

Justifications and Impacts of Low-Fee Private Schools in Kenya and Uganda: Understanding Policy Evolutionary Mechanisms through Public Discourse of Bridge International Academies

Jeremy Monk

Abstract

Low-fee private schools (LFPS) have grown considerably in the developing world as public free primary education has been unable to cater to the poorest children. Bridge International Academies (BIA), one of the largest chains of LFPS, has positioned itself as a solution to issues of access and quality of primary education. Using newspaper articles from Kenya and Uganda, this paper examines public discourse of BIA through the lens of cultural political economy, or how public discourse can influence variation, selection and retention regarding LFPS. After exploring scholarship to understand the justifications and impacts of LFPS, this paper finds that justifications are present in public discourse while impacts are not. Therefore, public discourse has given voice and promoted the need for improvements, with LFPS as an option, but that discourse (and scholarship) has yet to emphasize LFPS as a real solution, due to inconclusive evidence and ongoing battles with governments.

Full text: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1245868.pdf>