

**THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL JOB LOSS ON THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN IN KAWEMPE DIVISION, KAMPALA DISTRICT,
UGANDA**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE OF BACHELOR
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DECLARATION

I, **ABWOCH ANNA MARIA**, hereby attest that the dissertation I have submitted to School of Social Sciences, Uganda Christian University in order to receive a degree in Social Work and Social Administration is entirely original with no submissions to other institutions for consideration for any awards.

Signature:



Date 27 April 2026

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APPROVAL

As a prerequisite for the award of a degree of bachelor of social work and social administration from Uganda Christian University, this certifies that the dissertation, **“THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL JOB LOSS ON THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN IN KAWEMPE DIVISION, KAMPALA DISTRICT, UGANDA,”** was completed under my supervision and is now prepared for submission for review.

Signed: 

Date: 27 April 2026

SUPERVISOR: MR. KABANDA LEWIS CARL

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, who guided, encouraged, and mentored me during my academic journey up to the university level.

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My supervisor, Mr. Kabanda Lewis Carl, has my sincere gratitude for his capable oversight, commitment, availability, and expert counsel.

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Finally, I give thanks to God for my good health and strength, which have allowed me to conduct the research successfully from start to finish.

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the impact of parental job loss on the social and emotional development of children aged 10-17 years in Kawempe Division, Kampala District. It specifically focused on; assessing the emotional effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division, examining the social effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division, and identifying coping mechanisms used by children and families affected by parental job loss in Kawempe division

The study was carried out using a cross-sectional descriptive research design where quantitative research approach was also used. The data was collected using questionnaires and during data collection; both purposive and simple random sampling methods were used. A sample size of 100 respondents who are children aged 10-17 years in Kawempe Division whose parents have lost employment within the past two years was used in the study.

The findings from the study showed that when parents lose their jobs in Kawempe division, it negatively affects children both emotionally and socially. Many children feel sad, anxious and stressed. Some withdraw from others, lose confidence and find it difficult to relate well with their peers, their participation in school and community activities also reduces. Financial problems in the family make the situation worse as children start worrying about basic needs like food and school requirements which increases their emotional distress. However, support from family members helps to reduce some of these negative effects. Even with these challenges, children and families try to cope in different ways. These include seeking support from others, relying on religion or spirituality, thinking positively and making practical changes in their daily lives. This shows that they are resilient. However, some coping mechanisms like avoiding problems and hiding emotions may make the situation worse with time.

Finally, the study recommended the need for strengthening social welfare support for affected families, establishing school-based counseling and mentorship programs, promoting community peer support and recreational activities, equipping parents with positive parenting skills during unemployment, and enhancing collaboration with religious and community leaders to provide

emotional and spiritual support, all aimed at improving the social and emotional well being of children affected by parental job loss.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter displays the information of chapter one from the background of the study to the problem statement to purpose of the study the objectives of the study, the research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study and finally the conceptual framework.

1.1 Background to the Study

The employment status of a parent has been known to be a key determinant on a child's social and emotional well-being. It is important for a parent to have stable employment as they are able to provide for their children basic needs such as health care, food, education etc. According to Conger et al., 2010; McLoyd, 1998), parental job loss affects a family negatively and this affects the family dynamics causing stress to increase in the household in the end affecting the children's emotional and social development.

Globally, parental job loss is known to be linked to aspects such as depression, little or no social competence, anxiety, behavioral challenges in children. Evidence from the different levels of income countries namely the high- and middle-income countries parents that children whose parents experienced job loss may or may not experience difficulties such as economic distress, peer relation difficulties, emotional instability (Baranowska Rataj et al., 2023; Havermans & van der Jagt, 2021)

In Uganda, there is the high levels of underemployment and unemployment especially in the urban setting areas where there is a high level of informal employment. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics reports that "over 60% urban employment is informal and characterized by low job security and making households vulnerable to sudden job loss (UBOS, 2022; UBOS, 2024). According to UNICEF, 2021, the national child well being reports highlight that job loss reduces care giving capacity, increases the house hold stress.

Despite this evidence, limited empirical research has focused specifically on how parental job loss affects children's social and emotional development in Kawempe Division. This study therefore sought to address this gap.

Locally, in Kawempe division Kampala district is one of the highly economically struggling and highly populated areas. Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) highlights that in Kawempe the main type of employment is small scale trade, informal employment and casual Labour which can easily affect them if economic disruptions are to take place (KCCA, 2021; KCCA, 2023).

Local Government and Non-government organizations have connected income instability and parental unemployment to poor peer relation, emotional distress and absenteeism in school among children in informal settlements in Kampala (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, 2020; UNICEF & UBOS, 2019). This study sought to address the gap.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Parental job loss is defined as when a caregiver or a parent loses their employment status, causing a change in family life style and can impact the health of the family members. The negative impacts of job loss tend to affect the lower income households compared to the higher income households Ruiz-Valenzuela (2021).

Ideally, children need to grow up in stable environments where their parents have the ability to provide for them basic needs, such as food, shelter, education and emotional support. However in Kikaaya, Kyebando, Makerere zone III Kawempe Division, children are commonly affected by their parents losing their jobs due to dependence on informal employment and economic instability. As a result of job loss families face challenges of increased levels of stress, inability to meet children's basic needs, reduced income etc. This has led to emotional and social challenges among children which lead to social withdrawal and poor peer relationships. In Kikaaya, Kyebando, Makerere zone III Kawempe Division,

Children who come from households experiencing job loss often face social exclusion due to the financial hardships. The limited targeted interventions and child focused research on parental job loss escalates the situation. This study therefore sought to explore how parental job loss affects the social and emotional development of children in Kikaaya, Kyebando, Makerere zone III Kawempe Division.

1.3 General Objective

To explore the impact of parental job loss on the social and emotional development of children aged 10-17 years in Kawempe Division, Kampala District.

1.4 Specific Objectives of the Study

- i. To assess the emotional effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division.
- ii. To examine the social effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division.
- iii. To identify coping mechanisms used by children and families affected by parental job loss in Kawempe division.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What emotional effects does parental job loss have on children in Kawempe Division?
- ii. How does parental job loss affect the social relationships of children in Kawempe Division?
- iii. What coping mechanisms are used by children and families experiencing parental job loss in Kawempe Division?

1.6 Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in Kawempe Division in areas, Kampala District, focusing on selected communities within Kikaaya, Kyebando, and Makerere III zones.

1.6.2 Content Scope

The study focused on parental job loss and its effects on children's emotional well being (such as stress, anxiety, sadness) and social development (peer relationships, social interaction, behavior), as well as coping mechanisms.

1.6.3 Time Scope

The study was focus on children 10 -17 years whose parents experienced job loss within the last two years (2023-2025).

1.7 Significance of the Study

The results of this study would contribute to academic knowledge on the relationship between parental job loss and child development in urban Ugandan settings. The study would also inform social workers, NGOs, and community-based organizations operating in Kawempe Division about the specific challenges faced by children affected by parental unemployment.

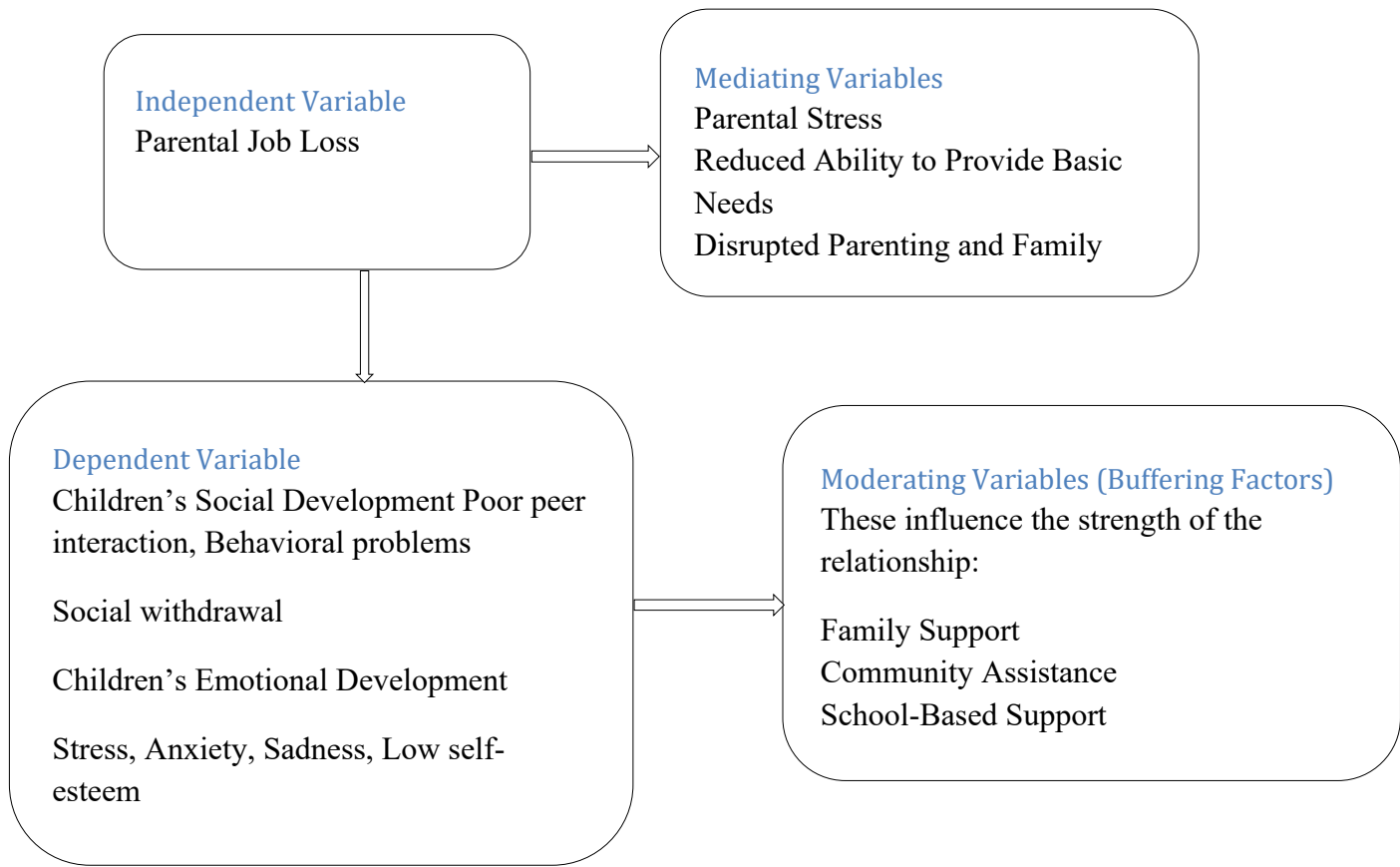
The findings of this study was to show policy makers what is required for development in areas of Uganda for example child welfare programs and increase in social protection aiming at the unemployed households. Furthermore, the study would be an insight for future scholars intrigued by unemployment, poverty in urban areas in Uganda.

There is use of the family stress model developed by Rand D. Conger et al., 1994) as the conceptual frame work. It explains how job loss as apparent affects the family dynamics and the children's emotional and social well being, parental job loss affects parents' ability to provide basic needs such as education, emotional support, food etc. which can also negatively family relationships.

As a result, children are negatively impacted by parental job loss. These children tend to have social challenges, behavioral problems, poor peer interaction and emotional challenge for example; sadness, stress and anxiety. The availability of support systems namely school-based support programs, community support programs, extended family support can assist children to cope with those problems.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing the relationship between parental job loss and the social and emotional development of children in Kawempe adapted *from* the Family Stress Model (Conger et al., 1994)



Source: Adapted from the Family Stress Model (Conger et al., 1994)

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter explains the study by showing the link between parental job loss and social and emotional development of children. It shows how job loss affects the family dynamics, increases parental stress and destabilizes the function of a family leading to negative emotional and social challenges towards children. This chapter highlights the research problem which is the limited focus on how job loss can affect a child negatively. To address this gap the study's general objective is to examine this impact.

In conclusion, chapter outlines the importance of the study including its potential contributions to academic knowledge it's value for informing social workers and NGOs and its usefulness for policy makers in strengthening child welfare programs.it ends by present a conceptual framework that includes models and a theory .This framework visually explains the pathway from parental job loss to financial hardship and parental stress which then negatively impacts children's social and emotional well being.

This chapter reviews recent and relevant literature on parental job loss and children's social and emotional development. The literature is organized thematically, focusing on emotional development, social development, and children's lived experiences of parental job loss, and coping mechanisms. Emphasis is placed on current global, regional, and national evidence, with particular relevance to low-income urban contexts such as Kampala.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents relevant literature. It presents similar work done according to the impact of parental job loss on the social and emotional development of children and review literature related to the study. This chapter purpose is to highlight the different literature considered to be relevant to the study. Children require a multi fold of things to develop socially and emotionally.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

2.1.1 Family Stress Model

According to Conger and Elder (1994), job loss increases financial pressure on families, leading to psychological distress among parents. This stress can destabilize the family functioning leading to harsh disciplinary action, poor emotional support which negatively impacts the children's well being. The model highlights that economic stress increases the child's depression, behavior difficulties and anxiety decrease parental availability. Studies demonstrate that financial strain resulting from unemployment is consistently associated with reduced parental warmth and increased conflict in family environments. (Conger et al.,2010)

2.1.2 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

The ecological systems theory explains childhood development it explains the different levels in which a child may be exposed to from the Microsystem. The microsystem includes their immediate environment such as friends and family. Then Mesosystem and macrosystem. When a parent loses a job the family system (microsystem) is affected due to the presence of stress (Bronfenbrenner,1979).

2.1.3 Resilience and Protective Frameworks

The resilience theory sheds light on why some children do well even when they come to face serious challenges. (Garmezy 1991), highlighted that certain factors are used to assist children to overcome hardship. Masten (2001) defines resilience as "ordinary magic" (p. 227), suggesting that it derives from an adaptive system in human beings. The known protective factors include accessible community programs, positive school environments and supportive caregiver relationships. (Werner &Smith,1992).

2.2 Global Empirical Literature

2.2.1 Prevalence and Broad Impacts

Parental job loss is recognized globally as a significant socioeconomic shock that increases risk for adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), including neglect, maltreatment, and household dysfunction. (Schneider, Waldfogel, and Brooks-Gunn, 2017) carried out a systematic meta-analysis of 60 studies found that parental unemployment is associated with 29% increased risk of sexual abuse, 54% increased risk of neglect, 60% increased risk of physical abuse, and up to 90% higher risk of child maltreatment and parental mental illness. The final effect was highly associated with fathers losing their jobs. The international labor organization (2021) reported similar findings.

2.2.2 Psychological and Developmental Consequences

Evidence from longitudinal research indicates that children exposed to parental job loss show measurable declines in emotional well being and social adjustment. Brookings' analysis, using decades of German panel data reported by Hogberg & Baranowska-Rataj, ((2024) suggests that parental unemployment experienced in early childhood (ages 0-5) is linked to lower life satisfaction later in life approximately 8% lower on life satisfaction scales suggesting long-term psychological impacts of economic instability during formative years.

According to Hogberg & Baranowska-Rataj, (2023), the effects of parental job loss on a child's emotional development can be seen or after a period of time which can be two to three years after the job loss Furthermore Sandstrom et al, (2013) demonstrated that parental job loss is related to a child's decline in academic performance and behavior such as depression anxiety. Stevens & Schaller (2009) also found that parental job loss on children and their academic program performance may be different this is showed that children from low educated families may be victims of parental job loss compared to families that have parents that are well educated. According to Sandstrom and Huerta, (2013) social emotional support stability is essential for child wellbeing. children need caregivers or parents who provide who will provide them with a favorable environment with access to medical care and opportunities to develop. Furthermore, Sandstrom et al, (2013) highlights that not only is there a decline in income but an increase on stress and lack of oversight on losing a job.

2.2.3 Family Dynamics and Mental Health Spillovers

Parental unemployment alters family psychological dynamics. Evidence from (Mari & Keizer, 2021) shows that when a parent loses employment, maternal or paternal mental health can decline, increasing the likelihood of adolescent depressive symptoms, especially among girls, illustrating

how job loss can spill over into emotional health domains for children. Stevens & Schaller (2009) emphasized that the families often have higher rate at 3% change of separation and 8% change of environment due to job loss which explains why these changes may affect child's emotional and social well-being.

Hogberg & Baranowska-Rataj, (2023) demonstrated demonstrate that there are many ways in which parental job loss may impact a child's emotional and social development and health these are stress from the parent to the child's change in family dynamics.

2.3 Regional Literature: Sub-Saharan Africa

In Sub-Saharan Africa, unemployment and job insecurity are structural problems. The International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021 reported that over 80% of urban work in the region is informal, often without job security or social protection.

Save the Children (2020) published a report on child well being in East Africa. The report noted that economic waves lead to various things such as low school attendance which affect children in terms of the social and emotional well being.

2.4 National Literature: Uganda

There are high levels of underemployment and unemployment especially in the urban setting areas in Kampala (UBOS,2022). The levels employment in the informal sector is 60% making the families vulnerable to economic shifts. (UNICEF ,2021), reports highlight that the employment is a key determinant for poor childhood outcomes for example deteriorating mental health etc.

Children in households with unstable income are more likely to experience multidimensional poverty, which (UNICEF ,2021) defines as deprivation in at least three dimensions of well being health, education, standard of living.

National child well being assessments in Uganda also show that children from economically stressed households are more likely to experience reduced psycho social support and lower peer engagement, although these studies do not isolate parental unemployment as the sole variable. (Stevens et al..2009) further highlight in the United States Family productivity decreases by 10% due to parental job loss and employment income reduces by 15% just like in Uganda the percentage of income from a parental figure in informal employment the known difference is that in Uganda there are no employment safety Nets to help those in need but in the United States of America such bailouts are available to the public.

2.5 Local Literature: Kawempe Division

Local data specific to Kawempe Division is sparse. However, Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) socio-economic assessments identify persistent job insecurity and poverty in informal settlements, with many households relying on casual labor, petty trade, and informal services sectors highly susceptible to fluctuations and job loss. The increase in behavioral issues and absenteeism is associated with the economic hardships the household is facing.

The social workers in Kikaaya, Kyebando and Makerere zone III Kawempe Division imply that children whose parentals are experiencing economic hardships present challenges in their social and emotional development for example high levels isolation and high levels of anxiety.

2.6 Thematic Synthesis

2.6.1 Parental Job Loss and Children's Emotional Development

Emotional distress in children has been known to come from parental job loss as the children are negatively impacted by their parent's employment status. Parental emotional availability becomes limited due to the financial hardship a parent is facing, resulting to anxiety, depression and stress towards the parent and household (Conger et al., 2010; Lund et al., 2011). Anxiety, fear and sadness have been known to come from children whose parents have experienced job loss.

Economic shifts have been known to affect low- and middle-income countries compared to the first-class status countries this has been known to affect the social and emotional development of children. UNICEF, (2021) reported that children living in economically stressed households are more likely to experience persistent worry, low mood, and emotional withdrawal. In urban African settings, parental income instability has been linked to heightened emotional vulnerability due to overcrowding, food insecurity, and limited access to psychosocial support services (Patel et al., 2018).

Nikolova and Nikolai ,(2021) also highlighted that children between the ages of 11 to 15 are affected by parental job loss as they start to understand and become more self-aware of themselves and their surroundings these children evidently may take on responsibilities at home due to their parents experiencing job loss. Hogberg & Baranowska-Rataj,(2024) observed that children at the age of 10 were heavily impacted by parental job loss of their father risking their mental health while those 11 to 18 years had a little or no effect.

2.6.2 Parental Job Loss and Children's Social Development

Social development is defined as a child's ability to socialize positively with peers, participate in social activities, and develop appropriate social behaviors. Studies show that parental job loss often leads to reduced school attendance, limited participation in extracurricular activities, and social withdrawal among children (Rege et al., 2011; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Economic strain may restrict children's access to social spaces and increase stigma, particularly in school environments. At the national level, reports indicated that children from house hold that is financial strained are more likely to experience absenteeism in school, behavioral problems and poor peer relationships. (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2021; UNICEF, 2019).

2.6.3 Children's Experiences of Parental Job Loss

Children experience parental job loss as a stressful and destabilizing life event. Qualitative studies indicate that children are often aware of household financial difficulties and parental frustration, which can create feelings of fear, shame, and uncertainty (Evans & Kim, 2013). In low income households, children may assume additional responsibilities such as caregiving or income-generating activities, which interfere with schooling and peer interaction.

Furthermore, in urban Africa reports show that parental job loss affects children as they experience social isolation, stress in household relationships and emotional distress. This shows why it is essential to explore children's perspectives when estimating how parental job loss affects child wellbeing Save the Children, (2020).

2.6.4 Coping Mechanisms Used by Children

There are various ways in which coping mechanisms can assist in social and emotional stress that the children /caregivers may be experiencing. These may include; community-based interventions, peer support, positive school systems. Caregivers can provide support that can help moderating the effects of financial hardships Garmezy, (1991), Ainsworth, M.D.S, (1978).

In Uganda, School based support programs offer support to children as a way of helping them cope with what they are experiencing in their households. Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, (2020)

2.6.5 Relationship Between Parental Job Loss and Children's Social and Emotional Development

Parental unemployment has been known to affect the social and emotional wellbeing of children this this due to there being the change in family dynamics, increased stress in the household and reduced income flow.it is common for there to be emotional withdraw for the parents to the children and household. Uther more the presence of supportive programs or systems can reduce the effects on the household and children. Children are negatively affected by parental job loss as it affects the family functioning Kalil, (2009).

2.7 Research Gaps

Globally there is a relationship between a parent's employment status and the negative impact on the child. There is limited information on the link of parental job loss and how it negatively affects child development in the local setting, In Kawempe division there is high number of informal employment and economic shock are common occurrences in this area. There is limited information in this area show casing the emotional and social impact of parental job loss on children.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review

This chapter highlights that parental job loss deeply affects the social and emotional wellbeing of children. Globally parental job loss affects the child's ability to interact with peers, increases stress and anxiety also leading to absenteeism and academic decline.it also highlights that a child is impacted by the systems/environment, these systems have been known to be linked to each other Bronfenbrenner, (1979).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used to explore the impact of the parental job loss on the social and emotional development of children in Kawempe Division, Kampala district. It presents aspects such as research design area of study (location), study population, sampling procedures, variables, data collection, data analysis methods and ethical considerations.

This study uses quantitative methods with structured questionnaires. The purpose of this approach was to have objective and measurable data as required for the field based social work research.

3.1 Research Design

A cross sectional descriptive research design is to be adopted. It involves collecting data from the respondents in order to describe existing conditions. It is right because the study seeks to explore how parental job loss affects the social and emotional development of children in Kawempe Division's study also wanted to examine the impact of parental job loss on a household as a whole over time.

A quantitative approach was appropriated because it allows the researcher to acquire feedback or responses for a large number of respondents and to sum up the results in percentages and frequencies using Likert scale, bar graphs and pie charts. All aimed at reducing researcher bias and uniform responses.

3.2 Area of Study

The study was conducted in Kikaaya, Kyebando and Makerere in Kawempe Kampala District. Kawempe is a densely populated area with high levels of poverty as it is an urban area with a high number on reliance of informal employment, these conditions have been known to make households vulnerable to job loss.

The three zones namely Kikaaya, Kyebando and Makerere III. These areas were chosen due they the low-income urban communities where under employment and unemployment is common. Studying these areas increases the probability of finding children affected by parental job loss.

3.3 Study Population

The study population comprised of children aged 10 -17 years living in areas of Kikaaya, Kyebando and Makerere zone III whose parents are and have experienced parental job loss with in the last two years.

For accuracy in analysis the population will be categorized in two categories namely:10- 17 years. The study population 10-13 years and 14 -17 years. The range difference between the ages is 4. This is used for easy assessment of data. This is used because children are known to have different developmental stages may respond differently to family economic stress.

3.4 Population and Sampling Techniques

3.4.1 Target Population

The target population is all children aged 10-17 years in Kikaaya, Kyebando and Makerere zone III whose parents are and have experienced parental job loss with in the last two years and are having social and emotional challenges.

3.4.2 Sample Size

A sample of 100 children aged 10- 17 years were participants of the study. Only children were participants because the study was focused on how parental job loss affected the social and emotional development of children.

“n” is the sample size

N” is the population

“e” = error (0.05)

“N” (population) = 134 children aged 10-17 years that have been affected by parental job loss from Kawempe Division.

$$N = 134 / (1 + 134 \times 0.05^2)$$

$$N = 134 / (1 + 0.335)$$

$$N = 134 / 1.335$$

$$\underline{N = 100}$$

3.4.3 Sampling Technique

The technique that was the most appropriate to use was the purposive sampling under the non-probability sampling technique. This technique is applicable because the study needs participants

who fit a specific category. Simple random sampling was also used to give the children a chance of participation. This reduced selection bias and improves representativeness of the sample.

3.5 Variables Definition and Measurement

The study focused on the relationship between parental job loss and children's development

Independent variable is the parental job loss of employment resulting in economic hardships in the household.

Dependent variables are the children's emotional development such as sadness, anxiety and stress. Children's social aspect such as participation, social interaction and peer relationships.

The measurement was based on the responses to structured questionnaire items using agree and disagree alternatives.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

The study used a structured questionnaire as the only data collection tool. The questionnaire was appropriate because it allows the collection of information from many respondents with in a limited time. The questionnaire will comprise of four sections related to the objectives of research study. The sections are namely;

Section A: Demographic characteristics

Section Emotional effects of parental job loss

Section Social effects of parental job loss

Section Doping mechanisms used by children

All the above sections had 15 structured questions.

3.7 Procedure for Data Collection

The data collection was through permission authorities in the study areas for example; the local leaders, parents and guardians and school administrators. The eligible households were located due to the help of local leaders. The researcher distributed questioners to the eligible participants to selected children through face-to-face interaction.

Each interaction with the respondents took 20- 30 minutes. The responses were recorded directly.

3.8 Quality Control

For there to be validity and reliability of the data the tool/instrument of data collection was pre tested on a small group of children out of Kikaaya, kyebando and Makerere zone iii all aimed at checking the validity and reliability of the instrument (the questionnaire). all the data collected was checked in to ensure consistency and completeness.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaires were put in to categories for example, Agree and Disagree. There was also the use of percentages and frequencies that were calculated to sum up the data collected. The findings presented in the Likert scale were presented in pie charts and bar graphs manually. This method was appropriate for descriptive studies using structured questionnaires.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Confidentially was maintained by not recording participations names on questionnaires. All the data collected were used strictly for academic purposes.

Sensitive questions, these questions were asked carefully to avoid emotional distress. Participants has the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

The participation in the study was completely voluntary. There was a written consent from caregivers.

3.11 Methodological Constraints and Mitigation Strategies

Language difficulties, also affect the interpretation of some questions.

One of the challenges that came up during data collection were some children had difficulties sharing economic hardships faced by their household and some households may be hard to access.

To address these challenges the researcher built a rapport with participants before administering questioners. Questions were explained in languages that can easily be understood by the participants or translated to the next language which is Luganda where necessary

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter has a cross sectional descriptive deigns to explore the impact of parental job loss on the social and emotional development of children in Kikaaya, Kyebando and Makerere zone III in Kawempe Division Kampala district. A sample size of 100 were chosen from the age of 10-17 years.

Purposive and simple random sampling for equal participation. The instrument of data collection is a questionnaire. Data was processed by tallying frequencies etc. To ensure quality control the questionnaire was pretested and completed forms were checked for consistency. Permission for the study was secured from local authorities and parents with informed consent. Ethical considerations are paramount and ensuring confidentiality and the right to withdraw. This methodology was designed to provide a structured and ethical assessment of how parental job loss currently affects the social and emotional wellbeing of children in this specific urban context.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

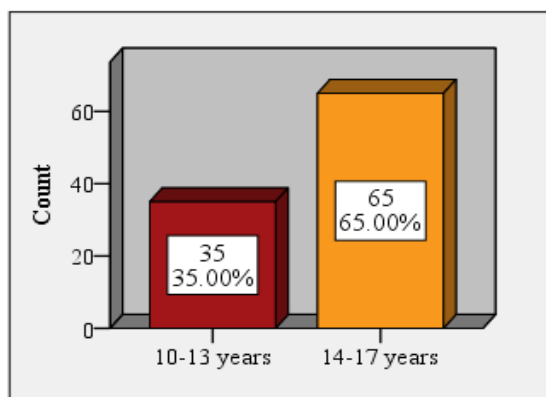
This chapter presents and discusses the results of analysis that has been done to look at the specific objectives of the study and in relation to the reviewed literature. The study was carried out using questionnaires with 100 children aged 10-17 years in Kawempe Division whose parents have lost employment within the past two years. The findings are presented with the help of tables for purposes of clarity and interpretation.

4.1 Findings on demographic characteristics of respondents

This section presents the general background information about the respondents in relation to their age, sex, class/level of education, area/zone of residence, parent/guardian who lost employment, duration since parent lost job, who they currently live with, number of children in the household, type of housing, main source of income now, whether the child ever changed schools due to financial problems, distance from home to school, whether they receive any external support (e.g., NGOs, community, relatives), access to basic needs after job loss and family structure as shown in the table below;

4.1.1 Age of the respondents

Figure 1: Age

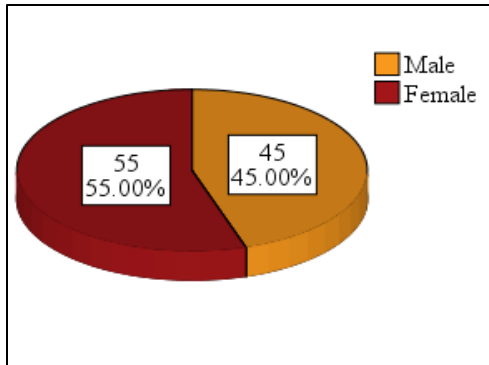


Source: *Primary data*

According to figure 2 above, the majority of respondents were aged 14–17 years at 65.0%, while those aged 10–13 years accounted for 35.0%. This indicates that most participants were older children, who are more likely to understand and express the effects of parental job loss.

4.1.2 Sex of the respondents

Figure 2: Sex

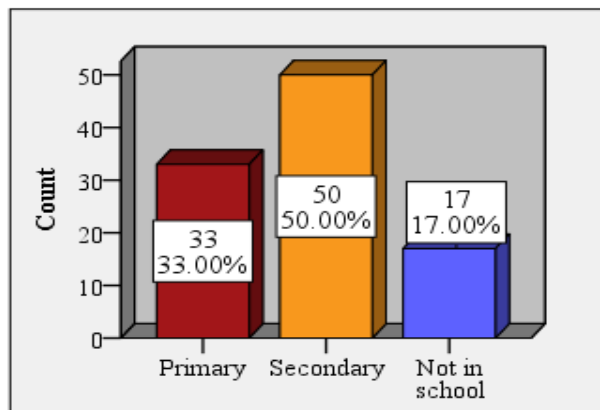


Source: Primary data

The finding in figure 3 show that 55.0% of respondents were female and 45.0% were male. This means that there were slightly more female respondents than male in the study.

4.1.3 Education level of respondents

Figure 3: Level of education

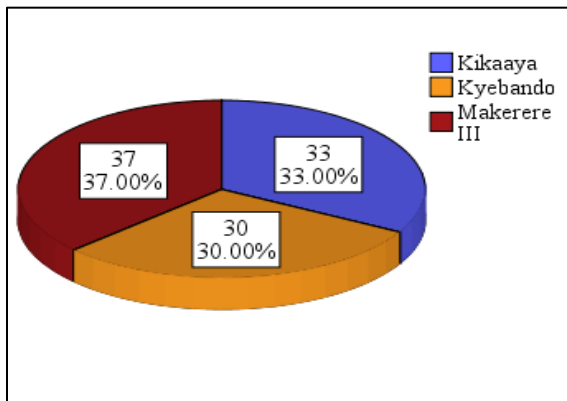


Source: Primary data

The results showed that 50.0% of respondents were in secondary school, 33.0% were in primary school and 17.0% were not in school. This means that although most children were still at school, a notable number had dropped out possibly because of financial challenges.

4.1.4 Area/zone of residence of respondents

Figure 4: Area/zone of residence

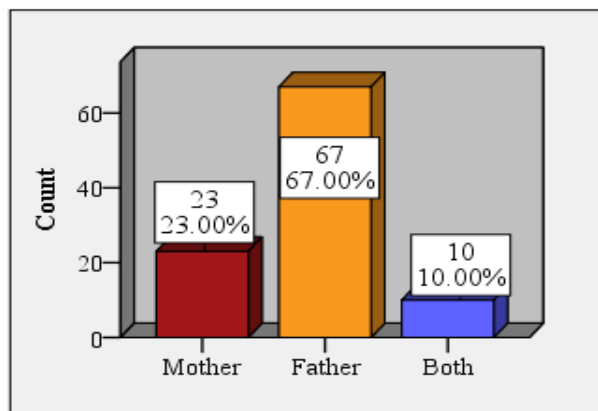


Source: Primary data

The findings showed that 37.0% of respondents lived in Makerere III, 33.0% from Kikaaya and 30.0% were from Kyebando. This means the respondents were fairly evenly distributed across the three areas although Makerere III had slightly more participants than others.

4.1.5 Respondents parents/guardians who lost employment

Figure 5: Parent/guardian who lost employment

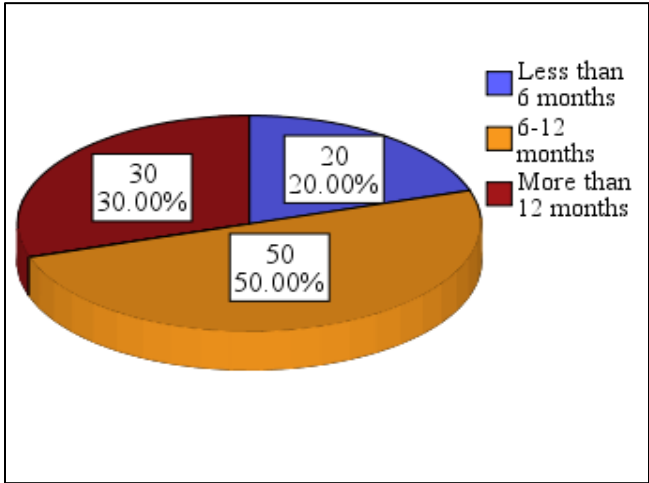


Source: Primary data

The findings revealed that majority of respondents reported that their fathers lost employment at 67.0%, followed by those whose mothers' lost employment, represented by 23.0%, while 10.0% indicated that both parents lost employment. This shows that fathers were the most affected in terms of job loss.

4.1.6 Duration since parents of the respondents lost jobs

Figure 6: Duration since parent lost job

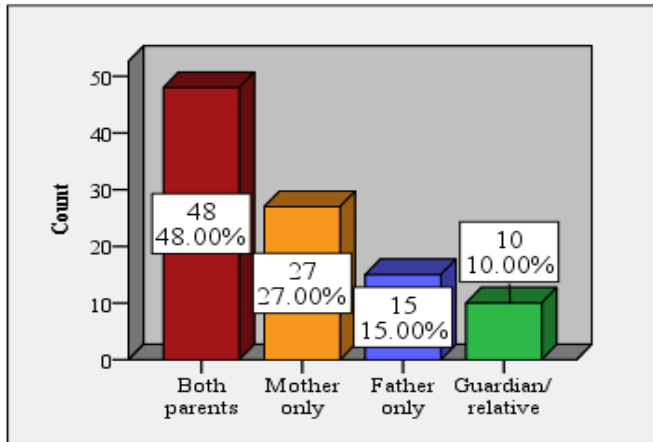


Source: *Primary data*

In addition, the results found out that half of the respondents indicated that the job loss occurred 6–12 months ago at 50.0%, followed by more than 12 months at 30.0%, and less than 6 months at 20.0%. This suggests that many families had been experiencing the effects of job loss for a considerable period.

4.1.7 Who the respondents currently live with

Figure 7: Who do you currently live with?

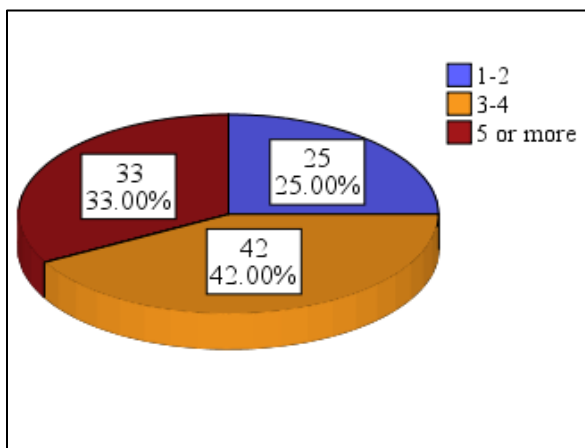


Source: Primary data

The findings also illustrated that most of the children live with both parents at 48.0%, followed by those living with the mother only at 27.0%, the father only at 15.0%, and guardians or relatives at 10.0%. this means that almost half of the children were still living with both parents even after the job loss.

4.1.8 Number of children in the household

Figure 8: Number of children in the household

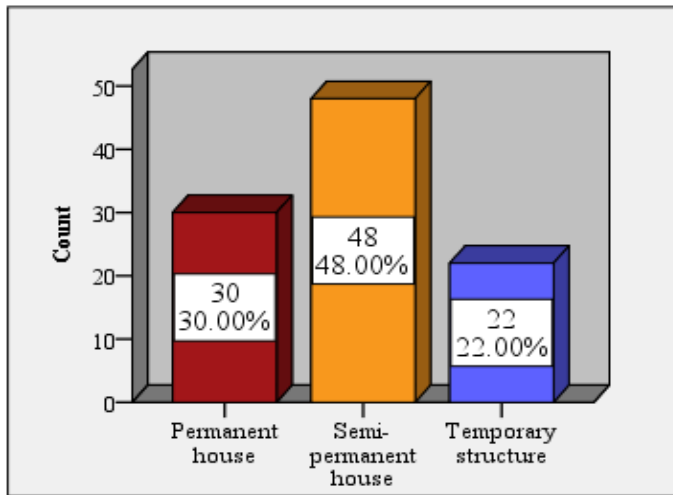


Source: Primary data

The result showed that most respondents 42.0% came from households with 3-4 children. This was followed by those from households with 5 or more children 33.0% and 25.0% came from households with 1-2 children. This suggests that many children were living in relatively large families.

4.1.9 Type of housing of the respondents

Figure 9: Type of housing

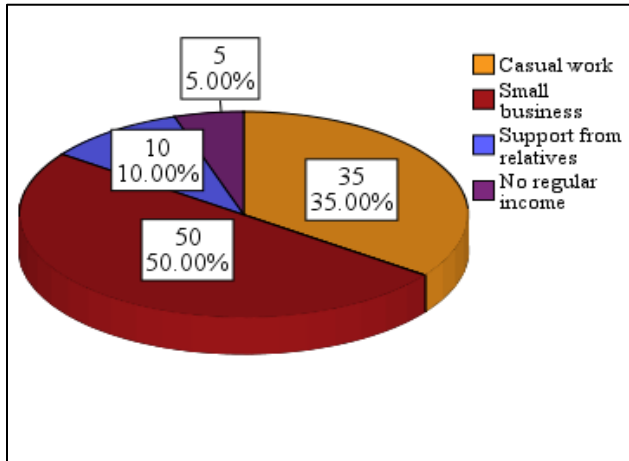


Source: *Primary data*

The results noted that most respondents live in semi-permanent houses at 48.0%, followed by those who live in permanent houses at 30.0%, while 22.0% live in temporary structures. This suggests that a large proportion of families were in moderately stable but not fully permanent housing conditions.

4.1.10 Main source of family income now of the respondents

Figure 10: Main source of family income now

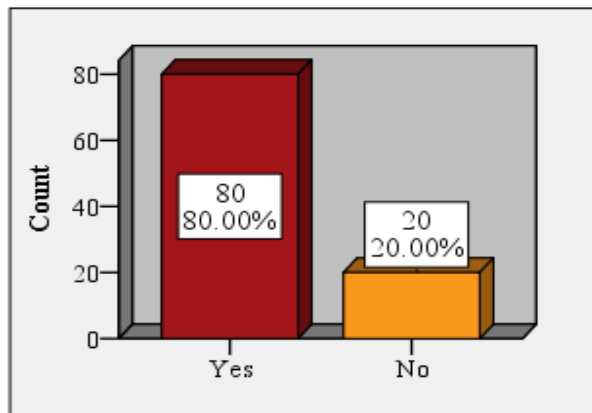


Source: *Primary data*

The results noted that most respondents live in semi-permanent houses at 48.0%, followed by those who live in permanent houses at 30.0%, while 22.0% live in temporary structures. This suggests that a large proportion of families were in moderately stable but not fully permanent housing conditions.

4.1.11 Whether the respondents have ever changed schools due to financial problems

Figure 11: Has the child ever changed schools due to financial problems

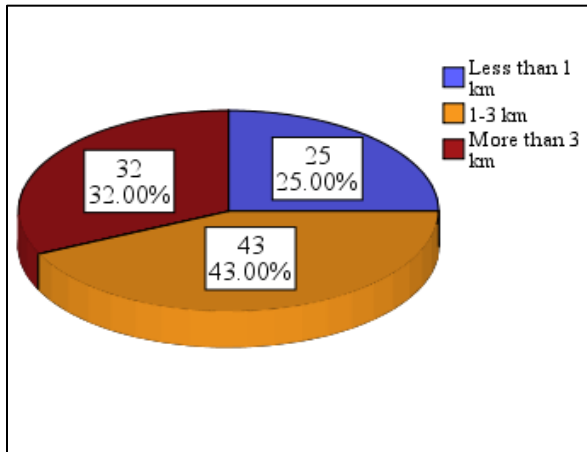


Source: *Primary data*

The results revealed that majority of respondents reported having changed schools due to financial problems at 80.0%, while 20.0% noted that they did not change school due to financial problems. This means that many children's schooling was affected when their parents lost their jobs.

4.1.12 Distance from home to school of the respondents

Figure 12: Distance from home to school

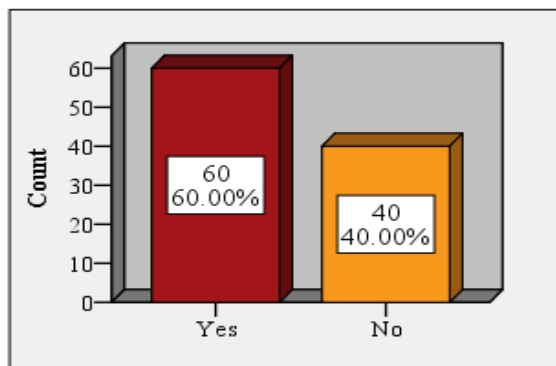


Source: Primary data

The results show that 43.0% of respondents travel 1-3 km to school, 32.0% travel more than 3 km and 25.0% travel less than 1 km. This means that many children have to walk moderate to long distances to get to school.

4.1.13 Whether the respondents receive external support

Figure 14. do you receive external support?

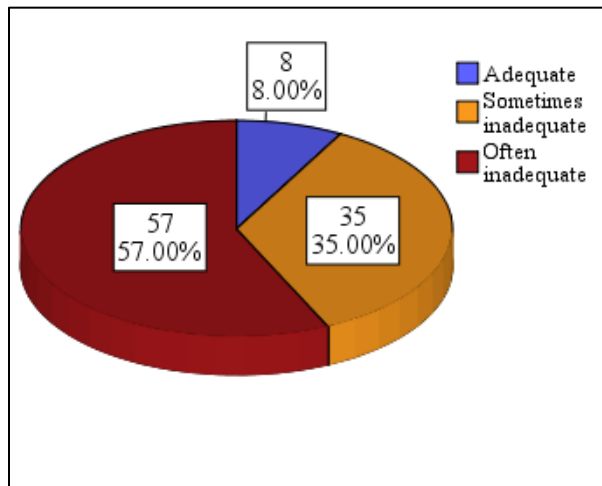


Source: *Primary data*

The results showed that 60.0% of respondents receive support from outside and 40.0% do not. This means that external support is important in helping families to cope with job loss.

4.1.14 Access to basic needs after job loss by the respondents

Figure 13: Access to basic needs after job loss

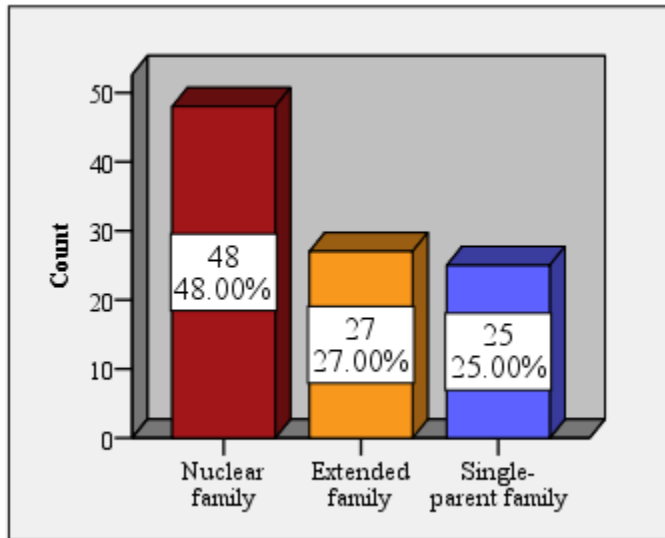


Source: *Primary data*

The results pointed out that more than half of the respondents reported that access to basic needs is often inadequate at 57.0%, followed by sometimes inadequate at 35.0%, while only 8.0% reported adequate access. This indicates that most families struggled to meet basic needs after job loss.

4.1.15 Family structure of the respondents

Figure 14: Family structure



Source: Primary data

The findings established that the largest proportion of respondents comes from nuclear families at 48.0%, followed by those who come from extended families at 27.0%, and those who come from single-parent families were represented by 25.0%. This suggests that most children lived in nuclear family settings, although a considerable number were in extended and single-parent households.

4.2 The emotional effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division

Table 1 summarizes respondents' responses on the emotional effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division by using a Likert scale where 5 (Always), 4 (Often), 3 (Sometimes), 2 (Rarely) and 1(Not at all).

Table 1: The emotional effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division

| Statements | Extent of agreement and disagreement | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| | Always | Often | Someti mes | Rarely | Not at all |
| | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) |
| I feel sad most of the time | 25 25.0% | 47 47.0% | 18 18.0% | 10 10.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I feel worried about my family's situation | 28 28.0% | 28 28.0% | 17 17.0% | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I feel anxious or nervous | 38 38% | 45 45.0% | 17 17.0% | 00 | 00 |
| I cry more easily than before | 38 38.0% | 27 27.0% | 18 18.0% | 17 17.0% | 00 |
| I feel stressed about school or home life | 38 38.0% | 37 37.0% | 00 | 25 25.0% | 00 |
| I feel lonely or left out | 25 25.0% | 43 43.0% | 00 | 20 20.0% | 12 12.0% |
| I feel angry or easily irritated | 25 25.0% | 48 48.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I feel hopeless about the future | 33 33.0% | 32 32.0% | 00 | 25 25.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I have trouble sleeping because of worries | 38 38.0% | 40 40.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 5 5.0% |
| I feel afraid about what might happen to my family | 35 35.0% | 33 33.0% | 2 2.0% | 15 15.0% | 15 15.0% |
| I feel embarrassed about my family's financial situation | 38 38.0% | 35 35.0% | 5 5.0% | 22 22.0% | 00 |
| I feel less happy than I used to be | 27 27.0% | 45 45.0% | 00 | 18 18.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I feel like no one understands my feelings | 25 25.0% | 48 48.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I worry about not having basic needs (food, school fees, etc.) | 42 42.0% | 30 30.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I feel emotionally supported by my family | 40 40.0% | 45 45.0% | 00 | 15 15.0% | 00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics on the emotional effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe division. The findings show that 72.0% of respondents often or always feel sad, 18.0% sometimes feel sad and 10.0% rarely or do not feel sad at all. This indicates that most children frequently experience sadness which shows that parental job loss greatly affects their emotional well being.

The results also reveal that 54.0% of respondents often or always feel worried about their family situation, 18.0% sometimes feel worried and 28.0% rarely or do not feel worried. This suggests that more than half of the children are concerned about their family's condition reflecting increased emotional strain due to financial difficulties.

The result also showed that 83.0% of respondents often or always feel anxious and nervous, 17.0% sometimes feel this way and none reported rarely or not at all. This shows that anxiety is very common among children affected by parental job loss indicating high emotional distress.

Results also show that 65.0% often or always cry more easily than before, 18.0% sometimes do and 17.0% rarely or do not experience this. This suggests increased emotional sensitivity among many children due to household stress.

Regarding stress levels, 75.0% of respondents often or always feel stressed about school or home life. 25.0% rarely or do not feel stressed and none indicated sometimes. This implies that stress is a major challenge affecting children both at home and at school.

The results also show that 68.0% of respondents often or always feel lonely or left out, 32.0% rarely or do not feel this way and none indicated sometimes. This indicates that many children experience social withdrawal and emotional isolation.

The result shows 73.0% of respondents often or always feel hungry or easily irritated, 27.0% rarely or do not feel this way. This suggests that emotional instability and irritability are common among affected children.

The findings also reveal that 65.0% often or always feel hopeless about the future, 35.0% rarely or do not feel hopeless. This shows that parental job loss negatively affects children's outlook on life leading to pessimism.

In addition, 77.0% of respondents often or always have trouble sleeping due to worries and 22.0% rarely or do not experience this. This indicates that emotional stress is severe enough to affect sleep patterns.

The results show that 68.0% of respondent often or always feel afraid about what might happen to their family, 30.0% rarely or do not feel afraid and 2.0% sometimes feel afraid. This reflects widespread fear and uncertainty among children.

The results indicate that 73.0% often or always feel embarrassed about their familys financial situation, 22.0% rarely or do not feel embaraased and 5.0% sometimes feel this way. This suggests that financial hardship contributes to shame and reduced self esteem.

The findings also indicate that 72.0% often or always feel less happy than before, 27.0% rarely or do not feel this way. This shows a clear decline in overall happiness among children affected by parental job loss.

The results further show that 73.0% often or always worry about having basic needs such as food and school fees, 27.0% rarely or do not worry worry about this. This highlights how economic insecurity creates constant worry among children.

However, 85.0% of respondents often or always feel emotionally supported by their family, 15.0% rarely or do not feel supported. This indicates that despite the financial challenges, most families still provide emotional support which helps children to cope with stress.

Therefore, the findings show that parental job loss has a strong negative emotional effects on children in Kawempe division. Most children experiences sadness, anxiety, stress, fear, loneliness, anger and hopelessness. They also face sleep problems and constant worry about basic needs which further affects their well being. However, family emotional support remains an important protective factor that helps children to manage these challenges.

4.3 The social effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics on the social effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe division.

Table 2. The social effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe division

| Statements | Extent of agreement and disagreement | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| | Always | Often | Someti mes | Rarely | Not at all |
| | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) |
| I enjoy spending time with my friends | 20 20.0% | 25 25.0% | 00 | 45 45.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I participate in school activities | 13 13.0% | 30 30.0% | 00 | 37 37.0% | 20 20.0% |
| I feel comfortable talking to my classmates | 20 20.0% | 18 18.0% | 00 | 27 27.0% | 35 35.0% |
| I avoid social gatherings or group activities | 20 20.0% | 45 45.0% | 28 28.0% | 7 7.0% | 00 |
| I have good relationships with my peers | 35 35.0% | 20 20.0% | 00 | 45 45.0% | 00 |
| I feel isolated from other children | 20 20.0% | 8 8.0% | 00 | 25 25.0% | 47 47.0% |
| I take part in community activities | 5 5.0% | 20 20.0% | 00 | 43 43.0% | 32 32.0% |
| I get into conflicts or fights more than before | 50 50.0% | 30 30.0% | 00 | 15 15.0% | 5 5.0% |
| I feel confident when interacting with others | 18 18.0% | 20 20.0% | 00 | 27 27.0% | 35 35.0% |
| I prefer to stay alone rather than mix with others | 25 25.0% | 40 40.0% | 00 | 28 28% | 7 7.0% |
| I feel accepted by my friends | 13 13.0% | 12 12.0% | 00 | 30 30.0% | 45 45.0% |

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|----|-------------|-------------|
| I find it difficult to trust other people | 33 33.0% | 40 40.0% | 00 | 20 20.0% | 7 7.0% |
| I share my problems with friends | 45 45.0% | 20 20.0% | 00 | 35 35.0% | 00 |
| I feel ashamed to interact with others because of my family situation | 50 50.0% | 30 30.0% | 00 | 20 20.0% | 00 |
| I cooperate well with others in group work | 20 20.0% | 18 18.0% | 00 | 27 27.0% | 35 35.0% |

Source: *Primary data*

The findings indicated that 55.0% of the respondents rarely or not at all enjoy spending time with their friends, while 45.0% often or always enjoy spending time with their friends, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that the majority of children have reduced enjoyment in socializing with friends, suggesting weakened peer interaction due to parental job loss.

The findings revealed that 57.0% of the respondents rarely or not at all participate in school activities, while 43.0% often or always participate, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that most children are less involved in school activities which may affect their social development and school life. In addition, 62.0% of respondents rarely or do not feel comfortable talking to their classmates, 38.0% often or always feel comfortable. This shows that many children struggle with communication indicating low social confidence.

The finding reveal that 65.0% of respondents often or always avoid social gatherings or group activities, 27.0% sometimes do and 8.0% rarely or do not. This suggests that social withdrawal is common among children affected by parental job loss.

Interestingly, 55.0% of respondents often or always reported having good relationships with peers, 45.0% rarely or do not. This shows that although some children maintain positive relationships, a considerable number still face challenges in peer interactions.

The results show that 72.0% of respondents rarely or do not feel isolated from other children, 28.0% often or always feel isolated. This implies that most children still maintain some level of social connection despite challenges.

The results show that 75.0% of respondents rarely or do not participate in community activities, 25.0% often or always take part. This indicates low involvement in community activities among most children.

The results revealed that 80.0% of the respondents often or always get into conflicts or fights more than before, while 20.0% rarely or not at all experience this, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that parental job loss may increase aggression and conflict in children's social behavior.

Furthermore, the study findings showed that 62.0% of the respondents rarely or not at all feel confident when interacting with others, while 38.0% often or always feel confident, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that many children experience low confidence in social interactions.

More so, the study findings indicated that 65.0% of the respondents often or always prefer to stay alone rather than mix with others, while 35.0% rarely or not at all prefer this, and none of the respondents indicated sometimes. This therefore implies that social withdrawal is a common response among children.

The findings revealed that 75.0% of the respondents rarely or not at all feel accepted by their friends, while 25.0% often or always feel accepted, and none indicated sometimes. This suggests that many children experience feelings of rejection and lack of belonging.

The results further indicate that 73.0% of respondents often or always find it difficult to trust others and 27.0% rarely or do not. This shows that trust issues are common and may affect relationships. In addition, 65.0% often or always share their problems with friends and 35.0% do not. This implies that despite the difficulties, some children still rely on peers for emotional support.

The findings also reveal that 80.0% of respondents often or always feel ashamed to interact with others because of their family situation and 20.0% rarely or do not. This shows that stigma and embarrassment greatly affect social interaction.

Lastly, 62.0% of respondents rarely or do not cooperate well in group work and 38.0% often or always do. This suggests that teamwork and cooperation skills are negatively affected among many children.

Therefore, the findings show that many children experience reduced participation in school and community activities, low confidence and social withdrawal. There are also issues of poor peer relationships, lack of trust, increased conflict and feelings of shame. Although some children still maintain relationships and share their problems with friends, the overall pattern suggests that

parental job loss disrupts children’s social well being, leading to weakened social connections and reduced social integration.

4.4 Coping mechanisms used by children and families affected by parental job loss

Table 3 summarizes respondents’ responses on the coping mechanisms used by children and families affected by parental job loss in Kawempe Division by using a Likert scale where 5 (Always), 4 (Often), 3 (Sometimes), 2 (Rarely) and 1(Not at all).

Table 2: Coping mechanisms used by children and families affected by parental job loss

| Statements | Extent of agreement and disagreement | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|----------|---------------|----------|---------------|
| | Always | Often | Someti mes | Rarely | Not at all |
| | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) |
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| I talk to someone when I feel stressed | 25 25.0% | 48 48.0% | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% | 00 |
| I seek comfort from my family | 28 28.0% | 27 27.0% | 18 18.0% | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I pray or engage in spiritual activities | 38 37.0% | 45 45.0% | 17 17.0% | 00 | 00 |
| I try to stay positive despite challenges | 38 38.0% | 27 27.0% | 18 18.0% | 17 17.0% | 00 |
| I focus on my schoolwork to distract myself | 38 38.0% | 37 37.0% | 00 | 25 25.0% | 00 |
| I spend time with friends to feel better | 25 25.0% | 43 43.0% | 00 | 20 20.0% | 12 12.0% |
| I help with household activities | 25 25.0% | 48 48.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I avoid thinking about my problems | 33 33.0% | 33 32.0% | 00 | 25 25.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I keep my feelings to myself | 38 38.0% | 40 40.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 5 5.0% |
| I engage in games or hobbies to relax | 35 35.0% | 33 33.0% | 2 2.0% | 15 15.0% | 15 15.0% |
| My family supports each other during hard times | 38 38.0% | 35 35.0% | 5 5.0% | 22 22.0% | 00 |
| We reduce our spending at home | 27 27.0% | 45 45.0% | 00 | 18 18.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I look for advice from elders or teachers | 25 25.0% | 48 48.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I try to solve problems on my own | 43 43.0% | 30 30.0% | 00 | 17 17.0% | 10 10.0% |
| I feel hopeful that things will improve | 40 40.0% | 45 45.0% | 00 | 15 15.0% | 00 |

Source: *Primary data*

Table 3 represents the descriptive statistics on the coping mechanisms used by children and families affected by parental job loss in Kawempe Division. The findings indicated that 73.0% of the respondents often or always talk to someone when they feel stressed, while 10.0% rarely or not at all do so, and 17.0% indicated sometimes. This implies that most children rely on communication as a coping strategy, suggesting the importance of social support in managing stress.

The findings revealed that 54.0% of the respondents often or always seek comfort from their family, while 28.0% rarely or not at all seek comfort, and 18.0% indicated sometimes. This implies

that family remains a key source of emotional support, although a notable proportion of children may lack this support.

The results showed that 83.0% of the respondents often or always pray or engage in spiritual activities, while none rarely or not at all engage in such practices, and 17.0% indicated sometimes. This implies that spirituality plays a significant role in helping children cope with the effects of parental job loss.

The findings indicated that 65.0% of the respondents often or always try to stay positive despite challenges, while 17.0% rarely or not at all do so, and 18.0% indicated sometimes. This implies that many children adopt a positive mindset as a coping mechanism, although some still struggle to maintain optimism.

The results revealed that 75.0% of the respondents often or always focus on their schoolwork to distract themselves, while 25.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that academic engagement is used as a distraction strategy to cope with stress.

The findings showed that 68.0% of the respondents often or always spend time with friends to feel better, while 32.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that peer interaction serves as an important coping mechanism for emotional relief.

The results indicated that 73.0% of the respondents often or always help with household activities, while 27.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that children actively contribute to family responsibilities as a way of coping with the situation.

The findings revealed that 65.0% of the respondents often or always avoid thinking about their problems, while 35.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that avoidance is a commonly used coping strategy, although it may not be effective in the long term.

The results showed that 78.0% of the respondents often or always keep their feelings to themselves, while 22.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that many children internalize their emotions, which may increase the risk of emotional distress.

The findings indicated that 68.0% of the respondents often or always engage in games or hobbies to relax, while 30.0% rarely or not at all do so, and 2.0% indicated sometimes. This implies that recreational activities are used as a positive coping strategy by many children.

The results revealed that 73.0% of the respondents often or always reported that their family supports each other during hard times, while 22.0% rarely or not at all experience this, and 5.0% indicated sometimes. This implies that family cohesion plays an important role in helping children cope with challenges.

The findings showed that 72.0% of the respondents often or always reduce spending at home, while 28.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that families adopt financial adjustment strategies to cope with reduced income.

The results indicated that 73.0% of the respondents often or always look for advice from elders or teachers, while 27.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that guidance from trusted adults is an important coping mechanism for children.

The findings revealed that 73.0% of the respondents often or always try to solve problems on their own, while 27.0% rarely or not at all do so, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that many children develop self-reliance as a coping strategy.

The results showed that 85.0% of the respondents often or always feel hopeful that things will improve, while 15.0% rarely or not at all feel hopeful, and none indicated sometimes. This implies that hope remains a strong and important coping mechanism among children despite challenges.

Overall, the findings indicate that children and families affected by parental job loss in Kawempe Division employ a variety of coping mechanisms, both positive and negative. The majority of respondents reported relying on social support, spirituality, school engagement, and family cohesion as key coping strategies. Positive approaches such as seeking support, staying hopeful, engaging in hobbies, and focusing on schoolwork help children manage stress effectively. However, some children also adopt less adaptive strategies such as avoiding problems and keeping feelings to themselves, which may negatively affect their emotional wellbeing over time. Additionally, families adjust by reducing spending and supporting one another, highlighting resilience in the face of financial hardship. Overall, while parental job loss presents significant

challenges, children and families demonstrate considerable adaptability through a combination of emotional, social, and practical coping strategies.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter includes the discussion of findings in relation to the literature. It also summarizes all findings reported in chapter four according to questions of the study, draws conclusions, suggests recommendations and also proposes some areas for further study.

5.1 Summary of findings

The findings revealed that parental job loss in Kawempe Division has significant negative emotional effects on children. A large majority of children often or always experience sadness, anxiety, stress, fear, anger, loneliness, hopelessness, embarrassment, and decreased happiness, reflecting widespread emotional distress. Many also report trouble sleeping and persistent worry about basic needs such as food and school fees, highlighting the impact of financial instability on their wellbeing. Despite these challenges, most children feel emotionally supported by their families, suggesting that family support serves as a crucial protective factor that helps them cope with stress and adversity. Overall, parental job loss substantially undermines children's emotional health, although strong family support mitigates some of its adverse effects.

Furthermore, the findings established that parental job loss in Kawempe Division has considerable negative social effects on children. Many children experience reduced participation in school and community activities, low confidence in interacting with peers, and a strong tendency toward social withdrawal. They also face challenges in peer relationships, including trust issues, feelings of rejection, poor cooperation in group work, and increased conflicts or aggression. Additionally, stigma and embarrassment related to their family situation further limit social engagement. Although some children maintain friendships and share problems with peers, the overall results suggest that parental job loss disrupts social wellbeing, weakening social connections and limiting children's integration within their communities.

Lastly, the findings indicated that children and families affected by parental job loss in Kawempe Division use a range of coping mechanisms to manage stress and challenges. Many children rely on social support, talking to someone when stressed, spending time with friends, and seeking guidance from elders or teachers. Spirituality, maintaining hope, staying positive, focusing on schoolwork, engaging in hobbies, and helping with household activities are also important strategies. Families demonstrate resilience by supporting each other and reducing spending at home. However, some children adopt less adaptive strategies, such as avoiding problems or keeping feelings to themselves, which may increase emotional distress over time. Overall, despite the hardships of parental job loss, children and families show considerable adaptability through a combination of emotional, social, spiritual, and practical coping strategies.

5.2 Discussion of findings

5.2.1 The emotional effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division

The study's results showed that children's emotional health is seriously impacted by parental job loss in Kawempe Division; many children often felt depressed, anxious, stressed, afraid, angry, lonely, hopeless, embarrassed, and less happy. The results connect with the work by Mari and Keizer (2021), who discovered that children's general development was negatively impacted by parental job loss during the Great Recession, which was linked with more emotional distress and behavioral issues in children. Likewise, Schaller and Zerpa (2019) found out that youngsters whose parents lost their jobs exhibited more psychological stress, therefore reinforcing the results of the present study indicating that financial insecurity directly affects the emotional state of children. These investigations all together point to increased vulnerability among youngsters as a result of financial shocks within families, therefore mirroring trends seen in Kawempe Division.

The results of the study further showed that youngsters suffer from sleep problems and ongoing worry about fundamental needs including food and school expenses, therefore underlining the wider influence of economic insecurity on their welfare. Heinrich (2014) found that parents' unemployment causes more domestic stress and less access to resources for their children which impacts their physical as well as emotional well-being, therefore confirming this result. Han and Hart (2022) found somewhat similarly that, particularly in times of social unrest like pandemics, economic suffering resulting from unstable parental employment is linked to children's lower happiness and increased anxiety. But the present study somewhat contradicts Prickett (2020), who found that mother's job loss didn't always lower sensitivity to the emotional demands of children, implying that parental support may buffer bad results in some situations. This highlights that, as seen in Kawempe Division, family support can help to somewhat reduce emotional issues even under economic hardship.

Additionally, the research showed that most youngsters felt emotionally supported by their parents even if there were bad emotional effects, therefore implying that family support is a protective element. This conclusion links with Britto et al. (2022), who emphasized that good family cohesiveness and support systems can mitigate the negative consequences of parental job loss on children, therefore fostering resilience under trying conditions. Ruiz-Valenzuela (2021), too,

observed that encouraging family settings lessen the degree of behavioral and psychological problems in children impacted by parent employment loss. On the other hand, Högberg and Baranowska-Rataj (2024) discovered that in cases of prolonged or repeated parental job loss, even supportive surroundings may not completely prevent the use of psychotropic medicines in children, implying that ongoing financial hardship can outweigh protective elements. Taken together, these studies show that although children suffer great psychological damage from parental job loss, supportive family interactions in Kawempe Division seem to lessen some of the negative impacts.

5.2.2 The social effects of parental job loss on children in Kawempe Division

The research results showed that children's involvement in school and community activities is severely lowered as well as their confidence in interacting with peers when their parents lose their jobs in Kawempe Division. According to Wightman (2012), parental job loss negatively impacts children's social participation and educational engagement because of diminished parental support and resources, therefore the results correspond with the literature. Likewise, Mari and Keizer (2021) pointed out that financial shocks inside families might interfere with children's participation in organized events, therefore reducing chances for social growth. These data imply that financial insecurity brought on by parents' unemployment reduces children ' active involvement in community life and education, which might have long-term consequences for social skill development and academic results.

Children who have experienced parental job loss also have problems in their relationships with other people, such as not being able to trust them, feeling rejected, not working well in groups, and being more angry or aggressive. The results support the research by Mörk et al. (2019), who underlined that a parent's job loss can cause problems in the family dynamic, which makes it harder for children to grow up with good social skills. Likewise, Britto et al. (2022) noted that youngsters whose parents are jobless frequently show peer relationship difficulties and social withdrawal. The results, however, somewhat contradict Prickett (2020), who found that mother job loss does not always lower children's social sensitivity and that the effects on peer relationships may depend on the parent-child interaction and support inside the house.

Moreover, the study results showed that shame and embarrassment connected to a family's financial state even more constrain children's social activity, therefore reinforcing social withdrawal. The results complement Ruiz-Valenzuela (2021), who discovered that youngsters from families going through financial difficulties frequently encounter societal stigma, which reduces their self-esteem and peer interactions. Moreover, Heinrich (2014) found that protracted parental unemployment raises psychosocial stress, therefore impairing children's capacity to build reliable relationships with others. On the other hand, Han and Hart (2022) claimed that if parents give their children a lot of support when they are going through a hard time, it can help them deal with the social problems that can come with losing a job. This is a bit like what the current study showed, which is that some children are still have friends even if they are going through a tough time. In general, the results show that family support can help to somewhat reduce some bad consequences while parental job loss significantly compromises social welfare, therefore limiting children's social integration, trust, and cooperation.

5.2.3 Coping mechanisms used by children and families affected by parental job loss

The results of the study showed that children in Kawempe Division who had their parents lose their jobs often turn to social support as a way to deal with their stress. This includes talking to someone when they are stressed, spending time with friends, and getting advice from older people or teachers. The results are consistent with those of Mari and Keizer (2021), who discovered that children's ability to reach encouraging social networks reduces some of the negative effects of parental job loss and helps them control emotional stress and keep resilience. Similarly, Britto et al. (2022) found that children's vulnerability against the psychosocial consequences of parent joblessness depends mostly on adult and peer support. But Schaller and Zerpa (2019) found that some children might have less access to supportive social networks in the near future, which could make their stress worse. This shows that how well social coping mechanisms work depends on the situation.

The study results showed that youngsters also use spiritual, cognitive, and activity-based coping mechanisms including praying, hopefulness, positive outlook, attention on schoolwork, hobbies, and assisting with housework. The results corroborate with those of Ruiz-Valenzuela (2021), who found that youngsters from homes going through financial difficulties usually turn to spirituality, hope, and planned activities to help them handle stress, therefore promoting cognitive and

emotional resilience. Heinrich (2014) also said that children can stay stable during times when their parents are out of work by being involved in meaningful activities and keeping a positive attitude. On the other hand, Prickett (2020) argued that not all children make good use of these strategies since parents' job loss might occasionally lower parents' sensitivity and guidance, therefore inhibiting the growth of adaptive coping skills.

Though some children internalize their stress or avoid difficulties, which can raise emotional distress, the study results showed that families suffering from parental job loss also display resiliency by means of practical coping mechanisms like lowering household expenditures and helping each other during tough times. The results connect with those of Mörk et al. (2019), who underline the need of family unity and flexible home routines in minimizing the negative impacts of parental unemployment on the welfare of youngsters. But Högberg and Baranowska-Rataj (2024) found that even if a family has strong coping skills, long-term psychological problems can still happen to children if they are exposed to parental job loss for a long time. This shows that even if a family is strong, it might not be enough to stop bad things from happening. In general, the results imply that although children and families use many emotional, social, spiritual, and practical coping skills, their effectiveness relies on family support as well as more general environmental elements.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that parental job loss in Kawempe Division has profound negative emotional effects on children. Children's emotional health is seriously compromised as shown by the widespread feelings of sadness, anxiety, stress, worry, fear, anger, isolation, hopelessness, and humiliation. Financial uncertainty makes emotional suffering worse since it causes ongoing anxiety about fundamental needs and sleep problems. Still, emotional support from families serves as a buffer, therefore aiding youngsters in navigating the psychological difficulties related with parental unemployment. Therefore, although losing a parent's job causes great emotional distress, a close family can somewhat counteract its consequences.

Furthermore, the study concludes that children's social well-being suffers when their parents lose their jobs. Many children exhibit social withdrawal tendencies, poor confidence in social interactions, and decreased participation in community and school events. The social difficulties

these children experience underlined trust challenges, rejection emotions, subpar group work collaboration, and increased anger. Furthermore, restricting their social involvement is embarrassment and stigma related to family financial issues. Generally, parental job loss affects social integration, thereby compromising children's peer interactions and community involvement; yet, some children nevertheless keep some level of friendships and peer support networks.

Finally, the study concludes that children and families exhibit great resilience by using a range of coping strategies to handle the difficulties of parental job loss. Good strategies for children to handle stress well include looking for social support, getting involved in spiritual activities, keeping optimism, concentrating on schoolwork, following interests, and helping with household tasks. Families also demonstrate flexibility by helping each other and cutting household expenses. Still, certain children turn to less successful methods like internalizing their emotions or avoiding issues, which over time can aggravate emotional disturbance. Generally speaking, children and families' ability to adapt to the problems related to parental job loss is reflected in their mix of emotional, social, spiritual, and practical coping mechanisms, even if they might be difficult.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been found necessary concerning the impact of parental job loss on the social and emotional development of children aged 10-17 years in Kawempe Division, Kampala District;

5.4.1 Recommendations for practice

The research recommends the need for local and government authorities to put focused social welfare programs in place to give families impacted by parental job loss financial and psychological support. This would guarantee fundamental necessities including food, school costs, and healthcare are met, hence lowering children ' stress and anxiety and enhancing their emotional state.

The study also recommends the need for schools in Kawempe Division to establish counseling and mentorship programs that support children experiencing parental job loss. By helping children to control stress, gain confidence, and keep social interaction, trained counsellors can lessen the detrimental influence on their social and emotional development.

Furthermore, the research suggests the need of community-based programs encouraging peer support groups and leisure events for children affected by parental unemployment and stress. Such activities help to develop social skills, teamwork, and a feeling of membership while also lowering stigma, social withdrawal, and isolation.

In addition, the research recommends that parents and guardians need direction and instruction on good parenting during times of unemployment. Workshops and awareness campaigns can enable families to offer emotional support, keep clear communication lines open, and use good coping mechanisms to safeguard children's social and emotional growth.

Lastly, the study recommends that children and families be encouraged to have spiritual and emotional support networks by means of cooperation with religious and local leaders. Participating in religious or neighborhood events can help one develop resilience, find optimism, and support healthy coping strategies in the face of parental job loss difficulties.

5.4.2 Social work policy recommendations

The study recommends the need for the government and relevant stakeholders to develop and implement policies that strengthen child and adolescent mental health services, ensuring that children affected by parental job loss have access to professional psychosocial support.

There is also a need for policies that institutionalize family support and parenting programs aimed at strengthening caregivers' capacity to provide emotional and social support to children during times of economic hardship.

Furthermore, policies should be established to integrate school-based social work services, including counseling units and child support programs, to identify and assist vulnerable children within the education system.

The study also recommends the need for strengthening social protection policies, including financial assistance and welfare support for families affected by unemployment, to reduce the economic strain that negatively impacts children's wellbeing.

Lastly, policies promoting community-based child protection systems and multi-sectoral collaboration among social workers, NGOs, religious leaders, and local authorities should be enhanced to provide comprehensive support to affected children and families.

5.4.3 Social practice gaps

The study identified a significant gap in the availability of psychosocial support services for children affected by parental job loss in Kawempe Division, as many children experiencing emotional distress lack access to counseling and mental health support.

There is also a gap in parental capacity to provide emotional support, where many caregivers struggle to cope with stress and are unable to adequately support their children's emotional and social needs during unemployment.

Additionally, weak school-based support systems limit the identification and assistance of vulnerable children, resulting in reduced access to guidance, counseling, and mentorship services.

The study further identified inadequate community-level interventions, with limited structured programs to promote social interaction, peer support, and resilience among affected children.

Lastly, there is insufficient coordination among social support systems, including government, community, and religious institutions, which reduces the effectiveness of interventions aimed at addressing the social and emotional challenges faced by children affected by parental job loss.

5.5 Areas for further research

Future studies could look at how parental job loss affects the academic success and career aspirations of youngsters aged 10–17 years to see how long-term financial insecurity affects their educational outcomes and chances for future success.

More research should look into how different genders react socially and emotionally to parents losing their jobs. They could see if girls and boys react differently to stress, anxiety, and social withdrawal, and how they deal with it.

Finally, further studies should focus on examining the efficiency of particular coping mechanisms such as counselling, peer support programs, or community projects in reducing the unfavorable social and emotional effects of parental job loss on children.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Abwoch Anna Maria. A student of Social work and Social Administration at Uganda Christian University (UCU). I am exploring the study on “The Impact of Parental Job Loss on the Social and Emotional Development of Children in Kawempe Division, Kampala District.

You have been selected to participate in this study and the information collected shall be purely for academic purposes.

Instructions to the Respondent: - Please answer all questions honestly. - There are no right or wrong answers. - Your responses will be kept confidential. - Tick (✓) the option that best represents your experience.

Response Format: - Agree Disagree

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age of the child

a) 10-13 years b) 14-17 years

2. Sex

a) Male b) Female

3. Class/Level of education

a) Primary b) Secondary

c) Not in school

4. Area/Zone of residence

a) Kikaaya b) Kyebando

c) Makerere III

5. Parent/Guardian who lost employment

a) Mother b) Father

c) Both

6. Duration since parent lost job

- a) Less than 6 months b) 6-12 months
c) More than 12 months

7. Who do you currently live with?

- a) Both parents b) Mother only
c) Father only d) Guardian/Relative
e) Others specify:.....

8. Number of children in the household

- a) 1-2 b) 3-4
c) 5 or more

9. Type of housing

- a) Permanent house b) Semi-permanent house
c) Temporary structure

10. Main source of family income now

- a) Casual work b) Small business
c) Support from relatives d) No regular income

11. Has the child ever changed schools due to financial problems?

- a) Yes b) No

12. Distance from home to school

- a) Less than 1 km b) 1-3 km
c) More than 3 km

13. Do you receive any external support (e.g., NGOs, community, relatives)?

a) Yes b) No

14. Access to basic needs after job loss

a) Adequate b) Sometimes inadequate

c) Often adequate

15. Family structure

a) Nuclear family b) Extended family

c) Single-parent family

SECTION B: EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

Instruction:

Please tick (✓) the option that best describes how often you feel this way since your parent/guardian lost their job.

Scale:

1 = Not at all 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Always

| No. | Statement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I feel sad most of the time | | | | | |
| 2 | I feel worried about my family's situation | | | | | |
| 3 | I feel anxious or nervous | | | | | |
| 4 | I cry more easily than before | | | | | |
| 5 | I feel stressed about school or home life | | | | | |
| 6 | I feel lonely or left out | | | | | |
| 7 | I feel angry or easily irritated | | | | | |
| 8 | I feel hopeless about the future | | | | | |
| 9 | I have trouble sleeping because of worries | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 10 | I feel afraid about what might happen to my family | | | | | |
| 11 | I feel embarrassed about my family's financial situation | | | | | |
| 12 | I feel less happy than I used to be | | | | | |
| 13 | I feel like no one understands my feelings | | | | | |
| 14 | I worry about not having basic needs (food, school fees, etc.) | | | | | |
| 15 | I feel emotionally supported by my family | | | | | |

SECTION C: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

Instruction:

Please tick (✓) the option that best describes how often you feel this way since your parent/guardian lost their job.

Scale:

1 = Not at all 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Always

| No. | Statement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I enjoy spending time with my friends | | | | | |
| 2 | I participate in school activities | | | | | |
| 3 | I feel comfortable talking to my classmates | | | | | |
| 4 | I avoid social gatherings or group activities | | | | | |
| 5 | I have good relationships with my peers | | | | | |
| 6 | I feel isolated from other children | | | | | |
| 7 | I take part in community activities | | | | | |
| 8 | I get into conflicts or fights more than before | | | | | |
| 9 | I feel confident when interacting with others | | | | | |
| 10 | I prefer to stay alone rather than mix with others | | | | | |
| 11 | I feel accepted by my friends | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 12 | I find it difficult to trust other people | | | | | |
| 13 | I share my problems with friends | | | | | |
| 14 | I feel ashamed to interact with others because of my family situation | | | | | |
| 15 | I cooperate well with others in group work | | | | | |

SECTION D: COPING MECHANISMS USED BY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Instruction:

Please tick (✓) the option that best describes how often you feel this way since your parent/guardian lost their job.

Scale:

1 = Not at all 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Always

| No. | Statement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I talk to someone when I feel stressed | | | | | |
| 2 | I seek comfort from my family | | | | | |
| 3 | I pray or engage in spiritual activities | | | | | |
| 4 | I try to stay positive despite challenges | | | | | |
| 5 | I focus on my schoolwork to distract myself | | | | | |
| 6 | I spend time with friends to feel better | | | | | |
| 7 | I help with household activities | | | | | |
| 8 | I avoid thinking about my problems | | | | | |
| 9 | I keep my feelings to myself | | | | | |
| 10 | I engage in games or hobbies to relax | | | | | |
| 11 | My family supports each other during hard times | | | | | |
| 12 | We reduce our spending at home | | | | | |
| 13 | I look for advice from elders or teachers | | | | | |
| 14 | I try to solve problems on my own | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 15 | I feel hopeful that things will improve | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|

NB: All answers are kept with confidentiality and are extracted for academic purposes **ONLY**

Thank you for your participation. Your responses will help improve support for children affected by parental job loss