Enhancing Global Competitiveness and Human Capital Management: Does Education Help Reduce Inequality and Poverty in Hong Kong?*

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Abstract

Like other global cities, over the last few decades, Hong Kong has experienced significant economic restructuring with emphasis being shifted to the service sector and the demise of the manufacturing sector. Such economic transformations have inevitably influenced job availability. Without sufficient jobs available for less educated and less skilled workers, a growing number of citizens have experienced a decline in living standards and have even suffered poverty. This article sets out, against the policy context outlined above, to critically examine major policies for helping poor children in Hong Kong, especially when they are confronted with intensified education inequality against the growing trend of privatization and marketization of education. More specifically, the major objective of this article is to examine critically how and whether or not education performs the function of enhancing people’s chances of upward social mobility and reducing inequality between the rich and the poor.

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