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Bangladeshi rural secondary school girls' participation in higher mathematics optional course: what are the influences?

Adams, G. (ed.), Proceedings of the British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics (BSRLM). Vol. 35, No. 3. Proceedings of the day conference, University of Reading, UK, November 7, 2015. London: British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics (BSRLM). 7-12 (2016).

Summary: Previous research has shown that women are still underrepresented in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) field compared to men in many countries, including those from the European Union and the United States but the cause remains debated. The negative effect of gender stereotypes relating to women's perceived lower ability in domains such as mathematics and reasoning is considered to be the one possible explanation for this underrepresentation. This paper reports on a pilot study based on three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 30 girls of grades 9 and 10 of three rural secondary schools in Bangladesh. The thematic analysis of FGD data explores these girls' attitudes towards mathematics, perceived usefulness of studying higher mathematics, their school experiences, career aspirations, and parents' professions.

Classification: C63 C23 D33

Keywords: educational research; gender differences; pilot study; classroom observations; interviews; lower secondary; student attitudes; choices; careers; influences; parents; school-related issues; rural secondary school; STEM

<http://www.bsrlm.org.uk/IPs/ip35-3/BSRLM-IP-35-3-02.pdf>