

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DRUG ABUSE
AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN
KIRINYAGA CENTRAL DIVISION, KIRINYAGA
DISTRICT, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate the factors contributing to drug abuse among secondary school students in Kirinyaga central division. Drug and substance abuse is not only a problem in Kenya but also a global one. Drug abuse has penetrated into learning institutions at a high rate, causing untold suffering to the students, riots, strikes, indiscipline and poor academic performance. This study is therefore expected to contribute information that could be useful in intervention measures that could be undertaken to prevent the use and abuse of drugs in secondary schools in Kirinyaga central division.

The research was conducted in Kirinyaga central division whereby 13 secondary schools were used. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the 260 students. All the 13 head teachers participated in filling the questionnaires. One teacher was selected from each school using simple random sampling. Questionnaires were used for these groups of respondents and questionnaire return rate was 99.7%.

The findings of the study were that the most commonly abused drugs in the division were alcohol, cigarettes, miraa and bhang. Students also had knowledge on drugs like cocaine and heroine. The study findings also found out that drug abuse was mainly caused by peer pressure being the major factor, curiosity, stress, age, mass media, parental influence, and availability of cash.

The study findings also revealed that drug abuse among students has led to poor academic performance, indiscipline, school drop out and poor school attendance.

The findings of the study recommended that there should be a control of availability of drugs in the markets and more so around the schools. Parents should be counselled on the adverse effects of drugs. Peer counselling should be encouraged by organizing seminars and workshops. Stakeholders in education should do a thorough survey on the root cause of drug abuse among learners and deal with it.

The findings from the study also recommended for further studies to be carried out in other divisions to come up with a general assessment of the whole country on the factors contributing to drug abuse among students. There should be a study on the management of drug abuse in Kenya. Ministry of Education should allow expulsion and corporal punishments in schools. Kenya Institute of Education should make sure that teacher's curriculum include drug prevention education. Finally teachers should be trained on how to deal with drug use and abuse.