

A Systematic Review Regarding Caregiving Relationships of Adolescents Orphaned by Aids and Primary Caregivers

Authors : M. Petunia Tsweleng

Abstract : Statement of the Problem: Research and aid organisations report that children and adolescents orphaned due to HIV and AIDS are particularly vulnerable as they are often exposed to negative effects of both HIV and AIDS and orphanhood. Without much-needed parental love, care, and support, these children and adolescents are at risk of poor developmental outcomes. A cursory look at the available literature on AIDS-orphaned adolescents, and the quality of caregiving relationships with caregivers, shows that this is a relatively under-researched terrain. This article is a review of the literature on caregiving relationships of adolescents orphaned due to AIDS and their current primary caregivers. It aims to inform community programmes and policymakers by providing insight into the qualities of these relationships. Methodology: A comprehensive search of both peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed literature was conducted through EBSCOhost, SpringLINK, PsycINFO, SAGE, PubMed, Elsevier ScienceDirect, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library databases, and Google Scholar. The combination of keywords used for the search were: (caregiving relationships); (orphans OR AIDS orphaned children OR AIDS orphaned adolescents); (primary caregivers); and (quality caregiving); (orphans); (HIV and AIDS). The search took place between 24 January and 28 February 2022. Both qualitative and quantitative research studies published between 2010 and 2020 were reviewed. However, only qualitative studies were selected in the end -as they presented more profound findings concerning orphan-caregiver relationships. The following three stages of meta-synthesis analysis were used to analyse data: refutational syntheses, reciprocal syntheses, and line of argument. Results: The search resulted in a total of 2090 titles, of which 750 were duplicates and therefore subtracted. The researcher reviewed all the titles and abstracts of the remaining 1340 articles. 329 articles were identified as relevant, and full texts were reviewed. Following the review of the full texts, 313 studies were excluded for relevance and 4 for methodology. Twelve articles representing 11 studies fulfilled the inclusion criteria and were selected. These studies, representing different countries across the globe, reported similar forms of hardships experienced by caregivers economically, psychosocially, and healthwise. However, the studies also show that the majority of caregivers found contentment in caring for orphans, particularly grandmother carers, and were thus enabled to provide love, care, and support despite hardships. This resulted in positive caregiving relationships -as orphans fared well emotionally and psychosocially. Some relationships, however, were found negative due to unhealed emotional wounds suffered by both caregivers and orphans and others due to the caregiver's lack of interest in providing care. These findings were based on self-report data from both orphans and caregivers. Conclusion: Findings suggest that intervention efforts need to be intensified to: alleviate poverty in households that are affected by HIV and AIDS pandemic, strengthen the community psychosocial support programmes for orphans and their caregivers; and integrate clinical services with community programmes for the healing of emotional and psychological wounds. Contributions: Findings inform community programmes and policymakers by providing insight into the qualities of the mentioned relationships as well as identifying factors commonly associated with high-quality caregiving and poor-quality caregiving.

Keywords : systematic review, caregiving relationships, orphans and primary caregivers, AIDS

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