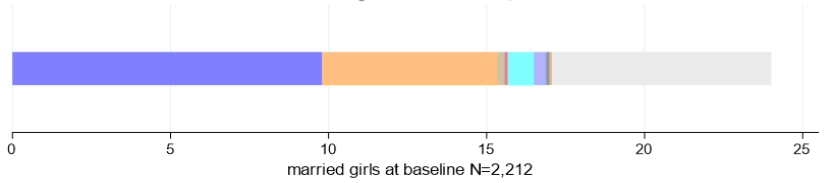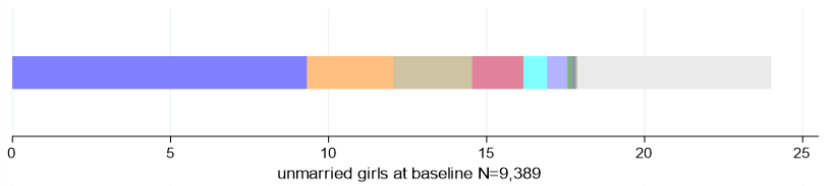
sleep		unpaid work
home study		school
eat		travel
play		paid work
farming		shop
other		

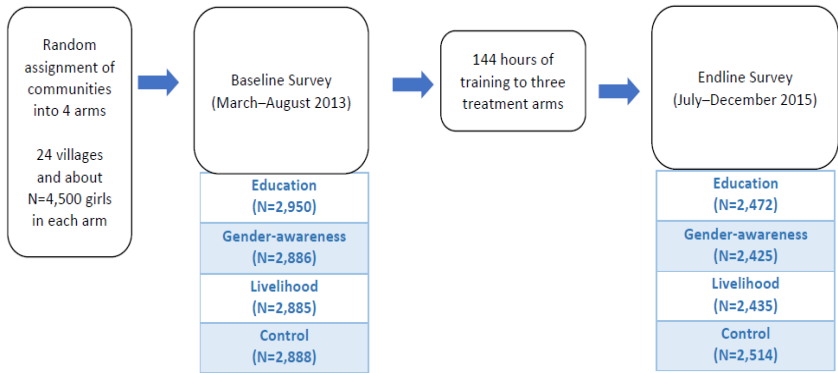**Time-use patterns by whether they can disagree with their parents(unmarried girls at baseline only)**

BALIKA location

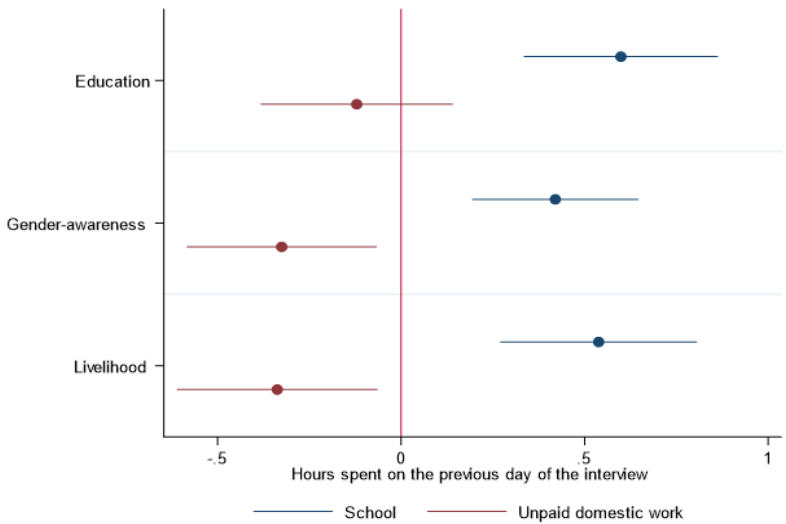**Specific skill-training in three treatment arms**

Common component (44 hours)		
Basic life-skill training, ICT support, Community awareness training		
Specific component (100 hours each)		
Education	**Gender-awareness**	**Livelihood**
School-going girls: Mathematics and English to prepare for mandatory examinations Out-of-school girls: Financial skills and communicative English	Negotiation, critical thinking, and decision-making skills by discussing gender roles, family power dynamics, and gender-based division of labor	25 hours on computing, 13 hours on mobile phone applications, 30 hours on photography, 17 hours on health screening, and 15 hours on entrepreneurship Information on locally available and nontraditional female occupations

Timeline of BALIKA skill trainings and surveys
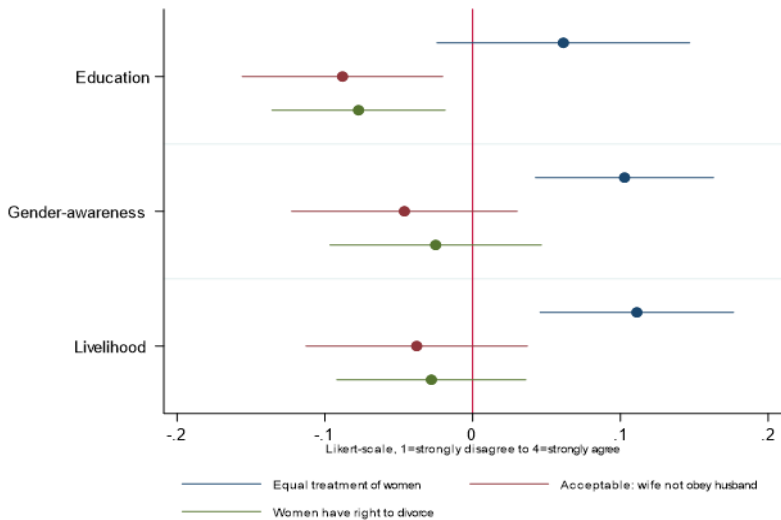
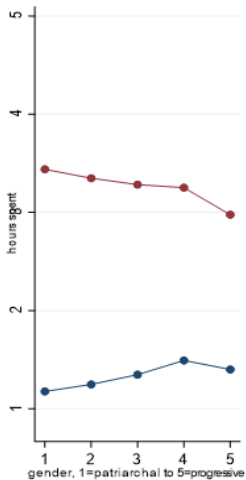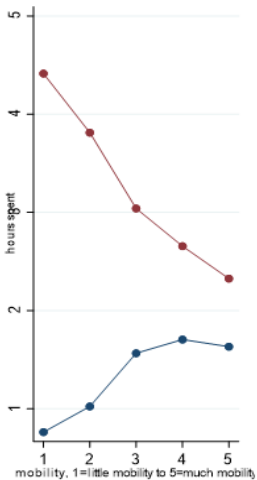**Treatment effects on time spent in school and on unpaid domestic work**

Hours spent on the previous day of the interview

School ——— Unpaid domestic work

Likert-scale, 1=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree

Equal treatment of women   Acceptable: wife not obey husband

Women have right to divorce

Time-use patterns by gender norm, mobility, household wealth at baseline