

The Influence of Family Dynamics and Substance Abuse Among Students in Private Universities in Kenya: A Case of St Paul University

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to evaluate the influence of family dynamics on substance abuse among students in private universities in Kenya. A case of St Paul University. This research was guided by the following specific objectives; to explore the influence of parental communication patterns, family structure and parental supervision substance among students in private universities in Kenya. This research is significant to policymakers, management of St Paul University, and future researchers. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population for this study was 1400 students at St Paul University in first, second, third and final year. The study sampled size of 311 respondents using Yamane's formula which was done using simple random sampling as the sampling design. Data was collected through questionnaire, which were distributed to the respondents. To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was done. Data was analysed using both qualitative methods and later presented through tables, bar graphs, and pie charts. The correlation findings indicated that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between drug abuse and all the independent variables. Specifically, substance abuse is positively correlated with parental communication patterns ($r = 0.297$, $p = 0.000$), family structure ($r = 0.437$, $p = 0.000$), and parental supervision ($r = 0.409$, $p = 0.000$). The highest correlation is between substance abuse and family structure, a weaker but significant correlation between parental communication patterns. The findings revealed that the patterns of communication among parents' respondents are generally low in all the aspects measured. The mean of the statement regarding the openness with parents in discussing drug use is 2.23 ($SD = 1.174$), which means that they do not discuss this issue openly. On the same note, the comfort of discussing personal struggles with parents is low with a mean of 2.08 ($SD = 0.843$) indicating that a significant number of the respondents do not feel comfortable talking openly. The well-established parental roles demonstrate a somewhat greater mean of 2.37 ($SD = 1.129$), yet they still represent a rather weak framework. The standard deviation scores of 0.762 to 1.145 show that there is moderate variation in responses. The patterns of communication between parents and their children such as openness to discuss drug use, emotional support and encouragement towards healthy choices had low mean scores of between 2.08 and 2.46 indicating weak communication patterns. It is also important to strengthen family structure. The family must develop clear roles and responsibilities of every member to ensure stability, cohesion and accountability. Promoting a good family relationship, collective decision-making, and belongingness can generate a positive environment that will deter risky behaviour such as drugs. Such interventions may make adolescents feel more at ease with their families and supported in their everyday life.

Key words: Family Communication, Family Structure Drugs and Substance Abuse, Private Universities

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1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The study will focus on the influence of family dynamics and substance abuse among the students in private universities in Kenya with St. Paul's University as the case study. The background gives a broad context, which addresses the growing problem of drug abuse among college students worldwide and locally, and draws attention to how family relations, patterns of communication, parenting strategies and socio-economic factors can contribute to the susceptibility of college students to the abuse of substances. This context introduces a discussion of influence on students' choice regarding substance in the context of private universities in Kenya (Muriuki and Muriuki, 2021).

The statement of the problem recognizes knowledge gap on the relationship of family dynamics and substance abuse in private universities since research is less developed compared to that in state institutions. The study therefore aims at bridging this gap by focusing on a private university context which is still underrepresented in the scholarly inquiry. By so doing, it addresses the need for evidence-based understanding which can lead to tailored interventions for students in Private institutions (Owino & Kimani, 2022).

The objectives and research questions of the study clearly indicate what the research intends to accomplish and gives direction towards solving the identified problem. The rationale comes out against the importance of looking into the issue, especially in comprehending the academic, psychological, and social consequences of substance abuse in young adults. This focus enhances the applicability of the study in discovering sustainable solutions to a serious problem confronting students in higher learning institutions (Mutisya & Kihoro, 2020).

The importance of the study is that it may contribute to various stakeholders such as educators, parents, policymakers, and mental health professionals in providing information that can help in the development of a preventive and intervention strategy. The findings of the study will also contribute to the existing literature and as a practical instrument in curbing the drug abuse among students in private universities. Furthermore, its assumptions state the beliefs and expectations with which the research process will be undertaken so that there is clarity in terms of scope and direction (Njoroge & Wambugu, 2023).

The scope of the study is restricted to St. Paul's University which can be considered a representative sample of private universities in Kenya, although it is evident that the results may not be generalized to all universities. Limitations and delimitations that could affect the outcomes of the research are also outlined, to ensure transparency and to guide the interpretation of the results. The chapter ends with the definitions of some key terms like family dynamics and substance abuse, which provide conceptual clarity and this chapter is meant to prepare the reader for the next few chapters which focus on literature review, methodology, findings and discussions (Kanja & Chege, 2021).

1.2 Background to the Study

Substance abuse and family dynamics are social and psychological constructs that are complicated and especially intertwined and that have been well researched concerning behaviour of young adults. The family dynamics include the type of interactions, the pattern of communication, roles, parenting styles, emotional relationships, and support systems in a household, which affect the development and decision-making of individuals (Smith and Hamel, 2021). This dynamic may also act as protective buffers, or risk factors depending on whether they promote stability, guidance, and open communication, or the opposite: neglect, conflict, and permissive attitudes toward harmful behaviours. Substance abuse or substance misuse is a harmful or dangerous use of psychoactive drugs including alcohol, cannabis, opioids, stimulants, inhalants and prescription drug without a medical purpose (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). substance abuse is frequently seen through experimentation, consistent use, or addiction in university contexts, and the effects of substance use may include poor academic results and serious mental and physical problems (Peterson et al., 2022). The family issues and the use of substances are especially severe during the period of young adulthood when a person is actively working on a higher independence level and facing a greater number of external issues.

Substance abuse among college students is one of the major essential health issues that have become a concern on an international scale. According to reports provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2023) and other international monitoring organizations, late adolescence and early adulthood, usually, 18-25 years old, is a high-risk stage in the development and increase of substance use. Academic stress, peer influence, new-found independence, and lower parental peers all make the stage have higher vulnerability (Johnston et al., 2022). Cannabis is the most consumed illicit drug worldwide with synthetic drugs and stimulants making headway among the youthful adults. Another problem identified in the literature is an increase in the percentage of poly-drug use when students combine several substances at once, increasing both the chances of immediate damage and subsequent dependence. In the various regions, family environments still contribute to the development of such behaviours, with close monitoring and communication with parents being protection factors, and family dispute and substance use of the parent contributing to the probability of missing a student in drug abuse (Stone et al., 2021).

In the European situation, according to data collected by the European Monitoring Centre of Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA, 2022), cannabis, MDMA, and cocaine are the most common among the university students, and prescription drug abuse also increases. Studies in the United Kingdom and Ireland reveal the tendency of some student subcultures to turn to the normalization of recreational drug use where experimentation is usually viewed as an essential part of university life (O'Neill et al., 2021). Harm reduction policy including drug testing at festivals or campuses are becoming the more acceptable substitute to punitive measures, which is

a general shift in the attitudes of the population. Nevertheless, research also indicates great differences, depending on the family background, and the students with families that are emotionally supportive and have open communication channels report fewer substance use rates (Hibell and Molinaro, 2021). On the other hand, family instability, absence of direction and parental substance abuse have been repeatedly related to the increased rate of drug abuse in this population.

A multidimensional interaction comprising socio-economic, cultural, and family factors leads to substance abuse among the young adults in sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the most popular substances are alcohol, cannabis, and khat, the popularity of which, in turn, is determined by their local presence and social acceptance (Mndeme et al., 2021). African environment in most cases comes with special structural issues that may worsen the situation, poverty, political instability and short supply of formal counselling services. Research in the region found male gender, the use of substances by peers, and urban living as frequently observed correlates in increased prevalence rates (Agbiji and Okechukwu, 2022). Factors that are family based continue to play a key role with parental monitoring, parental supervision and strong emotional attachments being identified with reduced risk, but family conflict, parental neglect and parental drug use are key risk increases.

Nigeria is a good example of what these dynamics are on a regional level. Eze et al. (2022) research study revealed that more than one-third of Nigerian university students had a lifetime use of illicit drugs, with the most widespread form of illicit use being the consumption of cannabis and misuse of prescription drugs. It was shown that the students who belong to the families with the conflict, separation or low emotional support had much higher chances of using drugs. It is also affected by economic conditions where the students of both high and low-income families experienced various but strong forces to use substances. This can be a problem in Nigeria, where extended family systems can, although being a traditional source of guidance, sometimes conceal problems of neglect or inconsistent value systems, which in turn complicates the protective role of the family.

Substance abuse among university students in East Africa is no longer a problem that is treated as a priority area. Mndeme and Shao (2021) conducted studies in Tanzania that reported significant alcohol, cannabis, and khat use among students, with significant peer influence, stress, and family background being found. Disintegration in the family, low parental supervision, and the lack of role models were strong predictors of use of drugs. Socio-economic inequalities, urbanization, and exposure to global youth culture, have also helped to change norms of substance use in the region.

The same tendencies are observed in Uganda. Ssebunnya et al. (2020) discovered that those students of homes with low communication and low parental guidance tended to experiment more with drugs and move on to regular use. It was also observed in the study that the support structure that existed in a family, including mentoring, emotional availability and shared moral values, were used as potent deterrents. The incorporation of family-focused prevention measures into the higher education policies has been suggested both in Tanzania and Uganda as the measure to stem the increasing wave of student drug abuse. Similar problems are encountered in Kenya, and the increasing amount of literature indicates that there is a significant prevalence of substance abuse among young adults including those attending private universities. According to the National Authority on Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA, 2022) alcohol, cannabis, and the abuse of prescription drugs are the most common forms of abuse among the Kenyan youth. Risk factors in the family including family substance use, domestic discord, and deficiency of supervision are invariably associated with the increased tendencies to use drugs among students, and the family solidity and active parental participation are the protective elements.

Within the context of the case of the University of St. Paul, research is scarce but there is emerging evidence that the issue is just as much relevant. Otieno and Mwingi (2021) also point out that students belonging to comparatively higher socioeconomic sectors of the population, which often happens in private schools, can be easier to access drugs, and social pressures and academic stress are also contributing factors. In this context, it is important to involve family dynamics as the key component of prevention activities to decrease substance abuse and preserve the academic achievements and the overall well-being of students.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

A family is supposed to serve as a stable environment to the moral, social, and psychological growth of the youth. Family dynamics expressed through adequate communication, emotional support, parental monitoring and positive role modelling are vital in directing the adolescents and young adults out of dangerous lifestyles like drug abuse (Peterson et al., 2022). In well-adjusted family settings the parents and the guardians are the initial line of defence, they instil discipline, resiliency and nurture the decision-making skills and abilities that assist young adults to live through the stresses of university life. These protective family processes must ideally remain

to have a positive impact on students in the context of higher education, as they come to settings with more independence and exposure to different peer and social networks (Smith and Hamel, 2021).

There are however new developments that show that such protective roles are more likely to be undermined thus increasing the issue of drug abuse among students in universities. According to the National Authority on the Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA, 2022), 13.5 percent of students in higher learning institutions have used illicit drugs in the past, the most abused are alcohol, cannabis, and prescription drugs. The same actions in African settings have demonstrated that the lack of parental monitoring, family conflict, and the substance abuse of parents poses a significant risk of students using drugs (Eze et al., 2022; Agbiji & Okechukwu, 2022). In privately funded universities, students can have superior academic resources and facilities, but the socioeconomic status of families may be higher, which means that they have more money and opportunities to acquire drugs, which increases the likelihood of abuse (Otieno and Mwangi, 2021). These facts beg the question on how far family dynamics remain to have the protective role in such situations.

Even with these reservations, the empirical research studies on the relationship between family dynamics and drug abuse in the Kenyan private university sector are quite scarce. The existing research is incomplete as it is limited to the general population of youth or general universities, and there is little information on the ways in which the unique aspects of private institutions (smaller classes, different demographics of students, different campus culture) relate with family factors (Mndeme and Shao, 2021). Moreover, little research has been conducted to determine the existence of differential effects of some features of family dynamics, including parenting style, family structure, or communication patterns, on students in both private and public universities. This knowledge deficiency restricts the establishment of specific intervention measures that can deal with the underlying family factors behind drug abuse among the students at the private university. Thus, this research aims at addressing this gap by examining how family processes contribute to the development of drug abuse practices among students at St. Pauls University, to make an impact on the development of more effective prevention and intervention strategies.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the role of family dynamics and substance abuse among students in private universities in Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

- i. To examine the influence of parental *communication* patterns on substance abuse among students in private universities in Kenya.
- ii. To assess the influence of *family structure* on substance abuse among students in private universities in Kenya.

1.6 Research Questions

- i. What is the influence of *parental communication* patterns on substance abuse among students in private universities in Kenya?
- ii. How does *family structure* influence substance abuse among students in private universities in Kenya?

1.7 Rationale of the Study

St. Paul's University is being targeted in that it's one of the top private universities in Kenya, and it's the type of institution where drug and substance abuse have been shown to be a growing concern. According to a NACADA national survey, students from private universities reported higher drug use (35%) than those from public universities (22%) with alcohol, cannabis, tobacco, and miraa/muguka being the most common: While no publicly released data is available isolating St. Paul's, it has been included in multi-University research e.g. the study conducted by Ngure et al. (2022), where results showed lifetime substance use of 48.6% and current use of 37.9% among undergraduates in Kenyan Universities. These results confirm that the issue is not hypothetical but real in the context of the private university that St. Paul's is part of.

The reason behind the choice of a private university like St. Paul's is that most studies and interventions have been done in public universities or with the general youth population and there is a gap in institution specific knowledge for a private setting. Despite the students being affected, private universities sometimes do not have specific data to help their student welfare departments in creating effective prevention and counselling programs (Otieno & Mwangi, 2021). St. Paul's provides a relevant case study due to its diversity in terms of student population and its inclusion in previous multi-university surveys but not having been studied on its own. Therefore, this research aims at providing actionable and context-specific data that can help address the drug problem at St. Paul's in addition to contributing to better understanding of the influence of family processes on substance use in private universities in general (Agbiji & Okechukwu, 2022).

Programmatic and clinical justification of the study: detection of family-based risk and protective factors will enhance early detection, customize mental-health and substance-use services, and educate culturally relevant family-centred interventions on campuses. Empirical research at African universities has shown that programs that do not consider any family context find it hard to bring a lasting behaviour change, and programs that include parental engagement, family communication skills or referral pathways are more effective (Eze, Odo, & Okeke, 2022; Mndeme & Shao, 2021). Furthermore, the relationship between university counselling services and evidence-based family approaches and national substance use guidelines (WHO, 2021) can be used to improve the timeliness and relevance of care to substance-related issues among students who present them. Exploring the contribution of family interactions to the University in St. Paul thus presents direct possibility of enhancing clinical pathways, prevention programs and student support mechanisms in the context of the Kenyan University.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The research is going to be instrumental in offering some important information to policymakers, education stakeholders, and administrators of the individual universities regarding the contributions of family dynamics to drug abuse among students. The knowledge of the relationships will facilitate the making of customized policies and intervention programs that will meet the special needs of students in privately owned universities. These evidence-based interventions will help to develop a favourable learning environment that will decrease the rates of substance abuse and student well-being.

Counsellors, psychologists, and student welfare departments in private universities will also find the study relevant because it will provide a comprehensive knowledge of family-related issues predisposing students to drug use. Having this information, institutions could come up with effective prevention and rehabilitation programs that include the affected students as well as their families. Such an inclusive approach to families can contribute to better support systems, better communication, and to the overall mental and emotional well-being of the student population. The proposed study will be of value to scholars and future researchers since it will address the existing gaps of knowledge regarding the study topic, which is family impact on substance use in the framework of private higher education in Kenya. It will serve as a basis to conduct other research that can include other aspects like socio-economic status, parenting, and cultural factors. The conclusions will contribute to the scholarly research, generate new debate, and prompt comparative investigations of the private and the state-owned university environment.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

This research presumed that respondents would be honest and would provide accurate information about their family backgrounds, relationships, and their encounters with drug use. Considering the sensitivity of the subject, the research assumed that the participants would feel free and secure to express their opinions without fear of being judged or punished. Another assumption was that the efforts put in place to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity would promote openness and truthfulness in the responses, and hence the resulting data would be reliable and valid for analysis.

Thirdly, the sample chosen from the University of St. Paul was assumed to be representative of the larger population of students in privately owned universities in Kenya. It was presumed that the trends, problems, and family relationships observed among the sampled participants would reflect those of students in other similar institutions nationwide. In this way, it was assumed that the generalizability of the findings was reasonable and could be used to make recommendations implementable on a policy and intervention scale beyond the study site.

Lastly, family dynamics were considered to play a key role in determining the probability of drug abuse among university students. It was assumed that parenting styles, patterns of communication, parental involvement, and family stability could be measured and would influence the decisions made by students regarding substance use. This assumption was based on existing theoretical and empirical data that associated family history with behavioural outcomes, and it was used in formulating the research questions, objectives, and data collection plans of the study.

1.10 Scope of Study

In this study, the geographical area of interest was the University of St. Paul in Nairobi County, Kenya, and the analysis was specifically conducted on the impact of family dynamics on the influence of drug abuse among students at the university. A sample of 311 students, selected from the various faculties within the university, was used as the target population, encompassing a wide variety of academic levels and backgrounds. The selection of the University of St. Paul was not accidental, as it allowed the researchers to work within a representative environment of Kenyan private universities while also providing the opportunity to access participants within the constraints of time and resources. In terms of sectors, the research was limited to the

educational setting and did not include any government or non-governmental organizations operating drug prevention initiatives, to ensure that the scope remained focused on the experiences of students and the effects of the family setting. This reduction of scope resulted in a study that allowed for a more thorough and context-tailored analysis, producing findings that were not only applicable to the institution itself but also potentially relevant to other privately owned universities in similar contexts.

1.11 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

A limitation of this study is that the research will rely on self-reported information by the students on their family dynamics and experiences with usage of drugs. Since the subject matter is sensitive, the chances of social desirability bias are high, in that, the subjects might underreport or hide data to portray themselves in a favourable way. As a measure to curb this, the research will contain this threat by making sure that there is a lot of secrecy and anonymity of the responses, so that the responses are given in a secure atmosphere that promotes truthful and correct exposure.

The other limitation is the geographical scope of research which is at the university of St. Paul, which could be a limitation to the ability to generalize the results to other Kenyan universities that are privately owned. The patterns of drug abuse and family influences in other regions might be affected by differences in institutional policies and student demographics as well as by social-cultural factors that are unique to each region. In limiting this, this study will make sure that the sample used will be diverse in terms of gender, age, academic programs, and socio-economic backgrounds in the university hence increasing the applicability of findings to similar contexts. Another weakness is that not all students are likely to volunteer because of the fear of stigmatization or to be linked to drug abuse. This may result in the reduced response rate which hinders the representativeness of the sample. To demarcate this, the researcher will provide awareness sessions before data collection to explain the aim of the research, remind the participants of the academic and non-judgmental character of the research and assure them of voluntary participation and lack of any adverse effects.

1.12 Definition of Terms

Family Dynamics- The processes of interactions, relations and communication that takes place in a family, roles, power distribution, emotional relationships as well as the conflict management styles that takes place in a family as a whole and affect how individuals in the family behave and make decisions.

Drug Abuse- Intended and destructive use of psychoactive drugs whether legal or illegal in a structure that is out of medical or socially accepted standards with the result of negatively affecting physically, mentally or socially.

Private University, an institution of higher education is privately owned and financed, is not directly controlled by the government, and provides academic programs to enrolled students, usually with research and administrative and policy organization of its own.

University of St. Paul- This is a chartered private university in Kenya and the case study site in this research because it has a diverse student body and is applicable in this research in terms of representing the context of the private universities in the country.

Students - The students undergoing their academic programs at the University of St. Paul, and both undergraduate and postgraduate are the target population in this study whose experiences and views will be analyzed.

Parental Communication Patterns- How the parents communicate, share feelings and even hold a conversation with their children which shapes the attitude, behaviors and decision making.

Family Structure- This is the makeup and structure of a family unit and the relationship of the members and their roles about the nuclear, single-parent, or extended family.

Parental Supervision- It is the active administration and-parenting of the activities, peers, and behaviours of children by their parents to guarantee their safety and conforming to acceptable norms.

Psychological- This term refers to the interrelation of social factors and individual taught and behaviour. In this study it will be used to refer to the psychological and social state of university students.

Addiction- This describes engaging in a behaviour or substance use, where the rewarding effect compels one to repeat the activity, despite harmful consequences. When someone is unable to stop partaking in an activity than they are said to have a behavioural addiction.

1.13 Summary

In chapter one, The Influence of Family Dynamics and Drug Abuse among Students in Private Universities in Kenya: A Case of St. Pauls University has been introduced. The chapter started with a background to the study stating the definitions, global, regional, and local view on the interrelation between family structures, interaction, and drug abuse prevalence among the university students. It also identified the problem statement, which is how the ideal family should be in terms of leading the behaviour of students, the issues and rate of drug abuse that exist today in the higher learning institutions, and the gaps created by the research that justify this study. In addition, the chapter introduced the purpose of the study, research objectives, and research questions to give a clear guideline on the inquiry. The purpose and relevance of the investigation were explained, and the relevance of the results was of high importance to policymakers and the educational organizations as well as families and further researchers.

Besides this, Chapter One outlined the assumptions that will guide the research, the extent of the study and with emphasis on the University of St. Paul and the limits and boundaries that will affect the research process and the methods of overcoming them. The key terms that were used in the study were clarified so that they could be understood in a similar manner across the study. In sum, the chapter forms a broad basis of the research giving a precedence to other chapters to be discussed, including literature review, research approach, analysis of data and presentation of results.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The second chapter is an extensive review of literature in relation to the study to give a picture of the study. It discusses the theoretical framework of the research, empirical review of related studies, conceptual framework of the research and a summary of the main findings. This chapter forms the foundation on which the analysis of the role of family dynamics and drug abuse among learners in privately operated universities in Kenya is conducted.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Family Systems Theory

Developed by Murray Bowen, Family Systems Theory conceives the family as an emotional unit in which individual behaviours and symptoms are understood in relation to the emotional unit of the family. Within this framework, the concepts of differentiation of self, emotional triangles, family projection and transgenerational transmission account for the ways in which patterns of anxiety, conflict and coping strategies are passed on through families. This view is extremely useful when considering substance abuse among students as drug use is not viewed as merely an individual issue, but one that is related to families and family relationships. For example, parental substance use, family conflict or poor boundaries can result in higher vulnerability among university students, especially those who are transitioning to independent living (Calatrava, Gonzalez, & Guilela 2022).

The significance of Family Systems Theory to the research was that it was able to describe the relationship between family level variables and substance abuse among students in private universities in Kenya. The theory emphasizes the roles of family cohesiveness, communication patterns, parental behaviours, and conflict patterns that are influential in the behaviour of young adults. This lens allows this study to look at the question of whether low family cohesion or parental substance use can make students more likely to use a drug, and whether family functioning is a moderator in peer influence. By having this theoretical background, the study can have better research questions and more specific recommendations for prevention and intervention. Recent work is an example that family processes continue to be at the forefront of understanding and addressing substance use in African contexts, which is why this theory is still relevant in informing the research (Ebrahim, Adu, & Okoye, 2024).

The advantages of Family Systems Theory include its holistic perspective of human behavior that provides a relational model that is consistent with evidence linking family relations to substance use trajectories. It is also very useful in creating family-based prevention and treatment programs, such as family therapy and multisystem interventions. However, there are weaknesses in its use. Important constructs such as "differentiation of self" are not easily measured consistently, and the theory may not adequately address larger socio-cultural and structural factors such as poverty, the availability of drugs, and campus culture. Moreover, as the theory is of Western origin, some parts of the theory may need to be culturally adapted so that it is compatible with Kenyan family structures and social norms. These limitations imply that though useful, Family Systems Theory should be incorporated with larger socio-ecological frameworks when used in this context (Marceau, Lisdahl, & Zucker, 2023).

The use of Family Systems Theory in this study includes operationalizing the family-related variables with established measures (family cohesion and adaptability scales, family functioning indices, and history of parental substance use). Finally, qualitative interviews can be conducted as part of the study to understand phenomena that may not be captured in the survey, such as emotional cut off, boundary problems, conflict dynamics, etc. In practice, this theoretical perspective can help to inform the design of family-based prevention programs, parent-inclusive interventions on campus, and referrals to evidence-based family therapy programs. By basing the study on Family Systems Theory, not only the individual student will be treated, but also the bigger family system in which the student is involved, thus increasing the effectiveness of prevention and treatment of drug abuse in Kenyan private universities (Esteban, Ramirez, & Lopez, 2023).

2.2.2 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory in the form developed by Albert Bandura, focuses on the fact that human behaviour is learned primarily through observation, imitation, and modelling of others, especially those that are significant and important such as parents, siblings, and peers. The theory states that behaviors, including dangerous behaviors such as using drugs, are learned when people see others engaging in them and get the impression that they are reinforced or approved as behavior. Within the context of the family, children and young adults tend to internalize behaviors and attitudes that they see at home. If students witness parental substance abuse, poor communication, or drug permissive attitudes, they may be more likely to follow suit, particularly at the vulnerable age of young adulthood in universities (Schunk, 2021).

The relevance of Social Learning Theory to this study is that it demonstrates how the family directly influences the propensity of drug abuse among students in private universities in Kenya. The theory emphasizes the role of parents and family members as primary models of behavior in the development of a child. If a student's family members model healthy coping skills, good communication, and disapproval of substance use, then this student is more likely to resist peer pressures and use drugs. Conversely, students who grow up in homes where drug abuse is normalized may find drug abuse to be acceptable or even rewarding. This framework can be used to gain a robust basis for studying the role of family modelling and reinforcement patterns in substance use among university students in Kenya (Cascio & Guzzo, 2022).

The strengths of Social Learning Theory are its emphasis on observable behavior, and its ability to explain the importance of environmental and social factors in the development of substance use. It is especially useful for determining the role of family and peer modelling of drug-related behavior, making it an important tool for prevention programs. However, one weakness is that it can oversimplify the complexity involved in substance abuse by placing a heavy focus on observational learning while underestimating biological or psychological or structural factors ranging from genetic predispositions or socioeconomic conditions to cultural factors. Moreover, some opposition has been raised against the theory by critics who claim that the theory expects all individuals to imitate behaviors they notice, while in practice, personal values and situational factors might moderate this process (Muro & Jeffrey, 2020).

In the light of this study social learning theory can be utilized by looking at the role that family interactions and parental behaviors play in the attitude of students towards drug use. For example, surveys and interviews can be employed to test whether students who saw their parents or guardians use substances are more likely to do the same. The theory may also be useful for developing intervention strategies, such as family-based awareness programs that focus on parents modelling positive behaviors and de-emphasizing permissive attitudes toward drug use. In addition, universities can develop mentorship and peer support programs to offer alternative role models to counter negative family influences. By using this theoretical framework, the study will not only be able to comprehend the pathways that family dynamics plays in drug abuse, but it will also provide suggestions on the practical interventions that can be done to combat the issue in Kenyan private universities (Tomczyk, Isensee, & Hanewinkel, 2021).

2.3 Empirical review

2.3.1 Family Structure

Family structure is the form and arrangement of relationship in a family, which usually consists of parents, children, and other dependents, and the functions each of them has in the formation of the patterns of interactions and developmental results. It includes such variations as nuclear families, single parent households, extended families and blended families. A family set up plays a major role in socialization, value impartation and coping mechanisms which subsequently affect behaviours like substance usage among the young adults. Mkomani (2020), in a survey regarding family structures and youth behavior in Nairobi County, reports that survey design was employed to determine the correlation between the household types and adolescent risk-taking behaviors.

The results showed that teenagers in single-parent and unstable families were more likely to abuse substances than teenagers in stable two parent families, and that the structure of a family is protective.

The empirical evidence also reveal that the structure of the family may influence the nature of communication patterns and parental monitoring as these two factors play a significant role in the prevention of drug abuse. As an illustration, Ndunda (2021) carried out a cross-sectional study in Kenya that aimed at investigating the impact of parental presence and the stability of households on the coping strategies of university students. The study conducted via structured questionnaires revealed that the students with blended and disrupted families reported more stress and did have a higher propensity to use drugs and alcohol as a way of escape. The research gave the conclusion that stable family structure is better in the provision of emotional support that relates to the decreased risk of drug experimentation, whereas disrupted structure leaves the family vulnerable to such risks.

The significance of the parental roles in the family set ups is supported by another research. Okoth (2022) used a mixed-methods design of surveys and interviews to determine the impact of single-parent and dual-parent households on major health outcomes in a study on parental involvement and risky behaviors among college students. The results showed that dual-parent family's students had stronger parental regulation, greater consistency in discipline, and clear of their expectations about substance use, which were associated with reduced forms of drug abuse. In contrast, single-parent families did not always have time in their hands and therefore could not easily keep a track of the student, especially in economic factors, which led to the increase in vulnerability to substances use. This indicated the way family structure can have a direct effect on the behavioral outcomes due to the parenting practices.

The review of the empirical studies recently conducted indicates that the family structure interacts with the wider social and cultural context to influence the drug use patterns. Wekesa (2023) conducted a study to understand the relationship between family structure and youth substance use in private universities in Kenya using a descriptive survey design that involved three institutions with 300 respondents. The research established that extended family students were impacted in various ways: although some of them enjoyed the benefits of more emotions and money, some were adversely impacted by the intergenerational conflicts and inconsistent parenting. The findings indicated that though family setups offer important support mechanisms, their efficacy in the prevention of drug abuse is subject to quality of the relationships and how often the guidance is given through the family. This points out to the necessity of interventions that do not only target the family composition but also enhance functional relationships in various forms of families.

2.3.2 Parental Communication Patterns

The parental communication patterns are the methods through which the parents and children communicate, express their feelings and provide norms of the family system. Such patterns may be open and supportive, in which dialogue fosters trust and transparency, or they may be closed and restrictive and involve scanty sharing and authoritarian styles. Communicative style and quality between children and their parents are key determinants in influencing the decision-making, coping, and vulnerability to risky behaviors among adolescents like drug abuse. Ochieng (2020) states that in a research study on parental communication and youth behavior in Kisumu County, the descriptive survey design was used to study how parental dialogue affects lifestyle choices among adolescents. The research found out that the students having open communication with the parents were less likely to experiment with drugs and used drugs because they felt supported and guided on how to deal with stress and peer influence.

Empirical research also reveals the effects of the use of communication strategies on the substance use outcomes among university students. An example is a cross-sectional study by Mwangi (2021) to determine the connection between parental communication styles and drug abuse of students in privately funded universities in Nairobi. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data when we distributed 250 questionnaires to the students. The findings indicated that lower drug use rates were greatly related to open communication, the main feature of which was the active listening, respect to each other and encouragement. Conversely, dictatorial forms of communication in which parents dictated without discussion were correlated to greater rates of secrecy and more inclined towards substance abuse. The research concluded that open communication further improves trust and assists parents in successfully persuading their children in making decisions.

Furthermore, it has been indicated that the effects of peer pressure on substance use are mediated by the quality of parental communication. A report by Atieno (2022) on the topic of communication and peer influence on students in privately funded university involved a mixed-method approach, surveys, and focus group discussions. The findings showed that the students that had open lines of communication with their parents, could better withstand peer pressure in using drugs. On the contrary, the learners that faced communication barriers at home were more vulnerable to adverse peer effects because they were not guided or supported

emotionally by the families. This underscored the cushioning effect of effective parental communication in the development of the resilience of students against peer-induced experimentation with drugs.

The dynamics of culture and context contribute to defining the effects of the parental communication patterns on the student behavior. Wanjiru (2023) conducted a descriptive survey using a study sample of 300 participants in a study aimed at investigating the effects of family communication on drug use among university students in Kenya, who were privately enrolled. The study established that students who had families that recorded culturally open and emotional expressive communication patterns had reduced cases of drug abuse. But in those families where generations could not communicate with one another because of the generational barriers or cultural taboos, students were prone to using substances after being guided by their peers. The results highlighted that, in addition to the family structure, the quality and nature of communication in the family influences directly the ability of students to overcome the obstacles related to drug abuse.

2.3.3 Parental Supervision

Parental supervision involves the extent of parental control, guidance and monitoring of child activities, behaviors and social interactions of children with the aim of providing safety and positive development. Practices like being aware of the children's whereabouts, knowing the people they associate with, having clear rules and always maintaining boundaries fall under it. Proper supervision has proved to prevent any chances of engaging in risky activities such as substance abuse by instilling a sense of accountability and deterring contact with deviant peers. Kamau (2020) says that a survey design was employed in a study on parental supervision and adolescent risk behaviors in Nakuru County where he sampled high school students. The results indicated that high parental monitoring highly reduced the likelihood of engaging in substance use, whereas the lack of supervision or inconsistent supervision related to an increased number of drug and alcohol experimentation.

The role of parental oversight in the lives of young adults has been emphasized in recent research in university contexts, to the effect that it persists in the lives of young adults in more independent settings. A cross-sectional study was carried out by Njoroge (2021) among students in the private universities in Nairobi on parental supervision and substance use. Self-administered questionnaires to 280 individuals were used to collect data. The findings indicated that students reporting regular parental oversight including regular check-in and talking about academic and social life experiences had low occurrences of drug abuse as opposed to students with little parental participation. It was determined in the study that despite their higher autonomy, the university students remain vulnerable to risky behaviors because of the ongoing parental interest and supervision.

It has also been identified that parental supervision interacts with peer influences and determines how susceptible students are to drug abuse. Mutua (2022) used a mixed-methods research design, which included surveys and focus group discussions with students at private universities. The study found out that a low level of parental supervision exposed students to more peer pressure; hence, more chances of taking up substance use. On the other hand, the influence of peers on the drug taking behaviours was minimized by high levels of supervision where the communication was open and involved in the life of the students. The results indicated the importance of parental monitoring to alleviate the adverse impact of peer settings on the behaviour of students.

Parental supervision about the use of substances is a time-honoured cultural expectation and family interaction. A descriptive survey study was conducted by Waweru (2023) among 320 students at private universities in Kenya to determine the correlation between family oversight and drug abuse. It was revealed that the students in those families where supervision was proactive and balanced with emotional support were less likely to abuse drugs. But excessive authoritarian or strict monitoring with the absence of equivalent emotional intimacy tended to result in secrecy and unobservable drug consumption. This showed that as much as supervision is a crucial element, it varies according to the quality of parent-child relationship and the ratio of control and support.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework involves the organized description of concepts, theories and variables that is the guiding principle of a study, and which elucidates the relationships between them. It acts as a guide that links the research goals to the knowledge, thus defining the path of the data collection and analysis (Adom et al., 2021).

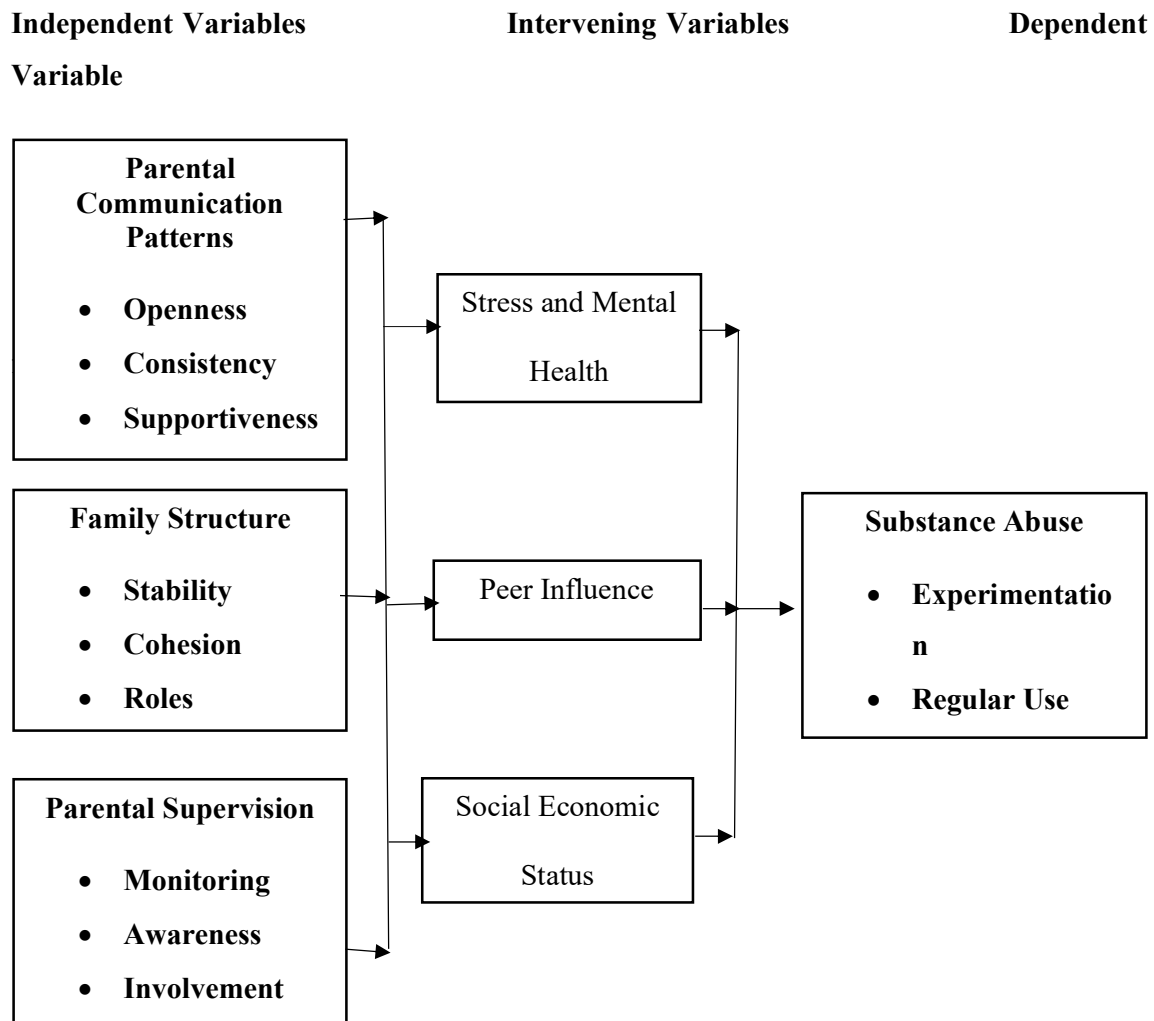


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

2.4.1 Interpretation of Variables

The independent variables are those related to family e.g. family structure, parenting style, communication, support, conflict. The findings indicate that family structure is an important factor in shaping youth behavior, and that stable two-parent families have more protective factors against substance use and abuse than single-parent or disrupted families (Wang et al., 2020). Similarly, parenting styles and open communication between parents and children have been associated with reducing incidences of risky behaviors while neglectful or authoritarian parenting makes students more vulnerable to drug abuse (Ma et al., 2022). Family support systems are also preventative in nature, while unresolved family issues may move students to maladaptive coping such as substance use (Cheteni & Madikizela, 2021).

The dependent variable, drug abuse among students, is a manifestation of this family dynamics behavior. But the relationship is not direct as there are some intervening variables which play a mediating role. For example, peer influence is one of the most powerful factors that determine substance abuse among young people in universities, frequently outranking parental influence in young adult populations (Mutiso et al., 2021). Stress and mental health issues, which are common in an academic setting, also predispose students to substance use as a coping mechanism (Kuria et al., 2020). Moreover, socio-economic status influences the access to resources, with the low-income students commonly being more vulnerable (Okeyo et al., 2021). The university setting and exposure to permissive drug use culture also influence student choices, and availability of counselling services may

aggravate or ameliorate risks based on the availability and quality of counselling services (Ogachi & Njagi, 2022).

Thus, the conceptual framework highlights the fact that, although the family dynamics act as the foundation affecting the outcome of drug abuse behavior, the causes of variation among students are the intervening variables. Mediating factors can also contribute to the problem, and these include students from stable and supportive families still engaging in substance abuse if they are exposed to high peer pressure or lack of adequate mental health support.

2.5 Summary

The second chapter introduced the theoretical and empirical grounds of the investigation of the role of family dynamics and substance abuse of students in the private universities. It started by discussing key theories that describe the relationship between family influences and substance use such as Family Systems Theory, Social Learning Theory, Attachment Theory, Strain Theory, Social Control Theory, and Ecological Systems Theory that have been identified to influence substances abuse vulnerability and or resilience among students because of the family relationships, communication, and the wider social environments. The chapter also presented an empirical review of the important factors in the dynamics of families like the family structure, patterns of communication in the family and parental supervision and how these factors affect the behavior of students. Research findings have indicated that stable family systems promote protective conditions, open communications make them trust others and eliminate risky behaviors and successful supervision minimizes negative peer pressure and drug abuse exposure. In totality, the chapter emphasized the fact that family dynamics have a decisive role in the outcomes of students, as both protective and risk factors exist, and indicated that these effects should be considered when combating drug abuse on the campuses of private universities.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three contains the research methodology that was used in the research with a straightforward description of the procedures and methods through which the objectives of the research were attained. It addresses research design, population of the study, sampling process, data collection and data analysis methods, and the reliability test that was applied in order to make the results correct. The chapter also brings out the ethical considerations that made the study be conducted in an integrity and credibility manner in the research process.

3.2 Research Design

The research design is the blueprint or general outline that enumerates how data are going to be collected, measured and analysed so that the research problem can be solved. It gives some order to the study, showing the steps to be taken, the nature of data to be gathered, the methods to be used in conclusion. The research adopted descriptive research design because it enables the researcher to describe and analyse characteristics, opinions, and behaviors of the target population in a systematic manner without having to manipulate variables. This type of design is especially applicable in coming up with information relating to the connection between family relations and drug abuse among the students in privately owned universities because it gives the researcher the opportunity to capture information that is highly detailed and can be presented in a form that will help in understanding more about the phenomenon that is being studied. Saunders et al. (2019) explain that descriptive research design is effective in offering correct descriptions of events and conditions, thus its appropriateness in the study that seeks to explore and explain existing situations.

3.3 Target Population

Target population refers to the entire number of individuals, groups or entities that share certain attributes to a research problem and out of which a sample is taken to be studied. As Creswell and Creswell (2021) elaborate, it is fundamental to define the target population properly; this will define the extent to which the results can be generalized and make sure that the findings are relevant to the target population. The target population in this research included 1400 students at St. Paul University from first year to fourth year because this group of students was selected as a suitable group towards investigating the role of family dynamics in drug abuse among

students in private universities. The emphasis enables the study to collect data on a specific and relevant population and makes the research results stronger in terms of validity and applicability.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

Sampling procedure is defined as the methodical arrangement of picking a representative fraction of a group to undergo research with the purpose that the findings may be extrapolated to a complete group. In this paper, St. Paul University of 1400 students were the target population, and the sample size was calculated using the formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample Size

N = Total Population

e = Sampling Error of 0.05 (95% Confidence Level)

$$N = 1400 / (1 + 1400(0.05)^2)$$

$$N = 1400 / (1 + 3.5)$$

$$N = 1400 / (4.5)$$

$$N = 311$$

So, a sample size of 311 students was chosen to represent the population. Etikan & Babatope (2022) proposed that a proper sampling process promotes accuracy, minimizes bias and enhances the reliability of the study results through a limited but representative study sample that enables the researchers.

3.4.1 Sampling Frame

A researcher may choose a subset of a group with which he or she will conduct the study as it is known as the sampling Procedure; this is because sampling is a systematic process. Proper sampling process will make sure that the sampled individuals give credible and valid data to be generalized. Stratified random sampling was considered in this study, according to which the target population was stratified by certain characteristics, and random samples were selected in each stratum. This would ease the reduction of sampling bias and make the sample representative especially when the population is heterogeneous. Etikian & Bala (2020) affirm that stratified random sampling fosters the accuracy of findings because all major sub-groups of the population are represented accordingly, and thus this sampling method is suitable when a study aims to include a wide range of views in a specific population.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

Methods of data collection is a systematic approach and tools employed by a researcher to obtain appropriate data on the respondents to address research questions and to meet study objectives. They offer an organized

methodology so that the information retrieved is correct, unchanged, and predictable. Data collection methods employed in this study included structured questionnaires given out via online Google Forms which are convenient, less expensive and reach a large population of the target population. It has been demonstrated that online questionnaires can be used to improve the effectiveness of gathering large scale data and reduce time and geographic distance which makes them effective in conducting research with various participants. Mohajan (2022) writes that data collection methods are vital because they have a direct effect on the quality and credibility of the research results, and digital tools like online forms are becoming strong platforms to collect standardized responses [for example, online questionnaires].

3.6 Research Instruments

Research instruments are the resources and tools in the data collection and analysis to solve the goals of a study. A questionnaire will be used in a proposal as one of the main tools to collect the required data, and it will be designed and delivered using Google Forms, where the participants will be able to provide the required data easily and safely. The use of a Google Form questionnaire provides for wide accessibility, ready distribution and easy collation of the responses for analysis. In this case, research assistance will include the services of trained assistants who will assist in monitoring responses, clarify any issues of concern by the participants, and make the data complete.

In addition to the questionnaire, an interview will be conducted with the Dean of Students at St. Paul's University to gain the expert insight into how family dynamics and substance abuse issues manifest themselves in the student population. This interview presented the institutional perspective, which complemented the responses from the students by introducing the policies, support systems, and challenges encountered by the administration in tackling the problem. The interview guide will include structured and semi-structured questions to accommodate flexibility and depth to responses to provide rich qualitative data to support the quantitative data findings from the questionnaires.

As an example, in the research that involved investigating the influence of family dynamics on drug abuse among students in private universities, the questionnaire in the form of Google Form was sent electronically to the students, follow-up was conducted by the research assistants to increase the response rates, and the interview with the Dean of Students was analyzed thematically to give context to the experiences of students. Ahmad et al. (2021) claim that the online questionnaires are good research tools in that they provide flexibility, cost efficiency and reliability in the collection of huge volumes of data.

3.7 Methods of Data Collection

Methods of data collection are the orderly methods and instruments employed by researchers when gathering pertinent information that answer the goals of a study. Online Google Forms and structured questionnaires were used as the main methods of data collection within the framework of the given research, as they are efficient, cost-effective, and enable the respondents to answer them whenever they find it most convenient. These approaches were especially appropriate when large audience needs to be reached over a brief timeframe, and data entry errors should be kept at a minimum since answers are automatically recorded in electronic formats. Taherdoost (2022) notes that the validity and reliability of research results strongly depend on the type of method

used to collect data, and selecting online questionnaires as a suitable approach to any research project implies the provision of accurate, flexible, and time-sensitive results.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

Data presentation and analysis could be defined as the systematic arrangement, data analysis, interpretation, data presentation in a valid pattern to allow conclusions to be made and utilized to decide. It is the way to interpret raw data to obtain useful information by some means and represent it in the form of some table, chart, or graph. In this study, descriptive analysis will be conducted to summarize and draw the meaning of the data obtained through the questionnaires. This was done in the form of application of frequencies, percentages and measures of central tendency (mean, median and mode) to present a clear picture of the responses. According to Saunders et al. (2023), a descriptive and statistical analysis approach allows the researcher to develop evidence-based information rather than merely present data, which facilitates the development of effective conclusions.

Moreover, to measure how the variables, relate with each other, this study employed multiple regression analysis methods.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

Whereby:

Y = Substance Abuse

β_0 = Constant

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$ = Coefficients of determination

X1 = Parental Communication Patterns

X2 = Family Structure

X3 = Parental Supervision

ϵ = Error term

3.9 Reliability Test

All instruments were pre-tested and piloted to make them clear, culturally appropriate and to fit the objectives of the study. This assisted in finding out possible errors or ambiguities that can affect the quality of data that is being collected. Reliability was stressed to ensure that the instruments are accurate in measuring what they are designed to measure. Moreover, round-the-clock supervision was undertaken during data collection as a way of ensuring uniformity. The accuracy and credibility of the findings were also improved by conducting inter-rater reliability checks as Creswell and Creswell (2020) note.

3.9.1 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the research instrument is valid, that is, whether it measures what it is supposed to measure; and whether the data obtained by the instrument do indeed represent the concept being studied. In this study, the reliability was obtained by exposing the questionnaire and interview guide to expert judgment, including from the Dean of Students and academic supervisors, where the questionnaires will be conducted to ensure the relevance, intelligibility, and congruence between the questions and the purpose of the

study. A pilot was also performed on a small number of learners to find ambiguities and check that the questions are an effective way of gathering the information required. This procedure increased the content validity as well as face validity to assure that the instruments are appropriate for the study setting. According to Taherdoost (2020), the establishment of validity in research instruments is necessary to enhance the accuracy and credibility of the findings and hence the trustworthiness of the results that was used for decision-making and policy recommendations.

3.10 Research Ethical Issues

In this research, all the participants were informed to give informed consent to allow them to participate in the study willingly and fully understand the aim and methodology of the research as well as their rights. Individuals were made fully and concisely aware of the purpose of the study, data being gathered and its intended use giving them a chance to make their informed decision about participating. The research process was also ethical in the highest standards since confidentiality was maintained to the letter and the identity of the participants safeguarded to allow privacy. In addition, cultural sensitivity was taken into consideration so that the study referenced the values, beliefs, and social norms of the participants and thus promote trust and cooperation.

The reduction of any possible psychological distress that might occur in the process of the research was also paid specific attention to, so that the participation of the respondents was harmful to them. All these measures lead to safeguarding of rights of participants and ensuring integrity in research process. Resnik (2023) points out that ethical principles like informed consent, confidentiality, and the good well-being of the participants must be observed when ensuring the credibility and ethics of research. This interview schedule is designed to collect data for a study on *The Role of Family Dynamics and Drug Abuse Among Students in Private Universities in Kenya: A Case of St. Paul University*. All responses provided will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for academic purposes. Your honest and accurate answers will provide valuable insights that will contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between family dynamics and drug abuse, which may help in developing targeted interventions and support programs. Please answer all questions truthfully and to the best of your knowledge

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation of the data collected to analyze and interpret it. The chapter starts by describing the response rate and how the data was prepared to be analyzed. It further gives a clear analysis of the results in relation to the study objectives and where necessary, it uses both the descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Patterns, relationships, and trends in the data are illustrated using tables, charts, and narratives. The results are presented in a way that corresponds with research questions thus making sure that all the objectives are addressed in a systematic manner. All in all, this chapter forms the empirical basis, under which the discussion and findings of the study will be conducted.

4.2.1 Parental Communication Patterns

This part gives a descriptive analysis of the patterns of parental communication among the respondents in terms of nature, frequency and openness of family interactions. It generalizes the information to draw general patterns and the differences in communication.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My parents openly discuss issues related to substance use and its consequences with me.	2.23	1.174
I feel comfortable sharing personal challenges with my parents without fear of judgment.	2.08	.843
My parents consistently set and communicate clear rules about substance use.	2.46	1.145
My parents' messages about substance use remain the same over time and across situations.	2.32	1.039
My parents provide emotional support when I face peer pressure related to substance.	2.08	.770
My parents actively encourage me to make healthy, drug-free choices.	2.28	1.043

The findings reveal that the patterns of communication among parents among respondents are generally low in all the aspects measured. The mean of the statement regarding the openness with parents in discussing drug use is 2.23 (SD = 1.174), which means that they do not discuss this issue openly. On the same note, the comfort of discussing personal struggles with parents is low with a mean of 2.08 (SD = 0.843) indicating that a significant number of the respondents do not feel comfortable talking openly. The clear rules about drug use, which are set and communicated by parents, record slightly higher mean of 2.46 (SD = 1.145) whereas the mean of messages over time is 2.32 (SD = 1.039), and both are below the average level, indicating weak communication structures. Additionally, parental emotional support in case of peer pressure associated with drugs has a mean of 2.08 (SD = 0.770), which indicates that this support was not highly experienced by the respondents. Parental support in making healthy and drug-free decisions is also low with an average of 2.28 (SD = 1.043). The values of standard deviations (between 0.770 and 1.174) indicate moderate dispersion of responses, i.e. although there are some respondents who have a better communication experience, most of them report low scores. In general, the results indicate that the parental communication about openness, support, and guidance is generally low among the respondents.

4.2.2 Family Structure

This part entails a descriptive analysis of family structure which involves the distribution of the respondents in various family structures. It provides a clear description of the most popular family arrangement in the sample.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My family provides a stable environment that supports my well-being and decision-making.	2.42	1.117
Changes in my family's structure or circumstances have affected my attitudes towards drug use.	2.12	.762
My family members share a strong bond and spend time together regularly.	2.27	1.026
I feel a sense of belonging and connection with my family.	2.14	1.145
My family members have clearly defined roles that guide responsibilities at home.	2.07	.848
Parental roles in my family are well established and help guide my behavior.	2.37	1.129

The outcomes show that, in most cases, the respondents have a low positive family structure as the mean scores are all below the mean. The average of the statement that the family provides a stable environment is 2.42 (SD = 1.117) implying that many respondents do not strongly view the home environment as a stable environment. On the same note, the effect of family structure change on drug use attitudes has a mean of 2.12 (SD = 0.762), which shows that the change is present but not well recognized by majority of the respondents. The level of strong connection and time spent together with the family members provides a mean of 2.27 (SD = 1.026), and the sense of belonging and connection to the family is also low with a mean of 2.14 (SD = 1.145).

Also, roles in the family are the most specified with a minimum mean of 2.07 (SD = 0.848), which implies that most respondents have unclear roles at home. The well-established parental roles demonstrate a somewhat greater mean of 2.37 (SD = 1.129), yet they still represent a rather weak framework. The standard deviation scores of 0.762 to 1.145 show that there is moderate variation in responses, i.e. although some of the respondents are reporting stronger family structures, most report weaker or less defined ones. Overall, the results indicate that the level of stability, bonding, role clarity, and the feeling of belonging in the families is low among the respondents.

4.2.3 Parental Supervision

This part is a descriptive study of parental supervision, which will focus on the frequency of monitoring and directing the activities of children by parents. It brings out the overall trends and disparities in amounts of surveillance.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My parents regularly monitor my activities and social interactions.	2.14	1.083
My parents keep track of my whereabouts when I am not at home.	2.32	1.026
My parents are aware of the friends I spend most of my time with.	2.57	.913
My parents know about my daily routines and lifestyle choices.	2.15	1.155
My parents are actively involved in my academic and personal life.	2.10	.885
My parents participate in important decisions that affect my well-being.	2.32	1.090

The findings demonstrate relatively low parental supervision among the respondents since all the means are below the mean. A mean of 2.14 (SD = 1.083) is obtained from regular monitoring of the activities and social interactions, which implies that most respondents are not strongly monitored. Parental knowledge about everyday habits and way of life is similarly on low mean of 2.15 (SD = 1.155), active participation in academic and personal life has even lower mean, 2.10 (SD = 0.885). These results indicate the low parental involvement in the main aspects of the lives of adolescents. There is a slight increase in means of parents who follow-up whereabouts (mean = 2.32, SD = 1.026) and those involved in making important decisions (mean = 2.32, SD = 1.090), which nonetheless point to relatively weak supervision.

The maximum score is parental awareness of friends, 2.57 (SD = 0.913), which implies that it is the most practiced supervision element, but it is still below average. The standard deviation scores of 0.885 to 1.155 indicate moderate change in the responses, implying that although some respondents have high levels of supervision, most respondents have low levels of parental involvement. All the above results imply that parental monitoring, involvement, and awareness among the respondents are generally not effective.

4.2.4 Substance Abuse

This part includes a descriptive study of drug abuse in respondents with emphasis on the rate of use and the frequency of substance use. It generalizes the data to present general trends of drug use among the sample.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have experimented with drugs at some point in my life, influenced by curiosity or social interactions within the university setting.	2.13	1.129
I have tried using drugs at least once, reflecting exposure to drug-related influences among students in private universities in Kenya.	2.34	1.185
I regularly use drugs as part of my lifestyle, which may be influenced by family dynamics and peer pressure.	2.41	1.105
I often rely on drugs to cope with stress, academic pressure, or personal challenges experienced while studying in a private university.	2.21	1.146
I find it difficult to stop using drugs once I start, indicating the influence of addiction and family support systems on my behavior.	2.04	.825
I experience strong cravings or dependency on drugs, demonstrating how family dynamics may play a role in drug abuse among students.	2.31	1.095

The findings show that drug abuse rates among the respondents are generally low to moderate, with all the mean scores being below the midpoint yet being located relatively close to the midpoint than the rest of the variables. Drug experimentation has a record of 2.13 (SD = 1.129) which means that several respondents have been exposed to drugs, but not at high concentrations. Likewise, the mean of trying drugs once at least is slightly higher 2.34 (SD = 1.185), which means that there is a significant amount of initial exposure among the respondents. Mean of regular drug use is the highest at 2.41 (SD=1.105), implying that even though it is not very common, there is moderate presence of continued use in the sample. The mean of coping with stress with the use of drugs is 2.21 (SD = 1.146) which shows that some respondents use drugs as a coping strategy.

Moreover, the lowest mean of 2.04 (SD = 0.825) is recorded under difficulty in stopping the use of drugs, which shows that dependency or addiction is not strongly reported by the respondents. Nevertheless, the experience of cravings or dependency still has a means of 2.31 (SD = 1.095), indicating that there is some degree of dependency. The values of standard deviation, (0.825 to 1.185) are moderate variability, which implies that although a large proportion of the respondents report low levels of drug abuse, there are those who report higher

levels. Overall, the results indicate that drug abuse is observed among respondents at a low to moderate level and is more common in the type of experimentation and occasional use than in extreme dependency.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

This part will discuss the correlation analysis of the research variables, which will involve the analysis of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. It dwells on the intensity and the direction of the relationships between the variables. The findings give the clue to the relationship between the variables.

		Drug Abuse	Parental Communicati on Patterns	Family Structure
Drug Abuse	Pearson Correlation	1	.297**	.437**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
Parental Communication Patterns	Pearson Correlation	.297**	1	-.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.519
Family Structure	Pearson Correlation	.437**	-.037	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.519	
	Pearson Correlation	.409**	-.100	.516**

The correlation findings indicate that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between drug abuse and all the independent variables. Specifically, drug abuse is positively correlated with parental communication patterns ($r = 0.297$, $p = 0.000$), family structure ($r = 0.437$, $p = 0.000$), and parental supervision ($r = 0.409$, $p = 0.000$). The highest correlation is between drug abuse and family structure, then there are parental supervision and a weaker but significant correlation between parental communication patterns. All these relationships have significant levels at the 0.01 level which means that the alterations in these variables are correlated with changes in drug abuse in respondents.

Conversely, the correlation between the independent variables is mixed. The family structure ($r = -0.037$, $p = 0.519$) and parental supervision ($r = -0.100$, $p = 0.079$) have weak and non-significant negative relationship with parental communication patterns. The relationship between family structure and parents' supervision is, however, positive and has a statistically significant relationship ($r = 0.516$, $p = 0.000$), implying that the parental supervision level is positively and statistically significantly related to family structure. Comprehensively, the results suggest that although the relationship between all the independent variables, there is only strong relationship between family structure and parental supervision.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The results of the analysis reveal that the parental factors and family dynamics are very important in determining the behaviour of adolescents especially in drug abuse. Descriptive investigation shows that there are relatively low rates of parental communication, supervision, and positive family structure among the respondents. The patterns of communication between parents and their children such as openness to discuss drug use, emotional support and encouragement towards healthy choices had low mean scores of between 2.08 and 2.46 indicating weak communication patterns. On the same note, the elements of family structure, including stability, bonding, role clarity, and sense of belonging also scored low mean scores of between 2.07 and 2.42, indicating little support and cohesion in the households.

Parental supervision also proved to be not very high, with the mean score of between 2.10 and 2.57, which implies that there are not much supervision, participation and awareness of what adolescents are doing. The prevalence of drug abuse among the respondents was mostly low to moderate as the experimentation and occasional use were more common than dependency as reflected in the mean scores of 2.04 to 2.41. The correlation analysis also showed that drug abuse is significantly and positively related with parental communication patterns ($r = 0.297$), family structure ($r = 0.437$), and parental supervision ($r = 0.409$). Family structure and parental supervision were the only independent variables with a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.516$), whereas the parental communication patterns did not have strong and significant correlation with the other variables.

In general, the research demonstrates that weak parental communication, lack of supervision, and low positive family construction are typical of the respondents and these variables are strongly connected to the risk of drug abuse. Although experimentation and occasional use of drugs is more common, the statistics indicate that family related factors can be measured to influence the behavior of adolescents. This moderate difference in the answers also shows that the experiences are different among the respondents with some having a stronger parental support and supervision than others do.

These results highlight the need to implement some specific interventions to empower families and parental involvement. Being more communicative with parents, establishment of clarity of roles and regular supervision, and building of strong family relationships may decrease the vulnerability to substance abuse. Moreover, some of the programs focused on informing parents and caregivers about the impact of poor family structures and poor parental supervision could be used to reduce risky behaviors among the adolescents. In general, it seems that the

enhancement of family-based support systems is crucial regarding the increase of the healthier lifestyle and decrease of the drug-related risks among the youth.

5.2 Conclusion

The paper finds that parenting and family factors play an important role in determining the behaviour of adolescents especially in matters concerning substance abuse. Descriptive analysis indicates that parental communication, supervision and family structure are usually poor among respondents with majority of adolescents recording low openness, emotional support, guidance, monitoring and stability levels of their families. These family dynamic weaknesses are aligned with moderate drug experimentation and occasional use, which implies that the lack of parental involvement and support can be associated with the risky behaviours.

The correlation analysis also confirms that drugs abuse is significantly and positively related to the parental communication patterns, family structure, and parental supervision, with the highest relationships with parental supervision and family structure. This implies that family cohesion, roles, and supervision are poor thus leading adolescents to engage in drug related behaviors. On the other hand, parental communication itself demonstrates a more informal relationship, which indicates a possible limited protective effect of communication without active involvement and structural support.

In general, the results suggest that family structure, supervision, role structure and emotional attachment are key factors that determine whether adolescents will use drugs. Programs that strengthen these factors would then be important in the prevention of drug abuse. The research highlights the fact that the need to bridge any gaps in the family support systems and parental involvement is critical in promoting healthier behavioral patterns and minimizing the risks of substance abuse among adolescents.

To sum up, the study highlights that the family environment is central in influencing the behaviors of adolescents and that enhancing parental communication, parental supervision, and family structure may significantly reduce the risk of drug abuse. Such lessons can guide policymakers, educators, and families to come up with policies that improve family functionality and create safe and supportive settings to support youth development.

5.3 Recommendations

According to the results of the study, it is suggested that parents should improve on the level of communication with their children, by having frequent, free and candid conversations on the use of drugs and its effects. Parents must be empowered with skills on how to offer emotional support and offer a secure environment where teenagers feel free to share personal issues. The development of these communication skills and the consistency and significance of guidance can be facilitated by workshops, counselling, and parenting programs.

It is also important to strengthen family structure. The family must develop clear roles and responsibilities of every member to ensure stability, cohesion and accountability. Promoting a good family relationship, collective decision-making, and belongingness can generate a positive environment that will deter risky behaviour such as drugs. Such interventions may make adolescents feel more at ease with their families and supported in their everyday life.

There should also be an increase in parental supervision and involvement through close monitoring of the activities, social interactions, and peer associations of adolescents. Parents are expected to be involved in major decision making and lead daily activities in order to ensure that the adolescents make responsible decisions. Parents can minimize the exposure to drug-related influences and offer timely interventions as challenges occur by ensuring that the activities are supervised and the parents are involved.

Also, it is proposed to use family-based intervention programs and early awareness campaigns. The schools, universities and community organizations must work together with the families to give them advice on how to be good parents and the repercussions of poor family support. Structured programs and peer-learning should also be used to educate adolescents about the dangers of drug use and ways to cope with them. The combined initiatives can enhance family support mechanisms, adopt healthy decision-making, and curb drug abuse among the youth.

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