

The Effects of Drug Abuse in Secondary Schools: The Case of Ijara and Garissa Districts of North Eastern Province, Kenya

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Abstract

This thesis investigated the effect of drug abuse in secondary schools in Garissa and Ijara districts of North Eastern Province, Kenya. The research problem emanated from the concern that drug abuse has remained a serious habit in Kenyan schools despite efforts put in place to reduce it by various stakeholders such as the government, parents, teachers, and religious leaders. This problem of drug abuse may be responsible for various adverse effects on students like the deterioration in academic performance in a number of schools and the indiscipline cases in form of school strikes. The problem of the effects of drug abuse by students in schools in Garissa and Ijara districts was not known since no such study had ever been done there. Therefore, this study focused on the objectives of finding out the sources and types of drugs abused by students in schools, causes and the effects of drug abuse on the students, schools, and the local community. Other objectives were to find out the factors contributing to failure to contain drug abuse and the possible solutions to minimize drug abuse in the two districts of study. The study sample was 13 headteachers, 104 teachers, and 780 students. The information was elicited by 26th Postgraduate Seminar Abstracts. June, 2013. use of questionnaires, interviews and focused group discussions. Quantitative data was analyzed through simple statistics while qualitative data by thematic analysis. The findings established that abused drugs were mainly khat, cigarettes, and marijuana. Sources of these drugs were drug peddlers, their peers, touts, school workers, and shopkeepers at the local markets. The study found that students abused drugs due to peer pressure, stress, lax school administration, easy availability of drugs, ignorance of their harmful effects and lack of proper guidance from their parents and teachers. The effects of drug abuse on students themselves included poor performance, absenteeism, addiction to drugs, truancy and dropping out of school. The schools experienced indiscipline cases since students broke all the school rules and regulations at will. In addition, drug abusers were rude to teachers as well as their fellow students and also stole school or student property. Furthermore, the students stole from or robbed community members, showing them lack of respect, and even fought with community members. In conclusion, urgent measures should be put in place in order to save the students from the dangers of drug abuse. Otherwise students are likely to be wasted if such measures are not put in place. Some of the recommendations include stepping up the school awareness campaigns against the vice of drug abuse as well as strengthening the department of guidance and counselling in schools.

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