

Factors contribute to gender differences in science learning among primary school children: the case of Lundusi primary school in Songea rural district

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This study investigated into the factors that contribute to gender differences in science learning among primary school children in a rural setting in Tanzania. A feminist approach in explaining gender differences in science learning was adopted to guide the conceptual framework and research design. A modified version of Blau and Duncan's (1967) and the Distalproximal models was used in the framework. The sample included standard six pupils and their science teachers at a primary school in Songea rural district. Data collection methods included: interviews, observations, questionnaires, documentary reviews, checklists and snapshots. The major findings of the study include: all categories of teachers used the same science teaching approach and their classroom interaction behaviour cored boys than girls; there existed a poor textbook distribution strategy at the school; the science literature had gender stereotyped content dominated by the presence of male pictures and experiences; boys had more background experiences in science, a higher self-concept in science achievement and a wider spectrum of career choices than girls; girls had higher overall science performance records than boys.. the study concluded that boys were more favored in the science subject than girls at the school. They were also more advantaged to learn science than girls, although the girls in the sample performed better than them. Following the study, recommendations were made for action to be taken at district level, classroom level and at the level of the Tanzania institute of Education.