Education in Zambia at Fifty Years of Independence and Beyond: History, Current Status and Contemporary Issues
FEMALE EDUCATION AND FERTILITY IN ZAMBIA

by

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Abstract

Education has a strong impact on the life of a woman, her family, community and nation. However, measuring such impact is not an easy task. The effect is seen in all areas of family life and in society and it reflects the multifaceted nature of the education experience. Using Demographic and Health Survey data for Zambia, this chapter presents evidence that shows that fertility reduces with an increase in education. Children Ever Born, total fertility and fertility preferences were used to explore the relationship between female education and fertility. The results show that fertility is lowest among women with the highest education attainments. This reflects the fact that educated women have knowledge of and access to family planning and have the impetus to make credible and reflective fertility decisions. Efforts to improve women’s enrolments, retention and participation in education in line with the policies outlined in Zambia’s national implementation framework for education are thus the surest way to reduce fertility, especially adolescent fertility which is very high and is a major cause of girls’ drop-out from school.

Key words: Female Education, Fertility, Zambia

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