

An Exploration of the Quality of Primary Caregiving Relationships between Adolescents Orphaned through Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and Grandmothers, Based on the Narratives of Stakeholders

Authors : Mmapula Petunia Tsweleng

Abstract : This qualitative study presents an exploration and findings thereof of the quality of primary caregiving relationships between adolescents orphaned through Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and their grandmothers. This exploration was based on in-depth narratives of 6 stakeholders who provided community-based psychosocial support services to children and families affected by AIDS. The narratives show that grandmothers provided high-quality parental care and support to the orphans. Furthermore, stakeholders categorised grandmother caregiving as genuine. Findings also show that the orphans thrived emotionally, socially, and cognitively and performed well academically. However, it was also identified that grandmothers' caregiving had elements of overprotectiveness as well as susceptibility to manipulation -which appeared to be a threat to the positive development of the orphans. Relevant interventions, with a special focus on strengthening grandmother caregiving, are needed. Special attention should be on equipping grandmothers with a better understanding of adolescent behaviours and abilities to provide appropriate monitoring and supervision.

Keywords : adolescent orphans, AIDS, caregiving relationships, grandmothers

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