

NAIROBI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

A BEHAVIORAL EXAMINATION OF COUNSELING CONCERNS RELATED TO DRUG
ABUSE AMONG SCHOOL GOING YOUTH FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE:
A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KABETE DIVISION OF
KIAMBU DISTRICT

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
COUNSELING STUDIES

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AUTHORIZATION AND SIGNATURES



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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved husband Gabriel Kunari and our children ~~John~~ and Peter for their moral support and encouragement throughout the period of my ~~studies~~ studies in Nairobi International School of Theology.

To all my friends and lecturers that encouraged and mentored me to achieve my ~~goals~~ goals and to be the kind of person that God wants me to be.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The topic of drug addiction immediately brings with it a reaction of anger disgust and condemnation. This menace of drugs has slowly infiltrated the lives of many young people. Due to noble and tireless efforts of some organizations, it can now be said that an average young person knows at least something about drugs.¹

In every society there have been people who have failed to follow the patterns acceptable for using drugs in that they have taken more than what was permitted or have taken it for the wrong reasons. So the misuse and abuse of drugs is almost as old as humankind. The abuse of self-administered drugs is a major problem extending into every age and every economic, social and educational class. There is no community that can claim immunity from the problem of drug abuse.²

Problem Statement

Drug epidemic is booming both nationwide and indeed worldwide. The United Nations Organization estimates that about 185 million which is 3% of the world population were drug users during the last few years of the 20th century. Surveys in America reveal that 25 percent of high school students drink more than three beers per week. Four percent of teenagers claim to smoke marijuana regularly and seventy percent of high school students have tried marijuana. Primarily young people unfortunately feel its impact. These findings by this body regarding the consumption of drugs among

1. Rajenda Pillai, *Youth and Drugs* (Bandra, Mumbai: Better yourself Books, 2002), Introduction.

2. Boniface O.Mouti, *About the Bitter Fruits of Drug Abuse* (Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications-Africa, 2002), 7.

western teenagers are alarming. Only slightly half of the adolescent population claims their parents have ever discussed drug use with them.³ Among the students that have finished high school in the United States, 53% had some relationship with drugs in their school period. In Peru the initiation age for drug consumption continues to descend alarmingly. It is quite surprising that 15% of the young people started consuming crack and cocaine when they were fourteen to sixteen years old.

Research conducted in 1996 by UN in the United States cited a remarkable increase in the consumption of marijuana between 1995 and 1996 as observed among students in the first three years of high school. The research also confirmed that 23.1% of students in the first year of high school had tried marijuana at least once compared with 19.95% in 1995. Habitual use of marijuana in the fourth year of high school went up from 9.1 % in 1995 to 11.3% in 1996. Specifically from 1995 to 1996 a remarkable increase in the consumption of marijuana was observed among students in the first three years of high school. Meanwhile teenagers finishing their secondary studies went on consuming the drug at a high rate (Nation's Health, 1997). In the United States, two out of every three persons over the age of fifteen consumes alcohol on occasions.⁴

Narconon International which runs a drug education curriculum for High Schools estimates that 13 million youths aged 12 to 17 become involved with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs annually. The number of 12 to 17 olds abusing controlled prescription of drugs increased an alarming 212 percent between 1992 and 2003. For many youths, substance abuse proceeds academic and health problems including lower grades, high

3. John Q. Baucom, *Help your Children Say No to Drugs* (Lansing, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 21.

4. Rafael Escando'n and Cesar Galvez, *Free from Drugs and Addictions. In the face of Aids and other enemies of Society* (Mandrid European Union: Nov, 2005), 26.

truancy, drop out decisions, delayed or damaged physical, cognitive, and emotional development.⁵ Spain another country usually considered among “developed” nations also presents alarming data. It currently occupies the first position in cocaine consumption in the European Union, having doubled its use in the last ten years. In addition, about 36% of Spanish young people between 14 and 18 had consumed cannabis in twelve months twice as many as ten years before, which means more than 761,000 young people.⁶

National data in the USA indicates that the majority of teenagers have used alcohol and cigarettes. It further reveals that over 90 percent of high school students will experiment with alcohol before they graduate and well over one third will try Marijuana. Seventeen percent will try cocaine and approximately 47 percent will use heroin before high school graduation. An additional research project by National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) suggested 30 percent of all college students will try cocaine by their fourth year and over half will try marijuana. Eighty percent will experiment with some illegal drug by their mid twenties.⁷

The consumption of drugs and other intoxicants have been taking place in Kenya for a long time. Alcohol has always been the most popular form of intoxicant. Other traditional practices such as tobacco chewing, taking snuff, miraa (Khart), chewing and smoking of bhang (cannabis) have remained popular among communities throughout Kenya. Simple observation in the streets of Nairobi reveals examples of young people

5. The Narconon Drug Education Program for high school Students
www.substanceabusepolicy.com/content/3/1/8 accessed on 16th May, 2008.

6. Rafael Escando'n and Cesar Galvez, *Free from Drugs and Addictions. In the face of Aids and other enemies of Society* (Madrid European Union: Nov, 2005), 27.

7. John Q. Baucom, *Help your Children Say No to Drugs* (Lansing, Mi: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 21.

sniffing glue, chewing miraa, smoking tobacco and cannabis as well as drinking alcohol. This practice is wide spread among secondary school youths and major urban centers.⁸

The United States has the highest rates of illegal drug use in the industrialized world and it is a major issue. That is why we are seeing such a high shift towards fierce anti-drugs policies at every level of society.⁹ It is worth noting that drug abuse is not new among teenagers but the age at which children are starting to use drugs is getting lower by the day, and the number of users steadily rising. Drug abuse is a big issue in many countries while it could become a disaster in countries where no steps have been taken to address it. Sadly, even children below ten years are experimenting with tobacco and inhalants like glue and petrol, then graduating to other staff. For those who make it to high schools, this involvement becomes an addiction and greatly affects the performance due to low concentration¹⁰. Some students end up being discontinued from their studies. Therefore, they not only become a burden to the school authorities and their families but also to the society at large since they become a social misfit. This means that this problem is real and cannot be ignored.

Alcohol abuse is a serious social, health, and moral problem. It disrupts families, ruins careers, destroys bodies, tears apart friendships and leads to untold human misery. In the United States, at least half of all fatal accidents, fire deaths, drowning, arrests, murders and other violence in the home are attributed to alcohol misuse. Alcoholics come

8. Aylward Shorter and Edwin Onyancha, *Secularism in Africa. A case study: Nairobi City* (Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications, 1997), 109.

9. Dr. Patrick Dixon, *The truth about Drugs* (London, Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1998), 7.

10. Dr. Peter Njuguna, *Drug Abuse. All at Risk* (Thika, Kenya: Ebenezer Publications, 2007), 1.

from all ethnic groups and from every socioeconomic level. One out of every five teenagers is an alcoholic.¹¹ Drug use today and all alcohol use is not only accepted but seen as a rite of passage into adulthood. Adolescents especially young males see it as a socially acceptable way of expressing their maturity. The use of drugs other than alcohol is increasing slowly among teenagers.¹²

It is therefore quite important that all members of the society whether parents, guardians, teachers as well as the government know the causes, consequences, possible treatment and above all, prevention methods against the abuse of drugs. Youths and adults need to know the whole truth about the practices of drugs so as to make their decisions freely. Everyone needs to be involved in addressing this problem as well as preventing it so that we save our young generation who are the majority in the society. We all need to come out and fight this problem and above all come up with possible ways of preventing and reducing this challenge before it gets root in our young people.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to provide biblically consistent counseling strategies of prevention and intervention of drug abuse to the Leadership of the secondary schools in Kabete division of Kiambu District to deal with the increasing rate of drug abuse among the students. This will be accomplished by analyzing the factors responsible for drug abuse, the effects as well as the possible solutions available to counter this problem.

11. Gary R. Collins, *Christian Counseling. A Comprehensive Guide* (Austin, TX: W Publishing Group, 1988), 488.

12. Ibid 26.

Research Questions

- a) What factors do the community members of the secondary schools of Kabete Division of Kiambu district believe contribute to drug abuse among high school students?
- b) What possible drug effects on the students do the community members of secondary schools of Kabete Division of Kiambu district believe exist?
- c) What biblically consistent strategies could the leadership of the secondary schools of Kabete Division of Kiambu district employ to counter the problems associated to drug abuse that may be drawn from what the community members perceive as the factors that contribute to drug abuse and the effects of drug abuse on students.

Overview of methodology

This chapter will deal with the description of the methods applied in carrying out the research study. This will cover areas including; research design, research site, population, research area, population, sampling techniques, research instruments, and data collection procedures.

Overview of data analysis

This will involve uncovering underlying structures; extracting important variables, detecting any anomalies and testing any underlying assumptions. It involves scrutinizing the acquired information and making inferences.

Definition of terms

A Drug

A *drug* is any substance in the form of food, drink, capsule, smoke, injection or smell which is taken into the body through the mouth, nose, or skin and upsets the biochemical system of the body and especially the nervous system.¹³

A *drug* can also be described as a habit-forming substance that directly affects the brain and the nervous system and changes mood, perception or consciousness.¹⁴ *Drugs* are also chemicals that have a profound impact on the neuron chemical balance in the brain, which directly affects how you feel and act.¹⁵

The definition of drugs is acceptable in that it describes what drugs are. It is very elaborate in terms of the effects of drug abuse. However it has a weakness in that it does not hold the drug abuser responsible for his behavior. The use of the word “habit forming” in the second definition of drugs means that the user is intentionally repeating the use of drugs till it becomes a habit. This means that the drug abuser has a moral choice on his or her part. The researcher is well aware that some drug abusers might have had no choice in becoming drug abusers. They might have been predisposed to drug abuse early in their childhood. It is worth noting that such people in a way have a responsibility to decide whether they want to continue in drug abuse or not.

13. Rafael Escando'n and Cesar Galvez, *Free from Drugs and Addictions. In the face of Aids and other enemies of Society* (Spain, European Union: Nov, 2005), 18.

14. Ibid 33.

15. [Help Guide Organization www/mental/drug-substance-abuse-addiction-signs-effects-treatment.htm](http://www.mental/drug-substance-abuse-addiction-signs-effects-treatment.htm). accessed on 17th April, 2008.

In this research therefore, the word *drugs* has been used in relationship to their unhealthy and harmful effects.

Drug abuse or substance abuse

Drug abuse or substance abuse involves the repeated and excessive use of prescribed drugs or street drugs. The basic element of abuse is some psychological instability for which chemical substances may represent the so-called "therapeutic agent" needed for self-treatment.¹⁶ Drug abuse is an intricate psychological, social, biochemical and possibly a genetic problem, which involves taking of drugs to produce euphoria. This definition explains what drug abuse is and the reason as to why people abuse drugs hence making it acceptable.

Addiction

This is the physical, psychological and social dependency on drugs. It is a strong compulsion to keep using drugs due to the discomfort one experiences due to withdrawal. It is worth noting that the drug abuser at this point needs help since he is completely under the control of drugs. Addiction in this context clearly explains the negative aspect of drugs thus making the consumer notable to function without being intoxicated.¹⁷

16. Thomas E. Forrest. *Alcoholism and Substance Abuse. Strategies for Clinical Intervention.* (Albany NY: Collier Macmillan, Inc ,1985),49.

17. Gary R. Collins, Ph.D. *Christian Counseling. A Comprehensive Guide.* (Dallas London: W Publishing Group, 1988), 503.

Presuppositions of the study

The researcher believes that people will avoid drugs when they learn skills that enable them to cope with life's pressure without leaning on addictive substances or behavior. Secondly, the researcher presupposes that if adolescents were better informed about dangers of using drugs, they would make a rational and informed decision to remain drug free.

Prevention or delaying initiation of alcohol or other drug use during early adolescence can reduce or prevent substance use and other risk behaviors later in adolescence and adulthood.

Limitations of the study

Time factor was a main constraint to properly carry out the research in the given short period of three months (Feb 2009 to April 2009). Financial support to carry out a wider survey geographically was not sufficient since the researcher didn't have any external financing. All financing towards this research was purely dependent on the researcher. I also limited the number of schools to visit to reduce on "sensitivity" of respondents that could generate controversies.

Delimitation

The research focused on the causes and effects of drug abuse. It also touched on the methods of prevention and intervention of drug increase among high school students. Despite this localization, the findings and recommendations were generalized for other high school students in various schools.