

# **Effects Of Drugs And Substance Abuse On Mugging Among Youths In Kosovo Area - Mathare, Nairobi County**

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**ABSTRACT:** The aim of the study was to explore the effects of substance abuse on mugging amongst the youth aged 18-25 years in Kosovo Area-Mathare, Nairobi County. Specifically the study sought to assess the effects of alcohol dependency, to analyze the effects of narcotics dependency and evaluate the effects of prescribed drugs dependency on mugging among youths in Kosovo-Mathare, Nairobi County. The research was founded on the general theory of crime. The study adopted descriptive research design and adopted stratified sampling. The sample size consisted of 54 youths. Data was analyzed using SPSS Version 20 and then presented in the form of pie Charts, bar graphs and tables. A self-administered closed ended questionnaire was used to collect data. The study found out that, at least 70% of Youths in Kosovo are dependent on alcohol, prescriptive drugs and narcotics. The study also found out that over 70% of the mugging in Kosovo is associated with drugs and substance abuse. The study recommends that the government in partnership with community-based organizations should introduce social activities which can engage youths constructively thereby using their time well. Some of the activities include games and sports which can create a forum in which law enforcement agencies as well as social workers can get a forum to interact freely with these youths so as to foster a mutual relationship with them.

**Key words:** alcohol dependency; mugging; narcotics dependency; prescribed drugs dependency; youths

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Global Report on Human Settlements (2007) Crimes and Violence trend states that the largest proportion of crime in Kenya is committed by youth both as victims and offenders. As is the case all over the world persons who are most likely to offend are also at greatest risk of being victims themselves. For example, on the crime victimization survey contacted found out that 82% of young people who were arrested reported having been mugged. Youth crime is not only significant because of the population distribution of the country (approximately 25% of the population is aged between 15 and 25 years), but over 50 % of convicted prisoners in the country are aged between 16 and 25 years.

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme UN-Habitat Report (2006) states that, many of the people in Kenya's informal settlements such as Mathare live in houses made out of tin and wood and mud. Street crime in particular mugging, is a serious problem and more acute in Nairobi and other large cities. Most street crime involves multiple armed assailants. In some instances, large crowds of street criminals incite criminal activity, which has the potential to

escalate into mob-like violence with little notice. Along with other crimes of opportunity, pickpockets, and thieves often carry out “snatch-and-grab” attacks on city streets in crowded areas and from idle vehicles in traffic (Kenya Crime and Safety Report, 2014). According to National Survey on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA 2012), substance abuse by Kenyans aged between 15 and 65 years of age is attributed to alcohol (13.3%), tobacco (9.1%), cannabis sativa (1%) and heroin (0.1%).

The UN-Habitat Report (2006) indicates that, 87% of Mathare residents are casual labourers or have informal businesses. Most residents are engaged in small-scale petty businesses either in their six by eight feet makeshift housing structures or on narrow open raw sewer filled alley ways, it would take a miracle for these hand-to-mouth investments to blossom into big-time business. The area is characterized by rampant illegal brew and deeper dearth of external support. Average monthly household income in Mathare is less than Kshs 8500 per month (about \$3 per day).

Alcohol and drug abuse is linked to poverty because family resources and earnings are spent on drugs. There is also decreased efficiency hence low wages and loss of employment among other problems. Other socio-economic effects of drugs include: drug induced accidents and violence; child abuse; fear, depression and anxiety hence low productivity; and increased medical bill (National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Conference Report, 2012).

### 1.1 Problem Statement

Kenyans who either do not have a steady income or no income at all tend to inhabit slum areas like Kosovo- Mathare valley. Such slum areas are associated with substance abuse and mugging especially by the youth. Mugging is directed to those assumed to have some income even in broad day light. The targets of mugging are left with cuts, stabs or bruises and at times death. The law enforcement officers avoid such areas because they are at times victims themselves. Crime threatens the wellbeing and economy of the inhabitants of an area and can only be reduced or prevented once the authorities analyze the causes of crime and effect the correct measures to curb it. Thus this study sought to assess the effect of substance abuse on mugging among the youth of Kosovo-Mathare, Nairobi County.

The study was guided by the following objectives

1. To assess the effects of alcohol dependency on mugging among youths in Kosovo-Mathare, Nairobi County.
2. To analyze the effects of Narcotics dependency on mugging among youths in Kosovo-Mathare, Nairobi County.
3. To evaluate the effects of prescribed drugs dependency on mugging among youths in Kosovo-Mathare, Nairobi County

### 1.2 Significance of the Study

The social pillar of Kenya’s Vision 2030 will be addressed by rehabilitating youths and thus ensuring that youth will be in a position to lead a productive life where they can have families devoid of violence within the family setup. The residents and the entire community are bound to benefit as the level of crime is expected to drop. The residents will be able to go about their

income generating activities without fear of attack from the criminals thereby improving on the economy.

The research will help the government through designing appropriate programmes meant to rehabilitate these youths thereby uplifting their economic standards (economic pillar of Kenya's Vision 2030) through reduction of crime. The research will also compare with what was previously done in Kibera to evaluate whether the same problems are faced in Kosovo.

Additionally, the research will address the knowledge gap between the Criminal Justice System, the criminal and the public at large through provision of information which is not readily available in the scholarly literature.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The study was founded on the general theory of crime which is based on choice and free will by Gottfredson and Hirsch (1990), which postulates that crime is the natural consequence of unrestrained human tendencies to seek pleasure and to avoid pain. The theory further asserts that, the essential element of criminality is the absence of self-control. Such control is learned, usually early in life, and once learned, is highly resistant to change. In relations to this, strains or stressors in life increase the likelihood of crime. These strains involve the inability to achieve one's goals, the loss of positive stimuli for example the death of a friend, the loss of valued possessions, or the presentation of negative stimuli like verbal and physical abuse. Individuals who experience these strains become upset, and they may turn to crime in an effort to cope through human tendencies to seek pleasure and to avoid pain. This theory was considered because the dependent variable, mugging, is a type of crime attributed to loss of self control as a result of drug and substance abuse, (alcohol, narcotics and prescription drugs).

Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) saw drug abuse as over-dependence and misuse of one particular drug with or without prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioners. They further identified dangerous drugs like cocaine, Indian hemp (marijuana), morphine, heroin, tobacco, ephedrine, valium five and Chinese capsules as few among the drugs commonly abused by youths. Chikere and Mayowa (2011) found that in a number of school and college surveys in Nigeria, alcohol use is the most common among students, with many drinking students having had their first drink in family settings. Chikere and Mayowa (2011) study postulated that the majority of students affected were initiated into the use of alcohol at a tender age of 16-20 years.

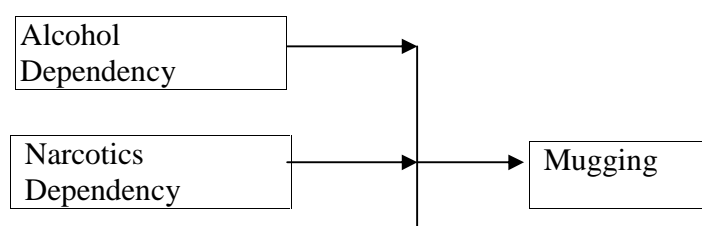
Drug abuse is a matter of grave concern to educational stakeholders, medical practitioners, sociologists, religious leaders, counselors and parents. It is a national and international sensitive challenge that needs urgent attention due to the alarming rate of involvement of the youth. Adewuya (2005) noted that alcohol is most widely used among young people. West and Graham (2005) also agreed that students, as a subset of the youth population, consume large quantities of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Ajake, Isangedihi and Bisong (2009) posited that premarital sexual practices and drug abuse constitute social ills that have been age-long problems in this secondary school system. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) equally confirmed that drug abuse has

been Identified as a serious constraint to effective teaching and learning process in the Nigerian educational system.

Early drug abuse has-been associated with more severe addiction, delinquency, criminality, and psychological and behavioral problems. Igwe and Ojinnaka (2010) argue that the rates of psychiatric disorders are much higher among adolescents with current substance abuse being replicated in many studies. Igwe and Ojinnaka (2010) study concluded that substance-abusing adolescents seem to have a high prevalence of mental health symptoms compared to their peers who do not use substances. Olley (2008) found that the use of alcohol contributes 25% to the total explanatory power of sexual-risky behaviors among adolescents which exposes adolescents to a higher risk of HIV/AIDS and other STD infections. Science and Nutrition (2009) also noted that excessive chewing of kola, consumption of bland coffee and other substances to stay awake, could lead to addiction and substance abuse. Sanni, Udoh, Okediji, Modo and Ezeh(2010) identified vandalism, drug abuse, weapon carrying, alcohol abuse, rape, examination malpractices, school violence, bullying, cultism, truancy, and school drop-outs as anti-social behaviors often associated with juvenile delinquents.

National Council Against Drug Abuse (NACADA, 2012) conducted a study where the main objective was to gain insight into the current trend of drug/substance abuse among the youth in the informal settlements within Nairobi so as to ascertain the major causes and effects of drug abuse and identify types of drugs and substances abused. The study found that the youth drink alcohol on a regular basis, leading to addiction. This in return might have negative effects on families, friends and partners, as well as their mental health. National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD, 2015) reports that in the United States of America, the relationship between drugs and crime is directly and highly correlated and serious drug use can amplify and perpetuate preexisting criminal activity. Narcotics use leads people into criminal activity. According to the study, many illegal drug users commit no other kinds of crimes, and many persons who commit crimes never use illegal drugs.

Though research on drug and substance abuse has been done in the world, there is little literature on the effects of drugs and substance abuse on mugging among youths in Kosovo area - Muthare, Nairobi County has been done. It is recommended that the results of this study be implemented so as to reduce the effects of drug abuse especially among the youth with the aim of making them productive. Thus, the relationship between the dependent and independent variables as was derived from the objectives and empirical study are reflected in the conceptual framework (Figure 1).



ptive Drugs →

**Independent variables**

**Dependent variable**

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted descriptive research design because of its ability to explain the relationships between variables. The study was carried out in Kosovo, Mathare-Nairobi County targeting 537 youths aged between 18-25 years. The total population in Mathare as per 2009 Kenya Census is 215,073 (KNBS, 2009). Mathare is divided into eight wards that are divided into 50 Villages, Kosovo being one of them according to Kenya census of 2009, Kosovo has 537 Youth aged between 18-25 years. The researcher's accessible population consists of 50 youthful participants who mainly come from Kosovo area.

**Table 1: Youth Age Bracket**

Age bracket	No. of Youths (Mathare)	No. of Youths Per Ward	No. of Youths Per Village (N)
18-21 Years	75,188	9,398	188
22-25 Years	139,885	17,485	350
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>215,073</b>	<b>26,884</b>	<b>537</b>

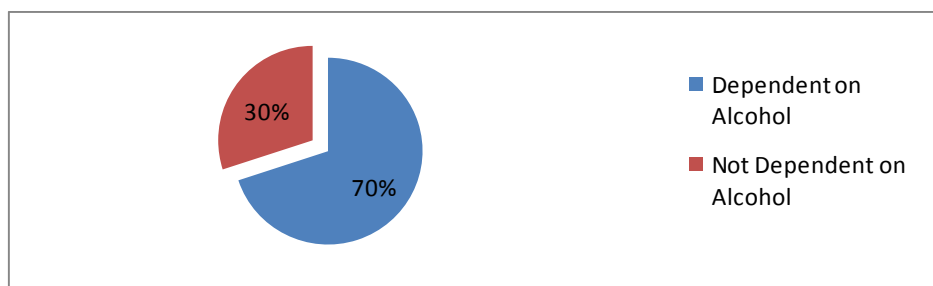
Source: KNBS (2009 Census)

The research used stratified sampling so to divide the population of interest into sub-populations (strata) of age groups. The sample size consisted of 54 youths which was 10 % of 537. The research employed self-administered questionnaires as data collection tool.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The response rate was 80% (40 out of 54 youths) which was deemed appropriate (Mugenda, 2003). According to the study, the highest number of Muggings was mostly perpetrated by youths aged between 18-22 years accounting for over 70 % of mugging cases. The respondents indicated that they either had an experience of being mugged or had witnessed a victim being mugged. Sometimes these acts are committed in broad day light and this leaves the victims or those who witness these acts so much terrified to an extent they are not willing to go about with their normal daily activities for fear they might be attacked.

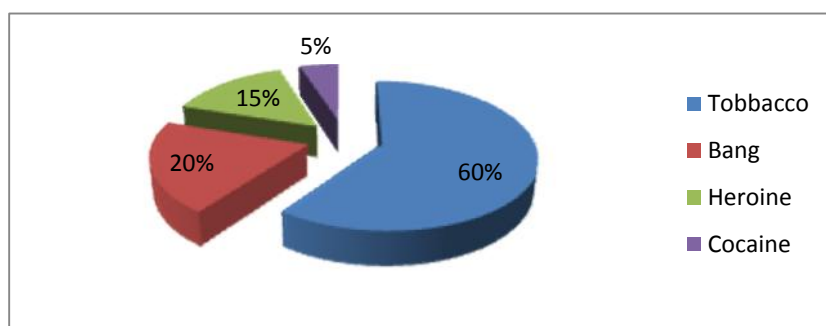
According to the study 70% (28 youths) of the respondents engaged in mugging while under the influence of alcohol. It was evident that these youths abused alcohol so as to alter their perception of the immediate surrounding so that as they perpetrate these acts they are not aware of what is going on around them.



**Figure 2: Alcohol Dependency on Mugging**

According to Kenya Crime and Safety Report (2014) street crime (mugging) is a serious problem and more acute in Nairobi and other large cities. The report outlines that, street crime involves multiple armed assailants. In some instances, large crowds of street criminals inciting criminal activity, which has the potential to escalate into mob-like violence with little notice. Along with other crimes of opportunity, pickpockets, and thieves often carry out “snatch-and-grab” attacks on city streets in crowded areas and from idle vehicles in traffic. This report disagrees with what the situation is on ground.

According to the findings, all respondents who claimed to have engaged in mugging and narcotics were abusers of different types of narcotics. Out of the forty (40) youth, twenty four (24) abused tobacco, eight (8) abused cannabis sativa (bang), six (6) heroine and two (2) abused cocaine. This translated to 60%, 20%, 15% and 5% respectively.

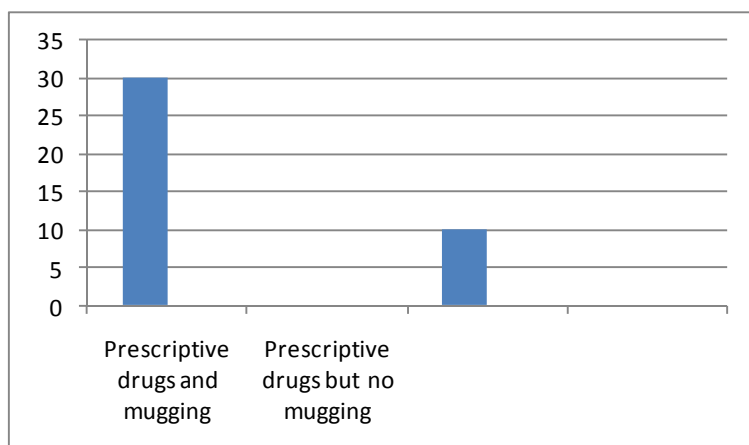


**Figure 3: Narcotics Dependency on Mugging**

According to National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Report (NCADD, 2015), there exists a relationship between drugs and crime which is complex, Narcotics use leads people into criminal activity. However, many illegal drug users commit no other kinds of crimes, and many persons who commit crimes never use illegal drugs. At the most intense levels of drug use, drugs and crime become directly and highly correlated and serious drug use at this level can amplify and perpetuate preexisting criminal activity.

The study found out that Youths in Kosovo were either abusing prescriptive drugs knowingly or unknowingly and had grown dependent on them. Out of the 40 respondents, 30 youths were abusing prescriptive drugs and engaged in mugging and other forms of crime such as burglary

while the remaining 10 were not. This translated to 75% and 25 % respectively. National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Report (2015) states that taking prescription drugs which are not prescribed by a doctor or in a way that has not been recommended by a doctor, can be dangerous to health.



**Figure 4: Prescriptive Drugs Dependency on Mugging**

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

As per this study, chronic unemployment homelessness, discrimination and inability to meet financial goals by people of Kosovo leads to a range of negative emotions such as anger. Individuals who had developed dependency on expensive drugs were the main focus of the study. The study found out that there occurs economic-related crime where an individual commits a crime. The study assumes that, the large amounts of money associated with frequent use of certain illegal drugs constitute an incentive for criminal action.

The study found out that there is drug-crime relationship, the compelling and recurrent need for drugs and their high price lead some users to commit crimes to obtain the money they needed to buy drugs. The research findings revealed that most of those youths who perpetrated these crimes were under the influence of drugs and substances. The research findings revealed that the subjects interviewed who committed crimes of mugging their age brackets was 18-21 and 22-25 years accounting for 70% and 30 % respectively.

Motivation was seen to be the driving force behind those crimes of mugging in order to gain monetary benefits which bring about immediate self-gratification. This was the main reason as to why these youths under the influence of drugs attacked those with income thereby depriving them of their due peace. This in return at times forces some inhabitants to move to other areas which they deem to be safer. Thus, the findings established very strong relationships between, abuse of drugs and poor living conditions as main causes of this form of crime. Nevertheless the adoption of the report by the criminal justice system would lead to the rehabilitation of many youths who engage themselves in criminal activities due to the fact that they are unemployed, because they did not achieve remarkable level of education since they dropped out of school due to lack of school fees or indulging in drugs while still in school. The report will form the basis

for the rehabilitation and again as a crime prevention and control strategy if adopted and implemented by relevant authorities.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH**

### 6.1 Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1. The government in partnership with community-based organizations should introduce social activities which can engage youths constructively thereby using their time well.
2. Activities such as games and sports can be used to forums in which law enforcement agencies and social workers can interact freely with youths.
3. This interaction will enable the law enforcement agencies to understand well some of the possible causes of criminal prevalence among these youths and also serve as a leeway to unearth the existing criminal cartels among these youths altogether.
4. The same interaction with social workers will enable them to understand well the needs of the youths which in turn will assist them to know which community-based project they can introduce so as to cater for their needs.

### 6.2 Areas of Further Research

Relationship between age and crime: A study should be conducted to explore whether there is any significant relationship between age and crime today, specifically looking into the age bracket which is mostly active in criminal activities.

Education as a rehabilitation mechanism: A study should be done to check on cases of criminality involving youths who have gone to school and those who have not so as to conclude whether there is relationship between crime and illiteracy.

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