

Providing Quality Early Childhood Development Education: A Poverty Reduction Agenda

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ABSTRACT It is a well-known fact that basic education is a fundamental driver of human development. Enhancing individuals' literacy and numeracy skills is beneficial for increased productivity, economic growth and reduction of poverty. A significant portion of young children have started their schooling journey in the early childhood development centers. There has been overwhelming concern regarding the quality of early childhood development experiences afforded to these young children. On the basis of the scenario set above this paper seeks to outline the challenges facing African education in trying to pursue the United Nations' aim of Education for All, to achieve Millennium Development Goals and finally to reduce the poverty level. Provision of quality early childhood development may be an important aspect of reducing poverty. A recent evaluation reveals that although this early childhood contributes positively to the life of young children, this does not apply equally across the board. Although there are plans and strategies in place, these will continue to be just a dream if poverty continues to divide the society, determined by the quality of schooling afforded to different social classes. This high degree of inequality between schools is largely a legacy of historical educational inequality. However, it arises more from differences in educational quality than from differential attainment, since the latter has narrowed considerably in recent decades. Funding is still undoubtedly scarce, funding sometimes in, and by itself is not a guarantee to achieve equity and equality of outcomes. This paper will share insights learned through this study.