

**FACTORS INFLUENCING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE  
ABUSE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS  
IN MERU MUNICIPALITY IN IMENTI NORTH DISTRICT,  
KENYA**

**BY**

**HELLEN MUTONGA**



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## ABSTRACT

Drug and substance abuse is a major challenge to societies and authorities from all over the world. The main objective of this study was to investigate factors that influence drug and substance abuse among secondary school students in Meru Municipality in Imenti North District. The study adopted descriptive research design. The sample was drawn from students in nine public secondary schools in Meru Municipality with a total 3273 students. The accessible population was from forms two, three and four. Stratified simple random sampling was used to obtain 360 students. A questionnaire was used for data collection. Piloting was done in Kiereni Mixed Secondary School in Chuka Municipality in Meru South District which is both a day and boarding school. Split half technique was used during the pre-testing. The alpha coefficient was 0.71, suggesting that the instruments were reliable. With the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics (chi-square). Findings were presented in frequency tables, percentages and pie-charts. The main reason for drug and substance abuse was peer influence. Substances most commonly abused were social drugs like alcohol, miraa, tobacco as well as indigenous alcoholic drinks. Drug abuse was strongly dependent on age of respondents, easy availability of drugs and having a family member who abuses drugs. Sources of drugs are mostly the low economic areas around the schools. The study recommends that the government and other stakeholders should institute a greater public awareness campaign especially for the most vulnerable groups to educate them on the side effects of drug and substance abuse.