

**EFFECTS OF HIV/AIDS ON LEARNERS IN MARIAKANI ZONE
KILIFI COUNTY**

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

In Mariakani Kaloleni Sub-County, Kilifi County many learners have faced challenges caused by HIV and AIDS. HIV stands for Human Immune Deficiency Virus, the virus that causes AIDS. The AIDS virus enters the body through body fluids, mucus membrane or through broken skin. Once inside the body the virus attacks the body defense cells, eventually killing them. The virus targets the white blood cells. (The T. cells) or the bodies immune system. All the body fluids contains the T. cells. Concentration is in the blood, the semen and vaginal secretion. The viruses reproduces inside the defense cells and other viruses are released into the blood system. When a substantial number of defense cells have been killed, the body lacks protections against common infections though it may take several years.

AIDS - It stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. HIV causes AIDS through progressive destruction of the body defense system. After infection, the body defense is progressively weakened making it liable to get common infections which are also recurrent, the persons health deteriorate until death. Due to such kind of deaths, many learners in Mariakani zone have become orphans. Hence the researched will look at the many challenges facing these kind of learners. Today AIDS is the most prominent and catastrophic example of the process of globalization to Kenya in general and Mariakani zone in particular.

AIDS epidemic is itself a global health crisis. It offers both a threat to survival and an opportunity to revive, renovate, revitalize and relocate our values and ethics of survival.

1.1 Background of the study

For very many years HIV and AIDS has been a major challenge to social, political and economical development. HIV and AIDS was first reported in 1981 among homosexuals in the United State of America. It does not infer that HIV and AIDS was invented or started in America. The search for origin of HIV and AIDS is a challenging exercise for researchers. Many scientists believe that HIV and AIDS first appeared in Chimpanzees in Central Africa. They believe that HIV and AIDS accidentally infected through hunters who killed animals for food especially in west and central Africa.

According to records on Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) seven percent of Kenyan adults are infected with HIV and AIDS with a steady increase in new infections. This is according to a cite by Kenyan National AIDS Control Councils (PMTCC) 2005. The same year 2005 in particular statistics showed that HIV and AIDS prevalence rose among married couples. J here has been a concern that 4.8 million children are newly infected. The most vulnerable ages are 15-49 years who are youth, the most productive age in economic development of the society. By the year 1999 HIV and AIDS had killed several people including youth and adults which resulted to increased number of orphaned children. About seven hundred (700) people were dying everyday. This led it to be declared a National Disaster by the former president of the Republic of Kenya, His Honorable Excellency Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi.

The increased number of orphans among primary schools in Mariakani Education Zone has greatly affected their academic performance and enrolment in ECDE centers cum primary schools and secondary schools in the zone. The orphaned learners face/experience a lot of problems which include the following chronic absenteeism, withdrawal, malnutrition, poor clothing and poor housing.

Orphaned participate in many household chores and lack parental love/care and poor negative