The problem of drug use and abuse is not only an issue of concern to the general public but also in our institutions of learning. The statistics from the child welfare society of Kenya are alarming. They show that one out of two pupils is believed to be using drugs while five out of ten non-school going children are addicts. The marked increase in consumption of both legal and illegal drugs in our society is continually highlighted in the local dailies and the government has been showing increasing concern about this problem. Most researchers done in Kenya have shown evidence of drug use and abuse among students especially those in secondary schools. This study focuses on factors contributing to drug use and abuse among public secondary school students in Kiambu Division of Kiambu District.

To realize the purpose of the study, a descriptive survey design was adopted. Primary data were collected by use of questionnaires. The questionnaires contained both open-ended and structured questions, which targeted students, teachers and the headteachers. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data processing and analysis. The first stage of processing and analysis involved computation of frequencies, and percentages. The second stage involved testing of hypotheses by use of chi-square to test for independence between observation made and patterns of association, respectively.

The study revealed that the prevalence of drug abuse in secondary schools in Kiambu District is high. It also showed that there was a significant difference in the prevalence of drug abuse on the basis of gender, age, and the person a student lives with. The most common types of drug abused by the students were cigarettes, alcohol and bhang. It further showed that the main sources of drug to the students were from friends and from the shops. The major influences to drug abuse were friends, drug abusing parents and siblings. The study revealed that the most common method used to discourage drugs in schools was through guidance and counselling.

The study includes that the problem of drug abuse in the schools was far from being solved. However, means exist of effectively using guidance and counselling to discourage drug abuse. The study recommends that guidance and Counselling departments should be upgraded by furnishing them with current resource materials and the teachers be in-serviced.