

Original Article

# Mental Health Care Service and Mental Problems among Orphan and Vulnerable Children in Addis Ababa Ethiopia

Liranso G. Selamu<sup>1</sup>, Mohan S. Singhe<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD research candidate, many world class books, and journals author, <sup>2</sup>Asst. Professor & many research journals editor & author, Mangalore University, India.

\*Corresponding Author : Liranso G. Selamu, Ph.D. Research Candidate, many world class books, and journals author.

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Abstract :

A lot of children in the world suffer from untreated mental health problems. The global burdens of childhood mental disorders are increasing but mental health care services are neglected in most countries. The objective of this critical analysis was to realize the access to mental health service and mental problems among orphan and vulnerable children in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. To achieve the purpose of the analysis, the method was based on the critical analysis of the recent research literature from Pub-Med, Global Health, Google Scholar, Ethiopian Universities, Psych-Info, and WHO data sources. Thirty-six journals published after 2001 were identified and critically analyzed based on scientific inclusion and exclusion criteria as well as analyzed in a systematic manner. The orphan and vulnerable children face a prospect of a persistent effort for physically continued existence, for fundamental needs, education, love and affection, and protection against exploitation violence and bias. The problem of meeting these desires of the children corresponds to a major new challenge that requires an in-depth research, future interventions, and policy plans in tackling the problem. In light of the problem in Ethiopia, researches regarding the mental health care services of the orphan and vulnerable children in Addis Ababa are extremely inadequate.

## Introduction

Globally nearly 20% of children affected from mental health problems. Many millions of children worldwide are anticipated to have experienced the death of their parents. However, the mental health needs of children and adolescents are neglected, especially in low-income countries. Orphan and vulnerable children are mainly victims of the serious socio-economic and developmental challenge in developing countries. Research conducted in sub-Saharan Africa in the near the beginning 1990s documented increase in the figure of orphans and the breakdown of caring social networks and supports for the children. In 1997, the primary inclusive global estimations of orphans exposed that the number of orphans was growing and that experience reacting to orphaning as a social problem was inadequate (TFTAI, 2014).

According to various researchers, Ethiopia has OVC trouble, with almost 5.4 million orphans, with around 15% of these believed to have been orphaned as a result of

HIV/AIDS. In Ethiopia, most frequently noted causes for children being placed in orphanages were HIV/AIDS situations or poverty. Chronic diseases such as AIDS and lack of adequate medical treatment are frequently correlated with poverty (TFTAI, 2014). Besides, the mental health issues of orphans and vulnerable children who have lost their parent's cause of HIV/AIDS have been exposed to the psychosocial and economic problems in Ethiopia. Moreover, the circumstances of the children in Ethiopia remain serious due to economic, social, and political challenges. WHO (2008) had predicted that 106 million children below 15 years of age globally may lose one or both parents because of violence, injury, or illness.

On the other hand, there is lack of recent scientific research on mental health problems from African countries. Lorentzen & Morris (2003) indicated that serious challenges to efforts in understanding and then designing successful intervention strategies. It is not appropriate to extrapolate findings from these contexts to countries like

Ethiopia with low empirical evidence. Childhood and orphan hood are also varied, social, and cultural constructs and so it is wrong to extrapolate findings regarding these variables from one setting to another. On the other vein, childhood is a vital developmental phase in which the significance of joint emotional linkage between a child and his/her caregivers, for healthy psychological, social, and physical development. Moreover, mental health problems which adversely impact orphan children's performance in the form of depression and anxiety, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, and oppositional defiant disorder. Therefore, this article aimed at access to mental health service and mental problems among orphan and vulnerable children in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

#### Method

The method was based on the critical analysis of the recent research literature from PubMed, Global Health, Google Scholar, Ethiopian Universities, PsychInfo, and WHO data sources. Thirty-six journals published after 2001 were identified and critically analyzed based on scientific inclusion and exclusion criteria as well as analyzed in a systematic manner. Besides, the selection and analysis themes of journals selection were based on the objective which focused on the access to mental health service and mental problems among orphan and vulnerable children in Ethiopia.

#### Results and Discussion

Recently, an increase in the number of orphan and vulnerable children in many regions of Ethiopia was perceived as a response to the intervention direction that motivates the mental health care for the orphan and vulnerable children. A lot of child caring professionals yet consider that orphanages are terrible for children and exposing the children to fail and have abnormal development in terms of physically, psychologically, and socially. The mental health care conditions of the orphan and vulnerable children are more complicated and multipart in the country. Besides, several studies described that in many regions of the country, mental health care for OVC is the most neglected issues of service provided.

Furthermore, organizations at different levels tried to get involved to alleviate the multidimensional troubles of orphan and vulnerable children, yet the programmatic coverage of the existing efforts in Ethiopia is unsatisfactory.

Furthermore, a mental health care service in Ethiopia is the most underprivileged health programs. However, the average occurrence of mental disorders in Ethiopia for children is 15%. The trouble of mental disorders is especially serious for an orphan and vulnerable children for whom facing multidimensional challenges. Greater awareness needs to be given to anticipation and encouragement at the level of children policy formulation, legislation, decision making, resource distribution and the overall mental health care system to reduce the burden of mental disorders and to save the further generation of the country.

The orphan children are exceptionally helpless to many psychosocial hazards of institutional care when compared to children living with their families. Institutional care had the negative effect on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of early childhood. The orphanage from time to time relates to the regularity and harshness of longer-term hindrances in mental and academic development, social and peer relations, physical growth, inattention, and internalizing and externalizing behavior troubles.

Mental health problems of the orphan and vulnerable children are most important concerns of the society. For a better understanding of the mental health problems of the children, there is a need to have a common understanding of the mental disorders. Mental disorders are frequently related to significant distress or disability in social, occupational, or other important activities. On the other vein, socially abnormal behaviors of the children and conflicts that are primarily between the children and society are not mental disorders unless the deviance or conflict results from a dysfunction in the children.

According to previous studies, AIDS orphans are helpless to a lot of economic, social and psychological problems and due to these interrelated problems, they get

disadvantaged of the basic needs and social services that a child needs to get for his/her healthy development. The orphan and vulnerable children face a prospect of a persistent effort for physically continued existence, for fundamental needs, education, love and affection, and protection against exploitation violence and bias. The problem of meeting these desires of the children corresponds to a major new challenge that requires an in-depth research, future interventions, and policy plans in tackling the problem. In light of the problem in Ethiopia, researches regarding the mental health care services of the orphan and vulnerable children in Addis Ababa are extremely inadequate.

### Conclusion

The major analysis of the study was focused on the access to mental health service and mental problems among orphan and vulnerable children in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

These children problems were found to be causal to the great societal problems and exposing the children to the serious mental health problems, internalizing problems, anxious/depressed, withdrawn, and psychological problems. In relation to economic problems, a significant number of orphan and vulnerable are engaged in a variety of income generating tasks to meet their financial obligations. This may expose them to the unfavorable physical, moral, and psychological problems. On the other vein, organizational care and support programs need to consider types of childhood mental illness prevention and rehabilitation programs, contributing factors to serious mental problems, types of mental health problems, and the associations between the relevant treatment options for the specific mental disorders. The fast-rising groups of children without sufficient access to mental health services, proper education, and basic supplies have serious economic and social problems of the country.

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