

Relationship between Levels of Exposure to Mass Media and Students' Deviant Behaviors in Selected Secondary Schools, Nakuru County Kenya

Kimani James Mwaura

Abstract

The influence of the media on the psychosocial development of children and the youth is profound. Kenya has witnessed tremendous and rapid expansion of the mass media, whose large proportion of features is Western oriented. Most of this information focuses on violence, drugs, relationships and sexuality. The available literature shows that most young people are heavy consumers of both electronic and print media. This study was therefore designed to establish the relationship between levels of exposure to mass media and students' deviant behaviors in selected secondary schools within Nakuru County Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the relationship between levels of exposure to mass media and students': drug abuse, aggression, sexual violence and physical violence. The study was guided by the Social Learning Theory pioneered by Albert Bandura with its principle of —modeling and operant conditioning theory by B.F Skinner. The study employed survey research design. In view of this, questionnaires were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The independent variable in the study was levels of exposure to mass media. The dependent variables were students' Drug abuse, aggression, Sexual violence and physical violence. The study was carried out in the 3 Sub-counties of Nakuru town, Molo and Nakuru North, within Nakuru County, Kenya. The sample size for this study was 482 sampled from a total student population of 12,300 from the 3 selected Sub-counties. The study areas were purposively sampled while stratified random sampling and simple random sampling were used to sample schools and students respectively. The study used 8 public secondary schools distributed as follows, 3 were Sub-county day and mixed, one provincial day and mixed, 2 provincial boarding and mixed, 1 national boys boarding and 1 national girls boarding. All form one, two and three students in the specified categories formed the accessible population of 482 students. The study used questionnaire to collect data. The instruments were pretested in 3 schools, randomly selected from the 3 Sub-counties. Each school had 20 students selected randomly. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 for Windows. Specifically, Chi square and Pearson correlation statistics were used to test the significance of the stated null hypotheses, set at $\alpha=0.05$. Qualitative data applied thematic analysis while descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and means were used to summarize data. The key findings indicated that levels of exposure to mass media influences students to drug abuse ($P=0.007$ that is <0.05). Test done proved that levels of exposure to mass media are related to students' Drug abuse, aggression, sexual violence and physical violence. The statistical test results showed that time spent watching TV or video has an influence on students' physical violence levels ($P=0.029$ which is <0.05). Moreover, the statistical test results showed that time spent watching TV or video has an influence on students' levels of risky sexual behavior ($P=0.004$ which is <0.05). It was recommended that government, teachers and parents undertake measure to control adverse effects of media consumption by students. Further research should also be done to enhance parental role in sex education of the youth.

Full text: <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/handle/123456789/11924>