

## YOUTH DECISION MAKING AUTONOMY AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper investigates the role of adolescents in decision making related to investments in their education. Economic literature by far and large has focused on parents as the decision makers in these investments. This paper, however, points out that this is not always the case. Specifically, the paper finds that autonomy, measured by participation in household decision making, increases the probability of a 19-year-old entering vocational school or college after completing high school in Vietnam, but decreases that probability in Peru and has no impact in India and Ethiopia. These findings call for more attention toward the relationship between adolescents and parents as well as to specific cultural contexts if government and organizations aim at supporting education and enhancing youth welfare.