

EDITORIAL NOTE

I am glad to bring to you this issue of the African Journal of Social Work (AJSW). The AJSW is seeking indexing at regional and international level. As I write, our application is being considered by the [African Journals Online \(AJOL\)](#). To quote their website, AJOL is 'the world's largest and pre-eminent collection of peer-reviewed, African-published scholarly journals'. Readers will be informed of the outcome from AJOL. Meanwhile, we keep receiving well informing papers.

The first article in this issue came from Kenneth Atuheire and Gerald Kagambirwe Karyeija in Uganda. The general objective of their study was to assess the role of financial institutions towards affordable housing to middle income earners in Kampala City. A sample size of 113 respondents was selected using both probability and non-probability sampling methods. Data was collected and analysed using mixed methods. Findings revealed a weak positive effect ($=.312$) of mortgage financing towards affordable housing and accounted for 9.7% change in affordable housing. This study also established a moderate positive effect ($=.472$) of housing loans towards affordable housing and accounted for 22.3% change in affordable housing. Findings further revealed a weak positive effect ($=.345$) of housing finance on affordable housing and contributed to 11.9% change towards affordable housing. Three major conclusions are made, i.e. a) when access is limited to mortgage financing, access to affordable housing is also limited and need for housing loans arises because they make great sense from a long-term savings perspective. These are useful to social work because the provision of housing extends across all of social work's various arenas of endeavour, and Uganda is struggling to use housing finances to overcome the housing deficit. Additionally, social work research related to overcoming urban housing deficits adds knowledge to the

way Africa is working to meet housing needs for the urban middle class.

The second article was provided by Olufunmilayo Folaranmi and it focused on the girl child. Olufunmilayo argued that the girl-child is hindered from achieving her full potential in life due to an “unknown burden”. The unknown unexpected burden comprises people, poverty, pregnancy, diseases, illiteracy and maltreatment. The purpose of their paper was to examine if the girl-child could be empowered to live an improved qualitative life through a school social work intervention and connecting the people who will support the girl-child. The intervention was conducted in two schools in Akinyele Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. All students (638) who attended the intervention workshop constituted the sample for the study. Data was collected through questionnaires administered after a presentation of the “unknown burden” of the girl-child to the entire school population. Data collected were analysed through frequency counts and percentages. Findings showed that the majority of the girls were aware of their burden, even though they did not know how to deal with it. In conclusion, the intervention was successful at giving the girl-child a forum to air her burden and help her to identify sources of support. Recommendations made included the establishment of the position of school social workers and the empowerment of the girl-child to be self-determined to succeed at school.

In the third article, James Ayangunna and Benedict Oyewo examined indigenous communication, religion and education as determinants of attitudes towards STIs/HIV/AIDS education in Igando Community Lagos State, Nigeria. A sample of 195 people was randomly selected from the population. The study used four hypotheses to test the respondents’ attitude to the use of indigenous and modern communication approaches to STIs/HIV/AIDS; differences based on literacy level, religion and marital status. The instruments were

author constructed questionnaires with 0.713 reliability coefficient and 0.71 construct validity, respectively. The data obtained were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test to determine the difference in variables. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference between modern and indigenous approaches, literacy level, religion and marital status of respondents towards STIs/HIV/AIDS. It was recommended that traditional community leaders, traditional doctors, social workers and religious leaders dwelling in rural communities should lead in the local campaign against STIs/HIV/AIDS at the grassroots level using acceptable contemporary approaches.

Mildred Mushunje's article discusses the extended family as a social safety net for vulnerable children in Zimbabwe. The analysis paper argued that, though the extended family has its shortfalls and is adversely affected by HIV/AIDS and economic hardships, it remains a reliable form of informal safety net. The paper acknowledges that the extended family is an institution which is evolving, yet national policy seems to be silent on its contribution to the protection of vulnerable children. The state machinery has been unable to provide the necessary care and support for vulnerable children because of financial constraints. The paper suggests that there is much to gain in supporting the extended family to augment formal social welfare services as these are not always readily available or reliable. It concludes by recommending that the extended family should be linked with formal community based support structures in order to strengthen them against external shocks.

I would like to thank our network of reviewers, advisors and more importantly, our writers and researchers. I encourage educators, researchers, practitioners and postgraduate students to keep submitting their papers. I have no doubt those who are submitting are benefiting from our review and publishing process. The AJSW is always ready to work with you throughout these processes.

AJSW is still constrained in terms of resources and our plan to have an interactive website is still a pipedream.

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