



PARENTING STYLES AS PREDICTORS OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG SELECTED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN EMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

The role of parents in helping their children to face the adolescence challenges and specifically the challenge of drug abuse cannot be underestimated; however, the extent to which parenting styles predetermine secondary school students' involvement in drugs is not well understood. This study investigated parenting styles, as predictors of drug abuse among public secondary school students in Embu County, Kenya. A population of 8820 (4886 girls and 3934 boys) from two and three students distributed in 132 public secondary schools in Embu County was targeted. Purposive sampling was used to select a sample of 15 schools which had reported more cases of drug abuse for the last three years in the county. Stratified random sampling and systematic random sampling were used to select 399 participants (221 girls and 178 boys). Purposive sampling was used to select 15 Guidance and counseling teachers and 70 secondary school dropouts from the 15 schools. Reliability for the parenting styles questionnaires and risky behaviours were calculated an average Cronbach alpha (α) of $\alpha = 0.82$ for parenting styles questionnaires was reported and for risky behaviours $\alpha = 0.78$. Multiple linear regression showed that parenting styles significantly predict drug abuse among secondary school students, and that parenting styles accounts for, 64.4% ($R^2=0.644$, $p < 0.05$) of students' drug abuse, The study, therefore, recommends that the government through the Ministry of Education should train the teacher counselor, to identify and counsel drug abusing students and train parents on how to handle drug abusive children

Keywords: parenting styles, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive indulgence, permissive neglectful, drug abuse

1.1 Background to the Study

Majority of the secondary school students are in adolescence stage, a period of transition into adulthood, such transition exposes them to many risks (Kimanthi, 2014). Globally, adolescence is one of the riskiest phases of a person's life, due to the complexity and magnitude of biosocial changes that occur during this stage (Robinson, 2006). The stage is characterized by increased exploration and experimentation with much risky behaviour such as drug abuse, (Adams & Berzonsky, 2006). The risks have implications on adolescent's health and other social problems. Adolescent risk taking exposes them to possible immediate danger with a possibility of such dangers persisting to adulthood (Park, Mulye, Adams, Brindis, & Irwin, 2006).

Internationally, risky behaviours such as drug abuse among students have been on the rise. Secondary school students are frequent users of alcohol and increasingly consume it in an alarming rate. Kuntsche, Kuntsche, Knibbe, Simons-Morton, Farhat, Hublet and others (2011) contend that, student's drinking of alcohol has continued to be of significant social and public health concern. For instance, in Europe, the average age of alcohol taking is 12.5 years (Anderson, De Bruijn, Angus, Gordon & Hastings, 2009). In America students in 12th grade have been found to abuse cigarettes alcohols and other drugs (Johnston, O'Malley and Bachman, 2002). A study conducted in America by United States Census Bureau (2001) found that, 30-60 % of adolescents reported having tried illicit substances such as alcohol, 17 % had used marijuana and another five percent had used other illegal drugs. This has a lot to do with the media advertising and exposure of students to alcohol use. A study by Shijun, Songming, Xiaoqi, Shurong, Weijia, Lei, & Guansheng (2015) Showed that, the prevalence of lifetime alcohol abuse among high school students in China is 52.5%; in addition, 38.5% of the students were past-year drinkers, while 20.1% of them had consumed alcohol in the past 30 days before the study. During the previous year, 29.7% of the students reported that they drank once per month or less, and 22.0% of the students drank less than once.

Kimanthi and Thinguri (2014) contend that, the risk of drug abuse among students in Africa is a challenge. For instance in South Africa a study by Chauke, Heever and Hoque (2015) show that 35.5% of male and 29.7% of female high school students use alcohol, the study also found that alcohol consumption increase with age, 32.2% by age 15-17years and 53.2% by the 18-20years of age. Media reports show worrying trends while research show that the menace is on the increase. NACADA (2012) identified alcohol, tobacco and bhang use among the major challenges of

substance abuse facing Kenyan adolescents currently. According to Siringi and Waihenya (2003), more than 22% of primary school children in Kenya take alcoholic products, by the time they are in secondary school the figures increase to 57% and to 68% at university. Simbee (2012), contends that cigarette smoking is a major problem among students and is described as “the main gate way” to other hard drugs. According to Onjoro (2014) in every 15 Kenyan students, one of them is an abuser of drugs such as bhang or hashish. A country- wide survey on drug use among students found that bhang or marijuana (*Cannabis Sativa*) is among drugs mostly abused by school children (NACADA, 2012).

According to NACADA (2007) as cited in Weldon (2013), the culture of drug abuse is growing among the youth and adolescent students in Kenya. A report by NACADA (2009) indicates that, the national prevalence for drugs among young people in Kenya is at 60 % alcohol, 58% tobacco and 23% cannabis among others. Another report by NACADA (2012) indicates that majority of students in all levels of education engage in the risks of drug abuse. The problem of drug among adolescent students affect both boys and girls with 9.0% of those aged 15-24 involved in smoking out of whom, 20.9 % are males while 1.3% are females (Otieno, Kariuki & Mwenje, 2013). Drug abuse among the students jeopardizes their health in addition to lowering their academic performance thus diminishing their contribution towards the countries’ economic growth.

1.2 Research Objective

To find out whether parenting styles significantly predict secondary school students’ drug abuse in Embu County.

1.3 Research hypothesis

Parenting styles do not have statistically significant prediction of drug abuse among secondary school students.

1.4. Review of Related Literature

1.4.1 Parenting Style Predicting Students’ Drug Abuse

Parenting behaviours such as parenting styles are known to be important in predicting adolescent behaviour outcomes including alcohol use (Devore & Ginsburg, 2005). Parental communication on substance use within parental warmth has been found to be protective against adolescent alcohol use (Berg, 2011). Perozzi (2007) explored adolescents’ perceptions of parental communication and adolescent frequency of alcohol consumption in Virginia. A sample of 3,472 adolescents was used. The study

reported low relationship between parental communication, levels of alcohol consumption and binge-drinking by adolescents. Linear regression analyses found that most of the variance of alcohol use by adolescents could be accounted for by parental communication. Another study by, Ryan, Nicolette, Roman and Okwany (2015) reported that parental communication delayed adolescent alcohol initiation in children.

According to Hoang (2007), an authoritarian parenting style stresses on conformity, obedience and respect for authority. Authoritarian style may create fear and anger in the child who is likely to become resentful and disrespectful to authority figures (Lavin, 2012). This observation was supported by a study conducted by Tinkew, Moore and Corrano (2006), who carried out a study on relationship between children and their male parents' parenting style as a predictor of first delinquency and substance abuse. The study used a sample of 5,345 adolescents from intact families. Results reveal that having authoritarian fathers is positively related to increased risk of adolescents indulging in risky behaviours including substance use. Previous research has found a relationship between child monitoring by parents and alcohol abuse by teenagers, increased rate in alcohol misuse and risky binge drinking (Fosco, Stormshak, Dishion & Winter 2012; Ryan, Jorm & Lubman, 2010; De Haan & Boljevac, 2009). This view is supported by a study conducted by Perozzi (2007). Perozzi used a sample of 3,472 adolescents to examine adolescents' alcohol use and perceptions of parental monitoring. Linear regression analyses show that most of the variance in alcohol use is accounted for by parental monitoring. The study considered parental monitoring as a predictor of alcohol use yet monitoring does not occur in isolation since it is an attribute of parenting styles among other attributes such as responsiveness communication and support. On the other hand, parents who are permissively neglectful are usually disengaged from taking responsibilities of child care giving. They are heedless, and impulsive as a result their children lack self-control and display social incompetence including decision making competencies on risky behaviours (Baumrind, Larzelere & Owens, 2010). This is consistent with a study conducted by Kao and Carter (2013), who investigated alcohol use among college adolescents in California. The study used a sample of 100,000 from California's Health data base; Permissive parenting was associated with high students' alcohol use.

World over, one of major health concerns is cigarette smoking because the health complications and the resultant loss of life associated with it are enormous yet they can be prevented (Bindah & Othman, 2011). Since many smoking addicts start smoking at adolescence stage it is important to understand predictive factors of smoking. Understanding family related factors may help parents to act early in ways which may prevent health problems related to smoking. According to Simbee (2012), cigarette

smoking is described as an entry to other hard drugs, and the initiation age is quite low. According to Ross, McCurdy, Kilonzo, Iams & Leshabar, (2008), in Tanzania, 56% of children start smoking cigarettes as early as 10 years. A study conducted by Pelzer (2009) analyzed data from six African countries: Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, Swaziland, Namibia and Zimbabwe using a sample of 20,765 students, from Global school based health survey, the findings indicate that 12.6% of respondents had used tobacco in the past month of the survey.

According to a report by child welfare Association (2010), as cited by Onjoro (2014), one out of every 15 Kenyan teenage learners is *bhang* or hashish abusers. In Kenya *bhang* or *marijuana* (*Cannabis Sativa*) is among drugs mostly abused by school students, it is widespread and on the rise (NACADA, 2012; NACADA, 2011). The studies conducted by NACADA found that in coastal region of Kenya, *bhang* was the most abused illicit drug among school students, with those initiated to drug abuse making 53.80% of young people of average age of 18.99 years. The study also found that the earliest initiation age into the drug is 7 years. Another study by Mayoyo (2003) revealed that over 400,000 students are drug addicts in Kenyan secondary schools, of this, 160,000 were girls and 240,000 were boys. The study also notes that the number of girls abusing drugs was increasing. Research shows that *bhang* is easily accessible and affordable compared to other hard drugs like heroin (Chesang, 2013; Wanyaga, 2010). *Bhang* taking among students has been attributed to parenting behaviour among which parenting style have been identified as key (Ikramulah, Manlove, Carol & Moore, 2009).

Previous studies show that adolescents who have strong emotional bond with their parents have lower risks of engaging in problem behaviours, such as drugs abuse (Fletcher, Steinberg & Iams-Wheeler, 2004). Claes, Laccourse, Ercolani, Pierro, Leone and Presaghi, (2005) investigated relationship between maternal and paternal bonding, parenting behaviours, adolescence prevalence for drug abuse and antisocial behaviours in late adolescence. A sample of 908 adolescents from Canada, Italy and France was used. The findings reveal that parental supervision influenced quality of emotional bonds, where supervision acted as mediators. Another study by Rai (2008), found that rejection from father and mother was a predictor of drug abuse among adolescents, while teenagers who perceived strong emotional connection with parents were less likely to engage in drug use.

Authoritative parenting style is characterized by a two-way communication between the parent and the child about drugs and substance abuse. This relationship has been reported to reduce adolescent marijuana use (Luk, Farhat, Iannotti & Simons-Morton, 2010). According to Muchemi (2013), parents have a basic role of socializing their children since children get their first standard of behaviours from their parents

through observation and direct teaching. This concurs with a study conducted by Pokhrel, Unger, Wagner, Ritt-Olson and Sussman (2008) who investigated influence of parent-child communication and parent-monitoring on marijuana use in Hispanic adolescents. Results reveal that there was a negative relationship between parent-child communication, parental monitoring and marijuana abuse. The relationship was stronger for Latinos compared to adolescents of African and white origin, making it difficult to apply the findings to other communities.

1.5 Methodology

The target population for this study all the form 2 and form three students in public secondary schools in Embu County. The study adopted survey research design. Stratified random was used to select 15 schools. This was done in order to ensure all the categories of schools were represented. From each category of schools, simple random sampling was used to get 399 students proportionately from form 2 and form 3. Simple random sampling was used to select 8 participants for the focus group discussion from the sampled students. Focus group discussion was used in order to get students feelings on the subject of the study. Purposive sampling was use to select 15 guidance and counseling teacher school dropouts from the selected schools and 70 school dropouts. Data were collected by use of a four-point likert scale questionnaires, focus group discussion schedule and interview schedule. The questionnaires were administered to ongoing students and school dropouts. Data from guidance and counseling teachers were collected by use of interview schedule.

1.6 Study Findings

The study findings were represented by use of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 1.1: Results on Scoring of Parenting Style Questionnaires

Parenting styles	Low		High		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Authoritative	116	29.1	283	70.9	399	100
Authoritarian	162	40.6	237	59.4	399	100
Permissive Indulgence	194	48.6	205	51.4	399	100
Permissive neglectful	199	48.9	200	50.1	399	100
Average	168	42.1	231	57.9	399	100

N=399

Table 1.1 shows that, majority (70.9%) of the responses score very high on Authoritative style, followed by Authoritarian parenting style. This means that authoritative parenting is the commonest among the parents of the target population. This is

followed by authoritarian (59.4%). The least common parenting style is permissive neglectful with 50.1% of the responses. It was further revealed that on average all the factors scored relatively high (57.9%). This was an indication that the four parenting styles are common within the target population.

1.6.1 Descriptive Statistics for Focus Group Discussion

The study collected views from 15 focus groups, one group from each selected school. Each group was made up of 8 students selected randomly from those who participated in answering the questionnaires. Responses from the focused group discussion were analyzed under three broad themes; ease of students discussing risky behaviours with parents, people with who students prefer to discuss risky behaviours with and students expectations of their parents in handling risky behaviours. The responses are given in tables, 4.13, 4.14 and 4.15 below.

Table 1.2: Ease of Students Discussing Drug Relate Issues with Parents

	Freq	%
Not easy	5	33
Easy	10	67
Total	15	100

Table 1.2: shows that, majority (67%) found discussing drug abuse related issues with parents easy. These discussions were limited by perception of parents that the children were seeking information in order to experiment with the vices. Respondents felt that their parents are too busy to spare time for discussions. This supports a study by Nundwe, (2012) which found that parental occupation, economic activities in which parents were engaged were blamed for keeping the parents too busy to take time to talk with their children, this is the barrier to communication as parents have little time to be with their children.

Table 1.3: Preferred People by Students to Discussing Risky behaviours with Students' preference in frequency and Percentages

Parents		Relatives		Peers		Counselors		Totals	
Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
10	68	1	8	1	7	3	17	15	100

Table 1.3 shows that, discussing risky behaviours with parents is not popular among secondary school students. Most students (68%) would prefer to talk about drug issues with their parent or counselors (17%).

The findings of the study show that the respondents have varied preferences for discussing drug abuse related issues risky though for majority parents are their first priority. During the developmental stage of adolescence, young people strive for independence and begin to make decisions that impact on their lives (Spear & Kulbok, 2004). The study postulates that, driven by search for autonomy and facilitated by the busy schedule of parents who do not have enough time with their children, secondary school students find themselves spending more time with peers and other strangers from who they get information concerning their challenges.

1.6.2 Multiple Linear Regression for Parenting Styles and Drug Abuse

The objective of the study was to investigate whether parenting styles significantly predict drug abuse among secondary school students. To achieve this objective, the study sought to test the hypothesis, H_0 , that, Parenting styles do not have statistically significant prediction of drug abuse among secondary school students. Multiple regressions for drug abuse were conducted. The results were presented in Table 4.22, 4.23 and 4.24 below.

Table 1.6: Model Summary for Drug Abuse

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.825(a)	.681	.644	0.619

Note: a: Predictors: (Constant), Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive indulgent and permissive neglectful.

Table 1.6 shows that 64.4% of variations in the drug abuse are explained by parenting styles (Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive indulgent and permissive neglectful). The remaining 35.6% is determined by other factors not related to parenting styles. The findings show that parents through their parenting styles significantly have the greatest role to predetermine the involvement of their adolescent children in abuse of drugs. Parenting styles provide the microsystem which determines the parent child relationships. The test of fitness of the regression model using ANOVA was conducted. Regression coefficients were presented in Table 4.23 below.

Table 1.7: ANOVA (a) Parenting Style; (b) Drug Abuse

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	125.580	4	17.145	18.669	.000(a)
	Residual	113.395	395	38.333		
Total		238.975	399			

Note: a: Predictors: (Constant), Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive indulgence, and Permissive neglectful, b: Dependent Variable: Drug abuse

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to establish the fitness of the model used. The ANOVA Table: 1.7 shows that the $F_{(4,395)}$ statistic was 18.669 with a p-value of 0.000 indicating that the model was statistically significant in explaining the effect of parenting styles on drug abuse. Table 4.23 also shows that significance level was less than p-value of 0.05. This means that the model used was appropriate and the relationship between the variables did not occur by chance. This means that the model is fit to explain, to what extent parenting styles can be blamed for the involvement of adolescent children in the antisocial behaviour of drug abuse. Regression coefficients were presented in table 4.24 below.

Table 1.8: Multiple Regression Coefficients (a) for Drug Abuse

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1					
	(Constant)	1.958	.718		
	Authoritative (X ₁)	.118	.152	1.014	4.844
	Authoritarian (X ₂)	.141	.582	.125	.242
	Permissive indulgence (X ₃)	.259	.673	.055	.385
	Permissive neglectful (X ₄)	.736	.468	.126	.252

Note: a: Dependent Variable: Drug abuse

Table 1.8 shows that all the independent variables (Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive indulgence, and Permissive neglectful) significantly ($P < 0.05$) predict the change in the drug abuse by students hence hypothesis H_{02} was rejected.

The regression model is;

$$Y = 1.958 + 0.118X_1 + 0.141X_2 + 0.259X_3 + 0.736 X_4$$

This model shows that the permissive neglectful parenting style has the greatest contribution to the model (0.736, $p < 0.05$). This means that a unit positive change in permissive neglectful parenting style causes a change in drug abuse use by a factor of 0.736 at 5% significant level. This is followed by permissive indulgence (0.259, $p < 0.05$), authoritarian parenting (0.141, $p < 0.05$) and authoritative parenting (0.118, $p < 0.05$). The result concur with those of Berg, (2011) and Ryan, Nicolette, Roman and Okwany (2015) who found that Parental communication on substance abuse, within parental warmth

(Authoritative parenting style) is protective against adolescent alcohol use. Parent-child communication under the authoritative parenting provides the information the child would need about drugs and reduce the curiosity that may drive the young people into experimentation with the drugs. Since the parent explains the reasoning behind the any conditions they might impose on the children (Macobby and Martins, 2003).

The findings are similar to those of Baumrind, Larzelere & Owens, 2010) who found that Permissive parenting was associated with high students' alcohol use. Table 4.17 shows that authoritative parenting style explains adolescence drug abuse by a factor of 0.118 at 5% significant level. Authoritative parenting style accounts for the least contribution to drug abuse among the four parenting styles. The findings also show that indulgent parenting style contribute more to drug abuse (0.259) than authoritarian parenting (0.141) this is contrary to a study by Calafat, Garcia Juan, Becona and Fernandez-Hermida (2014) who found indulgent parenting to have better adolescence behavioural outcomes similar to authoritative parenting style relation to alcohol use than authoritarian parenting.

However, the findings of this study reported a positive and strong prediction of drug use by both permissive neglectful (0.736, $p < 0.05$) and permissive indulgence (0.259, $p < 0.05$) which is contrary to the findings of Yusefi and others (2016), who found no significant prediction of drug abuse such as smoking by permissive parenting. Permissive parenting styles allow unchecked freedom for the adolescents which can easily be misused by the adolescents in engaging in drugs. Access to unlimited resources including finances by adolescents from their permissive indulgent parents means the child can afford the drugs of abuse. Children in permissive indulge parents view their parents as a resource to be use with no conditions. This concurs with Miller (2010) who affirms that, for indulgent parents, having a relationship with their children is more important than providing direction or rules for the child.

On the other hand, the study findings show that authoritarian parenting style predicts less drug abuse compared to permissive neglectful and permissive indulgence parenting styles contrary to the findings of Milevsky, Schlechter, Netter & Keehn (2007) who found that adolescents from most authoritarian families have been found to exhibit poor social skills, low levels and high levels of antisocial behaviour. Lavin (2012), agree that, authoritarian parents apply strict rules and children are punished, when they fail to follow the rules. This creates fear which may keep the children away from the drugs as opposed to children from neglectful parents. Neglectful parents are uninvolved with the children's wellbeing. They are heedless, and impulsive as a result their children lack self-control and display social incompetence including decision making competencies on risky behaviours (Baumrind, Larzelere & Owens, 2010). As a

result, the children result to taking drugs as a relief to frustrations because parents fail to meet many of their needs. These findings concur with a study conducted by Kao and Carter (2013), who found that adolescents from permissive neglectful parents scored highly on alcohol abuse. Since permissive parents do not form strong emotional bond with their children, necessary to influence their children's decision making positively. This view is supported by a study done by Rai (2008), who found that rejection from father and mother was a predictor of drug abuse among adolescents. However, the study findings are inconsistent with the findings of Yusefi, Idelu, Saravani, and Razegghi (2016) who report that permissive parenting style does not significantly predict adolescent risky behaviour such as smoking.

1.7 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine if parenting styles significantly predict secondary school students risky behaviours in Embu County. From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the importance of parenting styles in shaping adolescents' behavioural outcomes lies in the interaction between the parents and their children. This is because parents, through their parenting styles, set an emotional and psychological microclimate within the family microsystem in which the child develops. Each parenting style provides different parent-child interactional relationships, each of which give different child developmental outcome. These outcomes are manifested in various social skills including ability of the child to handle risky situations such as drug abuse.

1.8 Recommendations

The study established that neglectful parenting followed by permissive indulgent accounts for the largest variance in drug abuse among secondary school students, while authoritative parenting style had the lowest variance. The study, therefore, recommends that the government through the Ministry of Education should, train and empower the teacher counselor, who would identify students with drug abuse problems, counsel them and train parents whose adolescent children are drug abusers to handle their drug abusing children. The study also recommends that the training should also target empowering parents whose children are not yet in the vice for preventive measures through good parenting which emphasize on authoritative parenting. It is also recommended that the schools through the teacher parent association form mentorship programs for the students aimed at helping students develop coping mechanisms against a growing culture of drugs.

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