THESIS TITLE

A Psychological Evaluation of Mental State Levels of Families in Uganda using Systemic Lenses

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the mental health levels of families in Uganda. A comparison between war and non-war affected families was made.

The study was cross-sectional using both quantitative and qualitative methods but utilized a causal comparative study design in data collection and analysis. Non-random sampling, specifically purposive sampling, was used to select adolescents who qualified following the study criteria for a war-affected, and non-war affected person.

Selected adolescents led the researcher to the rest of their family members. Seventy five respondents (25 adolescents and any other two family members) were selected from each group of respondents (war and non-war affected families) making it a total of 150 respondents. The researcher used the Becks Depression Inventory to measure depression levels, State Trait Anxiety Inventory to measure anxiety levels, Impact of Event Scale-Revised to measure PTSD, General Health Questionnaire to measure the general wellbeing, Index of Peer Relations to measure the quality of peer relations, and the Index of Family Relations to measure the quality of family relations among the respondents.

Data analysis was done using SPSS version 10 because this is what the researcher had access to, and was well versed with it too. Overall, results indicated that there was a significant difference in the mental health of war affected and non-war affected families with the war affected families registering higher levels of depression ($p<.05$), anxiety ($p< .05$), and PTSD ($p< .05$), compared to non-war affected families. Surprisingly, war affected families registered better family and peer relations compared to non-war affected families ($p< .05$, & $p< .05$) respectively. This was attributed to experiencing high levels of deaths, as well as isolation that war brings about which results in better appreciating those that are alive and present for the individual. The study presents recommendations and proposes evidence-based interventions that can guide rehabilitation of traumatized and war-affected populations not only to victims in Uganda but also globally.

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