

Demand for Education in Kenya: The Effect of School Uniform Cost on Access to Secondary Education.

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Abstract

This paper examines the actual cost of school uniform by age, gender, class and type of school and how it influences pupils' access to secondary education in Kenya. The study used correlational research design and targeted all the 26 secondary school principals and 23,275 household heads in Tharaka south Sub-county, Kenya. The sample size constituted all the 26 school principals and 393 household heads sampled using Yamane (1967) formulae. The data was collected from school principals using questionnaires and from household heads using interview guide. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, means and standard deviation as inferential statistics like correlation and t-test. Through data analysis, the study established that the cost of uniform for girls is 12% higher than that of boys. It also found that students in boarding schools spend more on school uniform compared to those in day schools at Ksh 4,779 and Ksh 4,143 respectively. The study also revealed a variation on cost of uniform in relation to class level where on average, a student in Form 1 spends Ksh 5,375 on uniform compared to those in Form 2 who spends Ksh 4,706, Form three Ksh 3,917 and Form four 4,325 respectively. Finally, the study established that, there is a relationship between the cost of school uniform and access to secondary education ($r = 0.834$, $N=333$, $p<0.0010$) implying that the cost of school uniform determines pupils chances to access secondary education in Kenya. The results lead to a recommendation that the government of Kenya in partnership with other educational stakeholders should subsidise the cost of school uniforms for the government achieve 100% transition rate from primary to secondary educations as envisioned in the policy of Free Day Secondary Education.

Keywords: Access, Uniform cost and Effect.

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