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
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
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 absenteeismism 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