

LEVEL OF EXPOSURE TO RISK FACTORS FOR NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AMONG THE YOUTH IN BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have been on the rise in Kenya over the past few years. This has become a major public health concern due to the impacts it has had on the individual's health and socio-economic status as a result of increased health care needs, lost productivity and premature deaths. The four major risk factors of NCDs are; tobacco use, alcohol, physical inactivity and unhealthy diets. These behavioral risk factors mostly affect the youth thus the purpose of this study was to assess the level of exposure to the risk factors for non-communicable diseases among the youth in Bungoma County, Kenya. The objectives were: to examine the prevalence of behavioral risk factors of NCDs among the youths, the NCDs prevalence and the relationship between behavioral risk factors of NCDs and the prevalence of NCDs. The study employed purposive sampling for study area and study population. Five sub-counties in Bungoma County were selected by random sampling from. The respondents' ages ranged from 18-34years. A sample of 150 youths was studied. The data collected was cleaned, coded and entered in the SPSS statistical software for data analysis. The mean, standard deviation and percentages were established. Chi-square was used to establish the relationship between the variables. This study is relevant in increasing the knowledge in the existing literature on the burden of non-communicable diseases among the youth and influence policy formulation that aim at reducing the burden of NCDs and also reversing the trends of NCDs. The study will influence behavior change among the youth reducing their indulgence in the risk factors thus improving their overall health.

Keywords: NCDs, prevalence and behavioral risk factors.