

Influence of drugs and substance abuse on social behavior among youths in Garissa municipality

Abdinoor, Aden Mohamed

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Abstract:

This research study aimed at investigating the influence of drugs and substance abuse on the social behaviour among youths in Garissa Municipality. The research tried to determine the relationship between drugs and substance abuse and the social behaviour of youths such as peer pressure, family structure, access to drugs, unemployment, levels of education, conflicts at personal, family and community levels, government policy on youths and enterprises and their influence on youth's social behaviour. The research employed a descriptive survey design and it used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to collect information and data on the influence of drugs and substance abuse on youths and social behaviour. It also made judgments regarding the degree of influence on sexually transmitted infection, divorce rates among the youth, theft/hooliganism, and levels of idleness among others. The study targeted both provincial and District Officers of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, youth based group leaders and youths themselves. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the study area as well as the two youth officers to be involved in the study. Simple random sampling was used to select the villages to be involved in the study while the youth based group leaders were chosen. Youths were selected by the use of stratified random sampling. Two instruments were developed and used to collect data. These included an interview schedule for both Provincial and District Youth Officers and two questionnaires, one for youth based group leaders and another one for youths themselves. The research instruments were piloted on a small representative identical to but not including the group that was involved in the actual study. This was done using participants from villages that were involved in the actual study. The instruments were subjected to analysis after the pilot study with consultation with the supervisors and specialists in this field of study. After being found valid, logical and reliable, the actual data collection took place within two weeks. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. The findings showed that peer pressure influences youths to abuse drugs and substance abuse thereby negatively affecting their social behaviour. It was found that social gathering like social welfare meetings, clubs, pubs, sports and internet and movie halls are major places for youths to meet and influence each other. The structure of the family greatly influences the social behaviour of the youth. Youths whose parents are in drugs and substance business are likely to abuse these drugs and affect their social behaviour, extended nature of the family, family conflicts and parenting style also influences the youth social behaviour. It has also been found out that the culture of dependency and the availability of drugs and substance abuse affect the social behaviour of youths. The research also found that most abused substance in Garissa municipality is miraa. In conclusion, the research found that drugs and substance abuse has a negative impact on the social behaviour of youths in Garissa municipality and it has proposed the following recommendations and interventions, establishment of rehabilitation centres for youths who have been addicted into drugs and

substance abuse, Provision of funds for youths out of school to start business and income generating activities. Provision of bursaries and scholarships for youth in schools and colleges in order to prevent drop outs and enhance retention rates. Provide facilities for sporting activities and identity programmes that exploit and develop various talents among the youth and . keep them meaningfully occupied. And finally the regulation of trade on alcohol and other drugs in the world market.