

**GENDER DISPARITY IN EDUCATION AMONG PASTORALIST
COMMUNITIES IN KENYA: A Case Study of the Somali in North Eastern
Kenya**

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the issue of gender inequality in education among pastoralist communities in Kenya. It narrows down to the Somali as a case study and argues that the provision of education for boys and girls is uneven and biased through gender resulting in high illiteracy rates for girls and women. The paper concludes that negative cultural values, poverty and economical challenges, female genital mutilation, early marriage, and sexual harassment are some of the leading contributors to gender inequality in education among these groups of the society. Other factors that exacerbate gender inequality are lack of gender responsiveness among the teachers, ineffective teaching, and lack of learning materials and poor learning environment. The study adopted the Structuralism theory and applied descriptive survey research design. 75% of the population was used as sample to participate in the study. The target population was 28 head teachers, 260 teachers, 500 parents and 300 school drop-outs. The sample totals were 20 head teachers, 185 teachers, 40 parents and 43 school drop-outs. The paper contends that gender inequality in education holds back the growth of individuals, the development of these communities as well as the evolution of societies to the disadvantage of both men and women if not addressed. Strategies and interventions that have the potential to eliminate gender disparities in education among pastoralist communities are discussed in this paper.