

EFFECTIVENESS OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR THERAPY (COPING CAT PROGRAM) IN
THE TREATMENT OF ANXIETY DISORDERS AMONG CHILDREN AT OUR LADY OF
PEACE AND AMANI PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

by

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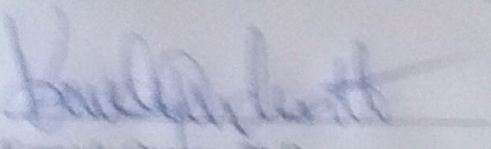
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to test the efficacy of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) using Coping Cat (CC) approach in the treatment of anxiety disorders. The study employed quasi-experimental design utilizing purposeful sampling frame. A total of 92; 52 and 40 children were recruited into control and experimental schools after assessing 224 of them from classes 3 to 7 at Our Lady Queen of Peace and Amani Primary Schools. Data was collected using a self-administered Socio-demographic and the Screen for Child Anxiety Related Disorders (SCARED) – Child Version. Findings showed that 50% of the respondents' parents were not living together with both parents. Half of the respondents were from very poor socio-economic background as depicted by: materials used in constructing houses they lived-in (mud 2.7%, 8.0% wooden materials and 37.1% iron sheets) and source of water for domestic use where 31.7% drew water from a common tap outside their houses. The prevalence of anxiety disorders was extremely high (80.8%) and were comorbid as is shown by positive correlation coefficient (r) $p < 0.001$ between the types of anxiety disorders. The effect size computed at midline and at end-line between experimental and control group among respondents indicated a significant difference in the proportions of respondents with: panic disorder $d = 0.929$, generalized anxiety disorder $d = 1.175$, and social anxiety disorder $d = 0.971$ at midline; and any anxiety disorder $d = 2.534$, panic disorder $d = 0.854$, generalized anxiety disorder $d = 1.007$, separation anxiety disorder $d = 1.040$ and social anxiety disorder $d = 1.665$ at end line. This study therefore shows that children's mental health from poor social-economic settings in an African cultural and environmental context wanting. These study findings can go a long way in helping the authorities concerned with health services to appreciate the need for a concerted effort in the formulation of policies and the need to provide resources to enhance mental health services in children attending school.