

Teachers' and Caregivers' Perceptions of Gender Differences in Educational Experiences of Children Affected by Parental AIDS in Western Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to describe the perceptions of teachers and caregivers concerning gender differences in the educational experiences of children influenced by the HIV status of their parents or orphaned by AIDS in 7 orphanage schools of Western Kenya. 12 teachers and 8 caregivers participated in the study. Data were collected over 3 months using participant observation and individual interviews. Findings indicated that no gender differences in educational experiences were noted during preschool. However, during the elementary school years and beyond, participants described gender differences in terms of math, science, languages, and school attendance. Boys were perceived to do better at math and science, while girls were believed to do better in languages. Girls were also more likely to be kept out of school to assist with or take care of family needs when a parent became ill due to AIDS.

Keywords: HIV/AIDS, Children, Orphaned, Kenya, Education

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