

THE SCHOOL CHALLENGE IN ELGEYO MARAKWET - KENYA: A Cursory Look at the Social Behavior of Students Whose Parents abuse Alcohol

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Abstract

Alcohol abuse is one of the social issues in today's society. Parents and social institutions like schools have the responsibility of socializing the young people but they have also fallen victims of alcohol abuse. The need to carry out this research arose from the fact that alcohol consumption, especially illicit alcohol, had affected the society as a whole, the family included. The study was conducted in Keiyo North, Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The objective was to examine the challenges that schools faced due to the social behavior of the students. The study was based on the theory of Social Cognitive Learning by Albert Bandura. The theory argues that through observation and the use of cognitive processes people have the potential to learn certain behaviours from their environments. Concurrent triangulation mixed method research design involving qualitative and quantitative approaches was used. The target population of this study comprised of all the public secondary schools in Keiyo North sub-County. The sample comprised of 49 participants sampled from seven public schools. Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling were used to select the schools and participants respectively. The study utilized questionnaires and interviews to collect data. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The findings showed that most fathers (63.6%) abused alcohol compared to the mothers. The challenges faced by schools were mostly the breaking of school rules which led to many indiscipline cases but schools had put up several measures to correct these social behaviors.

Key words: parental alcohol abuse, social behaviour and challenges

1. Introduction

Students in Kenya spend 16 years in school if he or she completes the 8-4-4 system hence the youth who are in secondary schools are greatly influenced by their peers and this peer influence needs to be supervised by adult socialiser who happens to be the parents and teachers. Simons Morton (2008) noted that the rapid development in early adolescence causes a lot of difficulty in parenting although positive parenting can greatly influence behavior with regard to substance abuse. Responsible parenting which can be jeopardized by alcohol abuse enables the children to obtain both technical and social skills needed in life (Sirera & Mwenje, 2014).

Adams (1987) argues that teaching could be among the most wonderful jobs world widely if students were well behaved. However, unwanted behaviors were on the increase and teachers were worried about the aggression directed at them by both students and parents (Stanley, 2014). Schools had a challenge in correcting anti-social behaviors given that some parents had also shifted their roles to the teachers who were already overwhelmed with other responsibilities in and out of the schools, yet parents and guardians had a big role in disciplining their children (Munyaka, 2008). Ngwokabuenue (2015) on the study done on students' indiscipline found out that many undisciplined students lacked parental guidance and supervision on their choice of friends. The studies above by Stanley, 2014, Munyaka, 2008 and Ngwokabuenue, 2015 showed that most of the school's challenges emanated from home.

2. Literature Review

A study done in USA, the national data revealed that over a 12 - month period, workplace alcohol use and impairment was reported by an estimated 15.3 per cent of the U.S. workforce which is approximately 19.2 million workers (Frone, 2006). Canadian Centre of

Occupational Health and Safety Resource (2005) observed that there were numerous effects of drug and alcohol abuse on workers and they included the after-effects of substance use (hangover, withdrawal) which impaired job performance, preoccupation with obtaining and using substances while at work which interferes with attention and concentration. Alcohol is known to be a major reason for workplace absenteeism (Mongan, Hope & Nelson, 2009).

NACADA 2009, due to the drug abuse menace in workplaces in Kenya came up with a policy to curb the menace. The policy enables organizations to create awareness on the harmful effects of alcohol and drug abuse at the workplace. It also helps in establishing corporate culture and practices that prevent and pre-empt alcohol and drug abuse at the workplace which enables the organization to maintain a drug free, healthy and productive workforce. Schools being a teacher's workplace were therefore also affected and this policy needed to be enacted in full force to save both the teacher and the student. According to Davins-Johnson (2000), teachers had not always modeled positive behaviors given that students learned both moral and immoral behaviours based on what they saw and not what they heard as stated by Curwin & Mendler (2008). The teacher being a surrogate parent in school needs to be a good role model.

Teachers being the adult supervisors of students in school have also fallen victims of alcohol abuse as shown in a study carried out in NaroMoru Division, Nyeri County. The findings of the study revealed that 25% of the teachers took drugs and they even provided these drugs to the students. The most prevalent drug in this case was alcohol; this study though was more concerned with the effect of drugs on the students' academic performance (Njagi, 2014). For most adolescents, school was a prominent part of their life and teachers acted as their role models and transmitters of knowledge. Teachers therefore played a major role in the social development of the student hence moulding their behaviours. Many of the studies had researched on the effects of alcohol on students. The issue of teacher's alcohol abuse and its effect on student's behaviour had been left out and it's on this basis that one of this study's objectives was to find the extent of alcohol abuse on the teachers as this affects their work as social role models.

According to a report on causes, effects and remedies of indiscipline in secondary schools in Central province in Kenya, prepared by the Provincial Education Board in 2001, teachers and parents were blamed for failing to infuse discipline in children (Wachira, 2001). Schools had faced many challenges including deaths, due to antisocial behaviours exhibited by students. According to Biu, (2011), four students were killed in Nyeri High school when the prefects were locked in their cubicle and burnt by students. The study by Biu found the general society to be the main cause indiscipline in secondary schools but this study sought to find if parental alcohol abuse contributed indiscipline cases among secondary school students.

Chebukaka (2014) in his study in public schools in Vihiga County on drug abuse noted that parents were abdicating their duties and laying the burden to the school and church hence students did not have the relevant knowledge about drugs and they therefore relied on their peers for information on drugs. Parents who had children who abused alcohol did not even know what to do. Some believed and thought that it was the responsibility of teachers and religious organizations to correct these children (NACADA, 2004). The study suggested the need to incorporate drugs and drug abuse education into the curriculum right from lower primary school as this was a challenge to the schools in fighting the menace of drug abuse.

Another study in Busia District secondary schools showed that students, both genders, drank alcohol because it was readily available and affordable around their school and home environments. The older students in school had higher affinity for alcohol consumption compared to the younger students. Regardless of the school type, all schools engaged in alcohol drinking, however those in mixed schools had a higher tendency for alcohol use. The students who drank alcohol suffered from poor health, memory disorder, criminal acts, and dropped out from school and finally failed in exams and in life (Shikuku, 2011). The two studies in Vihiga and Busia Counties were studying the abuse of drugs, alcohol included from the student's point of view but did not take into consideration the fact that these students might have been role modelled to drink by their parents.

According to Siringi (2003), the habit of alcohol consumption in schools by student which may or may not be as a result of parental alcohol abuse had resulted in a number of social ills which include truancy, theft, rudeness, dropouts, injuries, loss of lives, destruction of properties, draining away of morals, misallocation of resources, indiscipline, and compromised academic standards which pose serious challenges to managers of the educational institutions. This shows that alcohol abuse has an adverse influence on social behaviour.

The schools are also faced with the challenge of identifying students affected by parental abuse of alcohol, most of the time due to embarrassment they try to hide the fact that their parents abuse alcohol. They protect themselves by lying, suppressing feelings and withdrawing from close relationships. Some even role play a responsible child (Turney, 2007). In another study by Waititu and Khamasi in secondary schools the result showed that 94% of the guidance and counseling teachers had other responsibilities thus they offered counseling services only when they were free. Most schools had no allocation for a specific time for guidance and counseling and the teachers concerned were neither trained to offer the services (Waititu & Khamasi, 2010).

Njoroge and Nyabuto's (2014) study on discipline in public schools revealed that unruly behaviors had led to violent strikes resulting to death. Khamisi & Mutia (2007) argued that social ills and irresponsible behaviours among the youth like rape, bullying and arson

had happened and some of the perpetrators had claimed that they were under the influence of alcohol and other abused substances. This is a clear picture that our society is breaking down socially and morally, killing our African culture whose ethics and values were passed down from one generation to another. Therefore, immediate action needs to be taken to save our systems from more deterioration (Spear, 2004).

3. Research Design and Methodology

Research design

The study adopted concurrent triangulation mixed method research design. In this design data collection is done in one phase. Qualitative and quantitative are collected and analysed separately yet concurrently (Creswell, 2013). This method provides well-validated and substantiated findings. This study was conducted in Keiyo North sub-county in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The county has an area of approximately 557.40 square kilometres and currently the population is approximately 73,715 (IEBC, 2012). According to the county statistics residents spend as much as 5.1 Billion Kenyan shillings on alcohol every year. Keiyo North is ranked amongst the leading sub counties alcohol consumption (Kipchirchir, 2015). The county government had also raised concern due to the bars which are on the rise; their number was noted to be higher than the number of primary schools in the sub-county (Cheruiyot, 2014).

Target Population

Target population refers to the whole quantity of individuals, events or objects of a study (William, 2011). This study targeted students whose parents abused alcohol, as the researcher was purposely targeting this group of students. Guidance and counselling teachers were also targeted to give their perception on parental alcohol abuse and students social behaviours. The deputy principals were also targeted because they are in charge of discipline in school. These participants were from all the 22 public secondary schools in Keiyo North Sub-County of Elgeyo-Marakwet County.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Sampling is the process of selecting just a small group of cases from out of the population and a good sample should show how the population is like (William, 2011). According to Mugenda (2003) 30% of the target population is representative enough to allow for generalization. Seven schools were therefore selected for the study which represents 30% of the 22 public schools in Keiyo North Sub-County. Stratified random sampling was used to select a sample of 3 boarding schools and 4 mixed day schools. This was done by stratifying the schools into two, boarding schools and mixed day schools, the study then selected 3 boarding and 4 mixed day schools in proportion to the number of schools by use of simple random sampling. Boarding schools, in consideration of gender were further stratified into girls boarding, boys boarding and mixed boarding and one school from each strata was selected. All the forms were considered.

In each of the seven schools sampled, purposive sampling was used to select five willing students whose parents abused alcohol making a total of 35 sampled students for the study. This was done through the guidance of the class teachers since they had background information of students whose parents abused alcohol. It was also assumed that they would provide the required information. Purposive sampling was chosen because the study targeted students whose families' abuse alcohol. All the seven deputy principals and seven guidance and counselling teachers were selected purposively because their schools were participating. This made a sample of 35 students, 7 deputy principals and 7 guidance and counselling teachers resulting to a sample size of 49.

Table 1. Sample Size

Strata	Number of Schools	Schools Sampled	Number of Students per School	Number of Teachers per School
Boarding	8	3	15	6
Mixed day	14	4	20	8
TOTAL	22	7	35	14

Source: Field study, 2016

Data Collection Instruments

Two instruments were used given that one instrument is not sufficient to make valid and reliable conclusions. A questionnaire is a research instrument which consists of a series of questions used for gathering information from respondents. In this study questionnaires were used to collect data from the students and the guidance and counselling teachers. They contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The need for open-ended questions was to get more information. Each item in the questionnaire was developed to address objective and research questions of the study noted by Mugenda (2003) This was aimed at obtaining general information on the perceptions of teachers and students on the extent parental alcohol abuse, their perceptions on parental alcohol

abuse and the social behaviour of the students, the challenges faced by schools and the measures that have been taken by these schools to assist students. Interviews are oral questions that are used to obtain data. The study used structured form of interview where all the participants were asked similar questions. Interview schedules were used to obtain information from the deputy principals.

Piloting the Research Instruments

Before carrying out the actual study, a pilot study was conducted in two schools, a boarding and a mixed day school in the neighbouring Keiyo South sub-county which has the same characteristics as Keiyo North sub-county. This was meant to establish whether the instruments are clear and to test if they generated relevant and adequate information needed for the study. The sample consisted of 10 affected students, 2 deputy principals and 2 guidance and counselling teachers. Piloting helped the researcher to reframe some of the questions that the students could not understand. One of the questions on the guidance and counselling questionnaire brought out different meanings hence it also had to be change.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

Validity

Validity determines whether the research instrument measures that which it is intended to measure (Cohen, 2000). Validity has to do with accuracy and to what degree. The research instruments which include the questionnaire and the interview schedule were designed and developed with ideas from the supervisors, other experts from the school of education, master of philosophy students and teachers from secondary schools. To develop content validity a review of the student and guidance and counselling teachers was conducted using Content Validity Index (CVI) by experts in the department. The expert rated 20 items (students questionnaire) and 22 items (guidance and counselling questionnaire) based on relevance, clarity, simplicity and ambiguity on the four points scale. Content validity index (CVI) for each item was determined. Of the 20 items in the students' questionnaire, those with CVI over 0.75 remained and the rest were discarded resulted to 15 item instruments. In addition of the 22 items in the guidance and counselling questionnaire 13 had a CVI over 0.75. This rigorous process helped the researcher ascertain whether the items in the research instrument would illicit relevant information for the study.

Reliability

Reliability is when a researcher uses certain procedures to check for the accuracy of the research findings (Creswell, 2014). The researcher used the test re-test method and where the responses seemed to vary greatly, necessary adjustments were made. The instruments were administered to two different schools in Keiyo South sub-county. The researcher counter checked the responses together with those from respondents to ensure similarities in responses. After the administration of the test retest method, the researcher scored the responses. The researcher re-administered the instruments after two weeks to the same respondents and then scored the results. The researcher then calculated the coefficient of the two scores and established the reliability of the research instruments using Cronbach alpha. Since the coefficient of correlation obtained was 0.8 the research instruments were considered reliable for the study. This is acceptable as Cozby, (2003) puts that, for most measures the correlation should be at least 0.80. Qualitative data from open ended items in the questionnaire and interviews were organised and identification made on different components, patterns and themes were sought to enable explanation.

The Data Collection Process

A research permit was obtained from National Council for Science and Technology Innovation (NACOSTI) and then the Ministry of Education of Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The researcher then notified the head teachers of the selected schools of the intention to conduct the study and on the intended dates. The researcher delivered and administered the questionnaires personally to the students and the guidance and counselling teachers of the various schools. The researcher carried out interviews for the deputy principals in selected schools by asking the structured questions and then recording down the responses.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were sorted out to check clarity. Tallying for closed-ended questions was done and analyzed using descriptive statistics which included frequencies and percentages. This data was presented using frequency tables, summary graphs and pie charts. Quantitative data run by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data from the interview schedule for deputy head teachers and the open ended items in the questionnaire was analysed using content analysis procedures. The data was organised based on different components, patterns and themes to enable explanation. This involved the sorting of recorded data for completeness followed by coding according to the emerging themes. The researcher transcribed the emerging themes and gave the interpretations. Presentations were done in narrative form.

4. Results

Adams (1987) argues that teaching could be among the most wonderful jobs world widely if students were well behaved. However, unwanted behaviors are on the increase and teachers are worried. Schools have a challenge in correcting antisocial behaviors given that some parents have also shifted their roles to the teachers who are already overwhelmed (Munyaka, 2008).

4.1 Breaking of school rules

Findings from the deputy principal and the guidance and counseling teachers about the challenges that are faced with when handling students from families that abuse alcohol it was found that these students do not adhere to school rules due to lack of respect to school authorities since they lack parental involvement in their day to day activities. The guidance and counseling teachers admitted that they lack enough skills to handle these students. The students who are withdrawn due to the effect of parental alcohol abuse have a problem fitting into groups hence having them work in teams becomes a challenge. Responses from the deputy principal indicated thus;

“Many students whose parent drink alcohol is normally found on the wrong side of the law many of them are noise makers, delay opening of schools and are sometimes caught in theft cases. They break school rules despite the fact that they had consented to obey them when they joined this school.”

This shows that these students broke school rules and this was a challenge to schools and especially to the office of the deputy principal as they are in charge of discipline.

Another participant cited the issue of gangs whereby students join cliques that pose a threat to schools. The participant said thus;

“Some of these students join cliques in schools for purposes of finding love and identification. There is a possibility that because of their vulnerability there is the likelihood of them even joining other informal groups out of school hence posing a great danger to their lives.”

4.2 Social problems that the school faced due to parental alcohol abuse

The study further sought to find out the social problems that the school faced due to parental alcohol abuse. Results obtained from the teacher’s questionnaire were summarized in the table 2.

Table 2: Social Problems that School Faced due to Parental Alcohol Abuse

	Frequency	Percentage
sneaking out of school/missing school	3	50.0
gross indiscipline	2	33.3
unwanted pregnancies and use of abusive language	1	16.7
TOTAL	6	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2016

From the results in table 2, it is evident that most of the schools were faced with different problems such as sneaking out of school/missing school for flimsy reasons which recorded 3 (50.0%), unwanted pregnancies 1 (16.7%) and gross indiscipline 2 (33.3%). This was a reflection of what parents do while drunk for example using abusive language.

Responses from the deputy principles’ indicated the following thematic sentiments.....

“Children of alcoholics experience any of the following: chaos, uncertainty, instability, inconsistent discipline, emotional and physical neglect, arguments, instability of parents’ marriage, disorganization, violence and/or physical and sexual abuse, emptiness, loneliness, the terror of repeated abandonment, or the witnessing of violence or abuse to others. The family environment may be characterized by tension, fear, and shame that become connected with the child’s sense of self. It is often difficult to determine whether the problems a child is having are directly linked to parental alcoholism, separate, or a combination.”

From these themes, it was quite evident that there were challenges. It was certain that challenges that emanate from home had an impact on the school too. It was even becoming more difficult for the schools because some of the parent thought that it was the responsibility of teachers and religious organizations to correct these children, especially those who had indulged in drug abuse (NACADA, 2004).

4.3 How often were students whose parent’s abuse alcohol found in indiscipline problems?

In an attempt to establish the challenges that schools face the study sought to find out the frequency of indiscipline among students whose parents were alcoholic. The table 3 shows results on how often children of parents who abuse alcohol were found in discipline problems.

Table 3: Frequency of Indiscipline Among Students Whose Parents Abused Alcohol

	Frequency	Percent
Often	1	16.7
More often	1	16.7
Most often	4	66.7
Total	6	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2016

Table 3 indicates that 1 (16.7%) of teachers sampled indicated that the students whose parents abused alcohol were often found in indiscipline problems, 1 (16.7%) of the sampled teachers indicated that students whose parents abused alcohol were more often found in indiscipline problems, whereas 4 (66.7%) of teachers sampled indicated that the students whose parents abused alcohol were most often found in indiscipline problems. These results implied that in families where alcohol or other drugs were being abused, behavior was frequently unpredictable and communication was unclear thus leading to indiscipline. The results agree with Siringi (2003), who notes that the habit of alcohol consumption in schools by student which may or may not be result of parental alcohol abuse has resulted in a number of social ills which include truancy, theft, rudeness, dropouts, injuries, loss of lives, destruction of properties, draining away of morals, misallocation of resources, indiscipline, and compromised academic standards which pose serious challenges to managers of the educational institutions.

4.4 Teacher alcohol abuse and the school

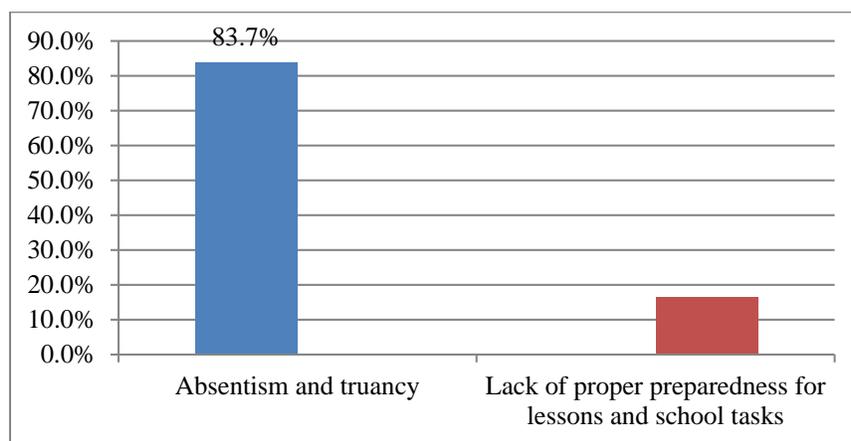
The study sought to find out how teacher alcohol abuse had affected the school. This was looked at from the point of view that some teachers may be parents and or guardian to some students thus this might cause challenges to the schools; results are summarized in table 4 and figure 1

Table 4: Teachers' Rate of Missing Lessons

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Never	2	6.1
Occasionally	6	18.2
Frequently	23	69.7
Always	2	6.1
Total	33	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2016

The results from table 4 indicate that 23 (6.1%) of student participants said the teachers frequently miss, 6 (18.2%) of the students said the teachers occasionally miss, 2 (6.1%) of the students said the teachers miss always and miss lessons 2 (6.1%) of the students said teachers never miss lessons. The missing of lessons was majorly attributed to drinking as was revealed by the Deputy Principals that were interviewed. This implies that teachers are acting as bad role models for the students.



Source: Field Study, 2016

Figure 1: Teacher Alcohol Consumption and the School

Responses from the Deputy Principals were quantified and the results indicated that majority of the teachers were absent as represented by 5 (83.3%) of the Deputy Principals sampled it was further established that these teachers exhibited behavior related to truancy. These teachers manifest withdrawal symptoms, low morale, low spirits thus leading to bad social behavior which is role modeled to the students. It also led to improper preparedness for lessons and school tasks as indicated by 1 (16.7%) of the participant

sampled. The findings implied that curriculum instruction and implementation was likely to be affected but of more importance to this study was the fact that the students were being socialized negatively when teachers do not take up their responsibilities though the school did not see this as a major challenge. This finding concurs with Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety Resource (2005) findings that, observed numerous effects alcohol abuse on workers that include hangover and withdrawal which affect job performance, preoccupation with obtaining and using substances while at work, illegal activities at work including selling illicit drugs to other employees, absenteeism, illness, and/or reduced productivity by the worker.

Another factor noted was that deputy principals looked at the teachers' drinking from the academic angle and did not worry much with how it impacted on the students socially. This also showed how much academic performance has been emphasized over moral and social development in our secondary schools (kwayera, 2013).

5. Conclusion

It is evident that schools had challenges due to parental alcohol abuse affecting their children. The challenges faced by schools were mostly breaking of the school rules and the problem of having these students work in teams/groups. Sneaking out of school was identified as a major challenge with 50% teachers saying that it affected schools. Unwanted pregnancies had 1 (16.7 %) teacher saying that it was a challenge. The findings showed that most often 66.7 % of the students whose parents engaged in drinking were found in indiscipline case thus a challenge to the school. Teachers who drank contributed to 83.7% of absenteeism, truancy and lack of proper preparedness as indicated by 16.7 %. This is in line with Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety Resources (2005) findings that observed numerous effects on workers that include hangovers and withdrawal which affect job performance. This was further supported by Mongan, et al (2009) who further said that alcohol is known to be a major reason for workplace absenteeism.

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