Exploration of bereavement on learner's psychological well-being in selected primary school in Ugu district.

By

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology),School of Education, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu- Natal, Edgewood Campus

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February, 2018

DECLARATION

I Slindile Primrose Cele declare that this thesis is my own original work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal. All the sources that have been used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed_____ Date: _____

S.P Cele.   February 2018

STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

This dissertation is submitted with my approval.

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Dr. H Muribwathoho   Date: February 2018

ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative study focusing on exploration of bereavement on learner's psychological well-being in selected primary schools in Ugu district' psychological well-being. Based on the objectives of this study it evident that losing a loved one is indeed a traumatic experience for anyone; more so for children who are still in the battle of discovering themselves. Often, children are left out when death strikes, yet they are the most affected by the loss of a significant other.

In order to generate data, the researcher drew meaning from tem participants, all of whom had lost a significant other such as a mother, a father, an aunt, and grandparents. This was done with an aim of letting participants share their own personal experiences of the loss at such a young age; and how it affected their wellbeing and academic/scholastic performance.

Findings revealed that seventy percent of the participants in the study have not yet come to terms with the loss of their loved ones even though some happened five years ago. They also mentioned they felt very alone and helpless, and mostly isolated themselves during the bereavement period as they did not receive any support from their families or schools. Problems they experienced ranged from social isolation, helplessness, depression, financial problems and academic problems often leading to failure and others dropping out of school.

There were limitations in conducting the research, one was the study used a case study. A case study uses small sample sizes, which means data collected cannot be generalizable. Data consisted of the opinions of those few selected as participants from the school. Moreover, there was only one ethnic group selected for the research, which means the data does not include every bereaved child but only those selected from that particular group. Thus, the implication for future research on the same topic can be can be conducted in school with diversity in racial and ethnic groups to broaden the research's results.

The study recommends that there should be a policy with guidelines to help educators with learners dealing with bereavement in schools. The study was done in one racial group, therefore for future studies it could be done on other racial groups to compare findings. It is also important that psychological services such as counselling and other psychological interventions services be provided for these learners.

Key words: Bereavement, Cope, Grief, Learners, Loss, Psychology well-being

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late dad Mr B. Mgobhozi and my brother Ntuthuko Mgobhozi, you will always be in my heart; I know I couldn't have achieved this without you looking down on me. My greatest gratitude goes to my daughters (Nomcebo, Sphesihle, Aphiwe, Zekhethelo) and my beloved husband Vusi Cele for their support. I could not have achieved this without you. Thank you for giving me this chance to spread my wings, your support means the world to me; this took a lot of my time away from you guys, yet you never complained.

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ABBREVIATIONS

B.Ed.   Bachelor of Education

C2005   Curriculum 2005

DoE   Department of Education

HIV/AIDS   Human Immune Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

HoD   Head of Department

SASSA   South African Social Security Agency

ZPD   Zone of Proximal Development

GNHA   Gross National Happiness Association

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study by firstly outlining the significance of the study; secondly the location of the study; background of the study, objectives and critical questions of the study. Furthermore, the study moves on to various aspects of this introductory chapter, which is theoretical framework, research design and methodology. Lastly this chapter focuses on the outline of chapters respectively.

1.1 Significance of the study

A study of this kind is much needed to help with understanding some of the challenges grieving learners are faced with. It will also assist in getting a glimpse into their lives and the day to day challenges they are faced with, to better understand where they are coming from. A lot of people will benefit from this study namely the learners themselves, the parents, guardians and most importantly the educators who spend the most time with these learners who are bereaved.

1.2 Location of the Study

The research took place in the South Coast region in the rural area of Mthwalume. The design of the study is a case study conducted at a local primary school. It is a no fee paying school and in a community that is poverty-stricken with high rates of unemployment and teenage pregnancy. The people in this community are mostly subsistence farmers.

1.3 Background to the study

Change varies, such as shifting our gaze from the smallest to a major change like migrating to another country. We seem to have the capacity to cope with some degree of change, but may become overloaded and suffer a negative psychological impact if this capacity is exceeded. People's inability to control the change event may affect their loss response, as may their life experiences and previously learnt coping strategies. Being out of control of events could well add to stress and to the loss reaction, this may be an issue with children. Loss of life results in changes that impact so greatly as to overwhelm us and become problematic. Loss is an individual experience, the impact it has will depend on our personality, and previous experiences if there are any. Grief is an emotional response to a loss, bereavement being the state of actual loss of something or someone, a term conventionally used in loss by death, with mourning the outward expression of our internal experience of grief (Goldman, 1994).

Due to the ever-increasing number of HIV and AIDS infections, the mortality rate in South Africa is very high. This means that learners at a very young age are constantly exposed to the loss of loved ones. Bereavement for children is influenced by many factors including their age, level of cognitive understanding and the relationship which they had with the person who died. These factors influence the child's emotional and behavioural responses. Separation has a powerful effect on young children and as they grow older the effects become more complex and powerful. This not only applies to children, but adults as well. This lays a foundation for understanding that comfort is attainable through our actions and our emotional responses. This does not only impact their social lives negatively but also their intellectual ability at school. There is much need for such a study to get an insight on what learners go through when they have lost a loved one, and what can be done to help them through their grieving process.

The HelpGuide.Org (1999) states that losing someone you love or care about deeply is very painful. A person may experience all kinds of difficult emotions and may feel like the pain and sadness being experienced will never let up. These are normal reactions to a significant loss. While there is no wrong or right way to grieve, there are healthy ways to cope with the pain that in time can renew a person and permit them to move on.

The importance of a good psychological state in the performance of a pupil at school cannot be understated. A bereaved pupil may lose concentration at school and may start getting relatively lower grades. A recent study by a Purdue University researcher (online) found that students who experience the death of a family member or close friend also experience a corresponding drop in academic performance during the time the loss takes place.

The combination of grief interfering with the ability to concentrate and perform leads to academic performance dropping. Grief is not purely emotional. It also has a greater cognitive effect. This therefore compels for an investigation on this matter to be carried out in a South African perspective.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To gain a deeper understanding of learners' experiences of bereavement;
- To investigate the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological well-being and
- To explore school-based strategies to assist learners dealing with loss due to bereavement.

1.5 Research Questions

- What are the learner's experiences on bereavement?
- How does bereavement impact on learners' psychological well-being?
- What school-based strategies are there to help learners' dealing with loss?

1.6 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts, like a theory but not necessarily so well worked out. Its main aim is to guide the research, determining what will be measured and the statistical relationship it has with other. This study will use an ecosystemic theory, which is rooted in how the environment can influence human development.

The study used an eco- systemic theory with an aim of understanding learners and their way of living, as this theory states that peoples' way of living is characterised by their environment and the relationship they have with it. A lot of times children live in a way they think society wants them to and tend to forget that they are human beings with feelings to consider. This is highly noticeable when referring to death related issues. Most African cultures exclude the children and assume it is an adult thing, forgetting that children can feel and understand everything that happens around them.

1.7 Research design

According to Myers (2009) the research method is a strategy of enquiry, which moves from underlying assumptions to research design and data collection.

1.7.1 Approach to the study

Qualitative research is naturalistic and attempts to study everyday life of different group of people and communities in their natural settings. It also involves an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter. It attempts to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in the terms of meaning people bring to them Denzin & Lincoln (1998). According to Demon and Fleming (2007) Qualitative research aims to explore and to discover issues about the problem at hand, which helped the researcher, understand better how learners deal with bereavement at home and how it affects them psychologically.

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1.7.2   Paradigm

The paradigm which frames this research is an interpretive paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) an interpretive paradigm aims to understand the subject world of human experiences.

The interpretive paradigm aims to gain insight on how learners experience dealing with bereavement. This paradigm is able to give clarity as it is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subject's experience of individuals.

The interpretive approach is also known as the epistemological stance towards research that focuses on explaining the subjective reasons and meanings that lie beyond social action" and attracts researchers who are interested in how reality is shaped by "people's subjective experiences of the external world (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

This study interprets the feelings, thoughts, reactions, and actions of bereaved learners to try and determine the effects of losing a loved one.

1.8 Methodology

Cohen , Manion and Morrison (2000) state that methodology in research refers to systematic way of gathering data from a given population so as to understand a phenomenon and to generalise facts obtained from a larger population. Methodology embraces the research design, population, instruments used to collect data, ethical considerations, data analysis and its interpretation. Methodology therefore helps the researcher and the reader to understand the process of the research thus giving it scientific merit.

1.8.1   Design of the study

The design of this research is a case study. Simons (2009) describes a case study as an in-depth explicit and uniqueness of a particular project or institution in real life context. In a case study the researcher aims to describe the thoughts and experiences of a particular situation Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011).

This case study was based at a local primary school which consisted of ten participants interviewed using face- to- face interviews. Face-to-face interviews allow participants to open easily and give data they would not normally reveal in a group interview, especially discussing

such a sensitive topic. Participants were selected with the help of school educator's recent survey results of orphaned learners. With the aid of a questionnaire the researcher divided the participants in two teams, namely those who had lost both parents and those who are survived by one parent. The purpose of dividing the participants was to determine the impact of bereavement on learners as well as compare whether the time frame had a significant role in the healing process.

1.8.2 Sampling Procedures

This study uses purposive sampling where the researcher handpicks participants based on their judgment (Govindarajulu & Zakkula, 1999). It represents a group of different non-probability sampling techniques. This type of sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. All relies on the judgments of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units to be used; the main aim of using this population interest is that it gives the best information or data on the chosen topic.

The study used nine learners from a nearby primary school. The interviews with the learners were conducted at a convenient time that did not affect their studies or disturb the schooling institution in any way.

1.8.3 Data generation

For this research two methods for generation of data were employed, namely: face- to- face interviews and observation schedule. These methods will assist to enable triangulation and enhance trustworthiness of the study.

Observation is an essential data gathering technique as it holds the possibility of providing the researcher with an insider perspective of the group dynamics and behaviours in a different setting. Observation allows one to hear, see, and begin to experience reality as participants do in possession of the characteristics being sought (Cohen et al., 2000).

The researcher also used face- to- face semi-structured interviews. According to Lavrakas (2010) face- to- face interviews, also called in-person interviews are often used to solicit information in projects that can be considered very sensitive. These data methods also enable greater coverage of issues because participants would be able to view experiences of others (Maree, 2007). Individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine learners. The interviews were audio taped with the participants' consent.

1.8.4   Data analysis

The analysis of data is an important step in the research process. Qualitative data involves organising the data in order to make sense of the situation. It entails the process of noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities (Cohen et al., 2009). The data collection through observations, interviews, and focus group interviews are analysed by listening to the audio tape recordings, then transcribed verbatim and interview transcripts are developed. When analysing data, the three c's of analysis were used: coding, categorising, and conceptualising (Lichtman, 2006).

Thematic data analysis was used to analyse data. According to Boyatzis (1998:2), thematic analysis is the grouping of data into themes to identify common patterns or recurrent themes from transcribed data. Codes or labels were created using emergent themes from gathered data through open-ended interviewing. The researcher used interview questions to devise themes. Transcribed data was fitted into themes that were created using research questions and interview questions. New themes that emerged were noted. These themes were used to group information and were coded. Babbie (2010) asserts that codes are formed through the questions asked and the data collected. The codes assisted in summarising data for analysis purposes. During coding, notes called 'memos' were written for use in report writing.

1.9 Definition of terms

Bereavement- is a period of sadness that you feel when you lose someone

Loss- losing something /someone to loss, particularly the loss of someone.

Mourning- is an outward expression of grief.

Learner- a person who is learning a subject or skill.

Cope- (of a person) to deal effectively with something difficult.

Psychological well-being- refers to the mental state of a person.

1.10 Ethical Consideration

The study required some ethical considerations to be considered. Working with learners who were under age required consent forms to be signed by parents and guardians that permitted learners to partake in the study.

1.11 Outline of the Study

This research study is entitled: An investigation of the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological well-being.

Chapter One

Chapter one of this research is the introductory chapter, which gives a synopsis of the background of study, significance of the study, research design, and methodology.

Chapter Two

The second chapter which is the literature review discusses existing literature on bereavement especially in children, where previous studies discuss about the current research topic.

Chapter Three

Chapter 3 consists of the theoretical framework, paying attention to Urie Bronfenbrenner's eco-systemic system theory

Chapter Four

Chapter four of this research is the research methodology and design. This includes specifying the research design, the population and the sample, sampling procedures, research instruments, data-collection procedures, presentation of the data, and the analysis procedures, as well as a summary.

Chapter Five.

Chapter five has two aspects namely the presentation of the data collected, the participants involved in this research and the analysis of data.

Chapter Six

The last chapter provides a general summary of the study and the recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

Chapter one provided an introduction into this research. This chapter consists of a literature review. The researcher conducted an initial literature study in respect of the research topic. A more comprehensive and extensive literature study was conducted during the research process (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). A literature study is also referred to as literature review. When one embarks upon a research project, the idea is that they should not take place in a vacuum or without any reference to the research of others in one's content area and topic. Any research should rest upon the shoulders of those who have gone before, within the context of the research of others (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

One is expected to review the work of other authors and researchers in the content area and subject. After the consultation of these literary sources researchers are to write about the results of such reviews. This serves several purposes. First, this enables the researcher to understand fully the theories that one's own research might rest upon and immerse oneself in the language of the discipline. Second, it allows the researcher to justify the need for his/her study's own research. One might find out that what one proposes to research has already been studied extensively, and that no contribution is being made to the world's knowledge if one follows a particular path. When this happens, the researcher has a good foundation with which to think about what is to be researched, a need in the discipline for further knowledge. Third, the review allows research readers to have a contextual backdrop to the research, a way of fitting what one has to present into the big picture (Ivankova, et al., 2006).

By literature review researchers refer to an essay or a collection of essays endeavouring to present issues that are related to the task at hand. In this thesis, the literature review looks at the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological well-being. According to Shuttleworth (2009), literature review is a precursor in the introduction of a research project. The literature review is a body of text that reviews critical points of current knowledge including substantive findings and contributions to a particular topic.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of bereavement on learner's psychological well-being. The study also investigates support that can be given to the learners

who are bereaved, and the role of educators in order to equip them with tools to better assist learners during the grieving process.

This section will be structured as follows: psychological well-being, bereavement, mourning, and grief. The sub-section on bereavement will provide an overview on the concept of bereavement. The subsection will also study the concept of psychological well-being.

2.1 Psychological well-being

Psychological well-being is the state of good mental health and emotional health. People who are psychologically healthy are free from mental disorders and have managed their stress so that it does not interfere with their ability to enjoy life and participate in society. Though there are times in most peoples' lives when they are not mentally or emotionally at their best, being in a state of psychological well-being means that they are able to cope with their problems effectively. This state of being has an effect on a person's physical health as well (Gross, 2013).

People are said to be in a state of psychological well-being when there are no mental or emotional disturbances in their lives. Mentally ill patients who have successfully managed their disorders can be in this state if their chronic problems are properly managed, though not if they are showing symptoms of their disorders. Being psychologically well often means that a person is generally happy, able to connect with others, and emotionally stable (wiseGeek.Com, 2000).

The literature on psychological well-being has progressed rapidly since the emergence of the field over five decades ago. As recent surveys show, psychologists, and other social scientists have taken huge steps in their understanding of the factors influencing psychological/ subjective well-being. Psychological well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. According to Diener (1997), these evaluations may be in the form of cognitions or in the form of affect. The cognitive part is an information based appraisal of one's life that is when a person gives conscious evaluative judgments about one's satisfaction with life as a whole. The affective part is a hedonic evaluation guided by emotions and feelings such as frequency with which people experience pleasant/unpleasant moods in reaction to their lives. The assumption behind this is that most people evaluate their life as either good or bad, so they are normally able to offer judgments. Further, people invariably experience moods and emotions, which have a positive effect or a negative effect. Thus, people have a level of subjective well-being

even if they do not often consciously think about it, and the psychological system offers virtually a constant evaluation of what is happening to the person.

In this study psychological well-being is defined in terms of internal experience of the respondent and their own perception of their lives. The focus was on momentary moods and long term states of their mental well-being. Current social indicators can capture phenomena such as crime, divorce, environmental problems, infant mortality, gender equality, etc. Thus, they can capture aspects of quality of life that add to the description drawn by economic indicators. However, these social indicators fail to capture the subjective well-being of people because they do not reflect the actual experiences, such as the quality of relationships; the regulation of their emotions; and whether feelings of isolation and depression pervade in their daily lives. On the other hand, economic indicators fail to include side effects and the trade-offs of market production and consumption. For example, the environmental costs of industries certainly are not observed from the national accounts. Another disadvantage of economic and social measures in terms of their links to psychological well-being is that they are based on models of rational choice, whereby people follow a set of logical rules when making development plans. However, works by Kahneman (1994) in psychology and economics reveal that people do not always make rational choices, and that these choices do not necessarily enhance psychological well-being.

Currently in Bhutan, economic and social indicators are available and frequently updated as most organisations conduct some research on it. Even the media and policies provide emphasis on such indicators, while no national measures of psychological well-being exist. The measurement of psychological well-being has advanced so much over the years that it is time to give a privileged place to people's well-being in policy debates. A GNH society calls for the inclusion of well-being indicators at par with economic ones. Media should provide attention to how a society is progressing in terms of psychological well-being and politicians should base their campaigns on their plans for reducing distress, increasing life satisfaction and happiness level.

Psychological well-being leads to desirable outcomes, even economic ones, and does not necessarily follow from them. In a very intensive research done by Diener et al. who score high in psychological well-being later earn high income and perform better at work than people who score low in well-being. It is also found to be related to physical health. In addition, it is often

noticed that what a society measures will in turn influence the things that it seeks. If a society takes great effort to measure productivity, people in the society are likely to focus more on it and sometimes even to the detriment of other values. If a society regularly assesses well-being, people will provide their attention on it and learn more about its causes. Psychological well-being is therefore valuable not only because it assesses well-being more directly but it has beneficial consequences.

According to the Gross National Happiness Association (2010) psychological well-being also refers to how people evaluate their lives. These evaluations may be in the form of recognition or in the form of affect. The cognitive part is an information based appraisal of one's life that is when a person gives conscious evaluative judgments about one's satisfaction with life as a whole.

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assesses as well-being, is therefore valuable because of its beneficial consequences (Beck, 2007).

Psychological well-being refers to positive mental health (Edwards, 2005). Research has shown that psychological well-being is a diverse multidimensional concept (MacLeod & Moore, 2000; Ryff, 1989b; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002), which develops through a combination of emotional regulation, personality characteristics, identity and life experience (Helson & Srivastava, 2001). Psychological well-being can increase with age, education, extraversion and consciousness and decreases with neuroticism (Keyes et al., 2002). Furthermore, the perception of physical health and spirituality can mediate the relationship between context and psychological well- being (Temane & Wissing, 2006a, 2006b).

Psychological well-being has undergone extensive empirical review and theoretical evaluation (Wissing & Van Eeden, 1998). There is currently no single consensual conceptual understanding of psychological well-being. Bradburn's (1969) initial understanding of psychological well-being provided a depiction of the difference between positive and negative effect. Preliminary research was mainly concerned with the experiences of positive and negative effect, subjective well-being and life satisfaction that were formed around the Greek word '*eudemonia*', which was translated as 'happiness' (Ryff, 1989b). Happiness was described as the equilibrium between positive and negative effect. Many early scales, such as Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffen's (1985) Satisfaction with Life Scale, on which a vast amount of research was conducted, used this initial subjective conception of well-being (Conway & Macleod, 2002; Diener et al., 1985). The Satisfaction with Life Scale requires participants to indicate a cognitive rather than affective response in relation to global satisfaction with their quality of life.

Other assessment measures have including Antonovsky's (1993) Sense of Coherence Scale with adaptations by Frenz, Carey and Jorgensen (1993), the Fortitude Scale (Pretorius, 1998), Social Readjustment Scale (Holmes & Rahe, 1967) and Beck's Depression Inventory (Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock & Erbaugh, 1961). The Fortitude Scale measures self-appraisals, family appraisals and support appraisals. The Social Readjustment Scale evaluates present experiences of stress in terms of significant life events. The Beck's Depression Inventory assesses emotional distress in the form of depression.

Despite extensive evaluation and assessments, experts have indicated that psychological well-being is a diverse multidimensional concept, with exact components still unknown (MacLeod & Moore, 2000; Ryff, 1989b; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002). Ryff has extensively researched the objective understanding of psychological well-being.

2.2 Death and Loss

Bereavement refers to the period of grief and mourning after a death. When one grieves, it is part of the normal process of reacting to a loss. We may experience grief as a mental, physical, social, or emotional reaction. Mental reactions can include anger, guilt, anxiety, sadness, and despair. Physical reactions can include sleeping problems, change in appetite, physical problems, or illness (National Cancer Institute of Health, 2013). Bereavement is the period of grief and mourning after a loss. Death is a crisis that all families encounter (Lahey, 2009). Death is recognised as the most stressful life event families' face. This is despite the fact that most do not need counselling to cope (Parkes, 2001). Research that examines loss as a family system phenomenon has only recently gained visibility (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002) with increased attention that parallels the movement into midlife of baby boomers. We live in an environment where death is invisible and denied (Huppert, 2009, Keyes, 2005 & Lahey, 2009). On the other hand, people have become de-sensitised to death. These inconsistencies appear in the extent to which families are personally affected by death Lahey(2009), whether they define loss as happening to one of us or to one of them.

In industrialised western nations, geographic mobility and social re-organisation of families also resulted in reduced intergenerational contact thus fewer opportunities for younger family members to participate in death related experiences (Keyes, 2005). In addition, the development of life extending medical technologies has had several effects on Americans' experiences with death:

- It has moved most dying from people's homes to institutions.
- It has resulted in care dominated by efforts to delay death by all means.
- It has led us to question our assumptions about what constitutes life and death.
- It has confronted families with decisions about whether to prolong the process of dying or terminate the lives of loved ones.

Although western families have distanced themselves from the intimacy of death, they are bombarded by public presentations of death through the news. With African families death is

treated differently. Families believe it's important to be around the person who is dying and offer them support. That doesn't include the family alone but the whole community as well.

Childhood bereavement is never easy, because it is a tough time when young people are trying to find themselves and now and up having to jungle this painful unfortunate time in their lives. Childhood bereavement may have both a short and long term impact on a children's well-being, including their psychological health and educational achievement, yet there is very little written about how to help these children going through bereavement. Death is not in the scheme of things when you are a child. It is often premature and unexpected. Death is an event that interferes with the normal process of growing up and plays on emotions, which may never have been experienced before. In short, the death of a parent or loved one is shocking and the foundations of a child's life are rocked; their confidence in the world they know is destroyed (Akerman & Statham, 2001).

For a child whose parent has died, the bewilderment and confusion may be both in the world around and within themselves. The long term emotional difficulties may be considerable. Brown and Harris (1989) believe that the death of a parent before the age of twelve is likely to increase the chances of depressive reactions in childhood. However, Segal and Simkins (1996) are more positive, saying that the quality of care children receive after the death of a loved one is crucial to their later well-being. In addition to the sorrow and loneliness experienced when a parent dies, children may feel doubly abandoned by their surviving parent who is struggling to manage their own grief and may have difficulty maintaining the status quo. Anger and guilt may also be part of children's feelings if they believe that they were to blame for what happened. This is especially prevalent when there has been conflict or anger shown towards the person who has died or with young children in the magical stage of conceptual thinking.

Many children will deny the reality of their parents' death because the experience and the long term consequences are too painful to manage. Dyregrov (1991) describes this response as automatic emotional defence and writes of children who on hearing the news, turn to issues such as, 'can I use his bed now?' or Can I take part in the funeral?'. Where children develop strategies like these, it is not unusual for strong or violent feelings to emerge in other circumstances. Their reactions may then be out of proportion to the issue at hand.

Reviews on studies from various countries on children and bereavement following the death of a significant other reported that learners in this situation do experience a wide range of emotional, psychological, and behavioural responses to grief (Downey, 2000). Responses may include anxiety, depressive symptoms, fears, angry outbursts. Grieving the death of a loved one presents significant challenges regardless of the bereaved individual's age or life circumstances and can be especially daunting during times of development transition. According to Graves and Larkin (2006), Erikson's psychosocial theory holds that individuals develop in eight life stages. Each stage holds a psychosocial crisis or task that needs to be resolved. This needs to be done in such a way that the individual is able to incorporate the skills mastered in order to find the resolution of future stages. According to Erikson (2005), adolescence marks the time when physical and cognitive development coincide with social expectations such that individuals are able to contemplate and structure their childhood self-identity and begin to consider a workable transition to adulthood.

Despite some changes in attitudes, death still seems like a taboo subject, especially in African people, which is perhaps remarkable as it is the one sure certainty. People in general seem to find it difficult to know how to respond to the bereaved, and as a result they may do nothing and thereby add to the negative emotional impact on the person. Bereavement is difficult for everyone especially in children, the surviving parent or guardian may not be emotionally available for the child and may be unable to facilitate their grieving through discussing the death and their feelings, as well as not answering their questions (Papadatou, Metallinou, Hatzichristou, & Palvidi, 2002). Children may then become forgotten mourners, being isolated and vulnerable. Hurd (1999) contend that a child's healthy mourning is dependent on a number of factors. These factors include the relationship with the deceased parent, the emotional availability of the surviving parent, and effective communication within the family. In addition, the participation of the child in a funeral and the quality of the child, support network, including school friends and family will be relevant in terms of a child's mourning.

Schools act as potential helpers when learners deal with loss. Schools seem to be in a unique position to help grieving learners. Although bereavement is a family issue, it potentially can affect children while they are at school (Reid, 2000). Children spend most of their waking time days in school, therefore, that has the potential to be a safe haven and even a secure second family (Lowton & Higginson, 2003). If trust and rapport are established and children are provided with accurate information, this helps to avoid myths developing about a death that

may further complicate grieving for children. A sensitive teacher is one who is able to acknowledge the needs of the pupil and help them to adjust to the loss. Schools may also be able to offer support to the bereaved family, by offering a listening ear or guiding them to a relevant agency for support, which will then indirectly impact on the pupil.

Dyregrov (2000) states that studies show that children and adolescents think of their dead relatives for a longer period more frequently compared to adults, and are more affected psychologically. Besides their academic success and social interaction, they are affected negatively as well. In addition, children and adolescents experiencing parental loss may tend to have psychological problems in their future life. This risk can be experienced more heavily in the case death is sudden and there is no one for the child to place to the death parent.

Although it seems that a lot of studies have been done on children and deaths, there is not much written about how African children deal with bereavement, which is what the study hoped to understand better. I also hope to make people aware of that if a person's grieving takes a longer time it does not mean there is something wrong with the person. It just means that they need more time to grieve fully so that they can heal fully. It is advisable to be patient especially with children as they grieve differently, according to Kelly (2000). In some ways their grief may never be finished. They do not forget the person who died and the relationship they shared, but they come to a grudging acceptance of the death and their loss and a realisation that they have to go on as they adjust and the grief changes. It becomes a part of them and a part of their life.

In this section psychological well-being has been defined in terms of internal experience of the respondent and their own perception of their lives. Studies focused both on momentary moods and long term states of their mental well-being. Current social indicator can capture phenomena such as crime, divorce, environmental problems, infant mortality, gender equality, etc. thus, they can capture aspects of quality of life that add to the description drawn by economic indicators. However, these social indicators fail to capture the subjective well-being of people because they do not reflect the actual experiences, such as the quality of relationships; the regulations of their emotions; and whether feelings of isolation and the depression pervades in their daily life. On the other hand, economic indicators fail to include side effects and the trade-offs of market production and consumption. For example, the environmental costs of industries certainly are not observed from the national accounts. Another disadvantage of economic and social measure in terms of their links to psychological well-being is that they are

based on models of rational choice (Ryff, 2001) whereby people follow a set of logical rules when making development plans. However, Berkman and Breslow (2003) reveal that people do not always make rational choices, and that these choices do not necessarily enhance psychological well-being (Cohen & Lemay, 2007).

2.3 Bereavement

Bereavement is defined as the objective situation one faces after having lost an important person to death. Bereavement is a normal reaction to loss in human beings in virtually every culture across the world. There are no set rules for how long 'normal' bereavement lasts, as each person and each loss is very different (AHF, 2012; Berger, 2009; Herrman, 2001). Therefore, bereavement tends not to be diagnosed unless it has gone on for a very significant period and significantly impacts the person's life. Getting over or past the loss of a loved one can be challenging for nearly everyone. However, for some, the loss of a loved one is too much, causing them to enter into a clinical depression that may need further attention or treatment. According to Winegard et al. (2014), bereavement is conceptualised as the broadest of the three terms and a statement of the objective reality of a situation of loss through death.

Bereavement is diagnosed when the focus of clinical attention is a reaction to the death or loss of a loved one. As part of their reaction to the loss, some grieving individuals present symptoms characteristic of a Major Depressive Episode, for example, feelings of sadness and associated symptoms such as insomnia, poor appetite, and weight loss, (Kelley & Nesse, 2006). The bereaved individual typically regards the depressed mood as normal, although the person may seek professional help for relief of associated symptoms such as insomnia or anorexia (Grohol, 2016). The duration and expression of normal bereavement vary considerably among different cultural groups (Freidli, 2009). The diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder is generally not given unless the symptoms are still present two months after the loss. However, the presence of certain symptoms that are not characteristic of a normal grief reaction may be helpful in differentiating bereavement from a Major Depressive Episode. These symptoms include: guilt about things other than actions taken or not taken by survivor at the time of the death; thoughts of death other than the survivor feeling that he or she would be better off dead or should have died with the deceased person; morbid preoccupation with worthlessness; significant psychomotor retardation (eg. it is hard to get moving, and what movements are there are slow); prolonged and serious functional impairment; and hallucinatory experiences other than

thinking that he or she hears the voice of, or transiently sees the image of the deceased person (Bonanno, 2004).

Bereavement is also defined as the state of having lost a loved one through death (Brown & Goodman, 2004). Everyone who has loved and lost a person through death will experience bereavement. Although it is a natural and universal experience, people still find bereavement distressing and experience a variety of emotions (Mwamwenda, 2004). Mwamwenda (2004) further states that bereavement is characterised by activities such as crying, having distressing thoughts about the dead person and feeling saddened by the loss of the person who died. Bereavement is also known as the state of grieving the death of a person with whom the bereaved individual has shared a significant relationship and must now endure the loss.

> "Relationships with the persons we care for combine both the tangible and intangible elements. What matters is that the person is gone forever, and that places the person in a state of loss (what we call bereavement), eliciting complex reactions (what we call grief) and finding expression in a myriad of ways (what we call mourning)" (Balk, 2011:38).

Bereavement is never easy; it is even more difficult to endure for children. Bereavement encompasses both grief and mourning, but these terms have particular meanings. According to Leming and Dickison (2007), grief is an uncontrollable emotional reaction to the state of bereavement, which extends beyond emotions and includes psychological and physical responses to loss. Mourning is an outward expression of grief, including cultural and religious customs surrounding death. It is also the process of adapting to life after a loss.

Bereavement, the loss of a loved one as a result of death, causes a broad range of reactions, and people experience their grief in many and varied ways. Mourning, the adaptation to loss, is an essential process in order to re-establish equilibrium and carry on with living. Mourning can take a long time and there is no fixed time in which one should expect to feel better.

Individuals may experience some of the following reactions when someone close to them dies:

Feelings

Sadness and loneliness

The loss of a loved one leaves an individual feeling sad and lonely. One may suffer deep sorrow that they are without the love and understanding of that person. When an individual loses a

partner or close friend they may be especially lonely as they were used to a close day-by-day relationship and shared in everyday activities.

Anger

This is a frequent experience after the loss. The anger comes from a sense of frustration that there was nothing family, doctors, God or one could do to prevent the death. One may also feel angry with the deceased for leaving them.

Guilt and self-reproach

These are common responses to loss. One may feel guilty about things done or left undone, unresolved quarrels, words said or left unsaid. Usually people blame themselves for something that was neglected around the time of the death. Most often guilt is normal, though not justified.

Anxiety and Fears

Feelings of anxiety are common and stem from two sources. One may fear that he/she will not be able to take care of oneself and awareness of own mortality is heightened by the death of a loved one. One may feel very vulnerable and lose confidence in oneself and in the world. Anxiety carried to extremes can develop into a phobia or lead to panic attacks.

Fatigue

Fatigue is frequently experienced and may take the form of apathy or listlessness. To a person who is usually very active this can be both surprising and distressing.

Despair and Helplessness

A person may feel he/she cannot bear the pain any longer. The sense of helplessness engendered by death makes bereavement a stressful experience.

Shock

An individual may feel numb, bewildered, stunned, and unable to think clearly. Shock occurs most often in the case of a sudden death. In some ways, shock protects you from the overwhelming feelings as it does not allow them all into consciousness.

Longing and Searching

One may have a sense of longing to see, hear, hold, and talk to the person who has died.

Relief

It is normal to feel relieved after death of a loved one who suffered a lengthy or particularly painful illness. It is also normal to feel relieved that a person with whom you had a difficult relationship is no longer alive. Guilt often accompanies this sense of relief but it is a normal part of grief.

Physical Sensations

Physical reactions are also associated with acute grief. These sensations play a significant role in the grieving process. Some common symptoms are tightness in the chest and throat, feeling short of breath, hollowness in the stomach, muscular tension, diarrhea, dry mouth, headaches, and sense of de-personalization. If the symptoms persist or are of concern, one should consult a physician for a check-up.

Thoughts

Certain thoughts are common in the early stages of mourning, and usually fade after a short time. Sometimes they persist and can lead to anxiety and depression.

Disbelief

This is often the initial response after hearing of a death. One may feel that what has happened is unreal, and can't believe it happened. It is a common thought, which might persist for some time.

Confusion

A person may feel unable to concentrate, can't seem to put thoughts in order and tend to forget things.

Preoccupation

You may be obsessed with thoughts about the deceased, be preoccupied about how to recover the lost person and have intrusive thoughts or images of the deceased suffering or dying.

Sense of presence

The counterpart of the experience of longing and yearning are thoughts that the deceased is somehow still in the current area of time and space.

Hallucinations

Hallucinations, both visual and auditory, are frequent experiences of the bereaved. Usually occurring within a few weeks following the loss, these transient illusory experiences do not pretend a more difficult mourning experience.

Behaviours

A number of behaviours are commonly reported after a loss, which are associated with normal grief reactions; they usually correct themselves over time. Some frequent behaviours include sleep and appetite disturbances, absentmindedness, social withdrawal, dreams, or nightmares of the deceased, avoiding reminders of the deceased, sighing, over activity, crying, visiting places or carrying objects that remind you of the person, and / or treasuring objects that belonged to the deceased.

2.4.1 Bereavement and major depressive disorders

The symptoms of depression are characterised by an overwhelming feeling of sadness, isolation, and despair that lasts two weeks or longer at a time (Archer, 2001). Depression is not just an occasional feeling of being sad or lonely, like most people experience from time to time. Instead, a person feels like they've sunk into a deep, dark hole with no way out, and no hope for things ever changing.

2.4.2 Symptoms of Clinical Depression

A person who suffers from a major depressive disorder must either have a depressed mood or a loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities consistently for at least a two-week period. The depressed mood represents a significant change from a person's normal mood. Social, occupational, educational, or other important functioning are negatively impacted by the change in mood (Davis, 2011). For instance, a person who is depressed starts missing work or school, or stops going to classes or does not participate in their usual social engagements (such as going out with friends).

2.4.3 Types of Depressions

Clinical depression is characterised by the presence of five or more of depressive symptoms. Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective reports (eg. feeling sad, blue, down in the dumps, or empty) or observation made by others (eg. appears tearful or about to cry). In children and adolescents, this may present as an irritable or cranky, rather than sad mood (Bonanno, 2006). Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or

almost all, activities every day, such as no interest in hobbies, sports or other things the person used to enjoy doing. Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (eg. a change of more than five percent of body weight in a month), or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day; insomnia (inability to get to sleep or difficult staying asleep), or hypersomnia (sleeping too much) nearly every day.

Psychomotor agitation (eg. restlessness, inability to sit still, pacing, pulling at clothes or retardation (eg. slowed speech, movements, quiet talking, nearly every day). Fatigue, tiredness, or loss of energy nearly every day (eg. even the smallest tasks, like dressing or washing seem difficult to do and take longer than usual) (Carr, Nesse & Wortman, 2005). Feelings of worthlessness, excessive, or inappropriate guilt nearly every day, for example, rumination over minor past failings); diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness nearly every day (eg. appears easily distracted, complains of memory difficulties); recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideas without a specific plan, suicide attempts, or a specific plan for committing suicide (Bressert, 2016).

Mourning

Mourning is defined as a public display of grief. While grief focuses more on the internal or intra-psychic experience of loss, mourning emphasises the external or public expressions of grief. Consequently, mourning is influenced by one's beliefs, religious practices, and cultural context (Wilner, 2011). There is an obvious overlap between grief and mourning, with each influencing the other. It is often difficult to distinguish between the two. One's public expression ie (Mourning) of the emotional distress over the loss of a loved one (ie. grief) is influenced by culturally determined beliefs, morals, and values. When the narrow portion, processing ability is filled with thoughts of the deceased and the necessity of managing intense emotions, little room is left for concentrating on academic demands and other memory tasks. The stress of daily academic tasks is often overwhelming to a child. In our bereavement, we spend different lengths of time working through each step and express each stage with different levels of intensity (Stetson, 2003). The five stages do not necessarily occur in any specific order. We often move between stages before achieving a more peaceful acceptance of death. Many of us are not afforded the luxury of time required to achieve this final stage of grief.

After one sustains a loss, there are certain tasks of mourning to be accomplished for the process of mourning to be completed (Worden, 2008). The tasks do not necessarily occur in a specific order, although a sequence is suggested.

Task I: To accept the reality of the loss.

The first task of mourning is to come face to face with the reality that the person is dead. It involves intellectual and emotional acceptance of the finality of loss. Many people protect themselves from reality by denying the meaning of the loss (I don't miss her), or denying the irreversibility of death (I won't have you dead). Belief and disbelief coexist while trying to come to grips with the reality of the loss. Traditional rituals such as the funeral help many bereaved people move toward acceptance. (Worden, 2008).

Task II: To work through to the pain of grief.

It is necessary to acknowledge and work through the pain - emotional, behavioural, and often literal physical pain - associated with loss. Avoiding or suppressing this pain can result in its manifestation through symptoms (e.g. depression, heart disease). Not everyone experiences the same intensity of pain or feels it in the same way, but it is impossible to lose a loved one without experiencing some level of pain. People can negate this task by not feeling. They may cut off their feelings, deny the pain, avoid painful thoughts and reminders of the dead, and even use alcohol or drugs. Society may be uncomfortable with the painful feelings and hence give the indirect message "you don't need to grieve". Adequate completion of this task is needed so that one prevents carrying the pain with them throughout their life.

Task III: To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing.

Depending on the relationship with the deceased, and the various roles the deceased played, adjustment to a new environment means different things to different people. It might mean living alone, raising children alone, managing finances alone; the full recognition of the changed circumstances may take a considerable period. (Worden, 2008).

The bereaved may have to develop new skills and take on new roles; they are often confronted with the challenge of adjusting to one's own sense of self. Attempts to fulfil the deceased's roles may be met with initial resentment, but the negative feelings usually give way to more positive ones as the bereaved learn new ways of dealing with the world.

As loss can challenge one's fundamental life values and beliefs, another area of adjustment may be to one's sense of the world. Searching for meaning in the loss, especially when there are sudden and untimely deaths, may mean adoption of new beliefs, or modification of old ones to reflect the fragility of life and the limits of control. The negative course of Task III is not adapting to the loss. Some people may not develop the skills they need to cope, withdraw from the world, and promote a stance of helplessness.

Task IV: To emotionally relocate the deceased and move on with life.
The essence of Task IV is about finding an appropriate place for the dead in one's emotional life. It is about evolving some on-going relationship with the thoughts and memories associated with the deceased in a way that would allow the bereaved to go on living effectively in the world. For many people it is the most difficult task to accomplish. They hinder it by holding on the past attachment rather than going on and forming new ones, later to realise that their life in some way stopped at the point the loss occurred.

One indication of a completed grief reaction is when the person is able to think of the deceased without pain or intense crying; mourning is finished when people reinvest their emotions into life, feels more hopeful, experience gratification again, and adjusts to new roles.

2.4 Grief

Grief is a multifaceted response to loss, particularly to the loss of someone or something that has died, to which a bond or affection was formed. Although conventionally focused on the emotional response to loss, it also has physical, cognitive, behavioural, social, and philosophical dimensions. While the terms are often used in an interchangeable manner, bereavement refers to the state of loss, and grief is the reaction and a natural response to loss.. It is the emotional suffering one feels when something or someone the individual loves is taken away. The grief association with death is familiar to most people, but individual grieve in connection with a variety of losses throughout their lives, such as unemployment, ill health or the physical loss being related to something that the individual can touch or measure, such as losing a spouse through death, while other types of loss are abstract, and related to aspects of a person's social interactions (AHF, 2012).

2.6.1 The process of grieving

In recent years there has been a high level of scepticism about the universal and predictable emotional pathway that leads from distress to recovery with an appreciation that grief is a more complex process of adapting to loss than stage phase model have previously been suggested (Davis, 2011).

While there are no set stages of grief, the following are all common responses:

► Numbness and shock,

► Sobbing, crying,

► Longing to bring the person (or situation) back,

► Overwhelming feelings of loss, anguish, pain,

► Intense emotions,

► Denial that the event occurred,

► Questioning (why did this happen? Why did he/she die?),

► Repetitious thinking and statements,

► Loss of appetite,

► Difficulty sleeping,

► Bodily distress such as headache, stomach upset, chest pains,

► Preoccupation with the event,

► Confusion, difficulty making decisions,

► Idealization of the person/situation that has been lost,

► Reality of the loss sets in,

► Anxiety and panic, feeling crazy,

► Depression and sadness,

► Helplessness, being in limbo,

► Guilt, resentment, despair, bitterness,

► Anger ñ at self, at others, at the person who died,

► Loneliness,

► Hope, and

► Renewal

All of these feelings, behaviours and emotions help people to make sense of the loss, and to integrate the loss into their lives. Not all people will experience all of these, but all are normal responses to loss. Ways to assist a grieving person can include:

►   Being there while a person is grieving,

►   Listening to the grieving person,

►   Acknowledge their loss,

►   Assure them that their grief reactions are normal and understandable,

► Do not compare a grieving person with others. Accept that each person may grieve differently,

►   Allow the person to grieve at their own pace,

►   Recognize that normal routines can be useful,

►   Assist the person to make decisions, but avoid deciding for them,

►   Encourage them not to make big life-changing decisions, but assist them to make smaller decisions that can help them feel in control of their lives,

►   Talk about the loss, talk about the person who died,

►   Encourage them to eat well-balanced meals, but avoid making them eat,

►   Avoid numbing the pain with alcohol or other drugs,

►   Assist with practical matters like childcare, housework, etc. but do consult the bereaved person about this.

2.6.2   Reaction

Crying is a normal and natural part of grieving. It has also been found however, that crying and talking about the loss is not the only healthy response and, if forced or excessive, can be harmful. Responses or action in the affected person, called 'coping ugly' (Bonanno, 2006) may seem counter-intuitive or even appear dysfunctional, for example, celebratory responses, laughter or self-serving bias in interpreting events. Lack of crying is also a natural, healthy reaction, potentially protective of the individual, and may be seen as a sign of resilience; science has found that some healthy people who are grieving do not spontaneously talk about the loss. Pressing people to cry or retell the experience of a loss can be harmful, while genuine laughter is healthy, according to James and Friedman (2009).

2.6.3   Common grief reactions

According to Nembahe (2013) reactions to loss, called grief reactions, vary widely from person to person and within the same person over time. Common grief reactions include difficult feelings, thoughts, physical sensations, and behaviors.

Feelings:

People who have experienced loss may have a range of feelings. This could include shock, numbness, sadness, denial, despair, anxiety, anger, guilt, loneliness, depression, helplessness, relief, and yearning. A grieving person may start crying after hearing a song or comment that makes them think of the person who has died. Alternatively, that person may cry for no reason *(ibid)*

Thoughts:

Common thoughts patterns include disbelief, confusion, difficulty concentrating, preoccupation, and hallucinations. (Nembahe, 2013)

Physical sensation:

Grief can cause physical sensation, such as tightness or heaviness in the chest or throat, nausea or an upset stomach, dizziness, headaches, physical numbness, muscle weakness or tension, and fatigue. It may also make one vulnerable to illness (Nembahe, 2013)

Behaviours:

When a person is grieving, he or she may struggle to fall asleep or stay asleep. He or she may also lose energy for enjoyable activities or lose interest in eating or interacting socially. A grieving person may also become more irritable or aggressive. Other common behaviours include restlessness and excessive activity (Nembahe, 2013)

Religion and spirituality:

Grief and loss may also cause a person to question his or her faith or view of the world or it may strengthen the person's faith by providing a new understanding of the meaning of life (Nembahe, 2013)

Experiencing grief:

Each person experiences grief differently. Often, a person feels grief in waves or cycles with periods of intense and painful feelings that comes and goes. People who grieve may feel they are making progress but then suddenly face overwhelming grief again. This may occur at significant dates, such as holidays, birthdays or without reason. Over time, these grief cycles will typically become less frequent and less intense as the person adjusts to his or her loss (Nembahe, 2013)

2.6.4 Five identities of grievers

Berger (2009) identifies five ways of grieving. As exemplified by nomads, memorialists, normalisers, activists and seekers. The nomads are those grievers that have not yet resolved their grief and do not seem to understand the loss that has affected their lives. The memorialists are those that have an identity and are committed to re-creating a sense of family and

community. The activists are those grievers who focus on helping other people who are dealing with the same issues that caused their loved one's demise and death. The seekers are those people who will adopt religious, philosophical, or spiritual beliefs to create meaning in their lives (Berger, 2009).

2.6.5 The effect of grief on thinking and learning

When someone very important dies, several changes take place that affect memory, concentration and learning (Archer, 2001). This challenge lasts for months and last for two or more years. Our most basic needs, feelings of real fear may result. Children worry about the surviving parent and often wonder what will happen to them this parent dies too (Nesse, 2005). The surviving parent may be grieving and perhaps unable to focus on the needs of the child for a time.

2.6.6 Learning theory and grief

Children have many learning responsibilities. Grief and trauma can be a detriment to learning (Carr, Nesse & Wortman, 2005). The following shows how learning theory applies to grieving children. There is a potentially infinite amount of information in the universe. The brain appears to have, if not unlimited, at least a massive storage capacity (Lichtentahl & Cruess, 2010). The limitation is in the amount of information that can be processed at one time. Learning theory suggests that only 5-6 chunks of information can be processed at one time (Pratt, 2005; Woolfolk, 2004).

2.6.7 Learning tasks and grief

When the narrow portion, processing ability, is filled with thought of the deceased and necessity of managing intense emotions, little room is left for concentrating on academic demands and other memory tasks (Shear, 2005); Smith (2012) claims that the stress of daily academic tasks is often overwhelming to a child.

2.6.8 Stages of grief

According to Genden (2005) grief is a natural response to an individual's experience with loss. A mixture of feelings can be associated with grief such as sadness, anger, guilt, frustration, or regret. People go through stages of grief to make peace with the experience and help heal the emotional pain associated with loss. This can be confusing since there are several lists that include anywhere from five to nine separate stages. One may also find it misleading, because

the word 'stage' may suggest a neat, orderly progression from one phase to another. The stage describes our reactions to the death of a loved one, and usually those reactions are not neat and orderly**.** Through extensive reading and practical experience over the years studies have compiled the list to just three stages of grief to assist in bereavement process: Disbelief, pain and belief.

Through these three stages share some of the same emotion-sadness, anger, depressions loneliness, shock, emptiness, relief, and fear for the future, etc. each one is named for the feeling that dominated in frequency and intensity (The Help Guide, 2000).

Disbelief: According to Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (2014), during the first months or so one's stronger reactions will probably be related to shock and disbelief. They find themselves thinking or saying 'this can't be true, this can't be happening'. They may pick up the phone to call, or set a place at the table for dinner and each time they forget their loved one died; there will be fresh pain as they remember. Disbelief is a common response in all humans to any bad news; they don't want to believe it. This stage of shock allows the truth to sink in slowly; in small doses, and this could last for three to seven weeks.

Pain: The second stage is when the disbelief and shock are wearing off, when the reaction relates mainly to the painful realisation that the loved one has indeed died; in the first stage the experiences some feelings of sadness. Without the protection of numbness' or shock, these feelings may be intense, more prolonged, and can seem overwhelming; they may feel like everything is falling apart. This stage may last about four months.

Healing: During this third stage they still have some moments of disbelief and feelings of sadness but they find themselves stronger; this occurs more often. They may have more interest in what is going on around them, at work, at home, with family –and they may feel more energetic and enthusiastic. For most people, there is no specific point at which they can say that they have recovered, rather, there is a gradual recognition of this healing and a realisation of the readiness again to become fully in love with living. This stage of reorganisation also may last about four months.

Recognising these three parts can help in understanding one's varying emotions. Often it is only when one looks back and realise some indication of when the change happened; this takes place mostly when one experiences disbelief, pain or healing states (Moore, 2015).

Smith (2012) states that the death of one's loved one might inspire one to evaluate one's own feelings of mortality. Throughout each stage a common thread of hope emerges as long as there is life, there is hope. As long as there is hope, there is life. Many people do not experience the stages in the order listed below, which is okay. The key to understanding the stages is not to feel like one must go through every one of them, in the precise order. Instead, it is more helpful to look at them as guides in the grieving process. It helps an individual understand and put into context where they are. All people grieve differently. Some people will wear their emotions on their sleeve. Others will experience their grief more internally, and may not cry (Shear, 2005). One should not be judgemental about how a person experiences their grief, as each person experiences it differently.

The first reaction to learning of terminal illness or death of a cherished loved one is to deny the reality of the situation. It is a normal reaction to rationalise overwhelming emotions (Santrock, 2007) It is a defence mechanism that buffers the immediate shock. We block out the words and hide from the facts. This temporary response carries individuals through the first wave of pain; as the masking effects of denial and isolation begin to wear, reality and its pain re-emerge. The intense emotion is deflected from a vulnerable core, redirected, and expressed instead as anger. The anger may be aimed at inanimate objects, complete strangers, friends, or family. Anger may be directed at the dying or deceased loved one. Rationally, the person is not to be blamed. Emotionally, however, one may resent the deceased for causing pain or for leaving. A person may feel guilty for being angry, and this makes the person angrier. Grieving is a personal process that has no time limit, nor one right way. The doctor who diagnosed the illness and was unable to cure the disease might become a convenient target. Health professionals deal with death and dying every day. That does not make them immune to the suffering of their patients or to those who grieve for them. One must not hesitate to ask the doctor to give one extra time or to explain the details of the loved one's illness. At times they have special appointments (Openshaw, 2011). They also intervene by requesting for clear answers to questions regarding medical diagnosis and treatment.

Understanding the options available to an individual, taking their time, are some coping strategies. The normal reaction to feelings of helplessness and vulnerability is often a need to regain control. One might blame circumstances eg. Saying If only we got a second opinion from another doctor. They might also find fault for not trying certain options by saying "If only we tried to be a better person towards them. Secretly, one may make a deal with God or a higher

power in an attempt to postpone the inevitable. This is a weaker line of defence for protection from the painful reality. Two types of depression are associated with mourning. The first one is a reaction to practical implications relating to the loss. Sadness and regret dominate this type of depression. Bereaved people worry about the costs and burial. They also worry that, in their grief, they have spent less time with others. This phase may be eased by simple clarification and reassurance. They may need a bit of helpful cooperation and a few kind words. The second type of depression is more subtle and, in a sense, perhaps more private. It is a quiet preparation to separate and bid the loved one farewell. Sometimes all they really need is a hug (Oesterreich, 2004).

2.5 The impact of grief on children's academic performance

There are children who continue to perform well in school following the death of a significant loved one. These children often go unnoticed. They may use the tasks of schoolwork or sports to block out painful feelings and thoughts. They may also feel a need to excel because of a feeling that the parent is watching them, and they may want to show the deceased parent how much they care and want to make them proud. This type of response to loss can result in stress related health problems later in life, as well as potential physical and emotional difficulties from unresolved grief (Oesterreich, 2004).

A person's psychological being is greatly affected by a traumatic event. A traumatic event is a sudden and unexpected occurrence that causes intense fear and may involve a threat of physical harm or actual physical harm. A traumatic experience may have a profound effect on the physical health, mental health and on the development of the student. How students process trauma depends on their age and level of development. By understanding how students experience traumatic events and how they express their lingering distress over the experience, school personnel can better respond and help them through this challenging time (Janoff, 2010).

For students, a traumatic experience may cause on-going feelings of concern for their own safety and the safety of others. These students may become preoccupied with thoughts about their actions during the event, often at times experiencing guilt, or shame over what they did or did not do at the time. They might engage in constant retelling of the traumatic event, or may describe being overwhelmed by their feelings of fear or sadness. Pre-school students may lose recently acquired developmental milestones and may increase behaviours such as bedwetting, thumb sucking, and regress to simpler speech. They may become clingier to their

parents and worry about their parent's safety and return. These young students may also become more irritable with more temper tantrums and have more difficulty calming down. A few students may show reserved behaviour and become very withdrawn, subdued, or even mute after a traumatic event. These students may have difficulties falling or staying asleep or have nightmares about the event or other bad dreams. Typically these students will process the event through post-traumatic play Hutchison (2005).

Elementary students may show signs of distress through somatic complaints such as stomach aches, headaches, and pains. These students may have a change in behaviour, such as increase irritability, aggression, and anger. Their behaviours may be inconsistent. These students may show a change in school performance and have impaired attention, concentration, and more school absences. Late elementary students may excessively talk and ask persistent questions about the event. These students exposed to a traumatic event feel self-conscious about their emotional responses to the event. They often experience feelings of shame and guilt about the traumatic event and may express fantasies about revenge and retribution. A traumatic event in adolescents may foster a radical shift in the way these students think about the world. Some of these adolescents may begin to engage in self-destructive or accident prone behaviours and reckless behaviours. There may be a shift in their interpersonal relationships with family members, teachers, and classmates. These students may show a change in their school performance, attendance and behaviour (Hutchison, 2005).

In spite of our ability to predict general responses to trauma depending on age and developmental level, there is still tremendous variability among students regarding post-traumatic symptoms and the extent to which learning and school may be disrupted. The variety of individual's responses to trauma is related to many factors, including a student's prior history of trauma or loss, or current mental health issues such as depression, anxiety or behavioural problems and individual differences in temperament. A traumatic event can seriously interrupt the school routine and the processes of teaching and learning. There are usually high levels of emotional upset, potential for disruptive behaviour, or loss of student attendance. Unless efforts are made to reach out to students and staff with additional information and services to offer and help ease their grieving process. Students traumatised by exposure to violence thou rather than normal natural passing have been noticed to have lower grades and more negative remarks in their cumulative records, and more reported absences from school than other students. They may have increased difficulties concentrating and learning at school and may engage in

unusually reckless or aggressive behaviour. The involvement of the school is critical in supporting students through the emotional and physical challenges they may face following an exposure to a traumatic event.

2.6 How teachers can support bereaved learners

A teacher must maintain routines both in the classroom and in school. He or she must be realistic about expectations for academic achievement for each learner (Lichtentahl & Cruss, 2011). Teachers must allow make-up opportunities while remembering that some children continue to have academic difficulties up to two years following a death, and sometimes beyond. Teachers must make exceptions for sports participation; sports can help with the healing process. A bereaved learner must be referred to the school counsellor while the teacher must communicate with the learner's parents. Teachers must respect the child's need to grieve and avoid telling the child to move on or get over it while creating an emotionally safe classroom. Teachers must also be aware that intense grief can come at developmental stages, years after a death has occurred. A teacher must affirm the person, regardless of academic performance (James & Friedman, 2009).

Loved ones that are terminally ill or ageing appear to go through a final period of withdrawal. This is by no means a suggestion that they are aware of their own impending death or such, only that physical decline may be sufficient to produce a similar response (Davis, 2011) their behaviour implies that it is natural to reach a stage at which social interaction is limited. The dignity and grace shown by dying loved ones may well be their last gift to us. This phase is marked by withdrawal and calm. This is not a period of happiness and must be distinguished from depression (Grohol, 2016).

2.7 Strategies for coping with bereavement

Reaching this stage of mourning is a gift not afforded to everyone. Death may be sudden and unexpected or one may never see beyond the anger or denial. It is not necessarily a mark of bravery to resist the inevitable and to deny oneself the opportunity to make peace. Coping with loss is ultimately a deeply personal and singular experience. Nobody can go through it more easily or understand all the emotions one goes through. But others can be there to provide help and comfort through this process. The best thing one can do is to allow oneself to feel the grief as it comes. Resisting it will only prolong the natural process of healing (Santrock, 2007).

The evidence on children's bereavement outcomes is difficult to summarise and some findings contradict others. In part, this is because children experience bereavement in a wide range of circumstances and opposite effects can cancel each other out in large scale quantitative studies. An 8-year-old child whose parent dies suddenly and who enters foster care will have a different experience from a 15-year-old child whose parent's death is expected but who is being bullied at school. As shown, some children are more likely to experience bereavement; additionally, significant bereavement seems to bring greater risks to those who are already disadvantaged or have faced multiple losses.

While a death of someone significant is a profound event in itself, it often brings other changes, such as new role difficulties. The journey of bereavement takes place alongside children's journey of development. They often revisit or re-experience their grief in new ways as they make further transitions, as the meaning of the death and their changed relationship with the person who has died takes on new significance. Many cumulative, interrelating risk and protective factors mediate or moderate children's experiences. These can be at the level of the child (such as their prior experiences of loss, their preferred coping style), their family and social relationships (including their prior and on-going relationship with the person who has died), their wider environment and culture, and the circumstances of the death (including whether the child perceives this as traumatic).

2.8 Developmental phases in understanding death

It is important to recognise that all children are unique in their understanding of death and dying; this understanding depends on their development level, cognitive skills, personality, and characteristics, religious or spiritual belief, teaching by parents and significant others, input from the media, and previous experiences with death. Nonetheless some general considerations will be helpful in understanding how children and adolescents experience and deal with death. They are as follows:

Infants and toddlers: the youngest children may perceive that adults are sad, have no real understanding of the meaning or significance of death.

Preschoolers: young children may deny death as a formal event and may see death as reversible. They may interpret death as a separation, not a permanent condition. Preschool and even early elementary children may link certain events and magical thinking with the causes

of death for instance, because of the world trade centre disaster; some children may imagine that going into a tall building may cause someone's death.

Early elementary school: children at this age (approximately 5-9) start to comprehend finality of death; they begin to understand that certain circumstances may result in death; they can see that, if large planes crash into buildings, people in the plane and buildings will be killed in the case of war images, young children may not be able to differentiate between what they see on television and what happens in their own neighbourhood. However, they may over-generalise, particularly at ages 5-6, if jet planes do not fly then people do not die; at this age death is perceived as something that happens to others, not to oneself or ones family.

High school: most teens will fully grasp the meaning of death circumstances; such as an automobile accident, illness and even the world trade or pentagon disaster. They may ask friends and family for comfort or they may withdraw to deal with their grief. Teens (as well as some younger children) with a history of depression, suicidal , and chemical dependency are at particular risk for prolonged and serious grief reactions and many need more careful attention in school during these difficult times (Jackson, 2011).

2.9 Factors Influencing Ability to Adjust

The gender of a child can have an impact on both the short and long-term effects of losing a parent early in life. Other factors which appear to be significant in terms of the ability of the child to adjust following bereavement, include the age at which the child experiences the loss and the extent of support available following the death.

2.11.1 Age and cognitive development

The age and cognitive development of a child will inevitably play a role in their basic understanding of death, which in turn may influence their long-term ability to adapt to the loss. There appears to be many differing views regarding when children develop the capacity to grieve and understand the finality of death. It is the view of some that a child is unable to properly grieve until they reach the formal operational stage at age eleven or twelve, which is the fourth and final stage of Piaget's theory of cognitive development. In contrast, John Bowlby, in his studies of attachment, believed that infants as young as six months experience grief reactions similar to those of adults. Others have put the age at which children acquire the capacity to grieve anywhere between the age of one and four years old (Bowlby, 1963; Furman, 1964; Worden, 1996).

Worden (1996) believes that only when a child can understand the abstract concepts of 'finality' and 'irreversibility' will they be able to accept the reality of the loss of a parent. This, he believes, is primarily achieved at the stage of operational thinking, although some level of understanding will be attained at earlier cognitive stages. In effect, Worden is suggesting that if a child loses a parent before the operational stage, the true extent of their grief may be delayed until the reality of the loss is fully comprehended. Children of approximately five to seven years of age, therefore, are particularly vulnerable in that they can understand the finality of death on some level, but lack the cognitive reasoning to cope with the intensity of the loss. Regarding other significant stages in a child's life, infancy is also regarded as a vulnerable stage due to potential attachment issues if the loss involves the primary caregiver. Such issues may include difficulties around trust, as well as feelings of anger or depression as the child grows and is unable to attach or become intimate with others (Worden, 1996). Furthermore, Speece and Brent (1996) highlight the role age plays in a child's understanding of death, noting that age has been widely studied in this regard and that the vast majority of these studies suggest a significant relationship between children's age and their concepts of death. Older children's concepts are, in general, more realistic, and abstract than those of younger children.

In her study, Angela Nickerson of the Massachusetts Veterans Epidemiology Research and Information Centre at the University of New South Wales, sought to determine how both the age of the child and the quality of the parenting following a death affected these children across their life span. The study analysed data from 2,823 adults, each of whom had experienced the death of a parent during childhood, in order to assess psychological impairment, parental care, and other factors that could contribute to difficulties later in life. Nickerson and her colleagues found that the younger a child was at the time of the loss, the more likely they were to develop mental health problems, including anxiety, mood, or substance abuse issues (Aderka, Bryant, Hinton, Hofmann, & Nickerson, 2013).

This conclusion is consistent with Rutter (1984), who posits that while young children may initially display milder symptoms of grief over a shorter period than those of adolescents, the long-term psychological consequences are greater for young children.

These findings suggest that how a child responds to grief at the time of the bereavement, which is influenced to a large degree by the age and cognitive development of the child, will in turn play a role in ultimate outcomes.

2.11.2 Support following bereavement

In terms of the role that the family environment plays in affecting adult outcomes following childhood bereavement, Nickerson concludes that there is strong evidence to suggest that the quality of the relationship with the surviving parent is a key factor. Although the study focused on the impact of poor parenting on psychological difficulties, she points out that the possibility that positive family relationships and good parenting practices may act as a protective factor against psychopathology following the loss of a parent (Aderka et al., 2011).

A separate study exploring the impact of early parental death has also revealed the long-term damage and suffering that can be experienced by individuals in adult life if appropriate levels of support are not provided at the time of bereavement. The research, published in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine,* describes the low self-esteem, loneliness, isolation and inability to express feelings of some individuals who lost a parent in childhood, with some reporting these effects as much as 71 years after the bereavement (Ellis, Dowrick & Loyd-Williams, 2013).

Ellis et al. (2013) found common themes among those who reported long-term effects such as those outlined. These included disruption in the child's social and family life following a loss, which frequently included moving home and separation from friends and family. This led the researchers to conclude that experiencing long periods of this type of upheaval meant the bereaved child was being effectively denied the support and stability required in such circumstances, resulting in an increased likelihood of the individual experiencing emotional difficulties in later life. As with Nickerson's study, this particular research suggests that if the appropriate supports are in place to address the necessary 'mothering or fathering' then a child is less likely to be affected in adult life.

Additional research by Comfort Zone Camp (2010) further highlights the importance of a supportive environment following the death of a parent. They surveyed 104 people between the ages of 13 and 19 who had experienced the death of a parent and it was the surviving parent who was deemed the most important source of support following such a loss; friends were considered the second most helpful group in terms of helping to cope with the loss.

2.10 Conclusion

Bereaved learners are witnessed in our classroom almost every day. Yet there is not much written on how to help them deal with loss of a loved one. Literature available goes way back

in previous years, which is why such a study is needed. Chapter two focused on bereavement and psychological well-being and how it affects learners. It also discussed grief and mourning as part of the discussion on bereavement. The theories around the effects and impact of going through bereavement were also laid out. Chapter three narrates the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the literature review on bereavement, as well as how children cope with bereavement. Different articles and journals where consulted to get a better understanding of previous work done on the topic at hand. This chapter presents the research design and methodology adopted in the study in order to answer the following research questions:

- What are the learner's experiences on bereavement?
- How does bereavement impact on learners' psychological well-being?
- What school based strategies are there to help learners dealing with loss?

3.2 Theoretical Framework

According to Peter (2006) theoretical framework consists of concepts together with definitions and references to relevant scholarly literature, existing theory that is used for a particular study. It should demonstrate an understanding of the theories and concepts that are relevant to the topic of research.

The study uses an ecosystemic theory with the aim of understanding learners and their way of living, as this theory states that people's way of leaving is characterised by their environment and the relationship they have with it. A lot of times children live according to how society wants them to and tend to forget that they are human beings with their own feelings to consider. This is highly noticeable when referring to death related issues, most African cultures exclude children and assumes it is an adult thing, forgetting that children can feel too and understand everything that happens around them (Sincero, 2012).

3.3 <u>Ecological Perspective (Urie Bronfenbrenner)</u>

The ecological perspective can be defined as an interaction between an individual and the environment. The Ecological Systems Theory views the child's development in terms of the reciprocal influences between the child and the multiple levels of the surrounding environment (Donald et al., 2010; Berk, 2007; Berk, 2006; Rathus, 2006). Donald et al. (2010) indicates that the ecological theory is based on the interdependence between different organisms and their

physical environment. The ecological perspective, as espoused by Bronfenbrenner (2005, 2008), provides a framework from which multiple contextual factors affecting the academic performance of a child can be viewed. Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) suggest that an individual development is a culmination of many direct and an indirect influence, which either facilitate or impede the individual's potential.

In the ecological theory, the relationships between organisms and their environment are seen holistically; therefore, all parts affect the system as a whole. According to Bray, Gooskens, Khan, Moses and Seekings (2011), the system is greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore, how the child thinks, feels, behaves and develops as a person is inevitably linked to the social grouping, forces and relationships that make up their environment; for example families, peer groups, the school and other social groupings, the socio-economic forces, and the interpersonal, affect other parts, and ultimately the ecological system as a whole. Changes or conflict in any one layer will cause a ripple effect throughout the other layers (Witt, 2012).

3.4 Ecosystemic Theory

Along the rise of postmodernism in the general thinking of time, a new theory flourished within the domain of psychology, namely ecosystemic theory and social constructionism. Ecosystemic thinking looks towards a relationship as a central aspect of how to understand the world. Specifically, ecosystemic thinking considers patterns of behaviors that develop within relationships and should be a point of focus (Beevar & Beevar, 2000). Linear cause- effects are thought to be only a part of the bigger picture of reciprocal causality, recursion, and share the responsibility. The context of a relationship becomes central, and in this context individuals are seen to affect each other's behaviour in a circular, reciprocal manner. The ecosystemic theory describes what happens in the relationship between individuals and what patterns of interaction occur in the relationship, in other words, it focuses on the processes that give meaning to the context.

The aim of which is to reveal the implication of the theory to this study. Subjectivity is seen to be inevitable, as the observer becomes a part of the reality she or he is describing. Reality and meaning are seen as being constructed through each person's individual, perceptions, understandings and experiences (Becvar & Becvar, 2000). Ecosystemic theory is similar to postmodern social constructionism in that it focuses on language as information to construct meaning. A system (be it familial, therapeutic or societal) is no longer regarded as a group of

people, but rather as an ecology of ideas that have been formed through a linguistic process and between people (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

Thus, the stories of clients became important in ecosystemic therapy, as the therapist listed the dominant discourse, which were often problem-saturated. It was thought that this problematic discourse could be deconstructed, and that the therapist could co-create a reconstruction of alternative stories that could facilitate hope and change this process, which was seen to occur through the transformation of meaning in a client's world (White, cited in Coale, 1994). This approach aimed to bring to the surface many of the non-dominant stories that clients held about themselves. This has previously been overshadowed by the dominant stories that told tales of their problems in life. These non-dominant discourses were seen to contain the possibility of empowering clients and amplifying their ability to solve their own problems.

The ecosystemic theory sees the therapist as a collegial co-creator of new stories, a neutral guide in the exploration of possibilities (Hoffman, cited in Coale, 1994). The meaning that the therapist brings is no longer regarded as separate from the system of meaning that is constructed in therapy but rather as an integral part of it (Coale, 1994). In addition, the interview process was to facilitate the construction of an alternative discourse which identifies the experience of inconsistency between explicit and implicit context of learning for trainees and the feeling of confusion and powerlessness that go along with that experience. The aim of construction of alternative discourse was to create a different understanding of training for trainees, and to facilitate a sense of empowerment, personal agency, and liberation for them.

3.5 *Ecological Model (Urie Bronfenbrenner)*
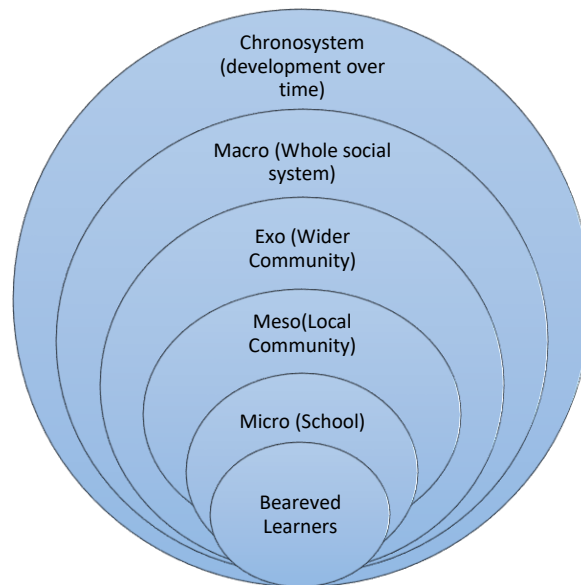
Bronfenbrenner's structure of 'environment' is as follows:

- The **Microsystem**- this is the layer closest to the learner and contains the structures with which the learner has direct contact. The micro system encompasses the relationships and interactions learners have with their immediate surroundings (Cuddington, 2001). Structures in the microsystem include family, school, and neighbourhood or learner-care environments. At these levels, relationships have impact in two directions-both away from the learner and toward the learner. For example learner's parents may affect his beliefs and behaviour; however, the learner also affects the behaviour and beliefs of the parent. Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls these bi-directional influences, and shows how they occur among all levels of environment. The interaction structures within a layer and interactions of structures between layers are key to this theory. At the microsystem level, bi-directional influences are strongest and have the greatest impact on the learners. However interactions at outer levels can still impact the inner structures.

- The **Mesosystem**- This layer provides the connection between the structures of the learner's microsystem (McDonnell et al., 1997). The connection between the learner's educator and his parents, between his church and his neighbourhood, serve as examples of this system.

- The **Exosystem**- This layer defines the larger social system in which the learner does not function directly. The structures in this layer impact learner's development by interacting with some structure in their microsystem (Keller & Golley, 2000). Parent workplace schedules or community-based family resources are examples. The learner may not be directly involved at this level, but they do feel the positive or negative force involved with the interaction with their own systems.

- The **Macrosystem**- This layer may be considered the outermost layer in the learner's environment. While not being a specific framework, this layer is comprised of cultural values, customs, and laws (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). The effects of larger principles defined by the macrosystem have a cascading influence throughout the interactions of all other layers. For example, it is the belief of the culture that parents should be solely responsible for raising their learners, that culture is less likely to provide resources to help parents. This, in turn affects the structures in which the parents function. The parent's ability or inability to carry out that responsibility toward their learner within the context of the learner's microsystem is likewise affected.

- The **Chronosystem**- This system encompasses the dimension of time as it relates to a learners environment. Elements within this system can be either external, such as the timing of a parent's death, or internal, such as the physiological changes that occur with the ageing of a learner. As learners get older, they may react differently to environmental changes and may be more able to determine the influence of that change (Colyvan & Ginzburg, 2003).

The ecosystemic theory is relevant to this study because bereavement is a societal issue and the effects thereof are felt by every member of the family and community.

3.6 Conclusion

The ecosystemic theory used highlighted some facts which are mostly overlooked, which showed the relationship that person has with their surroundings. And how it helps shape the person or break the person.

CHAPTER FOUR:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three discussed the theoretical framework and focused on it as a theory and how it differs from other theories. The following chapter will look at the research design and the methodology that the study will use.

4.2 Research Design

According to Durrheim (2006) a research design is a plan that guides a study presenting how the research will be conducted in order to answer the research questions. The research questions where centred on the impact of bereavement on learners psychological well-being. The study uses a descriptive research design as it presents a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship, and focuses on 'how' and 'why' questions. Neuman (2000, p.10) further explains that in a "descriptive research, the researcher begins with a well-defined subject and conducts research to describe it accurately".

According to Myers (2009) the research methodology can also be defined as a strategy of inquiry, which moves from underlying assumptions to research design and data collection.
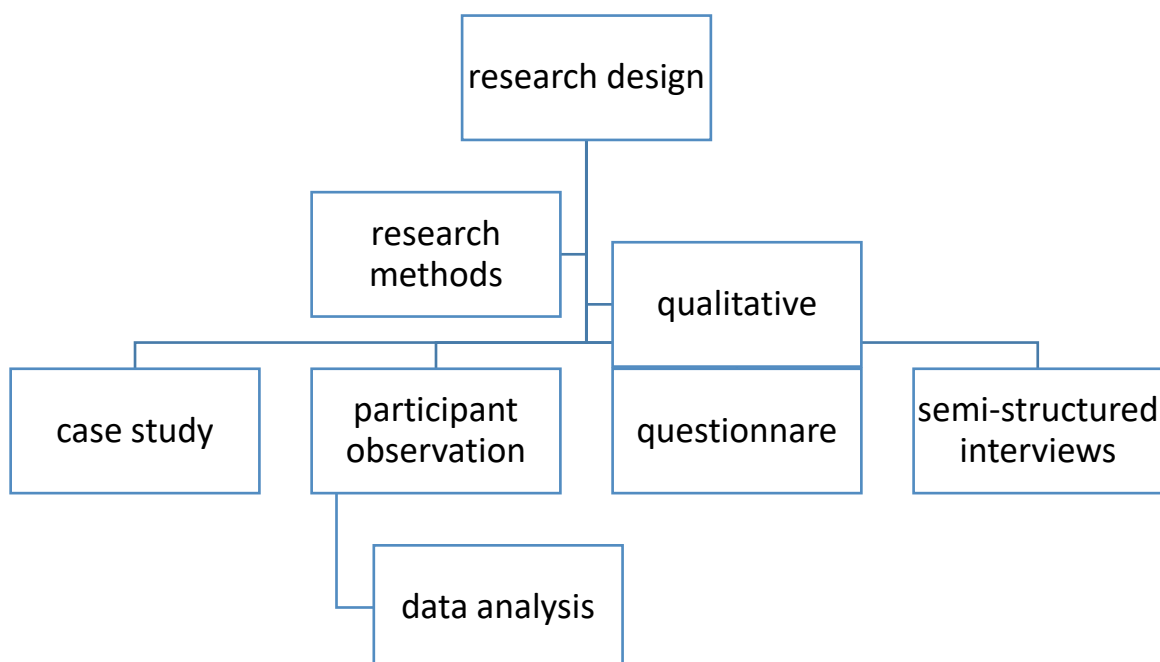
4.3 Paradigmatic location

An interpretive paradigm frames the current research study. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) an interpretive paradigm aims to understand the subject world of human experiences. The interpretive paradigm also aims to gain insight on the impact of bereavement on a learner's psychological well-being. This paradigm gives clarity on the subject at hand as this kind of paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subject's experience of individuals. The interpretive approach is also known as the epistemological stance towards research that focuses on explaining the subjective reasons and meanings that lie beyond social action and attracts researchers who are interested in how reality is shaped by "people, subjective experiences of the external world(Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

According to Cohen et al. (2007), in the interpretive paradigm, efforts are made to understand the person from within. Therefore, data generation methods need to take note of this. The nature of truth in the interpretive paradigm is there is no one truth that can be discovered.

4.4 Qualitative Method

The study is a qualitative study, which is naturalistic as it attempts to study the everyday life of different groups of people and communities in their natural settings. According to Demon and Fleming (2007), qualitative research aims to explore and discover issues about the problem at hand, which allows for better understanding of how learners deal with bereavement at home. Subjectivity is seen to be inevitable, as the observer becomes part of the reality she or he is describing. It also involves an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter. It attempts to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding, which is based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore social problems. Qualitative studies are usually conducted in a natural setting where detailed information is gathered directly from the participants (Henning et al., 2004). Flick (1998) maintains that a qualitative method involves observing, analysing a situation, studying actions, and activities as they occur. In this study the researcher used a qualitative method to gain an in-depth knowledge about the impact of bereavement on learners' and their psychological well-being.

4.5 Case Study

Simons (2009) describes a case study as an in depth explicit and uniqueness of a particular project or institution in a real life context. In a case study the researcher aims to describe the thoughts and experiences of a particular situation (Cohen, Manion & Morrrison, 2009). This case study was based at a local primary school and consisted of nine participants that were interviewed using face to face interviews, which allowed them to open up easily and share data they would not normally reveal in a group interview. Participants were selected with the help of schools educator's recent survey results of orphaned learners. With the aid of a questionnaire the participants were divided in two teams: those who had lost both parents; and those who are survived by one parent. The aim of dividing participants is to compare learner's psychological well-being during bereavement of those who are survived by one parent and those who have lost both parents. Furthermore, the case study also determined if the time frame from the person's passing played a significant role in the healing process.

A case study is about a person, group or situation that has been studied over time. If the case study is about a group, it describes the behaviour of the group as a whole, and not behaviour of each individual in the group. Case studies can be produced by following a formal research method. These case studies are likely to appear in formal research venues as journals and professional conferences, rather than popular works. The resulting body of a 'case study research' has long had a prominent place in many disciplines and professions, ranging from psychology, anthropology, sociology and clinical science, social work and administrative science.

In conducting a case study research, the "case" being studied may be an individual or an organisation, event or action existing in a specific time and place. For instance, clinical science has produced both well-known case studies of individuals and clinical studies. However when a "case" is used in an abstract sense, as in a claim, a proposition or an argument, such a case can be the subject of many research methods, not just a case study research. Data collection in a case study occurs over a sustained period.

4.6 Sampling

4.6.1 Purposive sampling

This study makes use of purposive sampling where the researcher hand-picks participants on the basis of their judgment (Govindarajulu & Zakkula, 1999). It represents a group of different

non-probability sampling techniques. This type of sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. All relies on the judgments of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units to be used. The main aim of using this particular population interest was that it gave the best information or data on the chosen topic. For this study of the impact of bereavement on learners psychological well-being will use ten learners from a nearby primary school. The researcher sought permission from the department of education to access schools and interview bereaved learners. After completing the application form by their guardians, semi structured interviews were conducted at a convenient time that did not affect their studies or the schooling institution in any way. The researcher decided to use purposive sampling because according to Patton (2002), this method looks for people who fit the criteria of desirable participants, who have the characteristics of the issue that the researcher is investigating.

Purposive sampling supplies the researcher with the participants that will assist in gaining insight on the problem and the research questions (Creswell, 2003). In this study will have ten participants who are all bereaved learners, either by loss of a parent or guardian. They are all currently at primary school and their ages range from the ages 11-13 years. Most of the learners in the study are doing grade 5 and 6 at a local primary. There are advantages and disadvantages for using this type of sampling technique. Below are some of them.

4.6.2   Advantages of Purposive Sampling

4.6.2.1   Wide range of techniques
Since there are several different types of purposeful sampling (eg. homogenous, expert and critical case etc.) one of the key benefits of using this sampling method is the ability to gather large amounts of information by using a range of different techniques. Cohen et al (2007).

4.6.2.2   Stage building blocks

Qualitative research usually involves a number of different phases, with each phase building progressively onwards from the original. This being the case, purposive sampling is useful to a researcher because they can use a variety of methods available to build and increase their research data. For example, one could start with critical case sampling, and then using the information gathered, progress to expert sampling in stage two.

4.6.3   Disadvantages of Purposive Sampling

4.6.3.1 The researcher may be biased

The main disadvantage of purposive sampling is that there is a high probability of researcher bias, as each sample is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in question, generally trying to prove a specific point. For this reason, researchers need to strive to make decisions based on accepted criteria, and not on what will best support their theory.

4.6.3.2 Difficult to defend

When a researcher publishes their findings, they need to be able to defend their proposal from critics successfully. Because of the non-probability nature of purposive sampling, it can be more difficult for a researcher to mount solid defence. A critic may argue that if different selections had been made during the purposive sampling, a different result could have been achieved. This variety will in turn, give a better cross-section of information.

4.7 Data collection methods

In order to answer the research questions, researchers need to collect data that will assist them to answer the research questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) indicates that the use of different data collection tools tend to strengthen the study because the researcher is afforded an opportunity to collect as much data as he/she can. In this study the following data collection methods were used: semi structured interviews, questionnaire, and participants' observation. These multiple methods assisted with triangulation and trustworthiness of the study.

4.7.1   Participant Observation

Participant observation is a method of data collection where the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study. Either openly in the role of a researcher or covertly in some disguised role. Observing things that happen, listening to what is said and questioning people over a length of time (Becker & Geer, 1957). As Becker and Geer (1957) indicate, the participant observer can operate in a completely covert fashion-like an undercover agent whose success depends on remaining undetected, whose purpose remains top secret. If no one knows about the research expert, the logic is that no one will act in anything but a normal way. Preserving the naturalness of the setting is the key priority for participant observation. The principal concern in any research is to minimise disruption to be able to see things as they normally occur, unaffected by any awareness that research is happening at that particular moment.

4.7.1.1   Advantages of participant observation

- Basic equipment: Participant observation uses the researcher's 'self' as the main instrument of research, and therefore requires little by way of technical/statistical support.
- Non-interference: It stands a better chance of retaining the naturalness of the setting than other social research methods.

4.7.1.2   Disadvantages of participant observation

- Access: There are limited options open to the researcher about which roles to adopt or settings to participate in.
- Commitment: Participant observation can be a very demanding method in terms of personal commitment and personal resources.

4.8 Semi structured interviews

According to Denscombe (2010) semi structured interviews refer to an interview where the interviewer still has a clear lust of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However, with the semi structured interview, the interviewee is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered and perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher.

This study used face to face and semi structured interviews. A semi- structured interview is a method of research used in social sciences. While a structured interview has a rigorous set of questions which does not allow one to divert, a semi structured interview is open, allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview because of what the interviewee says. The interviewer in a semi-structured interview generally has a framework of themes to be explored.

The specific topic or topics that the interviewer wants to explore during the interview should usually be thought about well in advance. It is generally beneficial for interviewers to have an interview guide prepared, which is an informal grouping of topics and questions that the interviewer can ask in different ways for different participants. Interview guides help researchers to focus an interview on the topics at hand without constraining them to a particular format. This freedom can help interviewers to tailor their questions to the interview context or situation, and to the people they are interviewing.

Semi- structured interviews are widely used in qualitative research: For example in household research such as couple interviews, this type of interview is the most common. A semi-

structured interview involving two spouses can result in the production of rich data, including observational data. According to Lavrakas (2008), face - to- face interviews are also called in-person interviews, and are often used to solicit information in projects that can be considered very sensitive. These data methods also enable greater coverage of issues as participants would be able to view experiences of others (Maree, 2007). The study also uses individual face- to-face interviews with the ten learners on the impact of bereavement on their psychological well-being. The interviews were semi-structured and audio taped with the consent of the participants.

4.8.1 Advantages of semi-structured interviews

Qualitative researchers like to use semi-structured interviews because questions can be prepared ahead of time (Delport, 2003). This allows the interviewer to be prepared and appear competent during the interview. Semi-structured interviews also allow informants the freedom to express their views in their own terms (Fetterman, 2009). Semi-structured interviews can provide reliable and comparable qualitative data Vithal and Jansen (2010) Here are some more advantages of semi-structured interviews:

- Depth of information.
- Respondent can influence the topic, so unexpected issues/topics emerge.
- Researcher can probe to understand perspectives and experiences.
- Topic guide ensures that a core list of questions is asked in each interview.
- Because the order of questions is not fixed, flow and sharing of views are more natural.

4.8.2 The disadvantages of semi-structured interviews

- Trained interviewers are needed to probe without being directive or judgmental.
- Analysis of findings is difficult and must be done by people who conducted the interviews.
- Researcher has to avoid biasness in analysis.
- Researchers need to have some knowledge of the local culture to capture the interviewees real meaning.
- Analysis is time consuming.
- Difficult to generalise findings.

4.9 Questionnaire

According to Terre Blanche et al. (2006) a questionnaire can be defined as a group of written questions used to gather information from respondents, and it is regarded as one of the most common tools for gathering data in the social sciences. The purpose of a questionnaire is to obtain facts and opinions about the investigated phenomenon from the participants. In this study learners where required to fill in a questionnaire prior to the interviews to assess their mind frame and their adjustment to loss/bereavement.

4.9.1 Advantages of a Questionnaire
- It is quiet an affordable tool for collecting untapped data.
- The tool permitted sufficient amount of time for learners to consider answers before responding.
- Unlike the interviews, they provide a greater uniformity across the measurement.
- The data or content provided by questionnaire could be more easily analysed and interpreted than the one obtained from verbal responses.

4.9.2 Disadvantages of the Questionnaires
- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility sometimes noted in interviews.
- Questionnaires can be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straight forward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions.
- Some participants are better able to express their views verbally than in writing.

4.10 Data analysis

Data analysis must be conducted in relation to a researcher's research design and approach (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Walliman and Appleton 2009) state that it is a common practice that researchers in a qualitative study deal with small groups or individuals because qualitative researchers are more concerned with what people say in words their descriptions, accounts, as well as their opinions and feelings than with numbers. Therefore, data cannot be displayed using statistical procedures.

The analysis of qualitative data is an important step the in research process. Qualitative data analysis involves organising the data in order to make sense of the situation. It entails the process of noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities (Cohen et al., 2013). The data collected through observations, questionnaires and semi structured interviews was analysed by

listening to audio tape recordings. The audio interview was then transcribed verbatim and interview transcripts were developed when analyising data. The three C's of analysis were used, which included coding, categorising and conceptualising (Litchman, 2006).

4.11   Ethical considerations

According to De Vos et al. (2006) ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental objects and respondents, employer, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students".

Wassenaar (2006) also asserts that it is often mistakenly assumed that qualitative research is exempted from ethical considerations. He points out that the argument that is sometimes put forth is that the method is generally conversational and that data analysis attempts to preserve the integrity of the data collected. Thus, there is often the belief that a qualitative research is ethically sound by virtue of being a qualitative research (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). However, the "participants in a qualitative research are entitled to the same protections and respect as those in the quantitative research" (Wassenaar, 2006:71).

For the purposes of this study, the following ethical issues, which are informed consent, protection from harm, anonymity and confidentiality, freedom to withdraw and deception of participants were considered.

4.11.1 Informed Consent

According to McLaughlin (2007) a central issue in ethics is the need for informed consent. He puts the implications of the informed consent as follows:

- Informed consent implies that the research participants should be provided with information about the purpose of the study.
- Research participants are allowed to exit the research study at any time they wish to do so.
- McLaughlin (2007) argues that informed consent should imply that participation is voluntary.

All the research participants were informed about the intentions of the study and that their identities would be protected at all times.

4.11.2 Protection from Harm

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) advise that in the cases where the nature of a study involves creating a small amount of psychological discomfort, participants should know this ahead of time. In addition, any necessary debriefing or counselling should follow immediately after the participation. Since the study is about bereavement, the researcher had to exercise a great deal of sensitivity and caution towards research participants during interviews.

4.11.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2006) a research participant has a right to privacy, and his or her right to privacy can be ensured through the promise of anonymity and confidentiality. Babbie in McLaughlin (2007) argues that anonymity implies that only the researcher and few other researchers who are involved in the study know the identity of the research participants. Confidentiality implies that although the researcher knows the identity of the research participant who has provided information, he or she will not make the connection publicly (Cohen et al., 2006).

In order to keep the research participants confidential in this study, the bereaved learners were given pseudonym names.

4.11.4 Freedom to Withdraw

Olivier (2003) cited in McLaughlin (2007) highlights the fact that the research participants have a right to withdraw their involvement in the study at any time without prejudice. Participants may do so without any need to explain themselves about their decision or by giving notice. Research participants in the study were told about their rights to withdraw in the event they were not comfortable to carry on with the interview. Considering the sensitivity of the research topic this, was vital.

4.11.5 Deception of Subjects

Corey et al. (1993) in McLaughlin (2007:60) argues that deception of subjects can involve withholding information. The deception of subjects occurs when the researcher deliberately misleads the participants either through written instructions or verbal instructions. In this study the researcher did not withhold any information from participants. Moreover, participants were further encouraged to ask questions when they required clarification.

4.12   Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology used in the study. The qualitative approach was outlined and its relevance for this study was explained. The chapter also discussed the research design that was used during data collection, and the case study design. Interviews, participant observations, and questionnaires as data collection techniques were also discussed. The next chapter presents and discusses the data analysis of the collected data respectively.

CHAPTER FIVE:

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

Analysing qualitative data is an important step for the researcher. The process involves organising the data to make sense of the situation which entails noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen et al., 2007). The data collection was done through observations, interviews, and focus group interviews which was analysed by listening to the audio tape recordings. The audio interview was then transcribed verbatim and interview transcripts were developed. In the process of data analysing data the three c's of analysis were used and coding was used to categorise concepts (Lichtman, 2006). Thematic analysis was used to analyse data. Codes or labels were created and themes emerged from gathered data through open-ended interviewing. The researcher used interview questions to devise themes. Transcribed data fitted into themes that were created using research questions and interview questions. New themes that emerged were noted, used to group information and were coded. Babbie (2010) asserts that codes are formed through questions asked and the data collected. The codes assisted in the summary of data for analysis purposes. During coding, notes called 'memos' were written for use in report writing.

5.2 Preparing the data

Data was transcribed into written text before analysis began. According to Patton (2002), data comes from existing texts. The choice of the content must be justified by what you want to know. Interviews were transcribed to create interview transcripts. This was done to reveal participants' information related behaviours and thoughts. According to Schilling (2006) transcribed data should be organised based on the research questions. Interview transcripts were read to relive the experience of the interviews. The transcripts were re-read in conjunction with the taped interviews to enable understanding of the meaning and experiences of each participant.

In this chapter, the researcher analyses data that was collected from using the following research instruments: interviews and observation schedules. The use of a qualitative design in this research allowed an in depth naturalistic approach to study the participants' experiences of

bereavement. A number of themes and codes emerged from the responses of participants which will later be evaluated against the literature that is available to date.

5.3 Presentation of themes and sub-themes
This section will present the themes and their subthemes in the following order.

Theme 1: Learners experiences of bereavement.
- Feeling of loneliness
- Loss of hope
- Financial constraints

Theme 2: The impact of bereavement on learners
- Psychological well-being
- Academic performance
- Social well-being
- Spiritual well-being

Theme 3: School- based intervention strategies to help bereaved learners
- School support
- Family support
- Peer support
- Psychological intervention

5.3.1 Theme 1: Learners experiences of bereavement

From the data collected using interviews and observation schedules, it was evident that learners' experiences of bereavement are different for each participant. While others preferred to be alone to deal with their emotions on their own, some would have loved to be assisted either by talking or by being there emotionally.

5.3.1.1 Feelings of loneliness

Loneliness is very common in bereavement. A big gap becomes existent in one's life that their loved ones used to fill. It is natural to think that no one ever again can fill that void in one's life. Every loved one is special and unique, and not having that person everyday may be gut-wrenching. Feeling lonely actually means that the person is dealing with the loss. It means the person is truly facing the truth in their life, and that they will be going on without their loved one. The intensity of these feelings will eventually lessen with time in the healing process.

When death strikes whether sudden or expected, it poses many difficulties amongst those left behind. It is even harder if those left behind are children. They normally have mixed feelings and emotions about the incident. It was evident among the participants that were interviewed that they had so many feelings inside about their loved ones. Losing someone you love has to be the hardest thing on earth that causes an individual to question: Why it happened to me? What did I do to deserve this? The following excerpts exhibit what the participants expressed.

P4: What am I going to do without my dad? Why it had to be him?
P1: I feel so empty without my mom, she was everything to me.
P7: It felt like I was in a bad dream, it seemed so unreal. At one point I hated God for doing this to me and my family.

According to Grief Encounter (2000), nothing is the same after the death of a parent, brother, or sister. At first, it may feel like a storm, one may feel sad, or want to hide away or feel nothing at all. These mixed emotions are normal and all part of the grieving process. Young people are often expected to move on quickly, and behave as though nothing has changed. Friends move on with their lives, while the lives of the bereaved have been turned upside down.

5.3.1.2 **Loss of hope**

Most of the participants said they felt helpless and hopeless about the future because they lost the one person whom they cherished and was their support system. Helpless, hopeless, powerless, worthless are some feelings the bereaved encounter. Depression echoes with emptiness. How can I go on? It doesn't seem worth it. Nothing seems worth it. Depression is part of mourning. Feeling that going to school is pointless as well as withdrawing from friends and feeling that no one can possibly understand what goes on inside the head and the heart is part of mourning (Grosshandler-Smith, 1995). The following excerpts express the feelings of the participants.

P1: I feel so empty without her, she meant everything to me. I see no reason to live anymore
P8: Dad supported everything me in everything I did. His passing killed my dreams too. I always wanted to make him proud of me. Now have no reason to work push myself, if he is not there to see my accomplishments.
P9: My whole world died when she passed, she always wanted the best for me.

Bereavement may also bring physical effects such as weight loss, lack of concentration and loss of self-esteem in children. They may even begin to neglect their appearance for a time and feel that nothing matters anymore. Although these are normal reactions to grief, it can help to talk to someone about what the person is going through. Friends, family, health care workers and religious people all may be able to offer support to bereaved children until life begins to make sense again, as every grieving period is different (the School of Oriental and African Studies, 2000).

5.3.1.3 **Financial constraints**

Financial constraints were raised by majority of participants, as most of the loved ones who had passed on were breadwinners at home. Their passing meant no food, and no school supplies for some, which caused so much pain.

P1: at times, we go to school without food as no one is working at home.
P4: the only income we had was my grandmother's pension grant so when she passed things were really hard.
P10: Things where really hard at home financially, as my mom was the only person working. Her passing meant we went to school without food in other days. If it wasn't for the school feeding scheme I don't know where my siblings and I would have done.

All participants mentioned the economic hardship they faced after the passing of people who supported them financially. Passing of parents or elders in any household can cause economic disruptions in any family. Such situations may lead to poverty, overcrowding, and lack of essential educational tools needed by learners. Mothuba (2010) states that families that are economically deprived do not provide the intellectual stimulation that provides good performance on intellectual capacities. According to Li et al. (2008), the majority of bereaved learners are vulnerable because they are faced with the deprivation of basic needs, care, and security.

5.3.2 **Theme 2: The impact of bereavement on learners**

Childhood bereavement is never easy or simple because it is a tough time when young people are trying to find themselves, and have to juggle this painful unfortunate time in their lives. The impact of bereavement in learners differs and the relationship the learner had with the deceased is an important aspect. According to Minde (2000) death introduces a major change in a vulnerable child. This may include among other things separation from siblings, or change

of place to stay. All these changes can easily affect not only the physical, but also the psychological well-being of a child, which includes academic performance.

5.3.2.1 **Psychological well being**

P1: after my mom's passing I preferred to be alone and just think they grades and not suffer much.

P8: I was moody all the time and cried a lot after my dad's passing.

P2: my dad's hardest passing affected me terribly and my grades suffered a lot, as I had hard time concentrating in class.

P6: my grandmother practically raised us with her pension money. Her passing left a huge strain on the family as we all were depended on her financially and emotionally as well. I suffered from depression after her passing couldn't eat nor sleep.

Literature on bereavement also supports what the participants experienced. Dyregrov (2000) asserts that children and adolescents think about their dead relatives for a longer period than adults, and they are more psychologically affected. Their academic and social interaction is normally negatively affected by this. They have feelings of isolation and find it difficult to relate to their peers. Bereaved children endure social, physical, and psychological consequences (Monash et al., 2007). Bereavement makes children vulnerable and renders them a population- at- risk. Other risk factors include poverty, hunger, and lack of access to services, inadequate clothing and shelter. Most participants mentioned that they were not coping with the loss and it affected their daily activities.

5.3.2.2 **Academic performance**

The responses from the participants on bereavement show clearly the turmoil they go through when they lose a loved one. According to the Khululeka (2005) grief support it is a fact that school aged children who have experienced the death of a parent, other family members or a close friend have a bigger risk of developing mental problems and difficulties in school, both academically and socially. Grieving children often have no place to go to and no one to talk to. If they do not find emotional and psychological support, bereaved children may develop further difficulties.

Kim Dehlin Zeiher (2012) posits that students dealing with grief resulting from the death of an individual with whom they shared a special close personal relationship, may experience issues that increase the challenges and negatively impact their academic performance. According to

Atle Dyregrov (2008) grief in children can lead to problems in school. First and foremost, children may experience difficulties with attention and concentration. Thoughts and memories of what has happened interrupt their lines of thought, and increased anxiety leads them to monitoring their surroundings for danger or involves thoughts about the safety of loved ones at home or at work. Sadness and grief may lead to slower thinking and a lack of energy and initiative. In school they have difficulty getting their tasks done as thoughts wander, and they may memorise and learn more slowly than usual.

Participants responded as follows:

P2: Losing my mother was very hard on me, but after some time the pain became better. I've always been a top achiever but after the loss my grades dropped a lot as I had a hard time concentrating in class.

P6: My grandmother was the only parent I knew; she raised me with her grant money. Her passing left a huge hole in my heart and even my grades at school suffered.

P10: I've always done well at school, but for the first time I failed and had to repeat grade four five. Her passing was so sudden and found it very hard to deal with. After a year or so I started feeling better and my grades improved a lot.

5.3.2.3 Social well-being

When loss takes place some children isolate themselves from peers and others following a loss. This social isolation can be caused by a lack of understanding among their peers. Isolation is a very common feeling in bereaved children (Crenshaw, 2006-2007; Davies et al., 2007). For school aged children and older, being like their peers is extremely important. Although acutely aware of the absence of the person who died, many choose to hide their emotions so they do not seem different. Adolescents often hide emotions in public but may seek outlets such as diaries (Sheehan, 2007). School-aged children and adolescents often identify a very select few people with whom they are comfortable sharing their grief with.

A 12 year old found that his schoolmates mocked him because his father was dead, and because he didn't have a father. He was bullied and felt stigmatized; as if everybody could see that his father had died of cancer.

Children may be wary of the conceptions or beliefs connected with different diseases, especially cancerous diseases. Such diseases have many negative connotations for both

children and adults. When in grief we are more vulnerable to others comments, and they easily trigger hurtful feelings. Some children worry about the questions that schoolmates might ask about death, because they are afraid of crying at school. They fear the embarrassment they may feel if they lose control of their feelings. Children may even guard against this by pulling away from their surroundings. Often children do not know how to deal with the new situation that arises when a friend experiences a death in his or her family, and they may solve the difficult situation by avoiding contact. In addition, such deaths may challenge friends' sense of security, and give rise to thoughts that this might happen to someone close to them again.

In some families children are sent away to stay with friends or family when a death occurs. Sometimes the family even moves away. This leads to a breakdown of the child's network (Dyregrov et al., 2008).

5.3.2.4 **Spiritual well-being**

During the bereavement period, most children and adults question their religion a lot. "A God whom they love and serve well couldn't let them hurt this much", are common utterances of some. People generally assume that religious faith will help them through difficult times in their life, but in fact find their faith to be of no help at all because of the pain they are feeling. On the contrary, they feel their faith is failing at a time they need it most. Questions like "how can there be a God who let things like these happen" are quite common in a grieving person.

5.3.3 **Theme 3: School-based intervention strategies to help bereaved learners**

School- based intervention strategies are initiatives implemented into school settings that aim to help learners going through any form of problem, and give them a platform to talk. The issue may be behavioural or loss related. This is done with the aim of reducing high risk problems like suicides among learners. During these trying times of losing a loved one, everyone needs some support from people close to them. It is very unfortunate that when death strikes children are expected to carry on like nothing happened and continue with their lives as if they are not affected by it. It always seems like bereavement mostly affects adults and most of the support that is available is for them. This study shares the experiences of the participants and providing insight on how much children are affected by the loss of a loved one too.

The support the child receives varies greatly. Some have a family characterised by inner cohesion and commonality, while others live in chaotic homes. Moreover, children's needs are below the priority list when death occurs. The support surrounding the child depends on the

opportunity the child is given to work through what has happened. It is not necessarily the size of the recovery environment that is most important, but the emotional climate surrounding the child following a death (Wolchick et al., 2006). In this theme, participants (learners) told their own stories about the support they received during and after bereavement from both the school and their families.

Loss is universal; while the experience of bereavement and grief remains uniquely personal, the goal of research is to explore and understand the nature, incidence, correlates, and most appropriate approaches to intervention and support (Collins, McAleavy, McGuckin, Strain, & McIlroy, 2013). Silverman (2000) argues that the work of the researcher and that of a practitioner are two cultures that cannot exist without one another – especially within the realm of bereavement and grief. Thus, the central question for researchers and practitioners is "Who grieves? How do they grieve? And what is the educational, psychological, and physical cost of the grieving process?" While research aids our understanding and explanation of such processes, inevitably the front-line professionals such as Guidance Counsellors must verify these findings from researchers.

Whilst the effect of bereavement on adults is relatively well understood, the same cannot be said in relation to children and adolescents, where the impact of bereavement is relatively inconclusive (Christ, Siegel, & Christ, 2002; McLoughlin, 2012). However, much research indicates that young adolescents are likely to have problems adjusting to bereavement (Elizur & Kaffman, 1983; Fristad, Jedel, Weller, & Weller, 1993). The loss of a parent presents one of the most significant examples of personal loss, with potential impairment of the young person's future development (Black & Young, 1995; Dowdney, 1999; Weller, Weller, Fristad, & Bowes, 1991). It has been estimated that 50 per cent of

Students who have a deceased parent are likely to be markedly hindered in their everyday functioning during the first year, with one in five requiring referral to specialist services (Black, 1996). Similarly, the important Harvard Bereavement Study (Worden & Silverman, 1996) found that bereaved students showed negative consequences (e.g., significant or sudden changes in behaviour, aggression, and persistent anxiety) at one year (19%) and at two years (21%). Sweeting, West, and Richards (1998) found that, among a sample of

females who had experienced the death of a parent (N = 1,000), 40% had become pregnant before the age of 18.

While the psychological pain and processes of grief are typically unavoidable, it is clear that the behaviour of adults relating to students day-by-day is a major contributory factor towards a 'healthy progression' through grief (Cranwell, 2007; Dowling, Kiernan, & Guerin, 2007). Research exploring young people's reactions to loss and traumatic events suggests that preventative support can help avoid long-lasting harmful effects (Sutcliffe, Tufnell, & Cornish, 1998). Interestingly, a US study found that following thirty years of teaching about death and bereavement in schools, those receiving death education had less fear of change and loss, better communication within their families, and had achieved better results than expected in other subjects (Stevenson, 2015).

Within Ireland, McGovern and Barry's (2010) research has shown that there is a need to take account of the fact that teachers and parents (especially men), whilst positive towards and supportive of death education for students, feel uncomfortable talking to young people about death. In comparing child bereavement and loss responses and needs of schools in Hull (UK) and Derry (NI) 2008, Tracey and Holland (2008) reported that training for teachers, pupils, and parents could help to develop a deeper understanding of the effects of bereavement, thus allowing educators to respond appropriately. Similarly, Shipman, Kraus, and Monroe's (2001) UK research into competences and capabilities found that 56% of teachers felt inadequate in handling students who had been bereaved. Holland (2007) found that 58% of schools continued to report, over a ten year period, which more training was needed in the area of bereavement. While there are many organizations in Ireland that can provide support, these are predominantly aimed at adults; where support is offered to young people, it is often through trained volunteers rather than professional therapists (Dowling et al., 2007). Carroll (2010) outlined the need for services to demonstrate greater flexibility, more inter-agency working, and greater awareness within communities about the impact bereavement can have on children and young people, as well as how they can be supported in the future. Head strong's 'My World Survey' (Dooley & Fitzgerald, 2012) reported that 'One Good Adult' is important for the mental well-being of students, with 25% of 12 – 19 year old students that they would seek information from a teacher or Guidance Counsellor in relation to their mental health.

In considering the outcomes from research in this area, a central message for Guidance Counsellors is that whilst some students may not experience negative effects following their experience of bereavement, the critical volume of findings points to the immediate and future effects related to educational attainment, behavioural adjustment, emotional regression, and physical and psychological well-being. Considering these wide ranging effects, Guidance Counsellors should seek to incorporate the issue of bereavement in the Whole School Guidance Plan to enable the issue to be understood and positively addressed by all in the school community.

5.3.3.1 **School support**

Most of the participants that were interviewed did mention that there are no school based support intervention strategies to help bereaved learners, yet almost every single day a learner loses a loved one. Some learners mentioned that some were bought school supplies and uniforms with the aid of the local municipality Umzumbe. They said it assisted in easing the financial burden on their guardians. In one of the interviews one of the learners mentioned that her educator helps organise grants for them and their siblings. The South African Social Security Agency representatives came to their school to speak to them and collect the necessary documents needed. This is what participants said:-

P2: There are no school based intervention strategies that were available for me after the loss; I was expected to go to school immediately after the burial and continue studying like nothing happened. It was very difficult at first, I felt so lonely, yet there were other learners around. It would have helped to have someone to talk to about how I was feeling rather than to brush it and act like nothing happened. One good did happen thou, the local municipality asked educators to identify learners who were orphans, and needed help with buying school uniform. I was lucky enough to be chosen and received brand new school uniform, which my family and I were grateful of.

P4: Going back to school was really hard for me, but my family insisted I did after the burial. When I got to school would have loved if someone would have asked me how I was holding up, but no everyone expected me to carry on like nothing happened. It was evident that the school had no support strategy available for learners like myself who were bereaved. It would have been very helpful to my grieving process to have someone to talk too about my feelings, especially as at home everyone is assuming I am okay.

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P8: The loss affected me terribly as I found it hard to cope. My friends and teacher knew what I was I was going through but no one ever stopped to check how I was holding up. I was an emotional wreck but tried very hard to hide it to the world. The only support I received was that of being in the schools feeding scheme for orphaned learners. That did not help me alone but my family as well, as I was allowed to take left-over's home for my siblings as well.

It is evident from the responses of participants that not much is done by schools to help bereaved learners. There is quite a lot that schools can do to help, as most learners do go through bereavement. Schools can act as potential helpers in dealing with loss. They are in a unique position to help grieving learners. Although bereavement seems like a family issue, it does affect learners psychologically, which ends up damaging their academic ability (Reid, 2000). Children spend most of their waking time days in school, which have the potential to be a safe haven and even a second family (Lowton & Higginson, 2003). School serves as an emotional safe haven, a place of comfort for vulnerable learners, specifically the bereaved.

In many ways supporting children involves becoming more aware of the communication skills used every day in the classroom. This includes verbal language and body language. The ability to communicate is an essential component of supporting children and listening is fundamental to all caring relationships. Communication includes understanding people's emotional responses and endeavouring to interpret whatever they are trying to convey. Good communication involves total involvement with the child so that they have no doubt that teachers are doing their best to understand what it is like to be in their shoes (Brown, 2012).

Policy and Support Documents

Regardless of the approach taken by a school in terms of having a bespoke Bereavement Policy, as a leader in the school community, the Guidance Counsellor should seek to include provision for the support of the school community in relation to bereavement and grief through the School Guidance Plan. In terms of formalising a plan regarding support related to bereavement and grief in the school community, Guidance Counsellors can draw upon DES documents relating to the support and care of students.

Guidance Counsellors should remain cognisant of the need to assess each case of bereavement and liaise with professional colleagues with expert knowledge in particular areas of bereavement and grief management.

The counselling component of the Guidance Counsellors' role has been recognised as a key part of the development of the student, in that it enables them to develop coping strategies to deal with stress, personal and social issues, and any challenges that life presents (DES, 2005). Often raised is the link between the role of counselling and mental health issues encountered by the youth of today. Important new "*Guidelines on mental health for post-primary schools*" are to be launched soon by the DES. while the guidelines were drafted mainly to assist the programme providers regarding the counselling dimension of education and training programmes for Guidance Counsellors, they also provide a reference point for practitioners. The second document is the "*Research on the practice of counselling by guidance counsellors in post-primary schools*" by Hayes and Morgan (2011). This research report is also a useful reference document in relation to the organisation and consideration of how Guidance Counsellors could plan support for bereavement and grief in the school community effectively.

5.3.3.2 **Family Support**

According to Amato (2005) of the National Council on Family Relations, family refers to a group of two or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage or adoption and residing together. Whenever an individual goes through a rough patch, the family unit is relied on for support. It was not surprising that most of the participants said if it was not for the support and love from their families during and after bereavement, they would not know where they would be.

Participants mentioned that the support they received was more financial than emotional. They would have loved to be asked occasionally how they were doing and how they were coping after losing their loved one. It seemed to them like everyone was comforting the elders about the loss and not them.

The following excerpts capture what they said:-

P9: If it wasn't for the love and support of my family. I would not be where I am today. Yes I would have loved for them to talk to me more and understand that I was going through the

loss just like them. I do understand they handled the situation the only way they knew and I felt cared for.

P4: If it wasn't for my family would probably be on the streets and not even at school. After my grandmother's passing my siblings and I relocated and moved in with our aunt. She took us in and raised us like her own children, it wasn't easy as the loss was still fresh but she was patient with us. Her passing left a huge strain on the family, as we all depended on her. I suffered from depression after her passing.

P6: Even thou I was hurting inside, it helped knowing my family was there was for me. I understood they too were hurting and did not know how to handle the situation. Yes would have loved us to talk about what we were feeling instead of brushing it under the carpet and caring on like nothing happened.

5.3.3.3 **Peer Support**

Peer support obtained from a child's friends, classmates, and others in his or her age group has been found to be positively related to the adjustment of children and adolescents. In addition, it is said to help them through their healing process after the loss of a loved one.

With peer relationships already serving an important role in many children's lives, it makes perfect sense why bereaved children may need to rely on peer support even more. Peer support is extremely important for bereaved learners because the rest of the child's family is also bereaved and may be unable to provide adequate support needed by the children. Furthermore, peers may be better able to provide such support because they are not directly involved with the death (Ross, 2000).

P10: If it wasn't for my friends and family I don't know what I would have done. The pain was unbearable and having them to make me laugh and forget a bit that now I was an orphan helped me a lot.

P9: Knowing he was there when I was ready to talk, made me feel safe.

5.4 **Recommendations for helping students who have experienced a significant loss**

5.4.1 **Recommendations for school Counsellors and School Psychologists**

5.4.2 **Recommendations for Parents and Teachers**

1) **Children are concrete in their thinking, therefore, describe death concretely;** avoid adding a large number of details, answer their questions simply and honestly and try to avoid euphemisms.

2) **Some of the most basic feelings expressed in children are fear and uncertainty.** They go through fear until they reach understanding. Be extra nurturing and attentive during this fearful time; this will help recover a sense of stability and dependability in life. Listen to their feelings of fear, and validate their feelings. If a child regresses, they may be searching for reassurance such as the care and attention they received as a baby.

3) **Children are very likely to experience guilt.** Unrealistic responsibility for a death gives the child a false reassurance that they could have prevented the death or future unwanted events. Remind them of the facts of the situation, and acknowledge that it is a difficult feeling to have. The child may need to feel the guilt until they are ready to face more difficult feelings.

4) **Children are repetitive in their grief, and asking questions and searching is part of their grief work.** The questions may be indicative of their feelings of confusion and uncertainty, so try to listen and support their searching.

5) **Remember that these feelings do not have quick cures.** Allow them to talk about their particular experience or trauma. Avoid transferring your fears to the child.

6) **Remember that a parent's death can be particularly difficult and confusing for children, affecting their sense of security, survival, and safety.** Their expression of grief is usually consistent with their life experiences, cultural and social context, individual personality, and age. School age children can develop phobias, sleeping disorders, academic problems, and antisocial behaviours. When helping a child, look at the child as an individual and do not assume that each experience is identical.

7) **Children need to feel safe within their worlds.** Try to listen with respect to the student's feelings and concerns. They need authority figures to acknowledge their pain. By doing so, you send a message that feelings are "ok" and a very natural part of being human. Children who are treated with care and consideration grow into sensitive, caring adults.

8) **Children need choices, because a death causes a frightening disruption in their lives.** Having some say in what they do or what they avoid concerning the funeral or services will help them express their feelings about the death. Giving the child control will help to build on their self-esteem.

9) **Children are often sent to school because the family may be struggling and think that a sense of normalcy may be helpful.** As a teacher or counsellor, one should encourage the grieving child to seek assistance if they are feeling unusually low or do not know how to handle a difficult situation.

10) **Provide information to the professional staff about the stages of grieving that may occur.** Children are different and their expressions depend on that child. Staff should be observant and report any unusual behaviour.

11) **Teachers and counsellors should be prepared to answer classmate's questions.** This can help the other children to develop empathy and discover ways to be supportive of their friends during this difficult time.

12) **Be careful to monitor games and songs when playing with children.** When death occurs, children may remember an instance when they are playing, "step on the crack, break your mother's back…" and feel that their mistake was the cause of a parent's death. Be mindful and creative when choosing games.

5.5 Conclusion

Losing a loved one at a young age is hard and the only way to come to terms with the loss is by having enough support around you. This chapter revealed that bereaved learners felt better in sharing their experiences of loss with their peers seemingly because they could relate to them. The next chapter summarises the findings of the study, recommendation for future studies and limitation of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATION, LIMITATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

Every child is unique with a unique background. Children can experience death at any age, during which time the child is developing physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, and socially. They may suffer the death of a parent, sibling, grandparent, or that of a close friend or family member. Death can be sudden and unexpected through accident, illness, or natural disasters or it can be expected when death occurs from natural causes. With so many variables, it is clear that childhood bereavement is a multi-faceted and complex subject. However, whatever the type of death, we now know children do grieve after a significant death, although they do so differently than adults (Corr & Corr, 1996; Silverman, 2000). Their reconstitution is shaped by four factors: understanding the death, emotional reaction to death, grieving and the reconstruction of the family (Christ, 2000). In the review of literature on childhood bereavement, it was apparent that there is still a lot to be done. There is a huge gap when comparing what has been written on adult bereavement and that of children. Yet children are affected by death every single day.

6.2 Summary of findings

The loss of an attachment figure or parent affects every aspect of a child's life, their emotional well- being, security, mental and educational development, and overall health. The findings of the study revealed that children are affected emotionally and psychologically by the loss of their parents or guardians. Majority (70%) of the participants are still hurting even thou some lost their loved ones five years ago. It is also evident that there is a difference in gender on how children handle loss; females were more in touch with their feelings and showed signs of grieving, while males wanted to paint the picture that they were coping with everything on their own. Grieving indeed is a personal journey and differs with each person.

Some participants shared their stories with ease and some had a hard time yet they lost their loved ones around the same time. Most of the participants felt very lonely during bereavement as adults seemed to be dealing with the loss on their own too. They mentioned

of their wishes of having someone to talk to about the loss and their feelings at the time. Even at school things were hard; everybody expected them to pick up from where they left off on their school work, it felt like they were moving on so quickly without their loved ones.

Theme 1

It is evidence that learners experiences of bereavement differs from each person. One can conclude that it does not have negatives consequences on learner's lives. Most learners felt very alone and lost all hope after the bereavement of their significant others. Some even experience financial constraints as some lost their people who supported them financially.

Theme 2

The impact of bereavement on learners affects every aspect of their lives that includes their psychological, academically and spiritually well being. Some learners who participated in the study felt that after bereavement a lot change in that it include

6.3 Limitations of the study

One of the limitations to the study is the use of a case study. A case study uses small sample sizes. This means data collected cannot be generalisable as; data only consisted of the opinions of those few selected as participants from the school under study.

Critically evaluating the research is an important step in any research. This is done in order to justify the conclusions and prospective regarding the implications of the study. The research involved a case study, and data was collected from 10 participants from the same geographical area, same racial group, and same school. This means the views expressed are of those individuals only and not all bereaved young people. Working around the participants' availability was difficult, as they would be available at a time that the researcher was not. It became evident that they were doing the researcher and the study a huge favour, and did not want anything to interfere with their studies.

6.4 Recommendations for further research

The following are suggested for further research:

- The research investigation was conducted specifically in a semi-rural school. Further research on the same topic can be conducted in rural and urban schools as well to compare findings.

- The research could also be done on other racial groups (that includes white, coloured and Indian students) to broaden the research's results.

- Future research can also focus on coping with bereavement at different ages and different genders as well to see whether a pattern emerges.

- A study on designing a policy with guidelines for the Department of Education, Educators, and Psychologists on how to help learners dealing with bereavement. Paying more attention to the much needed support given to these learners.

6.5 **Conclusion**

This journey has been such an eye-opening experience that I will treasure for a long time. Without a doubt, it has made me a more observant person. It has taught me to listen more and talk less. With my experience of being an educator for eight years, which means I am around children every single day, it never appeared that children went through so much at such a young age. Doing this research has made me realise that indeed we do take life for granted and complain about the littlest of things when they are people, especially children going through hardship but wake up and face each day as if all was well.

Losses are indeed so painful and frightening that young children endure strong emotions for only brief periods. Ultimately they avoid their feelings so as not to be overwhelmed. These emotions may be expressed as young outbursts or misbehaviour, rather than sadness; they may not be recognised as grief related. Furthermore, because their needs to be cared for and related to are intense and immediate, young children typically move their grief reactions to a prompt search for and acceptance of replacement persons. Unlike adults who can sustain a year or more of intense grieving, children are likely to manifest grief related affects and behaviour on an intermittent basis, for many years after loss occurred.

Without a doubt this makes one view the learners with a different lens. At times teachers expect the learners to produce their homework which is not written; in an attempt to explain, learners are never given a listening ear. During the interviews one of the learners said, "The aunt who took me in after my mom passed away, demands that we switch off

lights at seven as we are wasting electricity so I never get to finish my homework". Listening to that boy I understood that it is not his fault his work was not done, but the circumstances he found himself in; and that an educator would have no knowledge of this without enquiring first.

Through doing this study its evident learners go through bereavement, yet there is scant literature on support services to offer emotional and psychological support to bereaved learners.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethical clearance: University of KwaZulu-Natal

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

27 July 2016

Mrs Slindile P Cele 215079002
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Cele

Protocol reference number: HSS/0551/016M
Project title: An investigation of the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological well-being.

Expedited Approval

In response to your application dated 12 May 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Mr Henry Muribwathoho
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc School Administrator: Mrs B Bhengu-Mnguni, Mbalenhle Ngcobo, Philisiwe Ncayiyana, Tyzer Khumalo
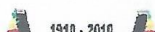
APPENDIX B: Ethical clearance: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

Mrs SP Cele
PO Box 35147
Hibberdene
4220

Dear Mrs Cele

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF BREAVEMENT ON LEARNERS' PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING",** in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 July 2016 to 01 December 2017.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Mandlendoda Junior Primary School

Adv. MB Masuku
Acting Head of Department: Education
Date: 21 July 2016

APPENDIX C: Research interview and observation schedule

<u>Face to face interview schedule for learners</u>

I would like to investigate learners' psychological well-being after bereavement and how they cope with the loss of a significant other.

Please note that this interview is confidential and will not be traced back to you and that your comments will remain anonymous. Please be honest and feel free to stop me at any time if you feel uncomfortable or need clarity on some questions.

<u>A: Biographical Details</u>

NAME(OPTIONAL)	
AGE	
SEX	
GRADE	

<u>B. Interview Questions</u>

1. Who have you lost through bereavement?

2. How are you related to that individual?

3. How close where you with the deceased (person who died)?

4. Do you have siblings, how many are they?

5. What work would you like to do after finishing with your studies?

6. Where do you reside and with whom?

7. Is family important to you, elaborate?

8. Has it always been these family members or some have moved out or passed on?

9. How have things changed after the relative died?

10. How has this loss affected you at school?

11. How has this loss affected you in your social life?

12. What support have you received from either your family or at school?

13. What kind of support do you need?

14. Has the school personnel assisted you in any way? If so how?

15. What advice would you give to someone in a similar situation?

APPENDIX D: Semi-structured interviews schedule

The "spy" ----- complete participant, this role likes a spy. The researcher attempts to enter into the specific group and become one member in it. However researcher is inside the group, his or her identity as a researcher is not known by other members, usually regard him/her as a colleague or friend to gain their trust.(Gill and Johnson 2002, cited in Saunders et al 2008).

Observation checklist for a research project

Name of School:

Name of learner:

Age:

Grade:

Time:

ITEM	BEHAVIOUR EXHIBITED
Interaction with peers	
Participation in class activities	
Academic performance	
Restlessness	
Social interaction outside of the classroom	
Interaction with educators	
Appearance	

APPENDIX E: Letter to the school and the principal

TO THE PRINCIPAL AND THE SCHOOL
GATEKEEPER PERMISSION
Dear Sir/Madam
I am a field - worker participating in a research project which is entitled, To investigate learners' experiences of bereavement, working under the leadership of my supervisor is Dr Henry Nkhanedzeni Muribwathoho from the University of KwaZulu Natal.
We have realized that not much research has been done in South Africa on learners dealing with loss of a significant other. Yet it is evident that it negatively impacts learners in all spheres of their lives if not dealt with accordingly. Learners who have lost a loved end up neglecting their school work which is a sign that they are not coping with the situation.
The study hopes to seek information about their experiences on bereavement and how it has impacted their wellbeing, and lastly how schools can do to assist these learners dealing with loss.
I am kindly seeking permission to conduct the study with six learners from your school. The study entails interviewing each learner once and interviews will take place after school hours. No aspect of the research will interfere with the normal running of the school. To protect the identity of the learners will use different names during the interviews. They will also be free to withdraw from the research at any stage without negative or undesirable consequences. All information is only intended for research purposes. Learners will not be paid for participation in the study. All data recordings and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet in the project leader's office.
Further clarification can be obtained from the project leader, Dr Henry Muribwathoho on 031-2607011 and by email at Muribwathohoh@ukzn.ac.za. Permission to conduct this research has been obtained from the University of KwaZulu Natal.

Yours faithfully_____
Fieldworker's name

APPENDIX F: Letter to the participants

Participation Information Sheet

Dear Participant

Information regarding participation in a research project:

I am a master's student kindly seeking your participation in an important study which aims to investigate learners' experiences of bereavement. In South Africa there is not much written or researched about on how these learners cope. The aim of the project is to identify learners' experiences on bereavement, and how it impacts learner's wellbeing, and what role schools can play in helping these learners through their grieving process.

The study requires you to be interviewed once. With your permission, this discussion will be audio taped. The interview will be take place and at a time that suits you and which does not interfere with the normal running of the school, your work in school.

As a participant, you have rights. These include voluntary participant and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. You have the right to be protected from harm and no detail that will enable you to be identified will be used. All documents, publications and written texts will make use of the pseudonym you chose. You will access to transcripts of the interviews before they are used in the study. You may delete or change excerpts from the interview. All information is intended for research purposes only. All data recordings and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet in the project leader's office. On completion of the study, the findings will be shared with you in a format of your choice (hard copy or electronic copy).

Please note that there is no payment for participation in this study.

Should you require further clarification, please feel free to contact the project leader, Dr Henry Muribwathoho on 031-2607011 and by email on Muribwathohoh@ukzn.ac.za. Permission to conduct this research has been obtained from the University of KwaZulu Natal.

APPENDIX G: Consent form

Informed Consent form

Declaration

I _____full names of participants hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project and I consent to being interviewed.

I hereby give consent for the interview to be audio-taped, and for the data to be used for research and dissemination of the research findings.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should I so desire.

- That I will have access to all transcripts and rights to change, revise or withdraw aspects of data that I have given

- My identity will not be divulged

- My participation is voluntary

- There is no payment for participation

_____   _____

Signature of participant   Date

APPENDIX H: Language Editor Certificate

APPENDIX F: Turnitin Certificate

Investigating the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological wellbeing

by Slindile Cele

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Change shifts, such as moving our look from the littlest to a major alter like moving to another nation. We appear to have the capacity to manage with a few degree of alter, but may ended up over-burden and endure a negative mental affect in the event that this capacity is surpassed.

People's inability to control the change event may affect their loss response, as may their life experiences and previously learnt coping strategies. Being out of control of events could well add to stress and to the loss reaction, this may be an issue with children. Loss of life results in changes that impact so greatly as to overwhelm us and become problematic. Loss is an individual experience, the impact it has will depend on our personality, and previous experiences if there are any. Pain is an enthusiastic reaction to a misfortune, loss being the state of genuine misfortune of something or somebody, a term ordinarily utilized in misfortune by passing, with grieving the outward expression of our inside encounter of despondency (Goldman, 1994).

Due to the ever-increasing number of HIV and AIDS infections, the mortality rate in South Africa is very high. This means that learners at a very young age are constantly exposed to the loss of loved ones. Separation has a powerful effect on young children and as they grow older the effects become more complex and powerful. This not only applies to children, but adults as well. This lays a foundation for understanding that comfort is attainable through our actions and our emotional responses. Loss for children is impacted by numerous components counting their age, level of cognitive understanding and the relationship which they had with the individual who kicked the bucket. These variables impact the child's enthusiastic and behavioural reactions.. This does not only impact their social lives negatively but also their intellectual ability at school. There is much need for such a study to get an insight on what learners go through when they have lost a loved one, and what can be done to help them through their grieving process. The HelpGuide.Org (1999) states that losing somebody you cherish or care around profoundly is exceptionally difficult. A individual may involvement all sorts of troublesome feelings and may feel like the torment and pity being experienced will never let up. These are typical responses to a noteworthy misfortune. While there is no off-base or right

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way to lament, there are solid ways to manage with the torment that in time can re-establish a individual and allow them to move on.

The importance of a good psychological state in the performance of a pupil at school cannot be understated. A bereaved pupil may lose concentration at school and may start getting relatively lower grades. A letter by a Purdue College analyst (online) found that understudies who encounter the passing of a family part or near companion moreover encounter a comparing drop in scholarly execution amid the time the misfortune takes put.

The combination of melancholy interferometer with the capacity to concentrate and perform leads to scholastic execution dropping. Grief is not purely emotional. It also has a greater cognitive effect. This therefore compels for an investigation on this matter to be carried out in a South African perspective.

1.2 Location of the Study

The research took place in the South Coast region in the rural area of Mthwalume. The design of the study is a case study conducted at a local primary school. It is a no fee paying school and in a community that is poverty-stricken with high rates of unemployment and teenage pregnancy. The people in this community are mostly subsistence farmers.

1.3 Significance of the study

A study of this kind is much needed to help with understanding some of the challenges grieving learners are faced with. It will also assist in getting a glimpse into their lives and the day to day challenges they are faced with, to better understand where they are coming from. A lot of people will benefit from this study namely the learners themselves, the parents, guardians and most importantly the educators who spend the most time with these learners who are bereaved.

1.4 Objectives
The objectives of this study are:
- To gain a deeper understanding of learners' experiences of bereavement;
- To investigate the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological well-being and

- To explore school-based strategies to assist learners dealing with loss due to bereavement.

1.5 Research Questions

- What are the learner's experiences on bereavement?
- How does bereavement impact on learners' psychological well-being?
- What school-based strategies are there to help learners' dealing with loss?

1.6 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts, like a hypothesis but not fundamentally so well worked out. Its main aim is to guide the research, determining what will be measured and the statistical relationship it has with other. This study will use an ecosystemic theory, which is rooted in how the environment can influence human development.

The study used an ecosystemic theory with an aim of understanding learners and their way of living, as this theory states that peoples' way of living is characterised by their environment and the relationship they have with it. A lot of times children live in a way they think society wants them to and tend to forget that they are human beings with feelings to consider. This is highly noticeable when referring to death related issues. Most African cultures exclude the children and assume it is an adult thing, forgetting that children can feel and understand everything that happens around them.

1.7 Research design

Concurring to Myers (2009) the research method strategy is a procedure of enquiry, which moves from basic presumptions to inquire about plan and information collection.

1.7.1 Approach to the study

Qualitative research is naturalistic and endeavours to consider regular life of diverse gather of individuals and communities in their normal settings. It too includes an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter. It endeavours to make sense of or to decipher marvels in the terms of meaning individuals bring to them Denzin & Lincoln (1998). Concurring to Demon and Fleming (2007) qualitative research aims to investigate and to find issues at hand, which

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helped the researcher, understand better how learners deal with bereavement at home and how it affects them psychologically.

1.7.2 Paradigm

The worldview which outlines this inquire about is an interpretive worldview. Concurring to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) an interpretive worldview points to get it the subject world of human encounters.

The interpretive paradigm aims to gain insight on how learners experience dealing with bereavement. This paradigm is able to give clarity as it is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subject's experience of individuals.

The interpretive approach is too known as the epistemological position towards investigate that centers on clarifying the subjective reasons and implications that lie past social action" and draws in analysts who are interested in how reality is formed by "people's subjective encounters of the outside world (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).
This study interprets the feelings, thoughts, reactions, and actions of bereaved learners to try and determine the effects of losing a loved one.

1.8 Methodology

Cohen , Manion and Morrison (2000) state that technique in inquire about alludes to efficient way of gathering information from a given populace so as to get it a marvel and to sum up realities gotten from a bigger populace. Strategy grasps the investigate plan, populace, rebellious utilized to gather information, moral contemplations, information examination and its elucidation. Technique subsequently makes a difference the analyst and the pursuer to get it the prepare of the inquire about in this way giving it logical justify.

1.8.1 Design of the study

The plan of this inquire about is a case ponder. Simons (2009) portrays a case consider as an in-depth express and uniqueness of a specific extend or institution in genuine life setting. In a case ponder the analyst points to portray the contemplations and encounters of a specific circumstance Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011).

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This case study was based at a local primary school which consisted of ten participants interviewed using face- to- face interviews. Face-to-face interviews allow participants to open easily and give data they would not normally reveal in a group interview, especially discussing such a sensitive topic. Participants were selected with the help of school educator's recent survey results of orphaned learners. With the aid of a questionnaire the researcher divided the participants in two teams, namely those who had lost both parents and those who are survived by one parent. The purpose of dividing the participants was to determine the impact of bereavement on learners as well as compare whether the time frame had a significant role in the healing process.

1.8.2 Sampling Procedures

This study uses purposive sampling where the researcher handpicks participants based on their judgment (Govindarajulu & Zakkula, 1999). It speaks to a gather of distinctive non-probability inspecting strategies. This sort of examining is too known as judgmental, specific, or subjective inspecting. All depends on the judgments of the analyst when it comes to selecting the units to be utilized; the fundamental point of utilizing this populace intrigued is that it gives the most excellent data or information on the chosen point.

The study used ten learners from a nearby primary school. The interviews with the learners were conducted at a convenient time that did not affect their studies or disturb the schooling institution in any way.

1.8.3 Data collection

For this research two methods for data collection were employed, namely: face- to- face interviews and an observation schedule. These methods will assist to enable triangulation and enhance trustworthiness of the study.

Perception is an fundamental information gathering method as it holds the plausibility of giving the analyst with an insider point of view of the gather flow and practices in a distinctive setting. Perception permits one to listen, see, and start to involvement reality as members do in possession of the characteristics being sought (Cohen et al., 2000).

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The researcher also used face- to- face semi-structured interviews. Concurring to Lavrakas (2010) confront- to- confront interviews, too called in-person interviews are frequently utilized to request data in ventures that can be considered exceptionally delicate.These data methods also enable greater coverage of issues because participants would be able to view experiences of others (Maree, 2007). Individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine learners. The interviews were audio taped with the participants' consent.

1.8.4 Data analysis

The examination of information is an imperative step in the investigate handle. Subjective information includes sorting out the information in arrange to make sense of the circumstance. It involves the prepare of noticing designs, subjects, categories, and regularities (Cohen et al., 2009).

The data collection through observations, interviews, and focus group interviews are analysed by listening to the audio tape recordings, then transcribed verbatim and interview transcripts are developed. When analysing data, the three c's of analysis were used: coding, categorising, and conceptualising (Lichtman, 2006).

Topical information investigation was utilized to dissect information. Agreeing to Boyatzis (1998:2), topical examination is the gathering of information into subjects to distinguish common designs or repetitive topics from translated information. Codes or names were made utilizing emanant subjects from assembled information through open-ended meeting. The analyst utilized meet questions to plan subjects. Translated information was fitted into topics that were made utilizing inquire about questions and meet questions. Unused topics that risen were famous. These subjects were utilized to gather data and were coded. Babbie (2010) attests that codes are shaped through the questions inquired and the information collected. The codes helped in outlining information for investigation purposes. Amid coding, notes called 'memos' were composed for utilize in report composing.

1.9 Definition of terms

Bereavement- is a period of sadness that you feel when you lose someone

Loss- losing something /someone to loss, particularly the loss of someone.

Mourning- is an outward expression of grief.

Learner- a person who is learning a subject or skill.

Cope- (of a person) to deal effectively with something difficult.

Psychological well-being- refers to the mental state of a person.

1.10   Ethical Consideration

The study required some ethical considerations to be considered. Working with learners who were under age required consent forms to be signed by parents and guardians that permitted learners to partake in the study.

1.11   Outline of the Study

This research study is entitled: An investigation of the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological well-being.

<u>Chapter One</u>

Chapter one of this research is the introductory chapter, which gives a synopsis of the background of study, significance of the study, research design, and methodology.

<u>Chapter Two</u>

The second chapter which is the literature review discusses existing literature on bereavement especially in children, where previous studies discuss about the current research topic.

<u>Chapter Three</u>

Chapter 3 consists of the theoretical framework, paying attention to Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic system theory

<u> Chapter Four</u>

Chapter four of this research is the research strategy and plan. This incorporates indicating the investigate plan, the populace and the test, examining methods, investigate disobedient, data-

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collection strategies, introduction of the information, and the investigation methods, as well as a rundown.

Chapter Five.

Chapter five has two aspects namely the presentation of the data collected, the participants involved in this research and the analysis of data.

Chapter Six

The final chapter gives a common rundown on the general summary on the study and the recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

Chapter one provided an introduction into this investigation. This chapter consists of a literature review. The researcher conducted an initial literature study in respect of the research topic. A more comprehensive and extensive literature study was conducted during the research process (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). A writing ponder is too alluded to as writing survey. When one sets out upon an investigation extend, the thought is that they ought to not take put in a vacuum or without any reference to the inquiry about of others in one's substance range and point. Any investigate ought to rest upon the shoulders of those who have gone some time recently, inside the setting of the inquiry about of others (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

One is expected to review the work of other authors and researchers in the content area and subject. After the consultation of these literary sources researchers are to write about the results of such reviews. This serves a few purposes. To begin with, this empowers the analyst to get it completely the speculations that one's possess inquire about might rest upon and submerge oneself in the dialect of the teachings. Moment, it permits the analyst to legitimize they require for his/her study's claim investigate. One might discover out that what one proposes to investigate has as of now been examined broadly, and that no commitment is being made to the world's information on the off chance that one takes after a specific way. When this happens, the analyst has a great establishment with which to think around what is to be inquired about, and require the advanced information. Third, the survey permits investigate pursuers to have a relevant scenery to inquire about, a way of fitting what one has to display into the enormous picture (Ivankova, et al., 2006).

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By literature review researchers refer to an essay or a collection of essays endeavouring to present issues that are related to the task at hand. In this proposal, the writing audit looks at the affect of deprivation on learners' mental well-being. Agreeing to Shuttleworth (2009), writing survey is a antecedent in the presentation of a investigate venture. The writing audit is a body of content that surveys basic focuses of current information counting substantive discoveries and commitments to a specific theme.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of bereavement on learner's psychological well-being. The study also investigates support that can be given to the learners who are bereaved, and the role of educators in order to equip them with tools to better assist learners during the grieving process.

This section will be structured as follows: psychological well-being, bereavement, mourning, and grief. The sub-section on bereavement will provide an overview on the concept of bereavement. The subsection will also study the concept of psychological well-being.

2.1 Psychological well-being

Psychological well-being is the state of great mental wellbeing and enthusiastic wellbeing. Individuals who are mentally sound are free from mental disarranges and have overseen their push so that it does not meddled with their capacity to appreciate life and take part in society. In spite of the fact that there are times in most peoples' lives when they are not rationally or sincerely at their best, being in a state of mental well-being implies that they are able to manage with their issues successfully. This state of being has an impact on a person's physical wellbeing as well (Gross, 2013).

Individuals are said to be in a state of mental well-being when there are no mental or passionate unsettling influences in their lives. Rationally sick patients who have effectively overseen their disarranges can be in this state on the off chance that their constant issues are legitimately overseen, in spite of the fact that not in the event that they are appearing indications of their clutters. Being mentally well regularly implies that a individual is by and large upbeat, able to associate with others, and candidly steady (wiseGeek.Com, 2000).

The writing on mental well-being has advanced quickly since the rise of the field over five decades prior. As later studies appear, clinicians, and other social researchers have taken gigantic steps in their understanding of the variables affecting mental/ subjective well-being. Mental well-being alludes to how individuals assess their lives. Agreeing to Diener (1997), these assessments may be in the shape of cognitions or in the shape of influence. The cognitive portion is an data based evaluation of one's life, that is when a individual gives cognizant evaluative judgments approximately one's fulfilment with life as a entirety. The emotional portion is a hedonic assessment guided by feelings and sentiments such as recurrence with which individuals encounter pleasant/unpleasant temperaments in response to their lives. The suspicion behind this is that most individuals assess their life as either great or awful, so they are ordinarily able to offer judgments. Assist, individuals constantly involvement moods and emotions, which have a positive effect or negative effect. Thus, people have a level of subjective well-being, even if they do not often consciously think about it, and the psychological system offers virtually a constant evaluation of what is happening to the person.

In this think about mental well-being is characterized in terms of inside involvement of the respondent and their possess discernment of their lives. The centre was on transient temperaments and long term states of their mental well-being. Current social markers can capture marvels such as wrongdoing, separate, natural issues, newborn child mortality, sexual orientation balance, etc. In this way, they can capture angles of quality of life that include to the portrayal drawn by financial markets. Be that as it may, these social markers come up short to capture the subjective well-being of individuals since they do not reflect the real encounters, such as the quality of connections; the direction of their feelings; and whether sentiments of confinement and sadness plague in their day by day lives. On the other hand, financial pointers fall flat to incorporate side impacts and the trade-offs of advertise generation and utilization. For case, the natural costs of businesses certainly are not watched from the national accounts.

Another disadvantage of economic and social measures in terms of their links to psychological well-being is that they are based on models of rational choice, whereby people follow a set of logical rules when making development plans. However, works by Kahneman (1994) in psychology and economics reveal that people do not always make rational choices, and that these choices do not necessarily enhance psychological well-being.

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Right now in Bhutan, financial and social markers are accessible and as often as possible upgraded as most associations conduct a few inquire about on it. Indeed the media and arrangements give accentuation on such pointers, while no national measures of mental well-being exist. The estimation of mental well-being has progressed so much over a long time that it is time to deliver a advantaged put to people's well-being in arrangement wrangles about. A GNH society calls for the incorporation of well-being markers at standard with financial ones. Media ought to give consideration to how a society is advancing in terms of mental well-being and lawmakers ought to base their campaigns on their plans for lessening trouble, expanding life fulfilment and bliss level.

Psychological well-being leads to alluring results, indeed financial ones, and does not essentially take after from them. In a exceptionally seriously inquire about done by Diener et al. who score tall in mental well-being afterward win tall wage and perform way better at work than individuals who score moo in well-being. It is too found to be related to physical wellbeing. In expansion, it is regularly taken note that what a society measures will in turn impact the things that it looks for. In the event that a society takes incredible exertion to degree efficiency, individuals in the society are likely to centre more on it and now and then indeed to the hindrance of other values. In case a society frequently surveys well-being, individuals will give their consideration on it and learn more almost its causes. Mental well-being is in this manner important not as it were since it surveys well-being more specifically but it has useful consequences.

According to the Gross National Happiness Association (2010) mental well-being moreover alludes to how individuals assess their lives. These assessments may be in the frame of acknowledgment or in the shape of influence. The cognitive portion is a data based examination of one's life that is when a individual gives cognizant evaluative judgments approximately one's fulfilment with life as a entirety.

Mental well-being moreover alludes to how individuals assess their lives. These assessments may be in the shape of cognition or in the shape of influence (Archontaki, Lewis & Bates, 2012). The cognitive portion is an data based evaluation of one's life that is when a individual gives cognizant advancement judgments almost one's fulfilment with life as a entirety. The full of feeling portion is a hedonic assessment guided by feelings and lives. The suspicion behind this is that most individuals assess their life as either great or awful, so they are ordinarily able

to offer judgments. Besides, individuals perpetually encounter dispositions and feelings, which have a positive impact or a negative impact. Hence, individuals have a level of subjective well-being indeed in the event that they do not regularly deliberately think around it, and the mental framework offers for all intents and purposes a steady assessment of what is happening to the individual (Diener, 2009).

Financial and social markers are accessible and as often as possible overhaul as most associations do a few inquire about on it. Indeed the media and approaches give accentuation on such pointers, while no national degree of mental well-being exist (Deci & Ryna, 2008). The estimation of mental well-being has progressed so much over the a long time that it is time to grant a advantaged put to people's well-being in arrangement talks about.

Psychological well-being leads to alluring results, indeed financial ones and does not fundamentally take after from them. In a exceptionally seriously investigate done by Diener et al., individuals who score tall in mental well-being afterward win tall salary and perform superior at work than individuals who score moo in well-being. It is moreover found to be related to physical wellbeing (Larsen, McGraw & Cacioppo, 2001). In expansion, it is regularly taken note that what a society frequently evaluates as well-being, is hence profitable since of its advantageous results (Beck, 2007).

Psychological well-being alludes to positive mental wellbeing (Edwards, 2005). Inquire about has appeared that mental well-being is a differing multidimensional concept (MacLeod & Moore, 2000; Ryff, 1989b; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002), which creates through a combination of passionate control, identity characteristics, personality and life involvement (Helson & Srivastava, 2001). Mental well-being can increment with age, instruction, extraversion and awareness and diminishes with neuroticism (Keyes et al., 2002). Moreover, the recognition of physical wellbeing and most profound sense of being can intercede the relationship between setting and mental well- being (Temane & Wissing, 2006a, 2006b).

Psychological well-being has experienced broad experimental audit and hypothetical assessment (Wissing & Van Eeden, 1998). There is as of now no single consensual conceptual understanding of mental well-being. Bradburn's (1969) starting understanding of mental well-

being given a delineation of the distinction between positive and negative impact. Preparatory investigate was basically concerned with the encounters of positive and negative impact, subjective well-being and life fulfillment that were shaped around the Greek word 'eudemonia', which was interpreted as 'happiness' (Ryff, 1989b). Joy was depicted as the balance between positive and negative impact. Numerous early scales, such as Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffen's (1985) Fulfillment with Life Scale, on which a endless sum of investigate was conducted, utilized this introductory subjective conception of well-being (Conway & Macleod, 2002; Diener et al., 1985). The Fulfillment with Life Scale require participants to indicate a cognitive rather than affective response in relation to global satisfaction with their quality of life.

Other appraisal measures have counting Antonovsky's (1993) Sense of Coherence Scale with adjustments by Frenz, Carey and Jorgensen (1993), the Grit Scale (Pretorius, 1998), Social Rearrangement Scale (Holmes & Rahe, 1967) and Beck's Sadness Stock (Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Deride & Erbaugh, 1961). The Guts Scale measures self-appraisals, family evaluations and back examinations. The Social Rearrangement Scale assesses show encounters of stretch in terms of noteworthy life occasions. The Beck's Sadness Stock evaluates enthusiastic trouble in the shape of depression. Despite broad assessment and appraisals, specialists have demonstrated that mental well-being is a different multidimensional concept, with correct components still obscure (MacLeod & Moore, 2000; Ryff, 1989b; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002). Ryff has broadly inquired about the objective understanding of mental well-being.

2.2 Death and Loss

Deprivation alludes to the period of melancholy and grieving after a passing. When one laments, it is portion of the typical handle of responding to a misfortune. We may involvement despondency as a mental, physical, social, or enthusiastic response. Mental responses can incorporate outrage, blame, uneasiness, pity, and lose hope. Physical responses can incorporate resting issues, alter in craving, physical issues, or sickness (National Cancer Organized of Wellbeing, 2013). Loss is the period of melancholy and grieving after a misfortune. Passing is a emergency that all families experience (Lahey, 2009). Passing is perceived as the most upsetting life occasion families' confront. This is in spite of the truth that most do not require directing to manage (Parkes, 2001).It analyzes misfortune as a family framework marvel has as it were as of late picked up deceivability (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002) with expanded consideration that parallels the development into midlife of infant boomers. We live in an environment where passing is undetectable and denied (Huppert, 2009, Keyes, 2005 & Lahey, 2009). On the other hand, individuals have gotten to be de-sensitised to passing. These irregularities show up in the degree to which families are actually influenced by passing Lahey(2009), whether they characterize misfortune as happening to one of us or to one of them.

In industrialized western countries, geographic portability and social re-organisation of families moreover come about in decreased intergenerational contact in this way less openings for more youthful family individuals to take part in passing related encounters (Keyes, 2005). In expansion, the advancement of life expanding restorative innovations has had a few impacts on Americans' encounters with passing:

- It has moved most dying from people's homes to institutions.
- It has resulted in care dominated by efforts to delay death by all means.
- It has led us to question our assumptions about what constitutes life and death.
- It has confronted families with decisions about whether to prolong the process of dying or terminate the lives of loved ones.

In spite of the fact that western families have removed themselves from the closeness of passing, they are besieged by open introductions of passing through the news.With African

families death is treated differently. Families believe it's important to be around the person who is dying and offer them support. That doesn't include the family alone but the whole community as well.

Childhood bereavement is never easy, because it is a tough time when young people are trying to find themselves and now and up having to jungle this painful unfortunate time in their lives. Childhood bereavement may have both a brief and long term affect on a children's well-being, counting their mental wellbeing and instructive accomplishment, however there is exceptionally small composed almost how to offer assistance these children going through loss.

Passing is not in the conspire of things when you are a child. It is regularly untimely and startling. Passing is an occasion that meddling with the typical prepare of developing up and plays on feelings, which may never have been experienced some time recently. In brief, the passing of a parent or cherished one is stunning and the establishments of a child's life are shaken; their certainty in the world they know is crushed (Akerman & Statham, 2001).

For a child whose parent has died, the bewilderment and confusion may be both in the world around and within themselves. The long term passionate troubles may be impressive. Brown and Harris (1989) accept that the passing of a parent some time recently the age of twelve is likely to increment the chances of depressive responses in childhood.

However, Segal and Simkins (1996) are more positive, saying that the quality of care children receive after the death of a loved one is crucial to their later well-being. In addition to the sorrow and loneliness experienced when a parent dies, children may feel doubly surrendered by their surviving parent who is battling to oversee their claim pain and may have trouble keeping up the status quo. Anger and guilt may also be part of children's feelings if they believe that they were to blame for what happened. This is especially prevalent when there has been conflict or anger shown towards the person who has died or with young children in the magical stage of conceptual thinking.

Many children will deny the reality of their parents' death because the experience and the long term consequences are too painful to manage. Dyregrov (1991) describes this response as automatic emotional defence and writes of children who on hearing the news, turn to issues such as, 'can I use his bed now?' or Can I take part in the funeral?'. Where children develop

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strategies like these, it is not unusual for strong or violent feelings to emerge in other circumstances. Their reactions may then be out of proportion to the issue at hand.

Reviews on studies from various countries on children and bereavement following the death of a significant other reported that learners in this situation do experience a wide range of emotional, psychological, and behavioural responses to grief (Downey, 2000). Responses may include anxiety, depressive symptoms, fears, angry outbursts. Lamenting the passing of a cherished one presents noteworthy challenges notwithstanding of the dispossessed individual's age or life circumstances and can be particularly overwhelming amid times of advancement move. Agreeing to Graves and Larkin (2006), Erikson's psychosocial hypothesis holds that people create in eight life stages. Each organize holds a psychosocial emergency or assignment that needs to be settled. This needs to be done in such a way that the person is able to consolidate the abilities aced in arrange to discover the determination of future stages. Concurring to Erikson (2005), youth marks the time when physical and cognitive advancement coincide with social desires such that people are able to mull over and structure their childhood self-identity and start to consider a workable move to adulthood.

In spite of a few changes in states of mind, passing still appears like a unthinkable subject, particularly in African individuals, which is maybe momentous as it is the one beyond any doubt certainty. Individuals in common appear to discover it troublesome to know how to reply to the dispossessed, and as a result they may do nothing and in this manner include to the negative enthusiastic affect on the individual. Deprivation is troublesome for everybody particularly in children, the surviving parent or gatekeeper may not be sincerely accessible for the child and may be incapable to encourage their lamenting through examining the passing and their sentiments, as well as not replying their questions (Papadatou, Metallinou, Hatzichristou, & Palvidi, 2002). Children may at that point get to be overlooked grievers, being disconnected and powerless. Hurd (1999) fight that a child's solid grieving is subordinate on a number of components. These components incorporate the relationship with the perished parent, the enthusiastic accessibility of the surviving parent, and compelling communication with

Schools act as potential partners when learners bargain with misfortune. Schools appear to be in a interesting position to offer assistance lamenting learners. In spite of the fact that

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deprivation is a family issue, it possibly can influence children while they are at school (Reid, 2000). Children spend most of their waking time days in school, hence, that has the potential to be a secure sanctuary and indeed a secure moment family (Lowton & Higginson, 2003). In case believe and compatibility are built up and children are given with precise data, this makes a difference to maintain a strategic distance from myths creating around a passing that may advance complicate lamenting for children. A delicate educator is one who is able to recognize the needs of the student and offer assistance them to alter to the misfortune. Schools may moreover be able to offer back to the dispossessed family, by advertising a tuning in ear or directing them to a pertinent organization for bolster, which will at that point in a roundabout way affect on the student.

Dyregrov (2000) states that children and young people think of their dead relatives for a longer period more regularly compared to grown-ups, and are more influenced mentally. Other than their scholastic victory and social interaction, they are influenced contrarily as well. In expansion, children and young people encountering parental misfortune may tend to have mental issues in their future life. This chance can be experienced more intensely in the case passing is sudden and there is no one for the child to put to the passing parent.

Although it seems that a lot of studies have been done on children and deaths, there is not much written about how African children deal with bereavement, which is what the study hoped to understand better. I also hope to make people aware of that if a person's grieving takes a longer time it does not mean there is something wrong with the person. It just means that they need more time to grieve fully so that they can heal fully. It is advisable to be patient especially with children as they grieve differently, according to Kelly (2000). In some ways their grief may never be finished. They do not forget the person who died and the relationship they shared, but they come to a grudging acceptance of the death and their loss and a realisation that they have to go on as they adjust and the grief changes. It becomes a part of them and a part of their life.

In this segment mental well-being has been characterized in terms of inner involvement of the respondent and their possess discernment of their lives. Thinks about centred both on transient dispositions and long term states of their mental well-being. Current social marker can capture marvels such as wrongdoing, separate, natural issues, newborn child mortality, sex uniformity, etc. in this way, they can capture viewpoints of quality of life that include to the depiction drawn by financial pointers. In any case, these social pointers fall flat to capture the subjective

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well-being of individuals since they do not reflect the genuine encounters, such as the quality of connections; the controls of their feelings and whether sentiments of separation and the misery plagues in their everyday lives. Another drawback of financial and social degree in terms of their joins to mental well-being is that they are based on models of level headed choice (Ryff, 2001) whereby individuals take after a set of coherent rules when making improvement plans. Be that as it may, Berkman and Breslow (2003) uncover that individuals do not continuously make sound choices, and that these choices do not essentially improve mental well-being (Cohen & Lemay, 2007).

2.3 Bereavement

Deprivation is characterized as the objective circumstance one faces after having misplaced an critical individual to passing. Loss is a typical response to misfortune in human creatures in essentially each culture over the world. There are no set rules for how long 'normal' loss endures, as each individual and each misfortune is exceptionally diverse (AHF, 2012; Berger, 2009; Herrman, 2001). Hence, deprivation tends not to be analyzed unless it has gone on for a exceptionally noteworthy period and essentially impacts the person's life. Getting over or past the misfortune of a cherished one can be challenging for about everybody. Be that as it may, for a few, the misfortune of a adored one is as well much, causing them to enter into a clinical discouragement that may require assist consideration or treatment. Concurring to Winegard et al. (2014), deprivation is conceptualised as the broadest of the three terms and a explanation of the objective reality of a circumstance of misfortune through passing.

Loss is analyzed when the center of clinical consideration is a response to the passing or misfortune of a adored one. As portion of their response to the misfortune, a few lamenting people show side effects characteristic of a Major Depressive Scene, for illustration, sentiments of pity and related side effects such as sleep deprivation, destitute craving, and weight misfortune, (Kelley & Nesse, 2006). The dispossessed person ordinarily respects the discouraged disposition as typical, in spite of the fact that the individual may look for proficient offer assistance for help of related side effects such as sleep deprivation or anorexia (Grohol,

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2016). The length and expression of ordinary loss shift significantly among diverse social bunches (Freidli, 2009). The conclusion of Major Depressive Clutter is by and large not given unless the indications are still display two months after the misfortune. Be that as it may, the nearness of certain side effects that are not characteristic of a typical pain response may be accommodating in separating deprivation from a Major Depressive Scene. These indications incorporate: blame approximately things other than activities taken or not taken by survivor at the time of the passing; considerations of passing other than the survivor feeling that he or she would be way better off dead or ought to have kicked the bucket with the expired individual; dismal distraction with uselessness; noteworthy psychomotor hindrance (eg. it is difficult to get moving, and what developments are there are moderate); delayed and genuine useful disability; and hallucinatory encounters other than considering that he or she listens the voice of, or transitorily sees the picture of the perished individual (Bonanno, 2004).

Deprivation is too characterized as the state of having misplaced a adored one through passing (Brown & Goodman, 2004). Everybody who has cherished and misplaced a individual through passing will involvement loss. In spite of the fact that it is a common and widespread encounter, individuals still discover loss upsetting and involvement a assortment of feelings (Mwamwenda, 2004). Mwamwenda (2004) encourage states that loss is characterised by exercises such as crying, having troubling contemplations almost the dead individual and feeling disheartened by the misfortune of the individual who kicked the bucket. Bereavement is too known as the state of lamenting the passing of a individual with whom the dispossessed person has shared a noteworthy relationship and must presently persevere the misfortune.

"Relationships with the persons we care for combine both the tangible and intangible elements. What matters is that the person is gone forever, and that places the person in a state of loss (what we call bereavement), eliciting complex reactions (what we call grief) and finding expression in a myriad of ways (what we call mourning)" (Balk, 2011:38).

Bereavement is never simple; it is indeed more troublesome to persevere for children. Deprivation envelops both despondency and grieving, but these terms have specific implications. Agreeing to Leming and Dickison (2007), pain is an wild enthusiastic response

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to the state of loss, which amplifies past feelings and incorporates mental and physical reactions to misfortune. Grieving is an outward expression of despondency, counting social and devout traditions encompassing passing. It is to prepare adjusting to life after a loss. Bereavement, the misfortune of a adored one as a result of passing, causes a wide run of responses, and individuals involvement their pain in numerous and shifted ways. Grieving, the adjustment to misfortune, is a basic handle in arrange to re-establish balance and carry on with living. Grieving can take a long time and there is no settled time in which one ought to anticipate feeling better. Individuals may encounter a few of the taking after responses when somebody near to them passes on:

Feelings

Sadness and loneliness

The misfortune of a cherished one takes off a person's feeling pitiful and forlorn. One may endure profound distress that they are without the adore and understanding of that individual. When a person loses a accomplice or near companion they may be particularly forlorn as they were utilized to a near day-by-day relationship and shared in ordinary activities.

Anger

This is a visit encounter after the misfortune loss. The outrage comes from a sense of disappointment that there was nothing family, specialists, God or one could do to anticipate the passing. One may too feel irate with the expired for taking off them.

Guilt and self-reproach

These are common reactions after loss. One may feel blameworthy around things done or cleared out fixed, uncertain fights, words said or cleared out implied. As a rule individuals fault themselves for something that was ignored around the time of the passing. Most regularly blame is ordinary, in spite of the fact that not justified.

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Anxiety and Fears

Sentiments of uneasiness are common and stem from two sources. One may fear that he/she will not be able to take care of oneself and mindfulness of possess mortality is increased by the passing of an adored one. One may feel exceptionally powerless and lose certainty in oneself and in the world. Uneasiness carried to extremes can create into a fear or lead to freeze attacks.

Fatigue

Fatigue is habitually experienced and may take the shape of lack of concern or laziness. To a individual who is as a rule exceptionally dynamic this can be both shocking and distressing.

Despair and helplessness

A person may feel he/she cannot bear the pain any longer. The sense of helplessness engendered by death makes bereavement a stressful experience. Helplessness

Shock

A person may feel numb, dazed, staggered, and incapable to think clearly. Stun happens most frequently in the case of a sudden passing. In a few ways, stun secures you from the overpowering sentiments as it does not permit them all into consciousness.

Longing and Searching

One may have a sense of yearning to see, listen, hold, and conversation to the individual who has died

Relief

It is ordinary to feel calmed after passing of a adored one who endured a long or especially excruciating sickness. It is moreover typical to feel soothed that a individual with whom you had a troublesome relationship is no longer lively. Blame frequently goes with this sense of alleviation but it is a ordinary portion of grief.

Physical Sensations

Physical responses are moreover related with intense melancholy. These sensations play a critical part in the lamenting handle. A few common indications are snugness in the chest and throat, feeling brief of breath, emptiness in the stomach, strong pressure, the runs, dry mouth, migraines, and sense of de-personalization. In the event that the indications continue or are of concern, one ought to counsel a doctor for a check-up.

Thoughts

Certain considerations are common in the early stages of grieving, and ordinarily blur after a brief time. Now and then they continue and can lead to uneasiness and depression.

Disbelief

This is frequently the beginning reaction after hearing of a passing. One may feel that what has happened is unbelievable, and can't accept it happened. It is a common thought, which might hold on for a few times.

Confusion

A individual may feel incapable to concentrate, can't appear to put considerations in arrange and tend to disregard things.

Preoccupation
You may be fixated with contemplations around the perished, be distracted around how to recoup the misplaced individual and have meddlesome contemplations or pictures of the perished enduring or biting the dust.

Sense of presence
The partner of the encounter of yearning and longing are contemplations that the perished is some way or another still in the current range of time and space.

Hallucinations

Mental trips, both visual and sound-related, are visit encounters of the dispossessed. More often than not happening inside a few weeks taking after the misfortune, these transitory deceptive encounters do not imagine a more troublesome grieving encounter.

Behaviours

A number of practices are commonly detailed after a misfortune, which are related with typical melancholy responses; they ordinarily rectify themselves over time. A few visit practices incorporate rest and craving unsettling influences, absentmindedness, social withdrawal, dreams, or bad dreams of the expired, dodging updates of the perished, moaning, over action, crying, going to places or carrying objects that remind you of the individual, and / or prizing objects that had a place to the expired**.**

2.4.1 Bereavement and major depressive disorders

According to (Archer,2001) symptoms of depression are characterised by an overwhelming feeling of sadness, isolation, and despair that lasts two weeks or longer at a time . Depression is not just a feeling that comes and goes of being sad or lonely, like most people experience from time to time. Instead, a person feels like they've sunk into a deep, dark hole with no way out, and no hope for things ever changing at anytime soon.

2.4.2 Symptoms of Clinical Depression

An individual who endures from a major depressive clutter must either have a discouraged disposition or a misfortune of intrigued or delight in every day exercises reliably for at slightest a two-week period. The discouraged temperament speaks to a critical alter from a person's typical disposition. Social, word related, instructive, or other vital working are contrarily affected by the alter in temperament (Davis, 2011). For occasions an individual who is discouraged begins lost work or school, or stops going to classes or does not take part in their regular social engagements (such as going out with companions).

2.4.3 Types of Depressions

Clinical sadness is characterised by the nearness of five or more of depressive indications. Discouraged temperament most of the day, about each day, as shown by either subjective reports (eg. feeling pitiful, blue, down in the dumps, or purge) or perception made by others (eg. shows up sad or around to cry). In children and teenagers, this may show as an crabby or crotchety, Or maybe than pitiful temperament (Bonanno, 2006). Particularly decreased intrigued or joy in all, or nearly all, exercises each day, such as no intrigued in side interests, sports or other things the individual utilized to appreciate doing. Critical weight misfortune when not counting calories or weight pick up (eg. a alter of more than five percent of body weight in a month), or diminish or increment in craving about each day; sleep deprivation (failure to get to rest or troublesome remaining snoozing), or hypersomnia (resting as well much) about each day.

Psychomotor disturbance (eg. eagerness, failure to sit still, pacing, pulling at dress or impediment (eg. moderated discourse, developments, calm talking, about each day). Weariness, tiredness, or misfortune of vitality about each day (eg. indeed the littlest errands, like dressing or washing appear troublesome to do and take longer than regular) (Carr, Nesse & Wortman, 2005). Sentiments of uselessness, over the top, or unseemly blame about each day, for case, rumination over minor past failings); lessened capacity to think or concentrate, or uncertainty about each day (eg. shows up effectively occupied, complains of memory challenges); repetitive contemplations of passing (not fair fear of biting the dust), repetitive self-destructive thoughts without a particular arrange, suicide endeavors, or a particular arrange for committing suicide (Bressert, 2016).

2.4 Mourning

Grieving is characterized as a open show of melancholy. While pain centers more on the inner or intra-psychic involvement of misfortune, grieving underlines the outside or open expressions of pain. Subsequently, grieving is impacted by one's convictions, devout hones, and social setting (Wilner, 2011). There is an self-evident cover between melancholy and grieving, with each affecting the other. It is frequently troublesome to recognize between the two. One's open

expression ie (Grieving) of the enthusiastic trouble over the misfortune of a adored one (ie. melancholy) is affected by socially decided convictions, ethics, and values.

When the contract parcel, preparing capacity is filled with contemplations of the perished and the need of overseeing seriously feelings, small room is cleared out for concentrating on scholastic requests and other memory assignments. The push of every day scholastic errands is frequently overpowering to a child. In our deprivation, we spend distinctive lengths of time working through each step and express each arrange with diverse levels of escalated (Stetson, 2003). The five stages do not fundamentally happen in any particular arrange. We frequently move between stages some time recently accomplishing a more quiet acknowledgment of passing. Numerous of us are not managed the extravagance of time required to accomplish this last organize of pain.

After one supports a misfortune, there are certain errands of grieving to be finished for the preparation of grieving to be completed (Worden, 2008). The errands do not fundamentally happen in a particular arrange, in spite of the fact that an arrangement is suggested as follows.

Task I: To accept the reality of the loss.
The first task of mourning is to come face to face with the reality that the person is dead. It involves intellectual and emotional acceptance of the finality of loss. Many people protect themselves from reality by denying the meaning of the loss (I don't miss her), or denying the irreversibility of death (I won't have you dead). Belief and disbelief coexist while trying to come to grips with the reality of the loss. Traditional rituals such as the funeral help many bereaved people move toward acceptance. (Worden, 2008).

Task II: To work through to the pain of grief.
It is necessary to acknowledge and work through the pain - emotional, behavioural, and often literal physical pain - associated with loss. Avoiding or suppressing this pain can result in its manifestation through symptoms (e.g. depression, heart disease). Not everyone experiences the same intensity of pain or feels it in the same way, but it is impossible to lose a loved one without experiencing some level of pain. People can negate this task by not feeling. They may cut off their feelings, deny the pain, avoid painful thoughts and reminders of the dead, and even use

alcohol or drugs. Society may be uncomfortable with the painful feelings and hence give the indirect message "you don't need to grieve". Adequate completion of this task is needed so that one prevents carrying the pain with them throughout their life.

Task III: To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing.
Depending on the relationship with the deceased, and the various roles the deceased played, adjustment to a new environment means different things to different people. It might mean living alone, raising children alone, managing finances alone; the full recognition of the changed circumstances may take a considerable period. (Worden, 2008).

The bereaved may have to develop new skills and take on new roles; they are often confronted with the challenge of adjusting to one's own sense of self. Attempts to fulfil the deceased's roles may be met with initial resentment, but the negative feelings usually give way to more positive ones as the bereaved learn new ways of dealing with the world.

As loss can challenge one's fundamental life values and beliefs, another area of adjustment may be to one's sense of the world. Searching for meaning in the loss, especially when there are sudden and untimely deaths, may mean adoption of new beliefs, or modification of old ones to reflect the fragility of life and the limits of control. The negative course of Task III is not adapting to the loss. Some people may not develop the skills they need to cope, withdraw from the world, and promote a stance of helplessness.

Task IV: To emotionally relocate the deceased and move on with life.
The essence of Task IV is about finding an appropriate place for the dead in one's emotional life. It is about evolving some on-going relationship with the thoughts and memories associated with the deceased in a way that would allow the bereaved to go on living effectively in the world. For many people it is the most difficult task to accomplish. They hinder it by holding on the past attachment rather than going on and forming new ones, later to realise that their life in some way stopped at the point the loss occurred.

One indication of a completed grief reaction is when the person is able to think of the deceased without pain or intense crying; mourning is finished when people reinvest their emotions into life, feels more hopeful, experience gratification again, and adjusts to new roles.

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2.5 Grief

Grief is a multifaceted response to loss, particularly to the loss of someone or something that has died, to which a bond or affection was formed. Although conventionally focused on the emotional response to loss, it also has physical, cognitive, behavioural, social, and philosophical dimensions. While the terms are often used in an interchangeable manner, bereavement refers to the state of loss, and grief is the reaction and a natural response to loss.. It is the emotional suffering one feels when something or someone the individual loves is taken away. The grief association with death is familiar to most people, but individual grieve in connection with a variety of losses throughout their lives, such as unemployment, ill health or the physical loss being related to something that the individual can touch or measure, such as losing a spouse through death, while other types of loss are abstract, and related to aspects of a person's social interactions (AHF, 2012).

2.6.1 The process of grieving

In recent years there has been a high level of scepticism about the universal and predictable emotional pathway that leads from distress to recovery with an appreciation that grief is a more complex process of adapting to loss than stage phase model have previously been suggested (Davis, 2011).

While there are no set stages of grief, the following are all common responses:

► Numbness and shock,
► Sobbing, crying,
► Longing to bring the person (or situation) back,
► Overwhelming feelings of loss, anguish, pain,
► Intense emotions,
► Denial that the event occurred,
► Questioning (why did this happen? Why did he/she die?),
► Repetitious thinking and statements,
► Loss of appetite,
► Difficulty sleeping,
► Bodily distress such as headache, stomach upset, chest pains,
► Preoccupation with the event,
► Confusion, difficulty making decisions,
► Idealization of the person/situation that has been lost,

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- ► Reality of the loss sets in,
- ► Anxiety and panic, feeling crazy,
- ► Depression and sadness,
- ► Helplessness, being in limbo,
- ► Guilt, resentment, despair, bitterness,
- ► Anger ñ at self, at others, at the person who died,
- ► Loneliness,
- ► Hope, and
- ► Renewal

All of these feelings, behaviours and emotions help people to make sense of the loss, and to integrate the loss into their lives. Not all people will experience all of these, but all are normal responses to loss. Ways to assist a grieving person can include:

- ► Being there while a person is grieving,
- ► Listening to the grieving person,
- ► Acknowledge their loss,
- ► Assure them that their grief reactions are normal and understandable,
- ► Do not compare a grieving person with others. Accept that each person may grieve differently,
- ► Allow the person to grieve at their own pace,
- ► Recognize that normal routines can be useful,
- ► Assist the person to make decisions, but avoid deciding for them,
- ► Encourage them not to make big life-changing decisions, but assist them to make smaller decisions that can help them feel in control of their lives,
- ► Talk about the loss, talk about the person who died,
- ► Encourage them to eat well-balanced meals, but avoid making them eat,
- ► Avoid numbing the pain with alcohol or other drugs,
- ► Assist with practical matters like childcare, housework, etc. but do consult the bereaved person about this.

2.6.2 Reaction

Crying is a normal and natural part of grieving. It has also been found however, that crying and talking about the loss is not the only healthy response and, if forced or excessive, can be

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harmful. Responses or action in the affected person, called 'coping ugly' (Bonanno, 2006) may seem counter-intuitive or even appear dysfunctional, for example, celebratory responses, laughter or self-serving bias in interpreting events. Lack of crying is also a natural, healthy reaction, potentially protective of the individual, and may be seen as a sign of resilience; science has found that some healthy people who are grieving do not spontaneously talk about the loss. Pressing people to cry or retell the experience of a loss can be harmful, while genuine laughter is healthy, according to James and Friedman (2009).

2.6.3 Common grief reactions

According to Nembahe (2013) reactions to loss, called grief reactions, vary widely from person to person and within the same person over time. Common grief reactions include difficult feelings, thoughts, physical sensations, and behaviors.

Feelings:

People who have experienced loss may have a range of feelings. This could include shock, numbness, sadness, denial, despair, anxiety, anger, guilt, loneliness, depression, helplessness, relief, and yearning. A grieving person may start crying after hearing a song or comment that makes them think of the person who has died. Alternatively, that person may cry for no reason (ibid)

Thoughts:

Common thoughts patterns include disbelief, confusion, difficulty concentrating, preoccupation, and hallucinations. (Nembahe, 2013)

Physical sensation:

Grief can cause physical sensation, such as tightness or heaviness in the chest or throat, nausea or an upset stomach, dizziness, headaches, physical numbness, muscle weakness or tension, and fatigue. It may also make one vulnerable to illness (Nembahe, 2013)

Behaviours:

When a person is grieving, he or she may struggle to fall asleep or stay asleep. He or she may also lose energy for enjoyable activities or lose interest in eating or interacting socially. A grieving person may also become more irritable or aggressive. Other common behaviours include restlessness and excessive activity (Nembahe, 2013)

Religion and spirituality:

Grief and loss may also cause a person to question his or her faith or view of the world or it may strengthen the person's faith by providing a new understanding of the meaning of life (Nembahe, 2013)

<u>Experiencing grief:</u>

Each person experiences grief differently. Often, a person feels grief in waves or cycles with periods of intense and painful feelings that comes and goes. People who grieve may feel they are making progress but then suddenly face overwhelming grief again. This may occur at significant dates, such as holidays, birthdays or without reason. Over time, these grief cycles will typically become less frequent and less intense as the person adjusts to his or her loss (Nembahe, 2013)

2.6.4 Five identities of grievers

Berger (2009) identifies five ways of grieving. As exemplified by nomads, memorialists, normalisers, activists and seekers. The nomads are those grievers that have not yet resolved their grief and do not seem to understand the loss that has affected their lives. The memorialists are those that have an identity and are committed to re-creating a sense of family and community. The activists are those grievers who focus on helping other people who are dealing with the same issues that caused their loved one's demise and death. The seekers are those people who will adopt religious, philosophical, or spiritual beliefs to create meaning in their lives (Berger, 2009).

2.6.5 The effect of grief on thinking and learning

When someone very important dies, several changes take place that affect memory, concentration and learning (Archer, 2001). This challenge lasts for months and last for two or more years. Our most basic needs, feelings of real fear may result. Children worry about the surviving parent and often wonder what will happen to them this parent dies too (Nesse, 2005). The surviving parent may be grieving and perhaps unable to focus on the needs of the child for a time.

2.6.6 Learning theory and grief

Children have many learning responsibilities. Grief and trauma can be a detriment to learning (Carr, Nesse & Wortman, 2005). The following shows how learning theory applies to grieving children. There is a potentially infinite amount of information in the universe. The brain appears to have, if not unlimited, at least a massive storage capacity (Lichtentahl & Cruess,

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2010). The limitation is in the amount of information that can be processed at one time. Learning theory suggests that only 5-6 chunks of information can be processed at one time (Pratt, 2005; Woolfolk, 2004).

2.6.7 Learning tasks and grief

When the narrow portion, processing ability, is filled with thought of the deceased and necessity of managing intense emotions, little room is left for concentrating on academic demands and other memory tasks (Shear, 2005); Smith (2012) claims that the stress of daily academic tasks is often overwhelming to a child.

2.6.8 Stages of grief

According to Genden (2005) grief is a natural response to an individual's experience with loss. A mixture of feelings can be associated with grief such as sadness, anger, guilt, frustration, or regret. People go through stages of grief to make peace with the experience and help heal the emotional pain associated with loss. This can be confusing since there are several lists that include anywhere from five to nine separate stages. One may also find it misleading, because the word 'stage' may suggest a neat, orderly progression from one phase to another. The stage describes our reactions to the death of a loved one, and usually those reactions are not neat and orderly. Through extensive reading and practical experience over the years studies have compiled the list to just three stages of grief to assist in bereavement process: Disbelief, pain and belief.

Through these three stages share some of the same emotion-sadness, anger, depressions loneliness, shock, emptiness, relief, and fear for the future, etc. each one is named for the feeling that dominated in frequency and intensity (The Help Guide, 2000).

Disbelief: According to Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (2014), during the first months or so one's stronger reactions will probably be related to shock and disbelief. They find themselves thinking or saying 'this can't be true, this can't be happening'. They may pick up the phone to call, or set a place at the table for dinner and each time they forget their loved one died; there will be fresh pain as they remember. Disbelief is a common response in all humans to any bad news; they don't want to believe it. This stage of shock allows the truth to sink in slowly; in small doses, and this could last for three to seven weeks.

Pain: The second stage is when the disbelief and shock are wearing off, when the reaction relates mainly to the painful realisation that the loved one has indeed died; in the first stage the experiences some feelings of sadness. Without the protection of numbness' or shock, these feelings may be intense, more prolonged, and can seem overwhelming; they may feel like everything is falling apart. This stage may last about four months.

Healing: During this third stage they still have some moments of disbelief and feelings of sadness but they find themselves stronger; this occurs more often. They may have more interest in what is going on around them, at work, at home, with family –and they may feel more energetic and enthusiastic. For most people, there is no specific point at which they can say that they have recovered, rather, there is a gradual recognition of this healing and a realisation of the readiness again to become fully in love with living. This stage of reorganisation also may last about four months.

Recognising these three parts can help in understanding one's varying emotions. Often it is only when one looks back and realise some indication of when the change happened; this takes place mostly when one experiences disbelief, pain or healing states (Moore, 2015).
Smith (2012) states that the death of one's loved one might inspire one to evaluate one's own feelings of mortality. Throughout each stage a common thread of hope emerges as long as there is life, there is hope. As long as there is hope, there is life. Many people do not experience the stages in the order listed below, which is okay. The key to understanding the stages is not to feel like one must go through every one of them, in the precise order. Instead, it is more helpful to look at them as guides in the grieving process. It helps an individual understand and put into context where they are. All people grieve differently. Some people will wear their emotions on their sleeve. Others will experience their grief more internally, and may not cry (Shear, 2005). One should not be judgemental about how a person experiences their grief, as each person experiences it differently.

The first reaction to learning of terminal illness or death of a cherished loved one is to deny the reality of the situation. It is a normal reaction to rationalise overwhelming emotions (Santrock, 2007) It is a defence mechanism that buffers the immediate shock. We block out the words and hide from the facts. This temporary response carries individuals through the first wave of pain; as the masking effects of denial and isolation begin to wear, reality and its pain re-emerge. The intense emotion is deflected from a vulnerable core, redirected, and expressed instead as anger. The anger may be aimed at inanimate objects, complete strangers, friends, or family. Anger

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may be directed at the dying or deceased loved one. Rationally, the person is not to be blamed. Emotionally, however, one may resent the deceased for causing pain or for leaving. A person may feel guilty for being angry, and this makes the person angrier. Grieving is a personal process that has no time limit, nor one right way. The doctor who diagnosed the illness and was unable to cure the disease might become a convenient target. Health professionals deal with death and dying every day. That does not make them immune to the suffering of their patients or to those who grieve for them. One must not hesitate to ask the doctor to give one extra time or to explain the details of the loved one's illness. At times they have special appointments (Openshaw, 2011). They also intervene by requesting for clear answers to questions regarding medical diagnosis and treatment.

Understanding the options available to an individual, taking their time, are some coping strategies. The normal reaction to feelings of helplessness and vulnerability is often a need to regain control. One might blame circumstances eg. Saying If only we got a second opinion from another doctor. They might also find fault for not trying certain options by saying "If only we tried to be a better person towards them. Secretly, one may make a deal with God or a higher power in an attempt to postpone the inevitable. This is a weaker line of defence for protection from the painful reality. Two types of depression are associated with mourning. The first one is a reaction to practical implications relating to the loss. Sadness and regret dominate this type of depression. Bereaved people worry about the costs and burial. They also worry that, in their grief, they have spent less time with others. This phase may be eased by simple clarification and reassurance. They may need a bit of helpful cooperation and a few kind words. The second type of depression is more subtle and, in a sense, perhaps more private. It is a quiet preparation to separate and bid the loved one farewell. Sometimes all they really need is a hug (Oesterreich, 2004).

2.6 The impact of grief on children's academic performance

There are children who continue to perform well in school following the death of a significant loved one. These children often go unnoticed. They may use the tasks of schoolwork or sports to block out painful feelings and thoughts. They may also feel a need to excel because of a feeling that the parent is watching them, and they may want to show the deceased parent how much they care and want to make them proud. This type of response to loss can result in stress related health problems later in life, as well as potential physical and emotional difficulties from unresolved grief (Oesterreich, 2004).

A person's psychological being is greatly affected by a traumatic event. A traumatic event is a sudden and unexpected occurrence that causes intense fear and may involve a threat of physical harm or actual physical harm. A traumatic experience may have a profound effect on the physical health, mental health and on the development of the student. How students process trauma depends on their age and level of development. By understanding how students experience traumatic events and how they express their lingering distress over the experience, school personnel can better respond and help them through this challenging time (Janoff, 2010).

For students, a traumatic experience may cause on-going feelings of concern for their own safety and the safety of others. These students may become preoccupied with thoughts about their actions during the event, often at times experiencing guilt, or shame over what they did or did not do at the time. They might engage in constant retelling of the traumatic event, or may describe being overwhelmed by their feelings of fear or sadness. Pre-school students may lose recently acquired developmental milestones and may increase behaviours such as bedwetting, thumb sucking, and regress to simpler speech. They may become clingier to their parents and worry about their parent's safety and return. These young students may also become more irritable with more temper tantrums and have more difficulty calming down. A few students may show reserved behaviour and become very withdrawn, subdued, or even mute after a traumatic event. These students may have difficulties falling or staying asleep or have nightmares about the event or other bad dreams. Typically these students will process the event through post-traumatic play Hutchison (2005).

Elementary students may show signs of distress through somatic complaints such as stomach aches, headaches, and pains. These students may have a change in behaviour, such as increase irritability, aggression, and anger. Their behaviours may be inconsistent. These students may show a change in school performance and have impaired attention, concentration, and more school absences. Late elementary students may excessively talk and ask persistent questions about the event. These students exposed to a traumatic event feel self-conscious about their emotional responses to the event. They often experience feelings of shame and guilt about the traumatic event and may express fantasies about revenge and retribution. A traumatic event in adolescents may foster a radical shift in the way these students think about the world. Some of these adolescents may begin to engage in self-destructive or accident prone behaviours and reckless behaviours. There may be a shift in their interpersonal relationships with family

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members, teachers, and classmates. These students may show a change in their school performance, attendance and behaviour (Hutchison, 2005).

In spite of our capacity to anticipate common reactions to injury depending on age and formative level, there is still colossal changeability among understudies with respect to post-traumatic indications and the degree to which learning and school may be disturbed. The assortment of individual's reactions to injury is related to numerous components, counting a student's earlier history of injury or misfortune, or current mental wellbeing issues such as discouragement, uneasiness or behavioural issues and person contrasts in disposition. A traumatic occasion can truly hinder the school schedule and the forms of educating and learning. There are ordinarily tall levels of enthusiastic disturbed, potential for troublesome conduct, or misfortune of understudy participation. Unless endeavours are made to reach out to understudies and staff with extra data and administrations to offer and offer assistance ease their lamenting prepare. Understudies damaged by introduction to viciousness thou Or maybe than typical common passing have been taken note to have lower grades.

2.7 How teachers can support bereaved learners

A teacher must maintain routines both in the classroom and in school. He or she must be realistic about expectations for academic achievement for each learner (Lichtentahl & Cruss, 2011). Teachers must allow make-up opportunities while remembering that some children continue to have academic difficulties up to two years following a death, and sometimes beyond. Teachers must make exceptions for sports participation; sports can help with the healing process. A bereaved learner must be referred to the school counsellor while the teacher must communicate with the learner's parents. Teachers must respect the child's need to grieve and avoid telling the child to move on or get over it while creating an emotionally safe classroom. Teachers must also be aware that intense grief can come at developmental stages, years after a death has occurred. A teacher must affirm the person, regardless of academic performance (James & Friedman, 2009).

. The dignity and grace shown by dying loved one Cherished ones that are terminally sick or maturing show up to go through a last period of withdrawal. This is by no implies a recommendation that they are mindful of their possess approaching passing or such, as it were that physical decrease may be adequate to create a comparative reaction (Davis, 2011) their conduct infers that it is characteristic to reach a organize at which social interaction is restricted. The respect and elegance appeared by passing on adored ones may well be their final blessing

to us. This stage is stamped by withdrawal and calm. This is not a period of joy and must be recognized from sadness (Grohol, 2016).

2.8 Strategies for -coping with bereavement

Coming to this arrange of grieving is a blessing not managed to everybody. Passing may be sudden and unforeseen or one may never see past the outrage or dissent. It is not fundamentally a stamp of bravery to stand up to the unavoidable and to deny oneself the opportunity to make peace. Adapting with misfortune is eventually a profoundly individual and particular involvement. No one can go through it more effectively or get it all the feelings one goes through. But others can be there to supply offer assistance and comfort through this handle. The leading thing one can do is to permit oneself to feel the pain as it comes. Standing up to it will as it were drag out the common handle of recuperating (Santrock, 2007).

The proof on children's deprivation results is troublesome to abridge and a few discoveries negate others. In portion, this is since children involvement in loss runs of circumstances and inverse impacts can cancel each other out in expansive scale quantitative thinks about. An 8-year-old child whose parent kicks the bucket all of a sudden and who enters cultivate care will have a diverse encounter from a 15-year-old child whose parent's passing is anticipated but who is being bullied at school. As appeared, a few children are more likely to encounter deprivation; also, noteworthy loss appears to bring more noteworthy dangers to those who are as of now impeded or have confronted numerous losses.

While a passing of somebody noteworthy is a significant occasion in itself, it frequently brings other changes, such as unused part challenges. The travel of loss takes put nearby children's travel of advancement. They frequently return to or re-experience their melancholy in better approaches as they make assist moves, as the meaning of the passing and their changed relationship with the individual who has kicked the bucket takes on modern centrality. Numerous totals, interrelating chance and defensive components intercede or direct children's encounters. These can be at the level of the child (such as their earlier encounters of misfortune, their favoured adapting fashion), their family and social connections (counting their earlier and on-going relationship with the individual who has passed on), their more extensive environment and culture, and the circumstances of the passing (counting whether the child sees this as traumatic).

2.9 Developmental phases in understanding death

It is critical to perceive that all children are one of a kind in their understanding of passing and biting the dust; this understanding depends on their advancement level, cognitive abilities, identity, and characteristics, devout or otherworldly conviction, educating by guardians and noteworthy others, input from the media, and past encounters with passing. In any case a few common contemplations will be supportive in understanding how children and young people involvement and bargain with passing. They are as follows

Infants and toddlers: the youngest children may perceive that adults are sad, have no real understanding of the meaning or significance of death.

Preschoolers: young children may deny death as a formal event and may see death as reversible. They may interpret death as a separation, not a permanent condition. Preschool and even early elementary children may link certain events and magical thinking with the causes of death for instance, because of the world trade centre disaster; some children may imagine that going into a tall building may cause someone's death.

Early elementary school: children at this age (approximately 5-9) start to comprehend finality of death; they begin to understand that certain circumstances may result in death; they can see that, if large planes crash into buildings, people in the plane and buildings will be killed in the case of war images, young children may not be able to differentiate between what they see on television and what happens in their own neighbourhood. However, they may over-generalise, particularly at ages 5-6, if jet planes do not fly then people do not die; at this age death is perceived as something that happens to others, not to oneself or ones family.

High school: most teens will fully grasp the meaning of death circumstances; such as an automobile accident, illness and even the world trade or pentagon disaster. They may ask friends and family for comfort or they may withdraw to deal with their grief. Teens (as well as some younger children) with a history of depression, suicidal , and chemical dependency are at particular risk for prolonged and serious grief reactions and many need more careful attention in school during these difficult times (Jackson, 2011).

2.10   Factors Influencing Ability to Adjust

The sex of a child can have an effect on both the brief and long-term impacts of losing a parent early in life. Other variables which show up to be noteworthy in terms of the capacity

of the child to alter taking after deprivation, incorporate the age at which the child encounters the misfortune and the degree of bolster accessible taking after the passing.

2.11.1 Age and cognitive development

The age and cognitive advancement of a child will definitely play a part in their essential understanding of passing, which in turn may impact their long-term capacity to adjust to the loss. They show up to be numerous varying sees with respect to when children create the capacity to lament and get it the conclusion of passing. It is the see of a few that a child is incapable to legitimately lament until they reach the formal operational arrange at age eleven or twelve, which is the fourth and last arrange of Piaget's hypothesis of cognitive advancement. In differentiate, John Bowlby, in his thinks about of connection, accepted that newborn children as youthful as six months encounter melancholy responses comparable to those of grown-ups. Others have put the age at which children secure the capacity to lament anyplace between the age of one and four a long time ancient (Bowlby, 1963; Furman, 1964; Worden, 1996) believes that only when a child can understand the abstract concepts of 'finality' and 'irreversibility' will they be able to accept the reality of the loss of a parent. This, he believes, is primarily achieved at the stage of operational thinking, although some level of understanding will be attained at earlier cognitive stages. In effect, Worden is suggesting that if a child loses a parent before the operational stage, the true extent of their grief may be delayed until the reality of the loss is fully comprehended. Children of approximately five to seven years of age, therefore, are particularly vulnerable in that they can understand the finality of death on some level, but lack the cognitive reasoning to cope with the intensity of the loss. Regarding other significant stages in a child's life, infancy is also regarded as a vulnerable stage due to potential attachment issues if the loss involves the primary caregiver. Such issues may include difficulties around trust, as well as feelings of anger or depression as the child grows and is unable to attach or become intimate with others (Worden, 1996). Furthermore, Speece and Brent (1996) highlight the role age plays in a child's understanding of death, noting that age has been widely studied in this regard and that the vast majority of these studies suggest a significant relationship between children's age and their concepts of death. Older ch In her ponder, Angela Nickerson of the Massachusetts Veterans The study of disease transmission Inquire about and Data Middle at the College of Modern South Grains, looked for to decide how both the age of the child and the quality of the child rearing taking after a passing influenced these children over their life span. The ponder examined information from 2,823 grown-ups, each of whom had experienced

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the passing of a parent amid childhood, in arrange to evaluate mental impedance, parental care, and other components that could contribute to troubles afterward in life. Nickerson and her colleagues found that the more youthful a child was at the time of the misfortune, the more likely they were to create mental wellbeing issues, counting uneasiness, disposition, or substance manhandle issues (Aderka, Bryant, Hinton, Hofmann, & Nickerson, 2013).Children's concepts are, in general, more realistic, and abstract than those of younger children.

This conclusion is consistent with Rutter (1984), who posits that while young children may initially display milder symptoms of grief over a shorter period than those of adolescents, the long-term psychological consequences are greater for young children.These findings suggest that how a child responds to grief at the time of the bereavement, which is influenced to a large degree by the age and cognitive development of the child, will in turn play a role in ultimate outcomes.

2.11.2 Support following bereavement

In terms of the part that the family environment plays in influencing grown-up results taking after childhood loss, Nickerson concludes that there is solid prove to recommend that the quality of the relationship with the surviving parent is a key figure. In spite of the fact that the ponder centered on the affect of destitute child rearing on mental troubles, she focuses out that the plausibility that positive family connections and great child rearing hones may act as a defensive figure against psychopathology taking after the misfortune of a parent (Aderka et al., 2011).

A partitioned ponder investigating the affect of early parental passing has moreover uncovered the long-term harm and enduring that can be experienced by people in grown-up life on the off chance that fitting levels of bolster are not given at the time of deprivation. The investigate, distributed in the Diary of the Regal Society of Medication, portrays the moo self-esteem, forlornness, confinement and failure to express sentiments of a few people who misplaced a parent in childhood, with a few detailing these impacts as much as 71 a long time after the loss (Ellis, Dowrick & Loyd-Williams, 2013).

Ellis et al. (2013) found common subjects among those who detailed long-term impacts such as those laid out. This included disturbance in the child's social and family life taking after a misfortune, which as often as possible included moving domestic and partition from companions and family. This driven the analysts to conclude that encountering long periods of this sort of change implied the dispossessed child was being viably denied the bolster and solidness required in such circumstances, coming about in an expanded probability of the person encountering enthusiastic challenges in afterward life. As with Nickerson's ponder, this specific inquire about proposes that in the event that the suitable underpins are in put to address the vital 'mothering or fathering' at that point a child is less likely to be influenced in grown-up life.

Additional inquire about by Consolation Zone Camp (2010) assist highlights the significance of a steady environment taking after the passing of a parent. They studied 104 individuals between the ages of 13 and 19 who had experienced the passing of a parent and it was the surviving parent who was considered the most critical source of bolster taking after such a misfortune; companions were considered the moment most supportive bunch in terms of making a difference to manage with the loss.

2.11 Conclusion

Bereaved learners are witnessed in our classroom almost every day. Yet there is not much written on how to help them deal with loss of a loved one. Literature available goes way back in previous years, which is why such a study is needed. Chapter two focused on bereavement and psychological well-being and how it affects learners. It also discussed grief and mourning as part of the discussion on bereavement. The theories around the effects and impact of going through bereavement were also laid out. Chapter three narrates the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the literature review on bereavement, as well as how children cope with bereavement. Different articles and journals where consulted to get a better understanding of previous work done on the topic at hand. This chapter presents the research design and methodology adopted in the study in order to answer the following research questions:

- What are the learner's experiences on bereavement?
- How does bereavement impact on learners' psychological well-being?
- What school based strategies are there to help learners dealing with loss?

3.2 Theoretical Framework

According to Peter (2006) theoretical framework consists of concepts together with definitions and references to significant insightful writing, existing hypothesis that is utilized for a specific think about. It ought to illustrate an understanding of the speculations and concepts that are important to the subject of inquire about.

The study uses an ecosystemic theory with the aim of understanding learners and their way of living, as this theory states that people's way of leaving is characterised by their environment and the relationship they have with it. A lot of times children live according to how society wants them to and tend to forget that they are human beings with their own feelings to consider. This is highly noticeable when referring to death related issues, most African cultures exclude children and assumes it is an adult thing, forgetting that children can feel too and understand everything that happens around them (Sincero, 2012).

3.3 Ecological Perspective (Urie Bronfenbrenner)

The environmental point of view can be characterized as an interaction between an person and the environment. The Biological Frameworks Hypothesis sees the child's advancement in terms of the complementary impacts between the child and the numerous levels of the encompassing environment (Donald et al., 2010; Berk, 2007; Berk, 2006; Rathus, 2006). Donald et al. (2010) shows that the environmental hypothesis is based on the interdependency

between diverse living beings and their physical environment. The biological viewpoint, as upheld by Bronfenbrenner (2005, 2008), gives a system from which numerous relevant variables influencing the scholarly execution of a child can be seen. Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) recommend that an person advancement is a perfection of numerous coordinate and an roundabout impact, which either encourage or hinder the individual's potential.

In the biological hypothesis, the connections between living beings and their environment are seen comprehensively; hence, all parts influence the framework as a entirety. Agreeing to Bray, Gooskens, Khan, Moses and Seekings (2011), the framework is more prominent than the entirety of its parts. Subsequently, how the child considers, feels, carries on and creates as a individual is unavoidably connected to the social gathering, strengths and connections that make up their environment; for illustration families, peer bunches, the school and other social groupings, the socio-economic powers, and the interpersonal, influence other parts, and eventually the biological framework as a entirety. Changes or strife in any one layer will cause a swell impact all through the other layers (Witt, 2012).

3.4 Ecosystemic Theory

Along the rise of postmodernism in the common considering of time, a modern hypothesis prospered inside the space of brain research, specifically ecosystemic hypothesis and social constructionism. Ecosystemic considering looks towards a relationship as a central perspective of how to get it the world. Particularly, ecosystemic considering considers designs of behaviours that create inside connections and ought to be a point in the centre (Beevar & Beevar, 2000). Straight cause- impacts are thought to be as it were a portion of the greater picture of complementary causality, recursion, and share the duty. The setting of a relationship gets to be central, and in this setting people is seen to influence each other's conduct in a circular, corresponding way. The ecosystemic hypothesis portrays what happens in the relationship between people and what designs of interaction happen in the relationship, in other words, it centres on the forms that deliver meaning to the setting.

The point of which is to uncover the suggestion of the hypothesis to this consider. Subjectivity is seen to be inescapable, as the spectator gets to be a portion of the reality she or he is depicting. Reality and meaning are seen as being built through each person's person, discernments, understandings and encounters (Becvar & Becvar, 2000). Ecosystemic hypothesis is comparative to postmodern social constructionism in that it centers on dialect as data to develop meaning. A framework (be it familial, restorative or societal) is no longer respected as a gather of individuals, but Or maybe as an biology of thoughts that have been shaped through a phonetic prepare and between individuals (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

Thus, the stories of clients got to be vital in ecosystemic treatment, as the specialist recorded the overwhelming talk, which were frequently problem-saturated. It was thought that this tricky talk could be deconstructed, and that the specialist could co-create a reproduction of elective stories that could encourage trust and alter this prepare, which was seen to happen through the change of meaning in a client's world (White, cited in Coale, 1994). This approach pointed to bring to the surface numerous of the non-dominant stories that clients held almost themselves. This has already been dominated by the prevailing stories that told stories of their issues in life. These non-dominant talks were seen to contain the plausibility of enabling clients and increasing their capacity to fathom their possess issues.

The ecosystemic hypothesis sees the specialist as a collegial co-creator of unused stories, a impartial direct in the investigation of conceivable outcomes (Hoffman, cited in Coale, 1994). The meaning that the specialist brings is no longer respected as isolated from the framework of meaning that is developed in treatment but or maybe as an fundamentally portion of it (Coale, 1994). In expansion, the meet handle was to encourage the development of an elective talk which distinguishes the involvement of irregularity between unequivocal and certain setting of learning for learners and the feeling of disarray and frailty that go along with that involvement. The point of development of elective talk was to make a diverse understanding of preparing for learners, and to encourage a sense of strengthening, individual organization, and freedom for them.
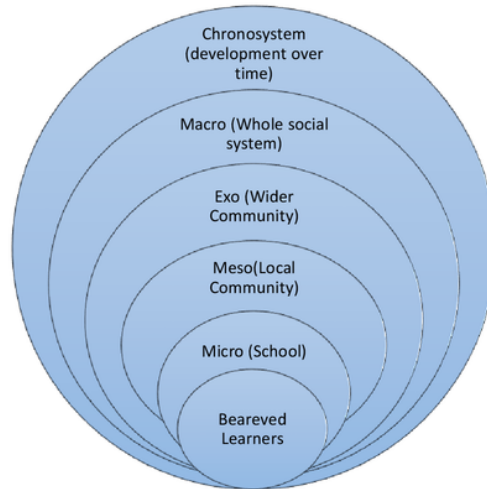
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3.5 *Ecological Model (Urie Bronfenbrenner)*

Bronfenbrenner's structure of 'environment' is as follows:

- The Microsystem- this is the layer closest to the learner and contains the structures with which the learner has coordinate contact. The micro system encompasses the relationships and interactions learners have with their immediate surroundings (Cuddington, 2001). Structures in the microsystem include family, school, and neighbourhood or learner-care environments. At these levels, relationships have impact in two directions-both away from the learner and towards the learner. For example learner's parents may affect his beliefs and behaviour; however, the learner also affects the behaviour and beliefs of the parent. Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls these bi-directional influences, and shows how they occur among all levels of environment. The interaction structures within a layer and interactions of structures between layers are key to this theory. At the microsystem level, bi-directional influences are strongest and have the greatest impact on the learners. However interactions at outer levels can still impact the inner structures.

- • The Mesosystem- This layer gives the association between the structures of the learner's microsystem (McDonnell et al., 1997). The association between the learner's

teacher and his guardians, between his church and his neighborhood, serve as cases of this framework.

- The Exosystem- This layer characterizes the bigger social framework in which the learner does not work specifically. The structures in this layer affect learner's improvement by association with a few structures in their microsystem (Keller & Golley, 2000). Parent working environment plans or community-based family assets are illustrations. The learner may not be specifically included at this level, but they do feel the positive or negative drive included with the interaction with their possess frameworks.

- The **Macrosystem**- This layer may be considered the outermost layer in the learner's environment. While not being a specific framework, this layer is comprised of cultural values, customs, and laws (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). The effects of larger principles defined by the macrosystem have a cascading influence throughout the interactions of all other layers. For example, it is the belief of the culture that parents should be solely responsible for raising their learners, that culture is less likely to provide resources to help parents. This, in turn affects the structures in which the parents function. The parent's ability or inability to carry out that responsibility toward their learner within the context of the learner's microsystem is likewise affected.

- The Chronosystem- This framework envelops the measurement of time as it relates to a learners environment. Components inside this framework can be either outside, such as the timing of a parent's passing, or inside, such as the physiological changes that happen with the maturing of a learner. As learners get more seasoned, they may respond in an unexpected way to natural changes and may be more able to decide the impact of that alter (Colyvan & Ginzburg, 2003).

The ecosystemic theory is relevant to this study because bereavement is a societal issue and the effects thereof are felt by every member of the family and community.

3.6 Conclusion

The ecosystemic theory used highlighted some facts which are mostly overlooked, which showed the relationship that person has with their surroundings. And how it helps shape the person or breaks the person.

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CHAPTER FOUR:

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three discussed the theoretical framework and focused on it as a theory and how it differs from other theories. The following chapter will look at the research design and the methodology that the study will use.

4.2 Research Design

According to Durrheim (2006) a research design is an investigate plan that has an arrangement that guides the study in answering the research questions. The research questions where centred on the impact of bereavement on learners psychological well-being. The study used a descriptive research design that considers employments on expressive inquire about plan as it presents a picture of the particular points of interest of a circumstance, social setting or relationship, and centres on 'how' and 'why' questions. It presents a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship, and focuses on 'how' and 'why' questions. Neuman (2000, p.10) further explains that in a "descriptive research, the researcher begins with a well-defined subject and conducts research to describe it accurately".

Concurring to Myers (2009) the inquire about strategy that can too be characterized as a methodology of request, which moves from basic presumptions to inquire about plan and information collection.
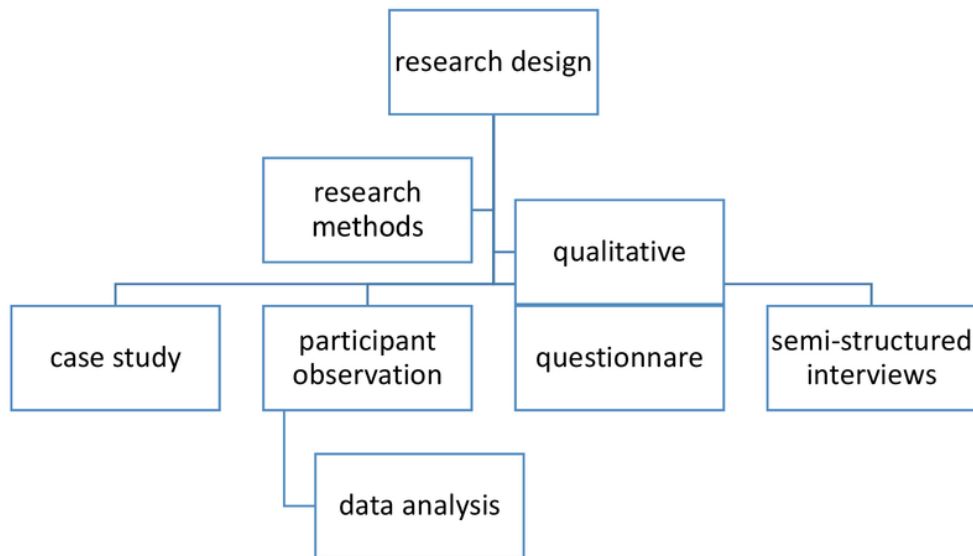
4.3 Paradigmatic location

An interpretive worldview outlines the current inquire about think about. Concurring to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) an interpretive worldview points to get it the subject world of human encounters. The interpretive paradigm also aims to gain insight on the impact of bereavement on a learner's psychological well-being. This paradigm gives clarity on the subject at hand as this kind of paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subject's experience of individuals. The interpretive approach is moreover known as the epistemological position towards investigate that centres on clarifying the subjective reasons and implications that lie past social activity and draws in analysts who are interested in how reality is moulded by "people, subjective encounters of the outside world(Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

Agreeing to Cohen et al. (2007), in the interpretive worldview, endeavours are made to get it the individual from inside. In this manner, information era strategies require to take note of this. The nature of truth in the interpretive worldview is there is no one truth that can be found.

4.4 Qualitative Method

The consider is a subjective consider, which is naturalistic as it endeavors to ponder the ordinary life of diverse bunches of individuals and communities in their normal settings. Concurring to Demon and Fleming (2007) a qualitative study is subjective inquiring about

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points to investigate and find issues approximately the issue at hand, which permits for superior understanding of how learners bargain with loss at domestic. Subjectivity is seen to be inescapable, as the eyewitness gets to be portion of the reality she or he is portraying. It too includes an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter. It endeavours to make sense of or to translate marvels in terms of implications individuals bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

Qualitative research is also known as a subjective investigation that requests to handle understanding, which is based on unmistakable methodological conventions of request that investigate social issues. Subjective thinks about are more often than not conducted in a characteristic setting where nitty gritty data is accumulated specifically from the members (Henning et al., 2004). Flick (1998) keeps up that a subjective strategy includes watching, dissecting a circumstance, examining activities, and exercises as they happen.

In this study the researcher used a qualitative method to gain an in-depth knowledge about the impact of bereavement on learners' and their psychological well-being.

4.5 Case Study

Simons (2009) depicts a case think about as an in profundity express and uniqueness of a specific venture or institution in a genuine life setting. In a case ponder the analyst points to portray the considerations and encounters of a specific circumstance (Cohen, Manion & Morrrison, 2009). This case study was based at a local primary school and consisted of nine participants that were interviewed using face to face interviews, which allowed them to open up easily and share data they would not normally reveal in a group interview. Participants were selected with the help of schools educator's recent survey results of orphaned learners. With the aid of a questionnaire the participants were divided in two teams: those who had lost both parents; and those who are survived by one parent. The aim of dividing participants is to compare learner's psychological well-being during bereavement of those who are survived by one parent and those who have lost both parents. Furthermore, the case study also determined if the time frame from the person's passing played a significant role in the healing process.

A case study is almost an individual, bunch or circumstance that has been considered over time. On the off chance that the case ponder is approximately a gather, it portrays the conduct of the bunch as a entirety, and not conduct of each person in the bunch. Case thinks about can be created by taking after a formal inquire about strategy. This case thinks about are likely to seem

in formal inquire about scenes as diaries and proficient conferences, Or maybe than well known works. The coming about body of a 'case think about research' has long had a unmistakable put in numerous disciplines and callings, extending from brain research, human studies, humanism and clinical science, social work and authoritative science.

In conducting a case think about investigate, the "case" being examined may be an person or an association, occasion or activity existing in a particular time and put. For occurrence, clinical science has created both well-known case ponders of people and clinical thinks about. In any case when a "case" is utilized in an theoretical sense, as in a claim, a recommendation or an contention, such a case can be the subject of numerous inquire about strategies, not fair a case ponder investigate. Information collection in a case think about happens over a maintained period.

4.6 Sampling

4.6.1 Purposive sampling

This study makes use of purposive sampling where the researcher hand-picks participants on the basis of their judgment (Govindarajulu & Zakkula, 1999). It represents a group of different non-probability sampling techniques. This type of sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. All relies on the judgments of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units to be used. The main aim of using this particular population interest was that it gave the best information or data on the chosen topic. For this study of the impact of bereavement on learners psychological well-being will use ten learners from a nearby primary school. The researcher sought permission from the department of education to access schools and interview bereaved learners. After completing the application form by their guardians, semi structured interviews were conducted at a convenient time that did not affect their studies or the schooling institution in any way. The analyst chosen to utilize purposive inspecting since concurring to Patton (2002), this strategy looks for individuals who fit the criteria of alluring members, who have the characteristics of the issue that the analyst is exploring.

Purposive sampling supplies the researcher with the participants that will assist in gaining insight on the problem and the research questions (Creswell, 2003). In this study will have ten participants who are all bereaved learners, either by loss of a parent or guardian. They are all currently at primary school and their ages range from the ages 11-13 years. Most of the learners

in the study are doing grade 5 and 6 at a local primary. There are advantages and disadvantages for using this type of sampling technique. Below are some of them.

4.6.2 Advantages of Purposive Sampling

4.6.2.1 Wide range of techniques

Since there are a few distinctive sorts of deliberate examining (eg. homogenous, master and basic case etc.) one of the key benefits of utilizing this testing strategy is the capacity to assemble huge sums of data by utilizing an extend of distinctive methods. Cohen et al (2007).

4.6.2.2 Stage building blocks

Qualitative investigate more often than not includes a number of distinctive stages, with each stage building continuously onwards from the unique. This being the case, purposive inspecting is valuable to a analyst since they can utilize a assortment of strategies accessible to construct and increment their inquire about information. For illustration, one could begin with basic case inspecting, and at that point utilizing the data assembled, advance to master examining in organize two.

4.6.3 Disadvantages of Purposive Sampling

4.6.3.1 The researcher may be biased

The primary drawback of purposive testing is that there is a tall likelihood of analyst inclination, as each test is based completely on the judgment of the analyst in address, by and large attempting to demonstrate a particular point. For this reason, analysts require to endeavour to make choices based on acknowledged criteria, and not on what will best bolster their hypothesis.

4.6.3.2 Difficult to defend

When a researcher publishes their findings, they need to be able to defend their proposal from critics successfully. Because of the non-probability nature of purposive sampling, it can be more difficult for a researcher to mount solid defence. A critic may argue that if different selections had been made during the purposive sampling, a different result could have been achieved. This variety will in turn, give a better cross-section of information.

4.7 Data collection methods

In arrange to reply the research questions, analysts require to gather information that will help them to reply the inquire about questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) shows that the utilize of distinctive information collection apparatuses tend to reinforce the think about since the analyst is managed an opportunity to gather as much information as he/she can. In this study the following data collection methods were used: semi structured interviews, questionnaire, and participants' observation. These multiple methods assisted with triangulation and trustworthiness of the study.

4.7.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is a strategy of information collection where the spectator partakes in the everyday life of the individuals beneath consider. Either transparently in the part of a analyst or clandestinely in a few masked part. Watching things that happen, tuning in to what is said and addressing individuals over a length of time (Becker & Geer, 1957). As Becker and Geer (1957) show, the member eyewitness can work in a totally clandestine fashion-like an covert operator whose victory depends on remaining undetected, whose reason remains best mystery. On the off chance that no one knows almost the inquire about master, the rationale is that no one will act in anything but a typical way. Protecting the instinctive nature of the setting is the key need for member perception. The vital concern in any inquire about is to limit disturbance to be able to see things as they regularly happen, unaffected by any mindfulness that inquire about is happening at that specific minute.

4.7.1.1 Advantages of participant observation
- Basic gear: Member perception employments the researcher's 'self' as the fundamental instrument of inquire about, and hence requires small by way of technical/statistical support.
- Non-interference: It stands a superior chance of holding the instinctive nature of the setting than other social investigate methods.

4.7.1.2 Disadvantages of member observation
- Access: There are restricted choices open to the analyst approximately which parts to receive or settings to take an interest in.
- Commitment: Member perception can be a exceptionally requesting strategy in terms of individual commitment and individual resources.

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4.8 Semi structured interviews

According to Denscombe (2010) semi organized interviews allude to an meet where the questioner still has a clear desire of issues to be tended to and questions to be replied. In any case, with the semi organized meet, the interviewee is arranged to be adaptable in terms of the arrange in which the subjects are considered and maybe more essentially, to let the interviewee create thoughts and talk more broadly on the issues raised by the analyst. This think about utilized confront to confront and semi organized interviews.

A semi- organized interview is a strategy of inquire about utilized in social sciences. While a organized meet has a thorough set of questions which does not permit one to occupy, a semi organized meet is open, permitting modern thoughts to be brought up amid the meet since of what the interviewee says. The questioner in a semi-structured meet by and large has a system of subjects to be investigated.

The particular subject or subjects that the questioner needs to investigate amid the meet ought to ordinarily be thought almost well in progress. It is by and large useful for questioners to have an interview arranged, which is a casual gathering of themes and questions that the questioner can inquire in diverse ways for distinctive members. Meet guides offer assistance analysts to centre and meet on the subjects at hand without compelling them to a specific organize. This flexibility can offer assistance questioners to tailor their questions to the meet setting or circumstance, and to the individuals they are meeting.

Semi- organized interviews are broadly utilized in subjective investigate: For illustration in family inquiry about such as couple interviews, this sort of interview is the most common. A semi-structured meet including two life partners can result in the generation of wealthy information, counting observational information. Concurring to Lavrakas (2008), confront - to-confront interviews are too called in-person interviews, and are regularly utilized to request data in ventures that can be considered exceptionally touchy. These data methods also enable greater coverage of issues as participants would be able to view experiences of others (Maree, 2007). The study also uses individual face- to- face interviews with the ten learners on the

impact of bereavement on their psychological well-being. The interviews were semi-structured and audio taped with the consent of the participants.

4.8.1 Advantages of semi-structured interviews

Subjective analysts like to utilize semi-structured interviews since questions can be arranged ahead of time (Delport, 2003). This permits the questioner to be arranged and show up competent amid the meet. Semi-structured interviews moreover permit sources the flexibility to express their sees in their claim terms (Fetterman, 2009). Semi-structured interviews can give dependable and comparable subjective information Vithal and Jansen (2010) Here are a few more points of interest of semi-structured interviews:

- Topic guide ensures that a core list of questions is asked in each interview.
- Because the order of questions is not fixed, flow and sharing of views are more natural.
- Depth of information.
- Respondent can influence the topic, so unexpected issues/topics emerge.
- Researcher can probe to understand perspectives and experiences.

4.8.2 The disadvantages of semi-structured interviews

- Researchers need to have some knowledge of the local culture to capture the interviewees real meaning.
- Analysis is time consuming.
- Difficult to generalise findings.
- Trained interviewers are needed to probe without being directive or judgmental.
- Analysis of findings is difficult and must be done by people who conducted the interviews.
- Researcher has to avoid biasness in analysis.

4.9 Questionnaire

Concurring to Terre Blanche et al. (2006) a survey can be characterized as a bunch of composed questions utilized to accumulate data from respondents, and it is respected as one of the most common instruments for gathering information in the social sciences. The purpose of a questionnaire is to obtain facts and opinions about the investigated phenomenon from the

participants. In this study learners where required to fill in a questionnaire prior to the interviews to assess their mind frame and their adjustment to loss/bereavement.

4.9.1 Advantages of a Questionnaire

- Unlike the interviews, they provide a greater uniformity across the measurement.
- The data or content provided by questionnaire could be more easily analysed and interpreted than the one obtained from verbal responses
- It is quiet an affordable tool for collecting untapped data.
- The tool permitted sufficient amount of time for learners to consider answers before responding.

4.9.2 Disadvantages of the Questionnaires

- Questionnaires can be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straight forward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions.
- Some participants are better able to express their views verbally than in writing.
- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility sometimes noted in interviews.

4.10 Data analysis

Information examination must be conducted in connection to a researcher's inquire about plan and approach (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Walliman and Appleton 2009) state that it is a common hone that analysts in a subjective consider bargain with little bunches or people since subjective analysts are more concerned with what individuals say in words their depictions, accounts, as well as their suppositions and sentiments than with numbers. Subsequently, information cannot be shown utilizing factual methods.

The examination of subjective information is an vital step the in investigate handle. Subjective information investigation includes sorting out the information in arrange to make sense of the circumstance. It involves the prepare of noticing designs, topics, categories, and regularities (Cohen et al., 2013). The information collected through perceptions, surveys and semi

organized interviews was dissected by tuning in to sound tape recordings. The sound interview was at that point deciphered verbatim and meet transcripts were created when analyising information. The three C's of investigation were utilized, which included coding, categorising and conceptualising (Litchman, 2006).

The investigation of subjective information is an imperative step the in investigate prepare. Subjective information examination includes sorting out the information in arrange to make sense of the circumstance. It involves the preparing of notice designs, topics, categories, and regularities (Cohen et al., 2013). The data collected through observations, questionnaires and semi structured interviews was analysed by listening to audio tape recordings. The audio interview was then transcribed verbatim and interview transcripts were developed when analyising data.

4.11   Ethical considerations

Agreeing to De Vos et al. (2006) morals is a set of ethical standards which is proposed by an person or bunch, is in this way broadly acknowledged, and offers rules and behavioural desires approximately the most rectify conduct towards test objects and respondents, manager, supports, other analysts, collaborators and students". Wassenaar (2006) too declares that it is regularly erroneously accepted that subjective investigate is exempted from moral contemplations. He focuses out that the contention that is some of the time put forward is that the strategy is for the most part conversational and that information investigation endeavours to protect the keenness of the information collected. In this way, there is frequently the conviction that a subjective investigate is morally sound by ethicalness of being a subjective inquire about (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). Be that as it may, the "participants in a subjective inquire about are entitled to the same securities and regard as those in the quantitative research" (Wassenaar, 2006:71).

For the purposes of this study, the following ethical issues, which are informed consent, protection from harm, anonymity and confidentiality, freedom to withdraw and deception of participants were considered.

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4.11.1 Informed Consent

According to McLaughlin (2007) a central issue in morals is required for educated assent. He puts the suggestions of the educated assent as takes after:

- McLaughlin (2007) argues that informed consent should imply that participation is voluntary.
- Informed consent implies that the research participants should be provided with information about the purpose of the study.
- Research participants are allowed to exit the research study at any time they wish to do so.

All the research participants were informed about the intentions of the study and that their identities would be protected at all times.

4.11.2 Protection from Harm

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) prompt that in the cases where the nature of a think about includes making a little sum of mental distress, members ought to know this ahead of time. In expansion, any essential questioning or directing ought to take after instantly after the support. Since they are considered as almost deprivad, the analyst had to work out a awesome bargain of affectability and caution towards investigate members amid interviews.

4.11.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2006) a investigate member has a right to security, and his or her right to security can be guaranteed through the guarantee of namelessness and secrecy. Babbie in McLaughlin (2007) contends that namelessness infers that as it were the analyst and few other analysts who are included in the ponder know the character of the inquire about members. Secrecy infers that in spite of the fact that the analyst knows the personality of the investigate member who has given data, he or she will not make the association freely (Cohen et al., 2006).

In order to keep the research participants confidential in this study, the bereaved learners were given pseudonym names.

4.11.4 Freedom to Withdraw

Olivier (2003) cited in McLaughlin (2007) highlights the truth that the investigate members have a right to pull back their association in the ponder at any time without partiality. Members may do so without any require to clarify themselves almost their choice or by giving take note. Investigate members in the consider were told around their rights to pull back in the occasion they were not comfortable to carry on with the meet. Considering the affectability of the inquire about point this, was crucial.

4.11.5 Deception of Subjects

Corey et al. (1993) in McLaughlin (2007:60) contends that misdirection of subjects can include withholding data. The duplicity of subjects happens when the analyst intentionally deceives the members either through composed informational or verbal enlightening. In this consider the analyst did not withhold any data from members. Additionally, members were encouraged empowered to inquire questions when they required clarification.

4.12   Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology used in the study. The qualitative approach was outlined and its relevance for this study was explained. The chapter also discussed the research design that was used during data collection, and the case study design. Interviews, participant observations, and questionnaires as data collection techniques were also discussed. The next chapter presents and discusses the data analysis of the collected data respectively.

CHAPTER FIVE:

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

Analysing qualitative data is an important step for the researcher. The process involves organising the data to make sense of the situation which entails noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen et al., 2007). The data collection was done through observations, interviews, and focus group interviews which was analysed by listening to the audio tape recordings. The audio interview was then transcribed verbatim and interview transcripts were developed. In the process of data analysing data the three c's of analysis were used and coding was used to categorise concepts (Lichtman, 2006). Thematic analysis was used to analyse data. Codes or names were made and topics developed from assembled information through open-ended meeting. The analyst utilized meet questions to plan subjects. Translated information fitted into subjects that were made utilizing inquire about questions and meet questions. Modern topics that developed were famous, utilized to gather data and were coded. Babbie (2010) declares that codes are shaped through questions inquired and the information collected. The codes helped in the outline of information for examination purposes. Amid coding, notes called 'memos' were composed for utilize in report composing.

5.2 Preparing the data

Data was transcribed into written text before analysis began. According to Patton (2002), data comes from existing texts. The choice of the content must be justified by what you want to know. Interviews were transcribed to create interview transcripts. This was done to reveal participants' information related behaviours and thoughts. According to Schilling (2006) transcribed data should be organised based on the research questions. Interview transcripts were read to relive the experience of the interviews. The transcripts were re-read in conjunction with the taped interviews to empower understanding of the meaning and encounters of each member.

In this chapter, the researcher analyses data that was collected from using the following research instruments: interviews and observation schedules. The use of a qualitative design in this research allowed an in depth naturalistic approach to study the participants' experiences of bereavement. A number of themes and codes emerged from the responses of participants which will later be evaluated against the literature that is available to date.

5.3 Presentation of themes and sub-themes
This section will present the themes and their subthemes in the following order.

Theme 1: Learners experiences of bereavement.
- Feeling of loneliness
- Loss of hope
- Financial constraints

Theme 2: The impact of bereavement on learners
- Psychological well-being
- Academic performance
- Social well-being
- Spiritual well-being

Theme 3: School- based intervention strategies to help bereaved learners
- School support
- Family support
- Peer support
- Psychological intervention

5.3.1 **Theme 1: Learners experiences of bereavement**

From the data collected using interviews and observation schedules, it was evident that learners' experiences of bereavement are different for each participant. While others preferred to be alone to deal with their emotions on their own, some would have loved to be assisted either by talking or by being there emotionally.

5.3.1.1 **Feelings of loneliness**

Loneliness is very common in bereavement. A big gap becomes existent in one's life that their loved ones used to fill. It is natural to think that no one ever again can fill that void in one's life. Every loved one is special and unique, and not having that person everyday may be gut-

wrenching. Feeling lonely actually means that the person is dealing with the loss. It means the person is truly facing the truth in their life, and that they will be going on without their loved one. The intensity of these feelings will eventually lessen with time in the healing process.

When death strikes whether sudden or expected, it poses many difficulties amongst those left behind. It is even harder if those left behind are children. They normally have mixed feelings and emotions about the incident. It was evident among the participants that were interviewed that they had so many feelings inside about their loved ones. Losing someone you love has to be the hardest thing on earth that causes an individual to question: Why it happened to me? What did I do to deserve this? The following excerpts exhibit what the participants expressed.

P4: What am I going to do without my dad? Why it had to be him?
P1: I feel so empty without my mom, she was everything to me.
P7: It felt like I was in a bad dream, it seemed so unreal. At one point I hated God for doing this to me and my family.

Concurring to Grief Encounter (2000), nothing is the same after the passing of a parent, brother, or sister. At to begin with, it may feel like a storm, one may feel pitiful, or need to cover up absent or feel nothing at all. These blended feelings are ordinary and all portion of the lamenting prepare. Youthful individuals are frequently anticipated to move on rapidly, and carry on as in spite of the fact that nothing has changed. Companions move on with their lives, while the lives of the dispossessed have been turned upside down.

5.3.1.2 Loss of hope

Most of the participants said they felt helpless and hopeless about the future because they lost the one person whom they cherished and was their support system. Helpless, hopeless, powerless, worthless are some feelings the bereaved encounter. Depression echoes with emptiness. How can I go on? It doesn't seem worth it. Nothing seems worth it. Depression is part of mourning. Feeling that going to school is pointless as well as withdrawing from friends and feeling that no one can possibly understand what goes on inside the head and the heart is part of mourning (Grosshandler-Smith, 1995). The following excerpts express the feelings of the participants.

P1: I feel so empty without her, she meant everything to me. I see no reason to live anymore

P8: Dad supported everything me in everything I did. His passing killed my dreams too. I always wanted to make him proud of me. Now have no reason to work push myself, if he is not there to see my accomplishments.

P9: My whole world died when she passed, she always wanted the best for me.

Bereavement may too bring physical impacts such as weight misfortune, need of concentration and misfortune of self-esteem in children. They may indeed start to disregard their appearance for a time and feel that nothing things any longer. In spite of the fact that these are typical responses to despondency, it can offer assistance to conversation to somebody around what the individual is going through. Companions, family, wellbeing care specialists and devout individuals all may be able to offer bolster to dispossessed children until life starts to make sense once more, as each lamenting period is diverse (the School of Oriental and African Considers, 2000).

5.3.1.3 **Financial constraints**

Financial constraints were raised by majority of participants, as most of the loved ones who had passed on were breadwinners at home. Their passing meant no food, and no school supplies for some, which caused so much pain.

P1: at times, we go to school without food as no one is working at home.

P4: the only income we had was my grandmother's pension grant so when she passed things were really hard.

P10: Things where really hard at home financially, as my mom was the only person working. Her passing meant we went to school without food in other days. If it wasn't for the school feeding scheme I don't know where my siblings and I would have done.

All participants mentioned the economic hardship they faced after the passing of people who supported them financially. Passing of parents or elders in any household can cause economic disruptions in any family. Such situations may lead to poverty, overcrowding, and lack of essential educational tools needed by learners. Mothuba (2010) states that families that are economically deprived do not provide the intellectual stimulation that provides good performance on intellectual capacities. According to Li et al. (2008), the larger part of dispossessed learners is helpless since they are confronted with the hardship of fundamental needs, care, and security.

5.3.2 Theme 2: The impact of bereavement on learners

Childhood bereavement is never easy or simple because it is a tough time when young people are trying to find themselves, and have to juggle this painful unfortunate time in their lives. The impact of bereavement in learners differs and the relationship the learner had with the deceased is an important aspect. According to Minde (2000) death introduces a major change in a vulnerable child. This may include among other things separation from siblings, or change of place to stay. All these changes can easily affect not only the physical, but also the psychological well-being of a child, which includes academic performance.

5.3.2.1 Psychological well being

P1: after my mom's passing I preferred to be alone and just think they grades and not suffer much.
P8: I was moody all the time and cried a lot after my dad's passing.
P2: my dad's hardest passing affected me terribly and my grades suffered a lot, as I had hard time concentrating in class.
P6: my grandmother practically raised us with her pension money. Her passing left a huge strain on the family as we all were depended on her financially and emotionally as well. I suffered from depression after her passing couldn't eat nor sleep.

Literature on bereavement also supports what the participants experienced. Dyregrov (2000) asserts that children and adolescents think about their dead relatives for a longer period than adults, and they are more psychologically affected. Their academic and social interaction is normally negatively affected by this. They have feelings of isolation and find it difficult to relate to their peers. Bereaved children endure social, physical, and psychological consequences (Monash et al., 2007). Bereavement makes children defenceless and renders them a populace- at- hazard. Other chance variables incorporate destitution, starvation, and need of get to administrations, insufficient clothing and protect.

5.3.2.2 Academic performance

The responses from the participants on bereavement show clearly the turmoil they go through when they lose a loved one. According to the Khululeka (2005) pain bolster it is a truth that school matured children who have experienced the passing of a parent, other family individuals or a near companion have a greater hazard of creating mental issues and troubles in school, both scholastically and socially. Lamenting children frequently have no put to go to and no one

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to conversation to. In the event that they do not discover passionate and mental back, dispossessed children may create encourage troubles.

Kim Dehlin Zeiher (2012) sets that understudies managing with pain coming about from the passing of an person with whom they shared a uncommon near individual relationship, may involvement issues that increment the challenges and contrarily affect their scholarly execution.

According to Atle Dyregrov (2008) despondency in children can lead to issues in school. To begin with and preeminent, children may encounter challenges with consideration and concentration. Contemplations and recollections of what has happened hinder their lines of thought, and expanded uneasiness leads them to observing their environment for threat or includes considerations approximately the security of cherished ones at domestic or at work. Pity and despondency may lead to slower considering and a need of vitality and activity. In school they have trouble getting their assignments done as contemplations meander and they may remember and learn more gradually than normal.

Participants responded as follows:

P2: Losing my mother was very hard on me, but after some time the pain became better. I've always been a top achiever but after the loss my grades dropped a lot as I had a hard time concentrating in class.

P6: My grandmother was the only parent I knew; she raised me with her grant money. Her passing left a huge hole in my heart and even my grades at school suffered.

P10: I've always done well at school, but for the first time I failed and had to repeat grade four five. Her passing was so sudden and found it very hard to deal with. After a year or so I started feeling better and my grades improved a lot.

5.3.2.3 Social well-being

When loss takes place some children isolate themselves from peers and others following a loss. This social isolation can be caused by a lack of understanding among their peers. Isolation is a very common feeling in bereaved children (Crenshaw, 2006-2007; Davies et al., 2007). For school aged children and older, being like their peers is extremely important. Although acutely aware of the absence of the person who died, many choose to hide their emotions so they do not seem different. Adolescents often hide emotions in public but may seek outlets such as

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diaries (Sheehan, 2007). School-aged children and adolescents often identify a very select few people with whom they are comfortable sharing their grief with.

A 12 year old found that his schoolmates mocked him because his father was dead, and because he didn't have a father. He was bullied and felt stigmatized; as if everybody could see that his father had died of cancer.

Children may be wary of the conceptions or beliefs connected with different diseases, especially cancerous diseases. Such diseases have many negative connotations for both children and adults. When in grief we are more vulnerable to others comments, and they easily trigger hurtful feelings. Some children worry about the questions that schoolmates might ask about death, because they are afraid of crying at school. They fear the embarrassment they may feel if they lose control of their feelings. Children may even guard against this by pulling away from their surroundings. Often children do not know how to deal with the new situation that arises when a friend experiences a death in his or her family, and they may solve the difficult situation by avoiding contact. In addition, such deaths may challenge friends' sense of security, and give rise to thoughts that this might happen to someone close to them again.

In some families children are sent away to stay with friends or family when a death occurs. Sometimes the family even moves away. This leads to a breakdown of the child's network (Dyregrov et al., 2008).

5.3.2.4 Spiritual well-being

During the bereavement period, most children and adults question their religion a lot. "A God whom they love and serve well couldn't let them hurt this much", are common utterances of some. People generally assume that religious faith will help them through difficult times in their life, but in fact find their faith to be of no help at all because of the pain they are feeling. On the contrary, they feel their faith is failing at a time they need it most. Questions like "how can there be a God who let things like these happen" are quite common in a grieving person.

5.3.3 Theme 3: School-based intervention strategies to help bereaved learners

School- based intervention strategies are initiatives implemented into school settings that aim to help learners going through any form of problem, and give them a platform to talk. The issue may be behavioural or loss related. This is done with the aim of reducing high risk problems

like suicides among learners. During these trying times of losing a loved one, everyone needs some support from people close to them. It is very unfortunate that when death strikes children are expected to carry on like nothing happened and continue with their lives as if they are not affected by it. It always seems like bereavement mostly affects adults and most of the support that is available is for them. This study shares the experiences of the participants and providing insight on how much children are affected by the loss of a loved one too.

The support the child receives varies greatly. Some have a family characterised by inner cohesion and commonality, while others live in chaotic homes. Moreover, children's needs are below the priority list when death occurs. The back encompassing the child depends on the opportunity the child is given to work through what has happened. It is not fundamentally the estimate of the recuperation environment that is most vital, but the passionate climate encompassing the child taking after a passing (Wolchick et al., 2006). In this theme, participants (learners) told their own stories about the support they received during and after bereavement from both the school and their families.

Misfortune or loss is all inclusive; while the involvement of deprivation and melancholy remains extraordinarily individual, the objective of investigation is to investigate and get it the nature, rate, connects, and most fitting approaches to intercession and bolster (Collins, McAleavy, McGuckin, Strain, & McIlroy, 2013). Silverman (2000) contends that the work of the analyst and that of a professional are two societies that cannot exist without one another – particularly inside the domain of loss and pain. In this way, the central address for analysts and professionals is "Who laments? How do they lament? And what is the instructive, mental, and physical taken a toll of the lamenting process?" While inquire about helps our understanding and clarification of such forms, unavoidably the front-line experts such as Direction Guides must confirm these discoveries from analysts.

Whilst the impact of loss on grown-ups is generally well caught on, the same cannot be said in connection to children and youths, where the affect of deprivation is moderately uncertain (Christ, Siegel, & Christ, 2002; McLoughlin, 2012). In any case, much investigate shows that youthful teenagers are likely to have issues altering to deprivation (Elizur & Kaffman, 1983;

Fristad, Jedel, Weller, & Weller, 1993). The misfortune of a parent presents one of the most critical cases of individual misfortune, with potential disability of the youthful person's future advancement (Dark & Youthful, 1995; Dowdney, 1999; Weller, Weller, Fristad, & Bowes, 1991).

Students who have a perished parent are likely to be extraordinarily ruined in their regular working amid the to begin with year, with one in five requiring referral to master administrations (Dark, 1996). Essentially, the imperative Harvard Deprivation Think about (Worden & Silverman, 1996) found that dispossessed understudies appeared negative results (e.g., noteworthy or sudden changes in conduct, hostility, and diligent uneasiness) at one year (19%) and at two a long time (21%). Sweeting, West, and Richards (1998) found that, among a test of females who had experienced the passing of a parent (N = 1,000), 40% had gotten to be pregnant.

While the mental torment and forms of pain are regularly unavoidable, it is clear that the conduct of grown-ups relating to understudies day-by-day is a major contributor calculate towards a 'healthy progression' through pain (Cranwell, 2007; Dowling, Kiernan, & Guerin, 2007). Inquire about investigating youthful people's responses to misfortune and traumatic occasions proposes that preventative back can offer assistance maintain a strategic distance from long-lasting destructive impacts (Sutcliffe, Tufnell, & Cornish, 1998). Interests, a US ponder found that taking after thirty a long time of educating almost passing and deprivation in schools, those getting passing instruction had less fear of alter and misfortune, way better communication inside their families, and had accomplished way better comes about than anticipated in other subjects (Stevenson, 2015).

Within Ireland, McGovern and Barry's (2010) inquire about has appeared that there is a require to take account of the truth that instructors and guardians (particularly men), while positive towards and steady of passing instruction for understudies, feel awkward talking to youthful individuals approximately passing. In comparing child deprivation and misfortune reactions and needs of schools in Body (UK) and Derry (NI) 2008, Tracey and Holland (2008) detailed

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that preparing for instructors, students, and guardians could offer assistance to create a more profound understanding of the impacts of deprivation, hence permitting teachers to reply suitably. Essentially, Shipman, Kraus, and Monroe's (2001) UK investigate into competences and capabilities found that 56% of instructors felt insufficient in taking care of understudies who had been dispossessed. Holland (2007) found that 58% of schools kept on report, over a ten year period, which more preparing was required in the range of deprivation. While there are numerous organizations in Ireland that can give bolster, thes

In considering the results from inquire about in this range, a central message for Direction Guides is that while a few understudies may not involvement negative impacts taking after their encounter of loss, the basic volume of discoveries focuses to the prompt and future impacts related to instructive fulfilment, behavioural alteration, passionate relapse, and physical and mental well-being. Considering these wide extending impacts, Direction Advisors ought to look for to consolidate the issue of deprivation in the Entirety School Direction Arrange to empower the issue to be caught on and emphatically tended to by all in the school community.

5.3.3.1 School support

Most of the participants that were interviewed did mention that there are no school based support intervention strategies to help bereaved learners, yet almost every single day a learner loses a loved one. Some learners mentioned that some were bought school supplies and uniforms with the aid of the local municipality Umzumbe. They said it assisted in easing the financial burden on their guardians. In one of the interviews one of the learners mentioned that her educator helps organise grants for them and their siblings. The South African Social Security Agency representatives came to their school to speak to them and collect the necessary documents needed. This is what participants said:-

P2: There are no school based intervention strategies that were available for me after the loss; I was expected to go to school immediately after the burial and continue studying like nothing

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happened. It was very difficult at first, I felt so lonely, yet there were other learners around. It would have helped to have someone to talk to about how I was feeling rather than to brush it and act like nothing happened. One good did happen thou, the local municipality asked educators to identify learners who were orphans, and needed help with buying school uniform. I was lucky enough to be chosen and received brand new school uniform, which my family and I were grateful of.

P4: Going back to school was really hard for me, but my family insisted I did after the burial. When I got to school would have loved if someone would have asked me how I was holding up, but no everyone expected me to carry on like nothing happened. It was evident that the school had no support strategy available for learners like myself who were bereaved. It would have been very helpful to my grieving process to have someone to talk too about my feelings, especially as at home everyone is assuming I am okay.

P8: The loss affected me terribly as I found it hard to cope. My friends and teacher knew what I was I was going through but no one ever stopped to check how I was holding up. I was an emotional wreck but tried very hard to hide it to the world. The only support I received was that of being in the schools feeding scheme for orphaned learners. That did not help me alone but my family as well, as I was allowed to take left-over's home for my siblings as well.

It is evident from the responses of participants that not much is done by schools to help bereaved learners. There is quite a lot that schools can do to help, as most learners do go through bereavement. Schools can act as potential helpers in dealing with loss. They are in a unique position to help grieving learners. Although bereavement seems like a family issue, it does affect learners psychologically, which ends up damaging their academic ability (Reid, 2000). Children spend most of their waking time days in school, which have the potential to be a safe haven and even a second family (Lowton & Higginson, 2003). School serves as an emotional safe haven, a place of comfort for vulnerable learners, specifically the bereaved.

In many ways supporting children involves becoming more aware of the communication skills used every day in the classroom. This includes verbal language and body language. The ability to communicate is an essential component of supporting children and listening is fundamental to all caring relationships. Communication includes understanding people's emotional responses and endeavouring to interpret whatever they are trying to convey. Good communication involves total involvement with the child so that they have no doubt that teachers are doing their best to understand what it is like to be in their shoes (Brown, 2012).

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Policy and Support Documents

Notwithstanding of the approach taken by a school in terms of having a bespoke Deprivation Approach, as a pioneer in the school community, the Direction Advisor ought to look for to incorporate arrangement for the back of the school community in connection to deprivation and despondency through the School Direction Arrange. In terms of formalizing a arrange with respect to bolster related to deprivation and melancholy in the school community, Direction Advocates can draw upon DES reports relating to the back and care of understudies.

Guidance Counsellors should remain cognisant of the need to assess each case of bereavement and liaise with professional colleagues with expert knowledge in particular areas of bereavement and grief management.

The directing component of the Direction Counsellors' part has been perceived as a key portion of the advancement of the understudy, in that it empowers them to create adapting techniques to bargain with stretch, individual and social issues, and any challenges that life presents (DES, 2005). Frequently raised is the connection between the part of guiding and mental wellbeing issues experienced by the youth of nowadays. Critical modern "Guidelines on mental wellbeing for post-primary schools" are to be propelled before long by the DES. while the rules were drafted primarily to help the program suppliers with respect to the guiding measurement of instruction and preparing programs for Direction Guides, they moreover give a reference point for professionals. The moment archive is the "Research on the hone of advising by direction advisors in post-primary schools" by Hayes and Morgan (2011). This inquire about report is moreover a valuable reference record in connection to the association and thought of how Direction

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5.3.3.2 Family Support

According to Amato (2005) of the National Council on Family Relations, family refers to a group of two or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage or adoption and residing together. Whenever an individual goes through a rough patch, the family unit is relied on for support. It was not surprising that most of the participants said if it was not for the support and love from their families during and after bereavement, they would not know where they would be.

Participants mentioned that the support they received was more financial than emotional. They would have loved to be asked occasionally how they were doing and how they were coping after losing their loved one. It seemed to them like everyone was comforting the elders about the loss and not them.

The following excerpts capture what they said:-

P9: If it wasn't for the love and support of my family. I would not be where I am today. Yes I would have loved for them to talk to me more and understand that I was going through the loss just like them. I do understand they handled the situation the only way they knew and I felt cared for.

P4: If it wasn't for my family would probably be on the streets and not even at school. After my grandmother's passing my siblings and I relocated and moved in with our aunt. She took us in and raised us like her own children, it wasn't easy as the loss was still fresh but she was patient with us. Her passing left a huge strain on the family, as we all depended on her. I suffered from depression after her passing.

P6: Even thou I was hurting inside, it helped knowing my family was there was for me. I understood they too were hurting and did not know how to handle the situation. Yes would have loved us to talk about what we were feeling instead of brushing it under the carpet and caring on like nothing happened.

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5.3.3.3 **Peer Support**

Peer support from a child's companions, classmates, and others in his or her age gather has been found to be emphatically related to the alteration of children and young people. In expansion, it is said to offer assistance them through their mending prepare after the misfortune of a cherished one. With peer connections as of now serving an imperative part in numerous children's lives, it makes culminate sense why dispossessed children may require depending on peer back indeed more. Peer bolster is amazingly vital for dispossessed learners since the rest of the child's family is too dispossessed and may be incapable to supply satisfactory bolster required by the children. Moreover, peers may be superior able to supply such bolster since they are not straightforwardly included with the passing (Ross, 2000).

P10: If it wasn't for my friends and family I don't know what I would have done. The pain was unbearable and having them to make me laugh and forget a bit that now I was an orphan helped me a lot.

P9: Knowing he was there when I was ready to talk, made me feel safe.

5.4 **Recommendations for helping students who have experienced a significant loss**

5.4.1 **Recommendations for school Counsellors and School Psychologists**

1) **Remember that children suffer losses and may grieve in different ways.**
2) Do not assess the child's melancholy by comparing it to the way you lament as a grown-up. Tailor your intercessions to be formatively fitting for the child.
3) **Let the student know that it is normal to grieve.**
4) Do not deny their feelings or make judgmental comments as to how they ought to handle their sentiments.
5) **Suggest that the student express grief, both verbally and non-verbally.**

Expressing a loss through craftsmanship, music, verse, being alone, or through commemoration are a few ways understudies have been made a difference. In case a

understudy needs to conversation, be there for him/her, but regard their right not to conversation. Particular Intercessions incorporate:

a) **Art Techniques:** Pictures depicting grief can be an easier way for a student to express him/her emotions and may be a springboard to further discussion.

b) **Music Techniques:** The use of tones, rhythm sounds, and melodies can be very useful in expressing grief. For example, simple percussion instruments, autoharps, or the playing of recorded music (e.g., loud and dissonant or soft and flowing).

c) **Body Movement:** With music or alone children can express feelings by imitating the sort of animal they feel like they are (lion, mouse, dinosaur etc.) or by asking them to move in the way they are feeling.

d) **Bibliotherapy:** Stories about loss and death can help children express their feelings through identifying with characters in the stories. These books also help the child to feel less alone. Moody and Moody (1991) provide an excellent list of books; a school librarian may also be able to suggest some.

e) **Play Therapy:** The use of puppets, dolls, or stuffed animals to allow children to express their emotions through play may help the child to feel a sense of control over his/her feelings.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Parents and Teachers

1) **Children are concrete in their thinking, therefore, describe death concretely;**
Avoid including a huge number of subtle elements, reply their questions basically and truly and attempt to dodge code words.

2) **Some of the most basic feelings expressed in children are fear and uncertainty.**
They go through fear until they reach understanding. Be additional sustaining and mindful amid this dreadful time; this will offer assistance recuperate a sense of soundness and steadfastness in life. Tune in to their sentiments of fear, and approve their sentiments. On the off chance that a child relapses, they may be looking for consolation such as the care and consideration they gotten as a child.

3) **Children are very likely to experience guilt.**
Improbable obligation for a passing gives the child a wrong consolation that they could have avoided the passing or future undesirable occasions. Remind them of the truths of the circumstance, and recognize that it is a troublesome feeling to have. The child may

require feeling the blame until they are prepared to confront more troublesome sentiments.

4) **Children are repetitive in their grief, and asking questions and searching is part of their grief work.**

   The questions may be demonstrative of their sentiments of disarray and instability, so attempt to tune in and back their looking.

5) **Remember that these feelings do not have quick cures.**

   Permit them to conversation approximately their specific encounter or injury. Avoid exchanging your fears to the child.

   Permit them to conversation approximately their specific involvement or injury. Maintain a strategic distance from exchanging your fears to the child.

6) **Remember that a parent's death can be particularly difficult and confusing for children, affecting their sense of security, survival, and safety.**

   Their expression of despondency is more often than not reliable with their life encounters, social and social setting, person identity, and age. School age children can create fears, resting disarranges scholastic issues, and introverted practices. When making a difference a child, see at the child as a person and do not expect that each encounter is indistinguishable.

7) **Children need to feel safe within their worlds.**

   Attempt to tune in with regard to the student's sentiments and concerns. They require specialist figures to recognize their torment. By doing so, you send a message that sentiments are "ok" and a exceptionally normal portion of being human. Children who are treated with care and thought develop into delicate, caring grown-ups.

   Try to tune in with regard to the student's sentiments and concerns. They require specialist figures to recognize their torment. By doing so, you send a message that sentiments are "ok" and a exceptionally characteristic portion of being human.

Children who are treated with care and thought develop into touchy, caring grown-ups.

Children need choices, because a death causes a frightening disruption in their lives.

Having a few say in what they do or what they maintain a strategic distance from concerning the burial service or administrations will offer assistance them express their sentiments almost the passing. Giving the child control will offer assistance to construct on their self-esteem.

8. Children are often sent to school because the family may be struggling and think that a sense of normalcy may be helpful.

As a teacher or counsellor, one should encourage the grieving child to seek assistance if they are feeling unusually low or do not know how to handle a difficult situation.

9. Provide information to the professional staff about the stages of grieving that may occur.

Children are different and their expressions depend on that child. Staff should be observant and report any unusual behaviour.

10. Teachers and counsellors should be prepared to answer classmate's questions.

This can help the other children to develop empathy and discover ways to be supportive of their friends during this difficult time.

11. Be careful to monitor games and songs when playing with children.

When passing happens, children may keep in mind an occasion when they are playing, "step on the break, break your mother's back…" and feel that their botch was the cause of a parent's passing. Be careful and imaginative when choosing recreations

5.5 Conclusion

Losing a loved one at a young age is hard and the only way to come to terms with the loss is by having enough support around you. This chapter revealed that bereaved learners felt better in sharing their experiences of loss with their peers seemingly because they could relate to them. The next chapter summarises the findings of the study, recommendation for future studies and limitation of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATION, LIMITATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

Every child is unique with a unique background. Children can experience death at any age, during which time the child is developing physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, and socially. They may suffer the death of a parent, sibling, grandparent, or that of a close friend or family member. Death can be sudden and unexpected through accident, illness, or natural disasters or it can be expected when death occurs from natural causes. With so many variables, it is clear that childhood bereavement is a multi-faceted and complex subject. However, whatever the type of death, we now know children do grieve after a significant death, although they do so differently than adults (Corr & Corr, 1996; Silverman, 2000). Their reconstitution is shaped by four factors: understanding the death, emotional reaction to death, grieving and the reconstruction of the family (Christ, 2000). In the review of literature on childhood bereavement, it was apparent that there is still a lot to be done. There is a huge gap when comparing what has been written on adult bereavement and that of children. Yet children are affected by death every single day.

6.2 Summary of findings

The loss of an attachment figure or parent affects every aspect of a child's life, their emotional well- being, security, mental and educational development, and overall health. The findings of the study revealed that children are affected emotionally and psychologically by the loss of their parents or guardians. Majority (70%) of the participants are still hurting even thou some lost their loved ones five years ago. It is also evident that there is a difference in gender on how children handle loss; females were more in touch with their feelings and showed signs of grieving, while males wanted to paint the picture that they were coping with everything on their own. Grieving indeed is a personal journey and differs with each person.

Some participants shared their stories with ease and some had a hard time yet they lost their loved ones around the same time. Most of the participants felt very lonely during bereavement as adults seemed to be dealing with the loss on their own too. They mentioned

of their wishes of having someone to talk to about the loss and their feelings at the time. Even at school things were hard; everybody expected them to pick up from where they left off on their school work, it felt like they were moving on so quickly without their loved ones.

Theme 1: Learners experiences of bereavement.

It is evidence that learners experiences of bereavement differs from each person. One can conclude that it does not have negatives consequences on learner's lives. Most learners felt very alone and lost all hope after the bereavement of their significant others. Some even experience financial constraints as some lost their people who supported them financially.

Theme 2: The impact of bereavement on learners.

The impact of bereavement on learners affects every aspect of their lives that includes their psychological, academically and spiritually well being. Some learners who participated in the study felt that after bereavement a lot change in that it include a decline in academic performance. They preferred to be alone than to socialise with others in their mental state as well suffered and ended up questioning their faith.

Theme 3: School based intervention strategies to help bereaved learners.

Losing a loved one is difficult especially for a young person. The only way they are able to get through is by having adequate support from the people around them. That includes schools, family and their peers as well. Most learners in the study felt that if they had received enough support things might have turn out way better.

6.3 Limitations of the study

One of the limitations to the study is the use of a case study. A case study uses small sample sizes. This means data collected cannot be generalisable as; data only consisted of the opinions of those few selected as participants from the school under study.

Critically evaluating the research is an important step in any research. This is done in order to justify the conclusions and prospective regarding the implications of the study. The research involved a case study, and data was collected from 10 participants from the same geographical area, same racial group, and same school. This means the views expressed are of those individuals only and not all bereaved young people. Working around the

participants' availability was difficult, as they would be available at a time that the researcher was not. It became evident that they were doing the researcher and the study a huge favour, and did not want anything to interfere with their studies.

6.3 Recommendations for further research

The following are suggested for further research:

- Future research can also focus on coping with bereavement at different ages and different genders as well to see whether a pattern emerges.

- A study on designing a policy with guidelines for the Department of Education, Educators, and Psychologists on how to help learners dealing with bereavement. Paying more attention to the much needed support given to these learners.

- The research investigation was conducted specifically in a semi-rural school. Further research on the same topic can be conducted in rural and urban schools as well to compare findings.

- The research could also be done on other racial groups (that includes white, coloured and Indian students) to broaden the research's results.

6.4 Conclusion

This journey has been such an eye-opening experience that I will treasure for a long time. Without a doubt, it has made me a more observant person. It has taught me to listen more and talk less. With my experience of being an educator for eight years, which means I am around children every single day, it never appeared that children went through so much at such a young age. Doing this research has made me realise that indeed we do take life for granted and complain about the littlest of things when they are people, especially children going through hardship but wake up and face each day as if all was well.

Losses are without a doubt so difficult and startling that youthful children persevere solid feelings for as it were brief periods. Eventually they maintain a strategic distance from their sentiments so as not to be overpowered. These feelings may be communicated as youthful upheavals or mischief, or maybe than pity; they may not be perceived as despondency related. Moreover, since their needs to be cared for and related to are seriously and quick, youthful children regularly move on. Unlike adults who can sustain a

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year or more of intense grieving, children are likely to manifest grief related affects and behaviour on an intermittent basis, for many years after loss occurred.

Without a doubt this makes one view the learners with a different lens. At times teachers expect the learners to produce their homework which is not written; in an attempt to explain, learners are never given a listening ear. During the interviews one of the learners said, "The aunt who took me in after my mom passed away, demands that we switch off lights at seven as we are wasting electricity so I never get to finish my homework". Listening to that boy I understood that it is not his fault his work was not done, but the circumstances he found himself in; and that an educator would have no knowledge of this without enquiring first.

Through doing this study its evident learners go through bereavement, yet there is scant literature on support services to offer emotional and psychological support to bereaved learners.

Investigating the impact of bereavement on learners' psychological wellbeing

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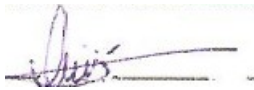|			
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that the dissertation written by Silindile Primrose Cele, titled **'An Investigation of the Impact of Bereavement on Learners' Psychological Well-Being'** was copy edited for layout (including numbering, pagination, heading format, justification of figures and tables), grammar, spelling and punctuation by the undersigned. The document was subsequently proofread and a number of additional corrections were advised.

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