

Access to Post-Secondary Education: What do we know from Low- and Lower Middle-Income Countries?

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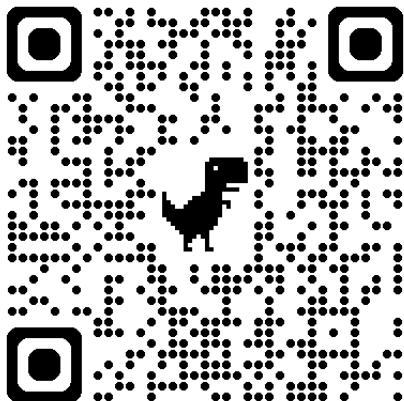
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Overview

- 1 Motivation
- 2 Conceptual Framework
- 3 Methodology
- 4 Findings
- 5 Discussion

- Importance of higher education.
 - Social mobility, higher earnings (Chetty et al., 2019; Shafiq et al., 2019).
- Access to post-secondary education in low- and lower middle-income countries (LMICs) is extremely low.
 - LMICs, while having the highest proportion of age-eligible students for post-secondary education, have the lowest levels of attendance rates (Altback and Reisberg, 2018).
- Historically, MDGs and SDGs have focused on universal primary and secondary education (UNESCO, 2020).

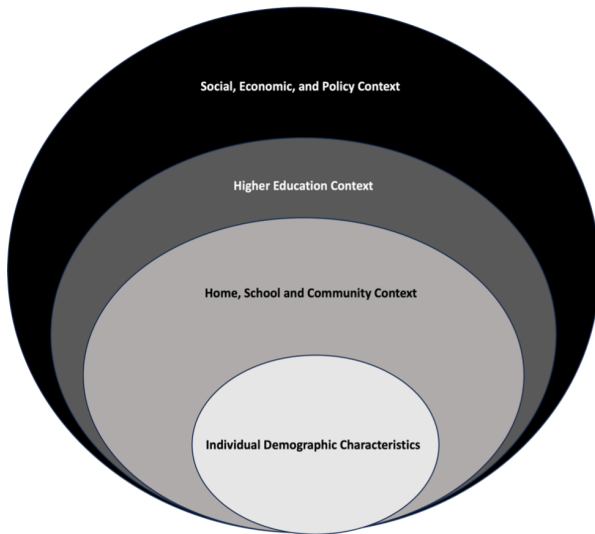
- Contemporary higher education in LMICs is rooted in a history of colonialism and resource extraction.
- There is high variation in public expenditure on higher education and attendance rates within LMICs.
 - Uganda (low-income) spends 1.5% of GDP on post-secondary education, compared to 3.9% in Ghana (lower-middle income).
 - Tertiary attendance rates are 10% in lower middle-income and 1% in low-income countries among those in the middle of the wealth index distribution (Buckner and Abdel Aziz, 2023).

- What do we know about the state of research evidence on post-secondary access in LMICs (from the English language)?
- What does the research say about factors that enable or constrain post-secondary access in these contexts?
- How effective are programs and policies that have successfully improved post-secondary access?
- What can future research look like in this space?

Conceptual Framework

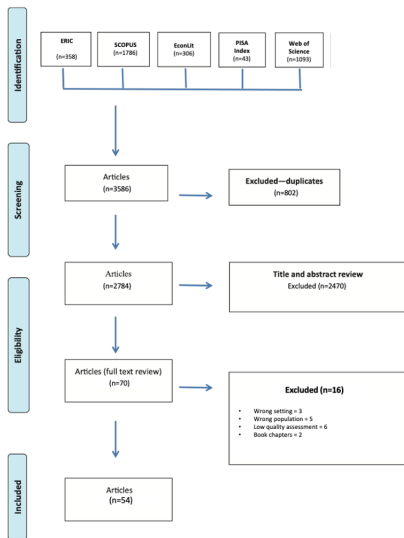
- Bronfenbrenner's human ecology model (1977, 1995)
 - How the individual develops in relation to their surroundings.
- Perna's model of college choice (2006)
 - Power structures and their interplay with individual choices.
- Combining perspectives in human development, sociology, and economics, allows us to have a holistic approach towards understanding our data.

Conceptual Framework



- Systematic Review
 - Article search and inclusion criteria
 - Screening
 - Data extraction
- Aggregating Effects of Impact Evaluations

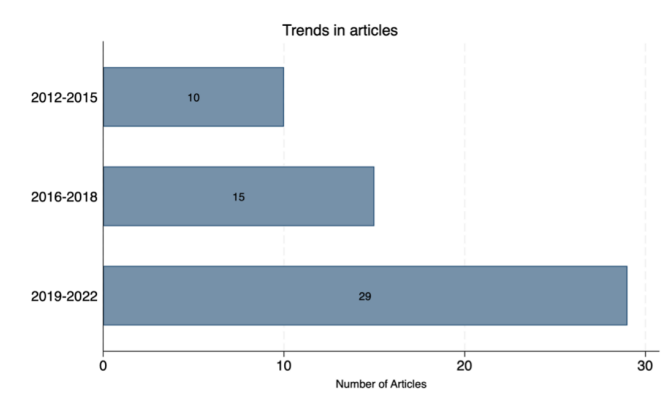
Methodology Contd.



Findings

- Descriptive
- Thematic
- Aggregate

Descriptive Findings



Descriptive Findings (Contd.)

- Majority of the articles in our database use quantitative data or research methods.
- More than 50% of the articles in our database are from the field of education, specifically, higher education
- Diverse regional distribution is represented in the literature
- 70% of the articles discuss post-secondary enrollment as the outcome, followed by admission; 40% of the articles discuss a particular intervention.

Thematic Analysis

- Individual Demographic Characteristics
- Home, School, and Community context
- Higher Education Context
- Social, Economic, and Policy Context

- Individual Demographic Characteristics
 - Gender: low female enrollment, reasons, and policies to address it.
 - Access to material resources.
 - Caste, religion, and place of residence.

- Home, School, and Community Context
 - Higher parental education.
 - Presence of adults at home and their attention and support.
 - Presence of role models in school and community and access to information about university.
 - Parents' aspiration for their children.

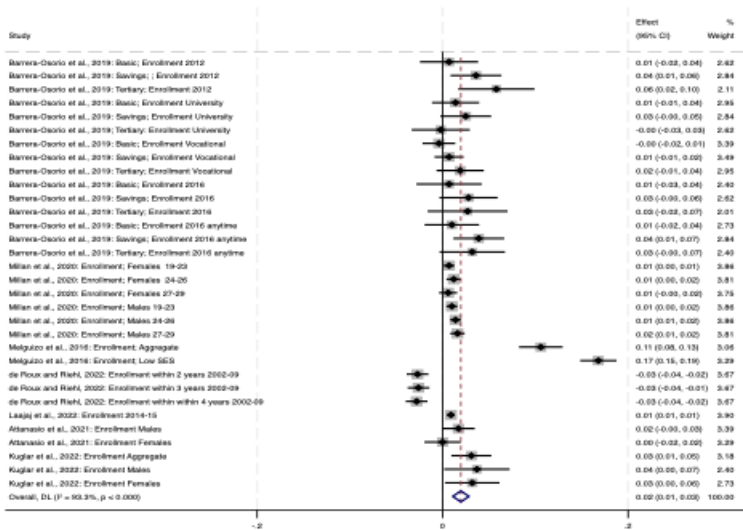
- Higher Education Context
 - Affordability and availability of higher education institutions.
 - Institutional characteristics of universities.

- Social, Economic, and Policy Context
 - Expansion of higher education.
 - Policies like financial incentives and equity-based initiatives.

Aggregate Effects

Study	Intervention	Program	Participants	Year
Barrera-Osorio 2019	Cash transfers	\$20-\$30/2mo + conditions	Adolescents 14-16	2005
Millan 2020	Multi-age CCT	Health/school monitoring	Children 0-12 + mothers	2000-2005
Melguizo 2016	ACCES Loans	Subsidized loans	Low-income students	2002-2012
de Roux 2022	Calendar shift	College delay	HS graduates	2008-2010
Laajaj 2022	SPP	Full scholarships	Low-income students	2014-2015
Attanasio 2021	Familias	Conditional cash	Families, kids 7-17	2002-2016
Kuglar 2022	Vocational	6-mo training	Youth 18-25	2001-2005

Aggregate Effects (Contd.)



NOTE: Weights are from random-effects model

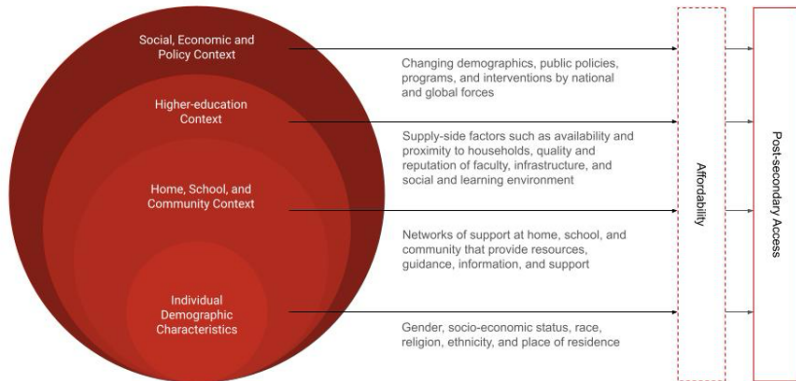
Aggregate Effects (Contd.)

	Overall (1)	By Treatment (2)	Monetary (3)	CCT (4)
Pooled ES	0.02***	0.01***	0.03***	0.01***
SE	(0.004)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.004)
Ns	7	7	5	3
Ne	32	9	7	5

Note: *** p < 0.01

- Strengths and limitations.
 - Home, school, and community context: structured support vs. informal networks.
 - Affordability as a cross-cutting theme.
 - Comparative studies of different contexts.

Proposed Conceptual Framework



- Questions scholars should ask:
 - ① What policies and programs can we design and evaluate that can improve access to post-secondary education in LMICs that address the constraints and opportunities highlighted in the framework? How valuable is it to investigate category specific questions, for e.g., the role that informal networks in LMIC contexts can play – to alleviate constraints to post-secondary access?
 - ② How effective are these categories as points of comparison that can explain differences in post-secondary access within and between different LMIC contexts?
 - ③ What research on post-secondary access exists in other languages (and contexts this research has missed) and what are the implications for generalizability of expanding this research agenda?

Thank you!

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