

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG PATIENTS  
ADMITTED AT THE REHABILITATION CENTRE AT MATHARI NATIONAL  
TEACHING AND REFERRAL HOSPITAL (NAIROBI), KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

Substance abuse is on the increase and causes adverse social, health and economic implications. As a result of this, there has been an increase in the establishment of treatment and rehabilitation services that will assist abusers in recovery and avoid relapse. However, despite the government's efforts to fight drug abuse through different approaches, the vice is still on the increase, hence the current study to determine the factors that contribute to substance abuse. The main objective for this study was to determine the factors contributing to substance abuse among patients admitted at the Mathari Teaching and Referral Hospital's (MNTRH) rehabilitation centre. This is a 700 bed capacity health care facility along the Thika superhighway, opposite Muthaiga police station and about four Kilometers from the city center. Descriptive cross-sectional study design was adopted for this study. The study involved 46 patients admitted at the MNTRH rehabilitation centre. All the 46 patients were interviewed during the study. Ethical approval was acquired from Mount Kenya University ethics and review committee and the MNTRH research committee. An informed consent obtained from the respondents after which they were interviewed by the researcher and responses filled appropriately in the questionnaire. The data collected was entered into analyzed in SPSS version 20 software and analyzed. The results were presented in form of tables and charts. The study results established that the socio-demographic characteristics that influence substance abuse include respondents' age, education status and place of residence. Respondents' related factors that contribute to substance abuse included age at initiation of drugs, various reasons for substance abuse (like to relieve stress, out of curiosity and experimenting on substance abuse and easy accessibility of drugs). The respondents' Socio-cultural factors that contribute to substance abuse included being initiated into substance abuse by relatives including parents and siblings, drug abuse by parents, and community practices like ceremonies and rites of passage. It is therefore recommended that the government and management of the learning institutions should develop strategies to prevent the access of drugs to the youth. There is also need for families to be educated on the signs of substance abuse among their children in order to detect signs of drug abuse early so as to take the necessary remedies. More youth centers and other recreational facilities need to be established in the community to occupy the youth and also assist them to vent out stress and also share on the effects of substance abuse among colleagues. A copy of the study report was handed over to the MNTRH and the findings will also be presented in various nursing forums for relevant as a way of enriching their knowledge on drug abuse and probably formulate a way forward as per the recommendation.