

Destructive Discos in Kilifi County

“Disco Matanga” are funeral parties that normally happens at night, these are events which are considered to be last stage of celebration among the community. Many villagers gather during these parties with an objective of fundraising through activities such as dance competitions where a Disc Jokey (Dj) takes control of the music the whole night.

Disco matangas do not have a specific age limit that is considered since these events are hardly controlled as the focus is on how to get a reputable send off to the dead.

Sexual immorality especially among the young people is the norm and sometimes there are cases of rape targeting vulnerable children and adolescents. Also, instances of drugs and substance abuse are rampant and sometimes people fight which is a normal occurrence during these events. Joining the wasteful ‘fun’ school going children from poor families are directly involved since some parents have developed don’t care attitude to some of their rebellious children.

This behavior of kids going to disco matanga is highly spreading among many children in the community and it has been declared by the authorities that it has led to teenage pregnancies, more cases of drugs and substance abuse and addiction among school going children, and formation of gangs that have become a threat to the community.

Disco in the past was used as a source of entertainment, driving funds and as a way of showing respect to a cherished person who is dead but the latter has evolved to a disaster in the community instead of the fun it used to be.

Disco which was previously considered important to community members during celebrations, weddings, and during tragedies for the benefit of donating or bringing people together with the aim of achieving something in recent years has become an obstacle for many students not to go to school. In Kilifi county, this matter has attracted the attention of the government, which at some point due to increased cases of teenage pregnancies which

was henceforth considered as a national disaster that needed an urgent solution.

According to a latest report from the Kilifi County Health Department, 4091 teenage pregnancies were reported in 2023 alone from girls age between 10 to 18 years. The report indicates that one of the contributing factors is the attendance of disco matanga and poverty among the locals.

In the heart of Kilifi County, Discos, especially those of Matanga, have caused great damage to the extent that many students drop out of school due to drug abuse, promiscuous sex that has contributed to early pregnancies, young people joining violent gangs and many other issues that result from these activities.

In Magarini constituency, Kilifi County for example, Katana Kalugo who is a village elder at Sabaki Kikombe Tele A confirms that discos especially in recent days has caused many young students to get involved in drugs and join dangerous gangs.

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Some children drop out of Sabaki primary school and get involved in Muguka, bhang, and alcohol which is available at the discos where they go every night. Since last year, I have seen children from the age of 16 drop out of school in this area “ Kalugo lamented.



Katana Kalugo Village Elder Kikombe Tele A, Sabaki Ward, Magarini Sub-County, Kilifi County with Samuel Mkare Lulu Fm Reporter.

It is a statement that is consistent with that of David Baya who is also a village elder in area at Sabaki Kikombe Tele B who says that the majority of people who stay up at night at the Disco are school children.

“A large number of people who go to discos, especially matangas, are children who are of school-going age, you will find that it is them who mainly surround the coffin. In the middle of the nights, you find others getting involved in sexual immorality and that’s where you hear early pregnancies are found.” David said.

Disco matanga has contributed to the number of students not returning to school or returning to school late, especially after the long Christmas and New Year celebrations. This is according to Samson Chengo, the deputy head teacher at Sosobora primary school located in Jilore ward, Malindi constituency, Kilifi County. However, he has mentioned that the government has been careful to see that the situation is controlled.

Mweri Mangi who is the deputy chief in the Girmacha-Sosobora area in Jilore ward confirms that there are some families who are financially well-off and forcefully break the law to organize discos. However, he admits that the government has worked to control them.

He also says that through the disco, young people, get involved in crime in order to finance the entrance fees of the discos that take place at night, buy bhang and other alcoholic beverages.

“They have become bad boys ‘Marasta’ in the street, they no longer want to study, they indulge in social evils. They steal goats from people in the neighborhood and then you will find them sitting in clubs, getting drunk and all manners of things. Most of them who dropped out of school have become completely useless people in this community.” Mangi said. So is there hope that children will be allowed to be at school safe away from the destructive discos?

The police commander in Kilifi County, Mrs. Fatuma Ali through a telephone interview says that discos have become a threat to the safety of children especially those who are still studying. “Indeed, in Kilifi County there are children who stay awake all night because of these Disco Matangas. It is necessary for us as the government to intervene. It is wrong for a young child to drink alcohol and be involved in sex and later get pregnant which stops them from continuing with their education.

We have involved community leaders including those in government to fight against this issue. At the moment, through this cooperation, the cases of Discos have decreased significantly in Kilifi County.” Fatuma assured.

Fatuma in the interview also commented that they have done proper sensitization amongst the community leaders on the punishment incase perpetrators are found guilty of offenses involving impregnating under-age girls.

Despite these measures that the government has had to take, there are already some students who are statistics in the number of teenage pregnancies.

However, for the affected students, the government has started to come up with a method to secure those affected and rehabilitate them and later allow them to continue with their education. The main goal is to ensure that children stay in a safe school environment and continue their education for a better future.



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