
**AN EVALUATION OF DRUG ABUSE AND ITS EFFECTS ON EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AMONG
YOUTH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF KALIRO TOWN COUNCIL.**

Mukisa Isaac Lennon¹, Babirye Shamirah²

1,2 Metropolitan International University

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of drug abuse on academic performance. The study was conducted in selected senior secondary schools in Kaliro Town Council, Kaliro district, Eastern Uganda. The objectives of the study were; To find out the different causes perpetuations of drug abuse among students of the Kaliro high school and bright future Secondary Schools; To identify the different forms of drugs abused by students of Kaliro high school and Bright future Senior Secondary Schools; To assess the impacts of drug abuse on academic performance of the students in Kaliro high school and Bright future secondary school Senior Secondary Schools and to suggest the possible strategies of curbing drug abuse among students of Kaliro high school and Bright future secondary school. The findings indicated the correlation coefficient (0.676) shown a strong positive relationship between drug abuse and academic performance. This was statistically significant at 99% confidence interval since the P-value (0.00) was less than the significance level and therefore we rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that there was a strong positive relationship between drug abuse and academic performance. The research designs were appropriate because data was easily analyzed using frequency counts and percentage derived from the responses obtained in the questionnaires. Recommendations,

Key words: drug abuse, education, performance, youth and secondary schools

Background to the Study

Drug abuse is the use of drugs for purposes other than medical reasons that negatively affect an individual socially, cognitively, or physically (Mercy et al., 2023). Social effects may be reflected in an individual's increased tendency to engage in conflicts with friends, teachers, and school authorities. Drug abuse among youth worldwide has become a serious problem that affects everyone (Rashid et al., 2023). Addiction leads many people, among them prominent young people, into a downward spiral of hopelessness, which in some cases ends fatally. The United States was found to have citizens who were four times more likely to report lifetime cocaine use than the next closest country, New Zealand (16% vs. 4%), marijuana use was more reported globally, and the US had also the highest rate of use at 42.4% compared to 41.9% of New Zealanders (Warner 2005-2008). The problem of alcohol and illegal drug use in secondary schools is significant (MacLean et al., 2012). Among high school students, specific problems include binge drinking, underage drinking, underage binge drinking (Christopher et al., 2022), and drug use. Estimates of the prevalence of this behavior range from 25 to 44%. Alarming, the average age of drug addiction in South Africa is 12 and falling (Cand et al., 2022). Tanzania is the second country in East Africa, after Kenya, to have a growing number of drug users, especially school-age teenagers. A report by the Drug Control Commission (DCC) (2011) states that the actual number of drug addicts in general is estimated to be between 150,000 and 500,000 nationally. Statistics released by Mirembe Hospital in the Dodoma region, which were incorporated into the DCC report, show

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that the number of young people , who use drugs and attend hospital clinics, increased from 290 in 2000 to 569 in 2005, corresponding to 96.2 percent

Problem statement

Kaliro City Council has experienced rapid population growth in recent years, the increasing demand for education has led to the creation of more secondary schools (Anthony, Kazaara, & Kazaara, 2023). Due to the rapid development, drug use has become a common phenomenon among students in schools and even affects their performance in the classroom. Despite worldwide concern and education about the dangers of drug abuse, most students have limited knowledge of how dangerous the habit is (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara et al., 2023). Many students dropped out of school and others decided to engage in crime, endangering the lives of people living in Kaliro City Council, The young generation no longer has role models as most of the young adults are unemployed and under the influence of this drug (S. Godfrey et al., 2023). Despite government concerns and increased anti-vice campaigns among high school students, there is a parallel acceleration in the number of students using illegal drugs. Even though students are expected to be aware of the effects of drug abuse and commit to their studies, the habit still exists if they are not aware of its consequences beforehand. Therefore, the researcher aims to identify the effects of drug abuse on the academic performance of students in selected senior secondary schools in Kaliro Municipal Council, Kaliro District.

Specific objectives

- To find out the different causes for perpetuation of drug abuse among students of the selected Senior Secondary Schools.
- To identify the different forms of drugs abused by student in selected Senior Secondary Schools.
- To assess impacts of drug abuse on academic performance of students in selected Senior Secondary Schools.
- To suggest possible strategies of curbing drug abuse among students of the selected Senior Secondary Schools.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey. Descriptive survey design was used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow the researcher gather information, summarize, present and interpret it for the purpose of clarification. It also allows the researcher to describe record, analyse and report conditions that exist or existed. This design allowed the researcher to generate both numerical and descriptive data that were used in measuring correlation between variables. Descriptive survey research was intended to produce statistical information about the influence of drugs on students' Academic performance. The target population for this study consisted of all students from 2 secondary schools in Kaliro Town which are Bright future secondary school and Kaliro high school. Therefore, the total population for the study was 1813 subjects including administration staff who were a total of 6. The study was conducted in all the 2 secondary schools. From the 1813 students, the researcher used non-Probability snow ball sampling to select 39 students who participated in the study This formed 23.5% of the target population, which is in line with Gay's (1992) recommendation. This study used questionnaires and observation guide to collect quantitative

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and qualitative data required for the study. Qualitative research consisted of detailed notation of behaviour events and contexts surrounding the event and behaviour. Quantitative data was coded manually, organized, and analysed using percentages and frequencies. The results were presented in tabulated form for easy interpretation. From the interviews, data was sifted through, sorted and coded using SPSS and STATA (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

The Extent of Drug Abuse among Students As Reported By Students, And School Administrators

Table 1: Number of students who have used drugs

Ever used drugs	frequency	Percent	Valid per cent
Yes	11	28.2	28.2
No	28	71.8	71.8
Total	39	100.0	100.0

Table 1 shows that 11(28.2%) of the students reported drug use other than for medicinal purposes while 28 (71.8%) reported they have never abused drugs.

The relationship between age and drug abuse was next investigated. The results are presented in Table 6

Table 2: Relationship between age and drug abuse as reported by students

		age	drug abuse
age	Pearson Correlation	1	.706**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	38	38
drug abuse	Pearson Correlation	.706**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	38	38
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source; Primary Data, 2022

The correlation coefficient (0.706) shows a strong high positive relationship between age and drug abuse. This is statistically significant at 0.01 level of significance since the probability (0.00) is less than the significance value and therefore we conclude and say that there is a statistical relationship between age and drug abuse

Table 3: General situation of drug abuse according to School Administrators

Administrators' response N = 6			
Is there any problem at your school	frequency	Percent	valid %
yes		50.0	50.0
No		50.0	50.0
Total	06	100.0%	100.0%

Three school administrators (50%) said there is a drug problem, and three (50%) said there was no problem. The limited sample thus indicated a trend of indecision among teaching staff as to whether drug abuse was a problem at the schools where they work. A frequency distribution of the responses from the 6 school administrative staff as to whether the problem of drug abuse is increasing indicated that it was perceived as increasing as presented in **table 4: Frequency distribution on whether the drug problem is increasing** (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara, et al., 2023).

Administrators' response N = 6			
Responses	Frequency	Per cent	Valid per cent
Yes	02	33.3	40.0
No	03	50.0	60.0
Total	05	83.3	100.0
No response	01	16.7	
Total	06		100.0

As shown in table 4, only two (33.3%) said the problem was increasing while three (50%) said no and one (16.7%) did not respond.

As part of the qualitative approach to the research design, interviews were conducted with four college administration staff on the general situation of drug abuse. They perceived that drug abuse problem does exist. One Director of Studies at high school indicated that he knew of a few isolated cases (Victoria et al., 2023). All in all, the general perception among the four interviewees was that the drug abuse problem was not extensive.

Commonly Abused Drugs by Students and Their Sources

This section presents information based on the most commonly abused drugs by students in high schools.

Knowledge of the most frequently used drugs by students was regarded as important in recommending possible prevention and intervention measures. The assumption was that cheap drugs are more frequently abused. The variables considered in this section included types of drugs abused, their sources and availability.

Prevalence of Drug Abuse by students

Alcohol and drug use were prevalent among high school students. On average, 45% of high school students drink alcohol excessively, 16% meet criteria for an alcohol use disorder, and 22% used a drug during the past month, with marijuana being the most common. Nonmedical use of prescription medications was also common with 40 percent reported using, but this use varied significantly across high schools. Moreover, excessive drinking and drug use often overlap.

Commonly Abused Drugs and their sources

According to table 5, it shows that not all (39) students responded to the various multiple-choice options in this question. Based on the chart, alcohol is the most frequently abused drug with a response (45.4%), followed by Marijuana, (18.3%), tobacco, (18.3%), Khat (9%) and barbiturates, (9%).

Drugs	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Alcohol	5	45.4
Marijuana	2	18.3
Tobacco	2	18.3
Khat	1	09
Barbiturates	1	09

The findings concerning alcohol, khat and tobacco as the most commonly abused drugs possibly reflect the overall current situation of drug abuse among the youth in the country. The current scenario could be attributed to the fact that Uganda has become a progressively significant transit point for drugs destined for other countries such as Europe and North America. In addition, use of drugs such as alcohol, khat and tobacco is culturally, socially and legally acceptable in Uganda and these drugs are locally produced. Such factors have compounded the problem of substance abuse and dependence among the youth including students (Richard et al., 2022). When students were asked whether these drugs are easy to get in school, out of 39 students, 21 (53.8%) said yes, 16 (41%) said no and 20 (5.2%) did not respond. These responses could suggest that society outside the school is contributing to drug abuse among students by making drugs easily available, which, as indicated in Table 5 of the study proved to be a statistically significant factor in the drug-abuse chain. This finding is further supported by New Vision, who says that the general trend in the country is for drug sellers target younger people, with children as young as 11 and 13 years are being recruited into drug use.

Source	Yes	Percentage (%)
Night Clubs	1	09
Slum areas	2	18.1
Kiosks/small shops	3	27.2
Fellow students	5	45.7
TOTAL	11	100

According to table 6 it shows that: fellow students who are peddling drugs were leading at (45.7%) followed by kiosks/shops around the campuses (27.2%), Slums (low economic areas) around the school, (18.1%), night clubs (09%).

Influence of Alcohol Abuse on Academic Performance

According to table 7 below, difficulty meeting academic responsibilities is one of the most common consequences of alcohol use, about 12 percent of college students report problems caused by alcohol use, such as earning lower grades, doing poorly on

exams or papers, missing class, and falling behind (W. Godfrey et al., 2023). According to this study, 18.1 percent of students who drank during the year prior to the study had fallen behind in their schoolwork and 18.1 percent had missed class because of their alcohol use. Also the study indicates 27.3 percent of students reported performing

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poorly on a test or assignment, and 36.3 percent said they had missed a class due to alcohol use (Ntirandekura et al., 2022).

Effects	Number of students	Percentage (%)
Lower Grades	4	36.5
Doing poorly in exams and papers	3	27.3
Missing classes	2	18.1
Falling behind in school work	2	18.1

Impacts on class attendance

Excessive drinking and drug use are both associated with short-term academic problems. Students who use substances during college spend less time studying and skip more classes, thereby reducing their exposure to the classroom learning environment and the beneficial experience of interacting with faculty and other students (Emmanuel et al., 2023). In this study 18.1 percent of the students reported missing most of their classes. Longitudinal research has found that students who use alcohol and drugs are more likely to have disruptions in their enrolment in college and also fail to graduate. Associated mental health problems can exacerbate the adverse academic consequences of excessive drinking and drug use.

Relationship between Drug Abuse and Academic Performance

		Drug Abuse	Academic Performance
Drug Abuse	Pearson Correlation	1	.676**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	38	38
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.676**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	
	N	38	38

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source; Primary Data, 2022

The correlation coefficient (0.676) shows a strong positive relationship between drug abuse and academic performance (Nelson et al., 2023). This is statistically significant at 99% confidence interval since the P-value (0.00) is less than the significance level and therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there was a strong positive relationship between drug abuse and academic performance.

Conclusion

The substance use of heavy drug-using students may directly impair academic abilities which limit their academic performance. For most students who use drugs at a lower level, however, drug use may serve as a maturational 'snare' that keeps some students engaged in deviant peer groups as others move on to more normative groups, thus

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having a long-term direct effect on educational attainment other studies have discussed similar processes, in which differential pathways to problematic outcomes are determined, in part, by the level of multiple risk behaviours. If we believe that multiple mechanisms are operating, then it follows that preventive interventions aimed at improving academic engagement should broaden their focus beyond drug use in adolescence. Community and family risk factors should also be targets of intervention.

Recommendations

The schools and Town Council should create and promote alcohol-free events for students, support student clubs and organizations that are substance-free, create and promote service learning and volunteer opportunities, require community service work as part of the academic curriculum and promote consumption of non-alcoholic beverages and food at events.

Schools should enforce strict rules on alcohol and drug abuse by requiring all social events during orientation of years to be alcohol free, disseminate responsible host guidelines for both on- and off-campus parties, install a responsible beverage service program, eliminate residence hall delivery of alcohol purchases, advertise food and activities, such as dancing or sports, rather than drinking as the focus of the event.

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