

## The relationship between levels of Depression and Substance use among students of tertiary institutions in Taita Taveta County, Kenya

Mseri Lawrian Lucas Mwanyika

Depression and substance use are common co-occurring conditions. Sometimes depression has been found to be the precursor of substance use. The aim of this study is to find out the relationship between levels of Depression and Substance Use among students of tertiary institutions in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. In this study, two theories will be used to explain the variables; Wendy Treynor's Depression Theory (2009). The study shall focus on depression levels and its relationship with substance use. The study will use a correlational research design. All the respondents from the four participating tertiary institutions shall be assessed using both Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST). The study will be carried out in selected four tertiary institutions namely, Coast Institute of Technology, St Mary's Teachers' College - Bura, Kenya Medical Training College - Voi and Tsavo Institute of Technology, all in Taita Taveta County (Kenya). CIT was chosen because it is only institute of technology in the county, SMTC was selected because it is the only teachers' college in the county and also it is a private college. KMTC is the only medical college in the county, and TIT is the only private institute of technology in the county. Each of the institutions has its uniqueness in terms of type of management, the professional inclination, the students admitted and geographical location within the county. The study will use a sample of 281 students from the selected institutions. Data will be collected using questionnaires, BDI depres-

sion standardized tool, ASSIST substance use standardized tool, Key Informant Interviews Questionnaires for Deans of Students and Tutors in charge of counseling programs. The captured data will be entered into the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS version 25) software, for analysis. Demographic characteristics of the respondents will be analyzed using descriptive data analysis. The objectives of the study are to find out the prevalence of depression, to examine the prevalence of substance use, to investigate the relationship between different levels of depression according to BDI, and to suggest ways of preventing depression among students of tertiary institutions in Taita Taveta County, Kenya to the first and second hypothesis). A chi-square test will be used for the second objective corresponding to second hypothesis because of the relationship between the variables. Descriptive data analysis will be used to answer the first and third objective. Qualitative data analysis will involve the identification, examination, and interpretation of patterns and themes in textual data to determine how these patterns and themes help to respond to the hypotheses. The expected result is that depression will have a corresponding relationship on substance use on students in tertiary institutions in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The study will be useful to administrators, managers, tutors and policy makers in tertiary institutions in Kenya, Africa and worldwide. It will also be useful to tertiary education quality assurance practitioners and general stakeholders in education at large.