

# **The Long-Term Effects of School Quality in Low-Income Countries: Evidence From 15 Years of Data**

**Natalie Bau**

## ***Abstract :***

Using rich data following children over 15 years in Pakistani villages, we provide the first causal estimates of the effects of attending a better primary school on children's long-term outcomes in a low-income setting. Exploiting panel test score data, which allow us to estimate and validate value-added measures of school quality, in combination with variation generated by moves across schools, we show that on average being exposed to a school that increases childhood test scores by 1 standard deviation, increases adult test scores by 0.2 sd, total years of schooling by nearly 1 year, the likelihood of still studying as a young adult by 5 percentage points, of graduating high school by 10 ppt, and college enrollment by 5 ppt. Hence, the effects of attending a better primary school do not fadeout by adulthood. A Mincerian exercise suggests that moving the children from the worst school to the best school in a village would generate present discounted wage gains of 280,000 USD for the average village.