

**Exploring psychological stress, effects and coping
resources among orphans in Magona Village of Malamulele
Community in Thulamela Municipality, Limpopo Province**

A dissertation

**Submitted to the University of Venda in fulfilment
For the Master of Arts Psychology Degree
In the School of Health Sciences
At the University of Venda**

By

**Baloyi Tsakani Mekie
(Student Number - 11575165)**

Supervisor: Prof. P Mudhovozi, Department of Psychology

Co-supervisor: Dr. J Takalani, Department of Psychology

2016

UNIVEN LIBRARY

Library Item : 20162154



ABSTRACT

Orphans in South Africa experience several psychological challenges including stress. These challenges may further impede the grieving process, placing these children at a heightened risk of prolonged mental and behavioural problems. The aim of the study was to investigate the psychological stress, its effects and coping resources among orphans. An exploratory research design was used to conduct the study. The population included all male and female orphans living at Magona Village of Malamulele Community between the ages of 13 to 18 years. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. The number of participants selected depended on data saturation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted. Individualised interviews were conducted by the researcher with the selected orphans. A voice recorder was used to record the conversations. Data was analysed using thematic content analysis. The study embraced eight ethical considerations: permission to conduct the study, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and privacy, avoidance of harm, right to withdraw, voluntary participation, and publication of results.

The study found that orphans at Magona Village experienced several psychological stresses. The treatment received by the orphans from the caregivers and the community, delay in disclosure of caregivers' relationships to the orphans and cultural beliefs that children may not experience psychological stress contributed to stress levels. Psychological stress experienced affected them negatively. Different resources for coping with stress which are positive and negative were utilised. Recommendations were made to The Department of Health, The Department of Social Development, The Department of Education and, The Tribal Authority of Magona Village.

Keywords: Psychological stress, stress, effects, coping resources and orphans.