

Research Article

Investigating psychosocial problems of orphan children in primary schools

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the psychosocial problems of orphan children in public primary schools. The study is based on a mixed-type research design focusing on both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. A total of 73 participants were involved in the study. Fifty-five orphaned students who were participated in filling the questionnaires were selected using simple random sampling technique while six orphaned children, nine teachers and three non-governmental officials were participated in the interview were selected through purposive sampling technique. To analyze the data descriptive statistics, mean score and standard deviation was calculated to determine the psychosocial problems of orphan children. One sample *t*-test also computed to see whether there was statistical significance different between the expected and actual mean scores at the *t*-value on the psychosocial problems of orphan children. Data collected through interview was presented and analyzed thematically. The results revealed that orphan children were exposed to diverse psychological problems, economical, social related problems and exhibited in problematic behaviors that tremendously affect their education and life in general. Considering the results, it was recommended that stakeholders, teachers and caregivers should establish a support system at different levels and play a major role to fulfill the psychosocial needs of orphan children.

Keywords: Psychosocial problems; Orphan children; Primary school

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1. Introduction

According to the report of UNICEF (2017) there are nearly 140 million orphan children worldwide who have lost one or both parents. Reports from Save the Children UK (2009), within Ethiopia 5.5 million children, around 6% of the total population and 12% of the child population, are categorized as orphans or vulnerable children (OVC); of which over 83% of OVCs are living in rural settings and, of these, 855, 720 are children orphaned as a result of the death of one or both parents due to HIV/AIDS (Save the Children UK, 2009). Therefore, orphan children are requiring the support of the community to improve their future life. Ethiopia has been brutally challenged and characterized by decades of conflict, food insecurity, extensive and abject poverty, and rapid population growth (UNICEF, 2004). Studies conducted by Tesfaye et al (2005) and, Abebe and

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Aase (2007), the number of children who are orphaned in Ethiopia is rising at an alarming rate and most of this increase is explained by AIDS-related adult mortality.

The adverse effects of the AIDS epidemic are felt most severely in some of the world's poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, where one of its consequences has been an upsurge in the number of orphaned children (UNAIDS, 2006). For adolescents, parental sickness or loss may lead to risky behaviors, sexual exploitation or abuse, as well as the burden of finding employment to support an ailing parent or younger siblings. Parental HIV seropositive status affects the psychosocial adjustment of children and makes them more prone to stigma and discrimination. Orphaned and fostered children are more likely to be discriminated against in schooling and health care, and they are more prone to neglect and abuse (UNICEF and UNAIDS 2006).

Stover et al (2005) indicated that children need various types of support ranging from those things necessary for survival, such as food and health care, to those interventions that will provide a better quality of life in the future such as education, psychosocial support and economic self-sufficiency. Some argue that a holistic program to support children should include all necessary elements including food, health care, education, clothes, shoes, bedding, psychosocial support and economic self-sufficiency among the caregivers, stakeholders, school community, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Others hold that some of these elements are not "essential" or far exceed the situation of most children living in poor households with both parents. In recent decades, the image of the orphan has come to embody child vulnerability in sub-Saharan Africa. Estimates of the alarming numbers of children being orphaned by AIDS-related deaths in the region raised international concern about an 'orphan crisis' and the 'burden' of their care in already fragile family and community circumstances (Abebe and Aase 2007). Wood, Chase and Aggleton (2006) argued that the way children respond to parental loss is very complicated and depends on factors such as their developmental age, survival drives, sensitive caring, and the amount of comfort and encouragement they receive from their social environment.

1.1. Background

Ethiopia counts one of the largest populations of orphan and vulnerable children in the world (Zewdineh, 2008). The loss of a parent is a hardship for any child, but the availability of care from other sources can have a meaningful impact upon recovery and ongoing development (Smyke et al., 2007). Every child requires basic needs to develop and grow to a healthy and responsible adult (UNICEF, 2016). A child requires parental love, care and protection in the early stages of development. The immediate family and environment of a child is critical in determining how that child develops because it is in this environment that they get nurtured, thereby experiencing love and acceptance, a sense of belonging, safety and security as well as developing trust, respect and confidence. In the psychological literature, studies such as Bhargava (2005) and Cluver *et al.* (2007) suggest that orphans may score lower in indicators constructed to reflect social and emotional adjustment and are more likely to report symptoms of depression, peer relationship problems and post-traumatic stress. Orphans were negatively impacted when they perceived a lack of caring, particularly when they received inferior treatment compared with the caregivers' biological children (Ansell & Young, 2004).

In most of the African countries, close to half of the children enrolled in primary schools cannot manage to access secondary education because of the inability of the caregivers to finance their education at this level (UNAIDS, 2010). Orphan children and vulnerable children fall in the category of the disadvantaged group (UNICEF, 2016). Access to food, shelter and education remains a key challenge for orphan children. This is due to the fact that their vulnerability has greatly been aggravated by lack of supportive socioeconomic factors such as quality health, income, and demographic changes.

Children in orphanage resident care face many difficulties such as poverty, poor physical health, attachment disorders, inadequate social skills, and mental health difficulties. Added to this is the loss of one or both parents, which is difficult for the children. It makes them more vulnerable

to psychological problems, and the effects may not manifest until many years afterward (Atwine et al., 2012). Orphans and vulnerable children are subjected to multiple ongoing stressful and traumatic life events such as abuse, neglect, parental loss, sexual abuse among others (Murray et al., 2013).

Depression is a deep sadness with long-term harmful effects on the health and development of the individual. When parents die, children not only miss their physical presence but also many positive things they gave them when they were alive such as love, care, and protection. In many instances, orphans and vulnerable children have no one to share their grief with, and this can compound their sense of helplessness. The lack of support during the grieving process and inadequate help in adjusting to an environment without their parents may lead children to become depressed (Masmias et al., 2012).

Many orphans who feel rejected and despair need social support. Such social support is more than a matter of social relationships or social contact: rather it implies providing emotional and material resources (Brannon, 2008). Therefore, the number of acquaintances a person has or the number of people with which he/she associate will not be a good indicator of social support. Multiple studies revealed that orphans suffer higher levels of psychosocial distress than their non-orphans peers. In particular, maternal and double orphans are more likely to experience behavioral and emotional difficulties, suffer abuse, and report lower rates of trusting relationships with caregivers (Baaroy & Webb, 2008). Literature on psychosocial competence also has shown that people with low sense of self efficacy and a higher feeling of helplessness are more likely to become more depressed and ill. However, it was noted that self-efficacy is often found to be situation specific, meaning a person could have high self-efficacy in one situation may not have in another. Theories in the areas of child development suggest that the manners in which children are reared have considerable impact on their ability to assess and solve problems (Darge, 1997). Although some children are able to adapt to loss without any special intervention it is also true all children who lose a parent obviously suffer with differing degree and have to cope with the loss (Humuliza, 1999).

Severely distressed children may suffer not in one way but in many ways; they may be very lonely, suffer from the loss of their parents, worried about being separated from their siblings, they may find themselves in a situation where they will be abused and neglected, hungry and ill. They may also grieve for long periods over lost opportunities. Moreover, they may not have someone who gives love and comfort or talk and listen to their needs and concerns (Humuliza, 1999). A number of recent studies have shown that orphans are more vulnerable than non-orphans with respect to schooling. Case et al. (2004), using cross-sectional data from 10 sub-Saharan African countries, concluded that orphans are less likely to be enrolled in schools than non-orphans with whom they live. This study also found that orphans who lived with distant relatives and unrelated caregivers had lower school enrollment than those who lived with a close relative. A descriptive study of 40 nationally representative household surveys in sub-Saharan Africa observed that orphans were considerably less likely to attend school than non-orphans, and double orphans were most likely of all to be disadvantaged in schooling (Monasch and Boerma, 2004).

In recognition of the psychosocial problems of orphaned children in their various settings, it is essential to conduct a systematic investigation into the actual problems. Hence, the principal purpose of this study was to investigate the psychosocial problems of orphaned children. At the end this study tried to answer the following basic research questions:

- What are the psychosocial problems of orphan children?
- What are the support and intervention strategies rendered to orphan children by different organizations?
- What are the psychosocial needs of orphan children?

2. Research Method

2.1. Research design

Convergent parallel mixed method design was employed to investigate the psychosocial problems of orphan children in five public primary schools in Injibara town. Convergent parallel mixed method design is a form of mixed methods design in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, the investigator typically collects both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results. Contradictions or incongruent findings are explained or further probed in this design (Creswell, 2014). The researcher employed a descriptive survey design for the quantitative research method and a phenomenological study design for the qualitative research method.

2.2. Study area

The study area which was chosen to conduct the study is Injibara town and which is found in Awi Administrative Zone, in the Amhara regional state in Ethiopia. Five primary schools namely Kossober, Bahunk, Injibara, Bata and Anedent primary schools have been selected purposefully. The schools have been selected purposefully because of the following reasons; the researcher can easily contact with orphan children and other participants, the presence of adequate number of orphaned students in the schools and the schools have long years of experience in teaching orphaned children.

2.3. Participants

There were around 205 orphaned students in these five selected public primary schools in Injibara town. Fifty five orphaned students were participated in filling the questionnaires were selected by simple random sampling technique and questionnaires were administered to these selected research participants. Furthermore, six orphaned children, nine teachers and three non-governmental officials were participated in the interview selected through purposive sampling technique. A total of 73 participants were involved in the study (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Demographic characteristic of respondents

Participants	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	
Orphan Children	Sex	Male	27	44.27
		Female	34	55.73
	Age	12-15	32	52.46
		15-18	29	46.54
	Grade	1-4	20	32.78
		5-8	41	67.22
	Parents you loss	Father	9	14.75
Mother		10	16.39	
Both		42	68.85	
Teachers	Sex	Male	5	55.6
		Female	4	44.4
	Age	20-40	3	33.3
		Above 41	6	66.7
	Experience	5-15	3	33.3
		Above 16	6	66.7
	Educational level	Diploma	-	-
Degree		9	100	

Table 1 continued

Participants	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	
Non-governmental Officials	Sex	Male	3	100
		Female	-	-
	Age	20-40	3	100
		5-15	3	100
	Experience	Above 16	-	-
		Diploma	-	-
	Educational level	Degree	3	100
		Master	-	-

Table 1 depicted the general background information of the participants. Regarding to their sex more than half of orphan students 34(55.73%) were females and the rest 27(44.27%) of the respondents were males and more than half of orphan children age inclined between 12-15 years 32(52.46%) and others between 29(46.54 %) 15-18 years. The majority of orphan children 42(68.85 %) were lost both of their parents, nine orphan children lost 9(14.75%) lost their father the remaining ten of the respondents 10(16.39%) were lost their mothers.

2.4. Instruments

2.4.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaires primarily developed by the researcher based on the extensive literature review in the area. Questionnaires were designed to obtain information to respond to the basic objectives of the study. Before the major data collection a pilot study was conducted in two primary schools. The main objective of the pilot test was to improve the items which needed modifications. A pilot study was conducted on 30 orphan children at Lideta and Kessa primary schools. These two primary schools were not included in the actual study. The pilot test results confirmed that Chrombach alpha coefficient values of 0.712 (10, items), 0.831 (6, items), 0.729 (8, items), 0.810 (4, items) and 0.752(4, items). All the five subscales had Chrombach alpha coefficient values .70 and above. Hence, all the 32 items in the five subscales were finally used as data collection tool for this study.

2.4.2. Interview

Interview is one of the commonly used instruments for collecting data. In this study, semi-structured interview was employed to gather essential information from the participants. To obtain valid and reliable data for the study, various methods of approaches such as triangulation, member checking and expert review were employed. Terms abound in the qualitative literature that address validity, such as trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000). In order to increase the validity of the findings, the researcher deliberately seeking evidence from extensive variety of sources and comparing findings from the different sources. The researcher used semi structured interview guide to collect the data. The interview sessions lasted between fifty minute and one hour with each interviewee.

2.5. Data Analysis

To carry out the analysis of quantitative data SPSS was used and the collected quantitative data were entered into the software. The descriptive statics frequency, mean score, standard deviations were calculated to determine the psychosocial problems of orphan children. One sample *t-test* also computed to see whether there was statistical significance different between the expected and actual mean scores at the *t-value* on the psychosocial problems of orphan children. Data collected through semi- structured interview analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis provides the opportunity to code and categories data into themes. For example, how issues

influence the perceptions of participants. In the case of thematic analysis, processed data can be displayed and classified according to its similarities and differences (Miles and Huberman 1994). Data analysis involved gathering information, determining themes and allocating information into the already preset themes. Hence, the preset category technique has been applied to organize the data according to its set of information and eventually, qualitative report has been accomplished (Creswell, 2003).

3. Results

3.1. Quantitative results

The descriptive statistics (see Table 2) showed that the mean score of the respondents on the psychological problems; the actual mean score was ($M=10.44$ with $SD=8.032$) was greater than the expected mean score ($M=7$). In addition, one sample *t*-test analysis also yielded that there was statistical significance difference between the two mean scores at the value of ($t=3.347$ at $df= 54$, $p=0.001$) two tailed. The result revealed that orphan children were exposed to diverse psychological problems that tremendously affect their education and life in general. This indicates that the orphan children are seeking the support of others to reconstruct their psychological health.

Table 2.

Results of one sample t-test analysis on psychosocial problems of orphan children

Sub categories of psychosocial variables	No	Expected Mean	Actual Mean	Standard Deviation	df	<i>t</i>	Sig
Psychological problems	55	7	10.44	8.032	54	3.347	0.001
Problematic Behaviors	55	3	5.87	2.520	54	8.892	.000
Social Related Problems	55	4	5.30	2.722	54	3.715	.000
Economic Problems	55	2	4.34	3.573	54	5.125	.000
Violating rights of orphan children	55	3	5.30	3.030	54	5.917	.000

Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

In this category similar procedures were applied to test the behavioral problems showed by orphan students in five selected primary schools in Injibara town. The result obtained from the respondents indicated that the actual mean score ($M=5.87$ with $SD =2.520$) was higher than the expected mean ($M=3$). Additionally, one-sample *t*-test analysis also computed and showed that there was statistically significant difference between the two mean scores at the value of ($t=8.892$ at $df= 54$, $p=.000$). This result suggested that the problematic behaviors were observed on orphaned children in the study area sever than the expected. Hence, the occurrence of problematic behaviors in the class room affects the education and life of orphan children. This shows that the orphan children are requiring the support of others to restructure their problematic behaviors into acceptable type of behavior.

The descriptive statistics result revealed that the mean score of the respondents on social related problems the mean score was ($M=5.30$ with $SD=2.722$) which is greater than the expected mean score ($M=4$). Furthermore, one sample *t*-test analysis was tested ($t=3.715$ at $df= 54$, $p < 0.05$). This result indicated that there was statistical significant difference between the two mean scores. The result obviously showed that social related problems were the serious challenges for the orphaned children in the selected primary schools in Injibara town. Thus, socially related problems that orphan children faced inside the school and outside the school affects their education and later life. This implies that orphan children are looking for the support of the school community and others to resolve their social related problems and consider them as part of the society.

To determine the economic problems of orphan children the descriptive statistics was computed. The result obtained from the participants showed that the actual mean score was

($M=4.34$ with $SD= 3.573$) is higher than the expected mean score ($M=2$). Moreover, one sample t -test was tested and it indicated that there were statistically significant difference between the two the mean score ($t=5.125$ at $df= 54$, $p=.000$). Thus, the findings of the study evidently showed that economical problems were very unending problems for orphaned children in primary schools in Injibara town. Hence, the education of orphan children in primary schools in Injibara town strongly affected due to economical problems they faced. This indicates that orphan children are requiring the support of the school community and other stakeholders to participate for financial support.

The same procedures were applied to examine violated rights of orphan children in selected primary schools in Injibara town. The descriptive statistics result indicated that the actual mean score was ($M=5.30$ with $SD =3.030$) and the expected mean score was ($M=3$). Similarly, one sample t -test was tested and it indicated that there were statistically significant difference between the two mean score ($t=5.917$ at $df= 54$, $p=.000$). Therefore, the result clearly indicated that orphaned children were not utilized their basic rights in the school and outside the school environment. Consequently, rights of orphan children to have free access to education, to get basic necessities and to protected from any types of exploitations violated by the school community and others. Thus, orphan children in primary schools in Injibara town need the support of the school community, stake holders and other community members to respect their rights and to be part of the real realization.

3.2. Qualitative results

Qualitative analysis results were presented five themes: Psychological problems, Problematic Behaviors, Social Related problems, Economic Problems and Violating Rights of Orphan Children.

3.2.1. Psychological Problems

Orphaned students were asked during the interview sessions about the psychological problems they faced after loss of their parents; all of the interviewed orphan children stated that their parental illness and death caused them to bottomless sadness and pain in their life. They were also explained that loss of parents generates a lot of anxieties, fears, loneliness, emotional shock and produce long lasting effects on their life. All ($n=6$, 100%) of the interviewed orphaned children responded that they suffered in one or more emotional experiences following the death of their parents such as felt pain, discomfort in body or mind and exposed to extremely distressing experiences that cause their overall development. In line with this idea orphan child 1 stated his feelings in the following ways;

"I dislike myself after I lost my parents, I prefer to die rather than to live, and I have poor appetite, poor sleeping and my future life is unrecognized. I have no any clear dream and destination; I don't know why I'm here."

Likewise to the above idea, all the interviewed teachers also reported that orphaned children faced many psychological challenges because of being orphan hood after the death of their parents. They also indicated that orphan children tried to solve many of their own problems, but sometimes they became swamped by facing too many psychological problems at the same time. They also reaffirmed that most of the orphan children complained of a headache in the classroom, lacked interest to attend their education effectively, most of them disliked themselves and felt discomfort in the classroom.

3.2.2. Problematic Behaviors

Almost all of the teachers reported that orphan children showed very problematic behaviors in the school such as cried excessively, spoken very little or loud, usually missed the school, had disobedient behaviors, aggressive towards people and withdrawal of themselves from any types of school activities. They were also explained that most of the time orphan children suffered by ruthless depression feelings, showed self destructive behaviors and fought with other children.

The participants also reported that orphan children most of the time; they were in constant confusion, failed to accomplish school assignments in time, learning was tremendously difficult for them and seemed to be in their own world. Hence, these problematic behaviors exhibited by orphan children adversely affect their lifelong holistic development such as cognitive development, socio-emotional development and learning.

3.2.3. Social Related problems

All (n= 6, 100%) of the orphaned children stated that they were abandoned and marginalized by the school community. They also mentioned that most of the orphan children grew up with their grandparents and other relatives. Participants of the study also indicated that there were also various social related problems that orphan children faced beyond their immediate experience of loss of their parents. Orphan children were also recognized that sometimes they were fought with teachers, students, siblings and other children because of the ill treatment they faced in the school and outside the school. One interviewed orphan child 3 described her ideas in the following ways:

"We orphan children are exposed to the different social problems that make worse our identity and personality. In principle we orphan children are part of the community, but on one hand close us as part of the community. Sometimes we orphan children become sensitively jealous by other children when their parents give them protections, love and affection for their children."

Likewise the above idea, all participant teachers and non-governmental officials reported that orphan children were maltreated and discriminated by the school community. As a result of this, most of the time orphan children had no fun in their life and lacked interest to play with other children. The participants also stated orphan children were not considered as part of the society by the school community and other community members.

3.2.4. Economic Problems

All the participant teachers and non-governmental officials stated that orphan children were exposed to serious economical problems. They also confirmed that orphan children worried about their clothing, school expenses, school uniforms and food. The teachers also mentioned that monthly they contributed very small amount of money from their salary to share the economic burden of orphan children to fulfill their school utilities. Among the interviewed teacher participants' Teacher 8 expressed his ideas in the following ways:

"We teachers know that the deeply rooted economic challenges of orphan children in our school. To be part of the solution; we teachers donate very few amount of money from our salary monthly. We know that our monthly contribution of money doesn't add any significant change on the life of orphan children; simply to be part of the challenges of orphan children."

All (n=3,100%) of non-governmental officials reaffirmed that their organizations attempted to fulfill the needs of orphan students such as food, clothing, school uniform and school fees in order to reduce their economic problems. But, the participants also confirmed that the financial support rendered by the non-governmental organizations to orphan children was not adequate to satisfy all basic necessities required by orphan children.

3.2.5. Violating Rights of Orphan Children

All (n=12, 100%) of the interviewed teachers and non-governmental officials confirmed that all children have the right to have free access to education and to be protected from all forms of hostility, child labor, physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse and being abducted. They also reported that no one responsible to fulfill the needs of orphan children and sheltered them from any kind of exploitations. Similarly, all the participants stated that orphan children were not attending their schooling regularly. They also stated the possible reasons for poor engagement of orphan children in their education such as poor health, lack of breakfast before to school, lack of

energy due to continuous hunger, too much physical work for money, demotivated by their life and others. Therefore, the responses of the participants implied that orphan children were deprived their rights such as free access to education, sheltered from any kind of exploitations and to have basic necessities such as cloth, to get balanced diet and house.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that orphan children were exposed to diverse psychological problems such as experience a lot of anxieties, feel pain, fears, loneliness, emotional shock, discomfort in body or mind, expose to extremely distressing experiences and produce long lasting effects on their later development. The findings of the study are consistent with the pervious study of (Humuliza, 1999) stated that death of parents makes children vulnerable and predisposes them to physical and psychological risks over which they have no control. The feeling of helplessness is very costly in terms of psychological well-being and may be reflected in lack of concern, involvement and vitality and school activities. Emotionally, it is indicated by sadness and depression.

The research findings of the study also showed that orphaned children exhibited very problematic behaviors such as crying excessively, speak very little or loud, usually miss the school, having disobedient behaviors, aggressive towards people and withdrawal of themselves from any types of school activities. Various research findings stated that orphan children are vulnerable to problematic behaviors. The findings of the study are with the earlier studies reporting emotional distress and behavioral symptoms in orphans (Cluver& Gardner, 2007; Li et al., 2008).The findings of the study also indicated that orphan children were abandoned and marginalized by the school community and other societies in any kind of activities. In line with this research finding, Prasad (1994) stated that orphan children are the most susceptible group in any population and needs of the greatest social care. In line with these research findings the study of Foster (2002) also pointed out children mourning behavior tends to fluctuate, making it difficult for adoptive parents and teachers to recognize symptoms and to provide appropriate support.

The findings of the study confirmed that orphan children worried about their clothing, school expenses, school uniforms and food. Orphan children were highly exposed to serious economical problems. In favor the findings of the studies (Cohen, 1999) confirmed that children are often pulled out of school to care for an ailing family member, or because meager household income is now spent on the sick. School fees, notebooks, and pencils become unaffordable and children begin to struggle to provide care and replace lost adult labor and income.

The findings of the study evidently showed that orphan children were not sheltered from all types of hostility, child labor, physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse and abduction. The results of the study are consistent with the previous research findings (UNICEF, 2007), which suggest that many orphaned children find themselves in danger of sexual exploitation and various forms of abuse when parents are no longer there to care for and looked after them (Poku, 2005). This indicated that orphan children were deprived their rights to have free access to education and to be protected from all forms of hostility, child labor, physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse and abduction. Correspondingly, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in 1989, establishes a broad legal and ethical framework to guide the international community in supporting the psychosocial well-being of all children during times of stability, as well as to safeguard all children from any kind of exploitations such as violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse and child labor.

As conclusion, orphaned students in public primary schools in Injibara town were exposed to diverse types of psychological problems such as lots of anxieties, constant worries about their life, fears, a strong feeling of grievance, loneliness, emotional shock and extremely stressful experiences that cause their overall development. Orphan children also showed very problematic types of behaviors in the classrooms and outside the classrooms that adversely affect their

learning for instance, cried terribly, became aggressive towards other people; had disobedient types of behaviors and usually missed their school. In addition to this, orphan children were no considered as one segments of the society. They were highly marginalized and unnoticed by the school community and other community members. Unending financial problems were also experienced by orphan children such as cloths, school expenses, school uniforms and food. Orphan children were not sheltered from any types of hostility, child labor, physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse and abduction.

To Sum up, all the above psychosocial problems are collectively affecting the overall well being of orphan children. Orphaned children are facing difficulty to get all the necessary supports they need from the society and the stakeholders. In general, orphan children have reduced school engagement, poor health, poor nutrition, lower participation in school activities and their rights to be protected from any kinds of exploitations deprived by the society. Hence, orphan children in Injibara primary schools are seeking the psychosocial support from the society and non- governmental organizations to fulfill their basic necessities.

5. Recommendations

By considering the major findings of the study; the researcher drawn the following recommendations.

- Parents, stakeholders, teachers and guardians should establish a support system at different levels and play a significant role to fulfill the psychosocial needs of orphan children.
- The political leaders should have readiness and commitment to allocate rational budget to orphan children and put into practice the national and international policy documents. The policy makers should revisit the legal legislations and regulations documents to protect the rights of orphan children.
- Governmental and non-governmental organizations should work in collaborations to implement policy frameworks and to establish orphanage centers to provide appropriate services to orphan children.
- Schools should work on improving orphan children welfare system by providing guidance and counseling services, protecting the rights of children and reducing discriminations.

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