



# **THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM**

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# INTRODUCTION

- Kenyan authorities and social non governmental organizations have expressed concern over the rising cases of alcohol abuse.
- Plans are under way to formulate a comprehensive alcohol policy in the country.



- Alcohol has become an important public health problem in Kenya arising from over consumption, intoxication and dangerous behavior upon consumption.
- It has contributed immensely to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Kenya (Mwenesi, 1995 )



- Although the alcoholic beverage industry contributes KSH 12 billion to the economy, most of it is spent to treat people with alcohol abuse related ailment.
- A lot more is lost due to alcohol – related reductions in productivity.



- Alcoholism is inevitably embedded in a network of family interactions.
- Children of alcoholics are more likely than the general population to develop alcohol problems.
- Spouses of alcoholics are much more likely to abuse alcohol and other drugs.



- This study was aimed at assessing selected social factors that are associated with alcohol use, abuse and alcoholism.
  
- The study focused on
  - social acceptance of alcohol use,
  - parental and peer influence,
  - availability of alcohol and
  - stressful lifestylesas the key variables



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- In Kenya, there are an estimated two million addicts, ninety percent of who are addicted to alcohol ( KEMRI), 1999).
- According to KEMRI, alcohol abuse affects 70% of families in Kenya



- Research has revealed that experimenting with alcohol and other drugs starts at primary school level (Ndegwa, 1980, & Gichuge, 1993).
- Similar studies from other parts of the world reveal that drug and alcohol use start as early as ten years (Jardine & Martin, 1984)





- A favorite explanation of young people's alcohol and drug taking behavior is that it is a result of social pressure from their friends that is the peer group (Kembo, 1999).
- Peer groups teach new skills and attitudes that are sometimes different from those learnt from the family (UNESCO, 1982, & Ingerso, 1989).



- The manner in which alcohol is acquired is an important factor that contributes to this abuse and consequently addiction.
- Research has revealed that drugs such as tobacco and alcohol are widely and easily available.
- The availability of these substances highly correlates with adolescent alcohol use



- Social acceptance of the use of alcohol has led to is uncensored use and abuse.
- Individuals learn form an early age that alcohol can be a source of pleasure and relieve, both privately and socially.
- Advertising equates alcohol with pleasure and relief, fun, fashion, friendship, and happiness. This makes alcohol use seem like an adult initiation rite



- Use of alcohol, as anesthesia to combat stressful lifestyles is another dangerous trend that is drawing many to the alcoholic lifestyle.
- Economic stress, unemployment, poor access to health are among the major factors (Becky, 2003).



- This study was conducted within the city of Nairobi. This location was purposefully chosen because the country's drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers are concentrated around the city.
- The study targeted all alcoholics in alcohol and drug rehabilitation centers in Nairobi city.



- The study revealed that most of the alcoholics seeking treatment in drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers are male between the ages of 30 and 49 years
- Society inculcates a certain drinking culture in individuals. Many cultures sanction their males to drink heavily, while a moderate drinker or an abstainer is held suspect.



- The family is also a transmitter of cultural attitudes. Drinking may be engraved into the social life of the family because of the circle of friends that they relate with and their patterns of entertaining.
- The study reveals that majority of the fathers of the alcoholics (66%) use alcohol occasionally, moderately or frequently. Only about 26% of the mothers use alcohol.



- In the choice of an alcoholic beverage peers influenced 37.1% of the alcoholics.
- Advertisements influenced only 11.45% of the alcoholics when making the choice of what beverage to use.





# PEERS INFLUENCE

- 91.4% said that their peers abuse alcohol.
- Peer group values and norms are submitted to an individual through consistent rewarding of conforming behavior.



# AVAILABILITY OF ALCOHOL

- Availability of alcohol is typically associated with the impact of control policies on the purchase and consumption of alcohol.
- In Kenya age at first drinking is set at 18 years.
- The impact of price control on reduced alcohol intake in Kenya needs further research.



# AGE AT FIRST DRINK

- majority of the alcoholics (54%) started using alcohol when they were between 11 and 17 years
- Although age at first drinking in Kenya is set at 18 years, the results show that children as young as ten years had access to alcohol.



# DRINKING SITES

- 77.4% of the alcoholics bought their alcoholic beverages from bars.
- About 11.4% bought their alcoholic beverages from the wine shops.
- while about 8.6% said they bought from the local brew sites.



- most of the Kenyan alcoholics reported that they often bought and drunk their alcoholic beverages in the bars, an indication that they prefer drinking in a social setting.
- The bar is seen as a leisure place, where any man is likely to be found outside of working hours



# CONCLUSIONS

- Parental models are instrumental in shaping early attitude and behaviors with regard to teenage alcohol abuse.
- Peer relations provide a context in which alcohol and other drug use is either supported or discouraged.
- Most of the alcoholics have peers who use of abuse alcohol, whereby sanctioning its use.



- Kenyans have access to alcoholic beverages at a very young age, although age at first drinking is set at 18 years
- The drinking habits of the peers play a major role in initiating individuals into alcohol use or abuse.
- The peers largely influence the choice of the alcoholic drink used by the individuals



- Anyone coming from an alcoholic family is more at risk of becoming an alcoholic.
- People with history of alcohol abuse and alcoholism, who have a higher risk for becoming dependent on alcohol, should approach moderate drinking carefully.





**THANK YOU!!!**

