

Bridging The Gender Gap Through The use of Open Distance Learning (ODL).

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Abstract

Gender equity in education has been an issue of concern both in Kenya and internationally. Although tremendous success has been made in attaining Education for All (EFA) in Sub Saharan Africa and Kenya in particular, gender disparities in access, retention, transition and performance still exist. Girls in particular have continued to record poor retention and transition rates as well as poor performance in examinations. Despite Kenya being among the Sub-Saharan countries that have recorded reduced gender gaps in Primary and secondary education, the aforementioned disparities still exist. This could be attributed to the fact that a lot of attention has been given to access to education. However, one of the major challenges faced in Kenya in regard to access to education is the few number of schools available especially in rural setups where girls and boys walk long distances to access education. This has affected girls more than boys with most parents preferring to keep their girls at home. Moreover, even of utmost concern is the few number of teachers available in Kenyan schools with the current student-teacher ratio standing at 45:1. This paper therefore advocates for the use of ODL to ensure equity in education especially where schools and teachers are few. The writer is cognizant of the fact that access to internet services and computer gadgets may be a challenge in Sub Saharan Africa and in Kenya in particular, due to the economic status of the countries and advocates for the use of cheaper technology such as mobile phones and where applicable intranet services may be used.

Key Words: Gender, Open Distance Learning, Equity

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