

## Abstract

**Introduction:** Substance abuse may slow-down economic growth if it affects the productive persons in the society. Identifying the characteristics of the substance user can help policy makers to develop targeted interventions. The aim of the study was to describe the Socio-demographic information, socioeconomic information, Cultural factors, substances used and relapses status of the psychoactive substance dependent patients admitted in substance dependence rehabilitation facilities in Nairobi. **Methodology:** This was a retrospective study conducted in November 2009 in four in-patient rehabilitation facilities in Nairobi. All the 170 in-patient files belonging to substance users admitted in the four selected rehabilitation facilities three months preceding the study were purposively included. The patient demographic variables: gender, age, occupation, income, social class, cultural beliefs and relapse status were reviewed. Data analysis methods included use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings were presented using charts, tables, and narrative form. **Results:** Males accounted for 114 (67%) of the patients. Approximately 136 (80%) of the patients were aged between 21 and 40 years. About 90 (53%) of the participants were single and 34 (20%) were divorced. Almost 114 (67%) of the patients used illegal sources of income to fund substance use. Forty percent (68) were influenced by friends to use substance and 142 (84%), indicated that the substance was easily available. Relapse rate was approximately 110 (65%). **Discussion:** Generally the research found that psychoactive substance abuse is common among males in the productive age bracket with most of them funding their substances using illegal means and experiencing relapses. **Recommendation:** Interventions to prevent and control substance abuse should put a lot of emphasis on young adults in the productive age(21-40) bracket. Rehabilitation and follow up services should also be strengthened to reduce relapses.