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## Original Article

# Growing Up in Ethiopia and Andhra Pradesh: The Impact of Social Protection Schemes on Girls' Roles and Responsibilities

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**Abstract** The focus of this article is the effect on adolescent girls' roles and responsibilities of public works schemes or cash transfers, which are the main forms of social protection in developing countries. Increasing participation in social protection is intended to enhance the development of girls in participating households, but evidence on their school participation and workloads suggests that the reverse may be happening. The article probes what happens to girls' roles and responsibilities when households participate in social protection schemes in rural Ethiopia and Andhra Pradesh. It argues that effects are complex, and often context-specific; however, the assumption that 'beneficiaries' benefit means that negative impacts are rarely acknowledged. The article combines a review of other papers addressing the effects of social protection on children's work with analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, recognising that this question cannot be answered with a methodology that considers girls' schooling or workloads in isolation.

Ce papier s'intéresse à l'effet, sur les rôles et responsabilités des adolescentes, des programmes de travaux publics et des transferts en espèces, qui constituent les principales formes de protection sociale dans les pays en développement. Augmenter la participation aux régimes de protection sociale vise, notamment, à favoriser le développement des filles appartenant aux ménages participant à ces programmes, mais des données sur leur scolarisation et leurs charges de travail suggèrent que l'inverse peut se produire. L'article examine en quoi les rôles et responsabilités des filles se modifient lorsque les ménages adhèrent à des régimes de protection sociale en Éthiopie rurale et dans l'Andhra Pradesh. Il indique que les effets sont complexes et dépendent souvent du contexte; toutefois, le principe selon lequel les « bénéficiaires » bénéficient implique que leurs impacts négatifs sont rarement reconnus. L'article associe une revue d'autres études portant sur les effets de la protection sociale sur le travail des enfants à une analyse de données quantitatives et qualitatives, et reconnaît que cette question ne peut être abordée en considérant séparément la scolarité et le travail des filles.

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## Introduction

Adolescent girls are often key contributors to family life, providing labour, care and in some cases income (for example, Nieuwenhuys, 1994; Ilahi, 2001a; de Graff and Levison, 2009). The International Labour Organization (2009) estimates that, globally, 23 per cent of girls aged 15–17 years do household chores for 28 hours a week or more (see also Webbink *et al*, 2012). Survey data collected in 2009 by Young Lives, a longitudinal study of childhood poverty,<sup>1</sup> also suggest large workloads for girls aged 14–15 years in rural Andhra Pradesh – the age group discussed in this article – who spend nearly 3 hours per day on domestic work or caring for others. The invisibility of daily reproductive work (Waring, 1997; Elson, 1999) means that girls' contributions are not valued or taken into account by development policy makers or planners. Nonetheless, their care of younger and older household members can free the labour of adult

women to engage in new economic opportunities such as public works schemes – a popular form of social protection – particularly where there is no affordable childcare (Lokshin *et al*, 2000). While one might expect greater sensitivity from conditional cash transfer schemes (CCTs) – welfare programmes that are conditional on the recipient performing actions that benefit the ‘target’ child – the literature review reported later in this section found mixed effects on girls’ work, depending on their age and whether they or their sibling are the target of the grant (Barrera-Osorio *et al*, 2008).

The two examples of social protection schemes used in this article are public works schemes in rural India and Ethiopia, respectively: the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), which has been successful in both recruiting women (51 per cent of participants, Reddy *et al*, 2010) and increasing agricultural wage rates for non-participating women; and the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). As I discuss later in the article, these schemes aim to reduce the vulnerability of households and increase their social mobility without specifying how this is to be done.<sup>2</sup> They also fail to acknowledge the potential trade-off between productive and reproductive activities, or the likelihood that this trade-off will disproportionately affect women and girls. While the schemes are broadly comparable in their aims and their effects, I do not compare them directly, as the schemes and their contexts are very different (for example, NREGS participation is elective while PSNP participation is via a means-tested quota scheme). Additionally, whereas PSNP is a successor to various food aid programmes and is largely donor-funded (hence the emphasis on ‘graduation’), NREGS is a rights-based programme funded by the government in response to representations from the civil society ‘Right to Livelihood’ movement. The article reviews literature addressing the effects of social protection on children’s work and uses quantitative and qualitative data collected by Young Lives over the period in which these programmes were operating (2005 onwards) to explore whether social protection schemes are partially responsible for the premature transfer of responsibilities for social reproduction to the next generation.

## Conceptual Framework

The article explores the complex relationship between social protection schemes and girls’ work. It uses Power’s (2004) concept of ‘social provisioning’ to highlight the exclusion of girls’ caring and unpaid labour – what Waring (1997, p. 31) describes as ‘most of the work that most of the people do most of the time’ – from evaluations of the outcomes of social protection schemes. Power argues that social provisioning ‘allows for a broader understanding of economic activities ... motivation ... [and] the importance of social norms’ (2004, p. 7). It also enables exploration of how ‘culture, ideology and social institutions help determine the specific organisation of provisioning at a given movement’ (*ibid.*, p. 7), for example, how gender and age affect decisions about who is withdrawn from school to provide care to sick family members. Finally, it illustrates how ‘organisation of social provisioning interacts with and changes the social environment’ (*ibid.*, p. 7), for example, by reducing the future human capital of girls through overwork and limited access to formal schooling.

The attention to girls’ motivation within the concept of ‘social provisioning’ has resonances with Donath’s (2000, pp. 116–117) characterisation of the ‘other economy’, which is ‘concerned with the direct production and maintenance of human beings ... [and] functions by gifts and reciprocity rather than by exchange’. As Folbre (1994) has argued in relation to ‘caring labour’, the behaviour of individuals in this economy cannot be explained by economic rationality because ‘they act in ways which are consistent with norms, expectations and beliefs, both their own and those which are imposed by external forces’ (Donath, 2000, p. 117). For this reason girls may not view participation in family work as negative: Martin (2010, p. 40) describes how in

Andhra Pradesh ‘children [aged fourteen to sixteen] recognize that their increasing work is linked to “growing up” and are contributing to family life similarly to their parents, rather than being dependent like younger siblings [...] work plays an important role in family integration and the transition to adulthood’.

The final author I draw on is Waring (1997, p. 31), who highlights the invisibility of the work of women and girls to the conventional economic measures that underpin the design of poverty alleviation programmes. Her analysis of Nepal’s Agriculture Perspective Plan is a telling example of how the lack of gender sensitivity in programming means that ‘mothers-in-law, sisters, and, overwhelmingly, daughters are required to assist with the additional workload. For this they are withdrawn from school, and the cycle of non-literacy, overwork, poverty, and anaemia is regenerated’ (see Jones and Holmes (2011) for examples from social protection). Nieuwenhuys makes a similar argument in her ethnography of a Keralan fishing village where she attempts to reclaim the activity that ‘does not count and has no name’ (1994, p. 205), that is, children’s productive and reproductive labour, which is nonetheless the basis of the rural economy. Wells’ (2009, p. 101) analysis of children’s work argues similarly that the majority of girl’s work occurs within an ‘economy of care’ – the hidden tasks of cleaning, food processing and preparation, and caring for siblings. This may explain why ‘the valuation of girls’ work is so low that it has been “discovered” by feminist anthropologists making a conscious choice to include housework and child care in their definition of work’ (Nieuwenhuys, 1996, p. 243).

### **What Do We Know So Far about the Factors that Affect Girls’ Work?**

I conducted a comprehensive review of literature, primarily from economists and anthropologists,<sup>3</sup> on the impact on adolescent girls’ workloads of social protection schemes (Table 1). The focus of the review was social protection schemes, although I recognise that these do not operate in isolation and intersect with other factors such as community-level or household ‘shocks’ and new economic opportunities in ways that can increase girls’ workloads. One provisional conclusion is that while CCTs have mixed effects on girls’ work, public works schemes such as PSNP or NREGS that are conditional on labour rather than child outcomes always increase unpaid domestic work carried out by girls. While CCTs produced declines in child work in Ecuador, Cambodia, Honduras and Bangladesh (albeit often based on the evidence of a single study), this was not the case in Uruguay, Ethiopia and India, and there was conflicting evidence for Brazil, Nicaragua, Mexico and Colombia (Table 1).

There were also differences in impact by age and gender; for example, Carpio and Macours (2009) found that Red de proteccion in Nicaragua reduced the work of older boys, and boys who were behind in school (indicating that recipients used the grant to respond to the needs of particular children within the household), but not older girls.<sup>4</sup> Where these differences did not exist, it was usually because the data had not been or could not be disaggregated (for example, Perova and Vakis, 2009, Peru), or the authors had defined child work as paid labour, outside the home (for example, Edmonds, 2006, South Africa). Studies of children’s experiences of social protection programmes clearly show the redistribution of domestic and other work, typically among female members of the household, that takes place to accommodate the requirements of the programmes (cf. Waring, 1997). For example, Streuli (2010) describes how one of the effects of Juntos, a Peruvian CCT conditional on children’s school attendance, was that older girls who would have previously migrated to continue their education or work remained in the community to help their younger siblings, illustrating the differential effects of social protection on differently aged siblings. Adato *et al* (2000, p. 62) similarly describe how women’s workload has increased in response to children’s school attendance: ‘when asked who does the

**Table 1:** Effect of social protection schemes on girls' work

| <i>Scheme</i>                             | <i>Reduces girls' work</i>   | <i>Increases girls' work</i>   | <i>Notes</i>  |
|---|--|--|---|
| Cash transfer lottery, Ecuador            | Edmonds and Schady, 2009   | —  | Shift from paid work to domestic chores; total working hours decline  |
| Familias en Accion, Colombia              | Attanasio <i>et al.</i> , 2008 (reduced for peri-urban, no change for rural)   | Barrera-Osorio <i>et al.</i> , 2008  | Increase in work of female siblings of 'treated' children as households reallocate resources to favour child whose education is being monitored   |
| Bolsa Escola and Bolsa Familia, Brazil    | Ferro <i>et al.</i> , 2010 (reduces work of rural girls aged 6–10 and 11–15 years, but not older urban girls)  | Cardoso and Souza, 2003 (Escola, no impact); Hall, 2008 (Familia, qualitative evidence that more mothers engaging in paid work/ economic activities increased girls' work) | Due to small size of the stipend children moved from work to work and school. Grants stimulated local economy, increasing female economic participation, which may have increased girls' work |
| CESSP Scholarship Program, Cambodia       | Ferreira <i>et al.</i> , 2009  | —  | Large reductions without 'negative spillovers' to siblings  |
| Programa de Asignación Familiar, Honduras | Gailiani and Macewan, 2011   | —  | Large reductions, especially in two poorest quintiles, without negative spillovers  |
| Red de proteccion, Nicaragua              | Carpio, 2008   | Carpio and Macours, 2009   | In Carpio and Macours' second analysis CCT income reduced the work of all groups, except older girls  |
| Ingreso Ciudadano, Uruguay                | —  | Borraz-Gonzalez, 2009  | Only reduced work of girls in the capital city  |
| Progressa, Mexico                         | Rubio-Codina, 2010; Sadoulet <i>et al.</i> , 2004; Skoufias and Parker, 2001 (reduced number of girls who worked by 10%, but did not reduce time spent working of girls who continued to work) | Behrman <i>et al.</i> , 2011; de Janvry <i>et al.</i> , 2006 (protected against dropping out after shocks, but not against increasing work)                                | Rubio-Codina observed women substituting for children in domestic and farm work to free them for schooling, which was confirmed by Adato, 2000  |
| Food for education, Bangladesh            | Ravaillon and Wodon, 1999  | —  | Girls' work decreased but only by 18% of the increase in enrolment, suggesting that enrolled children had little time for study, rest or leisure  |
| PSNP, Ethiopia                            | —  | Hoddinott <i>et al.</i> , 2009; Woldehanna, 2009; Emirie <i>et al.</i> , 2009  | Increases in work, particularly affecting girls, are attributed to direct and substitution effects  |
| MGNREGS, India                            | —  | Holmes and Jones, 2011; Camfield and Vennam, 2012; Martin, 2010  | Increase in girls' caring responsibilities, especially where childcare is not provided, and some substitution for parents   |

I have excluded four studies on Ecuador, Peru, India and Nicaragua as they looked at paid work only (Schady and Araujo, 2006; Maluccio and Rafael, 2005; Uppal, 2009), or just at whether the child worked or not (Perova and Vakis, 2009)

child's work when s/he is in school, a promotora [community organizer] from Hidalgo said: "Well, us [...] I have to do all my housework, because I prefer that my son study. So that one day he can pass the exam"'.

Social protection programmes interact with other factors that affect girls' work, for example, acquisition of labour-intensive assets such as livestock (Cockburn and Dostie, 2007), creation of new markets (for example, for ready-made food) from cash grants and changing working practices, and changes in the structure of the existing labour market in a way that benefits women (for example, by increasing wage rates or reducing labour supply). When women enter the labour market, girls often take on their responsibility for 'social provisioning', for example, in Peru (Ilahi, 2001b, p. 4) or Ethiopia where respondents discussed 'the frequent problem of girls' absence from school due to pressures to cook and care for siblings, substituting for mothers who often have to juggle extra-household work [in PSNP] or market activities as well as community work' (Woldehanna *et al.*, 2008, p. 187). There are counter-examples where economic opportunities have not impacted on girls' work. Degraff and Levison (2009, p. 1582) suggest that while mothers entering the labour market in Brazil increases the likelihood that their children will work, this is because children follow their example, rather than because they take over their caring role. Nonetheless, if there is no childcare, as is the case on most PSNP or NREGS work sites, it seems likely that older girls will be pulled away from other activities to care for siblings. For example, Lokshin *et al.* (2000) found that high childcare costs in Kenya reduced maternal employment and girls' schooling since if women did work then their daughters had to care for younger siblings. This is one of the reasons why across a range of settings having younger siblings, especially boys, had a negative impact on girls' workload and the likelihood of their attending school (Morduch, 2000). Family illness not only reduces the likelihood that older girls will remain in school (Pitt and Rosenzweig, 1990), but also increases their caring responsibilities, as can be seen in the qualitative case studies in the final part of the article.

## Methodology

The analysis uses Ethiopian and Indian (Andhra Pradesh) data from Young Lives, a study of childhood poverty in four countries (Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam). The quantitative data are drawn from the third round of data collection in 2009, when the children in the cohort discussed in this article were 14–15 years of age. The qualitative data come from data collection in 2008 (Tafere *et al.*, 2009; Vennam, 2009) and 2009 (Camfield and Roelen, 2012; Camfield and Vennam, 2012). This means that the research design is essentially cross-sectional and does not look at how children's workloads have changed over time, or attempt to attribute these changes to household participation in social protection schemes. While it compares the workloads of children in households that are or are not participating in social protection schemes, it recognises that there may be other factors such as material poverty that affect both the decision to participate and children's workloads.

The Ethiopian sample covers 20 sites in the four most populous regions and the capital, Addis Ababa, 13 of which are classified as rural (Outes-Leon and Dercon, 2008). The Indian sample covers 20 sites across six districts of Andhra Pradesh and the capital, Hyderabad; 15 are classified as rural (Kumra, 2008). The sample is described in Table 2. Points to note are that although a higher percentage of girls are enrolled in school in rural Ethiopia, they are progressing more slowly through the grades. This may be due to starting school later (age 7–8 versus 4–6 years in India) and to having a higher workload, expressed both in the smaller percentages of children not

**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics for schooling and work for female students in rural areas

|  | <i>Ethiopia</i>        | <i>India</i>           |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| Rural sample in 2009                         | 570                    | 728                    |
| % of female                                  | 47.9%                  | 52.6%                  |
| % of girls enrolled in school                | 87% (whole sample 85%) | 71% (whole sample 75%) |
| Mean highest female grade                    | 5 <sup>a</sup>         | 10                     |
| % of girls not doing paid or farm work       | 65%                    | 71%                    |
| % of girls not doing any work                | 1 girl                 | 10%                    |
| Hours female students spent working each day | 5.3                    | 2.3                    |

<sup>a</sup>The correct grade for this age group would be eight or nine, given that they should have started in grade one aged 7 years.

working in Ethiopia and the large differences between Ethiopia and India in the hours spent working in addition to schooling (Table 2).

The quantitative analysis for the whole rural sample ( $n = 647$ , girls aged 14–15 years from 28 villages in Ethiopia and India) is supported by analysis of the interview data for the qualitative sub-sample (31 girls from seven villages in Ethiopia and India). The Ethiopian qualitative data were collected from children in four rural sites in 2008 and 2009: Tach-Meret, in a food-insecure area in Amhara; Leki, near Lake Ziway in Oromia and producing vegetables for sale; Zeytuni, a drought-prone area in Tigray that is dependent on government support; and Buna, a coffee-growing area in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' (SNNP). Corresponding data from Andhra Pradesh were collected in three rural sites: Katur, a drought-prone near-rural village in Anantapur district; Poompuhar, a near-rural village in Mahabubnagar district, which grows cotton for sale; and Patna, a remote tribal village in Srikakulam district. The qualitative data set includes individual and group activities with children and adults and fieldworker observations, although in this article I mainly use data from interviews with children (collected in two waves when they were aged 13–14 and 14–15 years), triangulated with data from other sources, including my fieldnotes.<sup>5</sup> The participants were interviewed in a location of their choice by researchers of the same gender who spoke the same language and whom they had met previously.

In the remainder of the section I briefly summarise key characteristics of the schemes (Table 3) and look at the implications for participating individuals and households of their aims and outcomes.

PSNP aims to reduce household vulnerability, especially food insecurity, increase resilience to shocks such as crop failure, and support movements out of poverty. Evaluations of the programme have reported mixed success (Devereux and Guenther, 2007; Hobson, 2009), particularly in relation to 'graduation' from the scheme as the amounts of money disbursed are small and have been depreciated by high food prices. NREGS aims to increase livelihood security, generate productive assets at the community and individual level, empower rural women, and reduce rural–urban migration. Where schemes are well managed, NREGS has been successful in increasing livelihood security and women have been empowered in relation to wage negotiations as the amount paid by NREGS is more than double the rate for female agricultural workers. One of the distinctive features of NREGS is that participants work in groups, which means that slower or weaker individuals are not disadvantaged. However, the fact that these work groups are often caste- or gender-based creates potentially discriminatory dynamics, for example, dangerous work being given to Scheduled Caste groups or single women struggling to find a group (Sainath, 2007).

The physically demanding nature of the work in both schemes is less appealing to people who are older or have disabilities or health problems (Porter, 2010), and female household heads

**Table 3:** Characteristics of PSNP and NREGS

|              | <i>PSNP</i>   | <i>NREGS</i>   |
|--------------|---|--|
| Start date   | 2005  | 2008   |
| Overage      | 8.3 million households  | 45 million households in Andhra Pradesh  |
| Structure    | Food or cash for public works such as digging ditches, or direct support to households with no adult labour. Fixed work demand related to the number of household members covered by the scheme (~5 days per household member per month)          | Cash for public works such as breaking/moving stones, paid to every adult household member who can work on a designated day. Provides up to 100 days work per household member per year  |
| Remuneration | 10 ETB per person, per day or 3 kg cereal   | Rs 121 per person per day, proportionate to work done by work group  |
| Challenges   | Selection of participating households and the extent of ‘elite capture’ (eg Caeyers and Dercon 2008), the timing and size of the payment in a context of rising food prices, and the feasibility of ‘graduation’ after 3–5 years of participation | Remuneration calculated according to area covered and thus amounts are variable, work is often irregular and there are delays in payment (Sudarshan <i>et al</i> , 2010). Some elite capture due to high wage rates, which have distorted local labour markets (Imai, 2007; Scandizzo <i>et al</i> , 2009). Examples of mismanagement and corruption (Camfield and Vennam, 2012) |

reportedly prefer daily labour as it can take up to 1 month to receive payment (Sudarshan *et al* 2010). ‘Childcare’ is rarely provided in either scheme, even though this only refers to a designated worker supervising children on-site (Jandu 2008; Sudarshan *et al* 2010; Berhane *et al*, 2011; Song, 2011). This may mean that women with young children do not participate, or more plausibly, given high female participation rates, that they take siblings out of school to care for babies at home or on-site, or leave babies with preschool children. The guidance manuals for PSNP and NREGS stipulate that only people aged over 18 years can work on the programme; however, local works organisers frequently take children who look older or are covering for sick or aged family members (for example, one of the girls in the qualitative sub-sample described herself as ‘too short’ to work on NREGS, suggesting that biological age is less important than capacity or appearance). If they are discovered by an external observer they will be sent home, but the household will not be penalised.

### Analytical Methodology

The descriptive statistics were generated using SPSS 18 and differences between girls from participating and non-participating households were tested using independent sample *t*-tests. The content of the translated interview transcripts was analysed using a simplified form of Ritchie’s and Spencer (1994) framework analysis, which involves (i) reading and re-reading transcripts, noting key ideas and recurrent themes; (ii) focusing on themes that relate to time use, intra-household division of labour, work and control over income, PSNP or NREGS participation, and schooling; (iii) identifying and ‘charting’ portions of the data that correspond to a particular theme; and (iv) looking at the nature/frequency of these across the sample and within the narratives of individual respondents. In presenting the descriptive summaries of the qualitative and quantitative data, I have attempted to show the links between the two, notwithstanding the necessarily limited nature of the quantitative data set (for example, a single variable on school

attendance). The aim of both forms of analysis was to illustrate more general trends that are then explored in depth in the four case studies. For example, both the qualitative and the quantitative data report large workloads for girls in Ethiopia, which are partially attributable to participation in social protection schemes, but what does this mean in the context of their lives? The case study approach (Yin, 1994) allowed me to explore experiences of participation in PSNP and NREGS over time through the histories of particular children: ‘what actually happened in this specific instance as a result of context, path dependence, the actions and interactions of protagonists, and the mechanisms and processes at work and their consequences’ (Bevan, 2005, p. 11). I used the summaries of the quantitative and qualitative data to select four cases that show the impact of household participation in NREGS and PSNP on older girls’ lives and the extent to which the schemes were an effective safety net (I have not focused these cases on girls directly participating in NREGS/PSNP as this represents less than 20 per cent of the qualitative sample).<sup>6</sup> The cases were selected following analysis of the qualitative data set to show the impact of household shocks such as illness, which are identified as particular problems for girls in the literature review.

## Results

In this section I use first the quantitative and then the qualitative data to look at the effects of PSNP and NREGS on girls’ lives. I focus initially on their workloads and participation in school and then use the qualitative data to set the schemes in the context of their lives as a whole, including household responses to ‘shocks’.

In the Ethiopian sample ( $n=271$ ), 38 per cent of girls came from households that were registered in PSNP in the past year and 7 per cent were receiving direct support, without the requirement to work. A higher proportion of girls in the Indian sample ( $n=376$ ) came from households registered in NREGS (71 per cent) and 67 per cent of girls came from households that had worked for NREGS during the past 12 months.<sup>7</sup> There were no significant effects on the measure of school attendance (missing school for more than 1 week in the past year) for girls in participating households in Ethiopia; however, girls from NREGS households were significantly more likely to have missed school (24 per cent versus 20 per cent,  $P=0.01$ ), which suggests that they were either directly participating in work or substituting for others (see earlier observations in relation to childcare). Girls from NREGS households that have worked in the scheme during the past 12 months reported slightly lower grades (mean grade 9.6 versus 9.9 for non-participants), but this just escapes significance ( $P=0.056$ ). There were no significant differences in time use for girls from households working in NREGS and the only significant difference for girls from PSNP households was that they spent slightly less time in study and leisure (3.7 hours per day versus 4.3 hours,  $P < 0.1$ ) (Table 4). The reason why PSNP affects girls’ time – and implicitly their quality of life – but not their school attendance is that the school day in rural Ethiopia is shorter (for example, a morning or afternoon ‘shift’) and often adjusted around agricultural timetables.

Turning to the qualitative sub-sample, all of the 16 girls in the Ethiopian sub-sample and the majority of the 15 girls<sup>8</sup> in the Indian sub-sample work in the home or outside. Three-quarters of their households participate in PSNP or NREGS, which is higher than the percentage in the whole rural sample (38 per cent PSNP, 71 per cent NREGS) and may reflect the pro-poor bias in the selection of the qualitative sample (Tafero *et al*, 2009; Vennam, 2009). Three-quarters of the Ethiopian girls are enrolled in school (the four who are not dropped out to care for siblings or parents); however, only two-thirds of the Indian girls are enrolled, reflecting a pronounced drop in school enrolment once girls reach puberty (two of the Indian girls are married and one is



**Table 4:** Differences in time use between girls from households that were and were not enrolled in PSNP or NREGS

|                    | <i>Ethiopia (n=271)</i>         |   |   | <i>India (n=376)</i>            |   |  |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|---|--|
|                    | <i>Mean<br/>(hours per day)</i> | <i>Not<br/>enrolled<br/>in PSNP<br/>(n=168)</i> | <i>Enrolled<br/>in PSNP<br/>(n=103)</i> | <i>Mean<br/>(hours per day)</i> | <i>Not<br/>enrolled<br/>in NREGS<br/>(n=84)</i> | <i>Enrolled<br/>in NREGS<br/>(n=292)</i> |
| Paid and farm work | 1.1 (range 0–11)                | 1.5   | 1.2                                     | 1.8 (range 0–12)                | 1.5   | 1.9                                      |
| Chores and caring  | 4.8 (range 0–14)                | 5   | 4.6                                     | 2.8 (range 0–14)                | 2.4   | 2.8                                      |
| Total time working | 5.9 (range 0–15)                | 6   | 5.8                                     | 4.5 (range 0–15)                | 4   | 4.6                                      |
| School             | 5.3 (range 1–12)                | 5.2   | 5.4                                     | 3.8 (range 1–12)                | 6   | 5.7                                      |
| Study and leisure  | 4.1 (range 0–14)                | 4.3*  | 3.7*                                    | 5.5 (range 0–14)                | 5.9   | 5.4                                      |

\* $P < 0.1$ .

pregnant). Of those enrolled in school, four of the Indian girls are boarding at a residential hostel for tribal children, which ensures regular attendance. However, two girls mentioned missing school during cotton pollination season and one has shifted to vocational training for that reason. The Ethiopian students do not mention problems with attendance; however, they describe very long days (see also Table 2). Less than 20 per cent of girls only do domestic work, which includes activities outside the home such as collecting wood and water and drying dung. Two-thirds of the sample does farm or paid work,<sup>9</sup> but only a third of these girls work on NREGS or PSNP. In half of these cases work on NREGS or PSNP is in combination with other paid activities, which suggests that they are not the main motivations for girls working outside the home. Work activities reflect local opportunities; for example, in India these include work on the roads in Mumbai and cotton pollination, while in Ethiopia they are irrigated vegetable farms, cleaning haricot beans and working in a stone crusher. Since the money or grain from NREGS and PSNP is usually given to the household head (but not always – see Triveni in the following section) no one had control of this income in the same way as with the smaller amounts they earned through daily labour. Nonetheless, some of them described how money from the schemes had been spent on their clothing or school supplies, or on food they shared, which would have addressed two common barriers to school attendance (Emirie *et al*, 2009).

The results from the descriptive analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data support the findings of other studies that the schemes have had mixed impacts on children's lives (Emirie *et al*, 2009; Hoddinott *et al*, 2009; Woldehanna, 2009; Berhane *et al*, 2011; Camfield and Vennam, 2012). For example, Emirie *et al* (2009) and Berhane *et al* (2011, p. 120) claim that while there is greater school enrolment due to additional income and/or food acquired through PSNP, girls in PSNP households do domestic work while their parents are working on PSNP or are involved in other income-generating activities to cover the gap between PSNP income and consumption (for example, when households are paid in cash rather than grain, this amount does not keep pace with the rising costs of food). This suggests that the impact of PSNP depends on the age and gender of the child and perhaps also whether credit from the Other Food Support Programme (OFSP)<sup>10</sup> is used to purchase livestock that then need to be herded (Pankhurst, 2009). Further evidence for this comes from Hoddinott *et al* (2009), who report that rural boys aged 11 years and over benefit in terms of hours worked, but not girls. Woldehanna (2009) finds, contrary to my results, that PSNP increased girls' time for studying; however, the girls were then aged 11–12 years, and expectations as to their workloads may have changed as they aged.

I now explore four case studies of adolescent girls from different types of household that are participating in PSNP or NREGS to look at its effect on their lives and specifically whether it reduces the impact of household shocks such as illness, which are identified as particular problems for girls in the literature review.

Triveni lives in Katur (Andhra Pradesh) with her grandmother and her elder sister who left school last year. She goes to the 'drought works' (NREGS) during the holidays using her grandmother's registration card with the permission of the meti (foreman). She describes the work as moving boulders, constructing boundaries with mud and digging ponds to store water for livestock. Carrying mud is difficult and heavy work – children carry as much mud in their baskets as adults – although her sister is skilful and never loses her burden. Triveni and her sister have to work on NREGS as her grandmother has been told she is too old. She enjoys the camaraderie of working in a group, as if someone falls ill people are willing to work extra to compensate for this. This contrasts with what she sees as a more individualistic attitude to daily labour where 'support is not given if someone falls behind as the one who supported may fall behind [also]'. Triveni and her sister give their money to their grandmother for everyday expenses and to buy clothes for them for festivals. The money has enabled them to repay more than Rs 2000 in medical expenses

from treating chikungunya last year. It also makes a difference to their daily lives in small but important ways: 'Previously when there was less money, I used to buy fewer note books and used to adjust two subjects in one book only, madam. Now after the drought works came I am able to keep one book for each subject [...] Previously we were eating chutney [with rice], but now we make dahl'. Triveni reports small but valued improvements from participating in NREGS in relation to her health, diet and access to school materials, even though she finds the work tiring.

Beletch (Leki, Ethiopia) does all the household chores – fetching water and wood, cooking, making coffee, baking bread, grinding maize and going to market – as her aunt is sick and she is the only girl in the house (her parents and her sibling died when she was very young). After school she works on the vegetable farms digging holes and clearing earth to pay her school expenses. She works on PSNP on Sundays – her aunt and brother cover the remaining 2 days – and studies in the evenings. Beletch describes how on PSNP men, women and children work together according to their capacities: 'when the men dig the holes, we fill in the erosion trenches with stones [...] they give us the works that we can work'. The PSNP activity she likes least is digging as everyone has to dig 2–3 ft., regardless of age. She also herds the cattle when there are not any younger children to do this and helps in her elder brother's shop – 'I work the whole day. My recess is only when I go for sleep'. Although she goes to school she can only study 'after I finish house chores late in the evening'. Last year she dropped out due to illness and to repay a loan she took for her medical treatment because her caregivers could not afford it. Beletch finds PSNP tiring, but no more so than the range of other paid and unpaid work she engages in, all of which reduces her time for study.

Tsega's parents grow crops on a small plot around their house in Buna (Ethiopia) and her father has started doing construction work to compensate for repeated crop failure. Having left school last year to look after her sister she has not been able to re-enrol: 'this year my parents told me, after they bought [clothes and school materials] for the other children, that they didn't have money to buy clothes and school materials for me, so I have to stop going to school'. She feels depressed by this as last year was her first year in her school, even though she was already 14. Tsega attributes the decision not to re-enrol her to shocks experienced the previous year ('if the crop was not lost and the cow was alive, I would continue my schooling'). However, she also recalls her embarrassment at going to school without shoes, which suggests that material insecurity is a constant problem. She does not work on PSNP as her father and brothers cover the work requirement, but she herds the cattle bought through OFSP two mornings each week. PSNP has affected Tsega indirectly as its failure to offer adequate protection for the shocks her family experienced the previous year has delayed her entry into schooling and prevented her re-enrolling.

Haymanot's father left when she was very young and she was sent away from Zeytuni (Ethiopia) to live with an aunt. Last year she left her aunt's village, where she had been attending school, to care for her mother who had developed a heart problem. She did not have time to re-enrol as she was doing all the chores and looking after her younger brother. She also worked in PSNP every day with her elder sister, weeded other people's fields and worked in the stone crusher. Although the household has land, this is share-cropped out and they only receive a quarter of the yield. This year she has not returned to school and now works full-time in the stone crusher, 9 hours per day, 6 days per week. The household is still in PSNP – her sister covers the work requirement – but she needs to continue working in the stone crusher as the payment for PSNP is irregular (every 2–3 months rather than every month). She finds working in the crusher tiring and frightening, due to the risk of injury (she had to take 6 days unpaid leave last week after crushing her finger). She also has little free time: 'I would like to play with my friends but [...] I have only Sunday to get rest. I spend that day by washing my clothes, washing my body and

fetching fuel wood'. PSNP also appears to offer little support to Haymanot, who needs to work long hours in the stone crusher to cover their household expenditure, partly due to the irregularity of PSNP payments.

Taking the cases together we can see that Triveni is part of a 'skip-generation' household, that is, a household where grandparents are the sole or primary caregiver: she and her sister meet everyday expenses, including school-related, by working in NREGS using their elderly grandmother's card. They have also used NREGS to repay loans for medical treatment. Beletch's, Tsega's and Haymanot's households also use PSNP for everyday expenses, although Haymanot and Tsega note that the payment is not sufficient to cover schooling. Triveni's household found NREGS protective against shocks; however, PSNP has not protected Tsega's household and the acquisition of cattle through OFSP has increased her workload.

The main finding from the literature review was that social protection schemes in general have mixed effects on girls' workloads, but public works schemes always increase them. The negative effects of PSNP were increased by female gender, older age and membership of OFSP. Lack of childcare was a problem for both PSNP and NREGS. The quantitative analysis found that girls from NREGS households were significantly more likely to have missed school for more than 1 week and reported slightly lower grades, although the latter finding just escaped significance. There was no effect on school attendance or grades for PSNP; however, it significantly reduced the time girls spent in study and leisure. While it is not possible to draw generalised conclusions from such a small number of cases, the qualitative examples support insights from other studies of PSNP. For example, the amounts earned are insufficient to protect against household shocks (Emirie *et al*, 2009) and the requirement to participate in OFSP, usually by purchasing livestock, increases households' risk and children's workloads. The requirement to participate in OFSP may partially account for the lower amount of time spent in study and leisure for girls from PSNP households (Pankhurst, 2009; Camfield and Roelen, 2012). Although criticisms have also been made of NREGS in relation to the size of the payments (Sudarshan *et al*, 2010), in this case they compare favourably to the wages that a very young or old woman could have commanded in the local labour market prior to NREGS and can be more easily combined with schooling (for example, Triveni uses her share to cover her school expenses). Nonetheless, even a descriptive analysis of the quantitative data suggests that participation may affect girls' school attendance and attainment, and this should be explored further.

## Discussion

The article addresses the impact of social protection schemes, and to a lesser extent economic opportunities and shocks, on the lives of adolescent girls in developing countries, using the examples of PSNP and NREGS in Ethiopia and India. It concludes that in many cases these schemes increase girls' workloads and significantly reduce their time for study and leisure, a finding supported by the literature review and shown to apply to CCTs. The increase relates to the invisibility of girls' (and women's) work and the gendered nature of social provisioning. Nonetheless, it would be unfair to single out social protection schemes in contexts where the majority of adolescent girls work for at least 2 hours per day, whether they attend school or not (5 hours per day for female students in Ethiopia). Perhaps a more important failing of PSNP is its inability to protect against household shocks such as illness, which leave girls in Ethiopia acting as 'shock absorbers' for persistent crises<sup>11</sup> (Fakier and Cock (2009) in Locke *et al*, forthcoming).

The schemes can also sharpen tensions between individual and family life courses, which reflects the embedding of girls in a 'set of social activities' that are shaped by 'culture, ideology

and social institutions' (Power, 2004, p. 7). Examples of this are where the costs of schooling for some siblings are covered, but not others (Tsega) or where increases in workload are reported for non-beneficiary children in households receiving conditional cash transfers (Barrera-Osorio *et al*, 2008). When older siblings migrated, the burden of social provisioning often fell to a younger sibling (Haymanot); however, there are also examples of siblings sharing tasks (Tsega) or leaving school to support their younger sibling (Triveni), showing the diversity of motivations within the 'other economy'. In fact, three of the four cases are either taking sole responsibility for household chores or significant caring responsibilities, and within the qualitative sub-sample there are many examples of girls replacing mothers in the fields or at home while they engage in other economic activities, replacing older siblings at home after their marriage, and in one case heading a household with three young children after her parents' death. These examples, and others (for example Ansell, 2008), illustrate the earlier point in relation to female adolescents prematurely assuming the reproductive responsibilities of older women in response to new economic responsibilities, including social protection.

The four case studies show a relationship between social protection schemes and social development outcomes, but perhaps not in the direction that was intended. Failures in social protection are increasing girls' workloads, which are affecting their school attendance, achievement and in some cases health. These unintended consequences are the result of the 'success' as well as the failure of the schemes in that the poorest households are benefiting from additional income, even though in more remote areas this is at the expense of girls' workloads. The article highlights the need to 'revalue social reproduction' in social policy and planning (Locke *et al*, forthcoming) and recognise girls' role in this, especially in responding to household shocks or when women are engaged in other activities. This paradigm shift can be accomplished through the lens of Donath's (2000) 'other economy', which recognises not only the 'invisible work' of adolescent girls, including the role they play in social provisioning, but also their embedding in sets of social relationships, which shape their motivations and constrain their agency. In the absence of a wider social policy orientation towards social reproduction and social protection, targeting schemes may 'work' somewhat perversely as they cannot compensate for the austerity of wider social policy during times of economic crisis and neoliberal government. Consequently, they risk 'improving' the short-term lives of vulnerable families at the expense of girls' schooling and workloads with medium- and long-term implications.

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## Notes

1. [www.younglives.org.uk/what-we-do](http://www.younglives.org.uk/what-we-do).
2. For example, they aim to increase female participation in paid work, but do not adequately address the absence of childcare. Similarly, they fail to acknowledge the vulnerability implicit in wage payments that are not indexed to inflation.

3. Adato (2007) maintains that few qualitative studies on the impact of social protection schemes have been published, even in Latin America where CCTs originated (examples include Adato, 2000, Adato *et al*, 2000, Adato, 2007, Molyneux and Thomson, 2011, Streuli, 2010). While most studies focus on women's experience of participation rather than girls', the way programmes can reinforce gender roles and obscure increases in women's labour (Molyneux, 2006) is clearly relevant to this paper.
4. The composition of the household in terms of age and gender has been found to be an important influence on girls' work in studies of, for example, Progres-Oportunidades in Mexico. This dynamic is also visible in the case studies presented later; for example, Beletch takes responsibility for all the household chores as there are no other girls or women in the household, and Haymanot and Tsega were unable to go to school as they were looking after young siblings.
5. I designed the qualitative fieldwork with Yisak Tafere (Ethiopia) and Uma Vennam (Andhra Pradesh), carried out training and piloting, and participated in the early individual and group interviews.
6. I cannot confirm this figure in the whole sample because the girls are too young to be officially participating and thus this is unlikely to be reported in a survey.
7. The reason why there are registered households that are not working is that some schemes are inactive and some households take job cards as a form of insurance.
8. Of those who do not work, four are studying in residential hostels during the week as they live in a remote tribal area, and one has a disability.
9. The equivalent figure for the whole sample ranged from 29 per cent to 35 per cent, which may reflect a pro-poor bias in the qualitative sample – see also figures for PSNP/NREGS participation.
10. OFSP is a credit and agricultural extension programme in which PSNP recipients are compelled to participate to facilitate graduation from the scheme.
11. All of the three cases from Ethiopia dropped out of school due to their own or others' illness – Haymanot and Tsega to look after their mother and sister and Beletch to repay a loan for medical care.

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