

**INFLUENCE OF COUNSELLING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG STUDENTS IN BAHATI DIVISION.**

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**Abstract**

Drug abuse among secondary school students in Kenyan schools has been on the increase and identified as one of the major causes of indiscipline and unrest in schools. The marked increase in consumption of both illegal and legal drugs in our schools is continually highlighted in the local press media. The Ministry of Education and National Campaign against Drugs Abuse (NACADA) have shown great concern about this menace. This study sought to determine the influence of guidance and counselling on management of students' drug abuse with special reference to Bahati Division. The study adopted an *ex-post facto* research design. It targeted all the 47 secondary schools with a student population of 7767 and 472 teachers in the area. A random sample of 120 students, ten teacher counsellors and ten head teachers were selected from the ten schools. Data was collected through administration of questionnaires with the selected respondents. The collected data was then processed and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 11.5 for windows. The study established the following findings. Cheap and easily available drugs were the most commonly used types of drugs among secondary school students. They were also considered as legal and generally accepted in the society. Schools had the necessary management mechanisms to curb drug abuse among their students. Proper implementation and utilization of guidance and counselling services had a positive effect in the management of drug abuse among secondary school students. Guidance and counselling services reduces the level of drug taking in schools. Male students being the most vulnerable group to drug abuse were more targeted for guidance and counselling on drug abuse in secondary schools. Based on these study findings, the following recommendations were made. There is a need to control cheap and easily available types of drugs in the society in order to limit students' access. There is need to emphasize more on guidance and counselling as an effective mechanism of managing drug abuse among secondary school students. There is need for more drug abuse management mechanisms to target the most vulnerable group of students in order to minimize the vice in schools.

**Key words:** *Drug Abuse, Secondary Schools, Guidance and Counselling, Students.*

## Introduction

Drug abuse refers to the taking of the psychotropic substances resulting to changes in body functions affecting the individual in a negative way either socially, cognitively or physically. Drug can be taken through the mouth by injection using hypodermic needles, nostrils or as ointments. Drug abuse has become a major problem among the school-going youths. Eighty per cent (80 %) of the learners in schools are aware of illicit drugs but only 6% of them know the harmful effects of drugs. This means that majority of the learners indulge in drug abuse unaware of the dangers it causes. Drug abuse has been cited as one of the causes of the many social problems facing schools. For instance, the report of the task forces on the students' discipline and unrest in schools 2001 identified drug abuse as one of the causes of indiscipline in schools (Republic of Kenya, 2001).

Ingosi (1986) reported that 41% of form three, and form four's secondary school students had tried bhang and 10% were still smoking. Only 19% had experimented with valium and 8% were hooked into it. This indicates that the habit has its roots in the pre-teen years and is further amplified in the teenage years when most of the youth are in secondary schools. Pre-teenage and teenage years are critical in the human life cycle as they involve transition from childhood to adulthood. NACADA, (2004) revealed that there were over 400,000 students who are drug addicts in Kenyan secondary schools. Out of this number, 160,000 were girls while the rest were boys. It was noted that the number of girls abusing drugs was growing at an alarming rate and could soon surpass that of boys.

The development of guidance and counselling began in Europe and United States of America at the close of the nineteenth century (Mutie and Ndambuki, 1999). In Kenya, guidance and counselling services was introduced in schools in 1960 and has slowly been growing, changing and even getting more sophisticated as the needs of society keeps changing (Sindabi, 1992). It was in 1971 that guidance and counselling services was formally structured and a special unit was set up in the ministry of education to organize, administer and supervise the services under the inspectorate section.

## Objective of the Study

This study sought to determine the influence of counselling on management of drug abuse among students in Bahati Division.

## RESEACH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research type was descriptive survey adopting *ex-post facto* design. *Ex-post facto* design was used because the researcher rather than creating the treatment only examined the effect of a naturalistically occurring treatment after the treatment has occurred. The treatment was also included by selection rather than by manipulation.

### Study Location and Population

The study was carried out in Bahati Division of Nakuru District, Kenya. According to Nakuru District Education office (DEO) report (2004), Bahati Division had 47 public and private secondary schools. The division was chosen because it had a large number of secondary schools comprising of provincial and district schools. Bahati is an agricultural and industrial area attracting people of diverse cultural, social, educational and economic backgrounds. The area was also situated on Nairobi-Eldoret highway and thus accessible to Nairobi city with high drug problem. Its connection

to Nairobi may have led to a spill over effect as some drugs may be sold in this region on their way to and from Nairobi.

The target population consisted of 7767 students in secondary schools in the Division, all guidance counsellors' teachers, and the head teachers. Bahati Division had three Zones and according to Nakuru District Education Office Report (2004), it had a total of 47 public and private schools and a population of 472 teachers.

### **Sampling Procedure and Sample Size**

According to Kothari (2000) the size of a sample should be sufficiently large to allow accurate interpretation of the results and at the same time ensure that the data is manageable. He also indicate that the choice of a reasonable sample size saves times and the limited resources.

School selection was done through stratified sampling method. The reason for using stratified sampling method was to ensure that the sample is representative of other variables for instance in order to incorporate all categories of schools like private and public, boarding mixed and day mixed or girl's and boy's schools. Ten schools out of the 47 schools were selected through stratified sampling method as indicated in Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 1**

**Distribution of Sample by Type of School**

Type	Boarding boys	Boarding girls	Mixed Day	Mixed boarding	Total
Public	1	1	3	1	6
Private	1	1	1	1	4
TOTAL	2	2	4	2	10

**Table 2**

**Distribution of Students Sample Size per School**

Type	Boarding boys	Boarding girls	Mixed Day	Mixed boarding	Total
Public	12	12	36	12	72
Private	12	12	12	12	48
TOTAL	24	24	48	24	120

To select a school for each of the group, simple random sampling using random number tables was used. Six (6) students were selected from Form Two and Three of each school to constitute twelve (12) students per school. The Form Ones were considered to be too new to the school to have enough experience of the school environment. The Form Fours were considered to be too busy with the final year exams preparations. To select the six (6) students from each Form, simple random sampling using random numbers was used. Those whose numbers were picked were included in the study to comprise 120 students. Where more than one stream exists, simple random technique was

applied to select one class. The school counsellor and the head of the school was selected through purposive sampling technique and thus ten (10) teacher counsellor and ten (10) head teachers were involved. The total sample size of this study was 140 respondents.

### **Instrumentation**

Questionnaires were used as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to include the questionnaire for students, for counsellor, and for head teachers. The questionnaires were based on the study objectives and designed to elicit information on the respondent background information, their opinions on drug abuse and their view on the impact of guidance and counselling in the management of drug abuse. Questionnaire was used for they are much less expensive and do not consume a lot of time in their administration. Brevity in a questionnaire also encourages response.

A pilot study was carried out to test the reliability of the instruments where thirty respondents were used. Three schools from Bahati Division, comprising of one girl school, a boy's and a mixed school were selected for use through stratified random sampling and ten students per school were selected by simple random. Cronbach Alpha at a reliability coefficient of 0.7 was accepted for this study. The tools were developed by the researcher who ensured that the items tally with the objectives and then they were validated by experts in the department of Educational Psychology, Counselling and Education Foundation of Egerton University.

### **Data Analysis**

Analysis of data started with checking gathered raw data for accuracy and completeness. Then the data was organised, coded, and analysed with use of a computer. Computer program the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.5 for windows was used. It is a comprehensive integrated collection of computer program for managing analysis and displaying data. The descriptive analyses (percentages, tables, and cross-tabulations) were used to summarize and organize data and to describe the characteristics of the sample population.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The study was interested in finding out the effectiveness of guidance and counselling in the management of drug abuse among students in Bahati Division. This objective was based on the fact that in the country, the Ministry of Education has banned corporal punishment and directed all learning institutions to implement guidance and counselling programme to assist in addressing challenges facing students. Therefore, drug abuse being a social and psychological problem, could be better handled and managed through the intervention of guidance and counselling services.

In this study, all the ten schools had established guidance and counselling programme and the teacher counsellors reported that the department was functional. This suggests that the schools have complied with the government policy and therefore students could be assisted in addressing the challenges they face while in school. The teacher counsellors reported that guidance and counselling services in their schools were used in addressing drug abuse related problems among students. But they varied in the duration for which the programme in the schools had been used on this purpose. Table 3 summarizes their responses.

**Table 1**  
**Duration of Use of Guidance and Counselling on Drug Abuse**

<i>Duration</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Less than 2 years	2	20.0
2-5 years	2	20.0
More than five 5 years	6	60.0
Total	10	100.0

An examination of Table 3 indicates that 60.0 percent of the schools had used guidance and counselling department in addressing drug abuse related problems for more than 5 years. This suggests that guidance and counselling services in the study area had been used for quite a long time on drug abuse related problems. Teacher counsellors in such schools were expected to have monitored drug abuse situation in their schools for adequate time and therefore able to effectively identify the causes, symptoms and solutions. This also signifies the seriousness and entrenched levels of drug abuse among students in secondary schools in the area. It therefore suggests that addressing drug abuse is a process and not an event that can be solved at once and in one given time. The teacher counsellors reported that their guidance and counselling departments had designated specific period of time to controlling drug abuse. Table 4 depicts the frequency of use of guidance and counselling services in controlling drug abuse in the sampled schools.

**Table 2**  
**Frequency of Use Guidance and Counselling On Drug Abuse**

<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Every day of the week	3	30.0
Once a month	4	40.0
Once a term	2	20.0
When in demand (needed)	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

Table 4 shows that the teacher counsellors were not just haphazardly using guidance and counselling services in controlling drug abuse in their schools. But they had allocated specific period of time within a term for it with 30.0 percent doing it every day of the week, 40.0 percent once a month, 20.0 percent once a term and 10.0 percent when needed. This is very crucial in terms of adequate preparedness on the side of the teacher counsellor and students' knowledge of when and where to go for the services.

Guidance and counselling programme in a school can only succeed when students (clients) are aware of the services it offers. In this study, nine of the ten teacher counsellors reported that students in their schools were aware of the guidance and counselling services offered by the programme. Being aware of the services offered by programme suggests that the students were more likely to seek for assistance of the teacher counsellor in case of a problem. It also meant that the programme was well publicized in the schools. Only one teacher counsellor indicated that student were not aware of such services. This could imply that the programme was not well publicized in the schools or students were not interested in it. The nine teacher counsellors were asked whether their students sought for guidance and counselling services on issues related to drug abuse. Table 5 indicates their response.

**Table 3**  
**Students' Use of Guidance and Counselling Services on Drug Abuse**

<i>Demand</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	7	77.8
No	2	22.2
Total	9	100.0

Table 5 shows that 77.8 percent of the teacher counsellors had their students utilizing guidance and counselling services on issues related to drug abuse. This suggests that students were aware that guidance and counselling services could assist them in addressing drug abuse problems. It also suggests that teacher counsellors had adequately informed the students about the services offered by the programme. For the 22.2 percent who noted that their students did not use guidance and counselling services on issues related to drug abuse, this suggests that students taking drugs had not appreciated it as a problem worth seeking for assistance of the teacher counsellor. In other cases, the students could have feared testifying and confiding in the teacher counsellor that they were taking drugs. This was attributed to the sanctions and management mechanisms put in place in those schools to deal with drug abuse.

For guidance and counselling services to make a positive impact in addressing cases of drug abuse in any school, it is important for the students (clients) to be aware of its existence, access and utilization. The study therefore sought to establish whether students were aware that guidance and counselling services was used in solving drug abuse problems in their schools. Table 6 depicts their responses.

**Table 4**  
**Use of Guidance and Counselling in Solving Drug Abuse**

<i>Use of guidance and counselling</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	98	83.1
No	20	16.9
Total	118	100.0

Table 6 indicates that 83.1 percent (98) of the students were aware that guidance and counselling programme in their schools was used in solving drug abuse problem. This support the 77.8 percent of the teacher counsellors who had indicated earlier in Table 5 that their students utilized guidance and counselling services on issues related to drug abuse. The remaining 16.9 percent (20) of the students were not aware that the programme does that. The teacher counsellors, head teachers and the 98 students were asked about any noticeable significant change in the number of cases of drug abuse for the period that guidance and counselling services had been used. Table 7 captures their responses.

**Table 5**  
**Significant Change in Number of Cases of Drug Abuse**

<i>Change</i>	<i>Students</i>		<i>Teacher counsellors</i>		<i>Head teachers</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	60	61.2	9	90.0	9	90.0
No	16	16.3	1	10.0	1	10.0
Not sure	22	22.4	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	98	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0

Table 7 indicates that majority of the students, teacher counsellors and head teachers had witnessed a significant change in the number of cases of drug abuse in their schools for the period that guidance and counselling services were used. This suggests that guidance and counselling services had a positive impact on addressing drug abuse in the schools. However, the 98 students aware that guidance and counselling services in their schools were used in solving drug abuse problems differed in terms of their personal demand for the assistance of their teacher counsellor about a drug abuse related problem. Table 8 summarizes their responses.



**Table 6**  
**Demand for Guidance and Counselling Services on Drug Abuse**

<i>Demand</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	25	25.5
No	73	74.5
Total	98	100.0

Table 8 shows that even though 98 students had earlier indicated that guidance and counselling services in their schools were used in solving drug abuse problems, only 25.5 percent (25) of them had personally sought assistance of their teacher counsellor on a drug abuse related problem. This suggests that the 74.5 percent (73) of the sampled students were not taking drugs or not all students who took drugs and aware of guidance and counselling services sought assistance of the teacher counsellor. This could be attributed the earlier reason of fear to be identified as a drug taker due to the sanctions and management mechanisms put in place in the schools. The teacher counsellors could have also done very little to assure students of their confidentiality on information concerning drug abuse regardless of awareness of guidance and counselling services. The study also revealed that 92.0 percent (23) of the 25 students who sought assistance of the counsellor on drug abuse related problem felt helped, while 8.0 percent (2) were not helped. This suggests that teacher counsellors were able to help majority of the students who sought their assistance on drug abuse related problems.

Students engage in drug abuse for various reasons and the act is usually a very secretive and private affair. In most cases, it is fellow students who will first realize about a drug abuse victim in the school before the administration or school counsellor. The victim can freely and easily confide in his/her peers why he/she is hooked on drug. Therefore for guidance and counselling programme to be effective in the management of drug abuse in schools, it should enlist the services of peer counselling so as to allow students assist one another in eradicating the vice. Peer counsellors are recruited and trained from the students' body and form a very important link between the teacher counsellor and students. However, in this study, only 50 percent of the teacher counsellors had established peer counselling in their schools. The counsellors reported that peer counselling gave them an opportunity to adequately understand drug abuse related issues among the students as they could easily and freely share their problems with their peers. Peer counsellors also assisted in addressing those drug abuse related issues that students could only share with their peers. Gathiari (2002) and Fuhrman (1986) observes that peer counselling in a school foster friendships, learning together, talking together, comparing ideas and doing things together. The programme gives the counsellor an opportunity to understand the needs of the students better and provide services in a more acceptable and student-inclusive manner. The 50 percent of the teacher counsellors who had established peer counselling in the schools varied on the effectiveness of the programme in addressing drug abuse related issues in the schools. Table 9 depicts the effectiveness of peer counselling.



**Table 7**  
**Effectiveness of Peer Counselling on Drug Abuse**

<i>Effectiveness</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Not sure	1	20.0
Not effective	3	60.0
Very effective	1	20.0
Total	5	100.0

Table 9 indicates that 60.0 percent of the teacher counsellors rated peer counselling as not effective in addressing drug abuse problem in their school. This was attributed to unwillingness by the drug abuse victims to volunteer and seek assistance from the peer counsellors. This goes on to confirm the depth and difficulties involved in the management of drug abuse among students in schools. The victims either fear sharing their problem or do not consider it as a problem worth seeking for assistance from anybody.

### **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded that proper implementation and utilization of guidance and counselling services had a positive effect on the management of drug abuse among secondary school students as it reduces the level of drug taking in schools. Additionally, male students being the most vulnerable group to drug abuse should be more targeted for guidance and counselling on drug abuse in secondary schools.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

There is need to emphasize more on guidance and counselling as an effective mechanism of managing drug abuse among secondary school students. Trained and competent counsellor should be posted in schools to handle the problems of drug abuse.

Confidentiality on the part of the counsellor should be thought of to encourage students to freely seek for assistance on drug problems. There is need for more drug abuse management mechanisms to target the most vulnerable group of students in order to minimize the vice in schools

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