

Abstract

This study investigated factors that have led to alcohol abuse among the household heads and its contemporary socioeconomic effects on family life in Kenya. The main objective of the study was to find out the socio-economic impact of alcohol abuse among the Nandi Community. A survey research was used to conduct the study, employing purposive and proportionate stratified sampling to determine the sample size. The target population was the heads of households (mostly male). In female headed households, the female was interviewed. Key informants: the chief; assistant chief; a teacher; village elders, and a pastor were purposively selected. The study also used five case histories which were purposively selected. This comprised families who narrated the stories on how alcohol has adversely affected them (Five family heads were purposively chosen,) this helped the researcher to observe and even quote verbatim). The tools for collecting data included a questionnaire, semi-structured interview guides and direct observations. The findings of the study indicate that: harsh economic conditions have contributed to alcohol abuse; socio-cultural changes have played a role, whereby religious and traditional regulations that used to guard the misuse of alcohol have broken down; marriage stability and emotional wellbeing of the children have been adversely affected and, lastly, that the family has resorted to brewing changaa and busaa for sale. The study recommended that; alternative sources of income should be introduced in order to curb the problem; counselling and rehabilitation centres should be established in the district, and that awareness should be created on the impact of alcohol abuse on the family.