

**Death Of A Loved one: Its Perceived Effects On The Psychological Functioning
Among Late Adolescents**

An Undergraduate Thesis

Presented to:

The Faculty of Behavioral Sciences Department

College of Liberal Arts

De La Salle University – Dasmariñas

Dasmariñas, Cavite

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

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PSY 44

April 2011

ABSTRACT

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Funding Source : Parents

Total Cost : 10,000 Php

Date Started : June 2010

Date Finished : March 2011

Objectives:

A. General

1. To identify the perceived effects on the psychological functioning of the late adolescents who have experienced a death of a close loved one.

B. Specific

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. age
 - b. relationship to the deceased loved one
 - c. cause of death of the loved one

- d. span of years the death of the loved one had occurred
2. What are the changes in their psychological functioning in terms of:
 - a. Cognitive
 - b. Affect
 - c. Behavior
3. In Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief, what stage is the respondent currently facing or feeling?

Scope and Limitation:

This study revolves around the narrative accounts of ten late adolescents who have experienced a death of a close loved one and how it affected their psychological functioning in terms of; cognition, affect and behavior. More so, the stage of grief (proposed by Kübler-Ross') wherein the bereaved late adolescent is facing will also be determined and analyzed.

Further, this will not tackle the coping mechanisms that the respondent used in dealing with the stages of grief.

Research Methodology

The research design of this study is descriptive specifically case study method. The researchers used descriptive research design using case study method since the study focuses more on the narrative accounts of how the death of the respondents affected their psychological functioning.

The participants of this study are late adolescents who belong to the age group of sixteen (16) to twenty one (21) years of age. These participants should have experienced death of a close loved one within the range of six (6) months to two (2) years. These participants were chosen through purposive sampling. In total, there are ten (10) participants for this study.

This study used interview as a primary research instrument in gathering information particularly face-to-face interview with the use of an interview guide. Further, the researchers used a self made test to determine whether what stage the respondent is going through. The self made test is composed of 50 questions that would be scored using a Likert scale. The questions were clustered into five categories each composing of ten questions. The clusters were identified based on Kübler Ross' five stages of grief. Each question could be answered by: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often and Always.

After gathering all of the respondent's answers from the interview and total responses for each item were obtained and tabulated, each answer of the respondents were compared and generalized in order to come up with a conclusion on how a death of a close loved one could possibly affect one's psychological functioning.

Content analysis based on the respondent's responses is used. As for the self made test, the test was scored through the use of a Likert scale.

Findings

Based on the study conducted by the researcher, the following results were gathered:

1. The respondents of this study are composed of ten (10) late adolescents with the mean age of 19. Five of them are aged twenty (20), two are nineteen (19), one is eighteen (18) and the remaining two are seventeen (17) years of age. Majority (4) of the respondents have experienced a loss a father, in which three of the deaths was caused by an illness specifically: cancer of the stomach, heart attack and comatose while the other respondent's father died because of murder. More so, two of the respondents lost their mothers due to sickness and heart attack. Also, two of the respondents lost their grandparents due to complications and old age. Lastly, the remaining two respondents lost their cousins, one is because of an accident and the other one is because of cancer. In addition to this, six (6) of the respondents lost their loved ones two (2) years ago, while the remaining four (4) lost their loved one about a year ago.
2. In the cognitive functioning of the respondents, four (4) out of ten (10) of the respondents said that their mental processes were affected positively specially in terms of academic performance, concentration, reasoning and logical thinking. However, the remaining three (3) respondents said that the death of their loved one has affected their cognitive functions in a negative way.

Further, in the respondents' affective function, four (4) of the respondents said that after the death had occurred, they experienced some positive changes in

their affective function. However, the other four (4) respondents said that this experience affected them in a negative way.

Lastly, for the behavioral functioning of the respondents, majority or eight (6) out of ten (10) respondents said that after the death of their loved one had occurred, they experienced positive changes in their behaviors. Meanwhile, four (4) of the respondents said that there were no remarkable changes in their behavior after the death of their loved one happened.

3. In Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief, eight (8) of the respondents scored highest in the acceptance stage while two (2) scored highest in the bargaining stage. It shows that majority of the respondents have accepted the fact that their loved one is gone and is now ready to move on with their lives.

Conclusions

In the view of the findings of the study, the following are the conclusions formulated:

1. In the profile of the respondents, majority are twenty years old having a lost of a loved one. Majority of the lost loved ones are father and mostly the cause of death is illnesses, natural death, complications and heart problems.
2. The respondents experienced different changes after the death of their loved ones had occurred. After experiencing distressing incidents, some reacted in wildly emotional ways while some show almost no reaction at all. Some of the changes in the respondents' cognitive, affective and behavioral function were positive while some are negative.

3. Majority of the respondents are in the acceptance stage but the two of them are still in the bargaining stage. Some factors that must be considered when undergoing the stages of grief is the relationship and closeness of the deceased loved one to the bereaved late adolescent, their religious beliefs, cause of death, and the individual's overall psychological functioning.

Recommendations

Upon obtaining the findings and conclusions, the researchers recommended the following:

1. For the bereaved adolescents, especially for those having a hard time coping up with the situation, seeking support from parents, other relatives, or friends, or professionals and support groups can help normalize grief reactions. Also, doing activities that reduce stress can be a big help while going through the whole grieving process.
2. For the family, relatives, and friends of the persons who have lost their dear ones, they could give more time and attention to bereaved late adolescent. Provide enough support and care for them since this could help a lot in making the grieving process easier.
3. For the counselors, they may give interference or intervention to the family, relatives and friends who have lost their loved ones, especially for those who are having a hard time in coping with the situation. They could give some grief

counseling and grief therapy that could help enable their coping processes for the bereaved. This could also help normalize their psychological functioning again.

4. For the future researchers, they could study more on behavioral reaction and coping mechanisms of the late adolescents who have lost a loved one. Provide longer time for gathering data so that the obtained data would be more precise. Also, the interview should be more extensive so that the information that will be obtained will be more accurate.

