

Access, Poverty and Learning Achievement for Primary School Leavers in Kenya: Analysis of Evidence from 47 Counties

Moses Oketch

Abstract:

To what extent, if at all, did the introduction of free primary education in Kenya in 2003 have positive equity effects, in terms of both access and achievement. Access is based on the number of candidates sitting the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination and the KCPE score is used to measure achievement levels. The study uses data that reflects Kenya's 47 devolved governance counties. A quantitative measure of poverty in all 47 counties was then entered as an independent variable of regression analysis, and a negative association with KCPE performance noted (high poverty levels associated with low KCPE scores). Also noted was a contrast between counties showing high enrolment impact and improved KCPE scores, and those showing high enrolment impact and lower KCPE scores. Counties in the former group are located almost entirely in arid and semi-arid areas, those in the latter group in the coastal region.

Keywords: Kenya; free primary education policy; learning achievement; cross-county analysis;

Full text: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03057925.2017.1365286>