

**EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN KIUNGA DIVISION IN LAMU COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

Drug abuse is becoming an increasing problem in Kenya. A number of studies carried out in the country show that almost every Kenyan youngster at one time or another experiments with drugs, especially beer and cigarettes. The major cause of concern is that a significant proportion of these young people eventually get addicted posing a threat to their own health and safety, while creating difficulties for their families and the public at large into difficulties. This study sought to establish the current trend of drug abuse among students in Kenyan secondary schools, and to analyze the strategies used to address the problem. The ultimate aim was to propose a programme for prevention and intervention.

The study is a descriptive survey. In view of this, the field survey method was adopted to collect quantitative and qualitative data, using questionnaires and interviews. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in data analysis, thus there was a mixed model research design approach to data analysis. The analysis of structured items was mainly done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The key findings from the study were that drug abuse among students is common; both boys and girls have abused drugs with the majority being in boys' schools; the greatest ratio of drug abusers to non-abusers among the sampled schools are aged between 20 and 22 years; there is a significant relationship between drug abuse and age, use of drugs by other family members and easy access to drugs. A variety of factors contribute to drug abuse with the majority of students citing curiosity, acceptance by peers and ignorance as to the dangers of drug abuse as the main reasons. Both the school administrators and teachers face a number of challenges in an attempting to curb drug abuse in schools.

The study makes a number of recommendations for policy and further research. A number of guidelines are proposed for developing a programme for prevention and intervention.