

**SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN PREVENTION OF DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
AMONG THE YOUTH IN SELECTED INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS OF  
NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Disaster Management and Humanitarian  
Assistance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology**

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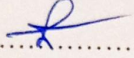


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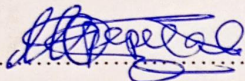
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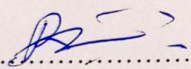
The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology the draft thesis titled “**Social Media Use in Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse among Youth in Selected Informal Settlements in Nairobi County, Kenya.**”

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents Mr. Wilson Koech and the late Mrs Elizabeth Koech for inspiring me to value education, my wife Pam and sons Austin and Adams for their patience and my siblings for their support in the course of this study.



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## ABSTRACT

According to a World Drug Report of 2018, drug use among young people remains higher than among older people. Drug control strategy has been reactionary and despite the growing popularity of society's use of social media, researchers have conducted minimal studies on the consequences social media has on Drug and Substance abuse among the youth. Specifically, the study investigated the nature and the extent of Social Media utilized in management of Drug and Substance Abuse, evaluated the preferences and benefits of using Social Media in management of Drug and Substance Abuse in informal settlements, analyzed the innovations and opportunities in Social Media for management of Drug Abuse and assessed the challenges of using Social Media to prevent Drug and Substance Abuse in informal settlements in Nairobi County. The study is based on Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) where by individuals determine their own behavior while being influenced by the environmental factors. It is also guided by the Community Readiness Model which offers a framework for influencing behavior through modifying social contexts to support the desired behavior. This research is a cross-sectional descriptive design to examine the role played by Social Media in prevention of drug abuse among the youth in informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya. The study population was the youth both in and out of school in Embakasi , Imara Daima and Mukuru *kwa* Njenga locations. For this study purposive sampling, snowballing and systematic random sampling approach were adopted. Purposive sampling was used to identify groups for the survey and was generated by focusing on the 32 groups. The sample size was 210 respondents who were distributed proportionately to the three selected study areas. Seventy two respondents were randomly selected from Embakasi , 53 from Imara Daima and 85 from Mukuru *Kwa* Njenga. Thirty key informants from the study area were recruited. Interviews were used to collect data from key informants and questionnaires from youth and their leaders. Qualitatively, data was given in form of text whereas quantitatively, descriptive statistics including standard deviation and frequency distribution were used to describe given samples. Multiple Regression, ANOVA and Chi square were used to analyze data quantitatively. Cannabis (Bhang) is the most abused substance with 50% of the youth in the slums smoking it. The youth aged 18 to 24 years have the highest levels of drug abuse rates at 73.5%. WhatsApp was the widely used social media as indicated by 54% of the respondents. It was however noted that the connection was not on issues of Drug and Substance Abuse. Though many young people access many social media sites and are in social media groups, it has no impact on management of drug and substance abuse among the youth in slums in Nairobi County. Only 23.2% of the respondents agreed that strategies adopted by the youth, their leaders and the government had some effect on prevention on drug and substance abuse in the selected informal settlements of Nairobi County. Statically, Social media has no effect on drug abuse consumption rates in informal settlements due to many challenges. Government and other stakeholders should allocate more resources in the fight against drug and substance abuse in the informal settlements and encourage the youth to use social media platforms in a beneficial manner. Prevention strategies should take into account complex interactions so as to identify relevant targets programs and policies.



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