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The Impact of Lengthening the Instructional Time on Inequality: The Case of Vietnam



Tran Ngo Thi Minh Tam
VASS, CAF
Laure Pasquier-Doumer
IRD, Dial



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Introduction

Shortages of financial and human resources have constrained many developing countries to limit the instructional time in primary to half of the day.

Lengthening the instructional time, a policy option to

- improve the learning achievement
- reduce the inequality of opportunity?



Introduction

Effect on inequality of opportunity by

- **narrowing the gap in instructional time** between children with disadvantaged social background and well-off children who benefit from private tutoring
- **substituting time spent outside of school** with time at school, children from different social background will benefit from a more similar learning environment



The context of Vietnam

Low number of teaching hours

Progressive implementation of full-day schooling

With specificities:

- the participation of the families in funding the full-day schooling policy
- an ambitious policy from 2009 to 2015 to support schools in the most disadvantaged provinces in their switch to full-day schooling (SEQAP).

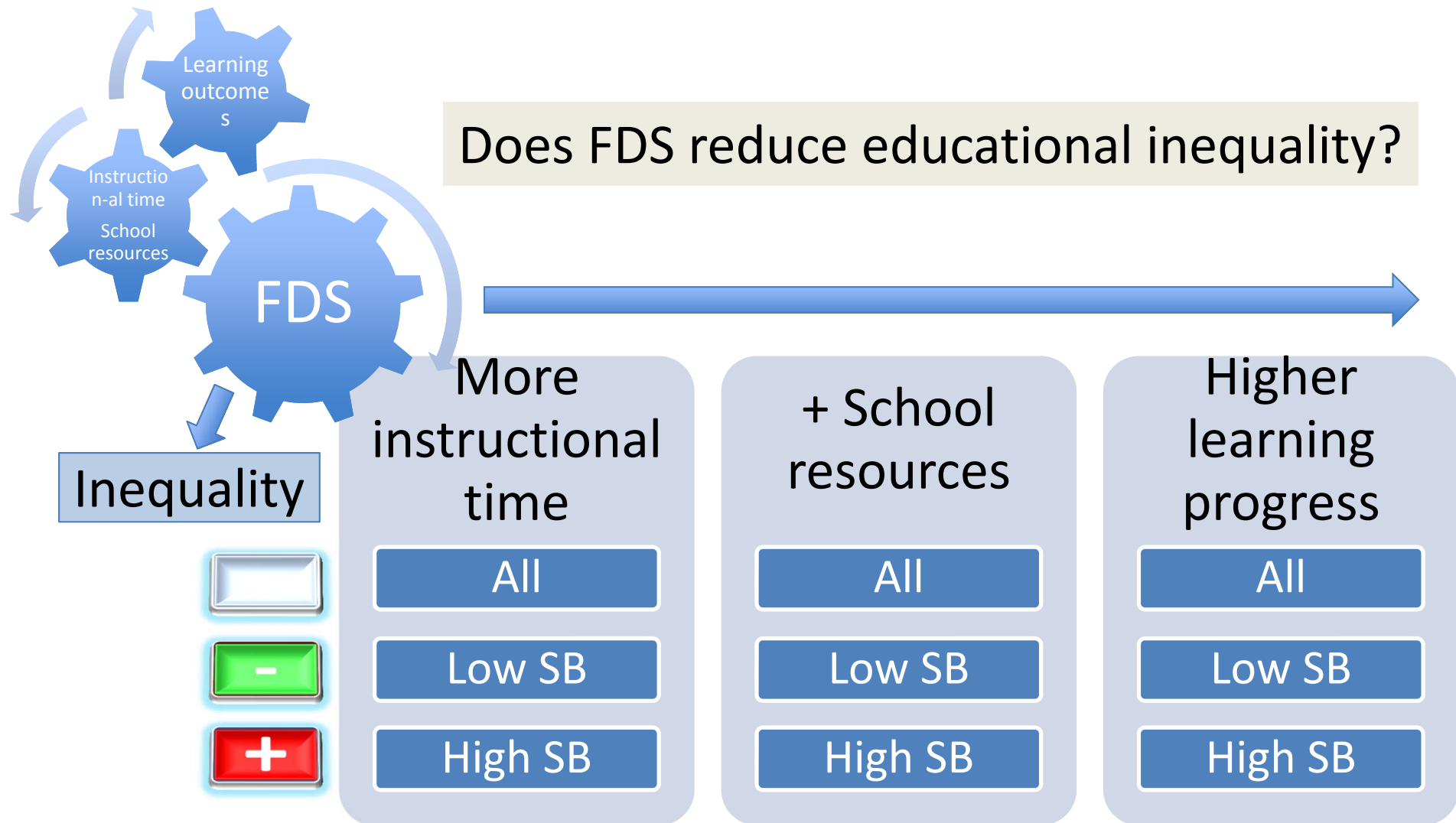


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Research question and methodology



Data

Young Lives School Survey 2011

- 3,284 G5 students in 176 classes of 52 schools
- Information on child, teacher, class, principal and school characteristics
- 2 rounds of data collection at the beginning and end of the academic year 2011-2012: Test and retest in Math and Vietnamese to measure learning progress

Longitudinal Young Lives household survey round 2

Younger cohort, 1125 children surveyed at age 5

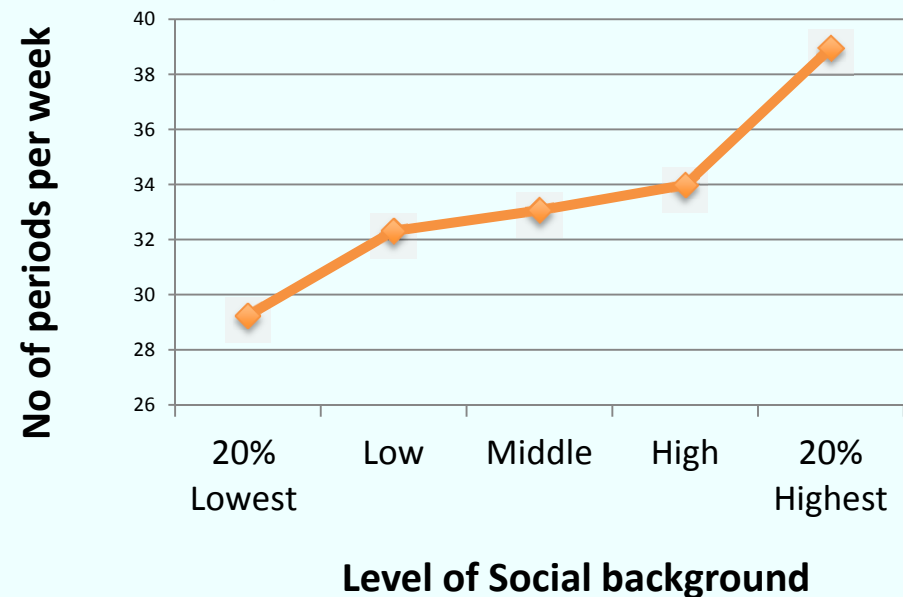


Key findings

1. FDS has not reduced the gap in instructional time between children with high and low social background

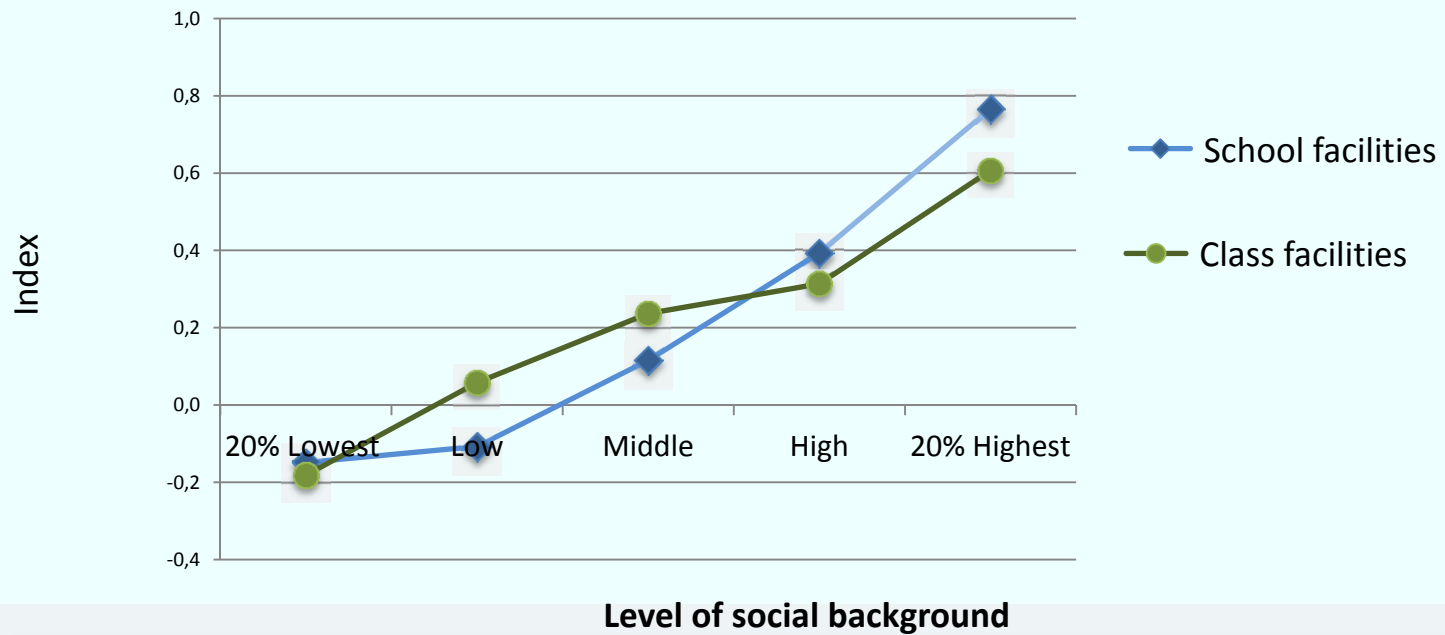
- Lower access to FDS or FDS with less instructional time for disadvantaged background students
- Partial substitution of FDS for private tutoring

Figure 1. Instructional time



Key findings

2. The well-off students always have better school resources accompanying FDS than the low social background



Key findings

3. FDS does not significantly improve the learning progress in Vietnamese or in Mathematics of the students, especially for children with disadvantaged social background

- FDS seems to magnify the effect of social background on learning progress, thereby worsening the inequality of opportunity.
 - Children belonging to the families with the lowest social background have lower progress in Vietnamese when they benefit from the FDS than when they do not



Policy implications

The extending the schooling time in primary school could participate to the SDGs (4, 10) only if some conditions are met:

- **defining national standards** in the definition and the implementation of the full-day schooling:
- should be accompanied by the authorities' **revision of the curricula** in order to avoid detrimental effect on the learning progress for the most disadvantaged students.



Policy implications

- the public support on full-day schooling for disadvantaged students should be guaranteed (good targeting of support policy or universal coverage of free full-day schooling)

Otherwise, full-day schooling will contribute as in Vietnam to reinforce inequality in education based on socio-economic inequality



Thank you for your attention!



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