

## Biblical, Pastoral and Theological Justification of the Church Involvement in Addressing the Problem of Alcohol and Drug Abuse with Reference To Presbyterian Church of East Africa

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**Abstract:** Global statistics show persistence of alcohol and drug abuse among the youth. In response to this, religious organizations have come up with Programmes aimed at mitigating alcohol and drug abuse. However, the problem continues to persist despite the significant role religions play in the society. This study analyzed the Biblical, pastoral and theological justification of the Church's involvement in addressing the problem of alcohol and drug abuse with reference to Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). The target population was 2,835,000 members in the PCEA. The accessible population was the Church elders, Parish ministers, Presbytery moderators, the PCEA youth director and the youth members who included the youth abusing alcohol and drugs. Multistage Cluster sampling technique was used to select three PCEA regions from the five regions. Church elders, Parish ministers, youth members and PCEA presbytery moderators formed three clusters. Snowball sampling technique was used to get the youth who are abusing alcohol and drugs. Purposive sampling was used to select the youth director. The study had a total sample of 928 respondents. A descriptive survey research design was used to obtain qualitative data. Instruments for data collection were questionnaires, structured interview schedule and focus group discussions. Data collected using questionnaires was cleaned and coded for analysis using statistical package for social sciences. Tape recorded data from the interview was transcribed verbatim. Data was analyzed qualitatively. Data was presented using frequency tables and discussions. The study established that involvement of the PCEA in mitigating alcohol and drug abuse had Biblical, pastoral and theological justification. The study avers that the Bible warns against the use of alcohol and more specifically its intoxicating effect. The Bible commends self-control with regard to alcohol. Parish ministers used Bible verses to explain that the bible forbids participating for the sake of personal pleasure, in practices that hinder moral judgment or weaken self-control.

**Keywords:** Church, Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Biblical, Pastoral, Theological justification, Mitigation Programmes.

### INTRODUCTION

Globally there has been rapid increase in production and consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs in the last two decades. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [1], there has been an increase in the overall global situation regarding the production, use and health consequences of illicit drugs. According to the United Nations office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention [2], alcohol and drugs destroy lives and communities, undermine sustainable human development and generate crime.

Alcohol problems, including at-risk drinking, drug abuse and dependence are highly prevalent in many countries in Africa. In Africa, an average of 1 in 18 people suffers from drug-use disorders or drug dependence with the youth being the most affected [3]. The vulnerability of Africa to drugs and crime remains

a grave concern, with increasing seizures of heroin indicating the region's role as a key transit area for global drug trafficking routes [4].

Kenya has also been experiencing rapid increase in production, distribution and consumption of multiple drugs of dependence. At the greatest peril are the youth who are deliberately and tactically recruited into alcohol and drug culture through uncontrolled media influences, curiosity, and peer pressure [5]. The government of Kenya enacted a legal and institutional framework to address the problem of alcohol and drug abuse. In 2007, Parliament ratified the formation of the National Campaign against Drug Abuse Authority (NACADA) with a mandate to coordinate a multi-sectoral effort aimed at preventing, controlling and mitigating the menace of alcohol and drug abuse in Kenya. Among the major objectives of the agency in

executing its mandate is to research on various aspects of alcohol and drug abuse and chemical dependence. According to a study by NACADA [6], 8 % of 10-14 year-olds have used some alcohol at least once in their life and about 13 % of them have ever used other drugs such as cigarettes.

A report of the 21<sup>st</sup> General Assembly [7] of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) showed that there was an increase in alcohol and drug abuse among the youth in the Church from 8 to 12 percent [7]. During the PCEA annual youth conference, it was noted that alcohol and drug abuse is one of the greatest challenges facing the youth in the Church. It was agreed that every effort must be made to educate the youth on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse [1]. In response to the challenge of alcohol and drug abuse among the youth, the PCEA has initiated mitigation Programmes. These include youth conferences, seminars, workshops, guidance and counseling, retreats, education on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse, youth camps, revival weeks and weekend challenges and Bible study among others.

In addition, the PCEA has established a drug education desk which in consultation with Theological Education by Extension (TEE) department and the Presbyterian University of East Africa (PUEA) develops alcohol and drug education materials [8]. The Parish ministers with assistance of church elders are directly involved in coordinating the Programmes on alcohol and drug abuse among the youth in the various congregations. Despite the existence of these Programmes the problem of alcohol and drug abuse continues to persist. This study sought to analyze the Biblical, pastoral and theological justification of the Church's involvement in addressing the problem of alcohol and drug abuse with reference to PCEA.

**Objectives**

The study was guided by the following objective:

- To analyze the Biblical, pastoral and theological justification of the Church involvement in

addressing the problem of alcohol and drug abuse with reference to PCEA.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design where qualitative data was collected in order to assess alcohol and drug abuse mitigation Programmes among the youth in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. According to Mugenda & Mugenda [9], a descriptive survey research design is used when examining social issues that exist in communities. This design was therefore deemed appropriate for this study since alcohol and drug abuse is a social problem which has permeated the society and all youth are at a potential risk.

The study was conducted in three regions (Eastern, Nairobi and Mount Kenya) out of the five regions of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The choice of the three regions is justified by the fact that the PCEA regions were administratively designed to take care of social, economic and cultural diversity. The five regions of the PCEA include; Eastern Region, Mount Kenya Region, Central Region, Nairobi Region and Rift Valley Region [8]. The five geographical regions have 53 Presbyteries and 400 Parishes. The PCEA 20<sup>th</sup> General Assembly report [7] show an increase in alcohol and drug abuse among the youth in the Church from 8 to 12 per cent.

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa where the study was conducted has five regions which include; Eastern Region, Mount Kenya Region, Central Region, Nairobi Region and Rift Valley Region. The total population of PCEA is about 2,835,000 according to the statistics of Nkonge [25]. The PCEA has a total of 53 Presbyteries each under a Presbytery Moderator and 400 Parishes each under a Parish Minister. The target population for this study was 2,835,000 PCEA members. The accessible population included the Church elders, Parish ministers, Presbytery moderators, the youth director and the youth members who included the youth abusing alcohol and drugs.

Table 1 shows a summary of the population characteristics in the PCEA in Kenya.

**Table-1: Summary of Population Characteristics of PCEA**

Region	No. of Church Members	No. of Registered Youth population	No. of Church Elders	Parish Ministers	Presbytery Moderators
Eastern	667000	10500	1050	70	9
Mt. Kenya	597000	10400	1360	80	10
Nairobi	587000	14400	1152	72	8
Central	717000	16200	1710	90	15
Rift valley	267000	17600	1408	88	11
Total	2835000	69100	6680	400	53

Source: PCEA Records, 2015

Multistage Cluster Sampling technique was used to select three PCEA regions from the five regions.

According to Bordens and Abbot [10] multistage sampling involves identification of large clusters and

randomly selecting from among them (first stage), then randomly selecting individual elements from the selected clusters. The three selected regions included Eastern region, Mt. Kenya region, and Nairobi region. Each of the three regions represented a cluster. The choice of the three regions is justified by the fact that the PCEA regions were administratively designed to take care of social, economic and cultural diversity. The researcher used a table developed by Kathuri and Pals [11] to select a sample for the youth members, Church elders and Parish ministers in the three regions. Eastern region has 10500 youth, Nairobi region has 14400 youth and Mount Kenya region has 10400 youth. This gives a total of 35300 youth in the three regions. The sample that corresponds with a target population of 35300 is 379 for youth members. However, the sample frame used was 400 to counter non-response rate. Eastern region has 70 Parish ministers, Nairobi region has 72 Parish ministers and Mount Kenya region has 80 Parish ministers. This gives a total of 222 Parish ministers in the 3 regions. The sample that corresponds with a target population of 222 is 144 for Parish ministers. However, the sample frame used was 150 to take care of attrition. Eastern region has 1050 Church elders, Nairobi region has 1152 Church elders and Mount Kenya region has 1360 Church elders. This gives a total of 3562 Church elders in the three regions. The sample that corresponds with a target population of 3562 is 353 for Church elders. However, the sample frame used was 360 to counter non-response rate.

Proportional sampling method was used to access the youth members, Parish ministers and Church elders in proportion to the way they occur in the population. Eastern region generated  $10500/35300 \times 400 = 119$  youth members. Mt. Kenya region generated  $10400/35300 \times 400 = 118$  youth members while Nairobi region generated  $14400/35300 \times 400 = 163$  youth members. This gave a total population of 400 youth members in the 3 regions.

For Parish ministers, Eastern region generated  $70/222 \times 150 = 47$  Parish ministers. Mt. Kenya region generated  $80/222 \times 150 = 54$  Parish ministers while Nairobi region generated  $72/222 \times 150 = 49$  Parish ministers. This gave a total of 150 Parish ministers in the three regions. For the Church elders, Eastern region generated  $1050/3562 \times 360 = 106$  Church elders. Mt. Kenya region generated  $1360/3562 \times 360 = 137$  while Nairobi region generated  $1152/3562 \times 360 = 116$  Church elders. This gave a total of 360 Church elders in the three regions.

All the PCEA Presbytery moderators in the three clusters were included in the sample. According to Kathuri and Pals [11] a population of ten and below cannot be sampled. Eastern region has nine Presbytery moderators; Mt. Kenya region has ten Presbytery moderators while Nairobi region has eight Presbytery moderators. Snowball sampling technique was used to select the youth abusing alcohol and drugs with the help of Parish ministers. Simple random sampling method was used to select one Parish from among the parishes in each of the three clusters. Each of the Parish ministers in the selected Parishes was asked to identify a youth member abusing alcohol and drugs that in turn identified others to form three Focus Groups of seven youth members in each cluster. This is in line with Kombo and Tromp [12] recommendation that a focus group should have six to eight members.

Purposive sampling was used to select the youth director as a key informant due to his direct knowledge on alcohol and drug abuse prevention activities in the PCEA. This is in line with Creswell's [13] recommendation that the researcher needs to choose respondents based on certain criteria that will help arrive at the respondents who are knowledgeable on the aspects that the study variables seek to investigate. The sample for the study was 928 respondents as shown in Table 2.

**Table-2: The Sampling Matrix**

Category of participants	Population	Sample
Youth Director	1	1
Presbytery Moderators	27	27
Parish Ministers	222	150
Youth Members	35300	400
Church Elders	3562	350
Total	39112	928

Data was collected using four sets of instruments. The instruments were; structured interview schedule, questionnaires, focus group discussions and document review. Saldana [14] says that using multiple data gathering methods guarantees a wider spectrum of diverse perspectives for analysis and representation. Harris [15] argues that limitation of one data collection method can be addressed by an additional method and that multiple data collection methods enhance credibility and trustworthiness. Structured interview

guide was used for the PCEA youth Director, Presbytery Moderators, Parish ministers and Church elders. Questionnaires were administered to the youth members. Focus Group Discussions were used for the youth abusing alcohol and drugs. The researcher reviewed documents available in the Church to find out how alcohol and drug abuse Programmes are being implemented.

Data from the field was cleaned, coded and recorded. Data collected by use of the questionnaires, was coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 for windows. The researcher interviewed the PCEA youth director, Presbytery moderators, Parish ministers and the Church elders and made a complete and accurate record of the respondents' answers. The respondents' exact words were recorded verbatim. This recording was facilitated by use of tape recorder to ensure that all the details of the interview were captured. The researcher recorded the information solicited from focus group discussions in a notebook for further analysis. Data was analyzed qualitatively whereby the main themes in the responses were identified. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency counts, percentages and means. Data was presented in summary form using the frequency distribution tables. The researcher then calculated the percentages of responses which were used to make statements about the results identify findings and make conclusions.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### **Biblical, Pastoral and Theological Justification of the Church's Involvement in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Mitigation**

#### **Introduction**

The Bible, for Christians, is the core source of authority concerning human nature, values and prescriptions for healthy living. The presupposition is that God works authoritatively and infallibly through His written Word, but also dynamically in the world and among people. While we look to God's Word as the standard by which to judge all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22), we recognize that the same God who preserved His Word also gave the world order and consistency, created natural laws, created humans with the ability to use logic and reasoning processes to apply Biblical principles to new situations and to understand new experiences, and gave us the ability to develop testing tools to help us understand ourselves and the world around us.

According to Kunhiyop [16], those who argue that it is acceptable for Christians to drink alcohol in moderation make the following points: Wine was included in the offerings made to the Lord (Numbers 15:5,7); Wine is regarded as one of the good things that God has given (Psalms 104:15); Wine is mentioned in the Bible as medicine for those who are enduring physical suffering (Proverbs 31:6); Jesus made wine for the guests at a wedding ceremony (John 2: 1-11). He also instructed his disciples to take wine in remembrance of him (Mark 14:23-25). This means wine was taken as a social activity with a lot of control and therefore issues of drunkenness were prevented.

Paul instructed Timothy to take some wine (1 Timothy 5:23). Paul told Timothy to take some wine meaning that self-control is very important. Lack of

self-control leads to drunkenness. The Bible does not condemn the drinking of alcohol but drunkenness; The Bible commends self-control, not abstinence with regards to alcohol; The Bible recognizes that wine can be medicinal; Church Fathers like Clement of Alexandria and Ambrose supported moderation rather than total abstinence; Not everyone who takes a drink gets drunk; Those who drink moderately still retain self-control; and refusing to drink may be considered anti-social in cultures that require drinking at social functions [16].

Kunhiyop [16] observes that those who argue that Christians should never consume alcohol but should practice total abstinence make the following points: The most important warning and standard set by God was that, "wine was forbidden to priests while ministering" (Leviticus 10:9). Nazirites like Samson and His mother as well were to drink no wine or sekar "fermented drink" (Judges 13:4; Numbers 6:3). They had to stay away from grapes altogether. The Israelites "ate no bread and drank no wine" during the forty years in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 29:6). Kings were to avoid it so as to govern with a clear head (Proverbs 31:4-5). Solomon warns against the use of wine because of its final tragic consequences (Proverbs 23:30-31).

The Bible warns us about the dangers associated with alcohol; Priests were forbidden to drink any alcohol before entering the Tent of Meeting (Leviticus 10: 5-9); Those who had taken a Nazarite vow were forbidden to take strong drink while their vow lasted (Numbers 6:3; 6:20). Samson and John the Baptist, who were Nazarites were forbidden to drink at all (Judges 13:7; Luke 1:15); Drinking can cause others to stumble. Thus, Paul asserts, "It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall" (Romans 14:21). For the same reason, one should not encourage one's neighbors to drink: "Woe to him who gives drinks to his neighbors, pouring it out from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies" (Habakkuk 2:15).

According to Davis [17] the Bible teaches self-control and restraint. Self-control is commanded in Titus 2:2 and 2:6 and is mentioned as a gift of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:23; Drinking is a slippery slope. Many who start as social drinkers end up as excessive drinkers and drunkards; Alcohol kills as every year hundreds of people die in road accidents. Heavy drinkers undermine their own health; Drinking alcohol leads to immoral and irresponsible behavior that can result in loss of employment and poverty; and Drinking wrecks families, breaks up marriages, and leads to the neglect of children whose lives may be ruined; Drunkenness leaves one prone to disgrace and makes one an object of ridicule, as happened to Noah (Genesis 9:20-22); Drunkenness makes one to lose inhibitions.

Lot for example, committed incest with his daughters while drunk (Genesis 19; 31-36); Drunkenness often results in physical injuries as people fall or engage in fights (Proverbs 23:29-35).

The writer of Proverbs describes beer as “a brawler” (Proverbs 20:1); Intoxicating drink affects judgment (Isaiah 28:7); those who are enslaved by strong drink are unwise (Proverbs 20:1); and strong drink is compared to the venom of a viper (Proverbs 23:32); those who get in an intoxicated state (drunkenness) have no inheritance in the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:21). In summary, the Bible warns that drinking alcohol leads to: poverty (Proverbs 21:17; 23:21), strife (Proverbs 23:29, 30), woe and sorrow (Proverbs 23:29, 30), error (Isaiah 28:7), contempt of God’s works (Isaiah 5:12), scorning (Hosea 7:5), and to rioting and wantonness (Romans 13:13) [16].

Given the many negative consequences of the consumption of alcohol in our society, the advantages of total abstinence far outweigh the advantages of drinking alcohol. We should heed the Scriptures’ advice not to “get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit”(Ephesians 5:18). Christians are instructed to learn God’s Word as the path to personal fulfillment, Holiness and healing (2 Timothy 3:15-17). God’s Word gives us instructions regarding decision-making in the course of daily living (Psalms 19:7-8; 119:105). And when we have difficulty making a decision we can seek counsel from others. Biblical counselors are described and commended in the Bible (Proverbs 11:14; 15:22). This conceptual understanding compelled the researcher to delve into a discourse analysis of responses from the clergy to justifying the church’s involvement in alcohol and drug abuse interventions through anchoring their teachings from the Bible.

According to Waruta and Kinoti [18] Pastoral counselling is the art and skill of caring for the well-being of others especially those who need help most. It is the responsibility of church ministers to be available when God’s people are suffering, and to help them towards restoration of their wholeness. Human life is sacred and must be preserved, defended, supported and enhanced as a matter of priority. Those who engage in the task of restoring the wholeness of human life are coworkers with God. The church should therefore be willing and prepared to confront human suffering and the conditions that cause it, following the example of its founder, Jesus Christ [18]. Alcoholism and drug abuse bring suffering and alleviating this suffering becomes the responsibility of Pastors.

Compulsive use of alcohol and drugs may all serve as a temporary solution to feelings of shame, loneliness, depression, or hurt feelings. However, the paradox of addictions is that the more we seek relief,

the more we find misery, and the more we are fed, the more hunger we feel [12]. Mukundi and Mathai [19] add to the debate by arguing that complete liberation from the course of alcoholism and other drugs of dependence can be achieved mainly when the spiritual dimension has been taken care of as man by nature is a spiritual being who has innate quest for fellowship with God. Man’s body machinery is supposed to function as originally designed not under the influence of alcohol and drugs [20].

The clergy have strengths, credibility and have face-to-face contacts with many people in the society [21]. This offers them the opportunity to make a real difference in combating alcohol and drug abuse. Further, the clergy are uniquely poised to break vicious cycle of substance abuse by reaching out with compassion to the affected [21]. The clergy are in the unique position of being able to alter the course of alcohol and drug abuse [21]. This is because they can shape social values, promote responsible behaviour that respects the dignity of all persons and defend the sanctity of life, increase public knowledge and influence opinion; provide charitable resources for spiritual and social care. They have the power to end guilt, denial, stigma and discrimination and open the way to reconciliation and hope, knowledge and healing, prevention and care.

#### **Biblical Justification of the PCEA Involvement in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Mitigation**

The clergy that were involved in the study indicated that there have been many erroneous statements made regarding the Bible’s disposition with regard to drinking alcohol. One of the clergy Rev. Kithinji [22] mentioned that one thing that most Biblical scholars agree on is that the Bible forbids intoxication. Those who justify drinking mention of Jesus converting water to wine. One clergy Rev. Mungai [20] gave his views about Jesus justifying drinking of alcohol,

*The one thing that is probably said more than anything else to justify drinking alcoholic beverages is that Jesus drank wine. Yet there is not a single statement in the Bible that declares that Jesus drank any sort of intoxicating beverage at any time in His life and even worse that He was ever intoxicated. The scripture really explicates the issue of alcohol drinking. We recognize that intoxication is an insult to God. Being Christians we are the temples of the Holy Spirit the dwelling place of the Most High and being intoxicated is a defilement of God’s temple.*

The study identified several relevant Biblical underpinnings of the church’s rationale to engage in alcohol and drug mitigation from questionnaire and interview responses. A critical analysis of the results obtained is presented in this section.

Romans 12:1 “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” Romans 12:1 is important because Christians in the church are to give up the old life, the old way of living, and they are to give up that old man or old nature and put on the new man or new nature. They are to renounce the old, sinful way of life. Christians are commanded to live a life of obedience that follows the divine will of the Lord. This is a Christian’s sacrifice.

The verse illuminates the value of following the divine will of God by not intoxicating oneself. Believers are to live in a way that is acceptable to God. Living a godly life is how Christians are to serve God. Whenever Christians are involved in taking illegal substances like alcohol and drugs, they are not properly serving God with their bodies, but rather are abusing them.

1 Corinthians 6:10 “Nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.” Lopez [23] wrote: “Scholars have presented a number of interpretations of this passage. These views include the following: (a) believers who commit these sins will lose their salvation, (b) people who commit these sins show they were not saved in the first place, (c) believers who commit these sins lose fellowship with the Lord, (d) believers who commit these sins will miss the millennial kingdom, and (e) believers who commit these sins will lose rewards in heaven.”

Jesus in John 10:28-30 states: “and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one.” If a person who is a disciple of Christ is using alcohol or drugs, then he or she is out of fellowship with God. Outside of Christ, all the good works of Christians are still stained with unrighteousness.

1 Corinthians 6:10 indicates that drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God. This means that to be a drunkard, dipsomaniac, or alcoholic is not right in the eyes of God. This justifies the Church’s role in transforming drunkards and substance abusers to sobriety. This does not mean that all substance abusers are lost, as all Christians are sinners and have to deal with the sin that is in their lives. Persons abusing alcohol and drugs can receive penance from God.

1 Corinthians 5:11 “But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler not even to eat with such a one.” 1 Corinthians 5:11 is telling the

Church not to consider drunkards to be a regular part of the church. Paul is not telling the church here not to have anything to do with drunkards, but rather not to consider a drunkard as a regular brother in the fold. This justifies the Church’s role in transforming drunkards and drug abusers from the bondage of alcohol and drugs.

Isaiah 5:11 “Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening, as wine inflames them” Isaiah 5:11 warns against drinking strong drink and wine. The Bible gives a strong warning to the person who has lost control because of drinking. This is the person who either rises early in the morning to get a drink or the person who is so addicted to alcohol that he or she is still drinking, even to the point of drinking all night. Drunkenness is also condemned in Isaiah 5:22, 22:13, 28:1-8.

Many of the interviewed presbytery moderators indicated they in many occasions used these scriptural underpinnings to preach against alcohol and substance abuse:

1 Peter 4:7 “The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.” The Bible tells an individual to be self-controlled and sober minded. Using illegal substances and abusing alcohol can cause a person to completely lose control and become unable to be clearheaded.

1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” Abusing alcohol and drugs allows the devil to get a foothold into individuals’ lives. The devil is like a lion that seeks to destroy lives. Losing control because of substance abuse is one of the greatest ways in which the devil can devour a person. Persons who have lost control of their lives are unable to pray properly or to hear from the Lord. The Bible tells believers to be sober minded and to be watchful. Whenever individuals lose control because of abusing alcohol and drugs, they are not able to be watchful and therefore, the devil can get a grip on them.

Ephesians 5:18 “and do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.” Drunk, means to intoxicate. It means to get drunk and to become intoxicated. The Bible gives Christians a strict warning against a person who has lost control of his or her life. This individual becomes unable to pray properly or to hear from the Lord. This verse is referring to Proverbs 23:30. Paul clearly gives a staunch warning here against losing complete control as the result of getting drunk on wine. This refers to wild, out-of-control living.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God with your body." The body of a Christian is to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit purchased those who trust Christ when He paid for their redemption on the cross. The Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian, and He is there to help Christians from sinning. Believers' bodies are a sacred place where the Holy Spirit dwells. Christians are not to destroy the bodies that God has given them. Christians' physical bodies affect their spiritual well-being. The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and when believers damage their bodies through alcohol and drug abuse, they defile the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise." Whenever Christians lose control because they have had too much wine to drink, they engage in behavior that causes them to be mocked. Whenever persons drink too much strong drink, it can cause them to become brawlers and get into fights in which they would not normally engage if they had not had too much to drink. This justifies the Church's role in transforming drunkards and substance abusers to sobriety.

1 Corinthians 3:17 "If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple." From this scripture it is evident that the body of a Christian is a holy temple that should not be defiled. Many people become destroyed because they cannot handle alcohol and illegal drugs. This justifies the church's role in transforming drunkards and drug abusers to live lives free of alcohol and drugs.

Galatians 5:19-21 "now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." It can be inferred from Galatians 5:19-21 that drunkenness is included in a list of many very bad and dangerous sins. Drunkenness is a work of the flesh. The Bible warns of the great danger of becoming involved in drunkenness. It is possible for a drunk to destroy not only his or her own life, but also the lives of others. This justifies the church's role in transforming drunkards and drug abusers from the bondage of alcohol and drugs.

1 Corinthians 10:13 "no temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." 1 Corinthians 10:13 gives great words of comfort for

those who are suffering substance abuse. With the right help, it is possible for a person to overcome alcohol and drug abuse, and the temptation of substance abuse is not so great that a person is never able to overcome it. This justifies why the church should get involved in the lives of those abusing alcohol and drugs so as to help them get out of the bondage.

Proverbs 31:4 "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to take strong drink." Leaders are warned against getting drunk and having strong drink. Alcohol clouds the mind and can lead to injustice and poor decisions. People in leadership positions who anesthetize with alcohol will eventually compromise their principles.

Hosea 4:11 ". . . Whoredom, wine, and new wine, which take away the understanding." Losing control because of substance abuse can cause a person to have a loss of memory. This justifies the church's role in transforming drunkards and drug abusers to live lives free of alcohol and drugs.

Daniel 1:8 "But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore, he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself." This justifies the church's role in guiding the youth so as to live lives free of alcohol and drugs. It is possible for a Christian to ask for a non-alcoholic drink and to choose not to have alcohol or get involved in taking an illegal substance.

The Biblical teachings regarding alcohol show that the Church stands to be a crucial gate to reaching out to those who are afflicted with substance abuse. This study laid out the gap in the research and has given logical justification for the purpose of this research. A Biblical analysis therefore shows that the Bible explicitly instructs us to refrain from getting high. Scripture specifically instructs us to avoid substance abuse. For example, the apostle Paul writes, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. "Instead, be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). The reason Paul gives for this instruction is that it leads to indulging passions without restraint. He contrasts drunkenness with being filled with the Holy Spirit of God. The principle behind the passage is to stay away from stuff that will confuse your thoughts, weaken your inhibitions and make you more vulnerable to sin. "In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper. Your eyes will see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things" (Proverbs 23:32-33).

From the Biblical analysis it is seen that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. God instructs us to honor Him with our bodies. In 1 Corinthians 6, the apostle Paul condemns sexual immorality. He says, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from

God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We do not own ourselves. Ultimately, we belong to God. He lives inside of those who trust in Him and takes a dim view toward those who destroy His habitation even if they do so in the name of pleasure. The emptiness of drugs takes us away from us true enjoyment in God. Jeremiah compared Israel's search for satisfaction in sin to broken cisterns, man-made reservoirs designed to store water. "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water" (Jeremiah 2:13).

From analysis of the scriptures provided by the clergy who participated in this study, alcohol and drug abuse numbs our will to pursue God and His purposes for our lives. Paul repeatedly instructed his readers to be careful about the decisions they make. The passage immediately before his instruction not to get drunk reads, "Be very careful, then, how you live not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is" (Ephesians 5:15-17).

It is evident from the scriptures that God wants Christians to cultivate the virtue of self-control which is

critical for a disciple of Christ. Self-control is one of the primary virtues of the Christian life. Christians are instructed to be in control of their decision-making processes and not enslaved to anything that erodes their ability to act in ways that are honoring to God. A clear mind which is impossible under the influence of alcohol and drugs is crucial to self-control, which in turn affects our ability to grow as Christians.

Lastly, the scriptures captured in this study show that God not drugs can be trusted to see us through the pain of life. The clergy should therefore embrace the Biblical model of dealing with alcohol and drug addicts. They can do so by helping the addict understand and believe that God alone is able to restore the addict to wholeness. God alone can help an addict overcome completely.

**Pastoral Justification of the PCEA Involvement in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Mitigation**

Audio recorded interviews with participants were undertaken to help in the transcription of the case scenarios provided by the clergy in the PCEA regarding their pastoral role in alcohol and drug abuse mitigation. The Parish ministers who participated in this study provided various pastoral interventions aimed at helping youth that are suffering from alcohol and drug related problems in PCEA. A summary of the results obtained is presented in Table 3.

**Table-3: Pastoral Interventions for Alcohol and Drug Abuse among the Youth in PCEA**

Pastoral Interventions	Frequency	Percentage
Keeping Close Contact with the Youth	2	2.0
Sermons/Preaching	46	38.0
Praying for Addicts	5	4.0
Pastoral Counseling	40	33.0
Open Discussions on Alcohol and Drugs	27	23.0
Total	120	100.0

The results show that majority 46(38%) of the parish ministers indicated that they used sermons as a pastoral intervention for alcohol and drug abuse among the youth in PCEA. Other pastoral interventions included pastoral counseling 40(33%), open discussions on alcohol and drugs 27(23%), praying for addicts 5(4%) and keeping close contact with and monitoring the progress and obstacles that the youth recovering from addiction were facing 2(2%).

**Keeping Close Contact with the Youth**

The study shows that once a youth who is alcoholic or a drug abuser has been engaged in a church programme, it is important that the clergy keeps close contact with him or her to monitor both the progress and the obstacles faced in the process of recovery. This finding is in tandem with results of Foucault's [24] study of pastoral powers that established that pastoral powers can illuminate how therapy seeks to work upon the motives, thoughts, desires and other subjective

aspects of the psychic being of addicts. These pastoral powers are dependent on keeping close contact with the addicts and cannot be exercised without knowing the inside of people's minds, without exploring their souls, without making them reveal their innermost secrets.

The Youth Director and Presbytery moderators argued in the affirmative with regard to Parish ministers' responses on keeping close contact with the youth as part of pastoral intervention for the youth in PCEA affected by alcohol and drug abuse. A verbatim response from one of the presbytery moderators Rev. Ngere [25] confirms when he says: There is need to keep close contact with the youth to understand when the problem is about to brew so that early interventions can be designed. This implies knowledge of closeness with the youth to understand them. The pastorate should lead addicted youth on their way to improve their health.

### **Sermons/Preaching**

The results in Table 3 show that majority 46 (38%) of the Parish ministers indicated that sermons in the pulpit is an appropriate pastoral intervention for alcohol and drug abuse among the youth in PCEA. Mwangi [8] established that most clergy use the pulpit to preach against social evils in the society such as alcohol and drug abuse.

Sermons carefully delivered may provide a spiritual awakening by helping the youth have an experiential reflection of the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse. This rightly justifies preaching or sermons as a pastoral practice in shepherding God's flock.

### **Praying for Addicts**

The results further show that 5(4%) of the parish ministers indicated that they prayed for addicts as part of their pastoral care. Chittaranjan and Rajiv [26] argue that prayer has long been regarded as an important component of recovery from addiction. Religious traditions across the world display beliefs in healing through prayer. The youth director Rev. Githiora [27] had this to say about prayer,

*We ask God ask for his blessing upon all who suffer from addiction for God to strengthen them to reach out for help, to enable them to take the first step to recovery, to bless them with the persistence to persevere in the fight to be free.*

The finding implies that praying for alcohol and drug addicts is one of the pastoral interventions being undertaken by the PCEA clergy. People pray for good health and for relief from illness. Prayer may result in health and healing through one or more of several mechanisms. Prayer may result in benefits that are due to divine intervention including being free from alcohol and drug abuse.

### **Pastoral Counseling**

The results further show that pastoral counseling was cited by 40 Parish ministers accounting for (33%) of the respondents that answered the questionnaire. Sumarel [28] posits that the clergy are in unique positions to offer counseling as an intervention in the chemical dependency process. Pastoral counseling brings to the fore that addiction is really a spiritual disease that can only be cured by a spiritual program of recovery. This implies that pastoral counseling becomes a justifiable intervention for treatment of alcohol and drug addicts. This justifies the church's role in transforming drunkards and drug abusers from the bondage of alcohol and drugs.

### **Open Discussions on Alcohol and Drugs**

The results show that 27(23%) of the parish ministers reported that as a pastoral intervention, they engaged the youth in open discussions on alcohol and drugs. In reviewing the data from the focus groups, it was found that the youth supported their engagement in productive discussions about alcohol and drug use with a clergy or a significant other.

One parish minister provided some helpful strategies for talking about alcohol and drug abuse to the youth as follows:

- Reserve judgment: although it may seem easier to label people who abuse drugs, it is important to listen to them without judging them.
- Allow honesty: sharing thoughts and experiences related to drug abuse often requires people to reveal parts of them that they may have kept hidden from others, so it is important to encourage them to tell the truth.
- Offer support: if the youth admit to struggling with drug abuse, we should be prepared to help them find the professional treatment that they need.

Having a conversation about alcohol and drug abuse requires the clergy to be non-judgmental, honest and supportive to the youth. This justifies the church's role in transforming drunkards and drug abusers from the bondage of alcohol and drugs.

### **Theological Justification of PCEA Involvement in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Mitigation**

The PCEA is involved in many activities and programmes for the benefit of the youth who suffer from alcohol and substance abuse, such as worshipping and liturgy, prayers and preaching, pastoral care and guidance, just to mention a few. This study was premised on the grounds that the church been associated with positive drug-related outcomes in a number of ways. However, reflections on what Christians say about the theological justification for church involvement in alcohol and drug abuse mitigation have not adequately been documented.

This study was an attempt to fill this lacuna from the vantage point of scripture and respondents' views. A summary of evidence generated from the Parish ministers on how the church through its clergy directly influence substance use interventions by serving as a moral compass coming primarily from theological underpinnings is shown in Table 15. Equally compelling in this research is the discussions of use of theology in justifying church involvement in alcohol and drug abuse mitigation. One hundred and twenty Parish ministers provided scriptures that were used in teaching the youth about alcohol and drug abuse. A summary of the findings is presented in Table 4

**Table-4: Theological Interventions for Alcohol and Drug Abuse among the Youth in PCEA**

Theological interventions/teachings	Frequency	Percentage
All intoxicants are prohibited in the Bible and Christian society	13	11.0
To disobey God’s law is to sin against God	15	13.0
The clergy teach that the bible clearly rebukes intoxication.	12	10.0
The Bible Forbids alcohol and drug use for Personal Pleasure that Hinder Our Moral Judgment or Weaken Our Self-Control	35	29.0
The bible teaches that Christians should care for their bodies and use them to serve God	31	26.0
Drug abuse sets a bad example and constitutes fellowship with sin	10	8.0
Drug use is wrong because it tempts those who are involved to participate in other sins as well	4	3.0
Total	120	100.0

The results show that the clergy use a variety of excerpts from the Bible to discourse about alcohol and drug abuse. Among the most reported scriptural excerpts included: All intoxicants are prohibited in the bible and Christian society 13 (11%), to disobey God’s law is to sin against God 15 (13%), the Bible clearly rebukes intoxication 12(10%), the Bible forbids participating, for the sake of personal pleasure, in practices that hinder our moral judgment or weaken our self-control 35 (29%), the Bible teaches that Christians should care for their bodies and use them to serve God 31 (26%), drug abuse sets a bad example and constitutes fellowship with sin 10 (8%) and drug use is wrong because it tempts those who are involved to participate in other sins as well 4 (3%).

**Intoxicants are prohibited in the Bible and Christian Society**

The results show that majority 35(29%) of the Parish ministers reported that they used Bible verses such as Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-24:2; Hosea 4:10-11; Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:13-14, 21 to explain that the bible forbids participating, for the sake of personal pleasure, in practices that hinder our moral judgment or weaken our self-control.

A transcription of audio taped interview with the Presbytery moderators and Youth Director supports that the Bible prohibits all forms of intoxicants. One of the moderators Rev. Ndanyu [29] had this to say,

*Drunkenness is prohibited in the Bible. The Bible clearly rebukes intoxication. Corinthians 6:9-11 - People who are guilty of drunkenness will not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 5:11 - If a church member commits drunkenness and refuses to repent, he should be disciplined. St. Paul advised Timothy to instruct deacons in the church not to be addicted to much wine and he also advised Titus to instruct older women not to be slaves to much wine 1Tim. 3:8; Titus 2:3.*

The PCEA continues to strongly object to substance abuse as a social malignancy. This implies that the clergy and other church leaders should therefore

encourage church members to take an active and highly visible role and to participate in education relative to substance abuse. Jesus tells his disciples in Mathew 5:13: “You are like salt for the whole human race. But if salt loses its saltiness, there is no way to make it salty again. It has become worthless, so it is thrown out and people trample on it. You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it on the lamp stand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.”

**To Disobey God’s Law is to Sin against God**

The results further show that 15 (13%) of the Parish ministers indicated while teaching or preaching to the youth about alcohol and drug abuse, they used the theology of the Bible to show that alcohol and drug abuse is to disobey Gods law. To disobey God’s law is to sin against God. Romans 13:1-5 - God ordained governing authorities. To resist them is to resist God's ordinance. Those who disobey may be punished by the authorities, but they also have harmed their conscience toward God.1 Peter 2:13, 14 - Submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake Titus 3:1. This ought to settle the matter for every true believer. Drug abuse, including marijuana use, is illegal and therefore sinful. A verbatim response from the Youth Director Rev. Githiora [27] is congruent with this finding: do not get drunk on the wine which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

The Scripture admonishes Christians not to be drunk with wine (Ephesians 5:18) and calls drunkenness a sin. The Bible also warns of the dangers of drinking alcohol and by implication, the dangers of taking other kinds of drugs. The acts of the sinful nature are debauchery (wickedness) among others. This rationalizes the theological intervention for alcohol and drug abuse in PCEA.

### **The Clergy teach that the Bible Clearly Rebukes Intoxication**

The results in Table 4 further show that the clergy teaches that the Bible clearly rebukes intoxication as indicated by 12(10%) of the parish ministers that took part in the survey. Supporting this finding, one of the presbytery moderators Rev. Kirima [30] said: The Bible says in Proverbs 23: 30-32; do not join those who drink too much wine.

It is clear that the Bible outlines the evils that come as a result of intoxication by a way of rebuke. Proverbs 23: 30-32 says “those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine in the end it bites like a snake and poisons like viper. The theological justification is that the Bible urges believers to shun and reject the habit of drinking and becoming intoxicated.

### **The Bible Forbids Alcohol and Drug use for Personal Pleasure that Hinder Our Moral Judgment or Weaken Our Self-Control**

It is evident that the Bible forbids participating, for the sake of personal pleasure, in practices that hinder our moral judgment or weaken our self-control. This is according to 35(29%) of the parish ministers that gave their response through an interview. When interviewed the Youth Director Rev. Githiora [27] had this to report,

*In 1 Peter 1:13-17 the Bible says; - Be sober, gird up the loins of your mind so you can avoid lusts and be obedient and holy. This requires being alert. 1 Peter 5:8, 9 - Be sober so we can be on guard for the devil, resist him, and not be devoured by him. Realizing how dangerous Satan is, we should keep our minds clear so we can recognize his deceit and resist his temptations.*

From the findings of this study, it is clear that the clergy were using experiential theology anchored in the Bible to explicate about alcohol and drug abuse. For example, the Bible warns against indulging in too much wine which leads to poor moral judgment and weakens self-control. An experience captured from the Bible shows that after getting drunk with wine Noah undressed in the presence of his children as seen in Genesis 9: 21 “Noah became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent”. This shows that alcohol inhibits one from making moral judgement. This implies that desisting evil is difficult and dangerous, even with the clearest of faculties. That is why the clergy should constantly teach about self-control to keep the youth away from alcohol and drugs.

### **The Bible Teaches that Christians Should Care for their Bodies and Use them to Serve God**

The results indicate that 31(26%) of the parish ministers reported that they used theology to teach that the Bible teaches that Christians should care for their

bodies and use them to serve God. In support of this, one Presbytery moderator Rev. Mugendi [19] said,

*Romans 12:1; – therefore I urge you, in the view of Gods mercy to offer your bodies as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to God. 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20- do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. This teaching reveals that our bodies and life belong to God and are entrusted to us to use to accomplish His will. This is a stewardship. The scripture calls all believers to avoid the practice of consuming alcohol and drugs to the detriment of the body as temples of the Holy Spirit. The PCEA urges her followers to continue to speak out against the use of alcohol and drugs where they are admonished to maintain their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit.*

### **Drug Abuse Sets a Bad Example and Constitutes Fellowship with Sin**

The results show that 10(8%) of the parish ministers indicated that they used the theological underpinning that alcohol and drug abuse sets a bad example and constitutes fellowship with sin. Many passages in the Bible teach Christians to set a good example and avoid fellowship with sinful conduct such as alcohol and drug abuse. A qualitative response generated from one of the presbytery moderators Rev. Nyaga [31] supports the Parish ministers’ response,

*1 Timothy 4:12 – be an example in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity. Even in our youth, our manner of life, purity, etc., should be a good example to others. Matthew 18:6 - Woe to people whose example leads other people to sin. Such people will be punished by God.*

In light of the Holy Scriptures and theological experience concerning the ruinous consequences of the use of alcohol and drugs, and in light of the findings of this study, it is evident that alcohol and drug abuse violates God's word. Therefore, the clergy should hype their advocacy on the consequences of alcohol and drugs as set out in the scripture.

### **Drug Use is Wrong because it Tempts those who are Involved to Participate in other Sins as Well**

The results of this study show that 4(3%) of the parish ministers indicated that the theology of the Bible warns people against using alcohol and drugs as this tempts people to fall farther and deeper into sin. The Youth Director Rev Githiora [27] did mention that: The bible warns us to avoid temptations and evil influences. Proverbs 22:3 says, a prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.

It can be inferred from Proverbs 22:3 that one of the reasons why God condemns intoxication is that, as Christians we face many serious temptations after

alcohol and drug abuse. Drug use is wrong because it tempts those who are involved to participate in other sins as well. Mind-altering drugs weaken the mind's ability to think clearly and to distinguish right from wrong. In order to distinguish right from wrong and then have the will power to resist from alcohol and drugs, our minds must think clearly and control our bodies. The Bible calls this sobriety and self-control.

### CONCLUSION

The study established that involvement of the PCEA in mitigating alcohol and drug abuse had Biblical, pastoral and theological justification. The study avers that the Bible warns against the use of alcohol and more specifically its intoxicating effect. The Bible commends self-control with regard to alcohol. Parish ministers used Bible verses to explain that the bible forbids participating for the sake of personal pleasure, in practices that hinder moral judgment or weaken self-control. Christians should care for their bodies and use them to serve God. Drug abuse sets a bad example and constitutes fellowship with sin and it also tempts those who are involved to participate in other sins as well.

The study findings lead to the conceptualization that, sermons as a pastoral strategy should be strengthened to mitigate the problem of alcohol and drug abuse among the youth in PCEA. In establishing a church programme or providing counsel for a substance abuser, we should be aware of a number of biblical principles Christians should apply. First, Christians should help abusers see the source of their problem. It is not the drink or the drug that is ultimately the problem. Jesus said in Mark 7:19-20 that "whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not go into his heart. Instead, that which proceeds out of the man is what defiles the man. Evil lies in the human heart, not in the bottle or drug. Second, Christians must be willing to bear one another's burdens and provide comfort and counseling. Paul remarks in Galatians 6:1, Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourselves, lest you too be tempted. Third, Christians must have an appreciation for the compulsive, irrational, and even violent nature of substance abuse. The apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans noted this tendency in our nature: "For that which I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate" (Romans 7:15). In recognition of this, the clergy are implored to seize the opportunity to utilize the findings of this study to address problem of alcohol and drug abuse among the youth adherents in PCEA as this segment of the population is vital for church development.

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