

## **Does Gender-Equality Cause Gender Differences in STEM Preferences and Choices? A Reassessment of the Educational Gender-Equality Paradox**

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The educational Gender-Equality Paradox (GEP) describes larger gender differences in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) study choice in more gender-equal and affluent countries. However, whether GEP is due to a causal effect of gender-equality can be doubted since most studies are cross-sectional and arguments are indirect, via economic affluence. In this paper, I study what the longitudinal effect of gender-equality on the gender gap in STEM aspirations and graduation, net of GDP, using several waves from TIMSS and UNESCO. Analyses so far show that, net of GDP, gender-equality lowers instead of increases the gender gap in STEM aspirations. This finding downplays causal interpretations of GEP and suggests that gender-quality lowers horizontal gender stratification.