

**EFFECTS OF HIV/AIDS ON THE LEARNING OF ORPHANED
CHILDREN IN KARIARA ZONE OF GATANGA DISTRICT IN
MURANG'A COUNTY**

BY

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ABSTRACT

HIV/AIDS destabilizes and then devastates the family; especially when the bread winner is overcome by it. Inability of orphans to get appropriate care hinders their holistic development. The role of education in Kenya is meant to promote lives of all Kenyans but this is not applicable to them. Universal Primary Education supports a big number of children who would have dropped out of school due to lack of school fees. Successful approaches have been developed which focus on increasing the ability of families and communities to care for their children. As projections of the number of AIDS orphans rise, some have called for an increase in institutional care for children. One example is the approach developed by church groups in Zimbabwe. However this solution is not only expensive but also detrimental to the children (Soadatu Orosi - NYSC Coper). The purpose of the study therefore was to determine the effects of HIV/AIDS on the learning of orphaned children in Kariara Zone of Gatanga District. The objectives included; to find out the problems experienced by the orphans in their learning process, to determine the causes of high spread of HIV/AIDS and analyze their performance as compared to that of their peers with parents. Review of the literature tackled the following themes: What is HIV/AIDS? Symptoms of HIV/AIDS, factors that have contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS and impact of HIV/AIDS on children. The study adopted descriptive research design. The design was appropriate because it seeks to obtain information that describes existing phenomena. The sampling unit was schools selected randomly in the district, Gataka-ini and Gatura. From the selected schools, purposive sampling was applied to identify orphaned learners. Parents / guardians were selected from the homes with orphans like grandparents. From each school, three categories of target group:- the guardian / parent, the teacher and the orphaned children. An equal number of 10 children, 1 headteacher and 4 parents leading to a total of 20 children, 2 headteachers and 8 parents. The study dealt with a sample size of 30. Data was collected using questionnaires for teachers and parent / guardians. Interview schedule and observation checklist for orphans. Descriptive analysis was used. Data was summarized by use of figures, charts and tables. The findings of the study show that, various problems are experienced by orphans in their learning and they hinder effective learning. The problems include stigmatization, discrimination, malnutrition and absenteeism. There is need for the community to be sensitized about the spread of HIV/AIDS. The government should also come up with more effective solutions of dealing with orphans.