

**ASSESSMENT OF FAMILY ENVIRONMENT RELATED
FACTORS INFLUENCING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE
ABUSE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN
KISUMU TOWN EAST, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Drug abuse is a major public health problem among the youth worldwide especially in developing countries. The accessibility, affordability, and consumption of abused drugs by the youths have attracted great concern among public health personnel. The impact of drug abuse in human health and well-being is substantial and its contribution ranges from medical, social, family, legal and economic problems which are created by its uncontrolled use. Thus, drug abuse-related problems among the youth cannot be ignored. Evidence from around the world reveals that there is an upward trend in the misuse of psychoactive drugs among the youth. There is limited documented information on the extent of drug abuse among secondary school students Kisumu Town East, Kenya. The main objective of this study was to assess family environment related factors that influence drug and substance abuse among secondary school students in Kisumu Town East, Kenya. The findings of the study would be used to guide policy in the control and prevention of drug abuse in secondary schools. Descriptive cross-sectional study design was used in the study. Stratified sampling was used to determine the number of boys' schools, girls' schools and mixed schools to be selected. A total of eight schools were sampled proportionately in the ratio of 1:1:6 (boys, girls and mixed) respectively. The study population in this study was students in public secondary schools in Kisumu town, Kenya.

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INTRODUCTION

Drug and substance abuse is a phenomenon that is as old as mankind. People have used herbs, roots, barks, leaves and all kinds of plants to relieve pain and help control diseases (Kimanthi, 2003). When drugs are properly administered, they are a medical blessing to human beings. Unfortunately, some are not used for medical purpose. It is therefore regrettably noted that some drugs produce enticing side effects such as euphoria: a sense good feeling, elation and power. Later, whatever starts as a means of relaxation develops into a serious problem of abuse (Muchiri, 2005). Substance abuse, especially tobacco smoking is a risk behaviour and has been singled out to be the main preventable cause of death in the world (Astrom, 2003).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite, the strategies which have been put in place by the Government of Kenya through the ministry of Public Health and sanitation, Ministry of education, and other law enforcement agencies such as police, provincial administration and NACADA group, the aspect of drug and substance abuse is still an escalating problem in the Kenya society especially among the youth. Several strategies have been put in place to address the problem but have not yielded good results. The trend shows continuous increase of drug abuse among school going youth. Regrettably, researchers have indicated that use of drugs by school going youth decreases their academic performance, lowers their Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and makes them vulnerable to crime. Drug abuse also exposes them to health risks among other myriad problems (Boyd, 2005; NACADA, 2007; Nyassy, 2010). The extent of alcohol among students in Nyanza has a prevalence rate of 26.9%, tobacco 5.2%, bhang 2.4%, Miraa 4.2% and inhalants 2.8% (NACADA, 2004). According to NACADA's report (2007) at least 13% students are current consumers of alcohol. The report indicates that the median age of first use of changaa and cigarettes is 9 years and 10 respectively. One half of these have tried chewing or sniffing tobacco, traditional liquor and miraa. The median age of use of packed alcohol is 11 years while that of the bhang is 14 years. While people of all ages are at risk, the age bracket of between 16-26 years face a greater risk of getting into the tangle of drug abuse due to growth and developmental changes especially during the transition period from childhood to adulthood (Kiambuthi, 2005). It is a fact that cases of students engaging in drug abuse is on the rise despite the dangers of drug abuse. Statistical information from Kisumu District Hospital indicates an

increase in mental and behavioural disorders due multiple drug use and the use of other psychoactive substances (KDH office, 2012). In 2010, those between the age of 15-24 years who were admitted in the hospital with mental and behavioural disorders due to the use of such drugs were three. One patient among them died from psychotic disorders. In 2011, psychiatric cases related to multiple drug use and other psychoactive substances within secondary school age (15-24) years increased to ten. The percentage increase is 233%. Deaths that arise from drug and other substances abuse continue to increase yearly in Kisumu town (KDH, 2012). However, it remains unclear why students engage in this risk behaviour. This study therefore aimed at investigating the environmental and demographic factors influencing drug and substance abuse among secondary school students.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Few studies have been done on secondary school going students in Kisumu town. Therefore, there is limited documentation on drug and substance abuse among the secondary school students and no or limited success in mitigation measures. Statistical information shows steady trend of increase in psychiatric cases: mental and behavioural disorders due to multiple drug use and other psychoactive substances in Kisumu district hospital. In 2010, three patients in secondary school age bracket (15-24 years) were admitted in the psychiatric department while in 2011, ten cases (a 233% increase) were admitted (KDH's, 2012). This justifies the need for this study, which was designed to investigate environmental and demographic factors associated with the drugs and substance abuse among the secondary school students in Kisumu town, Kenya. The outcome of this study would be important in guiding policy and developing prevention strategies to control of drug abuse in secondary schools and among other youth in Kenya. The findings would also help school administrators and counsellors to put in place mechanisms for addressing possible environmental and demographic factors which promote drug abuse among the youth. Besides, the study was intended to bridge the information gap that exists regarding the environmental and demographic factors associated with drug and substance abuse among secondary school students in Kenya. The study also intended to reveal some of the schools and family factors which may influence abuse of drugs. It was envisaged that the implementation of the recommendations of the study would lead to a decrease in drug abuse prevalence rates among secondary school students and other students.

RESULTS**4.3 Family environmental factors and drug and substance abuse among the study population****4.3.1 Mother's educational level and drug abuse****Table 4.5 Mother's educational level versus drug and substance abuse**

Mother's educational level	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	χ^2 statistic
None	6(55%)	5(45%)	$\chi^2 = 153.492$ $df=3$ $p < 0.05$
Primary	24(51%)	23(49%)	
Secondary	51(50%)	52(50%)	
Tertiary	49(32%)	105(68%)	
Total	130(41%)	185(59%)	

The researcher sought to find out the link between mother's educational level and drug abuse among their teenage children in secondary schools. The findings are presented in table 4.5. The results show that those respondents whose mothers had received no formal education (55%) were at a higher risk of drug and substance abuse as compared to those respondents whose parents had received tertiary education (42%). The proportions are statistically different ($\chi^2 = 153.492$; $df = 3$; $p < 0.05$). This shows that there is a significant relationship between mother's educational level and drug and substance abuse.

4.3.2 Religious affiliation and drug and substance abuse**Table 4.6 Religious affiliation versus drug and substance abuse**

Religious affiliation	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	χ^2 statistic
Protestants	58(47%)	65(53%)	$\chi^2 = 2.520$ $df=3$ $p > 0.05$
Catholics	61(39%)	96(61%)	
Muslims	10(53%)	9(47%)	
None	8(50%)	8(50%)	
Total	137(43%)	178(57%)	

In the study, the researcher was interested in finding out the link between religious affiliation of the teenagers attending secondary schools and the risk behaviour of drug abuse. The findings are presented in table 4.6. The results show that 47% of the drug abusers were Protestants, 39% were

Catholics, 53% were Muslims and 50% had no religion affiliation. The proportions are statistically not different ($\chi^2 = 2.520$; $df = 3$; $p > 0.05$). This implies that religious affiliation had no association with drug and substance abuse.

4.3.3 Father's occupation and drug abuse

Table 4.7 Father's occupation versus drug and substance abuse

Father's occupation	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	χ^2 statistic
Professional	58(40%)	87(60%)	$\chi^2 = 4.18$ $df = 3$ $p > 0.05$
Technical	21(36%)	38(64%)	
Farmers	31(55%)	25(45%)	
Others	32(37%)	55(63%)	
Total	110(35%)	205(65%)	

The study sought to investigate the link between father's occupation and drug abuse among their teenage children in secondary school. The findings of this are presented in table 4.7. The results show that those respondents whose fathers were farmers (55%) were at higher risk of drug and substance abuse. Those whose fathers were professionals (40%) were at lower risk of abusing drugs. The proportions ($\chi^2 = 4.18$; $df = 3$; $p > 0.05$) are not statistically different. This implies that there is no relationship between father's occupation and drug and substance abuse among their children in secondary school.

4.3.4 Mother's Marital Status

Table 4.8 Mother's Marital Status versus drug and substance abuse

Mother's Marital Status	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	χ^2 statistic
Married	109(40%)	164(60%)	$\chi^2 = 428.274$ $df = 2$ $p < 0.05$
Unmarried	14(64%)	8(36%)	
Unknown	7(35%)	13(65%)	
Total	130(41%)	185(59%)	

In this study, the researcher sought to investigate whether there is a link between mother's marital status at the time of birth of their secondary school going teenage children and the possibility of indulgence in drug abuse among these learners. The findings are presented in table

4.8. The results reveal that there is an association between mother's marital status at the time of birth of the child and drug abuse. More children (64%) whose mothers were unmarried at the time of their birth had abused drugs than their counterparts whose mothers were married (40%) at the time of their birth. The proportions ($\chi^2 = 428.274$; $df = 2$; $p < 0.05$) are statistically different. This finding shows that there is a relationship between mother's marital status and drug and substance abuse by their children.

4.3.5 Supervision of school work and drug abuse

Table 4.9 Supervision of school work versus drug and substance abuse

Supervision of school work	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	χ^2 statistic
Never	27(57%)	22(43%)	$\chi^2 = 1.060$ $df=2$ $p > 0.05$
Rarely	33(45%)	40(55%)	
Often	70(37%)	119(63%)	
Total	130(41%)	185(59%)	

This study sought to investigate whether there is a link between supervision of school work by the parents of the learners in secondary schools and their chances of indulgence in drug abuse. The findings are presented in table 4.9. The results reveal that those children whose parents monitored their school work more often (37%) were at lower risk of abusing drugs as compared to their counterparts whose parents did not monitor (57%) their. The proportions ($\chi^2 = 1.060$; $df=2$; $p > 0.05$) are not statistically different. This implies that there is no relationship between supervision of school work and drug and substance abuse.

4.3.6 Expectations from parents and drug abuse

Table 4.10 Expectations from parents versus drug and substance abuse

Expectations	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	Odds ratio 95% conf. Level		
			Value	L. Limit	U. Limit
University education	124(40%)	184 (60%)	0.30	0.12	0.97
Others	6(43 % %)	8(57%)			
Total	127(40%)	188(60%)			

The researcher also sought to link parental expectations of education after secondary education for their children and the possibility of the teenagers indulging in drug abuse. The results indicate that a high parental expectation lowers the risks of drug abuse among these learners by 70% (table 4.10). This implies that parental expectation of education after secondary education for their children in secondary school significantly reduces substance abuse among these students.

4.3.7 Communication against drug abuse and drug abuse

Table 4.11 Communication against drug abuse versus drug and substance abuse

Communication against drug abuse	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	Odds ratio 95% conf. level		
			Value	L. limit	U. limit
Yes	98(40%)	148(60%)	0.77	0.45	1.33
No	32(46%)	37(54%)			
Total	130(41%)	185(59%)			

The researcher in this study was interested in establishing the link between parental communications of the norms of drug abuse to their secondary school going teenage children. The results indicate that parental communication lowers the risk of drug abuse among these teenagers by 23% (Table 4.11). This implies that when parents talk to children in secondary school about drugs, there is a reduction in substance abuse among these students. Nevertheless, there was no significant relationship between parental communications and drug abuse. Infact, there is indication that it reduces drug abuse but in some instances promotes it.

4.3.8 Family health and drug abuse

Table 4.12 Family health versus drug and substance abuse

Family health	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	Odds ratio 95% conf. level		
			Value	L. limit	U. limit
Yes	40(60%)	27(40%)	2.70	1.55	4.72
No	90(36%)	158(64%)			
Total	130(41%)	185(59%)			

Table 4.12 shows family health with regards to drug related problems diagnosed in hospital among members of a family and the possibility of a secondary school student from such a families indulging in drug abuse. The results indicate that members of families with diagnosed

cases are 2.70 times more likely to abuse drugs as opposed to those with no cases of drug related problems.

4.3.9 Leisure time and drug abuse

Table 4.13 Leisure time versus drug and substance abuse

Leisure time	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	χ^2 statistic
Youth club	35(53%)	31(47%)	$\chi^2 = 47.292$ $df=4$ $p < 0.05$
Home friends	22(34%)	36(66%)	
Home family	29(32%)	53(69%)	
Meet friends	37(42%)	50(58%)	
At school	6(27%)	16(73%)	

Investigation in this study was done to find out if there is a link between group with whom the teenagers in secondary school spend their leisure time when they are out of school and their indulgence in drug abuse. The findings are presented in table 4.13. From the table, those at higher risk of drug abuse were students who visited youth clubs during their free time (53%). On the other hand, those who passed their free time in school (27%) were at a lower risk of abusing drugs and substances. The proportions ($\chi^2 = 47.292$; $df=4$; $p < 0.05$) are statistically different. This shows that there is relationship between a group with whom the learners in secondary school spend their leisure and drug abuse.

4.4 Family environmental factors influencing drug and substance abuse as reported by respondents

The respondents were asked which family environmental factors they thought influenced drug and substance abuse. Results in table 4.13 indicate that a larger proportion (27%) of the respondents cited parents abusing drugs as the major factor influencing drug and substance abuse at home. Older siblings who were already engaged in drugs also influenced younger siblings (14%).

Table 4.14 Family environmental factors influencing drug and substance abuse as reported by respondents

Factors	Frequency (%)
Parents abusing drugs	27
Older siblings influence	14
Lack parental love	12
Mistreatment	11
Stress	10
Family feuds	10
Lack role models	9
Myths and media influence	8
Curiosity	7

4.5 School environmental factors and drug and substance abuse among the study population

4.5.1 Distance to the nearest wines and spirit shop

Table 4.15 Distance to the nearest wines and spirit shop versus drug and substance abuse

Distance wines shop	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	Odds ratio 95% conf. Level		
			Value	L. limit	U. limit
Less than 200 m	105 (43%)	142 (57%)	2.22	1.09	3.92
More than 200 m	20 (30%)	47 (70%)			
Total	125 (40%)	190 (60%)			

Table 4.15 shows the results of the investigation of the link between distance to the nearest wines and spirit shop from secondary schools and the possible indulgence of the teenage learners in drug abuse. The results indicate that with a distance of less than 200m to the nearest wines and spirit shop, secondary school going students are 2.22 times more likely to abuse drugs as opposed to a distance more than 200m. This implies that location of wines and spirit shops within the radius of less than 200m significantly increases chances of secondary school learners engaging in substance abuse.

4.5.2 School policy on drug and substance abuse

Table 4.16 Existence of School policy on drug and substance abuse versus drug and substance abuse

School policy	Drug abusers	Non-drug abusers	Odds ratio 95% conf. level		
			Value	L. limit	U. limit
Yes	62(36%)	108(64%)			

No	61(42%)	84(58%)	1.48	0.669	3.28
Total	123(40%)	192(60%)			

This study sought to compare schools with enforced drug policy to schools without a clear drug policy with regard to students indulging in drug abuse. The results indicate that schools with drug policy promote the risk of drug abuse among the learners by 1.48 as opposed to those with no clear policy (Table 4.16). Nonetheless, it also reveals that drug policy in secondary schools reduces the risk among the teenagers. This implies that there is no significant relationship between school drug policy and drug and substance abuse among students.

CONCLUSION

New environmentally based effective strategies are needed. The strategies need a multi-ministerial approach which should include Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Special Programmes, NACADA, NGOs and other church leaders. Effective and sustainable programmes should be initiated to promote a drug free environment for the youth. The programmes should be those that would help minimize characteristics that may promote abuse of drugs and enhance those characteristics that discourage drug abuse in schools and at family environmental level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development in collaboration with Ministry of Education should initiate comprehensive programmes that may engage the youth outside school more particularly the male gender. The researcher would recommend the following research gaps be filled in an effort to reduce drug and substance abuse among youths: A similar study should be done in a rural setting since this study concentrated only on an urban setting. A similar study should be done in other institutions of learning like primary and universities/colleges. A similar study should be done in all other districts/ cities in Kenya.

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