Outcome of Loss and Grieving in Self-Esteem among the Secondary Students in Langata Sub-County Nairobi, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Loss and grief is an issue that greatly affects adolescent's self-esteem as they adjust in life without their loved ones. The study was guided by the following two objectives: to examine the outcomes of loss and grief to self-esteem among the secondary school students in Langata Sub-County Nairobi Kenya; and to explore the prevailing support systems among secondary school students going through loss and grief in Langata Sub-County Nairobi Kenya. The study employed phenomenological research design. Through purposive sampling, a sample size of 15 participants was selected to participate in the study. The data was collected using Interview Guide. The data collected was analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings on the outcome of loss and grief in self-esteem were withdrawn from others, poor relationship with others, and poor academic performance. The findings on the prevailing support systems to secondary school students going through loss and grief were support from friends, family, school and Church. Also, self-acceptance, guidance and counselling were identified as prevailing support for students going through loss and grief. The study recommends that schools to strengthen guidance and counselling services in order to adequately be able to help students who are undergoing loss and grief.

Key Words: Loss and Grieving, Self-esteem, Support systems, Secondary students

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the bridging stage where the individual develops physically, socially, and psychologically, also known as the period of self-discovery. Adolescence is a period of spontaneous emotional, social, physical, and personal changes that begins with a crossover from childhood to puberty. This stage shows differences in age with factors like the environment, race, and nutrition (Kulaks?zoglu, 2016). The notion of death, which signifies life's termination, is an issue that the individual hopes to evade due to the anxiety it gives and because they live their whole lives with this fact at the backs of their minds. Even though some people use camouflaging mechanisms to exclude it from their lives, death is an inevitable event that all humans and living things, in general, go through (Tanhan, 2017). Consequently, when an individual loses someone they love, like parents, friends, or relatives, in their lifetime, they experience mental dejection and hardships in adapting to the new normal after the demise (Senelmis, 2016). According to Oates (2013), grieving is an authentic and expected pathway for the individual who has gone through the death of someone they love or the loss of someone they hold dear. Otherwise expressed, grieving is a challenging process to overcome, which also brushes on the emotional, cognitive, physical, behavioural, and social effects that onset after the loss. As many individuals who have experienced loss are aware, grief and bereavement can be a complex process, with no two people following the same path. A common scenario shared by some individuals is a loss of self-acceptance. The loss of a loved one is linked to several of the recognized reasons for low self-acceptance. Human beings frequently have no control over the death of a loved one, which can leave us feeling powerless and unable to change our own lives. When a loss happens of a wife, husband, or child, we cease to be that person's wife, husband, or parent in our daily roles and routines. The same can be said for losing our role as a brother, friend, or daughter. At times when an

individual no longer feels needed, they may experience feelings of insignificance. Adolescents are likely to be affected much by loss of their significant others by fact that they are dependent and searching for their identity and therefore, the current study was guided by the following two objectives:

1. To examine the outcomes of loss and grief to self-esteem among the secondary school students in Langata Sub-County Nairobi Kenya.
2. To explore the prevailing support systems among secondary school students going through loss and grief in Langata Sub-County Nairobi Kenya.

LITARATUIRE REVIEW

The study was grounded on Kubler Ross grief model. It is a model that is utilized by many counsellors and psychologists in helping their clients to process loss and grief. The lost can include many things including the death of a loved one, loss of job, loss of health among other losses in life. Clients are normally taken through five stages of loss and grief which includes: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance (Kubler-Ross, 1969). The first stage of loss and grief is denial. When a person receives bad news of the death of a love one, they tend to disbelief about the news and usually push the information to the unconscious mind. At one point the reality sinks and the person move to the stage of loss and grief namely anger stage. The person experiences anger towards many peoples. For instance, the person can be angry towards himself/herself and especially if he/she thinks there is something he/she did not do to save the life of the loved. Also, the anger can be directed towards the members of family or the medical personnel for not saving the life of the deceased (Kubler-Ross, 1969). The person may reach to bargaining stage where he/she thinks if he/she negotiates with God, the loved one can come back to live. The bereaved person may start going to Church or even changing his/her sinful ways if God is going to bring back their loved ones to life. Since their loved ones cannot come back to life and nothing they can do, it leads them to depression stage. After depression stage finally they move to acceptance stage and they are ready to move on with life without their loved ones (Kubler-Ross, 1969).

Loss and grieving in Self-esteem of Secondary School Students

Grief has an odd way of connecting itself to different aspects of personalities, affecting confidence and self-esteem. Numerous individuals feel unattractive, worthless, out of place, or anxious instantly after a significant loss. Others talk of a sudden drop in confidence. One tends to believe that there is a timeframe in which they must "get over" their grief since they live in a culture that idealizes mastery. Not "getting over" a loss "quickly enough" can have an impact on self-esteem and confidence. Furthermore, if the deceased individual gives a sense of self-worth, this can have an adverse influence on one's confidence. According to the current study, the formative years are one of the most vibrant points of human development, with physical, psychological, social, emotional, and environmental alterations. Self-confidence levels during this period may have long-term health implications, not just in adolescence (World Health Organization, 2019). As observed by Lindermann (2013), in Africa, the ways and depths of grieving differ from person to person and society too. This element is contributed to by various factors like age group, more so when the features of growth in adolescents are considered. Adolescents experience grief in very different forms compared to adults. With a focus on adolescents' social, physical, and psychological structure, they can be influenced by negative turn of events, and it could displace them (Avc?, 2006). The sensitive cases that are especially difficult to deal with, like the death of a parent, prove that it is important to find out how to internalize the situation, handle it, and the results of compassion and empathy towards oneself in this grief process. These Discoveries are vital for the professionals that work with teenagers. Few ideas in the social sciences have won the level of attention poured upon the theory of self-esteem being affected by loss and grieving. Within psychology alone, academic materials that make any reference to self-esteem, and mostly slightly more than a passing reference, are currently getting attention at a rate of more than a thousand each year. This level of

interest could convince the learners to conclude that it is a considerably important idea. Self-esteem is more about motivations, personal identity, and psychological health (McCauley, 2015). The most probable distinctive aspect of contemporary usage, however, is the school of thought that self-esteem is a kind of resource. Like other assets, it is lately discussed within the human rights domain. People long for self-esteem, the same way they may be expected to desire prosperity, freedom of thought, or good physical health. Since grief can show itself in individuals in various ways, it can be difficult to identify grieving adolescents. Grief affects adolescents cognitively, physically, interpersonally, behaviorally, emotionally, and spirituality. There is substantiation that the primacy of a loss event, as well as diminished self-concept clarity. One unresolved issue is the relative merits of these two concepts in forecasting bereavement outcome. Hobfoll and Lilly (2013) investigated the extent to which both discourses, both simultaneous and longitudinally, make a contribution to emotional trauma after loss. Data were available from 124 people who had been bereaved within the preceding 6 months. In cross-sectional assessments, loss-centrality and self-unclarity were associated with all three-outcome variables. Longitudinal analysis revealed that loss-centrality predicted symptoms of sustained grief, self-unclarity anticipated symptoms of depression, and both were related with trauma exposure six months after baseline. The one, which quickly immediately springs to mind in grief, is interpersonal identity (Bonanno, Wortman, & Nesse, 2014). It is the aspect of one's identity that is based on one's interactions with others. So one could be a sister, a daughter, a wife, a friend, a mother, and so on. When we lose someone, we frequently feel as if we have lost our relational sense of self. We usually find ourselves wondering, "Who am I if not a wife?" Even with the same individual, relationship identities shift. For example, if anyone becomes ill, your responsibility may shift from spouse or child to caregiver. There are still aspects of your original responsibility, but they may shift as you take on more roles as a caregiver. When someone dies, caregivers frequently feel as if their sense of purpose has dimmed. When one relational identity is described by caring for another individual, it can be difficult to regain a sense of self when that individual is gone. Hobfoll and Lilly (2013) discuss the connection between grief and self-acceptance levels. When we are grieving, our emotional stability disappears, and we end up losing our proclivity for self-acceptance. Due to the obvious intensity of our emotions, we may feel as if we have lost our identity. The intensity of these emotions – shock, anger – can leave us feeling out of our depth. We end up losing our sense of self when we can't recognize ourselves. According to Eklund, Backstrom, and Hansson (2018), individuals who have suffered grief frequently cannot think they have started to feel the emotions they have. These emotions frequently leave individuals feeling disoriented, depleted, and therefore unable to focus or find joy in items they could previously. These adjustments can cause people to feel out of grasp and out of character. When we appear to lose traits associated with our individuality, our self-esteem plummets dramatically. Grief has been studied in relation to self-acceptance, and research indicates that it has a negative impact on self-acceptance levels. According to the current study, loss of self-confidence can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including self-destructive behavior (extreme drinking or taking unnecessary risks), negative remarks or thinking about oneself; fear of new situations; and withdrawal from family, friends, or community. When we suffer a loss, we are often preoccupied with the tangible "stuff" we have lost – the person, the apartment, the career, the relationship, and so on. Of course, this is a big part of grief. However, there is another aspect of grief that we are often unaware of. Secondary losses cascade like dominoes, leaving far more to deal with than just the primary loss. It helps to shape most of how we exist in the world, and studies have shown that the lack of "self-clarity" that arises with grief as a consequence of loss of identity and low self-acceptance tendencies are associated with higher rates of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Brink and Wood (2018) examine the impact of loss and grief on adolescent self-confidence levels by relying on various communication systems within oneself and the outside world. The purpose of this study was to look into communication, self-esteem, and sustained grief in adolescent-parent dyads after a parent died from cancer. Chatting and grieving together could be crucial to preserving hope in a meaningful future and for assisting grief stricken adolescents and their parents in coping with the situation. According to World Health Organization (2019) formative years is one of the most active stages of human development, with physical, psychological and social, emotional, and environmental alterations. Self-confidence levels during this period

may have long-term health implications, not just in adolescence (World Health Organization, 2019).

Supportive Systems to Loss and Grief among Adolescents in Secondary Schools

According to Sydney, Gross and Baker (2014) members of the go through loss and grief in their unique way and also they are able to cope with it in different ways. Counselors and psychologists providing grief counseling to members of families who have lose their loved invite them to a catharsis experience where they are allowed to talk freely about the death of their significant ones. The talk therapy may capture how the family members received the bad news, what led to the death of the loved one, and how each member of the family is handling the situation. The death of a family member can bring a lot of confusion to the family because the family structures are likely to change and can affect each member of the family even without being aware (Jackson, 2018). According to Tomarken et al. (2018), grief counseling is important to be offered to adolescents who have experienced the death of their loved ones in order to be able to process the loss and accept to move on with life. When adolescents are taken through grief counseling, they are able to process their emotions and adjust in life without their loved one (Bonanno, 2014). According to Stroebe, Hansson and Schut (2011) there is a need for counselors and psychologists to come with strategies that help adolescents who have lose their loved ones to still have a bond with them either through memorial services or other ways that they can be able to remember them. A study by Hopmeyer and Werk (2014) found peer intervention to be one of best intervention to help adolescents and children to be able to process the loss and grief. According to Worden (2016), adolescents need to be taken through the stages of grief process in order to accept the death of their loved ones by adjusting in life without them. When counselors and psychologists are helping adolescents to adjust to new environment without their loved ones, they need to factors their culture, personality and support given by the family members. Social support is very critical in supporting the adolescents who are going through grief process. This social support may be psychological, emotional, spiritual and physical. It can come from the family members and friends (Taylor, 2007). Several ways to cope with loss and grief has been identified including talking about the loss, expressing your sadness, and gradually coming in terms with the loss (LaGrand, 2011). Medical professionals who meet with families where a caregiver is dying or has died may stimulate the adolescent and his or her parents to speak openly and honestly about their emotional and physical feelings, which may aid in their grieving process (Oates & Maani-Fogelman, 2020). It may be sufficient in some households to encourage ongoing communication, whereas others may require more professional assistance to improve parent-adolescent communication. Evidence-based regulations for family-centered care in adult palliative care, such as care for children and adolescents, would be useful for health-care professionals to use when meeting the ill parent's family. Family-centered care is a method of caring for children and their unions in pediatric care that ensures care is planned around the entire family and that all family members are identified as care recipients (Shields, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed phenomenological research design. It is a research design used in qualitative research when the researcher wants to explore the lived experiences of participants in a particular phenomenon. The research design was suitable for this study because it aimed at exploring the outcome of loss and grief to self-esteem of secondary school students. The study explored the lived experiences of secondary school students after the loss of their loved ones.

Target Population

According to Kothari (2004) target population refers to the whole gathering of people or items to which

researchers are keen on summarizing the conclusions. The target population in this study was secondary school students who had experienced loss of their loved ones in Lang'ata sub-county, Nairobi County.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Through purposive sampling, a sample size of 15 male and female secondary school students was identified to participate in the study. Purposive sampling gives room for a researcher to selectively identify research subjects directly, and on purpose. The participants had a criterion of having experienced loss and grief. The participants were identified from the secondary school students within Langata Sub-county, Nairobi Kenya.

Instruments of Measure

The data for the study was collected using Interview Guide. The Interview Guide contained three parts. The first part collected data on the demographic details of the participants which included age, gender, form, and religion. The second part collected data on the outcome of loss and grief to self-esteem of secondary school students. The third part collected data on the prevailing support to secondary school students who have experienced the loss of their loved ones. Some the questions contained in the interview guide was: how does the loss of your loved one affected how you look at yourself?; how has your life been since the loss of your loved one?; what kind of support have you been receiving from your other family members since the loss of your loved one?.

Data Analysis

According to Taylor (2008), the process of data analysis involves several stages. The qualitative data collected from interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis. "A method of detecting, interpreting, and reporting patterns (themes) within data is thematic analysis" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79). This method extends beyond identifying and evaluating the study issue to interpreting various parts of it (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis is meticulously coding the data and then reporting on the patterns found in the data.

RESULTS

The study was set out to examine the outcomes of loss and grief to self-esteem among the secondary school students in Langata Sub-County, Nairobi, Kenya and to identify the prevailing support systems available for them to handle loss and grief. Using thematic analysis, the themes from the data collected was identified and supported by verbatism from the participants. Before presenting the findings as per the objectives, the study presented the demographic details of the participants.

Demographic Details of the Participants

Table 1 Description of participants for the interviews

Participant No	Age	Gender	Class	Religion
1	19	Male	Form 4	Christian
2	18	Male	Form 4	Christian
3	18	Female	Form 4	Christian
4	18	Female	Form 4	Christian
5	17	Female	Form 3	Christian
6	17	Female	Form 3	Christian

7	13	Female	Form 1	Christian
8	19	Female	Form 4	Christian
9	17	Female	Form 3	Christian
10	16	Female	Form 3	Christian
11	16	Female	Form 3	Christian
12	17	Male	Form 4	Christian
13	17	Female	Form 4	Christian
14	18	Female	Form 4	Christian
15	16	Female	Form 3	Muslim

A total number of 15 participants participated in the study. The participants' age ranged between 13 years old to 19 years old. Majority of the participants were females compared to male counterparts. Majority of the participants were from form four, followed by form three. There was only one participants from form one. Almost all the participants were Christians except one participant who was a Muslim. Table 1 presents the demographic of the participants for the study.

Outcome of Loss and Grief to Self-esteem of Secondary School Students Withdrawn from Others

Majority of the participants reported withdrawn from others for several reasons. Some felt that were not understood by others as a result of the loss of loved ones and their friends disserted them. There was a feeling of misplaced and especially when socializing with friends who have their parents. A participant who felt not understood by others as result of the loss said, *it has made me distant because at times it has made me feel that they do not understand what I am going through so now I have a few friends and now my circle is smaller because they will not understand what I am going through (Participant 1).* Another participant withdrew from the friends because of feeling misplaced and misunderstood when their friends are talking about their parents while she has nobody to talk with. This came out clearly when she said, So what I have realized with the loss of my mum When I'm hanging out with my friends who have mothers and there talking about their mothers sometimes I feel misplaced, sometimes I feel like they do not understand me because at the end of the day they have their mothers to go back to talk about this they are struggling with but for me with my friends, I tend to often times I want to be alone. I know those situations where girls are meeting up, but even my cousins they talk about their parents and I feel I have no mother to talk about so that has kept me away from my cousins (Participant 9). Moreover another participant that was talkative before the loss of loved started wanted to be alone. She said, *"I would say Sometimes I would want to be left alone I would want to talk to people I was very chubby but I was a very talkative person sometimes nowadays I find myself rotting in my own space in my own world"* (Participant 10). Furthermore, another participant isolated herself because the teachers did not understand her and they did not allow her to process the loss and grief. This contributed to poor performance. The participant reported that, First of all My grades dropped, because It all happened during the short midterm then I was told about it at that time because itwas just a short midterm it was just in my head I did not get time to process it so when I went back to schoolmy grades dropped then the teachers started complaining and the pressure so I decided to isolate myself and very small things would trigger me and it would make me cry out of nowhere and I would have to fear that what if my other friends also die like that friend of mine at home because I only had that friend (Participant 15). Also another participants after the loss of her brother, she felt not needing people around her and she resulted to isolation and not taking with people. She said, I think from losing my brother I felt like there was no other reason of having people around me because that was my brother we were together talking but now he is not there anymore here comes someone else and we are not blood-related so I won't have that friendship so I stopped talking to people because it affected my relationship with my parents and alsofriends because they knew him actually it is the thing that has made me to be alone up to today to love myspace here at school. (Participant 13)

Identity Confusion

Most of the participants expressed feelings of confusion after the death of their loved ones. The confusion came as a result of the nature of death and dependability to the loved ones. Some of the participants' loss their loved ones through terminal illness and it were difficult to cope with the loss. A participant who loss the father due to cancer said, Last year I lost my father to cancer when I was in form two and it was very traumatizing. I feel lonely and I don't have anybody to go to because I used to be close to my father and now I feel lost and lonely, I feel God has forsaken me and I feel I don't know who I am now because I do not have anyone to go to (Participant 5). Another participant who loss the mother at age 16 expressed feelings of confusion because she feels there is nobody to encourage her towards realizing her life goals in life. The participant reported, I lost my mum when I was 16 years and it has been very hard because she was one person I looked up to and so I feel lost, I feel I do not have anyone to go to or for clarification as a young girl and I miss her a lot Sometimes I do not know how to be myself I feel like I lack the confidence of just being a girl who is working to becoming an adult. Because I do not have someone to look up to or someone to applaud me or cheer me on (Participant 9).

Fear of Death

Some of the participants reported frightened and shocked by the death of their loved one. Some have decided to avoid attending funerals because it reminds them the death of their loved ones and also the possibility of dying themselves. A participants who avoids attending burials said, *"I have lost a loved one but It has made me feel frightened of death and I just do not like talking about death, it makes me feel scared and freighted. And I do not like attending funerals each, death is bad" (Participant 2).* Another participant acknowledges that life is fragile and therefore she is conscious of how she lives her life because she can die in the next meeting. She reported, *"I would like to share, I lost my classmate in school. The experience was shocking and sad and it come when we least expected it. I see life-like its fragile and I live at the moment and take one step at a time because the next minute I might die" (Participant 4).*

Anger and Bargaining With God

Majority of the participants expressed anger towards God for the death of their loved ones when they needed them the most. There was feeling of hopeless as a result of the loss the loved ones. The participants were angry towards God for taking their loved ones when they were still young. Some felt betrayed by God and they seemed to bargain with God in regard to taking their loved ones. For instance, a participant was angry with God for taking his father when they are only two in the family. She said, I feel like God left that he forsakes me why could he take my father away and were only two in the family, so it is like I am angry with God because of taking my father there is nothing I can do, it is his will because it is his will, there is nothingI can do (Participant 5). Furthermore, another participant was angry with God for taking his mother when she is young. The participant reported that, *"My relationship with God has been closer but at times I feel angry at him for taking away my mother when I was very young, I just cannot understand why my mother was taken away"* (Participant 7). Also, another participant seemed to bargain with God for taking theirloved ones. In their bargaining, the participants wondered what they did to God in order to deserve the lossof their loved ones. The participant said, My relationship with God, so first questioned God why her andnow it came back to me and I started to question what have I done that I am guarantee to see form four and not her it has been a journey I cannot say I have clarity but through my parents, my mother is very religious, my people that I meet, the groups that I am in church, my peers and the CU and the catholic organizations is there in school, I get to interact more and more in terms of just appreciating life in itself and the word ofGod (Participant 8). The theme of participants bargaining with God in regard to the loss of their loved was echoed by another participant who said, My relationship with God has changed a lot because number one I feel like he has betrayed me because he did take my Mum at a key time in my life and I have a younger sister who needs my mother more, who needs to be encouraged she is a candidate, and you know a lot is happening as she does her KCPE she is preparing for that and so she needs to be encouraged and so with the loss, she has not been able to deal with the loss, and so I do not know how she will perform her exams, me being the first girl in the family, I have more responsibilities now that my Mum is not there (Participant 9)

Poor performance

Almost all the participants academic performance was affected by the loss of their loved ones. The loss of loved affected the participants concentration in their studies. Some dropped in their performance compared to before the loss of their loved ones. A male participant shared how his performance was affected by the loss of the loved when he said *"At first it started lowering because I could not concentrate I was just thinking about the loss but then after a while I coped up and started improving"* (Participant 1). Another female participant said *"my studies were affected. I used to do well, I used to have A and B+ but now I always thinking about him I do not concentrate on my books, now I see D-, C, that is what is happening" (Participant 5).* Furthermore, another female participant said, My performance has not been very good I have actually dropped in grades I am not doing very well, and as you know as I prepare for my form four exams I need to work on picking up my grades, and retain where I was with my grades (Participant 9). Also another participant dropped in academic because she could not be able to concentrate. She said *" my performance went down drastically because I would want to study but my mind was not focused immediately after the death of my sister because sometimes I want to study and I find myself my mind going to that event"(Participant 10).*

Prevailing Support Systems for Secondary School Students Going Through Loss and Grief Support from Friends, Family, School and Church

Almost all the participants identified support from friends, family, school and Church as a prevailing support after the loss of loved ones. The participants expressed the need of friends and family members to offer support to those who experience the loss of their loved ones. A participant shared how he was supported by his friends when he said *"For one my friends have tried to talk to me not to dwell on that so much and try to move on and my Church have tried to bring me closer to God"* (Participant 1). Another participant expressed the need of support by family and people who are close to students who have experienced the loss of loved when he said, Basically, those people who are close to the students, like their family and their relative should come together to talk to the person, make sure the person understands that there is life after death, and be supportive to the person. The family the parents should be closes to the student (Participant 2). Likewise, another participant shared how the Church and school showed support when experienced loss of loved one. She said, I can say that our teachers, the Church and the school have been there and very present through the phase that we have lost our classmate, and also students from other classes have been present through that phase (Participant 4). The same theme was echoed by another participant who shared how the family and teachers offered support during the loss of loved one when she said, We have been supported by teachers and parents after experiencing the loss, we were offered encouragement and support, they were given permission to check on us and also keep in touch with us because you do not know if it is the last time they will hear from us and also support from peers (Participant 14).

Guidance and counseling

Majority of the participants benefited from the counseling services either from school, friends, and Church. A participant shared the need of schools to have guidance and counseling services to help the students, who have experienced the loss of their loved ones when he said, Well, first of all, nobody prepares for death. so people in terms of school should have guidance and counselling yes we usually have but we do not talk about things like that they talk about life skills, so they should talk more about losses, and parents shouldalso be there for them, even though it is not like a cousin or a family friend the parents should be there for them (Participant 11). Also another participant emphasized the need of students to be offered counselling services when he said, I would like them to receive support because when my classmate died we did not receive psychological help because for us the sight of the dead body was very traumatizing I remembersome of us were not even sleeping because of the body and also I wished we would have gotten counseling

from counselors which would have helped us to move on and do well (Participant 2). The same them was echoed by another participant who said, There is a need for counsellors in school so that they can support those ones who have lost their loved one while in school because counsellor has really helped me cope in school because anytime I am feeling I am very low I talk to him (Participant 10). Another participant share how she benefited from counselling services when she said, I happen to be using the coping skills as told by my counsellor in school talked to me a lot about the stages of loss and gave me ways to cope with life and then I realized that it is something that happens, it is normally going through the emotions that I am going through (Participant 15).

Acceptance of the loss

Acceptance of the loss of loved ones was identified as a coping strategy. Some participants expressed the need to let go of the loved ones and to focus on achievements in live. Also having a positive thinking and especially remembering the good memories of the loved one. A participant expressed the need to accept the reality and move on with life when she said *"First of all, I have been trying to accept it because it has not been easy right now I am learning to and I have accepted that the person is gone and now I am focused to achieve more in life"* (Participant 2). Likewise, another participant expressed how she embraced acceptance when she said *"Acceptance was the only way because that we kept on counting him at our family functions and sometimes you know when you are doing something and you start grieving I guess I finally accepted he is gone and until we meet"* (Participant 13). Another participants emphasized the need to cope with loss of loved ones by focusing good memories when she said *"well, first of all, I am trying to keep the memories, the good memories shared of course are hard because this person is not here so the only thing I am trying to do is to remain positive though he is not here"* (Participant 11).

DISCUSSION

The study was set out to examine the outcomes of loss and grief to self-esteem among the secondary school students in Langata Sub-County, Nairobi, Kenya and to identify the prevailing support systems available for them to handle loss and grief. Majority of the participants reported withdrawn from others for several reasons. Some felt that were not understood by others as a result of the loss of loved ones and their friends disserted them. There was a feeling of misplaced and especially when socializing with friends who have their parents. The findings of this study were consistent with the findings of Horowitz, Wilner, and Alvarez (2019) who found that students who had experienced the loss of their loved one had withdrawn from others which in turn affected their self-esteem. Most of the participants expressed feelings of confusion after the death of their loved ones. The confusion came as a result of the nature of death and dependability to the loved ones. Some of the participants' loss their loved ones through terminal illness and it were difficult to cope with the loss. The findings resonated with the findings of Bonanno, Wortman, and Nesse (2014) who reported that when we lose someone, we frequently feel as if we have lost our relational sense of self. We usually find ourselves wondering, "Who am I if not a wife?" Even with the same individual, relationship identities shift. When someone dies, caregivers frequently feel as if their sense of purpose has dimmed. When one relational identity is described by caring for another individual, it can be difficult to regain a sense of self when that individual is gone. Majority of the participants expressed anger towards God for the death of their loved ones when they needed them the most. There was feeling of hopeless as a result of the loss the loved ones. The participants were angry towards God for taking their loved ones when they are still young. Some felt betrayed by God and they seemed to bargain with God in regard to taking their loved ones. The findings of this study was in agreement with the findings of Chen, Bierhals, Prigerson, Kasl, Mazure and Reynolds (2009) who found that adolescents who go through the loss of their loved ones experience negative emotions such as emptiness, depression, anger, loneliness, and frustration. The study found that adolescent boys and girls who lose their loved ones experience insomnia, headache, exhaustion, digestive disturbance and body weakness. Some of the participants had not healed since the loss of their loved ones. They were still in denial. Sometimes they felt that their loved ones are still around. Others seem to question why God allowed their loved ones to die. The findings were consistent with findings of Bolby-West (2013) who reported that it is difficult for adolescent to cope with the death of parent and it can easily lead them to defence mechanism in order to avoid experiencing the pain. Also the findings reported prevailing support systems to adolescents going through loss and grief. For instance, despite of

poor performance as a result of loss of loved ones, majority of the participants were motivated to succeed in life.The participants were determined to succeed because their loved had believed on them. They wanted to live the legacy of their loved ones. The findings were consistent with the findings of Bonanno (2014) who emphasized the importance of people to continue bonding with their loved ones even after death. Some of the participants reported continued bond with their loved ones through remembering the good memories and living their legacy. Almost all the participants identified support from friends, family, school and Church as a prevailing support after the loss of loved ones. The participants expressed the need of friends and family members to offer support to those who experience the loss of their loved ones. The findings resonated with the findings of Taylor (2007) which identified social support as significant in helping the adolescents who have experienced the loss of their loved ones. This kind of support can be emotional, spiritual or material and that can be provided by the members of the family and friends. Moreover, the findings were in agreement withthe findings of LaGrand (2011) who identified several coping mechanisms to grief and loss among the adolescents including talking about the loss, gradually accepting the loss and support of the friends. Majority of the participants benefited from the counseling services either from school, friends, and church. Most of the participants shared the need of schools to have guidance and counseling services to help the students, who have experienced the loss of their loved ones. The findings of this was supported by the findings of Berman, Cragg and Kuenzig (2018) which found that peer group interventions can be much of help to adolescents going through loss and grief in adjusting to life without their loved ones. Moreover, acceptance of the loss of loved one was identified as a coping strategy. Some participants expressed theneed to let go of the loved ones and to focus on achievements in live. Also having a positive thinking and especially remembering the good memories of the loved one. The findings were in line with findings of Worden (2016) who emphasized the need to help adolescents who have experienced loss and grief totowards accepting the reality by experiencing the pain and choosing to move forward with life.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that loss and grief plays a big role on the self-esteem of students who experience the loss of loved one and especially on their identity, self-acceptance and self-confidence. The study recommends secondary schools to strengthen guidance and counselling in order to help students who have experienced loss of their loved ones to deal with loss and grief. Also, to empower the teachers in charge of guidance and counselling department with skills on loss and grief counselling and finally to sensitize students on how best they can handle their colleagues' students when they are going through loss and grief.

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