

Factors affecting transition rates from primary to secondary schools: the case of Kenya

Kikechi R. Werunga, Geoffrey Musera

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), Kenya
E-mail: werungawerunga@yahoo.com, gmusera34@yahoo.com

Oliver Sindabi

Moi University, Kenya
E-mail: osindabi@yahoo.com

Abstract

Kenya envisages being a developed nation by 2030. This calls for increased transition rates from primary to secondary school in all districts to meet its anticipated middle and high level manpower requirements. However, transition rates from primary to secondary school in some districts remain low despite the government effort to offer tuition free secondary education. This has been attributed to a number of factors among them cultural, environmental, school-based or socio-economic factors. This is a cause of concern if the government has to meet Vision 2030 as well as MDGs by 2015. This paper reports on factors affecting transition rates from primary to secondary school in Taita Taveta district, Kenya. A sample of 144 respondents consisting of 88 parents and 56 primary school head teachers in the district were used. The main tools of data collection were a questionnaire and interview schedule. Data analysis involved the use of percentages and a Chi-square. The results indicate that an average of 40% of pupils fail to transit to secondary schools every year in the district and the most affected are girls. The main reasons for non transition are lack of funds to pay school levies, early marriages, long distance to school and lack of interest in schooling. There is thus need for the government to introduce incentives such as additional allocations to the poor, include secondary education as basic education, empower the locals through poverty eradication strategies and review the curriculum to make it more responsive to students' interests.

Key words: cultural factors, environmental factors, school-based factors, socio-economic factors, transition rate.