Medals and Mindsets: How Women's Olympic Competitiveness Advances Gender Equality

Heng Chen Qingxu Yang
The University of Hong Kong

May 2026

Motivation

Women are widely perceived as less competitive than men and less suited for success in high-stakes environments (Niederle & Vesterlund, 2007; Croson & Gneezy, 2009)

Such beliefs are persistent and broadly shared across education, labor markets, politics, and household decision-making (Buser et al., 2014; Kahn & Ginther, 2017)

They shape how parents, teachers, and employers evaluate female potential—reinforcing gender gaps in education, careers, and leadership (Carlana, 2019; Reuben et al., 2014)

Can salient and credible counter-evidence reshape these deep-rooted gender stereotypes?

Our question: Does exposure to a female Olympic medalist reduce gender gaps in education?

This Paper: The Olympics and Gender Gap in Education

Sports are inherently about competition—rankings and medals are *objective, public signals*

The Olympics offer uniquely massive and concentrated media exposure

China withdrew from the IOC in 1958, returned in 1979, and competed first in 1984.

- Olympic return reflected geopolitical decisions—not local gender dynamics
- Women athletes have accounted for roughly two-thirds of China's medals since 1984

In China's highly competitive education system, beliefs about children's competitive capacity carry significant weight.

Research Design

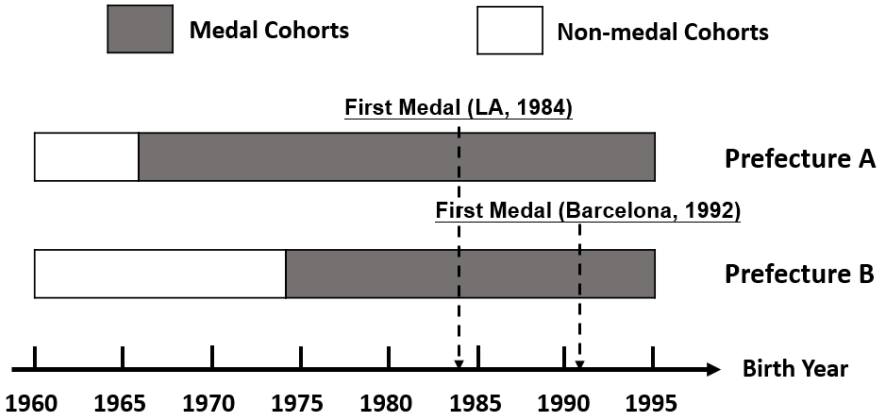
Key assumption: Medalists had stronger influence in their hometowns

FE model compares medal vs. non-medal cohorts across prefectures with different timing of their first female medalist.

- **Cohort variation:** Exposure affects cohorts within the educational choice window
  - *Medal cohort:* age ≤ 18 at the time of the medalist's emergence
  - *Non-medal cohort:* age > 18, education already completed
- **Geographic variation:** Focusing on medal prefectures only
  - Hometowns experience *staggered timing* of their first female medalist (1984–2004)

Shift-share instrument for the timing of first female medalist: leveraging geopolitical shocks (Soviet presence in Olympics) and its differential impacts across sport events.

Empirical Strategy: Example



Main Findings: Preview

1. Educational Outcomes: Exposure to a hometown female Olympic medalist reduces the gender gap in schooling.

- Girls obtain **0.2 additional years of education** relative to boys (≈ one-fifth of the 0.99-year pre-existing gap)
- Effects operate through educational transitions, especially primary-to-junior and junior-to-high school advancement
- No comparable effects following *male* medal victories

2. Mechanism: Media framing; Fathers update stereotypes; Higher investment in daughters

- ✓ Competitive-equality media narratives ("women are not inferior to men")
- ✓ Fathers' educational expectations and expenditure on daughters rise

Data

Sports Data

- IOC medal records + athlete profiles (Baidu Encyclopedia, Wikipedia, national registries)
- **Sample:** Team China, Summer Olympics 1984–2004
  - 1,281 athletes (590 female, 691 male); 355 medalists (254 female, 101 male)

Census Data

- 1% Population Mini-Census 2015; birth cohorts 1960–1995
- 91 hometown prefectures with at least one female medalist
- Reshaped into prefecture × birth cohort panel

Survey Data (Mechanisms)

- China Family Panel Studies (CFPS): parental educational expectations and children's self-reports
- China Household Income Project (CHIP): household educational expenditure

Summary Statistics

Baseline Specification: Fixed Effects Model

TWFE regression equation:

$$Y_{icp} = \beta_0 + \beta \text{Female}_i \times \text{Medal Cohort}_{cp} + \delta_{cp} + \gamma_{\text{Female}\times\text{Generation}} + X_i'\theta + \varepsilon_{icp}, \quad (1)$$

- Dependent variable: years of schooling for individual i of birth cohort c in hometown prefecture p
- *Medal Cohort*: individual was age ≤ 18 when hometown's first female medalist emerged
- Controls: ethnicity, Hukou type, migrant status
- Fixed effects: prefecture $\times$ birth cohort FE; female $\times$ generation FE
- Standard errors clustered at hometown prefecture level

Baseline Results: Years of Schooling

	Dependent Variable: Years of Schooling			
	Prefectures with Female Medalist			Also Male Medalist
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female × Medal Cohort	0.198***	0.199***	0.200***	0.225**
	(0.0641)	(0.0637)	(0.0635)	(0.109)
Medal Cohort	-0.124*			
	(0.0713)			
Female × Male Medal Cohort				-0.0285
				(0.0826)
Controls			Y	Y
HomePref FE	Y			
BirthYear FE	Y			
HomePref×BirthYear		Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mean	10.65	10.65	10.65	11.50
N	258,857	258,857	258,857	113,441
R^2	0.248	0.268	0.270	0.258

Transition or Dropout?

	Dependent Variable: Educational Transitions			
	Illiteracy →Primary+	Primary →Junior+	Junior →High+	High →College+
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female × Medal Cohort	0.00893***	0.0276***	0.0129*	0.00913
	(0.00268)	(0.00806)	(0.00781)	(0.0116)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mean	0.989	0.893	0.425	0.604
N	258,857	256,000	228,692	97,207
R^2	0.059	0.139	0.140	0.215

Transition or Dropout?

	Dependent Variable: Dropout (1=Yes)			
	Primary Dropout	Junior Dropout	High Dropout	College Dropout
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female × Medal Cohort	0.00363	0.00169	-0.00192	0.00221
	(0.00994)	(0.00172)	(0.00303)	(0.00293)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mean	0.087	0.028	0.018	0.010
N	26,912	131,473	66,707	58,536
R^2	0.111	0.035	0.061	0.092

Robustness Checks

- Redefining “choice window” and treatment variable
- Expanding sample cohorts or prefectures; dropping migrants
- Including winter Olympic medalists
- Controlling compulsory education policy
- Controlling prefecture-female specific and time-varying prefecture characteristics
- Controlling time-varying factors interacted with gender

View Results

IV Strategy: Bartik-Style Instrument

Identification concern:

- Timing of the first medalist may not be exogenous

Exogenous shock:

- Soviet Union's Olympic presence: 1984 boycott and 1991 collapse
- Soviet boycott and dissolution created a *competitive vacuum* unrelated to Chinese local conditions
- Heterogeneous impacts across sports $\Rightarrow$ different opportunities for different prefectures

Soviet Collapse Creates Medal Opportunities for China

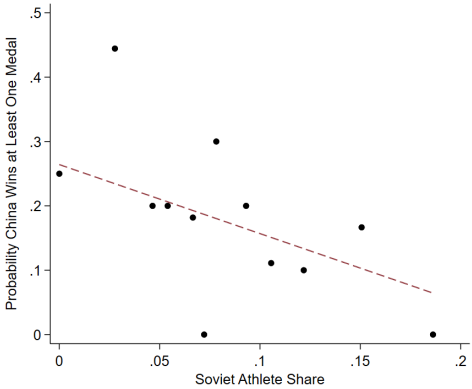


Figure: Soviet Share and China's Success

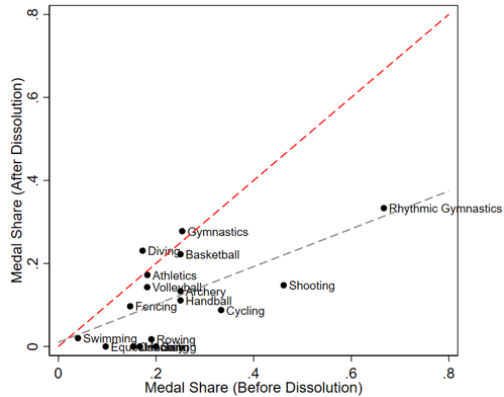


Figure: Soviet Dominance Pre vs Post

Bartik Instrument Combines:

- *Shares:* Pre-determined athletic specialization (1983 National Games)

  ρ_{kp} = prefecture p's share of national medals in sport k

- *Shifts:* Soviet strength in sport k at time t

  s_{kt} = Soviet female athletes as a share of all female athletes (excl. China)

- *Shares v.s. Shifts views*

IV Assumptions

Relevance: Soviet collapse systematically affected Chinese medal opportunities

- Strong negative correlation between Soviet participation and China's medal probability
- Heterogeneous decline in Soviet dominance across sports after 1991

Exogeneity: Soviet participation was orthogonal to Chinese prefecture characteristics

- Driven by domestic Soviet politics and broader geopolitical factors
- Unrelated to gender norm evolution in Chinese prefectures

Exclusion Restriction: Soviet participation affects gender outcomes only through medal opportunities

- No direct impact on local gender attitudes in China
- Relies on exogeneity of shifts rather than shares

IV Construction: Steps 1-3

Step 1 - Shares: Prefecture specialization from 1983 National Games

$$\rho_{kp} = \frac{\text{Prefecture } p \text{ medals in sport } k}{\text{Total medals in sport } k}$$

Step 2 - Shifts: Soviet competitive strength by sport-year

$$s_{kt} = \frac{\text{Soviet female athletes in sport } k}{\text{Total female athletes in sport } k \text{ (excl. China)}}$$

Step 3 - Bartik Aggregation: Prefecture exposure to Soviet competition

$$\theta_{pt} = \sum_{k=1}^{K} \rho_{kp} \times s_{kt}$$

IV Construction: Steps 4-5

Step 4 - Probability Mapping: Convert to medal opportunity measure

$$\pi_{pt} = 1 - e^{-(1-\theta_{pt})}$$

Why use Poisson process interpretation?

- Olympic medals are rare events with low baseline probability
- Provides natural bounded probability measure [0,1]
- Rate parameter $(1 - \theta_{pt})$ reflects competitive opportunity intensity

Step 5 - Cohort Aggregation: Cumulative exposure during ages 0-18

$$\text{Predicted Medal Cohort}_{pc} = 1 - \prod_{j=1}^{J_c} (1 - \pi_{pt_j})$$

IV Construction: An Example

For cohort born in 1979 in Prefecture p

Exposed to 4 Olympics before age 18, with predicted medal probabilities:

Olympics	Age	π_{pt}	No Medal Prob.
1984	5	0.10	0.90
1988	9	0.10	0.90
1992	13	0.20	0.80
1996	17	0.20	0.80

Cumulative Exposure:

$$\text{Predicted Medal Cohort}_{p,1979} = 1 - (0.90)(0.90)(0.80)(0.80) = 0.4816$$

Interpretation: 48% predicted probability this cohort was exposed to at least one hometown female medalist during educational choice window.

IV Regression Results

	Female Medal		Male Medal	
	1^{st} Stage	2^{nd} Stage	1^{st} Stage	2^{nd} Stage
Dependent Variable	Female× Medal Cohort	Years of Schooling	Female× Medal Cohort	Years of Schooling
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female × Medal Cohort		0.558***		
		(0.173)		
Female × Predicted Medal Cohort	0.591***			
	(0.0932)			
Female × Male Medal Cohort				0.236
				(0.431)
Female × Predicted Male Medal Cohort			0.411**	
			(0.153)	
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y
F-statistics		40.299		7.273
N	258,857	258,857	113,441	113,441
R^2	0.892	0.003	0.879	0.002

IV Validity Tests

Shift Exogeneity: Soviet decline not concentrated in China's competitive sports View

Balance Test: Instrument uncorrelated with pre-1991 prefecture characteristics View

Time-Varying Factors: Interacting pre-1991 characteristics with cohort FE View

Pre-Trend Test: Assigning post-1991 predictions to pre-1991 cohorts View

"Many Shifts" Requirement: Using 214 Olympic events instead of 29 sports View

Alternative Shift Definitions: using Russia vs. Russia+Ukraine+Belarus View

Re-centering: Isolating shift-driven variation following Borusyak and Hull (2023) View

Mechanism

Q1: How did media coverage matter? *Intensity* vs. *framing*

Q2: Who updates beliefs—*fathers* or *daughters*?

Q3: Is this a *role model* effect or *social norm* transmission?

Data: *People's Daily* (45,657 Olympics articles, 1984–2004); CFPS parental surveys; CHIP household expenditure data

Q1: Media Framing — Two Narratives

Competitive-Equality Narrative: Female competitive success challenges stereotypes

*"Zhang Shan, showing that **women are not inferior to men**, courageously won the gold medal..."*

—People's Daily, August 14, 1992

National Pride Narrative: Collective achievement and national prestige

*"Xu Haifeng's historic victory **brings glory to our motherland**..."*

—People's Daily, July 30, 1984

Key finding: Female medalists receive disproportionately more *competitive-equality framing*; this framing—not mere coverage intensity—drives educational outcomes.

Are Female and Male Medalists Reported Differently?

	Dependent Variable:		
	Number of Reports (log)	Competitive Equality Share	National Pride Share
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Female Medalist	-0.0118	0.0723***	0.0132
	(0.106)	(0.0148)	(0.0180)
Sport FE	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y
Mean	1.85	0.11	0.14
N	416	416	416
R^2	0.704	0.544	0.588

Media Coverage: Heterogeneity Analysis

Group by	Dependent Variable: Years of Schooling					
	Number of Reports		Gender Equality		National Pride	
	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female×Medal Cohort	0.210**	0.204**	0.261***	0.0739	0.210**	0.186**
	(0.0823)	(0.0986)	(0.0675)	(0.129)	(0.0956)	(0.0834)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mean	10.56	10.82	10.45	11.15	10.49	10.91
N	172,135	86,722	186,864	71,993	163,100	95,757
R^2	0.253	0.297	0.266	0.261	0.265	0.273

Q2: Parental Beliefs — Fathers vs. Mothers

CFPS Survey: "What is the highest level of education you hope your child will attain?"

- Separate responses from fathers and mothers
- Nationally representative, 128 prefectures

CHIP Survey: Detailed educational expenditure (tuition, tutoring, books)

- Single-child households, children aged 6–18

Key finding: *Fathers*—not mothers—update educational expectations and raise spending for daughters; mothers show no significant change.

Survey Evidence: Parental Educational Expectations

	Dependent Variable: Parents' Educational Expectations			
	Years of Schooling	Junior High	High School	College
Panel A: Fathers	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Daughter × Medal Exposure	1.277**	0.0229	0.0998*	0.126**
	(0.640)	(0.0380)	(0.0557)	(0.0631)
Daughter	-0.742*	-0.00659	-0.0541	-0.0879*
	(0.392)	(0.0170)	(0.0340)	(0.0509)
N	640	640	640	640
R^2	0.803	0.587	0.700	0.780
Panel B: Mothers	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Daughter × Medal Exposure	-0.539	-0.0194	-0.0318	-0.0158
	(0.501)	(0.0181)	(0.0387)	(0.0467)
Daughter	0.0290	0.00413	-0.00557	-0.0365
	(0.274)	(0.0111)	(0.0203)	(0.0277)
N	1,350	1,350	1,350	1,350
R^2	0.611	0.550	0.603	0.623
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
BirthYear FE	Y	Y	Y	Y

Survey Evidence: Educational Expenditure

	Dependent Variable: Yearly Household Expenditure (RMB, log)			
	Tuition Fee	Training Fee	Housing Exp.	Healthcare Exp.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Daughter × Female Medal	0.0452*	0.0175*	-0.0245	0.0131
	(0.0256)	(0.00991)	(0.0451)	(0.0312)
Daughter	-0.0621**	-0.0315**	0.0416	0.0151
	(0.0336)	(0.0167)	(0.0516)	(0.0215)
Female Medal	0.00554	0.00529	-0.0196	-0.0212
	(0.00661)	(0.00859)	(0.0467)	(0.0339)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
Prefecture FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	32,513	32,513	32,513	32,513
R^2	0.125	0.081	0.347	0.215

Q3: Role Model or Social Norm?

Alternative: Role model effects operate through girls' direct identification (*"someone like me"*).

Two empirical tests:

1. Do female medalists increase sports-related career choices? *No.*

View

2. Do effects operate through girls' own aspirations or self-assessed competence? *No.*

View

Conclusion: The mechanism is *social norm transmission* through fathers' belief updating, not direct inspiration of girls.

Conclusion

Beliefs about women's competitiveness can be reshaped: Publicized female competitiveness—when framed as evidence of equal capacity—shifts deep-rooted gender stereotypes.

Fathers as key gatekeepers: Engaging fathers may be pivotal for narrowing gender gaps in education and ambition. The channel operates through changed parental beliefs, not daughters' own inspiration.

Beyond parents: Similar mechanisms may influence other gatekeepers—teachers, employers, mentors, and peers.

Legacy of global events: Prominent global events (Nobel Prize, World Championships) can produce comparable effects by shaping social perceptions of female achievement.

Thank You!

Appendix: Female Medalists by Hometown Prefecture

Earliest medal achievement: Liaoning, Jiangsu and Sichuan
Highest medal count: Liaoning, Jiangsu and Hubei

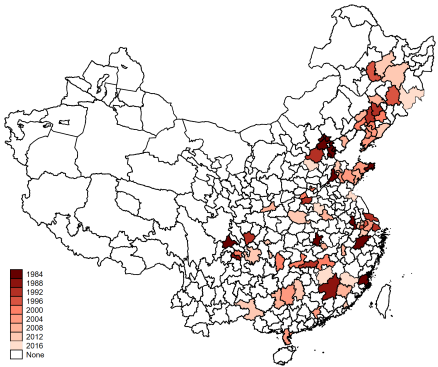


Figure: Year of Female Medal

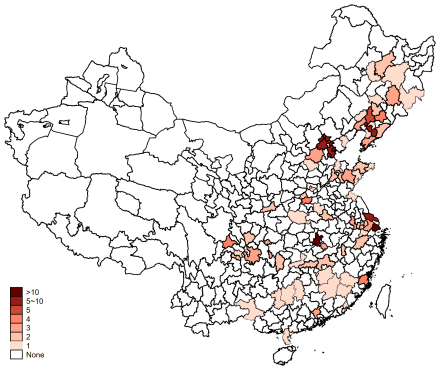
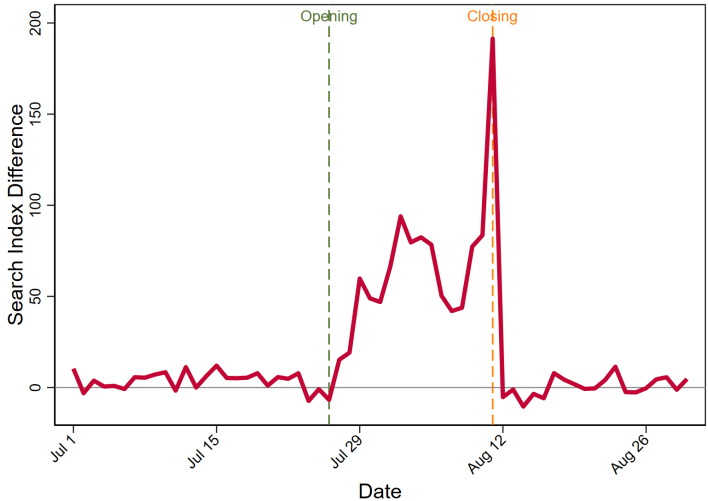


Figure: Number of Medals

Appendix: Medalists Receive More Attention Locally



Appendix: Female Medals by Sport Events

Top 10 sport events ranked by the number of medals

Sport	Proportion (%)	Female Share (%)
Diving	13.57	47.37
Gymnastics	13.21	29.73
Shooting	12.14	38.24
Weightlifting	12.14	23.53
Table Tennis	11.79	57.58
Swimming	7.50	100.00
Badminton	7.50	80.95
Judo	5.00	100.00
Athletics	4.64	84.62
Fencing	2.50	57.14
Other	10.00	82.14

Appendix: Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Panel A: Demographic Characteristics					
Female	258,857	0.496	0.500	0	1
Birth year	258,857	1976.961	10.128	1960	1995
Han ethnic	258,857	0.947	0.223	0	1
Household hukou	258,857	0.966	0.181	0	1
Migrant	258,857	0.113	0.317	0	1
Panel B: Educational Attainment					
Years of schooling	258,857	10.646	3.368	0	19
Transition to primary school	258,857	0.989	0.104	0	1
Transition to junior high school	256,000	0.893	0.309	0	1
Transition to high school	228,692	0.425	0.494	0	1
Transition to college	97,216	0.604	0.489	0	1
Dropout during primary school	27,308	0.087	0.282	0	1
Dropout during junior high school	131,476	0.028	0.164	0	1
Dropout during high school	66,724	0.018	0.133	0	1
Dropout during college	58,536	0.010	0.100	0	1

Back to Main

Appendix: Robustness Checks

	Dependent Variable: Years of Schooling		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Female × Medal Cohort at 12	0.161***		
	(0.0530)		
Female × Medal Cohort at 15		0.192***	
		(0.0548)	
Female × Exposure Duration			0.0211***
			(0.00579)
Controls	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y
N	258,857	258,857	258,857
R^2	0.270	0.270	0.270

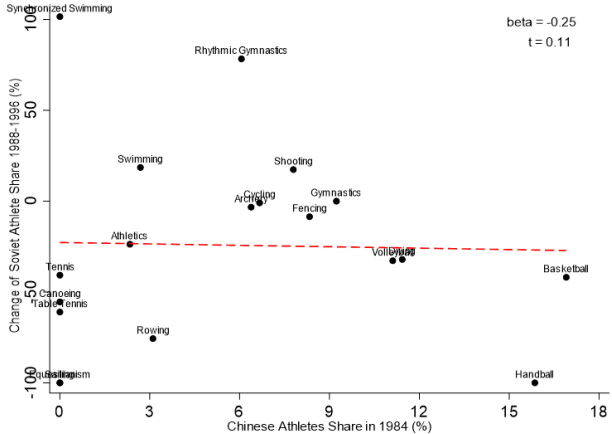
Back to Main

Appendix: Robustness Checks (cont.)

	Dependent Variable: Years of Schooling									
	Excl. 1984	All Pref.	All Age Cohorts	Incl. 2008	Incl. Winter	Drop Migrants	Comp. Edu.	Gender-Pref. FE	GDP p.c.	Primary Schools
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Female × Medal Cohort	0.161**	0.210***	0.200***	0.210***	0.200***	0.200***	0.186***	0.147***	0.200***	0.200***
	(0.0724)	(0.0394)	(0.0635)	(0.0572)	(0.0635)	(0.0652)	(0.0649)	(0.0446)	(0.0635)	(0.0635)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pref.×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Pref. FE								Y		
Female×GDP p.c. (log)									Y	
Female×Primary Schools (log)										Y
N	165,413	768,528	359,409	298,380	258,857	229,593	258,857	258,857	258,857	258,857
R^2	0.212	0.285	0.337	0.273	0.270	0.278	0.270	0.272	0.270	0.270

Back to Main

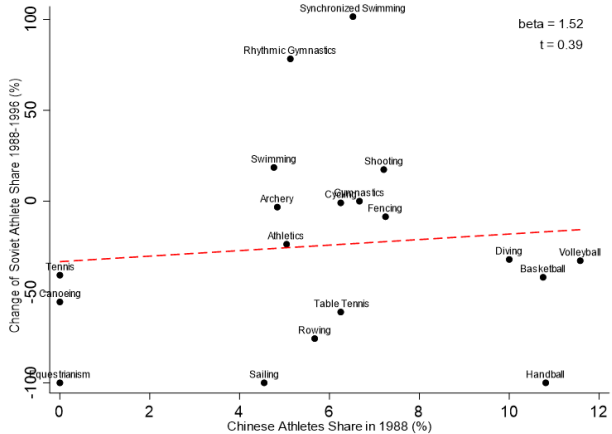
Appendix: Shift Exogeneity - 1984 Los Angeles



Next: 1988 Seoul

Back to Main

Appendix: Shift Exogeneity - 1988 Seoul



Back: 1984 Back to Main

Appendix: Balance Test

	Dependent Variable: Prefecture-level Characteristics in 1990						
	Sex Ratio (%)	GDP per Capita (yuan)	Primary Sector Share (%)	Secondary Sector Share (%)	Primary Schools (per 1,000 pop.)	Gyms (per 1,000 pop.)	Hospitals (per 1,000 pop.)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Predicted Medal 1992	-2.412	571.8	-4.616	-0.848	-10.76	-0.0278	2.753
	(3.812)	(632.0)	(4.971)	(4.819)	(7.130)	(0.0449)	(4.150)
Mean	0.52	2,310.52	24.55	47.57	46.38	0.24	25.28
N	91	84	84	84	84	83	84
R^2	0.001	0.010	0.010	0.000	0.027	0.005	0.005

Back to Main

Appendix: Time-Varying Controls

Control pre-1991 pref. char.	Instrumental Variable Estimation						
	Dependent Variable: Years of Schooling						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Female × Medal Cohort	0.558***	0.652***	0.652***	0.652***	0.652***	0.669***	0.652***
	(0.173)	(0.193)	(0.193)	(0.193)	(0.193)	(0.198)	(0.193)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sex ratio×BirthYear	Y						
GDP per capita×BirthYear		Y					
1^{st} Industry Share×BirthYear			Y				
2^{nd} Industry Share×BirthYear				Y			
Primary School×BirthYear					Y		
Gym×BirthYear						Y	
Hospital×BirthYear							Y
F-statistics	36.171	36.171	36.171	36.171	36.171	34.817	36.171
N	258,857	234,556	234,556	234,556	234,556	232,539	234,556
R^2	0.003	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002

Back to Main

Appendix: Pre-Trend Test

	Dependent Variable: Years of Schooling			
	1960s Cohort	1970s Cohort	1980s Cohort	1960s–1980s Cohort
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female × Medal Cohort	0.190	2.388	3.559	-0.0980
	(2.526)	(2.126)	(3.219)	(1.651)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y
F-statistics	2.634	3.120	3.099	3.064
N	77,386	73,241	76,956	227,583
R^2	0.002	0.002	0.005	0.002

Back to Main

Appendix: Alternative Shift Definitions

	Female Medal	
	1^{st} Stage	2^{nd} Stage
Dependent Variable	Female×Medal Cohort	Years of Schooling
	(1)	(2)
Female × Medal Cohort		0.437*
		(0.221)
Female × Predicted Medal Cohort	0.296***	
	(0.0725)	
Controls	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y
F-statistics		16.629
N	258,857	258,857
R^2	0.888	0.003

Back to Main

Appendix: Re-centering

	Female Medal	
	1^{st} Stage	2^{nd} Stage
Dependent Variable	Female×Medal Cohort	Years of Schooling
	(1)	(2)
Female × Medal Cohort		0.384**
		(0.184)
Female × Predicted Medal Cohort	-44.77***	
	(9.603)	
Controls	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y
F-statistics		21.734
N	258,857	258,857
R^2	0.892	0.003

Back to Main

Appendix: Gender Attitudes

	Dependent Variable:					
	Career	Capacity	Marriage	Layoff	Housework	Daughter
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female × Medal Cohort	-0.0395*	-0.0282	-0.0254	-0.00129	0.0920***	0.0705**
	(0.0214)	(0.0183)	(0.0177)	(0.00790)	(0.0260)	(0.0303)
Female	-0.00214	0.00598	0.0261**	0.00850	0.0470***	0.0216**
	(0.0115)	(0.0118)	(0.0116)	(0.00520)	(0.0128)	(0.00936)
Medal Cohort	0.0231	0.0430*	-0.0169	-0.00343	-0.0665**	-0.0134
	(0.0264)	(0.0216)	(0.0228)	(0.0110)	(0.0288)	(0.0230)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
BirthYear FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mean	0.60	0.39	0.43	0.11	0.73	0.88
N	5,824	5,816	5,815	5,799	5,825	5,838
R^2	0.126	0.067	0.047	0.029	0.101	0.033

Back to Main

Limited Evidence of Role Model Channel

	Dependent Variable: Occupation Choice			
	Athlete	Sport Agent	Sport Retail	All Related
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female × Medal Cohort	-0.000345	-0.0000448	-0.000122	-0.000512
	(0.000366)	(0.000480)	(0.000883)	(0.00109)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref×BirthYear	Y	Y	Y	Y
Female×Generation	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mean	0.0012	0.0018	0.0037	0.0067
N	258,857	258,857	258,857	258,857
R^2	0.012	0.015	0.020	0.018

Back to Main

Data: Children's Self-Reported Attitudes

Data Source: CFPS Children's Questionnaire

- Children aged 10-15 self-report (not parents answering for them)
- Nationally representative sample

Outcome Variables:

1. *Educational expectations:* "What is the highest level of education you hope to attain?"
2. *Academic performance:* Self-assessment relative to peers (1-5 scale)
3. *Competence:* Self-assessment as a student (1-5 scale)
4. *Effort & discipline:* Studying diligence, compliance with rules (1-5 scale)
5. *Leadership:* Self-assessment of leadership capability (1-5 scale)
6. *Career aspirations:* Preference for competitive occupations

Limited Evidence of Direct Inspiration

	Dependent Variable: Children's Self-reported Attitudes							
	Education	Achievement	Competence	Diligence	Compliance	Discipline	Leadership	Career
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Daughter × Medal Exposure	0.0893	-0.144	0.0272	0.00935	-0.244	0.0280	0.0272	-0.0607
	(0.252)	(0.115)	(0.111)	(0.656)	(0.232)	(0.407)	(0.111)	(0.0616)
Daughter	-0.0853	0.248***	0.199***	0.314	0.200	0.183	0.199***	0.0189
	(0.383)	(0.0697)	(0.0682)	(0.508)	(0.135)	(0.286)	(0.0682)	(0.0250)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
HomePref FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
BirthYear FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	1,429	1,406	1,408	1,411	1,411	1,411	1,408	1,380
R^2	0.569	0.483	0.486	0.373	0.557	0.449	0.486	0.446

Back to Main