

**PREVALENCE OF SELF MEDICATION IN
ROYSAMBU CONSTITUENCY, NAIROBI COUNTY**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Self-medication is a human behavior in which an individual uses unprescribed drugs to treat untreated and often undiagnosed medical ailments. Self-medication is often seen as gaining personal independence from established medicine (Hughes, McElnay and Fleming, 2001). This research intended to establish the prevalence of self medication among the residents of Roysambu constituency, Nairobi County where the research took place. The broad objective was to establish self medication trend in the region. Specific objectives included; first, to identify the most common ailments that people self medicate, secondly, identifying the group that self medicates the most among the respondents based on age and gender, thirdly to identify reasons as to why people self medicate in the region.

A cross sectional descriptive research design was used in the study. According to (William, 2006); a cross-sectional study is one that takes place at a single point in time. Brickman and Roy (1998) indicate that descriptive studies can answer questions such as "what is" or "what was". A sample size of 380 was calculated using sample size calculator which was a representation of the people. Secondary data are data and information generated by way of searching the existing and relevant literature, and also from data and information published as official statistics. Primary data, on the other hand, represent a collection of information and data of the original research project generated or collected by the researcher (Cooper and Schindler, 2000). Primary data was collected using questionnaires while secondary data was obtained from IEBC, KNBS and KDS. The responses from the respondents were classified, coded and tabulated to analyze quantitative data using SPSS. Tables and charts were used for further representation of data. All respondents had self medicated within six months prior to the study. The study found out that the major reason patients self medicated was financial constraints. The main source of drugs for self medication was local pharmacies since they were regarded as a cheaper alternative to other health care sources. The most common ailments people self medicated were cough, flu, sore throat, stomach upsets including diarrhoea and constipation, emergency contraception, menstrual cramps, headache, backache. Others included toothache, simple to moderate aches of the upper and lower limbs, People also believed in taking vitamins and other supplements to boost their immune system. The research also found out those respondents with higher education and earned a moderate monthly income self medicated more. Women and respondents below 40 years also self medicated the most in terms of gender and age respectively.