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## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-52038

Date: 02-06-2025

**Title: DETERMINANTS OF SUBSTANCE USE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NYARUGENGE DISTRICT, RWANDA**

**Recommendation:**

- Accept as it is.....**YES**.....
- Accept after minor revision.....
- Accept after major revision .....
- Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			√	
Techn. Quality			√	
Clarity			√	
Significance			√	

**Reviewer's Name:** Shafiya Akhter

**Reviewer's Decision about Paper:**      **Recommended for Publication.**

**Comments** (*Use additional pages, if required*)

### *Reviewer's Comment / Report*

**Scope and Relevance:**

The manuscript addresses a highly relevant public health issue with both local and global significance. The focus on adolescent substance use in Rwanda fills a notable gap in empirical research and offers context-specific data valuable for education, health policy, and community engagement strategies. The subject is timely, and the geographic focus on Nyarugenge District contributes to the specificity and applicability of the findings.

**Abstract and Summary:**

The abstract is comprehensive and clearly outlines the objectives, methodology, key findings,

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and conclusions of the study. The use of statistical indicators such as odds ratios (OR) and adjusted odds ratios (AOR) enhances the quantitative depth. The abstract effectively captures the multidimensional nature of the study and communicates the practical implications for stakeholders such as schools, families, policymakers, and health professionals.

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### Introduction and Rationale:

The introduction provides sufficient background to frame the issue of substance use among adolescents. It establishes the importance of the study in the broader African and Rwandan context and identifies the gap in existing literature. The research objectives are clearly stated and appropriately focused on prevalence and determinants.

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### Methodology:

The methodology is rigorous and well-described. The use of a cross-sectional quantitative design is appropriate for the study objectives. The sampling method (stratified sampling based on Taro Yamane's formula) ensures representativeness, and the selection of two schools—Lycée de Kigali and College de Saint Andre—adds specificity to the context. The use of the Global School-based Health Survey (GSHS) as a data collection tool adds credibility and standardization to the approach. Data analysis using SPSS version 25 is standard and well-justified.

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### Results and Analysis:

The results section is analytically sound and statistically robust. The finding that 27.4% of students reported substance use is notable and well contextualized. The use of bivariate and multivariate analyses enhances the interpretative value of the results. Identifying determinants such as peer influence, family behavior, access to technology, and financial factors provides a comprehensive view of the issue. The detailed presentation of odds ratios strengthens the empirical foundation of the findings.

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### Discussion and Interpretation:

The discussion interprets the findings in relation to the broader literature and social context. The exploration of how demographic, social, and technological variables intersect to influence substance use adds depth to the analysis. The emphasis on factors such as social media exposure, parental supervision, and peer dynamics is particularly insightful. The study effectively links individual behaviors to broader societal trends and policy considerations.

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### Conclusion and Implications:

The conclusion provides a strong synthesis of the study's implications, reiterating the complexity of adolescent substance use and highlighting the multi-sectoral response required. The emphasis on education, parental involvement, peer relationships, and media literacy offers a practical framework for future intervention. The recommendation for further research into long-term effects and program effectiveness adds value for academic and policy audiences.

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### Language and Presentation:

The manuscript is well-written, professionally structured, and logically organized. The tone is scholarly, and the language is precise. Statistical and technical terms are appropriately used, and the narrative remains accessible to a multidisciplinary readership.

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### Overall Assessment:

This is a well-executed and significant study that provides valuable insights into the determinants of adolescent substance use in Rwanda. The manuscript is a substantial contribution to the fields of public health, education, and youth development. It is suitable for academic publication and will serve as a useful reference for policymakers, educators, and health professionals working to address substance use among adolescents.

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