

Female Participation in Technical, Vocational Education and Training Institutions (TVET) Subsector: The Kenyan Experience

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Abstract

Economists widely agree that there is a high positive relationship between education and development. This relationship is even more pronounced when women receive education as it not only benefits them but also all those they nurture. Despite the progress made over the last decade in enhancing access, equity, retention, quality, completion rates and gender parity in education and training in Kenya, the Technical, Vocational, and Education Training (TVET) subsector continues to experience low female enrolment in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) based courses. This paper is a desk-review focusing on establishing the status of female participation in TVET and factors contributing to the prevailing status –quo. The paper recommends that encouraging and supporting fair and equal opportunities for girls and boys to perform in TVET -related subjects at school would translate to more girls and women in TVET fields of study and even to the world of work. There is also need for the educators to use more gender-responsive approaches at all levels of education; increase role models such as more female teachers and attach young female scholars to practicing women engineers in the country. At policy level, gender responsive strategies such as having a certain percentage of girls being admitted and encouraged to do technical-based subjects in form one every year are some of the interventions that may help shield this vulnerable group from persistent exclusion from TVET education.

Keywords: Female participation, TVET, inequality, STEM.

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