The rate at which young people in Kenya are abusing drugs is alarming and has been found to be the main cause of mental health problems among the youth. This study aimed to establish the factors that influence use of drugs among the youth in Kenya with specific focus on the Kibera slum in Nairobi. The study investigated the influence of peer pressure on the use of drugs among the youth, explored the influence of poverty on use of drugs among the youth, established the role that neighbours play in availing drugs to the youth and assessed the influence of media on use of drugs among the youth in Kibera slum. The study used descriptive research design where the target population was the youth in Kibera who use drugs, parents, teachers and government administrators.

Purposive sampling was used to select 75 youths using drugs who were identified through observation and snowballing. The study will then sample 10 parents of the sampled youth together with all the 5 Chiefs and the District Commissioner in the region. The main respondents comprised a majority of male and that most respondents had primary school education. From the main categories listed some of the drugs commonly abused included: alcohol, glue, "khat", Bhang, cigarettes and piritons. Findings showed that mass media and advertising had a large extent of agreement on influencing youth to abuse drugs; poverty, peer pressure and availability of drugs in the community. Some of the strategies that work include involving parents; use of rehabilitation centres; and reduced availability of drugs. Challenges faced were a rebellious youth, poverty inadequate database and inadequate knowledge and skills. It was recommended that the economic status of community members be taken care of; improve rehabilitation centres; enhance recreational facilities for the youth. These strategies may alleviate abuse of drugs among the youth.
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