

Name: Mahovo, Nomore

Student ID: 201526019

Thesis Title: The Impact of Electricity on School Attendance in the Rural Areas of Zimbabwe

Abstract:

The gap between rural and urban electrification remains huge in developing nations, a phenomenon prevalent in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) where more than half a billion people (70% of the SSA populace) were living without electricity in 2009 (IEA, 2010). Access to electricity is a critical factor for socio-economic development especially in rural areas where its availability is linked to development of the often remote and neglected rural areas. Electricity is a prerequisite to limiting rural to urban migration, slowing down deforestation, and aiding human capital development thereby enhancing productivity and future fiscal revenues. North African states which have very high rural electrification levels also exhibit higher literacy rates which were estimated at 92.6% in 2014 compared to 70.8% for SSA (World Bank). However empirical studies on electrification and education have come up with mixed results. The Zimbabwe 2014 Multi Indicator Cluster Survey data was used in extending the analysis to Zimbabwe, a landlocked sub Saharan African country. Using OLS we examined the effect of having electricity on school attendance of rural school children. The study shows a negative relationship between electricity and school attendance for secondary school girls as well as primary school boys. The way the Zimbabwe rural electrification program was structured forms the basis for argument against placement bias in terms of rural household electrification.