

**EFFECTS OF DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE IN
PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KIENI EAST ZONE, KIENI DISTRICT, NYERI
COUNTY-KENYA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Drug abuse is becoming an increasing problem in Kenya. A number of studies carried out in the country show that almost every Kenyan youngster at one time or another experiments with drugs, especially beer and cigarettes. The major cause of concern is that a significant proportion of these young people eventually get addicted posing a threat to their own health and safety, while creating difficulties for their families and the public at large into difficulties. This study sought to establish the effects of drug and substance abuse on learner's academic performance in public primary schools in Nyeri County. The Modified Social Stress Model (MSSM) for understanding drug use and abuse guides this study. The model was developed by Rodes and Jason (1988) and modified by World Health Organization/Programme on Substance Abuse (WHO/PSA) to include the effects of drugs or substances, the personal response of the individual to drugs and additional environmental, social and cultural variables. Research has shown that in order to prevent substance use and abuse, two things must be taken into consideration: factors that increase the risk of developing the problem must be identified, and ways to reduce the impact of these factors must be developed. The theory maintains that there are factors that encourage drug abuse called risk factors. Factors that make people less likely to abuse drugs are called protective factors. The key to health and healthy families is increasing the protective factors while decreasing the risk factors. According to this model, if many risk factors are present in a person's life, that person is more likely to begin, intensify and continue the use of drugs, which could lead to drug abuse. The model identifies risk factors as stress (which could be due to the school or home environment, and adolescent developmental changes) and normalization of substance use which could be seen in terms of legality and law enforcement; availability and cost of drugs; advertising, sponsorship and promotion through media, as well as the cultural value attached to various drugs. In addition, there is also the experience derived from the use of drugs, which could be positive or negative. Drugs which produce positive effects are likely to be abused. The model also shows that the more protective factors are present, the less likely the person is to become involved with drugs. Protective factors are identified as: attachments with people such as family members, peers and institutions such as religion and school. In addition are skills, which refer to physical and performance capabilities that help people succeed in life and reduce incidents of drug abuse. Availability of resources, within the person or the environment, which help people meet their emotional and physical needs, are said

to reduce dependence on drugs. Examples include positive role models, religious faith, anti-drug campaigns plus guidance and counseling services.

According to this model, it is easy to understand the drug problem better if both risk and protective factors are considered at the same time.

Probability of drug abuse is determined by these factors. The framework is useful as a way of planning interventions to prevent or treat problems related to drug abuse. Once the risk factors are identified, work can begin on reducing the risks and strengthening the protective factors.

Although Rodes and Jasons theory could explain why the youth in schools do or do not abuse drugs, it is not exhaustive. In addition to the above risk and protective factors there could be others which contribute to the present scenario in families, schools and communities, as suggested in the literature review. The presence of risk and protective factors is context dependent and the proportions of their contribution depend on intensity in given situations. Therefore the actual state of affairs needed exploration for factors unique to Machakos district in Kenya, where the investigation was carried out. This model therefore guided the study by way of examining the drug problem in secondary schools in the district and to analyzing the strategies used to address the problem, but where it proved inadequate other models were taken into account. The aim was to make recommendations for improvement and propose intervention measures to address the problem.

The study took place in Kieni East Zzone primary schools in Nyeri County. The target population was primary school class teachers. The researcher adopted a simple random procedure in order to reach his targeted population six teachers will be selected randomly. This method is suitable because every member of the group had a chance of being selected as members of the sample. The researcher used questionnaires to collect data which comprised of a number of written questions to find out the effects of drugs and substance abuse on learners' performance in Kieni East Zone. The researcher used frequency tables to interpret the raw data from questionnaire.