

Validating the Home Experiences of Children that Negatively Impact Their Right to Education in South Africa: The Case of HIV/AIDS Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) Living in the Amatole District

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Abstract : In South Africa and the world over, despite an array of commendable policies to protect the rights of children, the situation on the ground indicates that HIV/AIDS continues to pose increasing challenges on the children's right to education due to the death of their parents. This study sought to validate the home experiences of children that negatively impact on their right to education in South Africa with a case of HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) in Amatole District. The study utilized a qualitative research method in collecting the feelings, views and attitudes of these children to establish the children's home experiences. An interview guide with semi-structured questions was used to steer the one-on-one in-depth interviews with children from Parkside Primary School, Langa-Liphumile High School and one anonymous school in East London, Eastern Cape Province. 5 learners were purposively selected from each school and subjected to a one-on-one interview with the researcher. The researcher purposively selected one teacher per school, 2 members each from 3 community based organizations (CBOs) who were also subjected to a one-on-one in-depth interview. The findings indicated these negative experiences of the OVCs in their homes such as; attendance to a school was poor; academic performance was low; enrollment in schools was very low and abuse of these children was high. These researchers recommend for psychosocial support for these children to be placed in the schools; integration of HIV/AIDS programmes to target especially the OVCs; social workers should ensure that they regularly do home visits to these OVCs to establish whether the home circumstances these children are still conducive for them. It is hoped that the findings from this paper will be an asset that other researchers, policy makers, the government and NGOs/CBOs will take into consideration for the benefit of OVCs.

Keywords : orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs), HIV, AIDS, home experiences

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