

**DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF AND  
CHALLENGES OF ORPHANS: A CASE  
STUDY OF KIBWEZI TOWNSHIP AND  
ITS ENVIRONS, KENYA**

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# INTRODUCTION

- Disenfranchised grief is unsanctioned & unrecognized grief.
- The bereaved expression of grief may not be expressed publicly. This may be due to:
  - Absence of mourning rituals because the mourner is too young to take part in funeral rituals
  - Bereaved not provided with means to express publicly his/her recognition of loss
  - The loss is associated with social stigma e.g. death caused by stigmatized disease e.g. HIV/AIDS

# STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- Children assumed to be too young to experience grief
- HIV/AIDS orphans are stigmatized & keep quiet to avoid being ridiculed
- Children excluded from funeral rituals
- Lack of grief work leads to emotional disturbance, sadness, withdrawal
- Emotional problems affect the child's education & adjustment to life

# OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out what types of social support orphans get.
- Establish if they have traces of unattended grief reactions.
- Identify social problems and priorities of the orphans of the orphans.
- Suggest the way forward for educators to promote grief counseling in schools.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- In the year 2000 governments of the world agreed on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to ensure that all children have a better future
- The MDGs have children as beneficiaries to ensure that their needs and rights are met
- Orphans have many challenges
- Their well being is negatively affected

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- Orphans and vulnerable children are faced with many problems such as lack of basic needs such as food and clean water. They lack parental care, supervision & protection
- They are exposed to child labour, exploitation, physical and sexual abuse
- They suffer malnutrition & poor health
- Poverty and hunger is the order of the day for many of them
- They cannot afford the free primary education because of materials demanded by teachers
- Some drop out of school

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- The orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) experience distress and social isolation before and after the death of their parents
- Long illness and death of parents leave the family resources depleted
- Poverty adds emotional stress to children, besides resulting in malnutrition and stunted growth
- According to (UNICEF, 2002s) 140 million children in SSA live in extreme poverty
- Poor children are sent away from school due to lack of tuition fees and learning materials

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- Education is a crucial determinant of the well being of future generations and a universal human rights
- It develops analytical and critical thinking in children
- It equips them with knowledge and means to choose healthier diets, behaviors and life styles
- The impact of HIV/AIDS has resulted in the rising number of pupils who cannot profit from schooling because of social-emotional problems
- Stigma & discrimination may influence OVC to drop out of school which is detrimental
- It also means they will not acquire life-saving information on how to avoid HIV/AIDS infection
- Grief interferes with their education



# METHODOLOGY

- This was a survey research design and also an ex post facto research
- The sample consisted of 20 orphans (10 boys and 10 girls) aged between 13 and 18 years all going to school
- They were chosen because of their ability to verbalize what happened, what they feel and what they would like to be done for them
- Triangulation method was used to collect data
- The orphans were interviewed while being observed by the researcher
- To ensure reliability and validity of the study the items were clearly stated without any ambiguities
- The respondents were assured of confidentiality of the information
- Data was analyzed using SPSS and presented in frequency distributions and percentages

# RESULTS/FINDINGS

- 80% of the orphans were still grieving their parents
- 40% of the orphans lived with their elder brothers, 35% grand parents, 20% with their elder sisters and 5% with pastor exhibit traces of unattended grief
- They have problems of poor nutritional status, poor housing, and frequent absenteeism from school, poor health, being overworked and lack of recreation
- They also experience inappropriate sleeping arrangements, poor general hygiene, poor grooming, inappropriate and dirty torn uniforms
- Not a single orphan had birth certificate

# WAY FORWARD

- Some orphans manifest trances of unattended grief and in need of counseling
- They need somebody to talk to
- They need to be listened to
- They need to learn tasks in mourning so that they can accept and cope their losses
- The local community and the NGOs should continue giving emotional and social support to orphans
- Educators to promote grief counselling in schools
  - Individual /counselling/ group counselling/family therapy
  - Expressive arts
  - Play therapy

**THANK YOU**

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ARE  
WELCOMED