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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GRIEF AND CONDUCT DISORDER AMONG STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NJORO SUB-COUNTY, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

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ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY OF ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER 2026

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university. No part of this dissertation may be produced without the prior written permission of the author and St Pauls' University.

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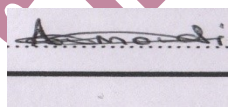
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and friends, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and belief in my academic journey have been my greatest source of strength. To my family, your love, sacrifices, and constant motivation have fueled my determination to pursue this research. To my friends, your words of encouragement and companionship have been invaluable throughout this process. This work is a reflection of your unwavering support, and I am forever grateful for the role you have played in shaping my aspirations and success.

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ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....ii
DEDICATION.....iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....v
LIST OF TABLES.....viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....x
ABSTRACT.....xii
CHAPTER ONE.....1
INTRODUCTION.....1
1.0 Introduction.....1
1.1 Background of the Study.....1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....7
1.3 Research Objectives.....8
1.3.1 General Objective.....8
1.3.2 Specific Objectives.....8
1.4 Research Questions.....9
1.5 Significance of the Study.....9
1.6 Scope of the Study.....11
1.7 Delimitations of the Study.....12
1.8 Assumptions of the Study.....13
1.9 Operational Definition of Terms.....13
CHAPTER TWO.....15
LITERATURE REVIEW.....15
2.0 Introduction.....15
2.1 Theoretical Framework.....15
2.1.1 Kűbler-Ross Grief Theory.....15
2.1.2 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.....18
2.2 Empirical Review.....21
2.2.1 Prevalence of Grief.....21
2.2.2 Levels of Conduct Disorders.....24
2.2.3 Grief and Conduct Disorder.....28

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

2.2.4 Intervention Strategies for Managing Grief....33
2.3 Summary of Research Gaps....36
2.4 Conceptual Framework....38
2.5 Summary....39
CHAPTER THREE....40
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY....40
3.0 Introduction....40
3.1 Research Design....40
3.2 Location of the study....40
3.3 Population....41
3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Method....42
3.4.1 Sample Size....42
3.4.2 Sampling of Teachers....43
3.4.3 Sampling of Principals and Heads of Counseling Departments....43
3.5 Data Collection Methods....44
3.5.1 Questionnaire....44
3.5.2 Interview Guide....44
3.6 Pilot Study....45
3.7 Instrument Validity....45
3.8 Instrument Reliability....46
3.9 Data Collection Procedures....46
3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation Techniques....47
3.11 Ethical Considerations....48
CHAPTER FOUR....50
RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS....50
4.0 Introduction....50
4.2 Response Rate....50
4.3 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics....52
4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents....52
4.3.2 Age of the Respondents....53
4.3.3 Class Level of the Respondents....53
4.4 Prevalence of Grief among Students....55

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

St. Paul's University Repository

4.5 Conduct Disorder among Students....66
4.6 Relationship between Grief and Conduct Disorder....80
4.7 Intervention Strategies and Support Systems in Place....82
4.7.1 Effectiveness of Existing Interventions....84
4.7.2 Additional Support and Strategies Recommended....85
CHAPTER FIVE....87
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS....87
5.1 Introduction....87
5.2 Summary of the Findings....87
5.2.1 Prevalence of Loss and Grief among Students....87
5.2.2 Conduct Disorder among Students....89
5.2.3 Relationship between Grief and Conduct Disorder among Students....90
5.2.4 Intervention Strategies for Managing Grief among Students....91
5.3 Conclusion....93
5.4 Recommendations....95
5.5 Suggestions for Further Research....96
REFERENCES....98
APPENDICES....106
Appendix I: INTRODUCTION LETTER....106
Appendix II: Informed Consent Form....107
Appendix III: Questionnaire for Students....109
Appendix IV: Key Informant Interview for Principals, Teachers and Head of Counseling 111
Appendix V: NACOSTI Letter....112
Appendix VI: Recommendation Letter:....113
Appendix VII: Map of Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya:....114

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Target Population....41

Table 3.2: Sample Size....43

Table 4.1: Response Rate Results....51

Table 4.2: Gender of the Respondents....52

Table 4.3: Age of the Respondents....53

Table 4.4: Class Level of the Respondents....54

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics on Loss and Grief among Students....58

Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics on Conduct Disorder among Students....66

Table 4.11: Model Summary....80

Table 4.12: ANOVA....81

Table 4.13: Regression Coefficients....81

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework.....38

Figure 4.1: Lost Someone Significant.....55

Figure 4.2: Duration since Loss of Significant One.....56

Figure 4.3: Functional Impairment Due to Grief.....62

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
APA	American Psychological Association
BDI	Beck Depression Inventory
BMC	BioMed Central
CAI	Computer-Assisted Instruction
CAL	Computer-Assisted Learning
CG	Complicated Grief
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DASS	Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale
DSM V	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders fifth edition
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
SPUERC	St. Paul's University Ethics Review Committee
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAA	International Academy of Accounting
ICD	International Classification of Diseases
ICG	Inventory of Complicated Grief
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
PBIS	Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports

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PCT	Personal Construct Theory
PGD	Prolonged Grief Disorder
PGRI	Private School Network in Indonesia
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SS	Senior Secondary
SSM	Social Science and Medicine
STAB	Social and Thought-Action Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how experiences of grief due to bereavement may influence the development or expression of conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro sub-county, Nakuru County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were-: to identify the prevalence of grief, to determine levels of conduct disorder, to examine the relationship between grief and conduct disorder, and to determine intervention strategies for managing grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The study examined how grief influences conduct disorder in Public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, aiming to inform the development of school based emotional support systems. This study was guided by Kübler-Ross Grief Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. The study employed correlational research design and targeted 24,858 respondents, comprising students (24,515), class teachers 196, school principals 49, and 49 heads of counseling departments from 49 public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. The sample size comprised 467 respondents from 13 public secondary schools: 393 students, 35 class teachers, 13 Principals, and 13 Heads of Counseling departments. The study employed standardized questionnaires to collect quantitative data from the student population. Qualitative data was obtained through Key Informant interviews with school administrators, class teachers and teacher counselors. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, where the grief scale recorded a reliability coefficient of 0.741, while conduct disorder recorded 0.835. Construct validity was assessed using the KMO measure of sampling adequacy, where grief recorded a value of 0.612, while conduct disorder recorded 0.729 and Bartlett's test of Sphericity which was significant for both variables (p=0.000). The collected data was analyzed with the aid of SPSS software version 29.0 using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that grief brought about by bereavement was prevalent among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, with 99.7% of respondents reporting they had lost someone significant. Grief symptoms caused functional impairment among 50.8% of students-; loneliness without the deceased recorded the highest grief mean score of 2.73. Simple linear regression analysis revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder, with grief explaining 47.3% of the variation in conduct disorder among students, $R^2 = 0.473$, $F = 341.106$, $p = 0.000$. The study concluded that grief due to the death of a loved one significantly contributed to conduct disorder-related difficulties among students, affecting their emotional stability, school adjustment, peer relationships, discipline, and overall functioning. The study recommends that public secondary schools should strengthen grief counseling, early identification of bereaved students, teacher sensitization, peer support systems, parental involvement, and referral mechanisms to reduce grief-related conduct difficulties among learners.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement and objectives of the study. Further, research questions, justification and significance of the study, scope and delimitations, assumptions of the study and operational definition of terms are also presented.

1.1 Background of the Study

Conduct disorder is a serious concern in schools, as it affects students' ability to adhere to rules, respect authority, regulate their behaviour, and make responsible decisions (Habibulloh, Ridho, & El-Yunusi, 2024). Welsh (2024) emphasizes that behavioural issues linked to conduct disorder pose challenges in maintaining good behaviours, which is essential for fostering values such as integrity, responsibility, and respect. Students with conduct disorder often struggle with aggression, defiance, and rule-breaking tendencies, which can disrupt their academic progress and social interactions (Kisisiwe, Bago, & Makundi, 2024). The presence of conduct disorder in schools contributes to increased classroom disruptions, making it difficult for teachers to manage learning environments effectively. Persistent behavioural issues may lead to conflicts with peers and educators, absenteeism, and, in severe cases, school dropouts (Sullen, 2024). Addressing conduct disorder through early intervention, behavioural support programs, and counseling services is crucial in promoting a positive learning atmosphere. Through structured conduct disorder management strategies and providing emotional and psychological support, schools are able to help students develop self-regulation skills, improve their academic performance, and create healthier relationships with peers and teachers.

Addressing conduct disorder among students is necessary in preparing students for future responsibilities in both professional and personal aspects (Khoirunnisa, 2025). The ability to

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regulate behaviour, interact respectfully with others, and handle challenges with self-control are crucial skills that extend beyond the classroom into adulthood. Schools serve as a microcosm of society, and managing conduct disorder effectively ensures that young individuals develop the necessary behavioural traits to navigate future responsibilities. When students with conduct disorder receive appropriate intervention and support, they are able to learn to follow rules, respect authority, and cultivate habits that will aid them in personal and professional relationships in adulthood (Thelma & Phiri, 2025). Additionally, addressing conduct disorder within the school environment fosters a sense of safety and inclusivity, reducing incidences of violence, peer conflicts, and other forms of disruptive behaviour that hinder learning (Sithole, Ngobeni, & Phage, 2024). Teachers, parents, and policymakers recognize that effectively managing conduct disorder not only benefits the affected students but also contributes to a positive school culture where collaboration, respect, and academic success can thrive.

Research by Vis and Boynton (2024) and Surbakti & Harahap (2024) have shown that grief to a greater extent contributes to conduct disorder among students who experience the loss of loved ones and especially on their identity, self-acceptance and self-confidence. Study by Ahmad, Iqbal, Ali, Jabeen and Imran (2024) has linked emotional distress from loss and grief to increased behavioural challenges, academic struggles, and difficulties in adhering to school rules. Grief has an odd way of connecting itself to different aspects of personalities, affecting confidence and self-esteem among students. When students experience grief, their ability to concentrate in class, follow school rules, and interact positively with peers and teachers is greatly disrupted (Üzmez & Kavakli Ulutaş, 2024). According to Isaac (2024), in some instances students tend to become withdrawn and disengaged, struggling to complete assignments or participate in classroom activities, while others may express their pain through aggression, defiance, or sudden mood swings, leading to disciplinary issues. The emotional

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turmoil of loss and grief also has the potential to erode a student's good behaviour, making it harder for them to manage their time, control impulsive behaviour, or adhere to school regulations (Shanshan & Loang, 2024).

According to Alvis, et al. (2022), the death of a loved one represents one of the most distressing and potentially traumatic life events in childhood and adolescence. Grief reactions in youth are influenced by ongoing developmental processes and manifest differently depending on the child's age and developmental stage. These grief-related processes unfold within youths' caregiving context, as children and adolescents rely heavily on the adults in their environment to navigate and cope with the death of a loved one (Alvis et al., 2021). The revised edition of the manual for the International Classification of Diseases - ICD-11, describes grief as intense emotional pain, difficulty to accept loss, and an inability to experience positive mood. These reactions impair an individual functionally and last more than six months after the loss. In the DSM-5 this condition is described as "complex bereavement disorder" and lasts for a period of more than 12 months. Grief comprises sadness and possible disruption, but it is not a mental disorder (Jordanova 2021). The death of a caregiver who may be a parent or guardian, sibling, or loved one is one of the most commonly reported (Pynoos et al., 2014) and most distressing forms of trauma among youth (Kaplow et al., 2010). When people encounter a loss, they may feel uninspired, disillusioned, and disconnected from the world around them (Balan 2024).

Grieving interferes with a person's ability to participate in daily life, and strips away one's sense of purpose and meaning (Gunning & Taladay-Carter, 2024). It can cause major lifestyle changes and can be profoundly disorienting. The grieving process may lead to maladaptive coping strategies such as eating an unhealthy diet or irregular meals, disrupted sleep patterns, withdrawal from social activities, and being physically or mentally inactive Simon & Shear, 2024). These behaviours can, in turn, exacerbate symptoms of grief, deepening the sense of isolation, and causing one to spiral further into depression (Balan 2024). Balan 2024 continues

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to argue that physiologically, grief may lead to sleeplessness which may consequently cause irritability, aggression, and negatively impact one's judgment. Sleeplessness decreases insight and interferes with the ability to regulate a person's emotions. In the event of bereavement and grief, our bodies may switch to a survival mode and we may react to our environment from a stance of flight, fight, or freeze. If someone has a history of traumas, abandonment, or attachment injury, the state of grieving might be triggering. When our trauma responses kick in, we struggle to make rational decisions and find it difficult to interact with our environment (Balan 2024).

Different cultures and traditions have their own particular methods for dealing with grief for instance, funeral arrangements for the departed. Even when the loss is anticipated, the person may feel traumatized, especially if death is provoked by violence, natural disasters, or war. Some general and universal reactions to loss are numbness, disbelief of the death, anger, unfairness, crying, emptiness, survivor's guilt, among many other feelings (Jordanova 2021). The loss of a loved person is one of the most devastating experiences in life and is associated with psychological, behavioural and physiological changes in the surviving close persons. The term loss refers to the actual loss event, whereas grief entails the subjective reactions that are associated with loss (Hopf et al., 2020).

According to the Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model, over 4.8 million children in the U.S. will experience the death of a parent or sibling before they reach adulthood and this number more than doubles by age 25, to 12.7 million (Burns et al., 2020). The responses to loss differ in people, but most important is the feeling of loneliness and helplessness. The period of grief is quite normal and is a human response to loss. Grief is inevitable, but it also could last for a very long time which may lead to complicated grief (Jordanova 2021). Children who have lost one or both of their parents or guardians through death may exhibit pre-death

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risk factors, post-bereavement child disorder, and erosion of familial social support, along with the impact of negative life events, which contribute to enduring impairment (Pham et al., 2018).

On the global stage, ongoing conflicts in Palestine, have led to widespread traumatic losses among adolescents (Aldabbour, Abuabada, Lahlouh, Halimy, Elamassie, Sammour & Nadarajah, 2024). A study in Nablus revealed that 20% of adolescents experienced complicated grief due to multiple traumatic losses, leading to behavioural issues and academic challenges (Farajallah, 2024). Similarly, in Afghanistan, the Taliban's ban on girls' secondary education has resulted in profound sadness and a sense of purposelessness among affected students, disrupting their educational journeys and personal development (Üçer, 2024). In the United States, approximately 30% of adolescents have reported experiencing at least one sudden loss, which is associated with lower academic achievement and reduced school engagement (Canales & Webb, 2024). This emotional distress manifests as disciplinary issues, including absenteeism and decreased motivation. In the United Kingdom, estimates suggest that around 3.5% of children aged 5 to 16 have endured such losses, equating to roughly one child in every classroom (Fauth, Thompson & Penny, 2019). These experiences of grief negatively affect students' academic performance and behaviour, leading to challenges in school engagement. Furthermore, studies have indicated that bereaved students often exhibit higher levels of perceived social support and mental health issues compared to their non-bereaved peers.

Regionally, loss and grief among students in African countries have negative influences on their behaviour within educational environment (Duma, Nzima & Govender, 2020). In South Africa, the high prevalence of parental loss due to factors such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic has led to a growing number of bereaved children (World Health Organization, 2023). A study by Meyerson, Hoddinott, Garcia-Prats and Tomlinson (2021) highlighted that many South African children are forced to deal with the death of a parent or primary caregiver, depriving them of not only parental support but also a stable psychosocial support system. This loss often results

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

in emotional distress, which manifests as behavioural issues in school, including increased absenteeism and declining academic performance. In Uganda, the prevalence of corporal punishment in schools has been attributed to various conduct disorders among students (Santo, Wilson & Eduan, 2025). Despite legal bans, studies have shown that close to 50% of students in Ugandan schools reported experiencing corporal punishment, which is associated with negative outcomes such as increased aggression and defiance. Additionally, a study in Uganda found that 6% and 2% of school-going children exhibited elevated symptoms of Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) and Conduct Disorder (CD), respectively (Turner, Parkes, Nagas ha, Naker, Nakuti, Namy & Devries, 2024).

In Kenya's public secondary schools, adolescents who grapple with the loss of loved ones often exhibit withdrawal, diminished self-esteem, and strained peer relationships, leading to disciplinary challenges and declining academic performance (Mwangi, 2024). Grief is a profound emotional response to loss and, among students, has the potential to influence their general conduct, emotional well-being, and overall conduct in school (Muli, 2024). A study conducted by Nyaga (2020) in Langata Sub-County, Nairobi, revealed that bereaved students frequently experience social withdrawal and deteriorating academic results. Furthermore, research in Kisumu Central Sub-County indicated that both male and female orphaned students face serious hurdles in adjusting to grief, impacting their behaviour and school engagement (World Vision, 2022). A study by Saladino, Verrastro, Calaresi and Barberis (2024) on the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy on children who have experienced parental death indicated that approximately 140 million children worldwide have experienced the death of one or both parents, most of whom live in low- and middle-income countries. These children, considered single orphans (one parent died) or double orphans (both parents died) by the United Nations Children's Fund's definition, have higher rates of posttraumatic stress, prolonged grief, depression, anxiety, and behaviour problems than non-orphaned children. Orphaned children

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are exposed to stressors associated with parental death, including loss of social support, disrupted education, unstable living situations, and orphan-related stigma (Dorsey et al., 2021).

Many studies, such as Uroko (2025); Riera-Negre, Hidalgo-Andrade, Rosselló and Verger (2024), have focused on the effects of grief on the academic performance of students who have been bereaved-; other studies show how students undergoing grief may be supported emotionally at school, while other studies have indicated how grief can be linked to suicidal ideation in youths who are going through loss and grief. As viewed from the literature above, many recent studies concerning grief , and its effects on students more so academically, have been carried out abroad. Therefore, this study will focus on the effects of grief as a result of the death of parents, guardians or siblings on students' behaviour, which may in turn affect a student's behaviour negatively at school.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Grief following the loss of a parent, guardian, or sibling profoundly affects students' emotional well-being and behaviour in public secondary schools (Campbell, 2024). Conduct disorder among students in Kenya's public secondary schools has become a serious concern, manifesting in behaviours such as high absenteeism, defiance towards teachers, bullying, and drug abuse (Ministry of Education, 2020). A study by Okumu (2022) in Nairobi County identified absenteeism, defiance towards teachers, and bullying as prevalent behavioural issues associated with conduct disorder. The loss of a loved one can lead to intense pain, sadness, helplessness, and insecurity, particularly if the deceased was the sole provider, leaving students vulnerable to financial hardship and emotional distress. Research indicates that grief can lead to behavioural issues commonly associated with conduct disorder, such as aggression, defiance, withdrawal, bullying, and increased irritability, which may result in disciplinary actions like suspensions and expulsions (Limo & Kibowen, 2017). If not addressed, unresolved grief can contribute to more severe emotional and behavioural disorders, including conduct

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disorder, which further exacerbates rule-breaking tendencies, classroom disruptions, and poor academic outcomes (Ngesa et al., 2020). Early intervention, counseling, and emotional support are essential in helping bereaved students manage their grief and reduce the likelihood of developing persistent behavioural challenges. Thus, the problem is that unresolved grief among bereaved students leads to emotional distress and conduct-related behavioural issues that hinder academic performance. Grief among students has primarily been the focus of most studies mainly focusing on psychological well-being and academic performance rather than its impact on their behaviour, creating a research gap that this study seeks to address. For instance, Limo and Kibowen (2022) assessed the psychological effects of grief on students in Kenyan secondary schools and found that bereaved students experienced emotional distress, social withdrawal, and reduced academic performance. This study sought to assess the relationship between Grief due to bereavement and conduct disorder among students in Public Secondary Schools in Njoro sub-County, Nakuru County.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study was guided by both general and specific objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to determine the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro sub-county, Nakuru County.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

i. To determine the prevalence of grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya.
ii. To assess the levels of conduct disorder caused by grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya.

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iii. To examine the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya.
iv. To determine intervention strategies for managing loss and grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

i. What is the prevalence of grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya?
ii. What are the levels of conduct disorders caused by grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya?
iii. Is there a relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya?
iv. How can intervention strategies be implemented for managing loss and grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to provide an understanding of how grief affects conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. Schools are not just academic institutions but also social environments where students experience emotional and psychological challenges, including grief from the loss of loved ones, broken families, or other personal traumas. Through profiling the prevalence of grief among students and evaluating its impact on conduct disorder, this study was expected to generate important information that would be helpful in developing interventions to support affected students. The findings were expected to provide analysis on the need for structured emotional support systems within schools, ensuring that grieving students receive the necessary psychological and social care to prevent grief-related disciplinary challenges. This would ultimately contribute to a safer, more inclusive, and emotionally supportive learning environment where all students can thrive academically and socially.

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In addition, government agencies and education policymakers are expected to benefit significantly from the findings of this study, as it will provide empirical evidence on the link between loss and grief and student conduct disorder. Understanding the extent of grief-related conduct disorder issues will help inform policies that integrate grief counseling and mental health programs into school curricula. The Ministry of Education, school administrators, and other relevant stakeholders will be able to use the study's findings to develop structured intervention programs, such as mandatory counseling services, teacher training on grief management, and peer-support initiatives. Moreover, policymakers will use the findings of this study to help mitigate the long-term impact of grief on students, creating a more stable and conducive learning environment that promotes both academic excellence and emotional well-being.

For practitioners, including teachers, school counselors, and social workers, this study will serve as a practical resource in understanding how grief manifests in students and how it influences their behaviour. Teachers often come face to face with students exhibiting signs of distress, aggression, withdrawal, or defiance without fully understanding the underlying emotional triggers. With the study's outcome, teachers will be better equipped to identify grieving students early and respond with appropriate strategies, such as classroom support, mentorship programs, and tailored behavioural interventions. School counselors and social workers will also benefit from the study by gaining a clearer framework for designing grief-sensitive disciplinary approaches, ensuring that disciplinary actions consider the emotional struggles of affected students rather than imposing punitive measures that may exacerbate the problem.

This study is also expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on loss and grief management and student conduct. While extensive research exists on conduct disorder among students and mental health separately, there is limited literature specifically addressing the

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relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder among students in the Kenyan context. Thus, the study is expected to provide information that future researchers can build upon. Scholars in the fields of education, psychology, and social work may be able to use this study as a reference for further research on loss and grief-related behavioural changes, the effectiveness of different intervention strategies, and the role of community and school partnerships in supporting grieving students. The study's findings will also inform comparative research between different regions, allowing for broader discussions on best practices in managing grief and conduct disorder among students in schools.

Finally, the study has the potential to influence policy changes at both institutional and national levels. The findings of this study will advocate for mandatory loss and grief counseling services in schools, increased training for teachers in emotional intelligence and student well-being, and the development of policies that prioritize students' mental health alongside academic performance. Additionally, the study will serve as a foundation for community-based interventions, encouraging collaboration between schools, local governments, faith-based organizations, and mental health professionals to create holistic grief-support programs. In the long run, these policy and practice improvements will ensure that grief-stricken students receive the support they need, reducing conduct disorder and promoting a healthier, more resilient student population.

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1.6 Scope of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. This study was conducted in public secondary schools within Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The researcher settled on Njoro as the study area because ethnic conflicts, characterized by tensions and violence between distinct ethnic groups, are a persistent challenge in multi-ethnic societies like Kenya, often driven by competition over resources,

political power and historical grievances (Mohammadzadeh, 2016). In regions such as Njoro, Nakuru County, these conflicts have been fueled by land disputes, electoral politics and socio-economic inequalities, resulting in cycles of violence, notably during the 1992, 1997 and 2007 elections (Adelana & Osifo, 2020). The consequences of such conflicts extend beyond immediate loss of life and property, disrupting social cohesion and hindering development efforts. This consequently affects student behaviour at school. The study was carried out over a period of three months. The study employed correlational research design. The target population of the study was 24858 comprising students, teachers, and school administrators as the units of observation. Specifically, data was collected from school administrators (either Principals or Deputy Principals), class teachers, teacher counselors and the student population. The sample size was determined using both stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The study employed Key informant interviews with school administrators, class teachers and teacher counselors. Through this approach, the study aimed to generate well-rounded findings that can inform interventions to support grieving students and promote positive behaviour and conduct in schools.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study targeted students in public secondary schools in Njoro sub-county. The focus of the study was the relationship between grief and conduct disorder. This is because ethnic conflicts, characterized by tensions and violence between distinct ethnic groups, are a persistent challenge in multi-ethnic societies like Kenya, often driven by competition over resources, political power and historical grievances (Mohammadzadeh, 2016). In regions such as Njoro, Nakuru County, these conflicts have been fueled by land disputes, electoral politics and socio-economic inequalities, resulting in cycles of violence, notably during the 1992, 1997 and 2007 elections (Adelana & Osifo, 2020). The consequences of such conflicts extend beyond immediate loss of life and property, disrupting social cohesion and hindering development

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

efforts. This consequently affects student behaviour at school. The researcher employed mixed method research design, where quantitative data was collected by use of standardized questionnaires, while qualitative data was collected by use of Key Informant Interviews. This was expected to affect the generalizability of the findings.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

This study was based on the following assumptions:

i. The study assumed that there is a prevalence of grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County and therefore the researcher will be able to get adequate information on Grief..
ii. The study assumed that students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County are exhibiting some degree of conduct disorder. This assumption was key to ensuring that the study effectively evaluates the level of conduct disorder and the influence of grief on student behaviour.
iii. The study assumed that schools kept accurate and updated records of disciplinary actions and cases related to grief-affected students. These records would be instrumental in determining the relationship between Grief and Conduct Disorder and providing quantitative evidence to support the research findings.
iv. The study assumed that public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County have operational intervention strategies to manage grief. Therefore, insights gained from this study would provide valuable recommendations that can be applied to other institutions facing similar challenges in managing grief-related disciplinary issues.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Conduct Disorder: In this study, Conduct Disorder (CD) refers to a persistent pattern of antisocial behaviour, emotional distress, and rule-breaking tendencies (Frick & Kemp, 2021) among students in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya.

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Grief: Refers to a deep emotional response experienced by students following the loss of a parent, guardian, or sibling Szuhany et al., 2021). In this study, grief was characterized by emotional distress, behavioural changes and social withdrawal.

Intervention Strategies: This refers to methods and programs implemented within schools to help students cope with grief and minimize its negative impact on conduct disorder among students (Brodbeck, et al., 2022). This was measured using counseling services, peer-support programs, teacher guidance, and policy measures aimed at creating a supportive learning environment for grieving students.

Prevalence of Grief: This is used to mean the proportion of students experiencing grief due to the loss of parents, guardians, or siblings (Kustanti et al., 2023). It was determined by the number of students reporting grief-related experiences and the observable effects on their emotional and behavioural well-being.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter critically examines theoretical and empirical literature on the relationship between grief due to bereavement and conduct disorder among adolescents, with a specific focus on students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. The chapter interrogates foundational theories that explain behavioural responses to traumatic and stressful life events, and evaluates empirical studies to determine the extent to which grief contributes to conduct-related challenges in school settings. Additionally, it presents conceptual framework that gives meaning of concepts and relationship between related variables in the study. By comparing diverse scholarly perspectives, the chapter highlights methodological limitations, and contextual gaps, particularly within Kenyan educational environments, that underscore the need for the present study.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Kübler-Ross Grief Theory (1969) and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.

2.1.1 Kübler-Ross Grief Theory

The Kübler-Ross Grief Theory was developed by Kübler-Ross (1969). The theory states that individuals experiencing grief go through five distinct stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance (Kübler-Ross, 1969). These stages are not necessarily linear, and individuals may move back and forth between them in their grief process (Corr et al., 2021). Kübler-Ross originally designed the model to describe the experiences of terminally ill patients, but it has since been applied to various forms of loss, including bereavement, job loss, and other significant life changes (Kastenbaum, 2020). The theory suggests that grief is a

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psychological journey where emotions evolve over time, ultimately leading to acceptance and adaptation (Worden, 2018). The five stages framework has been widely used in counseling and psychology, shaping how professionals support individuals coping with loss (Stroebe & Schut, 2021).

Despite its wide application, the Kübler-Ross Grief Theory has been subject to criticism, particularly regarding its rigid stage-based approach to grieving. Critics argue that grief is highly individualized, and not all individuals experience all five stages in the prescribed order (Bonanno & Kaltman, 2001). Neimeyer (2019) contends that the model oversimplifies the grieving process by suggesting a universal framework for emotions that may be influenced by cultural, social, and personal factors. Additionally, empirical studies indicate that some individuals bypass certain stages or experience them in a nonlinear fashion, contradicting the sequential progression proposed by Kübler-Ross (Holland & Neimeyer, 2010). Moreover, the theory does not fully account for external support systems, such as family, counseling, and religious beliefs, which can significantly influence an individual's grieving process (Parkes & Prigerson, 2013). Nevertheless, despite these criticisms, the model remains influential in bereavement studies and provides a foundational understanding of how grief manifests in different contexts (Attig, 2011).

The Kübler-Ross Grief Theory, with its five linear stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, has been critiqued in African contexts for its individualistic orientation, which does not adequately capture the collective and relational dynamics of loss within ethnic, family, clan, and community systems. In many African societies, grief is less about personal emotional progression and more about communal rituals, ancestral connections, and extended kinship involvement, where mourning practices are embedded in collective identity and spirituality (Mbiti, 1991; Nwoye, 2005). The theory assumes a universal psychological sequence, yet African mourning often emphasizes continuity with the dead

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

through remembrance ceremonies, symbolic practices, and communal support networks rather than an endpoint of "acceptance" (Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999). Furthermore, African grief processes are cyclical and ritualized, involving stages like funeral rites, cleansing rituals, and annual memorials, which contrast with the Western linear model. Thus, while Kübler-Ross offers a useful framework for understanding grief in individualistic societies, its application in African communal settings risks oversimplifying the relational, spiritual, and cultural meanings of mourning (Magesa, 1997; Nwoye, 2017).

Kübler-Ross Grief Theory is relevant to this study in understanding how grief impacts Conduct Disorder. Adolescents experiencing grief due to the loss of a loved one, whether a parent, guardian, sibling, or close friend, may struggle with emotional regulation and behavioural control (Baulk, 2011). The anger stage, for example, can manifest in disruptive behaviour, aggression, or defiance towards teachers and peers, impacting classroom conduct (Silverman & Worden, 2013). Similarly, students in the depression stage may withdraw socially, disengage from school activities, or exhibit poor academic performance, leading to disciplinary concerns (Kaplow et al., 2014). By applying Kübler-Ross's model, educators and school administrators can recognize behavioural changes linked to grief and implement supportive interventions such as counseling, peer support groups, and mentorship programs (Dyregrov, 2008). These strategies can help students deal with their grief while reducing its negative effects on school conduct and academic progress (Shear, 2012).

Furthermore, the study is consistent with recent findings that emphasize the need for grief-sensitive educational environments. Research indicates that unresolved grief in adolescents can lead to long-term behavioural problems, including truancy, substance abuse, and violence (Haine et al., 2008). The Kübler-Ross model helps educators and school counselors identify students at risk by assessing their behavioural responses to loss and tailoring interventions accordingly (Ribbens McCarthy, 2006). Schools that integrate grief education into their

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

disciplinary frameworks and train teachers to recognize grief-related behavioural changes are more likely to foster supportive learning environments (Servaty-Seib & Taub, 2010).

Additionally, understanding that grief is a dynamic process rather than a fixed sequence of emotions allows school authorities to provide flexible, student-centered approaches to conduct that address the root causes of misconduct rather than merely imposing punitive measures (Stroebe et al., 2008). The Kübler-Ross Grief Theory provides a theoretical perspective for examining the effects of grief on Conduct Disorder in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. Despite its limitations, the model provides a foundational framework for understanding how students cope with grief and how their emotional responses influence school behaviour. Recognizing grief as a contributing factor to disciplinary issues is able to help educators, school administrators, and policymakers to implement targeted interventions that support bereaved students.

2.1.2 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory was developed by Bronfenbrenner in 1979. The theory states that human development is influenced by multiple environmental systems that interact at different levels, namely the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The microsystem includes immediate relationships such as family, school, and peer interactions that directly affect a child's development (Tudge et al., 2009). The mesosystem involves the interactions between different microsystems, such as the relationship between a student's school and their home environment (Christensen, 2016). The exosystem consists of external settings that indirectly influence the child, such as parental workplaces or community institutions (Neal & Neal, 2013). The macrosystem encompasses broader societal influences, including cultural values, socioeconomic conditions, and educational policies (Guy-Evans, 2020). Lastly, the chronosystem captures changes over time, including life transitions such as the loss of a loved one (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). This theory is

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

instrumental in understanding how grief influences Conduct Disorder, as it considers the interplay between personal and environmental factors.

Bronfenbrenner's theory provides a framework for analyzing the effects of grief on students' behaviour and conduct in public secondary schools. When students experience the death of a close relative, their microsystem is immediately affected, disrupting their interactions with parents, teachers, and peers (McLeroy et al., 1988). A grieving student may exhibit withdrawal, aggression, or defiance in school due to emotional distress (Ungar, 2011). The mesosystem can further compound these effects, as conflicts between home and school responses to grief may create inconsistencies in conduct enforcement (Christensen, 2016). Additionally, the exosystem plays a role, as factors such as financial strain caused by a parent's death can lead to stress at home, affecting a student's concentration and behaviour in school (Kelly & Symonds, 2017). The macrosystem also influences grief responses, as cultural attitudes towards bereavement shape how students process and express their emotions (Betancourt & Khan, 2008). The chronosystem indicates how grief affects conduct over time, as unresolved grief can lead to long-term behavioural issues such as truancy and delinquency (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016).

Neal and Neal (2013) critique ecological systems theory for it is overly complex and difficult to apply in specific contexts. Some scholars contend that the model lacks clear mechanisms for measuring the impact of each system on an individual's development (Tudge, 2008). Additionally, the theory assumes that all systems interact uniformly, overlooking unique personal differences in how individuals respond to external influences (Hayes et al., 2017). Critics also point out that the model does not account for internal psychological factors, such as resilience and coping mechanisms, which play a crucial role in how children handle grief (Ungar, 2011). Despite these criticisms, the theory remains an important tool for understanding the multi-layered influences on students' behaviour and conduct in school settings (Guy-Evans,

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

2020). Its holistic approach ensures that grief interventions consider not only the individual student but also their broader social and environmental contexts (Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

In the context of this study, Bronfenbrenner's theory is relevant in designing interventions for grieving students to mitigate disciplinary challenges. Teachers and school administrators must recognize how the different ecological systems interact to shape students' grief responses and subsequent behaviours (Kelly & Symonds, 2017). For instance, strengthening the mesosystem through effective communication between schools and families can ensure that students receive consistent emotional support (Betancourt & Khan, 2008). Schools can also engage the exosystem by collaborating with community organizations that offer counseling and financial support to grieving students (McLeroy et al., 1988). Furthermore, considering macrosystem influences, schools can incorporate culturally appropriate grief education programs to help students navigate their emotions in socially acceptable ways (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016).

Addressing the chronosystem, long-term strategies such as mentorship programs and peer support groups is able to provide grieving students with continuous guidance to prevent negative behavioural outcomes (Ungar, 2011). Moreover, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory is an important framework for analyzing the effects of loss and grief on Conduct Disorder in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. Through considering multiple environmental influences, the theory provides guidance on how grief affects student behaviour and how interventions can be tailored to support grieving students effectively. Despite criticisms of its complexity, the model remains instrumental in guiding school policies and programs that address grief-related disciplinary challenges.

In conclusion, Ecological Systems Theory explains how a student's behaviour is shaped by interacting environmental layers-family, school, peers, community, and broader societal forces-while Kübler-Ross's Grief Theory explains the internal emotional stages (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance) a grieving student may experience. Used together, they

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

show that grief does not occur in isolation but unfolds within systems that can either buffer or intensify behavioural problems. The weakness of Ecological Systems Theory is that it does not explain the internal emotional mechanisms that trigger conduct disorder, which Kübler-Ross fills by detailing how unresolved grief can manifest as anger, withdrawal, or acting out. Conversely, Kübler-Ross focuses on individual emotional stages but does not explain why some students develop conduct disorder while others do not; Ecological Systems Theory fills this gap by showing how environmental risk factors (e.g., harsh discipline, peer pressure, family conflict) interact with grief to shape behavioural outcomes.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Prevalence of Grief

The death of a parent or relative is one of the most traumatic events in a child's life and is associated with a higher risk for developing psychiatric disorders particularly anxiety, post-traumatic stress and mood disorders. Bereavement does not only occur in adulthood, as it is also a common experience among children and adolescents. In a study of 1,746 adolescents aged between 11 and 16 years conducted in Northern England, 77.6% reported that at least one of their first- or second-degree relatives or close friends had died and 4.1% had lost a parent (Falala, et al., 2024). As recalled by Hélène Romano, the reality of the suffering generated by bereavement is even more difficult to envisage when it concerns a child, probably because of its violence and the vulnerability of children, who are all the more affected when those in charge of their care are themselves devastated and unable to provide that care as well as usual. Indeed, recent studies have clearly established that the loss of a loved one is one of the most stressful life events that a child can have to cope with and that it is a risk factor for numerous disorders (Revet et al., 2020).

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

A substantial number of children and adolescents experience bereavement: Prevalence rates of childhood bereavement range from 7 % for a close family member to 62 % for a close relative (Burns et al., 2020; Paul & Vaswani, 2020). Qualitative research indicated that adolescents who have experienced the death of a friend are more prone to difficulties in falling asleep, frequent nightmares, and disrupted sleep (Chen et al., 2024).

In 2017, South Africa had 2.8 million orphans, representing 14% of children (Falala et al., 2024).In African ethnic, family, and clan systems, grief is not only an individual emotional state but also a shared communal experience, with prevalence expressed through rituals, storytelling, and long-term cultural practices rather than standardized symptom counts (Mbiti, 1991; Nwoye, 2005). Western measures tend to emphasize pathology and the frequency of depressive or traumatic symptoms, yet in many African communities, grief is normalized as part of the life cycle, with prevalence understood in terms of communal participation in funeral rites, widowhood rituals, and periodic memorial ceremonies (Kilonzo & Hogan, 1999). Furthermore, the prevalence of grief is shaped by social realities such as poverty, conflict, HIV/AIDS, and displacement, making grief both chronic and recurrent, challenging the Western framing of prevalence as a quantifiable, time-bound condition (Magesa, 1997; Nwoye, 2017).

Peprah, Gilligan, Kay-Lambkin and Andriessen (2025) carried out a narrative review to examine suicide trends, contributing factors, and the burden faced by suicide loss survivors in Ghana. The study aimed to explore suicidal behaviour in Ghana and its impact on bereaved families within the country's sociocultural context. A comprehensive literature search was conducted using PsycINFO, Scopus, and PubMed, supplemented by grey literature, organizational reports, and newspaper articles. The findings showed that suicidal behaviour in Ghana was majorly influenced by multiple micro- and macro-systemic factors, including conflicting relationships, poor academic achievement, cultural beliefs, the death of a spouse,

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

and socioeconomic challenges. The study also highlighted that suicide bereavement was particularly difficult for families due to stigma, societal taboos, and limited mental health support services. However, the study acknowledged a limitation in that its findings cannot be generalized beyond Ghana.

Omucheni, Mwenje and Kamunyu (2024) assessed the prevalence of complicated grief (CG) among children who had lost loved ones in selected public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study was guided by Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory and employed a convergent mixed-method research design. A multistage sampling technique was used to select 259 pupils aged 10-13 years who had lost a loved one in the last year, while purposive sampling was used to select 22 class teachers of the bereaved pupils. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires using the SDQ, ICG, and STAB scales, as well as interviews. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS Version 25.0. The findings revealed that the prevalence of complicated grief among bereaved children was 26.1%, demonstrating that a significant proportion of students struggled with grief-related challenges. The study concluded that complicated grief negatively affects children's social and cognitive functioning, often manifesting in antisocial behaviours. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education introduce a school-based counseling program incorporating grief intervention techniques in public primary schools.

Atieno and Kisii (2024) conducted a qualitative study to explore the impact of funeral rites disruptions on family members' grief and bereavement during COVID-19 among the Luo community in Kenya. The study focused on how restrictions on funeral planning, funeral attendance, and post-death rituals affected the grieving process of bereaved families. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, the Government of Kenya imposed strict safety protocols, including limits on gatherings to a maximum of 10 people, mandatory burials within 24 hours of death, and immediate dispersal of mourners after burial. These measures significantly

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

disrupted traditional mourning and funeral practices, affecting cultural and emotional aspects of bereavement. The study involved interviews with 20 family members of hospitalized patients who died between May 2020 and May 2021, conducted from October 2021 to February 2022. The findings revealed that involvement in funeral planning had mixed effects on grief adjustment, while attendance at the funeral had a high and significant impact on grief and bereavement. Additionally, post-funeral rituals were perceived positively, as they played a crucial role in easing grief and strengthening emotional bonds with the deceased. Indeed looking at the studies above justifies that grief is prevalent among adolescents and children. This study aims at determining the intervention strategies put in place to manage grief so as to be able to inform future policies in handling grief reactions among students.

2.2.2 Levels of Conduct Disorders

Kusumawardana (2018) examined the differences in conduct disorder levels between students from state and private junior high schools in Malang City, Indonesia. The study assessed student conduct based on the types and intensity of punishments given by teachers. Data collection involved quantitative methods, specifically the administration of questionnaires to students. The study sample consisted of one class of second-grade students from four selected junior high schools, including two state junior high schools (SJHS 4 and SJHS 20) and two private junior high schools (PGRI 3 Junior High School and Muhammadiyah 1 Junior High School). The research process included problem identification, school observations, questionnaire distribution, and data analysis. The findings revealed that students from state junior high schools were generally more disciplined than their counterparts in private junior high schools. This conclusion was based on the observation that state school students received fewer and less intense punishments than private school students. The study concluded that conduct levels vary based on school type, with state schools maintaining stricter conduct standards.

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Elrod, Rice, and Meyers (2022) examined the relationships between Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS) fidelity, school climate, and student conduct in secondary schools in the United States. The research involved a large sample of 204,701 students from 288 middle and high schools and analyzed data across multiple years. The findings revealed that additional years of PBIS implementation were associated with greater fidelity, improved school climate, and fewer ODRs. Moreover, the study found that students' perceptions of school climate in earlier years significantly predicted PBIS fidelity and ODRs in later years. Conversely, ODRs reported during the early years of PBIS implementation influenced school climate and PBIS fidelity in later years. The study concluded that a positive school climate enhances PBIS fidelity, leading to improved student conduct outcomes. The study recommended that researchers and policymakers adopt multidimensional school climate scales rather than a single measure to gain a more comprehensive understanding of PBIS effectiveness.

Moreover, Obadire and Sinthumule (2021) conducted a qualitative study to investigate learner conduct in schools following the abolition of corporal punishment and to explore disciplinary measures that uphold students' human rights in South Africa. The study aimed to assess the nature and causes of disciplinary problems and how schools manage student behaviour effectively. A purposive non-probability sampling technique was used to select participants, which included school disciplinary committee members, Representative Councils of Learners (RCLs), and school principals from four schools. Data was collected through interviews with experienced educators involved in school conduct. The findings revealed that the causes of student disciplinary problems varied across schools, with factors such as parental influence, peer pressure, and school environment playing significant roles. Additionally, the study emphasized that effective school management was central to maintaining conduct and improving overall academic performance. It was concluded that learner conduct remains a

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

critical issue in the post-corporal punishment era, requiring proactive strategies that do not violate students' rights. The study recommended that parents, as the first teachers, should instil values and morals in their children to help them differentiate between right and wrong, reinforcing positive behaviour both at home and in school.

Kaluri and Mohammed (2024) conducted a survey research study to assess the impact of conduct on the academic achievement of secondary school students in Ganjuwa Local Government, Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study aimed to determine how conduct influences students' classroom behaviour, teacher-student interactions, and overall academic performance. Three research questions guided the study, and the target population consisted of 2,357 Senior Secondary (SS II) students from five selected schools. A sample size of 150 students was selected using simple random sampling techniques. Data was collected through researcher-developed questionnaires, and the responses were analyzed using mean scores. The findings indicated that schools should create a positive and conducive learning environment where conduct is upheld and respected, as it plays a significant role in shaping students' academic outcomes. The study concluded that strong disciplinary measures contribute to improved student engagement and learning performance. The researchers recommended that secondary schools implement comprehensive disciplinary policies and procedures that emphasize proactive approaches to fostering positive behaviour and student involvement in learning activities.

Specioza and Henry (2023) conducted a mixed-method research study to examine the relationship between head teachers' leadership styles and Conduct Disorder in selected secondary schools in Nyagatare District, Rwanda. The study employed a descriptive research design to develop insights into the status of student conduct and its relationship with leadership approaches. A cross-sectional design was used to collect data from a diverse group of students at a single point in time. The study found that head teachers' leadership styles had a significant

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

but weak correlation with student conduct. Leadership styles characterized by shared decision-making, and, student and parental involvement in disciplinary matters were associated with improved student conduct, including completion of assignments, regular attendance, adherence to school dress codes, and respect for school authorities. The study concluded that inclusive leadership approaches, where students and parents participate in disciplinary decision-making, contribute to improved conduct in schools.

Khamala, Amunga and Ashioya (2025) conducted a study in Bungoma South Sub-County to examine how guidance and counseling influenced conduct disorder in public secondary schools. The study was motivated by the increasing cases of misconduct following the ban on corporal punishment in 2001 through the Education Act, positioning guidance and counseling as an alternative disciplinary approach. The study applied behavioural modification theory and employed a descriptive research design, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods. A sample of 19 deputy principals, 19 guidance and counseling teachers, and 218 teachers was drawn from 62 public secondary schools to provide insights into the impact of guidance and counseling on conduct disorder. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview guides, analyzed using SPSS, and qualitative responses were transcribed and categorized into themes. The findings indicated that guidance and counseling positively influenced Conduct Disorder by offering a structured approach to behavioural modification. The study recommended the establishment of guidance and counseling units in schools, hiring professional counselors, and sensitizing stakeholders, which include students, teachers, parents, and Boards of Management, on the value of these services. However, the study was limited to teachers' perspectives and did not directly assess students' responses to guidance and counseling, presenting a gap in understanding its direct impact on students' behaviour.

Newton (2022) assessed the influence of mentorship interventions on student conduct in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was grounded on Personal Construct

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Theory (PCT) and employed a correlational research design to explore the relationship between mentorship programs and student conduct. The target population included 227 principals, 3,479 guidance and counseling teachers, and 89,065 students in Kiambu County, from which a sample of 23 principals, 97 teachers, and 398 students was selected using simple random sampling. Data was collected through questionnaires, interview guides, and observation schedules, with a piloting phase conducted to test the accuracy, clarity, and suitability of research instruments. Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, and percentages) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and multivariate regression analysis at a significance level of 0.05) were used for analysis, while content analysis was applied to qualitative data. The findings revealed a positive and significant correlation between mentorship interventions and student conduct, demonstrating that mentorship programs effectively contributed to improved behaviour management in schools.

2.2.3 Grief and Conduct Disorder

While bereavement is associated with various mental and physical health problems, such as concentration difficulties, fatigue and an increased vulnerability to subsequent stressors, most children adapt to it over time (Kennedy et al., 2018; Lytje & Dyregrov, 2019). A minority, however, develops mental health problems (Kentor and Kaplow, 2020; Keyes et al., 2014), e.g., depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), conduct disorder, or prolonged grief disorder (PGD). Bereavement may trigger grief reactions resembling symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including panic attacks, inexplicable breathing difficulties or hyperventilation, particularly when exposed to reminders of the death. Sleep disturbances are also common.

A study by da Silva Gracino et al. (2023) was qualitative in nature and examined the psychological and social distress experienced by students within the context of Brazil's national literacy policy, which mandates that all students achieve adequate literacy by age 8.

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

The study aimed to explore the negative meanings of schooling for children with a history of persistent academic failure. Fieldwork was conducted with three public elementary school students aged 9–10 who had experienced grade retention. Data collection involved play sessions, semi-structured interviews, reflexive interviews, and drawing conclusion, and thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Five key themes emerged from the findings: (1) difficulty learning written language, (2) inefficient and aversive learning strategies, (3) frustration with academic failure and the desperate search for success, (4) strained relationships with teachers, and (5) the impact of school failure on peer relationships. While the study design did not allow for direct assessment of the policy's impact, the findings suggested a mismatch between students' realities and the policy's pedagogical principles, which could contribute to negative school experiences and increased psychological distress. The study concluded that educational policies should consider students' individual learning trajectories to avoid reinforcing feelings of frustration and alienation.

Shumba (2021) conducted a multiple case study to examine secondary school children's bereavement experiences and their implications for school counseling in Harare Metropolitan Province, Zimbabwe. The study aimed to understand how orphaned learners experience bereavement and how these experiences can inform school counseling services. The research involved 13 bereaved school children and four school counselors from two secondary schools, with each participant considered a bounded case due to their unique bereavement experiences. The findings revealed nine key aspects of bereavement experiences among learners. First, the child's support system and type of attachment to the deceased influenced their grieving process. Second, students experienced intense emotional pain but struggled to verbalize it. Third, cultural practices had both positive and negative effects on bereaved children, with some traditions providing support while others were oppressive. Fourth, bereavement triggered deep philosophical reflections, with children evaluating their lives before, during, and after their

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

parents' deaths. Fifth, there was a significant mismatch between what students and counselors reported regarding bereavement counseling services in schools. Sixth, most students did not receive any bereavement counseling, with only three out of 13 learners stating that a teacher had ever spoken to them about their loss. Seventh, counselors, despite their qualifications, lacked confidence in handling bereavement-related issues. Eighth, the school counseling syllabus lacked a focus on bereavement counseling, despite the prevalence of death in Zimbabwe. Ninth, teachers who were not designated as counselors held negative attitudes towards counseling, which had serious implications for bereaved students.

Tibo (2020) assessed the relationship between psychosocial factors and student conduct in secondary schools in Yumbe District, Uganda. Grounded in Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, the study employed a correlational research design. Data was collected from six secondary schools, including day and boarding schools, single-sex girls' schools, government-aided institutions, community-based schools, and private schools offering both O' level and A' level education. The study used simple random sampling to select participants, with questionnaires and interview guides as data collection instruments. SPSS software was used to analyze frequencies, means, correlations, and regression tables, while qualitative methods were used to clarify insights from quantitative data. The findings revealed that self-esteem, motivation, school environment, and peer influence were the most significant factors affecting student conduct. The study indicating that a lack of motivation, low self-esteem, negative peer influence, and an unfriendly school environment contributed to persistent misconduct in secondary schools. Additionally, irregular guidance and counseling sessions and a lack of structured meetings between teachers, parents, and students further weakened conduct. The study classified misconduct into three categories: student-based, school-based, and society-based, indicating that collective student misconduct and negative social habits played a major role in declining conduct levels.

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Wango and Gwiyo (2023) examined how schools and counselors can support grieving pupils and students, emphasizing the inevitability and universality of death. The study indicated that bereavement, whether due to accidents, illnesses like HIV/AIDS and cancer, or natural disasters, significantly affects children's and adolescents' physical and mental health, relationships, and social functioning. The study noted that death within a student's close circle such as a parent, sibling, relative, teacher, classmate, or friend poses unique challenges, often requiring structured support from teachers, counselors, school chaplains, and social workers. The study emphasized the unpredictability of death, occurring naturally, suddenly, or traumatically, and suggested that in some cases, preparation for bereavement may be necessary, particularly in instances of prolonged illness or anticipated fatal accidents. The findings emphasized the role of schools in creating post-traumatic growth among bereaved students, advocating for structured support systems to help them cope with loss. The study recommended improving school personnel preparedness to offer psychological and emotional support to grieving students.

Omucheni, Mwenje and Kamunyu (2024) investigated antisocial behaviours prevalent among children experiencing complicated grief (CG) in selected public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study acknowledged that children's inability to fully comprehend and process death due to factors such as chronological age, attachment to the deceased, nature of death, and family support often leads to delayed or prolonged grief, manifesting in social and cognitive dysfunction, including antisocial behaviours. Guided by Attachment Theory, the study employed a convergent mixed-method design, utilizing multistage and purposive sampling to select 259 pupils aged 10-13 years who had lost a loved one within the last year, along with 22 class teachers of bereaved pupils. Data collection involved self-administered questionnaires (SDQ, ICG, and STAB) and interviews, with quantitative data analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics via SPSS Version 25.0. The findings revealed that social

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

aggression, with an aggregated mean of 3.01, was the most prevalent antisocial behaviour among children who had lost a loved one, though antisocial behaviours were also observed among those without CG. The study recommended the introduction of a school-based counseling program incorporating grief intervention techniques, with professionally trained counselors who do not double as teachers to mitigate role conflicts. Additionally, it suggested that public primary schools implement training programs to equip teachers with skills to support grieving students and foster resilience. However, the study did not explore the long-term psychological effects of CG on children's academic performance, presenting a gap in understanding the broader impact of grief on learning outcomes.

Muli (2024) conducted a descriptive correlational study to examine the influence of principals' conduct management strategies on the psychological well-being of orphaned students in public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya. The study aimed to assess the effect of principals' enforcement of rules and regulations, stakeholder involvement, counseling strategies, and mentorship programs on the psychological well-being of orphaned students. Grounded in Assertive Conduct Theory and the Theory of Psychological Well-Being, the study targeted 393 principals, 1,003 teacher-counselors, and 583 orphaned students, totaling 1,979 respondents. A sample of 333 respondents was determined using Yamane's Formula, with 66 principals, 169 teacher-counselors, and 98 orphaned students selected through stratified simple random sampling. The findings revealed a positive correlation between principals' enforcement of rules and regulations and the psychological well-being of orphaned students, suggesting that consistent application of school rules fosters stability and security. Additionally, stakeholder involvement in decision-making had a significant positive correlation, indicating that participation of teachers, parents, and community members enhances students' sense of belonging. Counseling strategies also showed a positive correlation, emphasizing the importance of accessible counseling services for supporting

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students' emotional well-being. Furthermore, mentorship programs exhibited a positive correlation, suggesting that mentors play a crucial role in improving the mental and emotional well-being of orphaned students.

2.2.4 Intervention Strategies for Managing Grief

Covington (2024) examined the strategies employed by school social workers in Virginia to help children cope with parental death. The study identified effective interventions that support children's adjustment to grief and enhance social work practice in schools. Grounded in Kubler-Ross's grief theory, ecological systems theory, and trauma-informed care, the research utilized semi-structured interviews with 10 school social workers to explore their roles, strategies, benefits, and challenges in supporting bereaved students. Data analysis revealed key themes, including the need to integrate parental death into grief treatment, the importance of specialized training for professionals, the necessity of introducing policies supporting evidence-based grief interventions, and the recognition of school social workers' contributions in assisting grieving students. The study concluded that effective grief and loss strategies in schools are essential for student adjustment and well-being. It recommended that schools implement structured grief treatment programs, enhance professional training, and establish policies that support comprehensive grief counseling services to foster positive social change and improve support for bereaved students.

Wood and McMahon (2024) conducted a conceptual study exploring interventions and best practices for school counselors working with grieving students, particularly those experiencing parental death, ambiguous loss, or suffocated grief. The study reviewed the three-stage model of evidence-based school counseling, which involves assessing student needs, selecting and implementing appropriate interventions, and evaluating outcomes to ensure the effectiveness of grief support strategies. The article emphasized the importance of understanding different types of grief and how they uniquely affect students' emotional and academic well-being. The

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study provided practical, evidence-based strategies that school counselors can use to create a supportive school environment, such as structured grief counseling sessions, peer support programs, trauma-informed interventions, and collaboration with families and mental health professionals. The study concluded that school counselors play a crucial role in helping students navigate grief, and effective interventions must be tailored to meet individual student needs. It was recommended that schools integrate grief support into counseling programs, offer professional training for counselors, and implement structured policies to provide long-term emotional support for grieving students to enhance their overall well-being and academic success.

Santos et al. (2022) conducted a longitudinal mixed-methods study in São Paulo, Brazil, to assess the effectiveness of school-based grief counseling interventions for adolescents who lost a parent or guardian. Using attachment theory and trauma-informed approaches, the study involved 152 students from ten public schools. The intervention combined weekly psychoeducational sessions, peer support groups, and one-on-one therapy. Findings showed that students who participated improved significantly in emotional regulation, class attendance, and social behaviour. The qualitative data further emphasized the role of peer support and emotional expression in managing grief. The study recommended scaling up grief-specific counseling services in Brazilian schools, enhancing teacher capacity to recognize grief symptoms, and integrating grief literacy into school curricula.

Okoro and Nwankwo (2023) conducted an exploratory case study in southeastern Nigeria examining the impact of structured grief therapy on junior secondary school students following sibling loss. Using a sample of 96 students across four schools, the study applied Worden's Tasks of Mourning model. Participants received eight weekly sessions involving narrative therapy, memory work, and creative expression techniques. Quantitative pre- and post-assessment results showed marked improvements in emotional stability and classroom

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engagement. The study emphasized the necessity of formal grief intervention training for school counselors and highlighted the effectiveness of culturally sensitive therapeutic models in addressing grief among African adolescents.

Mpofu and Mavundla (2021) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study in Zimbabwe to explore how teachers in rural secondary schools support students grieving the loss of parents due to AIDS-related complications. Drawing on the person-centered and resilience theoretical frameworks, the study used in-depth interviews with 18 teachers from six schools. Results indicated that most teachers relied on informal counseling, peer-pairing, and involving local church leaders to support grieving students. Teachers expressed a strong need for formal training and institutional support. The study concluded that while community-based support was crucial, structured grief interventions within schools were urgently needed to reduce absenteeism and emotional withdrawal among bereaved learners.

Lyimo, Mkongo and Lyakurwa (2024) conducted a qualitative study examining the provision of counseling services in addressing psychosocial challenges among students in secondary schools in Tanzania, focusing on both challenges and opportunities. The study acknowledged that secondary education is a critical period marked by academic demands, social interactions, and personal development, making psychosocial support essential for student well-being and academic success. The research involved students and school counselors, with data collected through focus group discussions and interviews. The findings revealed several challenges affecting the effectiveness of counseling services, including limited resources, high student-to-counselor ratios, inadequate training and professional development for school counselors, and an overemphasis on academic guidance rather than holistic student support. However, the study also identified opportunities for improving counseling services, such as integrating counseling into education and training policies, adopting a holistic approach to student well-being, enhancing capacity-building programs for counselors, implementing peer support initiatives,

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and fostering collaboration with NGOs and community-based organizations. The study concluded that counseling services in Tanzanian secondary schools face significant challenges but also present opportunities for improvement through targeted interventions.

Wambua, Mwania, and Mukolwe (2024) evaluated the influence of principals' counseling strategies on the psychological well-being of orphaned students in public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya. The study was grounded in the theory of psychological well-being and sought to determine how peer counseling, group counseling, life skills programs, and mentorship initiatives impact the mental and emotional stability of orphaned students. The research targeted 1,979 respondents, including principals, teacher-counselors, and orphaned students from 393 public secondary schools, with a sample size of 333 respondents selected through stratified and purposive sampling techniques. Data collection involved questionnaires for teacher-counselors and structured interviews for principals and students, while analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, through SPSS. The findings revealed a significant relationship between counseling strategies and the psychological well-being of orphaned students, showing that schools with structured counseling programs, dedicated counseling centers, and well-trained peer counselors positively influenced the mental health of orphaned learners. The study concluded that effective counseling services help mitigate issues such as low self-esteem, low self-confidence, and low self-efficacy among vulnerable students. It recommended that principals prioritize the availability of counseling services, enhance capacity-building for teacher-counselors, and ensure structured guidance and mentorship programs.

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2.3 Summary of Research Gaps

Based on the reviewed studies above, several research gaps have been identified. There is a conceptual gap in understanding the relationship between grief and conduct disorder, particularly among students in the Kenyan context. While studies have explored grief and

conduct disorder separately, few have examined the intersection of these factors within the adolescent student population. This study addressed this gap by investigating how grief influences the occurrence of conduct disorders among secondary school students in Njoro Sub-County.

In addition, a contextual gap exists in the literature regarding the impact of grief on student behaviour within Kenya, especially in rural and semi-urban areas like Njoro Sub-County. While studies from different regions have examined loss and grief and conduct disorders, the specific cultural, social, and educational context of Kenya, where grief and mental health support systems may be underdeveloped has not been sufficiently addressed. This study provided valuable insights into how grief manifests in the local secondary school setting and its role in students' behavioural issues.

Moreover, a methodological gap is evident in the lack of studies using a mixed-methods approach to investigate both the prevalence of loss and grief and its impact on conduct disorder among students. Many studies have relied on either quantitative or qualitative methods but not both. This study used a convergent mixed-methods design, allowing a comprehensive analysis of loss and grief and conduct disorder in students, addressing this methodological gap and providing a more nuanced understanding of the issue.

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2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presents a pictorial view of the resulting relationship between the variables. The conceptual framework is as shown in figure 2.1.

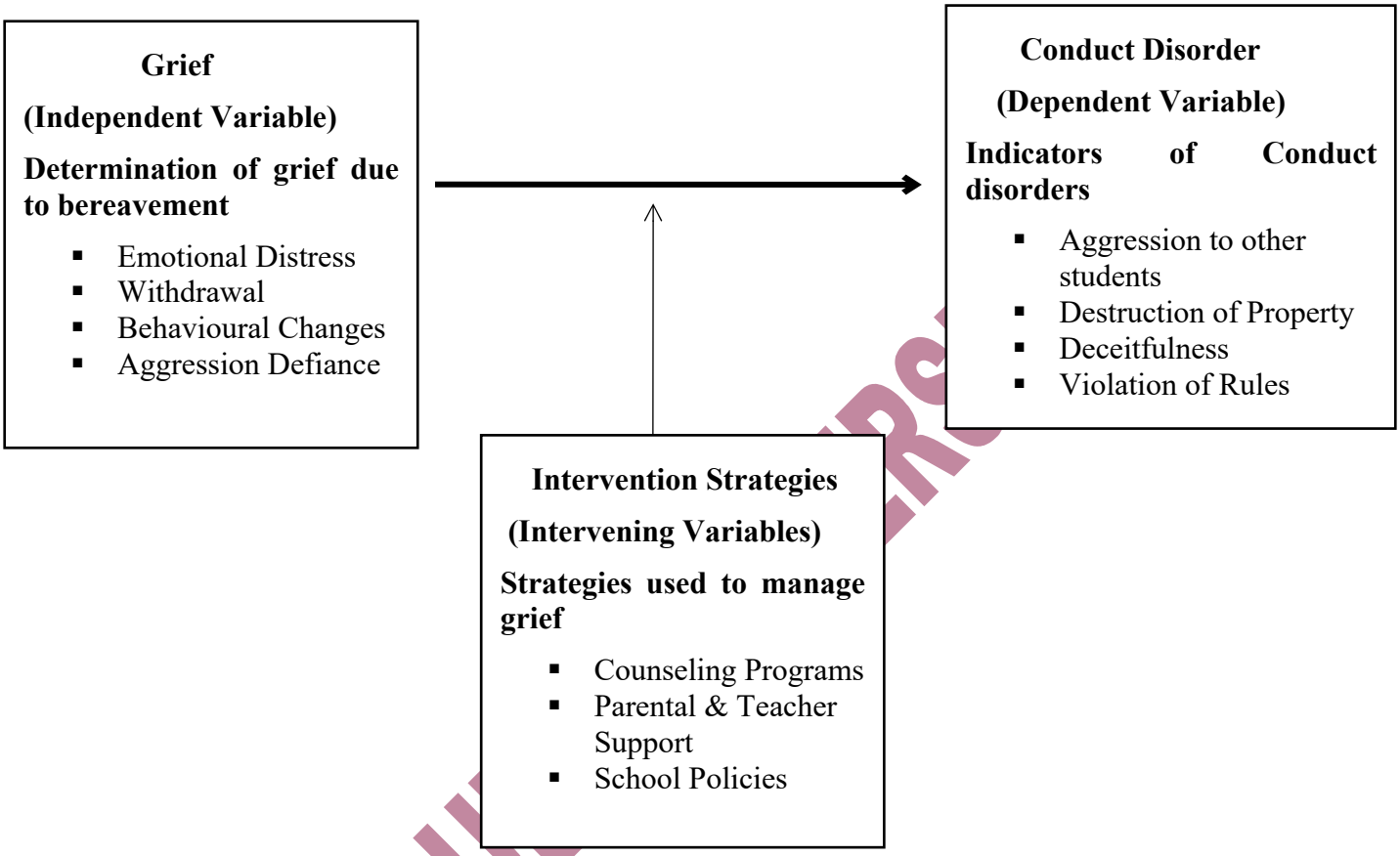


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 2.1 illustrates the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools. Grief, arising from the loss of a parent, guardian, or sibling, may manifest in emotional turmoil, withdrawal, anger, or defiance, which in turn can influence behavioural outcomes. The framework suggests that unresolved grief is likely to contribute to maladaptive behaviours commonly associated with conduct disorder, including aggression, rule-breaking, and oppositional tendencies.

Additionally, the framework implies that the school environment, social support systems, and availability of grief management interventions can moderate or mediate the impact of grief on

conduct disorder. Using this relationship, the study seeks to identify not just the correlation but also potential intervention points where educators and counselors can effectively support grieving students to prevent the escalation of behavioural issues.

2.5 Summary

This chapter reviews literature related to grief and its effects on Conduct Disorder. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the study, followed by an exploration of theoretical perspectives on grief, specifically Kübler-Ross Grief Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which form the foundation of the study. The chapter examines the prevalence of grief among students by reviewing studies on mental health challenges, complicated grief, and the impact of bereavement on students' well-being. It then evaluates students' conduct, highlighting factors that influence student behaviour, school conduct policies, and the role of mentorship in fostering positive conduct. The relationship between grief and student conduct is explored, emphasizing how emotional distress, academic decline, and behavioural changes contribute to disciplinary challenges. Additionally, the chapter presents intervention strategies for managing grief-related disciplinary issues, including counseling programs, teacher and parental support, and school-based grief interventions. The chapter concludes by identifying gaps in the existing literature and presenting a conceptual framework illustrating the relationship between grief, student conduct, and intervention strategies.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was employed in the study. The chapter covers the research design, target population, sample size, sampling method, data collection methods and procedures, pre-testing of data collection instruments, and data analysis techniques. Additionally, it discusses the ethical considerations to be observed throughout the study. Finally, the chapter presents a summary of the methodological approach adopted.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a correlational research design. A correlational research design is used when the objective is to examine the strength and direction of relationships between variables (Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2014; Priya, 2021). Commonly applied in social sciences, this design focuses on quantifying associations between key variables to determine their degree of correlation. This study adopted a correlational research design to assess the relationship between loss, grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. This design was appropriate for the study as it facilitated the measurement of the correlation between grief and conduct disorder, providing empirical analysis on the extent and nature of their association within the real-life context of public secondary schools in the region.

3.2 Location of the study

The study was conducted in Njoro Sub-County, which is one of the eleven sub-counties in Nakuru County, Kenya. Njoro is predominantly an agricultural region with both rural and peri-urban settlements, and it hosts a significant number of public secondary schools. It lies within the central part of the Rift Valley and is known for its diverse population and educational

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institutions. Geographically, Njoro Sub-County is located between latitudes 0°13' South and 0°28' South, and longitudes 35°49' East and 36°05' East. The area features a temperate climate and moderate rainfall, factors that contribute to its agricultural productivity and settlement patterns.

3.3 Population

Population describes an entire group of individuals, items, or phenomena that the researcher finds interesting and aims to draw conclusions or generalize based on the study findings (Metz, 2021). A target population is a specific group of individuals or elements within the broader population that researchers intend to study or make conclusions about (Rahi, 2017). The study population for this research comprised all 49 public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The selection criterion was that only schools registered with the Ministry of Education and offering counseling services were considered. Within these schools, respondents were selected based on their direct involvement in student guidance, administration, or academic support functions. The target respondents, who formed the units of observation included the student population, class teachers, principals, and heads of counseling departments. These 49 public secondary schools have a total of 24, 515 students. Therefore, the study targeted 24,515 students, 196 class teachers, 49 principals and 49 heads of counseling departments. Table 3.1 shows the target population.

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Table 3.1: Target Population

Category	Total Population	Male	Female
Students Population	24515	12643	11872
Class Teachers	196	124	72
School Principals	49	35	14
Heads of Counseling Departments	49	29	20
TOTAL	**24809**	**12831**	**11978**

Source: Njoro Sub-County TSC Data (2025)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Method

The study employed a combination of stratified random sampling, purposive sampling, and simple random sampling to ensure a representative selection of the students. Given that there are 49 public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, the study used a stratified approach to sample schools, ensuring that different school types are proportionately represented. The sample size determination was guided by Yamane (1967) formula for calculating a representative sample from a known population. The 49 public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County were categorized into three strata: Mixed-day schools, mixed boarding schools and single-gender schools (boys and girls boarding schools). In this study, 27% of the 49 schools were sampled, resulting in approximately 13 schools. The researcher listed all schools under each category and used a random sampling technique to select schools from each stratum proportionately to ensure fair representation.

3.4.1 Sample Size

The 24,515 students enrolled in these schools form the largest target population. To keep the sample manageable while maintaining representativeness, the study used simple random sampling was employed to select students. Following Yamane (1967) formula:

$n=N/1+N(e)^2$

Where:

n = required sample size

N = total population (24,515 students)

e = margin of error (0.05)

$n=24515/1+24515(0.05)^2$

n≈393

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Thus, 393 students were randomly selected from the sampled schools, ensuring that students from different grade levels are proportionately included.

3.4.2 Sampling of Teachers

The 196 class teachers were sampled using stratified random sampling to ensure representation. Applying 18% of the total population, approximately 35 teachers were selected. Teachers were randomly chosen from each school, ensuring fair gender representation. The 18% sampling rate ensures a manageable yet representative sample size that captures diverse teacher perspectives across all schools. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sampling rate of between 10% and 30% was considered adequate for a large population, thus, the use of 18% ensures both representativeness and practical feasibility in capturing diverse perspectives and is guided by this principle.

3.4.3 Sampling of Principals and Heads of Counseling Departments

Since there were 49 principals and 49 heads of counseling departments, the study employed purposive sampling to select 13 principals and 13 heads of counseling departments, corresponding to the 13 sampled schools. These respondents were selected because they hold key positions in school leadership and student support, making them critical informants in assessing how grief influences student conduct. Table 3.2 shows the sample size for the study.

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Category	Target Population	Sampling Procedure	Sample Size	Male	Female
Schools	49	Stratified random sampling	13	8	5
Student Population	24,515	Simple random sampling	393	210	183
Class Teachers	196	Stratified random sampling	35	20	15
Principals	49	Purposive	13	9	4

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		sampling			
Heads of Counseling Departments	49	Purposive sampling	13	7	6
Total	**24,858**		**467**	**254**	**213**

Source: Njoro Sub-County TSC Data (2025)

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data collection involves the process of gathering raw and unprocessed data that can be processed into meaningful information, following the scientific process of data analysis (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007). Research instruments refer to tools used to select, gather and collect data during the research process. This study relied on primary data which was collected using standardized questionnaires and Key Informant Interviews (KII) to ensure understanding of the effect of grief on conduct disorder among students.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

The study employed standardized questionnaires to collect quantitative data from the students population. The Standardized Conduct Disorder Questionnaire, comprising 32 questions was used to assess emotional distress, rule-breaking behaviours, and social challenges based on students' experiences over the past year. In addition, The Standardized Grief Disorder Questionnaire, consisting of 25 questions was used to examine emotional and cognitive responses to grief, identifying distress patterns and coping mechanisms.

3.5.2 Interview Guide

Qualitative data was obtained through interviews with school administrators, class teachers and teacher counselors. Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted with principals, class teachers and heads of counseling departments to capture in-depth qualitative details on school policies, conduct disorder challenges, and available grief support mechanisms. These interviews provided a deeper contextual understanding, complementing the quantitative findings from the standardized questionnaires.

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3.6 Pilot Study

The study used 10% of the sample size for pilot study. According to Creswell (2021) at least 10% of the sample size is appropriate for pilot test. Prior to actual data collection, the instrument for collecting data shall have to be subjected to pilot test and as described by Creswell and Creswell (2017) is carried out to find weak points in style, construct as well as for supplying proxy data collection from similar population. The procedures which were used in piloting the set of questions were identical to those that were made use of during actual data collection. Pilot study was done at Nakuru day secondary school, Nakuru municipality. Therefore, the pilot study provided an opportunity to improve the questionnaire and ensure that the questions were understandable, culturally appropriate and could enable the researcher to collect valid and reliable data. Respondents that took part in the pilot study were not included in the final analysis.

3.7 Instrument Validity

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), validity refers to the extent to which an instrument accurately captures the reality under investigation. This study employed both content validity and construct validity to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the research instruments in measuring the effect of loss and grief on Conduct Disorder in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. Content validity was established through a descriptive evaluation process, where the questionnaire and interview guide were reviewed by the researcher in consultation with the supervisor and peers to determine whether the instruments adequately represent the study's domain. Content validity was assessed by ensuring that all key aspects of grief and conduct were comprehensively covered in the data collection tools.

To further strengthen the study's validity, construct validity was tested using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) by examining Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

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(KMO) values. Shrestha (2021) suggests that a KMO value greater than 0.5 and a significant Bartlett's Test ($p < 0.05$) indicate that the construct is suitable for analysis. The study also ensured face validity of the instruments of data collection which was done through piloting of the study. These tests ensured that the research instruments effectively measured the intended concepts, providing confidence in the reliability and applicability of the study's findings.

3.8 Instrument Reliability

This study used Cronbach's alpha as a reliability testing tool to test the reliability of the questionnaire items. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), reliability is defined as a scenario where, when a person administers a questionnaire as a data collection instrument to a respondent twice, they will get similar results on the second interview, similar to the first outcome. This assisted finding out if the constructs were clear and if different respondents could interpret the questions in a similar way. For this to be realized from the test data, this study considered a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7 or above. Taber (2018) asserts that a value of 0.7 and higher for Cronbach alpha (α) indicates reliable items in the questionnaire, explaining that their internal consistency is relatively high. The grief scale recorded a reliability coefficient of 0.741, while the conduct disorder scale recorded 0.835. These findings therefore demonstrated a high level of internal consistency among the items in each scale.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher started by obtaining a research approval letter from the board of post-graduate studies of St. Pauls' University. Then the researcher obtained approval from the St. Paul's University ethics review committee before seeking a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Before visiting the various schools, the researcher sought authorization letter from the County Commissioner, Nakuru and clearance from the Ministry of Education through the County Director of Education, Nakuru

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County. Thereafter, official letters were sent to the principals of the selected public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, seeking permission to carry out the study in their institutions. The researcher, assisted by two research assistants, then visited the schools to facilitate the data collection process. The questionnaires were self-administered to students, while Key Informant Interviews (KII) was conducted with principals, teachers and heads of counseling departments. The interview took around ten minutes. The questionnaires were collected at an appropriate time to maximize the response rate and ensure the completeness of data.

3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation Techniques

According to Awang (2012), data analysis refers to the application of reasoning to understand the data that has been gathered with the objective of determining consistent patterns and summarizing the relevant details in the investigation. This study collected and analysed quantitative primary data which was keyed into Excel before subjecting it to meaningful analysis through SPSS version 29.0. The process involved the identification and correction of errors in the data (data cleaning), coding the data, and storing it. The data from the standardised questionnaires were also edited for completeness and consistency; coded and the responses on each item were put into specific main themes. The data to be obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

Further, to quantify the strength of the relationship between grief and conduct disorder, the researcher used regression analysis. The goodness of the model was assessed using Analysis of Variance, while test of significance was done at 5% level of significance, with the analytical model being multiple regression. A simple linear regression model was used to test the effects of grief on conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The linear regression equation model is illustrated below:-

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$\mathbf{Y = \beta_0 + \beta X + e}$

Where:

Y is the Conduct Disorder

X_1 is Grief

e is an error term , β_0 is the constant (coefficient of intercept)

β, is the slope of the regression equation. The results were presented on tables, charts and bars. Qualitative data collected using KII was analyzed thematically using content analysis.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

To support ethical compliance, the study obtained clearance from SPUERC, along with approval letters from NACOSTI and the University Post Graduate Studies Department. Official permission was also sought from the principals of the selected schools and the County Commissioner to conduct research within their institutions. Moreover, clearance was sought from the Ministry of Education through the County Director of Education. The researcher prioritized respect and honesty in engaging with respondents, ensuring that no harm was caused, while maintaining the utmost confidentiality and privacy of participants. Additionally, data were transcribed accurately, and findings were interpreted with honesty and sensitivity.

The form assured respondents that participation is voluntary, they have the right to withdraw at any point, and their personal details remained anonymous and confidential. It also emphasized data protection and confirmed that the information collected was used strictly for academic purposes. The study also ensured there was informed consent from the participants before data collection. Proper citation and referencing followed the American Psychological Association guidelines, and plagiarism check was conducted at every stage of the study to uphold intellectual property rights and copyright standards. Upon completion, the research findings were disseminated through publication in credible, peer-reviewed journals, ensuring

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free access to knowledge and contributing to the academic discourse on grief and student conduct.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. This chapter presents results of data analyses as well as presentation and discussion based on the study objectives which were; to identify the prevalence of loss and grief among students, determine the levels of conduct disorder, examine the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder, and investigate intervention strategies for managing loss and grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. The chapter begins by presenting results for personal information. The subsequent sections present descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and findings on intervention strategies. These results provide a basis for understanding how experiences of loss and grief relate to behavioural challenges among secondary school students and how schools can strengthen support mechanisms for affected learners.

4.2 Response Rate

Response rate defines the proportion of the students who successfully participate in the study out of the total number that are sampled (Shiyab, Ferguson, Rolls & Halcomb, 2023). Establishing the response rate was important because it helped to determine whether the data collected was adequate for analysis and whether the findings could reasonably represent the views of the sampled respondents. In this study, the researcher targeted 393 students, 35 class teachers, 13 principals, and 13 heads of counseling departments from the sampled public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. The response rate results are presented in Table 4.1.

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Table 4.1: Response Rate Results

Category	Sampled Respondents	Respondents Who Participated	Non-Response	Response Rate (%)
Students	393	382	11	97.2
Class Teachers	35	32	3	91.4
Principals	13	13	0	100.0
Heads of Counseling Departments	13	13	0	100.0
Total	**454**	**440**	**14**	**96.9**

Source: Research Data (2026)

The results in Table 4.1 depicts that out of the 393 students sampled, 382 participated in the study, giving a response rate of 97.2%. This indicates that most of the targeted students took part in the study, providing adequate data for examining the prevalence of loss and grief, levels of conduct disorder, and the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. Among class teachers, 32 out of the 35 sampled teachers participated, representing a response rate of 91.4%. This was also considered highly satisfactory because class teachers were expected to provide useful information based on their close interaction with students in classroom and pastoral support settings.

The study further achieved a 100% response rate among principals and heads of counseling departments, as all the 13 sampled principals and all the 13 sampled heads of counseling departments participated. This full participation strengthened the study because these respondents hold key administrative and counseling roles in schools and were therefore well placed to provide information on student behaviour, grief-related challenges, and intervention strategies used in schools. Overall, 440 out of the 454 sampled respondents participated in the study, giving an overall response rate of 96.9%. The overall response rate was therefore considered excellent and adequate for data analysis. The response rate achieved here is consistent with the recommendation by Wu, Zhao and Fils-Aime (2022) that a response rate of

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70% and above is good for statistical analysis. A high response rate reduces the risk of non-response bias and increases confidence that the findings reflect the views and experiences of the sampled respondents. The response rate achieved in this study was sufficient for drawing valid conclusions on the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County.

4.3 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

The respondents were required to provide their personal information that includes their gender, age, and class level Personal information was used to help the researcher comprehend whether such variables had a connection with their conduct disorder. The results are presented in the subsequent sections.

4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the gender distribution of the respondents. The findings are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	168	44.0
Male	214	56.0
Total	**382**	**100.0**

Source: Research Data (2026)

The gender distribution of the respondents showed that male students formed majority at 214 respondents, representing 56.0% of the sample, while female students were 168, representing 44.0%. This indicates that both male and female students were adequately represented in the study, although the number of male respondents was slightly higher. The inclusion of both genders was important because experiences of loss, grief, emotional adjustment and conduct-related behaviour may be expressed differently among boys and girls in school settings.

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Therefore, the gender composition provided a useful basis for examining the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder from the perspectives of both male and female students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County.

4.3.2 Age of the Respondents

The respondents were also required to indicate their age category. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Age of the Respondents

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage
18 years and above	116	30.4
Less than 18 years	266	69.6
Total	**382**	**100.0**

Source: Research Data (2026)

The age distribution showed that most of the respondents were below 18 years, with 266 students representing 69.6% of the sample. Students aged 18 years and above were 116, representing 30.4%. This finding indicates that the majority of the respondents were adolescents, which is appropriate for a study conducted among secondary school students. Adolescence is a critical developmental stage marked by emotional, social, and behavioural changes. During this stage, experiences of loss and grief may affect students' emotional stability, peer relationships, discipline, and general adjustment in school (Balk, 2011). The high representation of students below 18 years therefore strengthens the relevance of the findings to the school-going adolescent population.

4.3.3 Class Level of the Respondents

The study further examined the class level of the respondents. Table 4.4. presents the results.

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Table 4.4: Class Level of the Respondents

Class Level	Frequency	Percentage
Form 3	189	49.5
Form 4	74	19.4
Grade 10	119	31.2
Total	**382**	**100.0**

Source: Research Data (2026)

Most of these students were found to be Form 3 students who formed the largest proportion of the students at 189 students, representing 49.5%. Grade 10 students were 119, representing 31.2%, while Form 4 students were 74, representing 19.4%. This distribution suggests that the study covered students at different stages of secondary education. Including Grade 10 and Form 4 students also ensured the study reflected views from learners across different academic levels.

The class distribution further indicates that the study involved students who may be facing different academic and social pressures. Form 4 students, for instance, may experience greater academic pressure due to national examination preparation, while Grade 10 and Form 3 students may be adjusting to curriculum demands, peer relationships, and school expectations. These differences are important because emotional distress linked to grief may interact with school pressure and contribute to conduct-related difficulties such as defiance, aggression, truancy, or rule-breaking behaviour. Therefore, the inclusion of students from different class levels improved the breadth of the study findings.

These demographic findings show that the study had a balanced and relevant respondent profile for examining grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools. The sample included both male and female students, a majority of adolescents below 18 years, and learners from Grade 10, Form 3 and Form 4. This composition supports the reliability of the findings because the respondents were drawn from the key student groups directly affected by issues of loss, grief, and behavioural adjustment within the school environment. The demographic characteristics therefore provide a strong foundation for interpreting the

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subsequent findings on prevalence of loss and grief, levels of conduct disorder, the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder, and intervention strategies for managing loss and grief among students.

4.4 Prevalence of Grief among Students

The first objective was to determine the prevalence of loss and grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had lost someone significant to them and to state the period that had passed since the loss occurred. They were further asked to respond to statements on grief-related experiences, including longing for the deceased, difficulty performing normal activities, confusion about one's role in life, difficulty accepting the loss, avoidance of reminders, emotional pain, difficulty re-engaging in life, emotional numbness, feelings of meaninglessness, loneliness, and impairment in social, school, or other important areas of functioning. The responses helped to establish the extent to which students had experienced loss and grief and how such experiences affected their emotional and social adjustment. Figure 4.1 shows results on loss of someone significant to the learners.

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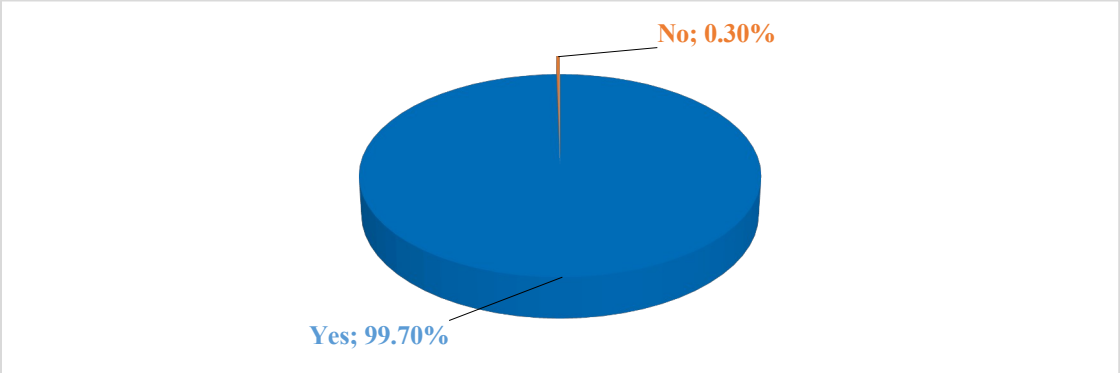


Figure 4.1: Lost Someone Significant

The results show that almost all the respondents had experienced the loss of someone significant to them, with 381 students representing 99.7% reporting "Yes," while only 1 student representing 0.3% reported "No." This indicates that loss was highly prevalent among students

in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, making grief a major psychosocial concern within the study population. The implication is that most students were likely to have been exposed to emotional distress associated with bereavement, which has the potential to affect their school attendance, concentration, social relationships, discipline and general behavioural adjustment. This concurs with Falala et al., 2024 who argues that the death of a parent or relative is one of the most traumatic events in a child's life and is associated with a higher risk for developing psychiatric disorders particularly anxiety, post-traumatic stress and mood disorders Therefore, the high prevalence of loss provides a strong basis for examining how grief relates to conduct disorder among students and highlights the need for structured grief counseling and psychosocial support services in schools.

In addition the students who had lost significant persons in their lives were asked to indicate the number of months it has been since the significant other had died. The responses are summarized in Figure 4.2.

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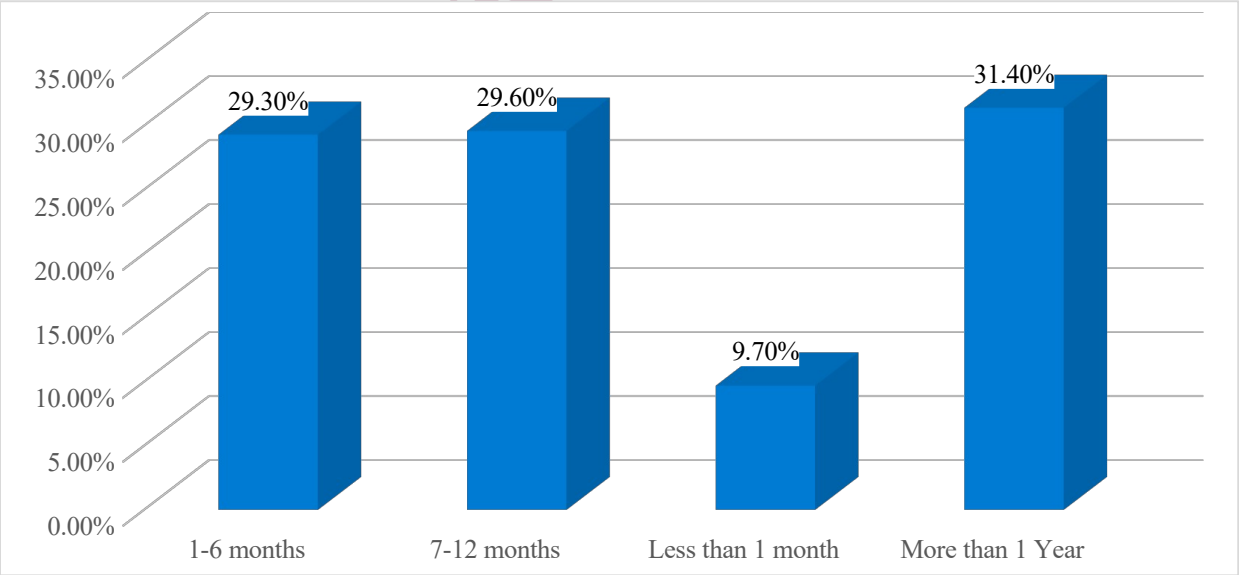


Figure 4.2: Duration since Loss of Significant One

Source: Research Data (2026)

The results in Figure 4.2 show that the duration since the loss of a significant person varied among the students. The largest proportion of respondents, 31.4%, had experienced the loss more than one year ago, while 29.6% had experienced the loss within 7–12 months. In addition, 29.3% had lost a significant person within 1–6 months, while 9.7% had experienced the loss less than one month before the study. These findings indicate that although many students had lived with grief for a longer period, a large proportion had also experienced relatively recent bereavement within the past year. This implies that grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County was both recent and ongoing, meaning that some students may still have been in the early stages of emotional adjustment while others may have been struggling with prolonged grief reactions. These findings align with a study of 1,746 adolescents aged between 11 and 16 years conducted in Northern England which found out that 77.6% of adolescents reported that at least one of their first or second-degree relatives or close friends had died and 4.1% had lost a parent (Falala., et al, 2024).The presence of recent and long-term grief experiences may affect students' concentration, school attendance, peer relationships, emotional control, and conduct-related behaviour. This is in line with Baulk, 2011, who argues that Adolescents experiencing grief due to the loss of a loved one, whether a parent, guardian, sibling, or close friend, may struggle with emotional regulation and behavioural control. Therefore, the findings points to the need for schools to provide continuous grief counseling, early identification of bereaved students, peer support systems, and referral services for students whose grief continues to interfere with their social, emotional, and academic functioning. The results on the prevalence of loss and grief among the students are presented in Table 4.9.

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Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics on Loss and Grief among Students

Question	Not at	Slightly	Somewhat	Quite a	Mean	Std.

	all			bit		Dev.
Do you feel yourself longing or yearning for the person who died?	28.80%	34.60%	24.90%	11.80%	2.2	0.99
Do you have trouble doing the things you normally do because you are thinking so much about the person who died?	31.20%	34.00%	23.60%	11.30%	2.15	0.99
Do you feel confused about your role in life or feel like you don't know who you are anymore (i.e., feeling like that a part of you has died)?	25.40%	37.40%	26.20%	11.00%	2.23	0.95
Do you have trouble believing that the person who died is really gone?	28.80%	36.60%	24.60%	9.90%	2.16	0.95
Do you avoid reminders that the person who died is really gone?	29.10%	36.10%	23.30%	11.50%	2.17	0.98
Do you feel emotional pain (e.g., anger, bitterness, sorrow) related to the death?	25.40%	39.80%	23.60%	11.30%	2.21	0.95
Do you feel that you have trouble re-engaging in life (e.g., problems engaging with friends, pursuing interests, planning for the future)?	28.80%	38.00%	21.20%	12.00%	2.16	0.98
Do you feel emotionally numb or detached from others?	30.90%	34.30%	27.50%	7.30%	2.11	0.93
Do you feel that life is meaningless without the person who died?	30.60%	36.90%	22.50%	9.90%	2.12	0.96
Do you feel alone or lonely without the deceased?	12.00%	28.50%	33.50%	25.90%	2.73	0.98

Source: Research Data (2026)

The findings in Table 4.9 show that students experienced different levels of grief-related symptoms following the death of a significant person. Regarding longing or yearning for the deceased, 34.6% of the respondents reported this slightly, 24.9% somewhat, while 11.8% experienced it quite a bit. The mean score of 2.20 and standard deviation of 0.99 suggest that yearning for the deceased was present at a moderate level among the students. This implies that although not all students were severely affected, a considerable proportion continued to experience emotional attachment to the deceased, which may affect their concentration, mood, social interaction, and school adjustment. The results also show that 34.0% of the students had

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some trouble doing normal activities because they were thinking about the deceased, while 23.6% reported this somewhat and 11.3% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.15 and standard deviation of 0.99 indicate a moderate level of disruption in daily functioning. This finding implies that grief affected some students' ability to participate normally in school and personal activities. In relation to the study, such disruption may contribute to poor academic engagement, withdrawal, reduced motivation, and conduct-related difficulties if students do not receive timely emotional support. This finding agrees with Kaplow, et al., 2014 who instigates that students in the depression stage may withdraw socially, disengage from school activities, or exhibit poor academic performance, leading to disciplinary concerns.

Regarding confusion about one's role in life or feeling as if a part of oneself had died, 37.4% of the respondents experienced this slightly, 26.2% somewhat, and 11.0% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.23 and standard deviation of 0.95 suggest that identity-related grief reactions were moderately present among the students. This implies that bereavement may have affected how some students viewed themselves, their future, and their place within family or school life. Such feelings may weaken self-confidence and emotional stability, thereby increasing the risk of social withdrawal, irritability, and poor behavioural adjustment. The findings further show that 36.6% of the students slightly had trouble believing that the deceased was really gone, while 24.6% experienced this somewhat and 9.9% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.16 and standard deviation of 0.95 indicate a moderate level of difficulty accepting the loss. This implies that some students were still struggling with acceptance, which may delay emotional recovery. This also echoes a study by Falala et al., 2024, which identified female gender, cognitive avoidance, chronic stressors (such as economic hardship), trauma exposure, and multiple losses as risk factors contributing to more severe PGD symptoms. In a school context, difficulty accepting the death of a significant person may contribute to sadness, poor attention, emotional numbness, and reduced participation in learning activities.

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Regarding avoidance of reminders that the person had died, 36.1% of respondents reported this slightly, 23.3% somewhat, and 11.5% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.17 and standard deviation of 0.98 show a moderate level of avoidance behaviour. This implies that some students may cope with grief by avoiding people, places, conversations, or activities that remind them of the deceased. While avoidance may offer temporary emotional relief, it may also prevent healthy adjustment and may contribute to withdrawal, school disengagement, or difficulty expressing emotions constructively. The results on emotional pain related to death show that 39.8% of respondents experienced it slightly, 23.6% somewhat, and 11.3% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.21 and standard deviation of 0.95 indicate that students experienced emotional pain moderately. This implies that feelings such as sorrow, bitterness, or anger remained present among some learners. Such emotional pain may affect peer relationships, increase irritability, reduce classroom participation, and contribute to conduct-related challenges, especially where students lack safe spaces to process grief.

The findings also show that 38.0% of students had some trouble re-engaging in life, while 21.2% experienced this somewhat and 12.0% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.16 and standard deviation of 0.98 indicate moderate difficulty in returning to normal social and personal functioning. This implies that grief may have affected students' willingness to interact with friends, pursue interests, or plan for the future. In relation to the study, difficulty re-engaging may be associated with school avoidance, loneliness, reduced motivation, and behavioural difficulties among bereaved students. Regarding emotional numbness or detachment from others, 34.3% of the respondents reported this slightly, 27.5% somewhat, and 7.3% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.11 and standard deviation of 0.93 indicate that emotional detachment was present but at a relatively lower level compared with other grief indicators. This implies that although many students did not experience intense numbness, a notable group still felt emotionally distant from others. Such detachment may reduce help-seeking behaviour and

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weaken relationships with peers, teachers, and family members, making school-based counseling important.

The results further show that 36.9% of respondents slightly felt that life was meaningless without the person who died, while 22.5% felt this somewhat and 9.9% quite a bit. The mean score of 2.12 and standard deviation of 0.96 suggest a moderate but relatively low level of meaninglessness compared with loneliness. This suggests that some students experienced grief in a way that affected their sense of purpose and future direction. In the school setting, such feelings may reduce academic motivation and increase emotional vulnerability, requiring supportive guidance and reassurance from teachers, counselors, and caregivers. The strongest grief-related indicator was loneliness without the deceased. The findings show that 33.5% of respondents felt lonely somewhat, while 25.9% felt lonely quite a bit. Only 12.0% reported not feeling lonely at all. The mean score of 2.73 and standard deviation of 0.98 were the highest among the items, indicating that loneliness was the most pronounced grief experience among the students. This implies that loss had a strong social and emotional effect on the respondents, possibly leaving many students feeling unsupported, isolated, or emotionally disconnected. In relation to conduct disorder, loneliness may contribute to sadness, irritability, school avoidance, withdrawal, or attention-seeking behaviour.

The findings indicate that grief was present among students at moderate levels, with loneliness being the most strongly reported symptom. Other notable grief experiences included confusion about one's role in life, emotional pain, yearning for the deceased, avoidance of reminders, and difficulty accepting the loss. These findings are also supported by the work of Omucheni, et al., 2020 who found that the prevalence of complicated grief among bereaved children was 26.1%, demonstrating that a significant proportion of students struggled with grief-related challenges. The study concluded that complicated grief negatively affects children's social and cognitive functioning, often manifesting in antisocial behaviours. The results imply that

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bereavement among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County may affect emotional stability, social belonging, school engagement, and behavioural adjustment. Therefore, the findings support the need for structured grief counseling, teacher sensitization, peer support groups, family involvement, and referral mechanisms for students whose grief interferes with normal functioning.

The students were further asked if the symptoms above caused significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning or not. Their responses were as captured in Figure 4.3.

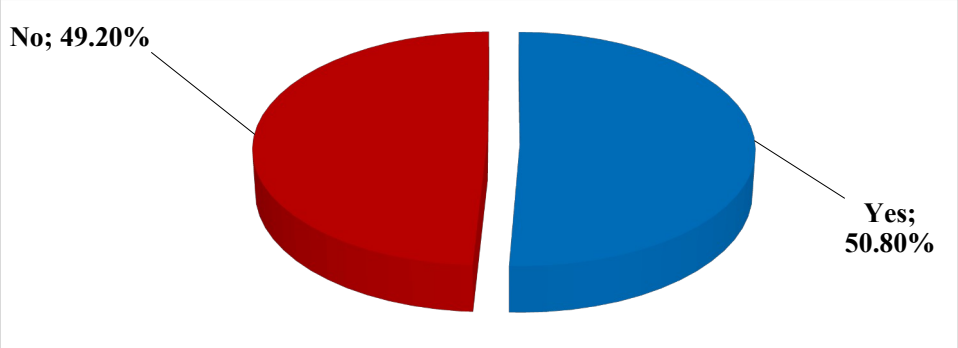


Figure 4.3: Functional Impairment Due to Grief

Source: Research Data (2026)

The results in Figure 4.3 show that slightly more than half of the students, 50.8%, reported that grief symptoms had caused significant impairment in their social, school or other important areas of functioning, while 49.2% indicated that they had not experienced such impairment. This finding suggests that grief affected the daily functioning of a considerable proportion of students, especially in areas such as peer relationships, school participation, concentration, emotional adjustment, and general behaviour. The implication is that grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County was not only an emotional experience but also a functional concern that may influence school attendance, academic engagement, discipline, and conduct-related behaviour. Therefore, schools need structured grief counseling, early

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identification of affected learners, and referral support for students whose grief interferes with normal functioning.

The study further conducted key informant interviews with principals, teachers and heads of counseling to obtain deeper explanations on grief and conduct-related behaviour among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. The interviews focused on the general level of grief observed among students, disciplinary challenges linked to grief, the effect of grief on classroom behaviour, forms of grief with stronger behavioural impact, common behavioural problems, existing intervention strategies, effectiveness of these interventions, and additional support needed to manage grief-related conduct concerns.

The interview findings revealed that grief was common among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. Most interviewees indicated that many students had experienced the death of parents, siblings, grandparents, close relatives, friends, or guardians. One principal explained that:

> *"In this school, grief is not rare. Many students have lost someone close, and although some try to hide it, you can see it in their mood, school attendance, and interaction with others."*

This echoes a study that found that substantial number of children and adolescents experience bereavement: Prevalence rates of childhood bereavement range from 7 % for a close family member to 62 % for a close relative (Burns et al., 2020; Paul and Vaswani, 2020).

The head of counseling in one school reported that grief was more visible among students who had lost parents or caregivers. According to the respondent, such learners often showed sadness, isolation, reduced confidence, and difficulty concentrating in class. The counselor noted that:

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"Students who have lost parents are usually more affected because the loss changes their emotional support system and sometimes their financial stability at home."

Teachers also observed that grief was not always expressed openly by students. A class teacher stated that some learners appeared quiet, withdrawn, or emotionally distant after losing a loved one, while others became irritable or easily angered. The teacher explained that:

"Some students do not tell us directly that they are grieving, but their behavioural changes. A very active student may suddenly become silent or avoid classmates."

The findings further indicated that grief among students existed at different levels. Some learners appeared to cope after a short period, while others remained affected for months. One deputy principal observed that:

"There are students who recover with support, but there are others who continue struggling for a long time, especially when the home environment is unstable."

These findings imply that grief was a major psychosocial issue among students and had the potential to affect their emotional stability, school participation, and behaviour. The findings echo the studies by Kentor and Kaplow, 2020, and Keyes et al., 2014 who argued that minority of students develop mental health problems post bereavement e.g., depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), conduct disorder, or prolonged grief disorder (PGD). The results support the need for schools to identify bereaved students early and provide regular counseling support rather than waiting until behaviour problems appear.

The interview results showed that students dealing with grief experienced several disciplinary challenges. Interviewees reported cases of lateness, absenteeism, incomplete assignments, poor class participation, defiance, and conflict with peers. One class teacher stated that:

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> *"Some grieving students start coming late to school, missing lessons, or failing to complete classwork. At first it appears like indiscipline, but when you talk to them, you realize there is a deeper problem."*

Principals indicated that grief sometimes made students less responsive to school rules and authority. One principal explained that bereaved learners may resist correction because they are emotionally overwhelmed. The principal noted that:

> *"A student who is grieving may react harshly even to simple correction. They may feel that nobody understands what they are going through."*

The head of counseling also reported that grief-related disciplinary issues were often linked to emotional pain rather than deliberate misconduct. According to the counselor, some students became restless, easily provoked, or uninterested in school expectations. The respondent stated that:

> *"Many of these students are not necessarily bad. They are hurting, and the pain comes out through behaviour such as anger, silence, or refusal to follow instructions."*

Teachers further noted that some grieving students developed strained relationships with classmates. One teacher observed that such students sometimes became defensive, avoided group work, or engaged in verbal exchanges with peers. The teacher said:

> *"They may think others are against them, and this creates tension in class or during group activities."*

Indeed, recent studies have clearly established that the loss of a loved one is one of the most stressful life events that a child can have to cope with and that it is a risk factor for numerous disorders (Revet et al., 2020). The implication is that disciplinary issues among grieving students should not be handled only through punishment. Schools need to combine discipline

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with counseling so that teachers can distinguish between ordinary misconduct and behaviour linked to grief, loss, and emotional distress.

4.5 Conduct Disorder among Students

The second objective of the study was to determine levels of conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. Respondents were asked to indicate how they had generally felt or behaved within the past year based on statements relating to emotional distress, school adjustment, rule-breaking behaviour, aggression, social withdrawal, concentration difficulties, irritability, hopelessness, and physical complaints such as headaches, stomachaches, and sleep problems. The results are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics on Conduct Disorder among Students

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always	Mean	Std. Dev.
I am more anxious.	17.00%	33.50%	33.00%	16.50%	1.49	0.96
I feel sad.	14.10%	27.50%	36.60%	21.70%	1.66	0.97
I skip the rules at school.	27.50%	40.30%	21.70%	10.50%	1.15	0.94
I cry easily.	11.00%	32.50%	37.20%	19.40%	1.65	0.92
I do not enjoy my favorite activities.	12.30%	28.30%	38.00%	21.50%	1.69	0.95
I'm having trouble sleeping.	31.40%	38.00%	23.60%	7.10%	1.06	0.91
I am feeling like hurting myself.	16.20%	35.30%	30.60%	17.80%	1.5	0.97
I feel hopeless about my future.	9.20%	32.70%	38.00%	20.20%	1.69	0.9
I do not want to attend school.	13.10%	29.60%	34.30%	23.00%	1.67	0.97
I feel irritable.	14.70%	28.50%	34.30%	22.50%	1.65	0.99
I feel tired.	12.30%	32.50%	38.50%	16.80%	1.6	0.91
I feel like I am failing in school.	13.60%	30.40%	31.70%	24.30%	1.67	0.99
I feel guilty.	11.30%	33.80%	32.50%	22.50%	1.66	0.95
I feel that no one loves me.	11.80%	28.00%	36.90%	23.30%	1.72	0.95
I feel that people do not like me.	13.60%	30.90%	31.20%	24.30%	1.66	0.99
I have trouble focusing at school.	18.80%	36.10%	29.10%	16.00%	1.42	0.97
I feel nervous when speaking to others.	19.60%	34.30%	31.70%	14.40%	1.41	0.96
I feel like I'm being left out.	16.80%	34.80%	28.50%	19.90%	1.52	0.99
I feel like hurting other people.	27.20%	38.00%	25.40%	9.40%	1.17	0.94
I feel like running away.	12.60%	28.50%	34.30%	24.60%	1.71	0.98
I have trouble sleeping at night.	20.40%	37.20%	25.90%	16.50%	1.38	0.99

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I have headaches often.	19.40%	36.60%	31.90%	12.00%	1.37	0.93
I have stomachaches often.	18.80%	34.80%	30.60%	15.70%	1.43	0.97
I have bad dreams.	16.20%	35.10%	30.10%	18.60%	1.51	0.97
I do things that get me into trouble.	25.10%	39.00%	23.80%	12.00%	1.23	0.96
I feel that life is not fair.	29.80%	37.40%	24.30%	8.40%	1.11	0.93
I do not finish what I start.	17.30%	33.50%	30.10%	19.10%	1.51	0.99
I break the rules.	23.80%	39.80%	25.70%	10.70%	1.23	0.93
I break the law.	22.00%	45.00%	23.80%	9.20%	1.2	0.89
I feel like fighting.	25.70%	37.20%	29.10%	8.10%	1.2	0.91
I feel alone.	11.80%	31.20%	35.30%	21.70%	1.67	0.95
People are against me.	12.30%	28.30%	35.90%	23.60%	1.71	0.96

Source: Research Data (2026)

The results in Table 4.10 depicts that conduct disorder-related experiences among students were reflected through emotional distress, school avoidance, social withdrawal, concentration difficulties, aggressive feelings, rule-breaking tendencies, and physical complaints. The findings show that several emotional and social indicators had relatively high proportions of students reporting them either often or almost always. This suggests that conduct-related concerns among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County are not limited to open rule-breaking, but also includes internal emotional struggles that have the potential to affect behaviour, learning, peer relationships and adjustment within the school environment.

The findings show that anxiety was common among the respondents. Although the largest single category was "sometimes" at 33.5%, a combined 49.5% of the students reported feeling more anxious either often or almost always. This implies that nearly half of the respondents experienced frequent anxiety-related feelings. In a school setting, such anxiety may interfere with concentration, class participation, peer interaction, and emotional regulation. The results further show that sadness was widely reported among students, with 36.6% indicating that they often felt sad and 21.7% indicating almost always. This implies that 58.3% of the respondents experienced sadness frequently. The mean of 1.66 and standard deviation of 0.97 indicate a moderate level of sadness, with some variation in responses among students. This finding implies that emotional distress was common within the student population and likely

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contributes to withdrawal, reduced motivation, low school engagement, and possible conduct-related difficulties if not addressed through guidance and counseling.

Regarding skipping school rules, the largest proportion of students (40.3%) indicated that they sometimes skipped rules at school, while 21.7% did so often and 10.5% almost always. A combined 32.2% reported frequent rule-skipping behaviour. The mean of 1.15 and standard deviation of 0.94 suggest that this behaviour was generally low to moderate, although still present among a notable group of students. This implies that while most students did not frequently disregard school rules, a meaningful proportion may require closer monitoring, behavioural guidance, and supportive disciplinary interventions to prevent escalation into more serious conduct problems. The results also show that crying easily was common among the respondents. Specifically, 37.2% reported that they often cried easily, while 19.4% reported almost always. This implies that 56.6% of the respondents experienced this emotional reaction frequently. The mean of 1.65 and standard deviation of 0.92 suggest moderate emotional sensitivity among the students. This finding implies that many learners may be experiencing emotional strain that affects their ability to cope with school and social demands. Such students may benefit from counseling, peer support, and safe spaces where they can express grief, stress, or other emotional burdens.

The item on loss of interest in favorite activities recorded one of the stronger emotional indicators. The results show that 38.0% of the students often did not enjoy their favorite activities, while 21.5% almost always experienced this. A combined 59.5% of the students therefore reported frequent loss of interest. The mean of 1.69 and standard deviation of 0.95 indicate a moderate level of this concern. This implies that many students may be struggling with reduced motivation, low mood, or emotional disengagement. In the context of grief and conduct disorder, reduced enjoyment may weaken school participation and increase vulnerability to withdrawal or problematic behaviour. On trouble sleeping, 38.0% of students

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reported experiencing it sometimes, while 23.6% experienced it often and 7.1% almost always. This implies that 30.7% reported frequent sleeping difficulties. The mean of 1.06 and standard deviation of 0.91 suggest a relatively low to moderate level of sleep-related problems. The implication is that while sleep difficulties were not among the highest-ranked concerns, a sizeable group of students still experienced disturbed sleep. Poor sleep may affect concentration, mood control, memory, and school discipline, making it important for schools to consider sleep-related complaints during counseling assessment.

The findings on feeling like hurting oneself require careful attention from school counselors and administrators. The results show that 35.3% reported this feeling sometimes, 30.6% often, and 17.8% almost always. This implies that 48.4% of students reported frequent self-harm-related thoughts. The mean of 1.50 and standard deviation of 0.97 indicate a moderate level of concern. The implication is serious: any student reporting such feelings should be treated as requiring immediate safeguarding attention, confidential counseling, referral where needed, and close follow-up by trained personnel. This item should not be treated as ordinary misconduct, but as an urgent student welfare concern. Moreover, the results show that hopelessness about the future was common among the students. A total of 38.0% of the students reported feeling hopeless often, while 20.2% reported almost always. This depicts that more than a half (58.2%) of the learners experienced frequent hopelessness. The mean of 1.69 and standard deviation of 0.90 indicate a moderate level of hopelessness with relatively controlled variation. This implies that many students may be struggling with pessimism, low motivation, and reduced confidence in their academic or personal future. Such feelings may contribute to poor academic engagement, school avoidance, irritability, and vulnerability to behavioural problems.

The item on not wanting to attend school also showed a high level of concern. The results indicate that 34.3% often did not want to attend school, while 23.0% almost always felt this

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way. This gives a combined frequent response of 57.3%. The mean of 1.67 and standard deviation of 0.97 suggest a moderate level of school avoidance. This implies that school attendance concerns may be linked to emotional distress, grief, peer difficulties, academic pressure, or disciplinary issues. Schools should therefore avoid interpreting absenteeism only as indiscipline and should also investigate emotional and family-related causes. The findings show that irritability was frequently reported, with 34.3% indicating often and 22.5% almost always. This implies that 56.8% of the students experienced irritability frequently. The mean of 1.65 and standard deviation of 0.99 suggest moderate irritability with varied student experiences. This implies that emotional tension among students may be expressed through impatience, anger, conflict with peers, or resistance to authority. In relation to conduct disorder, irritability may act as a pathway through which unresolved grief or emotional stress turns into visible behavioural problems within the school environment.

The results on tiredness show that 38.5% of the students often felt tired, while 16.8% almost always felt tired. This implies that 55.3% experienced tiredness frequently. The mean of 1.60 and standard deviation of 0.91 indicate a moderate level of fatigue. This implies that many learners may lack the physical or emotional energy needed for full academic participation. Fatigue may be linked to poor sleep, stress, grief, anxiety, or school pressure. This can affect attention, homework completion, classroom behaviour, and general performance. The findings further show that academic self-doubt was common. A total of 31.7% of students often felt like they were failing in school, while 24.3% felt this almost always. This implies that 56.0% frequently felt academically unsuccessful. The mean of 1.67 and standard deviation of 0.99 suggest moderate concern. This implies that perceived academic failure may contribute to frustration, low self-esteem, avoidance of school, and behavioural difficulties. Students who feel unsuccessful may require academic support alongside counseling, since emotional problems and poor academic confidence often reinforce each other.

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Feelings of guilt were also notable. The results show that 33.8% felt guilty sometimes, 32.5% often, and 22.5% almost always. Therefore, 55.0% of the students experienced guilt frequently. The mean of 1.66 and standard deviation of 0.95 indicate a moderate level of guilt. This implies that many students may be carrying emotional burdens linked to family issues, grief, personal mistakes, conflict, or academic struggles. Unresolved guilt may affect students' self-worth and may either lead to withdrawal or outward behaviour problems. The item "I feel that no one loves me" recorded one of the highest combined frequent responses. The results show that 36.9% often felt this way and 23.3% almost always felt this way, giving a combined 60.2%. The mean of 1.72 and standard deviation of 0.95 indicate a moderate but concerning level of perceived rejection. This implies that many students may be experiencing loneliness, emotional neglect, or weak support systems. Such feelings may increase vulnerability to grief-related distress, peer conflict, attention-seeking behaviour, or disengagement from school activities.

The findings further show that 31.2% of the students often felt that people did not like them, while 24.3% felt this almost always. A combined 55.5% therefore reported this feeling frequently. The mean of 1.66 and standard deviation of 0.99 indicate a moderate level of perceived social rejection. This implies that peer relationships may be a major concern among students. When learners feel disliked or rejected, they may withdraw, become defensive, or engage in disruptive behaviour. This highlights the need for schools to strengthen peer support, mentorship, and inclusive classroom practices. Regarding concentration, 36.1% of the students reported trouble focusing at school sometimes, while 29.1% reported often and 16.0% almost always. This implies that 45.1% experienced frequent concentration difficulties. The mean of 1.42 and standard deviation of 0.97 suggest a low to moderate level of concern. This implies that nearly half of the students may struggle to maintain attention in class. Concentration difficulties may reduce academic performance and may be misinterpreted as laziness or indiscipline if teachers do not consider possible emotional distress, grief, or mental strain.

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The results on nervousness when speaking to others show that 34.3% experienced it sometimes, 31.7% often, and 14.4% almost always. A combined 46.1% reported frequent nervousness in social interaction. The mean of 1.41 and standard deviation of 0.96 indicate a low to moderate level of concern. This implies that some students may experience social anxiety, low confidence, or fear of judgement. Such difficulties may affect class participation, peer relationships, and willingness to seek help from teachers or counselors. The findings show that 34.8% of the students sometimes felt left out, while 28.5% often felt left out and 19.9% almost always felt left out. This implies that 48.4% reported frequent feelings of exclusion. The mean of 1.52 and standard deviation of 0.99 indicate a moderate level of social exclusion feelings. This implies that almost half of the respondents may be experiencing weak social belonging. In school contexts, feelings of exclusion may contribute to sadness, anger, loneliness, truancy, or association with negative peer groups.

The item on feeling like hurting other people showed that 38.0% reported this sometimes, while 25.4% reported often and 9.4% almost always. A combined 34.8% reported frequent aggressive feelings. The mean of 1.17 and standard deviation of 0.94 suggest a low to moderate level. This implies that direct aggressive feelings were less common than internal emotional struggles, but still present among about one-third of the respondents. Such findings point to the need for anger management, conflict resolution training, and early identification of students who may be at risk of aggressive behaviour. The results on feeling like running away were among the strongest indicators of distress. A total of 34.3% of the students often felt like running away, while 24.6% felt this almost always. This implies that 58.9% reported frequent thoughts of running away. The mean of 1.71 and standard deviation of 0.98 indicate a moderate level of concern. This implies that many students may be experiencing intense emotional discomfort, family-related stress, school dissatisfaction, or grief-related distress. Schools should treat this as a warning sign requiring counseling, family engagement, and protective support.

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On trouble sleeping at night, 37.2% of the students reported this sometimes, 25.9% often, and 16.5% almost always. This implies that 42.4% of the learners experienced frequent night-time sleep problems. The mean of 1.38 and standard deviation of 0.99 suggest a low to moderate level. This implies that sleep disturbance was present among a considerable number of students. Since sleep affects mood, attention, patience, and learning, schools should consider sleep-related questions when assessing students with conduct difficulties or emotional distress. The results on headaches show that 36.6% of the students experienced headaches sometimes, while 31.9% experienced them often and 12.0% almost always. Therefore, 43.9% of the students reported frequent headaches. The mean of 1.37 and standard deviation of 0.93 indicate a low to moderate level. This implies that physical complaints may accompany emotional strain among students. Headaches may be linked to stress, poor sleep, grief, anxiety, or school pressure. Teachers and counselors should therefore avoid dismissing repeated physical complaints without considering emotional causes.

The findings on stomachaches show that 34.8% experienced them sometimes, 30.6% often, and 15.7% almost always. This gives a combined frequent response of 46.3%. The mean of 1.43 and standard deviation of 0.97 indicate a low to moderate level. This implies that nearly half of the students experienced frequent stomach-related complaints. These complaints may reflect stress, anxiety, fear of school, or unresolved emotional issues. School counseling and referral systems should therefore link physical symptoms with emotional assessment where appropriate. The results on bad dreams show that 35.1% of the students experienced them sometimes, 30.1% often, and 18.6% almost always. A combined 48.7% reported frequent bad dreams. The mean of 1.51 and standard deviation of 0.97 indicate a moderate level. This implies that sleep quality and emotional disturbance were important issues among the respondents. Bad dreams may affect rest, concentration, mood, and classroom behaviour. In

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the context of loss and grief, such experiences may point to unresolved emotional distress that requires supportive intervention.

The findings show that 39.0% of the students sometimes did things that got them into trouble, while 23.8% did so often and 12.0% almost always. This implies that 35.8% reported frequent trouble-related behaviour. The mean of 1.23 and standard deviation of 0.96 suggest a low to moderate level. This implies that although most students did not frequently engage in trouble-causing behaviour, over one-third did so regularly enough to warrant attention. Schools should combine discipline with counseling to identify emotional or social causes behind such behaviour. Regarding the feeling that life is not fair, the largest proportion, 37.4%, reported this sometimes, while 24.3% reported often and 8.4% almost always. A combined 32.7% reported frequent feelings of unfairness. The mean of 1.11 and standard deviation of 0.93 indicate a relatively low level compared with other emotional indicators. This implies that although many students occasionally felt life was unfair, frequent endorsement was lower than sadness, loneliness, hopelessness, or school avoidance. Still, such feelings may contribute to resentment, irritability, and resistance to authority among some students.

The findings show that 33.5% of the students sometimes failed to finish what they started, while 30.1% reported often and 19.1% almost always. This implies that 49.2% frequently failed to complete tasks. The mean of 1.51 and standard deviation of 0.99 indicate a moderate level. This implies that many students may struggle with persistence, concentration, motivation, or emotional fatigue. In school settings, failure to complete tasks may affect academic performance and may also attract disciplinary attention if teachers view it only as lack of seriousness.

The results on breaking rules show that 39.8% of the students reported doing so sometimes, while 25.7% reported often and 10.7% almost always. A combined 36.4% reported frequent rule-breaking. The mean of 1.23 and standard deviation of 0.93 suggest a low to moderate

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level. This implies that open rule-breaking was less frequent than emotional distress indicators, but it remained present among more than one-third of the respondents. This calls for preventive guidance, clear school rules, restorative discipline, and counseling-based behaviour correction.

The findings on breaking the law show that 45.0% of the students indicated sometimes, while 23.8% indicated often and 9.2% almost always. A combined 33.0% reported frequent law-breaking tendencies. The mean of 1.20 and standard deviation of 0.89 indicate a low to moderate level. This implies that serious conduct-related tendencies existed among a smaller but still important group of students. Since such behaviour may expose students to school sanctions or legal consequences, early intervention, parental involvement, and referral to professional support are necessary.

The results show that 37.2% of the students sometimes felt like fighting, while 29.1% often felt this way and 8.1% almost always felt this way. Therefore, 37.2% reported frequent fighting-related feelings. The mean of 1.20 and standard deviation of 0.91 suggest a low to moderate level. This implies that aggressive impulses were present among a notable proportion of students, though not as high as emotional distress indicators. Schools should strengthen conflict management, peer mediation, anger control support, and close supervision of students who repeatedly show aggression.

The findings show that loneliness was common among respondents. A total of 35.3% often felt alone, while 21.7% almost always felt alone. This implies that 57.0% reported frequent loneliness. The mean of 1.67 and standard deviation of 0.95 indicate a moderate level. This implies that many students may lack strong emotional or social support. Loneliness may increase vulnerability to grief symptoms, poor peer relationships, low school attachment, and behavioural problems. Schools should therefore promote mentorship, peer support groups, and accessible counseling services.

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Furthermore, the item "people are against me" recorded a high level of endorsement. The results show that 35.9% of the students often felt this way, while 23.6% almost always felt this way. A combined 59.5% therefore reported frequent feelings of being opposed by others. The mean of 1.71 and standard deviation of 0.96 indicate a moderate level. This implies that many students may experience mistrust, perceived rejection, or strained peer and authority relationships. Such perceptions may lead to defensiveness, isolation, conflict, or resistance to correction. This finding highlights the importance of supportive teacher-student relationships and school environments that encourage trust, belonging, and emotional safety.

These descriptive findings indicate that the strongest conduct disorder-related concerns were mainly emotional and social rather than purely rule-breaking. Items with high frequent responses included feeling unloved at 60.2%, feeling that people are against them at 59.5%, loss of interest in favorite activities at 59.5%, feeling like running away at 58.9%, sadness at 58.3%, hopelessness at 58.2%, unwillingness to attend school at 57.3%, loneliness at 57.0%, irritability at 56.8%, crying easily at 56.6%, and feeling like failing in school at 56.0%. These findings imply that conduct-related problems among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County may be strongly connected to emotional distress, grief-related struggles, poor social belonging, and school adjustment challenges. Therefore, interventions should go beyond punishment and include school counseling, grief support, peer mentorship, teacher sensitization, family involvement, and referral systems for students showing serious emotional distress.

The interviews revealed that grief affected student behaviour in the classroom by reducing concentration, participation, motivation, and emotional control. Teachers reported that some students appeared physically present but mentally distracted. One class teacher explained that:

> *"A grieving student may sit in class, but you can tell the mind is elsewhere. They may stare outside, fail to write notes, or forget simple instructions."*

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The head of counseling indicated that grief also affected students' ability to interact with teachers and classmates. Some students withdrew from classroom discussions, while others became irritable when asked questions. The counselor stated that:

> *"Grief affects how students respond to others. Some become quiet and isolated, while others become impatient and easily annoyed."*

Principals observed that grief sometimes led to poor academic engagement. Learners who had previously performed well could suddenly record declining marks or lose interest in schoolwork. One principal noted that:

> *"We have seen students who were doing well begin to drop in performance after losing a parent or close relative. The loss affects their focus and confidence."*

Teachers further reported that classroom conduct problems could include sleeping during lessons, refusing to participate, leaving class without permission, or arguing with classmates. One teacher said:

> *"Some students start behaving as though school no longer matters. They may fail to do assignments, avoid questions, or become disruptive."*

These findings imply that grief can influence classroom behaviour both directly and indirectly. Since grieving students may struggle with attention, motivation, and emotional control, teachers require basic skills in identifying grief-related behaviour and referring affected learners for counseling support.

The interview findings showed that the death of a parent or primary caregiver had the strongest impact on student behaviour. Principals explained that parental loss often affected students emotionally, socially, and economically. One principal stated that:

> *"Losing a parent affects a student deeply because it is not only emotional. It can also affect fees, food, guidance at home, and the student's sense of security."*

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The head of counseling reported that students who lost mothers or fathers often showed stronger grief reactions than those who lost distant relatives. The counselor explained that such students frequently expressed loneliness, hopelessness, and fear about the future. The respondent said:

> *"When a student loses a parent, the pain is very heavy. Some begin to wonder who will support them or whether they will continue with school."*

Teachers also indicated that family-related grief, including separation, abandonment, domestic conflict, and serious illness of a family member, affected student behaviour. One class teacher observed that:

> *"Even when there is no death, some students grieve because the family has broken down or because a parent is very sick."*

The interviews also revealed that loss of a close friend or sibling could strongly affect students, especially where the relationship was emotionally close. One teacher stated that:

> *"Some students are deeply affected when they lose a sibling or a close friend because that person was part of their daily life."*

The implication is that schools should understand grief broadly and not restrict it only to death. Parental death, loss of guardians, serious family disruption, and loss of close relationships may all influence student conduct, making it necessary for schools to assess the type and closeness of the loss when offering support.

The interviewees identified withdrawal as one of the most common behavioural problems linked to grief. Teachers reported that grieving students often avoided classmates, remained silent, or preferred staying alone. One class teacher explained that:

> *"The most common thing we notice is withdrawal. A student who used to interact freely may suddenly sit alone and avoid others."*

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Irritability and anger were also frequently mentioned. Principals observed that some students became easily provoked and reacted strongly to minor disagreements. One principal stated that:

> *"Some students become very short-tempered after a loss. A small issue with another student can quickly become a serious conflict."*

Absenteeism and school avoidance also emerged as common grief-related behaviours. The head of counseling noted that some students missed school because they felt emotionally unable to cope or because the loss had created new responsibilities at home. The counselor said:

> *"Some students stay away from school not because they dislike school, but because grief has affected their energy and sometimes their home duties increase."*

The interviews further showed that poor concentration, incomplete work, and declining academic performance were common among grieving students. One teacher explained that:

> *"A grieving student may stop finishing assignments or may perform poorly because they are thinking too much about what happened at home."*

These findings imply that grief-related behavioural problems are both emotional and school-based. The findings are in line with Obadire and Sinthumule 2021 study whose findings revealed that the causes of student disciplinary problems varied across schools, with factors such as parental influence, peer pressure, and school environment playing significant roles. Additionally, the study emphasized that effective school management was central to maintaining conduct and improving overall academic performance. Schools should therefore respond through counseling, academic follow-up, peer support, and family engagement rather than relying only on disciplinary measures.

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4.6 Relationship between Grief and Conduct Disorder

The third objective was to examine the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The study conducted a simple linear regression analysis to examine the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. In this analysis, grief was treated as the independent variable, while conduct disorder was the dependent variable. The regression analysis was used to determine whether students' experiences of grief significantly predicted conduct disorder-related behaviours and emotional difficulties. Table 4.11 presents the model summary results for the simple linear regression analysis.

Table 4.11: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.688	0.473	0.472	0.322

a. Predictors: (Constant), Loss and Grief
b. Dependent Variable: Conduct Disorder

Source: Research Data (2026)

The results in Table 4.11 show a correlation (R) value of 0.688, indicating a strong positive association between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. The coefficient of determination, R Square, is 0.473, implying that grief accounts for 47.3% of the variation in conduct disorder among the students. The remaining 52.7% of the variation in conduct disorder may be explained by other factors not included in the model. This finding suggests that grief is a key predictor of conduct-related difficulties among students. Table 4.12 shows the ANOVA results.

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Table 4.12: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	35.475	1	35.475	341.106	0.000[b]
	Residual	39.525	380	0.104		
	Total	75.000	381			

a. Dependent Variable: Conduct Disorder
b. Predictors: (Constant), Loss and Grief

Source: Research Data (2026)

The findings in Table 4.12 show that the regression model is statistically significant in explaining the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder, with an F-value of 341.106 and a p-value of 0.000< 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that loss and grief significantly predict conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. The implication is that students who experience higher levels of grief are more likely to report conduct-related difficulties, including emotional distress, school avoidance, irritability, social withdrawal, concentration problems, rule-breaking tendencies, and aggressive feelings. Table 4.13 shows beta coefficient results.

Table 4.13: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	0.694	0.052		13.346	0.000
	Loss and Grief	0.512	0.028	0.688	18.469	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Conduct Disorder

Source: Research Data (2026)

The fitted regression model is therefore expressed as follows:

Conduct Disorder = 0.694 + 0.512(Loss and Grief)

The regression coefficient results show that loss and grief have a positive and statistically significant relationship with conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County (B = 0.512, p = 0.000 < 0.05). This is supported by a t-

value of 18.469, which is greater than the critical value of 1.96. The finding implies that a one-unit increase in loss and grief is expected to result in a 0.512-unit increase in conduct disorder among the students. Therefore, students who experience stronger grief-related symptoms are more likely to report higher levels of conduct-related difficulties.

The findings are consistent with those of Chen, et al., 2025 who states that the loss of a loved one is typically distressing, with grief symptoms gradually subsiding over time. However, approximately 5–10% of individuals experience prolonged and intense grief reactions. Therefore, the current finding that loss and grief significantly predicted conduct disorder supports the view that student behaviour is shaped by psychosocial experiences and school-based support systems. This implies that grief counseling, positive behavioural interventions, and supportive school environments are important in reducing conduct-related difficulties among bereaved students.

4.7 Intervention Strategies and Support Systems in Place

The fourth and final specific objective was to investigate intervention strategies for managing grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The interview findings revealed that most schools had guidance and counseling services to support students dealing with grief. Heads of counseling indicated that bereaved students were usually invited for counseling sessions after teachers or classmates reported changes in behaviour. One head of counseling stated that:

> *"We normally call the student privately, talk to them, and try to understand what they are going through before deciding the next step."*

Principals reported that schools also used class teachers and boarding staff to monitor grieving students. One principal explained that teachers often helped identify students who were absent, withdrawn, or behaving unusually. The principal said:

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> *"Class teachers are very important because they interact with students daily and can notice changes faster than the administration."*

Some schools involved parents, guardians, or relatives when grief appeared to affect the student's school life. A deputy principal noted that family engagement helped the school understand the student's background and offer appropriate support. The respondent stated that:

> *"When the case is serious, we invite the guardian so that we can work together in supporting the learner."*

This is in line with Elrod, Rice and Meyers (2022) who observed that positive behavioural support systems and a supportive school climate reduce conduct-related problems among students. The interviews also showed that peer support was used informally in some schools. Teachers encouraged trusted classmates or student leaders to support bereaved learners. One teacher explained that:

> *"Sometimes students open up more easily to their friends than to teachers, so we encourage responsible classmates to support them."*

These findings indicate that schools already have some support systems, but many are informal and depend heavily on individual teachers. There is a need to strengthen counseling departments, train teachers in grief support, and develop clear referral systems for students requiring professional help. It was recommended that schools integrate grief support into counseling programs, offer professional training for counselors, and implement structured policies to provide long-term emotional support for grieving students to enhance their overall well-being and academic success.

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4.7.1 Effectiveness of Existing Interventions

The interviewees reported that existing interventions were helpful but not fully adequate. Heads of counseling stated that counseling sessions helped some students regain emotional stability and improve behaviour. One head of counseling explained that:

> *"When students are given time to talk, many of them calm down and begin to improve in attendance, class participation, and relationships."*

Principals also observed that guidance and counseling reduced some conduct problems, especially when students were identified early. One principal stated that early support prevented grief-related distress from worsening into repeated indiscipline. The principal said:

> *"The interventions work better when we identify the student early before the behaviour becomes serious."*

The findings are in line with Wood and McMahon 2024, whose study found that school counselors play a crucial role in helping students navigate grief, and effective interventions must be tailored to meet individual student needs. The findings also echoes the work of Khamala, et al., 2025 who established that guidance and counseling positively influenced conduct disorder management in public secondary schools by supporting behavioural modification among learners. Similarly, Kusumawardana (2018) showed that student conduct varied across school contexts, implying that school environment and disciplinary structures shape learners' behaviour.

Teachers reported that effectiveness depended on the willingness of students to open up. Some students accepted support, while others remained silent or avoided counseling. One teacher noted that:

> *"Some students benefit from counseling, but others are not ready to talk. They may say they are fine even when their behaviour shows they are struggling."*

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The interviews further revealed that a lack of professional counsellors limited the effectiveness of interventions. In some schools, counseling was handled by teachers who had other teaching responsibilities. One counselor stated that:

> *"We try our best, but we are also teachers with many lessons. Some cases require more time and professional support than we can provide."*

These findings imply that existing interventions have positive value but require strengthening. To address grief-related conduct problems more effectively, schools need trained counselors, dedicated counseling time, private counseling spaces, proper records, and links with mental health professionals where referral is necessary.

4.7.2 Additional Support and Strategies Recommended

The interviewees recommended the employment or deployment of trained school counselors to support students dealing with grief. Principals observed that teacher-counselors were often overburdened and needed professional support. One principal stated that:

> *"Schools need trained counselors who can handle emotional cases properly because teachers alone may not have enough time or skills."*

Teachers recommended regular sensitization of staff on how to identify grief-related behaviour. One class teacher explained that teachers sometimes punish students without understanding the emotional cause of the behaviour. The teacher said:

> *"Teachers need training so that when a student changes behaviour, we first ask what could be wrong before rushing to punishment."*

Heads of counseling suggested the establishment of peer support clubs and grief support groups within schools. According to one counselor, students who have gone through similar loss experiences can support one another in a guided setting. The respondent stated that:

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"A grief support group can help students realize that they are not alone and that others are also learning to cope."

The respondents also recommended stronger parent and guardian involvement. Principals indicated that schools could not manage grief-related conduct problems effectively without cooperation from home. One deputy principal explained that:

"The school and family must work together because some of the behaviour we see in school begins from challenges at home."

The interview findings imply that managing the effects of grief on student behaviour requires a whole-school approach. Effective support should include trained counselors, teacher sensitization, peer support, family involvement, early screening, referral systems, and a school climate that treats grieving students with care while still guiding them toward responsible conduct.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of findings, conclusion, recommendations, and suggestions for further research based on the study findings.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The study was guided by four specific objectives: to identify the prevalence of loss and grief among students, to determine levels of conduct disorder among students, to examine the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder, and to investigate intervention strategies for managing loss and grief among students. The study targeted students, class teachers, principals, and heads of counseling departments from public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. Out of the 454 sampled respondents, 440 participated in the study, giving an overall response rate of 96.9%. Specifically, 382 out of 393 students participated, giving a student response rate of 97.2%, while principals and heads of counseling departments recorded full participation at 100.0%. This high response rate provided adequate data for analysis and strengthened confidence that the findings reflected the experiences and views of the sampled respondents.

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5.2.1 Prevalence of Loss and Grief among Students

The first objective of the study was to identify the prevalence of grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The study found that grief was highly prevalent among the students, as 381 out of 382 respondents representing 99.7%, reported that they had lost someone significant in their lives. Only one respondent, representing

0.3%, indicated that they had not experienced such a loss. This finding shows that bereavement was almost universal among the sampled students, making grief a major psychosocial issue in the study area. The duration since loss also varied among the respondents, with 31.4% having lost a significant person more than one year before the study, 29.6% within 7–12 months, 29.3% within 1–6 months, and 9.7% less than one month before the study. This means that grief among students was both recent and long-standing, suggesting that schools were dealing with learners at different stages of bereavement adjustment.

The descriptive findings further showed that students experienced several grief-related symptoms at moderate levels. The strongest grief indicator was loneliness without the deceased, which recorded the highest mean score of 2.73 and a standard deviation of 0.98. Specifically, 33.5% of the respondents reported feeling lonely somewhat, while 25.9% reported feeling lonely quite a bit. Other notable grief experiences included confusion about one's role in life or feeling as though part of oneself had died, which recorded a mean of 2.23; emotional pain related to death, with a mean of 2.21; longing or yearning for the deceased, with a mean of 2.20; avoidance of reminders, with a mean of 2.17; difficulty believing that the person was gone, with a mean of 2.16; and difficulty re-engaging in life, also with a mean of 2.16. These findings show that grief among students was not limited to sadness but also involved emotional pain, loneliness, identity disruption, avoidance, and difficulty returning to normal school and social activities.

The findings also showed that grief had functional effects on students' daily lives. Slightly more than half of the students, 50.8%, reported that grief symptoms had caused significant impairment in their social, school, or other important areas of functioning, while 49.2% reported no significant impairment. This indicates that for many students, grief was not only an emotional experience but also a factor affecting school participation, peer relationships, concentration, behaviour, and general adjustment. The findings imply that public secondary

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schools in Njoro Sub-County need structured grief support systems because a large proportion of students had experienced loss, and many showed grief symptoms that interfered with normal functioning. Therefore, grief counseling, peer support groups, teacher sensitization, family involvement, and referral mechanisms are necessary in helping bereaved students cope and remain engaged in school.

5.2.2 Conduct Disorder among Students

The second objective of the study was to determine levels of conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The findings showed that conduct disorder-related experiences among students were mainly reflected through emotional distress, school avoidance, social withdrawal, irritability, concentration difficulties, loneliness, perceived rejection, aggressive feelings, and rule-breaking tendencies. The descriptive results indicated that the highest conduct-related concern was the feeling that no one loved them, where 36.9% of the students reported this often and 23.3% reported almost always, giving a combined frequent response of 60.2% and a mean score of 1.72. Similarly, 35.9% of the students often felt that people were against them, while 23.6% felt this almost always, giving a combined frequent response of 59.5% and a mean score of 1.71. This shows that perceived rejection and mistrust were major conduct-related concerns among the students.

The findings further revealed that emotional and school adjustment difficulties were common among the respondents. A combined 59.5% of the students reported that they often or almost always did not enjoy their favorite activities, while 58.9% often or almost always felt like running away. In addition, 58.3% of the respondents frequently felt sad, 58.2% frequently felt hopeless about their future, 57.3% frequently did not want to attend school, 57.0% frequently felt alone, 56.8% frequently felt irritable, 56.6% frequently cried easily, and 56.0% frequently felt like they were failing in school. These findings indicate that the conduct-related problems

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observed among the students were strongly linked to emotional instability, low motivation, weak school attachment, and social distress rather than only open indiscipline.

The study also found that direct rule-breaking and aggressive behaviours were present, though at lower levels compared to emotional and social indicators. For instance, 36.4% of the students reported that they often or almost always broke rules, 35.8% frequently did things that got them into trouble, 34.8% frequently felt like hurting other people, 33.0% frequently reported law-breaking tendencies, and 37.2% frequently felt like fighting. These findings suggest that while overt misconduct was not the dominant form of conduct difficulty, a notable proportion of students still displayed behavioural risk indicators that required attention. Overall, the results imply that conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County was expressed through both internal emotional struggles and external behavioural difficulties. Therefore, schools need to combine discipline with counseling, peer support, teacher sensitization, academic follow-up, and referral systems for students experiencing serious emotional or behavioural distress.

5.2.3 Relationship between Grief and Conduct Disorder among Students

The third objective of the study was to examine the relationship between grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. Simple linear regression analysis was conducted with grief as the independent variable and conduct disorder as the dependent variable. The model summary results showed an R value of 0.688, indicating a strong positive association between grief and conduct disorder. The R Square value was 0.473, meaning that grief explained 47.3% of the variation in conduct disorder among students. This finding shows that grief was a major predictor of conduct-related difficulties, although 52.7% of the variation was explained by other factors outside the model, such as family background, peer influence, school environment, academic pressure, and other psychosocial experiences.

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The ANOVA results confirmed that the regression model was statistically significant in explaining the relationship between grief and conduct disorder. The model recorded an F-value of 341.106 and a p-value of 0.000, which was below the 0.05 level of significance. This means that loss and grief significantly predicted conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County. The finding implies that students with higher levels of grief were more likely to experience conduct-related difficulties such as emotional distress, irritability, school avoidance, social withdrawal, reduced concentration, rule-breaking tendencies, and aggressive feelings. This confirms that grief among students was not only an emotional issue but also a behavioural and school adjustment concern.

The regression coefficient results further showed that grief had a positive and statistically significant effect on conduct disorder, with an unstandardized coefficient of B = 0.512, t = 18.469, and p = 0.000. The fitted model was expressed as Conduct Disorder = 0.694 + 0.512(Loss and Grief), meaning that a one-unit increase in grief was expected to cause a 0.512-unit increase in conduct disorder. This finding was supported by qualitative results, where principals, class teachers, and heads of counseling reported that grief affected students' attendance, classroom participation, concentration, peer relationships, emotional control, and discipline. Therefore, the study established that stronger grief-related experiences increased the likelihood of conduct-related challenges among students, highlighting the need for grief counseling, positive behaviour support, early screening, and stronger teacher-student support systems.

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5.2.4 Intervention Strategies for Managing Grief among Students

The fourth objective of the study was to investigate intervention strategies for managing grief among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. The findings from key informant interviews showed that most schools had guidance and counseling services, although the level of structure and professional capacity varied across schools. Heads

of counseling indicated that bereaved students were normally identified through class teachers, peer reports, changes in behaviour, absenteeism, withdrawal, or declining academic performance. Once identified, such students were called privately for counseling sessions to understand their experiences and determine the appropriate support. Principals also reported that class teachers and boarding staff played an important role in monitoring grieving students because they interacted with learners more frequently and could easily notice changes in mood, behaviour, attendance, and classroom participation.

The findings further revealed that schools used several support approaches, including individual counseling, teacher monitoring, parent or guardian involvement, informal peer support, and referrals where cases appeared serious. Some schools involved parents, guardians, or close relatives when grief appeared to affect the learner's school life, especially where the student showed persistent absenteeism, withdrawal, aggression, poor concentration, or declining performance. Teachers also reported that responsible classmates and student leaders sometimes supported bereaved students because learners were often more comfortable opening up to peers than to teachers. These findings suggest that schools already had some support systems for managing grief, although many of them were informal and depended heavily on the commitment of individual teachers and heads of counseling departments.

The qualitative findings also showed that existing interventions were helpful but not fully adequate. Heads of counseling reported that students who received counseling often improved in attendance, classroom participation, emotional control, and peer relationships. Principals similarly observed that early identification helped prevent grief-related emotional distress from developing into repeated indiscipline. Nevertheless, the findings showed that the effectiveness of these interventions was limited by lack of trained professional counselors, inadequate counseling time, limited private counseling spaces, and some students' reluctance to open up. Respondents therefore recommended the deployment of trained school counselors, regular

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

teacher sensitization, peer support clubs, grief support groups, stronger parent and guardian involvement, early screening, and clear referral systems. This implies that grief management among students requires a whole-school approach that combines counseling, discipline, family support, peer support, teacher awareness, and professional referral services.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that grief was highly prevalent among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County. Nearly all the student respondents reported having lost someone significant in their lives, while the duration since loss varied from less than one month to more than one year. This shows that schools were dealing with students at different stages of grief, including those with recent bereavement and those still carrying long-term grief experiences. The high prevalence of loss confirmed that grief was a major psychosocial issue among students and needed direct attention within the school support system.

The study also concludes that grief among students was expressed through several emotional, social, and functional symptoms. Loneliness without the deceased emerged as the strongest grief-related experience, followed by emotional pain, confusion about one's role in life, yearning for the deceased, avoidance of reminders, and difficulty re-engaging in normal life. The finding that 50.8% of the students reported significant impairment due to grief confirmed that bereavement affected not only students' emotions, but also their school participation, social relationships, concentration, and general functioning. Therefore, grief among students should be treated as a school adjustment issue and not only as a private family matter.

Moreover, conduct disorder-related experiences among students were present in both emotional and behavioural forms. The strongest indicators were feeling unloved, feeling that people were against them, loss of interest in favorite activities, feeling like running away,

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

sadness, hopelessness, unwillingness to attend school, loneliness, irritability, crying easily, and feeling like failing in school. Although direct rule-breaking and aggressive tendencies were also reported, the findings showed that the dominant conduct-related concerns were emotional and social. This means that student misconduct should not always be interpreted as deliberate defiance, since some behaviours may be signs of emotional distress, grief, rejection, or poor school adjustment.

The study concludes that loss and grief had a positive and statistically significant relationship with conduct disorder among students. The regression results showed that loss and grief explained 47.3% of the variation in conduct disorder, while the regression coefficient indicated that an increase in grief was associated with an increase in conduct disorder-related difficulties. This confirmed that students with stronger grief symptoms were more likely to report emotional distress, school avoidance, social withdrawal, irritability, concentration problems, rule-breaking tendencies, and aggressive feelings. Therefore, grief is an important predictor of conduct-related challenges among students in public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County.

Finally, the study concludes that schools had some intervention strategies for supporting grieving students, mainly guidance and counseling, teacher monitoring, parent or guardian involvement, peer support, and referral in serious cases. These strategies were helpful, but not fully adequate because many schools lacked trained professional counselors, adequate counseling time, private counseling spaces, and clear referral structures. The qualitative findings confirmed that managing grief-related conduct concerns requires a whole-school approach involving principals, teachers, heads of counseling departments, parents, peers, and external support services. The study therefore concluded that strengthening school-based grief counseling and psychosocial support would improve student welfare, behaviour, discipline, and academic engagement.

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County should establish structured grief identification and support systems. Schools should maintain confidential records of students who have experienced bereavement and monitor them over time, since the findings showed that some students had experienced recent loss while others had lived with grief for more than one year. Class teachers, heads of counseling, and school administrators should work together to identify bereaved learners early and provide timely emotional support before grief affects school attendance, concentration, peer relationships, and behaviour.

In addition, schools should improve guidance and counseling departments to respond more effectively to grief-related emotional and behavioural difficulties. The findings showed that loneliness, emotional pain, hopelessness, sadness, perceived rejection, irritability, and school avoidance were common among students. Therefore, counseling services should not only focus on discipline cases but should also address grief, emotional distress, social isolation, self-worth, academic fear, and peer relationship challenges. Schools should also provide private counseling spaces and allocate adequate time for heads of counseling to attend to students without being overwhelmed by normal teaching duties.

The study further recommends that teachers should be sensitized and trained on how grief can affect student behaviour. Since the findings showed that grief was linked to school avoidance, poor concentration, withdrawal, irritability, rule-breaking tendencies, and aggressive feelings, teachers should avoid interpreting all misconduct as deliberate defiance. Instead, they should be trained to observe warning signs, hold supportive conversations, and refer affected students to the counseling department. This would help schools shift from a purely punitive approach to a balanced approach that combines discipline, emotional support, restorative correction, and student welfare.

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

The study recommends the introduction of peer support groups and grief support clubs within public secondary schools. The findings showed that loneliness without the deceased was the strongest grief-related symptom, while many students also reported feeling alone, left out, unloved, or opposed by others. Peer support groups would provide bereaved students with safe spaces to share their experiences, receive encouragement, and rebuild social belonging. These groups should be guided by trained teachers or counselors to ensure that discussions remain supportive, respectful, and helpful to students' emotional recovery and school adjustment.

Finally, the study recommends stronger collaboration between schools, parents, guardians, education officers, and mental health professionals in managing grief-related conduct problems. The qualitative findings showed that existing interventions were helpful but limited by lack of trained counselors, limited counseling time, and weak referral structures. Schools should therefore involve parents and guardians when grief affects attendance, behaviour, or performance, while serious cases should be referred to qualified professionals. The Ministry of Education and relevant county education stakeholders should also support schools by deploying trained counselors, developing grief management guidelines, and strengthening psychosocial support programs for students in public secondary schools.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The study suggests further research on other psychosocial factors that may influence conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools. Although this study found that loss and grief explained 47.3% of the variation in conduct disorder, the remaining 52.7% was attributed to other factors not included in the model. Future studies should therefore examine factors that may account for the unexplained percentage. This will provide a broader understanding of the different conditions that contribute to conduct-related difficulties among secondary school students.

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Further research should also be conducted in other sub-counties or counties to compare the relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder across different school contexts. Since this study was limited to public secondary schools in Njoro Sub-County, similar studies in urban, rural, private, boarding, and day school settings would help establish whether the findings are consistent across different student populations. Future studies may also focus on the effectiveness of specific grief management interventions, such as school counseling, peer support groups, teacher-led psychosocial support, parent-school collaboration, and referral-based support systems in reducing conduct-related difficulties among bereaved students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear Participants,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER

My name is Elizabeth Atieno Ndiege, a master's student in Counseling Psychology at St. Paul's University. I am conducting a research study on *the Relationship between Loss and Grief and Conduct Disorder among Students in Public Secondary Schools in Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County*.

Your experiences and information will be important towards the success of this study. Participation involves completing a questionnaire designed to gather information on grief experiences and behavioural patterns. All responses will be treated with confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any point without any consequences. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please feel free to contact on P.O BOX 589-20107, Njoro.

Thank you for considering being part of this study. Your input will be instrumental in understanding and addressing the impact of grief on students' behaviour and well-being.

Yours Faithfully,

Elizabeth Atieno Ndiege

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Appendix II: Informed Consent Form

Title of the Study:

Relationship between loss and grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary schools in Njoro sub-county, Nakuru County

Elizabeth Atieno Ndiege

St. Paul's University

Contact Information: ndiege24@gmail.com

This study seeks to understand how grief influences students' emotional and behavioural well-being and to identify possible interventions to support affected students.

Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a standardized **questionnaire** that assesses experiences of grief and behavioural patterns related to conduct disorder. The questionnaire is standardized, allowing you to share your thoughts in detail. Completing the questionnaire is expected to take approximately 20 minutes.

Risks and Discomforts

There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. However, reflecting on grief-related experiences may cause some emotional discomfort. If you experience distress, you may choose to skip any question you are uncomfortable answering or withdraw from the study at any time.

Benefits

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While there may be no direct personal benefit, your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how grief affects students' behaviour and emotional well-being. The findings may help in developing better support systems and counseling interventions for students dealing with grief.

Confidentiality

All information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Your responses will remain anonymous and will only be accessed by the researcher and authorized research personnel. Data will be securely stored and used solely for academic purposes.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose to withdraw at any time without any consequences. If you decide to withdraw, any data collected up to that point will be securely discarded.

Questions and Contact Information

If you have any questions or need further clarification regarding this study, please feel free to contact Elizabeth Atieno Ndiege at ndiege24@gmail.com

Consent

By signing below, you confirm that you have read and understood the information provided, that you willingly agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for your participation!

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Appendix III: Questionnaire for Students

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: - [ ] Male - [ ] Female - [ ] Other

2. Age: - [ ] Less than 18 years - [ ] 18 years and above

3. Class: - [ ] Grade 10 [ ] - [ ] Form 3 - [ ] Form 4

Section B: Conduct Disorder Questionnaire

Please read the following questions carefully and mark the box that indicates how you have generally felt within the past year. Mark only one box and answer each question.

Question	Never (0)	Sometimes (1)	Often (2)	Almost Always (3)
1. I am more anxious.				
2. I feel sad.				
3. I skip the rules at school.				
4. I cry easily.				
5. I do not enjoy my favorite activities.				
6. I'm having trouble sleeping.				
7. I am feeling like hurting myself.				
8. I feel hopeless about my future.				
9. I do not want to attend school.				
10. I feel irritable.				
11. I feel tired.				
12. I feel like I am failing in school.				
13. I feel guilty.				
14. I feel that no one loves me.				
15. I feel that people do not like me.				
16. I have trouble focusing at school.				
17. I feel nervous when speaking to others.				
18. I feel like I'm being left out.				
19. I feel like hurting other people.				
20. I feel like running away.				
21. I have trouble sleeping at night.				
22. I have headaches often.				
23. I have stomachaches often.				
24. I have bad dreams.				
25. I do things that get me into trouble.				
26. I feel that life is not fair.				
27. I do not finish what I start.				
28. I break the rules.				
29. I break the law.				
30. I feel like fighting.				
31. I feel alone.				
32. People are against me.				

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Section C: Standardized Grief-Disorder Questionnaire

Prolonged Grief Disorder (PG-13-Revised)

Q1. Have you lost someone significant to you?	Yes / No
Q2. How many months has it been since your significant other died?	_____ Months

Question	**Not at all**	**Slightly**	**Somewhat**	**Quite a bit**	**Overwhelmingly**
Q3. Do you feel yourself longing or yearning for the person who died?					
Q4. Do you have trouble doing the things you normally do because you are thinking so much about the person who died?					
Q5. Do you feel confused about your role in life or feel like you don't know who you are anymore (i.e., feeling like that a part of you has died)?					
Q6. Do you have trouble believing that the person who died is really gone?					
Q7. Do you avoid reminders that the person who died is really gone?					
Q8. Do you feel emotional pain (e.g., anger, bitterness, sorrow) related to the death?					
Q9. Do you feel that you have trouble re-engaging in life (e.g., problems engaging with friends, pursuing interests, planning for the future)?					
Q10. Do you feel emotionally numb or detached from others?					
Q11. Do you feel that life is meaningless without the person who died?					
Q12. Do you feel alone or lonely without the deceased?					

Q13. Have the symptoms above caused significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning? Yes/No.

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Appendix IV: Key Informant Interview for Principals, Teachers and Head of Counseling

1. What is the general level of grief you observe among students in your school?
2. Can you describe any disciplinary challenges that students dealing with grief face in your school?
3. In your experience, how does grief affect student behaviour and conduct in the classroom?
4. Are there specific forms of grief (e.g., loss of a loved one, family issues) that seem to have a stronger impact on student behaviour?
5. What types of behavioural problems related to grief do you notice most often among the students?
6. What intervention strategies or support systems are in place to help students dealing with grief?
7. How effective do you think these interventions are in addressing conduct issues related to grief?
8. What additional support or strategies would you recommend to better manage the effects of grief on student behaviour?

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Appendix V: NACOSTI Letter

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 557363

Date of Issue: 29/October/2025

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms.. ELIZABETH ATIENO NDIEGE of St. Pauls University, Kenya, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nakuru on the topic: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOSS AND GRIEF AND CONDUCT DISORDER IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NJORO SUB-COUNTY, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 29/October/2026.

License No: NACOSTI/P/25/4181622

557363

Applicant Identification Number

Ag. Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

Appendix VI: Recommendation Letter:



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Private Bag 00217 Limuru, Kenya
Email: office@spu.ac.ke
Website: www.spu.ac.ke

Tel Office: +254 (0) 20-2020605/10
Mobile: +254 (0) 728-669000
(0) 736-424440

BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

8th October, 2025

National Commission for Science and Technology,
P.O. BOX 30623-00100,
Nairobi.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RECOMMENDATION FOR ELIZABETH NDIEGE – MACPNKR523123 TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter confirms the above-named person is a student in the Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology (MACP) Program at St. Paul's University.

After completion of the course work, the student is engaged in major research work leading to a Thesis/Dissertation writing. The student's selected topic is:

"Relationship between lost and grief and conduct disorder among students in public secondary school in Nyoro Sub-County, Nakuru County."

The SPU-Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee has reviewed the above-named research proposal and granted the ERB approval number 558, for the period between 6th October, 2025 – 6th October , 2026 (1 year).

Kindly grant this student the required permit. For further information, please contact the undersigned through postgraduatestudies@spu.ac.ke

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. John Mutoho
Director Board of Postgraduate Studies
postgraduatestudies@spu.ac.ke

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Appendix VII: Map of Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya:

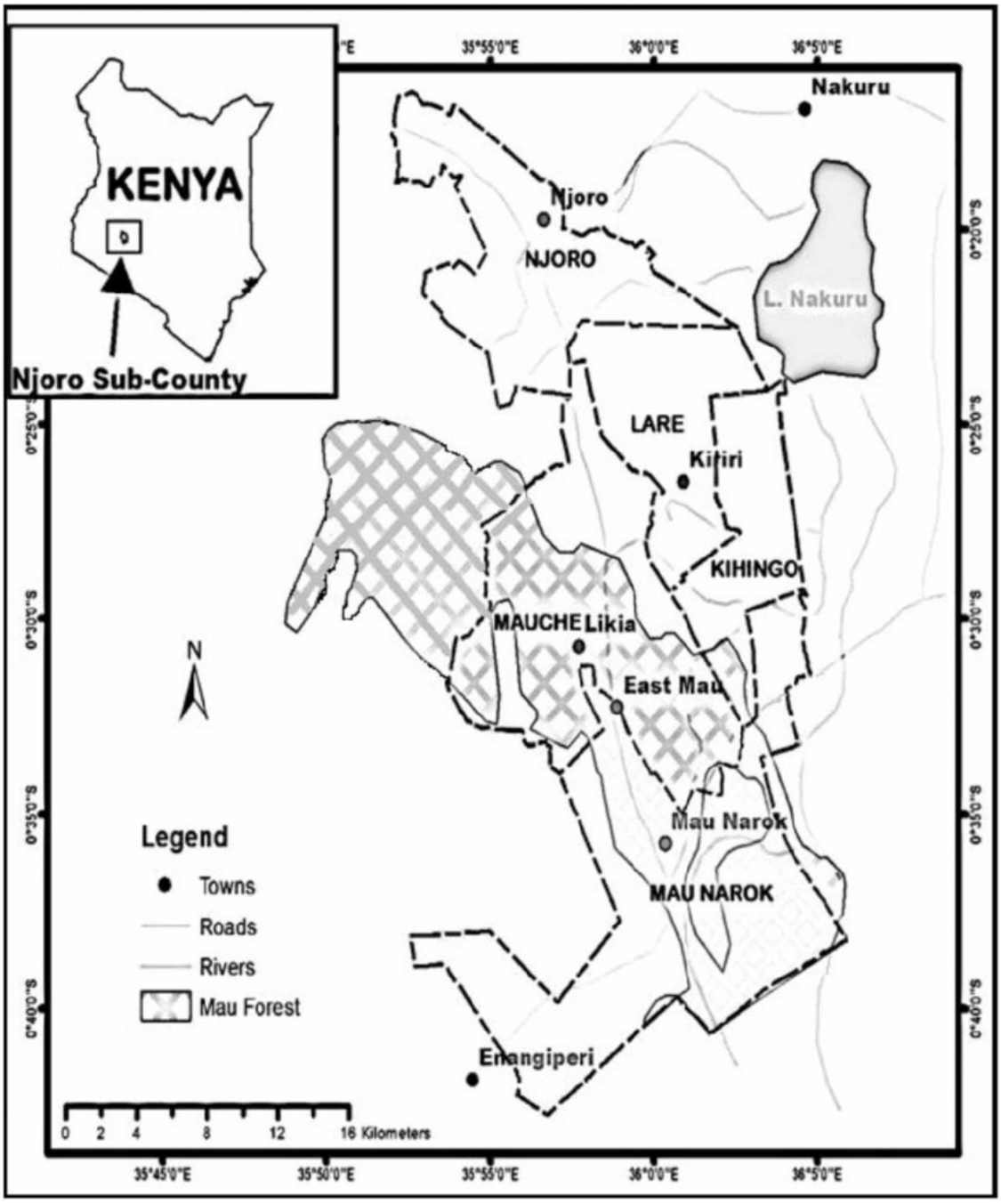


Photo by **Natasha Potgieter**