

**FACTORS INFLUENCING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MURANG'A EAST COUNTY,
KENYA.**

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ABSTRACT

Drug abuse is increasing in Kenya. A number of studies have been carried out in the country to find out the causes that make the youngster to experience on the use of drug and substance abuse. The major cause of concern is that significance 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 society at large. The study sought to establish the current trend of drug abuse among students in Kenyan secondary schools and to analyze the strategies to be used to address the problem. The study conducted a review of documented works carried out by other researchers. The study was guided by social learning theory by Albert Bandura. It employed descriptive design and it was carried out in public secondary schools in Murang'a East sub-county. The target population were the guidance and counselling teachers and form three students in all public secondary school in Murang'a East sub-county. The study used stratified random sampling method. This was because it sought to get a balanced and unbiased distribution of the students in all categories of schools, that is, national, county and day schools in Murang'a East sub-county. The study used questionnaires and focus group discussions for data collection purposes. The questionnaires were administered to guidance and counselling teachers while the students were accessed well by focus group discussions. The data was analysed by a way of descriptive statistics and presented in form of frequency tables, percentages and statistics or abstracts.

The study found out that the situation of failure to have constant guidance and counselling programmes between the schools and their students causes them to engage in drugs and substance abuse. This was confirmed by 60% of the respondents. It also found out that the students personalities caused them to engage in drugs and substance abuse. This was attributed to their character traits and allied environmental factors in the growth and developmental processes by 87% of the respondents. The study equally found out that high thresholds of the discipline standards had greatly helped reduce and forestall the drugs and substance abuse practices. This was confirmed by all the respondents.

The study recommended that the schools should always have continuous guidance and counselling programmes for the student fraternity. This will always assure the students of ability to have first hand information about the drugs and substance abuse phenomenal devoid of having them experimenting and getting to explore on their own. The study proposed that the schools should always seek to understand the different individual personality traits of the students as a measure to check the instances of drugs and substance abuse. They should always seek to provide the students with avenues to ventilate and reduce anxiety and performance induced stress in relation to the pressure accruing from academics. The study proposes enforcement of very high discipline standards in the schools to check the situation of drugs and substance abuse. The schools should work towards availing the students with forums for constructive recreation