

**RESEARCH TITLE**

# Crossing the border: Gendered experiences of immigrant children in South African schools

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study examines how the family, peers, and sociocultural environment at school in primary schools in South Africa perpetuated divergent gendered experiences among immigrant learners. A qualitative narrative inquiry was used during the study. Snowball sampling was used to select the participants for the study. The study drew on a narrative account of 27 participants, 18 immigrant children (9 girls and 9 boys) and nine teachers (6 women and 3 men) from three primary schools in the Johannesburg East District. Semi-structured in-depth interviews and observations were used as instruments to collect data from the participants. Collected data from the semi-structured, in-depth interviews and observations was analysed using thematic content analysis and was presented by using illustrative quotes. The study revealed that the school is a highly gendered place and serves to propagate gendered experiences among immigrant children in school between girls and boys. The findings of the study have significant implications for stake holders at all levels in education. It is recommended that school principals should ensure that teachers and administrators are familiar with both the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the school's policies and regulations that address gender, sexual harassment, immigration issues, school violence, and bullying. Improved perception of immigrant children and gender quality in schools will contribute to a positive school environment which may lead to increased positive wellbeing and academic performance to all learners regardless of gender and country of origin.*

**Keywords:** gender, socialization, gender socialization, gender role shift, immigrant parents, gender roles, immigrant children, migration, gendered experiences, gender differences

The full thesis can be found at <http://hdl.handle.net/10500/26669>