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Toward a Better Understanding of…

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The separation of children from their mothers has received significant attention in research on Sub-Saharan Africa; whereas this literature predominately focuses on the perspective of the children, I have attempted to expand the characterization of mother-child separation by focusing on the experience of mothers. Using Lesotho as a case study, I have conducted a descriptive analysis revealing characteristics associated with mothers living in the household with all or some of their children compared to mothers living with none of their children. Using 2009 Demographic and Health Survey data, I conclude approximately 75% of women (15-49) live with all of their children (0-17), 15% live with some of their children, and 10% live with none of their children. Additionally, mothers living with none of their children are more likely to live in urban areas, have higher levels of education, and those working are more likely to participate in domestic work and skilled and unskilled manual labor. Moving forward, these findings may serve as a preliminary step into further research on mother-child separation, exploring the reasons why these specific characteristic are associated with mothers who live with none of their children.