

School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine school based risk factors promoting drug among students in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub- County, Kenya. The study used a mixed methods embedded research design. The study used a sample of 120 participants from five schools sampled out of 26 schools through probability and non-probability sampling. The study used questionnaires and interview guide as the major instruments for data collection. The quantitative data were analyzed descriptively while qualitative data were transcribed, coded and analyzed in themes and narratives. The study identified peer pressure, poor communication, family stress, conflict with school management, social network sites and violence as the major risk factors for drug abuse among secondary school students. The research recommended further study to be conducted on factors contributing to the psychological well-being of students in schools in Molo Sub- County.

Keywords: *Drug abuse, Addiction, Well-being, Risk*

In the global perspective, drug abuse has been identified as a major issue that continues to affect a large population of students in learning institutions and young people across all spheres of life. According to Rees (2010), a drug refers to any solid chemical, liquid or an amorphous substance obtained from animals, plants or even mineral materials which is applied both internally and externally to create some desirable effects in the human body. When used properly and appropriately, drugs help in the general maintenance of people's quality of life and promotes their well-being. Well-being, therefore, refers to the dynamic process coming from the way in which people mix and interact within their living environment (Rees, 2010).

United Nations Drug Control Program (UNIDCP, 2006) highlighted that drug dependence is associated with psychoactive characteristics of persistently seeking the drug. This always leads to the pattern of treatment, recovery process and relapse which occurs most often

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School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

(Grella, Scott & Foss, 2005). As a result of these occurrences, drug abuse has been perceived as the chronic relapsing disorder.

According to Random House Dictionary of English language (1967), well-being refers to the good or satisfactory condition of existence characterized through health, prosperity and even happiness. Psychological well-being is always used interchangeably with the term “mental health” and when considered it is designated to the individual person who is functioning at the high level of behavioral and/or emotional adjustment and addictiveness (Cameron, Cropp & Reber, 2001). Psychological wellness is perceived to be a broader concept in the human understanding. The most significant reliable factorial components of psychological well-being are self-regard, interpersonal relationships, problem-solving, independence, assertiveness, reality testing, self-tolerance and self-actualization as well as happiness as indicated by Bar-on (1988).

In the context of Africa, According to Drug Abuse Report (2005), the commonly abused drug in Africa is cannabis with over 34 million abusers. Cannabis is a plant which is planted and transported illegally across the various continents in the world. Cocaine is mostly abused within the urban settings, particularly within tourist centers in South and West African countries. In spite of laws used in Africa, heroine still attracts people who inject themselves or sniff it (Obot, 2016). There is a high demand for amphetamines among abusers within Southern Africa as exhibited by illegal transportation of this drug from China to South Africa (Leggett, Louw & Parry, 2002). Also in South Africa and in Egypt, there has been evidence of increased abuse of the stimulant drug (Ecstasy) which has influenced many lives of the youths negatively. There is a laboratory responsible for the production of such stimulants. In 2004, Egypt justified the beginning of production and use of Ecstasy drug in Northern Africa. *Khat* is abused through chewing of the stems and is reported to have been produced from the Democratic Republic of Yemen and Djibouti (Drug Abuse Report, 2005). In Uganda, the commonly abused drugs by children under the age of 8 years are “Hubert” and cigarette. The reasons for abusing them are due to imitation from other pupils who are drug abusers as well as their availability, the lack of law enforcement agencies in the region also contributed to the abuse as presented by Mwananchi (2013).

According to Emilio (2006), a study conducted in Ugandan about the burden of alcohol abuse among police officers in Kampala found that 73.1% of its respondents had abused alcohol in their lifetime, while 63.5% reported that they were currently using alcohol. The majority of respondents started the use of alcohol in the age bracket 15-19 years, with some starting to take alcohol before the age of 10 years. The findings of the above mentioned study clearly illustrates the urgency with which matters of alcohol and drug abuse should be treated hence the need for the current study.

In Kenya, alcohol is the most widely abused drug (National Campaign on Drug Abuse Policy (NACADA, 2006). Alcohol has played a very significant part in the social life of the people, especially in celebrations, rituals and, in some cultures, as a means of settling some disputes. Today, the use of alcohol remains a popular feature in Kenyan social life. Alcohol is divided into various types depending on the content of alcohol (NACADA, 2012). These include beer, wine, spirit, traditional brews such as *Busaa* and *Chang'aa* (charm or distilled water) among others. In the East African nations such as Kenya, drug abuse cases have been continuously acknowledged as the great social challenge with the negative implications on

School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

individuals' security, psychological, health and cultural development of people abusing drugs related substances (NACADA, 2014).

A study by Chebukaka, (2014) found out that the drug abuse problem is widespread in Kenya. It is the challenging that cut across all social groups. However, the most affected group were the youth aged between 10-25 years. Research data further indicated that more than 60% of the Kenyan students aged below 30 years had been found to practice drug abuse in various learning centers in the country (NACADA, 2014). The issues discussed above have mainly focused on prevalence of drug abuse, the commonly abused drugs, causes of drug abuse and influence of drug abuse on academic performance and indiscipline of students.

The current study notes the importance of psychological well-being in the general functioning of individuals. It has been shown that drug abuse may have negative effects on the psychological wellbeing of the users. This study explored this gap by studying drug abuse and its influence on psychological well-being of students in public secondary schools in Molo sub County, Nakuru Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A research design is a strategic plan that sets out the broad outline and key features of the work to be undertaken in a research study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). The research adopted mixed method convergent research design. This research design is a strategy, in which a researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data, analysis them concurrently and compares the results to see if the findings confirms or disconfirm each other (Creswell, 2014). This design is preferred because it enables the researcher to use the concurrent procedures, which converge or merge quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, the researcher collected both forms of data at roughly the same time and integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall result. Contradictions or incongruent findings were explained or further probed in this design.

Locale of the Study

Molo Sub- County was chosen because it has a large number of public secondary schools which encompasses both the Provincial and National Schools. Molo sub – County is a metropolitan Sub – County situated at the highway junction of Nakuru - Eldoret road, Nakuru Kisumu road, and Nakuru –Nairobi highway where means of transportations is available from many directions to Molo Sub – County. The study site is associated with short and long distances transportation of goods to East African Countries which is also mostly known for drug peddling business. Its proximity to the highway might lead to spillover effects since some of the illegal drugs get into the hands of the students by the drugs sellers from or to Nakuru town. Molo Sub - County has also an Agricultural and Industrial settings which attracts many people of diverse cultural, social, educational and economic background for employment. The region and the residents are expected to have relevant information concerning the drug abuse among the students in the public secondary schools that were sought.

School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

Target Population

The target population consisted of all the 26,232 students, 52 Principals/Deputies, heads of departments of counseling, 26 counsellors from the 26 public secondary schools in Molo Sub-County of Nakuru and form four students. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) the target population constitutes a complete set of individuals, cases or objects with some common observable characteristics to which the researcher generalized result. From the 26 public secondary schools in Molo Sub -County, only 5 schools were selected to participate in the study. Some of the form four students were selected because they have been in school for a longer period, this gave them a vast experience regarding drug-related challenges and they were well placed to assess the influence of the drugs abuse in relation to the general psychological well-being of the students. In addition, the schools were selected due to many cases of drug abuse recorded from personal experiences. In addition, target schools are selected because of their geographical settings and accessibility of the respondents.

Sample Size

The constituent subjects for the sample were drawn from school principals and their deputies, school counsellors and students in five selected public schools within Molo Sub-County, Nakuru County. The sample size for this study included 10 school Principals/Deputies, 5 school counsellors Heads of Department (HoDs), and 105 students from five public secondary schools in Molo Sub - County, Nakuru County which brought the number to 120 respondents. The study used the purposive sampling procedure to select the study participants.

Research Instruments

The study used different instruments and techniques in data collection. Questionnaires gathered demographic information, data on the drug abuse and psychological well-being of students. Interview guides for the school counsellors and principals were used to gather qualitative data for this study.

RESULTS

School Based Factors Influencing Drug Abuse

The researcher investigated the school-based factors attracting students towards drug abuse. This was important since it would bring many insights related to school environmental issues attracting students towards drug abuse. The findings of the test are shared in Table 1.

Table 1 Reasons for Drug Abuse among Students

Reasons for drug abuse among students	Frequency	Percentages
Poor communication with teaching staff	18	18%
Influence among students/colleagues	24	24%
Stress at home	26	26%
Conflict with school management	30	30%
The urge to fit the modern culture	2	2%
Total	100	100

The researcher sought information about the school-based factors that attracted the students towards drug abuse. The responses from the field respondents are distributed in the following table. The analysis in the above table has demonstrated that 18% of the respondents had indicated poor communication with teaching staff as one of the influences from the school

School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

inducing students to engage in the drug related behavior, 24% commented that Influence among students/colleagues while 26% have indicated Stress at home as contributing factor towards drug abuse of students in secondary school,30% had mentioned Conflict with school management as a source of influence of drugs among the students and lastly 2% of the respondent felt that the urge to fit the modern culture among the secondary students has some leads towards the abuse of drugs by the students in the schools in the region. Based on these results it can be deduced that peer influence was a risks factor that could lead to massive students' drug abuse within the learning center.

These findings concurs with Ngesu (2008) who conducted study about drug abuse among then Kenyan learning institutions and associated strategies for prevention. Many of the respondents more than 80% of them shared their views and opinions that alcohol is the commonly abused drug by the Secondary School students, and then Miraa follows closely, Kuber and then bhang. The reason for alcohol abuse was because alcohol has no much negative implication on health and also readily available and therefore consumed in the nearby places such as restaurants, bars, and other entertainment joints. Another reason is that alcohol is acceptable by both the government law and the community laws. The observation made is that sometimes the students' abuse drugs because of the laxity of both teachers and parents, lack of mutual cooperation among these groups put the students to the state of confusion and unnecessary freedom. It is therefore important for the teachers and parents to work closely to address the drug abuse problem in the learning institutions to help in the restoration of learning order across the Public Secondary Schools.

Peer Pressure Attract Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students

The investigator asked the respondents to share their feelings, opinions, and views about the peer pressure attract drug abuse among the secondary students. The feedback concerning their opinions is presented in light of the literature and representing the actual feelings of the study respondents. Through the interview question, the responses were made to answer to item whereby the majority 85% of the respondents commonly agreed that individuals' students are influenced by their peers to do what they do at any given time. The respondents shared a common knowledge that pressure is a real disease that if left unchecked may contribute to the development of the ill behavior or attitude. The field finding has shown that there were greater numbers of student who were coaxed to abuse drugs in the schools. Teachers and students' participants showed that there was the correlation between drug abuse among students and academic performance. During the interview with some of the teachers about what extent peer pressure influences drug abuse among the students in public secondary school in Molo sub-county. One of the teachers commented,

When a child join high school he or she find a new culture to adopt in order to fit into the community, by fitting or being part of the new family imply that he or she must begin to incorporate and do exactly as that culture demands of them, even if it involved bullying others so they shall, through the child get influenced by the individuals in the peer (Respondent.8).

In the same discussion, another teacher argues that,

Any environment under which one lives determines their behavior or character and attitude at a given time it is therefore believed that when the school environment composed of students which drug influences they are likely to attract others to follow their habit (Respondent.13).

School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

One of the counsellors from the schools commented that,

Peer pressure is a disease by itself, peer pressure affects the entire teenage group at some particular point in life and therefore there is a need for the school management to keep an eye on any antisocial behavior emanating from the student's characteristics. These will the school to contain in time any behavior which may be destructive to the school students by helping them to conform with the school rules and regulations (Respondent.5).

On the same discussion about the peer pressure and drug abuse with the school administrator. One of the principal said,

Pressure surrounding the students is a major reason why they engage in serious and notorious crimes such as drug abuse which has contributed to antisocial behavior such as burning of classes and other school equipment around the county. In fact two of my students in this school were napped by their comrades attempting to burn lab equipment because they did not want to sit for their chemistry practical when I tried to engage them positively to learn what could have been their problem then they told me they were not interested in the chemistry exams and so it was agreement of their peers to eliminate the chemistry hall so they may be sent home for some weeks. Even the parents were aware of the challenges that their children were facing and did not have any option but to send them for the compulsory visit to their parents since I noticed that the duo was the disaster in waiting (Respondent.1).

The researcher's observation on the section about whether peer pressure attracts drug abuse among the secondary school students is a major threat on curbing drug abuse in school settings. The researcher observed that the attitude and character of the student are closely affected by the environment to which the students are based and therefore there is need for the school management to collaborate with the teachers and parents to control the youths by helping in close monitoring of the students attitude and character both at home and school in order to mitigate the challenge while in acute stage to help in the management within specific timeline.

Social Network Sites Influences Students Behavior towards Drug Abuse

All of the research participants shared a common agreement that there were numerous challenges surrounding the Social sites which influence students' behavior towards drug abuse in the high schools in the region. The respondents felt that social sites including mass media as well as their peers are universal risks to our students in the local villages. The question was posed to all the respondents including the teachers and students to find out whether social sites contribute to drug abuse among the secondary students. Many of the respondents 70% agreed that the social sites have negative implication to the lives of the secondary students. The good number of the respondents shared that the contents of the social sites relay huge vices to encourage drug abuse which includes tobacco, alcohol, and glue among others affect the general wellness of the secondary school students.

The teachers and school administrators argue that media like television influenced leisure and family moments; in addition, these drugs influences and feelings contribute to the negative behavior of the students as there are little to be learned from the mass media. During an interview with some teachers about the question whether the social sites influences students' behavior towards drug abuse. Majority 90% of the teachers shared their common perceptions

School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

that social sites contribute immensely to the negative character of the individual students. They felt that there is no one moderating the contents that come from various social sites because the internet is free and handily controlled. During a discussion with teachers about the contribution of social sites on students behavior. One of the teachers commented,

Social site promote drug abuse among the school students across the nation of Kenya. He father argue that the issue of suicides has been as a result of these media where the young people are always glued without any prior knowledge about the content and implication of those acts (Respondent.4).

Another teacher said that

Social sites are a great source of bad and ill manners from all over the world, he said that in the social media anyone can post anything from anywhere without anyone's consent and so it, therefore, put many lives of people into problems. She argues that many young teenage girls have ended up in wrong hands as a result of social sites where they always found men who lure them with nice and lucrative gifts which in turn influence their dignity and general wellness hence develops low self-esteem which forces the majority of them to drop off from school (Respondent.2).

Violence as the Main Contributor to Drug Abuse

The respondents commonly agreed that the practice and experience of conflict and violence among the families are contributing to drug abuse among the students in the high schools. The great number of the respondents agreed that the conflict in the families may influence poor parents connection which may then lead to lack of commitment to conventional mandates thereby leading to students abuse of drugs which in turn affect their well-being both in the schools and at home in the communities. During an interview with both teachers and counsellors concerning whether violence and conflict as the main contributors to drug abuse in the Public Secondary Schools in the region. Majority 75% of the respondent felt that violence and conflicts are the great influence of drug abuse among high school students. During a discussion with the teachers, one of the teachers commented, *'The attitude and individual way of speaking such as voice tone and languages used by the teacher affects indiscipline of the students'* (Respondent.4). One of the counsellors said, *'Violence and conflict are interrelated and affect personal behavior and attitude of students'* (Respondent.3).

The researcher observed that conflict and violence from the families affect the student's behavior which later on influences their well-being and academic performance. The violence between parents or teachers and the students may escalate to an extent whereby the child or children may choose to run away from both their respective schools and homes putting their lives in danger. When children have nowhere to go they choose to begin experiencing drugs which turn their lives upside down and eventually cause havoc in their general livelihood. It is, therefore, necessary for the school management to work together with both of the teachers and parents to help minimize conflict both at home and school to help in the encouragement of the student to work hard towards achieving their academic goals in the school. They need to empower the students to improve their self-esteem. Encourage the students more often to work hard in school and improve their academic work so that they may have good and great future life.

DISCUSSION

These results agree with other global and local research findings. For instance, Rabie (2016) argues that socio-demographic indicators for substance abuse is a major problem in Egypt, this is due to rapidly growing and changing patterns of substance abuse. The research that was conducted on students in Egypt stated that the field research was completed and more than six phases reached out to twenty six. Among the twenty seven Egyptian governorates included four phases of which eighteen governorates were illustrated in the manuscript. According to Rabie (2016), a total of 106480 youths were included in the sample, representing approximately 0.2% population from Egyptian population above the age of 15 years. The segment of 19.3% were indicated as experimental users while 7% were shown as regular on substance use and 6.3% were fulfilling the criteria of dependence. Significant connections were found between substance abuse and gender cases such as age, residence, education, occupation, and marital status. There are significant local changes in the general rates of drugs and substance abuse in Egypt. Although, the demographic associated risks like residence, individual age, level of education are consistent across the regions with few differences. Drug abuse has more lifetime prevalence among the young students and middle-aged males, with commercial jobs, less education living in urban areas and failed marriages in the community.

National Campaign on Drug Abuse Policy (NACADA, 2006) pointed out that Peer pressure accounts for 21 – 42% influence in all types of drugs and substances abused. The peer subculture also facilitates the behavior by making the substances available and by providing an appropriate social setting and instructions. Other factors identified by students that ought not to be assumed include students having more money and influence from their parents who also consume drugs. According to teachers, peer pressure is the largest contributing factor to drug abuse as represented by 40%. Other factors included curiosity, drugs being available and the belief among students that drugs are a silver bullet for passing their exams (NACADA, 2006). Several psychoactive drugs have the capacity to induce the user a very strong habit that makes further use difficult to avoid (Rao, & Chen, 2008).

For example, the cigarette smoking, in the beginning, an individual smokes only a few cigarettes a week and the number increases as time goes by and at last he/she becomes dependent on cigarettes by all other forms of drug and substances. Kithi (2004), argued that availability of illegal drugs such as heroin, Cocaine, and Mandrax, together with the availability of substances such as cigarettes and alcohol leads to drug abuse. It promotes the abuse to other drug related substances by the secondary students. In addition, Joshua and Otieno (2012) reported that the most readily available drugs appear to be the most important cause of the prevalence of drug abuse amongst Kenyan students. He further claims that the factors that contributes to drug abuse among the secondary school's students comes in various forms and are varied in nature based on the individual predispositions, heredity characteristics, and social complex. The environmental and demographic factors influencing drug and substance abuse among secondary school students in Kisumu town east. Kenya is a major public health problem among the youths worldwide especially in developing countries (Nyatuoro, Joshua & Otieno, 2012). The accessibility, affordability, and consumption of abused drugs by the youths have attracted great concern among public health personnel. These include environmental determinants as postulated by Rice, (2012).

School settings may contribute to drug abuse and may affect children from different calibers whether they are poor or average and may be come from wealthy families. Shoemaker,

School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

(2009) affirms that alcohol abuse is caused by particular environmental conditions, such as psychological and biological factors which contributes to drug abuse among the public secondary schools within the Sub County of Molo. A child gains the first standards of behavior from the teaching of parents and other grown- ups in the neighborhood (Muthigani, 2010). In the event that the little child made the observation on the disjuncture linking the parents teaching and practice which creates doubt that is carried into the adolescence contributing to the growth of the deviant behavior. Consequently, to have the parent with the drug-related problem may increase the opportunity of developing similar problems in their descendants.

Also, parents who abuse drugs could unwillingly be setting a model which their children will follow in the future. Parents' attitude towards drugs and user behavior can constitute strong influences. Children who are exposed to illicit consumption, production or distribution at an early age through adult contacts may be more likely to experiment themselves (Muthigani, 2010). The previous study related to family and drug abuse which was released by NACADA, (2004) had shown that adolescents between the age group ranging from 10-24 years whose guardians/ parents abuse or sell drug-related substances had a high likelihood of abusing the same drugs. The students who also sell drugs such as cigarettes and alcohols, their parents are always exposed to the drug related risks.

The report further indicates that children whose parents abuse drugs do experience higher rate of family challenges such as divorce or conflict compared to children whose parents do not engage in drug abuse. Such cases may lead to poor child attachment to parents; most often may contribute to children developing interest to abuse similar drugs hence continuing the drug abuse circle in the society. Schaefer (2006) adds that students with poor support tend to seek support and understanding elsewhere. The present study dealt with the influence of drug abuse on the psychological well-being of students in public secondary schools in Molo Sub-County, Nakuru, Kenya. The way in which individuals' persons interacts in the society may affect or contribute to our living style in the society.

CONCLUSION

The influence of drug abuse among the public secondary school students in Molo Sub-County may affect the general well-being of the students including their academic performance in the classroom and the society at large. The commonly abused drugs among the students from the public secondary schools in Molo Sub - County include cigarette, alcohol, miraa, and bhang was considered were found to be abused frequently used by students. Miraa and glue were found to have the connection with people from town canters. These findings exposed that have infiltrated into the county public secondary schools, therefore, calling for effective interventions approaches to manage the influence of drugs and promote well-beings of the students. Factors that contributed to drug abuse as revealed by the study were social reasons such as peer pressure, socialization, role models, family members and close friends. This shows that majority of the students abused drugs in order to be accepted among their peers. This leads to negative change in behavior in the school. These findings influence measures to identify the individual students who are abusers of drugs to be given counselling through their deputy head teacher and schools teachers. It was also noted that some of the students in the public secondary schools abuse drugs and other related substances to encourage them to carry on with their bad behaviour which may have long terms effect to their personal life and their families.

**School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in
Molo Sub County, Kenya**

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School Based Risk Factors Promoting Drug Abuse among Student in Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Kenya

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Conflict of Interest

The authors clearly declared this paper to bear no conflict of interests

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