

Impact of Institutionalisation of Orphaned Children on Their Wellbeing

Abstract

This study sought to find out the impact of institutionalisation of orphaned children on their wellbeing. A case of an institution (orphanage centre) in Mtoko district of Zimbabwe was used. Ten teachers from the primary school where most of the institutionalized orphaned children learn were randomly sampled and responded to the self-designed questionnaire, followed by an interview of 2 purposively selected teachers from a neighbouring secondary school, where some of the older orphans from the same orphanage centre do attend school. Interviewing secondary school teachers meant to complement findings from the primary school teachers. Out of the 55 orphans at the orphanage centre, 10 orphans (age range 6-21 years) were randomly selected to participate in the focus group discussion. Out of the 10 caregivers, (the employees at the orphanage centre), 5 were conveniently selected to participate in the interview. Age range, and sex of sampled caregivers was (29-55 years, 2 males and 3 females), respectively. The orphans' wellbeing was satisfactory, ranging from good health status, well balanced emotional attributes, and good social welfare issues, including having good meals and adequate shelter and good education. The institutionalized orphans face the challenges of limited resources and lack of parental affection. The care givers however played loco-parentis role. It was recommended that teachers were to be more emotionally available for the orphaned children. The communities, NGO's and governments were requested to gear up their support of orphanage centres in order to increase the positive impact of these centres on the wellbeing of orphans.