

Effects of School Quality on Student Achievement: Discontinuity Evidence from Kenya

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Introduction:

The most desirable Kenyan secondary schools are elite government schools that admit the best students from across the country. We exploit the random variation generated by the centralized school admissions process in a regression discontinuity design to obtain causal estimates of the effects of attending one of these elite public schools on student progression and test scores in secondary school. Despite their reputations, we find little evidence of positive impacts on learning outcomes for students who attended these schools, suggesting that their sterling reputations reflect the selection of students rather than their ability to generate value-added test score gains.

(JEL H52, I21, I28, O15)

Keywords: School quality, student achievement, Kenya

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