SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DELIQUENCY AMONG YOUTHS IN WALUKUBA DIVISION IN JINJA MUNICPALITY, UGANDA

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Abstract
The study investigated the relationship between substance abuse and delinquency among youths in Walukuba division in Jinja municipality in Uganda. A sample of 322 youths was investigated. They ranged from 12 -19 years in age. Substance abuse was measured using Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST) by world Health organization and delinquency was determined by the assistance of local leaders and other youths. Mean, standard deviation and frequency scores were obtained to describe their experiences. The findings indicated that level of substance abuse was not as serious as expected. Level of delinquency was moderate (mean = 2.98, SD = 1.32). The relationship between substance abuse and delinquency ranged from positive low to moderate and statistically significant (r = .21 to 0.44, p = 0.00). It was concluded that substance abuse leads to delinquency.

Keywords: *Substance, Abuse, Delinquency, Youths*

Introduction

The historical perspective and anthropological evidence show that humans have been using psychoactive substances for many millennia. For example, 13,000 years ago, betel nut is believed to have been chewed in Timor and in Thailand. Similarly, the Aborigines and Native Americans used pituri and nicotiana (both nicotine) and tobacco respectively, long before their contact with Europe. Ethiopians are believed to have used Khat. In the Andes, coca was being used 7,000 years ago and in Ecuador 5,000 years ago (Sullivan and Hagen, 2002). The United Nations reports around 185 million substance abusers globally, which accounts for 3.1% of the world population or 4.3% of the population aged 15 years and above by the end of the 20th Century.

A substance is any natural or synthesized product that has psychoactive effects to a person. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 1987) defines substance abuse as partnered harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and other illicit drugs. Psychoactive substances can be depressants (downers), stimulants (uppers), hallucinogens (psychedelics), and sedatives lead to different

effects that are detrimental to the individual's physical and mental health. A study in Ghana on socio-demographic characteristics of abusers reflected that substance abuse is a youth male problem than their female counterparts (Lamptey 2005). This was postulated to inequalities in gender distribution to innate categorical sex differences in their readiness to learn certain behaviors like aggression independence and

adventurism. Sydelle (2011) reports of an escalation of substance abuse in Africa especially among the youth in Sierra Leone's high unemployment rate is said to fuel a culture of drug abuse among the country's urban youth.

Delinquency is derived from Latin word 'deliquentia" which means "fault, crime". Dictionary definition of delinquency is what is morally wrong. Medical dictionary defines delinquency as a conduct which is out of accord with accepted behavior or law. Therefore, delinquency means "wrong doing". The term delinquency usually refers to juvenile (i.e when youth under the age) becomes involved in criminal activity such as shop lifting, vandalism, selling and consuming drugs and many others (WHO, 2010). A delinquent is, therefore, anybody under age who violates social and conventional roles. It is known that delinquency may be caused by living conditions in the family, school, community and greater society.

Substance abuse and Delinquency

Alcohol affects all age groups but its impact on youths in earily age (12-18 years) is most alarming (Maine Rural Health Research Center, 2007). According to Hawkins et al., (2010), and Wilson and Howell (2008), it cannot be claimed that substance abuse causes delinquent behaviour or delinquency. According to the Global Health Risks report (2009), hazardous and harmful alcohol and other substance abuse prove to be risk factors for a wide variety of social, financial, legal and relationship problems for individuals and their families (society). Brown (2010) noticed that not only has abuse of substances reached unprecedented levels, but so has toleration of its use. In understanding the moral effect of substance on youth, Sydelle (2011) asserts that at the dawn of prevalent cocaine usage in Nigeria among the university students (many of whom are youths) from 1980s on, the moral responsibility, social values and respect for elders and authorities among many students were ruined. So was a rise in phenomenon of cultism fraternities. Pienaar (2005) asserts that many cocaine abusers are trapped within addictive behaviour.

The number of Somali youth families who are breaking down due to misuse of Khat is beyond imagination (Sagal, 2013). Khat has been known to cause induced psychosis which imposes many direct and indirect costs on the central nervous system and delinquency in the society at large. According to Sagal (2013), the use of Khat is a significant social problem in the community that renders men irresponsible and involve in theft mostly in night hours, In Somalia; Khat has kept men away from work. Users not only are likely to suffer unstable relationships, physical, social and economic problems, but also engage in criminal activities when they are under the influence of Khat.

METHOD

Design

The study used descriptive correlation and cross sectional research designs using both quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

Samples

The study was conducted in Walukuba Division, Jinja. From the target population of 1952, a sample size of 322 youths was considered using the Morgan and Krejcie (1970) Table for determining sample size. Simple random sampling technique supplemented by the snowball technique was used to select the participants. The participants were 175 (58.3%) males and 125 (41.7%) females. Ages ranged from 15-18 (19.0%), 19-21 (21.7%), 22-24 (29.0%), and 25-28 (30.3%). About 116 (38.7%) were employed

while 184 (61.3%) were unemployed. Educational level attained comprised of 31 (10.3%) primary, 160 (53.3%) secondary, 106 (35.3%) tertiary, and only 3 (1.0%) did not go to school.

Research Instrument

The researchers adopted WHO standardized questionnaire called the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST) to measure substance abuse. Content Validity Index (CVI) 0.6 was derived. Alpha Coefficient for internal consistency reliability was 0.7. ASSIST is scored and interpreted by WHO as:

Interpretation	**Alcohol**	**Other Substances**
Low	0-10	0-3
Moderate	11-26	4-26
High	27+	27+

Procedure

An introductory letter from the Dean of Graduate Studies, Bugema University introduced the researchers to the stakeholders in Walukuba. With permission granted, the researchers presented themselves to participants, explained the purpose of the study and assured them with confidentiality of any information they would present. Data was collected, analysed and disseminated.

Results

The level of substance abuse among the youths in Walukuba is summarized in table 1.

Table1: Level of Substance Abuse on the ASSIST

Scored risk level of abuse	Frequency	Percent
Alcohol		
Low (0-10)	149	49.7
Moderate (11-26)	89	29.7
High (27+)	62	20.7
Marijuana		
Low (0-3)	236	78.7
Moderate (4-26)	41	13.7
High (27+)	23	7.7
Cocaine		
Low (0-3)	264	88.0
Moderate (4-26)	25	8.3
High (27+)	11	3.7
Khat		
Low (0-3)	214	71.3
Moderate (4-26)	60	20.0
High (27+)	26	8.7

Results from Table1 indicate that substance abuse in Walukuba is generally low. About 50.4% of the youths consume alcohol either moderately of high. Only 21.4% consume marijuana at moderate to high level. A meager 12.0% consume cocaine at moderate to high level, and 28.7% consume khat at moderate to high levels.

Level of delinquency was assessed and the results are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Level of Deliquency Among the Youths in Walukuba Division

Items	Mean	Std Dev	Interpretation
Theft	2.69	1.43	Moderate
Obscene Language	3.39	1.35	Moderate
Sexual promiscuity	3.09	1.27	Moderate
Irresponsible Behaviour	2.76	1.22	Moderate
Overall	2.98	1.32	Moderate

Legend: Very high (4.24-5.00), High (3.43-4.23), Moderate (2.62-3.42), Low (1.81-2.61), V.Low (1.00-1.80)

Results demonstrated in table 2 the level of delinquency among these youths is generally moderate which can be construed to mean a rather bad behavior tendencies. Use of obscene language was the leading delinquent behavior (mean = 3.39, SD = 1.35) among the youths. Theft was the least practiced delinquent behavior in the area. These findings suggest that these delinquent behaviours may not necessarily be due to substance abuse but rather stereotypal behaviours in the community.

Relationship between substance abuse and delinquency was examined and the finding is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Relation between Substance Abuse and Delinquency among Youths of Walukuba Division Jinja Municipality.

Substance abuse	**Description**	**Measure**
Alcohol	Pearson correlation (r)	0.211**
	P-Value	0.000
	Coefficient of determination (r^2)	0.044
Marijuana	Pearson correlation (r)	0.369**
	P-Value	0.000
	Coefficient of determination (r^2)	0.136
Cocaine	Pearson correlation (r)	0.249**
	P-Value	0.000
	Coefficient of determination (r^2)	0.062
Khat	Pearson correlation (r)	0.442**
	P-Value	0.000
	Coefficient of determination (r^2)	0.195

N=300

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

As indicated in Table3, there is a small but significant relationship between (r=0.211, p=0.000) alcohol abuse and delinquency. Coefficient of Determination shows that alcohol abuse contributes only 4.4% to delinquency. There is low significant relationship between marijuana and delinquency (r=0.369, p=0.000). Coefficient of determination indicates that marijuana abuse contributed 13.6% to delinquency. There is a small significant relationship **(**r=0.249, p=0.0000) between cocaine abuse and delinquency. Coefficient of Determination indicates that Cocaine abuse contribute 6.2% of delinquency among the youths. With regard to Khat, there is a moderate but highly significant relationship (r=0.442 p=0.000**)** with delinquency. Coefficient of Determination indicated that Khat abuse contributed 19.5% to delinquency among the youths in Walukuba and that other factors like predispositions and upbringing may count to delinquency among youth,.

Further analysis using the regression to find out the relationship between substance abuse and delinquency among youths revealed findings as they appear in Table 4.

Table 4: Substance Abuse and Delinquency among Youth of Walukuba

Predictor Variable	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**Sig.**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	
(Constant)	25.514	2.938		0.000
Alcohol level abuse	2.945	1.029	0.146	0.005
Marijuana level of abuse	4.734	1.568	0.179	0.003
Cocaine level of abuse	3.302	1.869	0.094	0.078
Khat level of abuse	7.579	1.483	0.305	0.000

N = 300

Significance at 0.05 level of significance R^2 = 0.255Adjusted R^2=0.245

Table 4 provides reliable evidence that there is a significant relationship between substance abuse and delinquency among youths **(b = 0.146, p = 0.005; b= 0.279, p = 0.003; b = 0.094, p = 0.078; b= 0.305, p = 0.000).** Study findings based on Standardized Coefficients (beta) show that Khat abuse contributes most at **b= 0.305** which is **(30%)** while abuse of cocaine contributes least at **b = 0.094** which is **9.4%** to delinquency among youths in Walukuba Division when other factors are held constant. This might be because Khat is a stimulant that keeps the youths highly active and it has become a fashion for people to chew it

Summary and Conclusion

The findings that were derived from this study portray an interesting result which is not expected. The level of substance abuse is surprisingly not too high as always expected of urban estates. Although the abuse of drugs is not too high, alcohol and Khat are the most consumed. With delinquency, the level is generally moderate with each type of drug contributing very little to delinquency. The findings are in agreement with Uberto et al, (2012), Sydelle (2011), Brown (2010), Global Health Risks Report (2009), and Bachman et al. (2009) who documented that substance abuse is associated with both delinquency and victimization among the

young; that marijuana abuse among youth is a problem in many countries in the world contributing highly to delinquency among the youths; that cocaine permeates all classes from top to bottom,

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