

## **Effects of Covid-19 Pandemic on the Welfare of the Maasai Girl Child in Narok County, Kenya**

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The Maasai girl child is vulnerable to poor menstrual hygiene, teen pregnancies, early marriages, domestic violence and female genital mutilation (FGM). Schools had temporarily offered the girls a shelter towards these challenges. However, covid-19 pandemic led to indefinite closure of schools forcing the girls back home to the full glare of these predicaments. Additionally, there was fear of the health pandemic which had also affected the economy. This study aimed at examining how covid-19 pandemic had affected the welfare of the Maasai girl child in Narok county, Kenya. A cross-sectional design of study was used. Data was collected using questionnaires and by observations. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings indicate that frustrations over lack of basic needs coupled with numerous domestic violence incidences caused the girls to engage in 'sex for sanitary towels'. 83.1% of the girls did not use any sex protection means while majority of the rest used ineffective methods. FGM was at its peak as there was abundant time to practice it and less government interference. In conclusion, the Maasai girls' welfare was in dire need for external assistance. Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should urgently intervene to rescue the Maasai girl child.

**Keywords:** Maasai girl child; covid-19 break; teen pregnancies; early marriages; Female Genital Mutilation