

Abstract

Drug abuse is becoming an increasing problem among students in Kenya. The major cause for concern is that a high proportion of the Kenyan youth in secondary schools are involved in drugs (NACADA 2012). As a result, these young people eventually become addicted, posing a threat to their own health and safety. This study sought to establish the current trend of drug abuse among students in Kenyan secondary schools. The aim was to analyse the strategies used to address the problem and propose prevention and intervention measures. This article reports on the findings of the study which was carried out in Machakos County in Kenya. The study, being descriptive in nature, adopted a field survey approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data using structured questionnaires and interviews. The sample population consisted of students, teachers and parents from selected secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya. Some of the major findings of the study showed that drug abuse is widespread among students, regardless of gender, and that there is a strong relationship between drug abuse and family members using/abusing drugs, as well as the easy availability of drugs to students. The findings also emphasise key challenges in addressing the drug abuse problem among students. The study makes a number of recommendations for developing strategies for drug abuse prevention and intervention.