

## **Consequences of alcohol and drug abuse among Chuka university students, Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

*There is a drastic increase in alcohol and drug abuse, especially among the youth in many parts of the World. It has been reported that University students are the most affected by the challenge of alcohol and drug abuse the world over. According to National Campaign against Drug Abuse (NACADA), 84% of youth between 16 to 24 years in Kenya are involved in alcohol and drug abuse. University students fall under this age bracket. To mitigate this all universities in Kenya are required to have Alcohol and Drugs Abuse prevention committees and policies. This study aimed at finding out the effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse among students at Chuka University. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 15,290 Chuka University students. A simple random sampling technique was employed to choose 384 respondents. Questionnaires were used to collect data. Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 for windows was used to analyze data. Data was presented in frequency distribution tables, bar charts, and pie charts.*

**Keywords.** Drug Abuse, Effects of Drug Abuse, Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem.**

Alcohol and Drug Abuse among the youth has been on a steady increase. The government of Kenya through the National Campaign Against Drugs Abuse (NACADA) Has put in a lot of effort to curb drug abuse, especially in schools and institutions of higher learning. Part of this effort has been the introduction of Alcohol and Drug policies in all institutions, especially the Universities. These committees are expected to sensitize students on the dangers of the vice. Despite these efforts, we have many cases of drug abuse among University students. This has been evidenced by the increase in suicides, murders, Exam failure, and even discontinuation from University. Parents and the government have continued to spend a lot of money on the rehabilitation of their addicted students. This has therefore raised concern about the effects of drug abuse in our Universities. This study sought to establish the effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Chuka University, Kenya.

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## **1.2 Objective of the Study\_**

The objective of the study was to establish the consequences of alcohol drug abuse among Chuka University students, Kenya.

## **1.3 Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to assess the effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Chuka University. In a descriptive survey, the variables of the study are examined in their natural state with no manipulation (Njeru & Orodho, 2003). Descriptive survey design ends up with the formulation of important principles and solutions to significant challenges because it produces statistical information that is used by policy makers, educators and other interested parties in various capacities (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This design was suitable because it enabled the study to assess the consequences of Alcohol and drug abuse among students in Chuka University.

## **1.4 Sampling procedure and sample size**

Third year students were purposely selected for this study. This is because they have a wider experience in the University and were therefore in a position to provide more accurate data on consequences of Alcohol and drug abuse in the University. Simple random sampling was employed to select 384 respondents. This number is considered adequate to make a generalization for a population of 15,000 Respondent according to Kathuri and Pals (1993).

## **1.5 Instruments**

The study utilized questionnaires in data collection. The questionnaire elicited responses on the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse among Chuka University students.

## **2.1 Introduction**

According to UNODC (2014) over 0.6 percent of the world's adult population are Alcohol and drug users while 5% of them have used illegal drugs at least once in 2010. M Avena (2011) found alcohol kills 0.2 million people every year. This devastates many families and thousands of people are left miserable. The same study reported that alcohol and drug abuse affect economic and social development major causes of crime instability, insecurity and the spread of HIV & AIDS in the world (M Avena, 2011). In addition to Alcohol and Drug abuse affecting the economy, health and crime increase to the society, it also affects the productivity of the drug abusers (Deressa & Azazh, 2011)

Martens, O'Conner and Beck (2006) suggests that about 9% of World population aged above 12 years have dependence on psychoactive drugs and alcohol. Watson (2002) found that alcohol and drug abuse bring about, psychological challenges like euphoria, hyper activity, insomnia and depression as well as increases sexual risky behaviour which leads to spread of HIV/AIDS infections. Martens, O'Conner and beck (2006) found that there was a very strong link between excessive alcohol consumption and drug abuse and unprotected sexual behaviour which predisposed college students to HIV/AIDS Transmission. Aklog,

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Tiruneh and tsegay (2013). Found that alcohol and drug abuse was on increase in high schools, colleges and universities in Ethiopia and their consumption decreased academic performance, increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexuality transmitted diseases. It also exposed the youth to other psychiatric disorders like exhaustion, meaninglessness in life, hopelessness and lack of sleep. It exposed students to illegal actions and ruined their enrolment or completion of university education

Bojago and Wendimu (2021) found that alcohol and drug abuse had negative effects on student's academic performance. According to Tulu and Keskis (2015) alcohol and drug abuse affect academic achievement of university students in Mekelle University. Students who engaged in alcohol and drug abuse ended up performing poorly in academics, absenting from lectures and some eventually dropped out of university (Tulu & Keskis (2015). NACADA (2012) indicates that majority of students at all levels who engaged in alcohol and drug abuse were likely to perform poorly in academics. Maithya et al (2015) found that alcohol and substance abuse in technical schools in Kenya resulted to poor academic performance, repeating years of study, referral of studies, academic warning due to poor performance and discontinuation on academic grounds. Ongwae (2016) did a study on the causes and effects of drug and substance abuse among students in selected secondary schools in Starehe Sub County, Nairobi County and found that alcohol and drug abuse lead to poor academic performance which consequently resulted to poor productivity in later life. A study by Ndegwa et al (2017) done at Kenyatta University indicated that students who engaged in alcohol and drug abuse had difficulties in doing their academic assignments and this lead to poor performance. They further found that more alcohol intake meant high likelihood of poor academic performance.

A study by Tulu and keskis (2015) on consequences of alcohol and drug abuse among second year students in Makelle University found that Alcohol and Drug Abuse affected their previous normal behaviour negatively. The students indicated that when they missed their alcohol or drug of choice they developed withdrawal symptoms which lead to a state of feeling confused, unstable behaviour, conflict with friends, showing unethical or impolite behaviour and getting involved in various anti-social behaviour (Tulu & Keskis, 2015). Maithya et al (2015) in their study on drug abuse among Technical institutions in Kenya got the following findings: 48.8% indicated that alcohol and drug abuse caused argument between them and lecturers, 30.4% said it influenced them to organize riots, disturbances, strikes and demonstrations. 36.7% indicated that it fueled violence against their other members, made them charged for related crimes while 14% said it resulted to some of them being arrested and put in police cells. Alcohol and drug abuse was also found to have caused conflict between teachers and student for missing classes and destruction of college property.

According to Tulu and Keskis (2015), Alcohol and drug use may have physical and psychological health challenges. The physical health effects include hang over, loss of body weight, physical injuries as a result of physical fighting when intoxicated or accidents as a result of loss of control when drunk. Deghardt and Hall (2012) found that illicit drugs were the major cause of health problem among college students. World Health Organisation (2010) found that 3.7% of the health problems can be attributed to alcohol and drug use. Simoni-Wastila (2006) also found that drug addiction leads to physical dependence

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which involves compulsive seeking for drugs. Ndegwa et al (2017) found that there was a significant correlation between alcohol use and common mental disorder indicators.

The health risk of alcohol and drug Abuse may include psychological problems like depression, stress, low self-esteem and meaninglessness in life (Tulu & Keskis, 2015). According to Ahmad & Aziz (2012) alcohol and substance abuse are linked to mental health challenges like depression and withdrawal symptoms. Watson (2002) suggest that heavy consumption of alcohol and tobacco are associated with psychological challenges like euphoria, hyperactivity, lethargy and depression. O'Malley and Johnston (2002) found that psychological distress like low self-esteem and depression as well as higher rates of psychopathology was more found among drug users that those who were not in drugs. Maithya et al (2015) found that the psychological consequences of ADA were stress, depression, emotional instability and examination phobia.

Tuwei (2014) found that ADA aggravated, social challenges like poor peer relationship between the drug users and their peers as well as involvement in criminal practices. It also caused conflict between the addict with family members, community and society. According to Didenko and packrats (2007) alcohol and drug abuse makes one lose friends. A study by Tulu and Keskis (2015) revealed that alcohol and drug abuse damage interpersonal relationships, affect addicts' communication, makes one not assertive, develop a weak social life, poor socialization, and devaluing of social norms. Tulu and Keskis (2015) further found that those in ADA conflict with their friends, show unethical, impolite behaviour and have different anti-social behaviour. Mandil et al (2011) postulates that addiction may damage interpersonal relationship, lead to poor communication, lead to non-assertiveness poor socialization, devaluing of social norms and values that are very key to socialization in any society. Garcia et al (2014) suggests that students who get into alcohol and drug use disengage with community activities and are therefore not able to make positive contributions to their peers and communities and may end up eliminating themselves from the community. Rintaugu et al (2012) found that alcohol and drug abuse by University Students may drain a family's financial and emotional resources as the student keeps on repeating years of study or even breaking from studies to go for rehabilitation and related medical support and treatment services.

### 3.1 Data Analyses

The study sought information on the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse. Data was collected from the respondents on Psychological, academic, behavioural, physical and social consequences.

Responses on psychological consequences of alcohol and drug abuse are shown in table 1.

Table 1

#### Psychological Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Psychological Effects on Ada	N	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%
Euphoria-Feel High	342	49	38	6	2	5
Hyperactive	310	20	44	21	9	5

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Lack of Sleep	327	20	37	15	15	14
Involvement in Illicit Sexual Behavior	320	33	37	12	9	9
Depression	328	27	42	14	9	9
Stress	329	29	38	12	11	9
Meaningless Life	323	27	38	13	11	11
Hopelessness	329	27	38	14	10	11
Frustrations	329	30	40	9	10	10
Fear of Sitting Exams	333	23	32	16	12	17
<b>Over all</b>		<b>28.5</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>10</b>

According to information on table 1, 69.9% of the respondents indicated that alcohol and drug abuse has psychological consequences with 77% indicating that it gives euphoria to the abusers and 55% agreeing that ADA leads to fear of sitting for the exam. This concurs with a study by Watson (2002) which found that Alcohol and drug abuse brings about psychological challenges like euphoria, hyperactivity, insomnia and depression. Data indicates that 64 % of the respondents indicated that ADA leads to hyperactivity while 69% indicated that it leads to depression. This concurs with findings by O'Malley and Johnston (2002) that there was more psychological distress like depression and psychopathology among drug users than the non-drug users. It also agrees with studies by Maithya et al (2015) who found that psychological consequences of drug abuse included; stress, emotional instability, depression and examination phobia.

The study collected data on the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse on academic performance. The responses are shown in table 2.

Table 2  
Effects of ADA on Academic performance

Effects of Ada on Academics	N	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%
Poor Academic Performance	339	42	32	9	8	9
Missing Cats and Exams	338	33	38	9	10	9
Miss Lectures	333	39	39	6	7	8
Deferment of Studies	339	21	32	18	15	13
Dropping out of University	333	24	33	16	15	13
Discontinuation of Students on Academic Grounds	337	25	39	12	15	10
Wastage of Learning Time	326	45	33	8	5	9
<b>OVER ALL</b>		<b>32.7</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.1</b>

According to table 2, over all respondents 57.8 agreed that alcohol and drug abuse negatively affected students' academic performance. 74 % of the respondents agreed that ADA resulted to poor students' academic performance with 78 % indicating that it resulted to students missing lectures and wasting time and consequently dropping out of university. This concurs with a study by Tulu and Keskis (2015) findings

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that students who engaged in alcohol and drug abuse in Makelle University ended up performing poorly in their academic achievements, absented from lectures and eventually dropped out of university. It further agrees with a study by Maithya et al (2015) who found that alcohol and drug abuse in technical colleges resulted to poor academic performance, repeating of years of study, deferments of studies, academic warnings and discontinuation from studies on academic grounds.

This study sought for information on the behavioural consequences of alcohol and drug abuse to university students. Data collected is shown in table 3.

Table 3.  
Behavioral Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

<b>Behavioral consequences of Ada</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>SA %</b>	<b>A %</b>	<b>U %</b>	<b>D %</b>	<b>SD %</b>
Uneasy due to withdrawal symptoms	326	39	41	10	4	5
Unpredictable Behavior	323	25	52	15	3	5
Conflicts with friends	328	28	48	11	7	5
Use of impolite or rude language	323	35	47	7	7	4
Abuse of others	326	30	45	12	6	6
Shouting along	322	29	42	14	8	7
Shouting in the room at night	329	27	38	15	12	9
Disagreement with others	320	16	30	23	19	13
Involvement with the unrest	327	20	39	21	12	8
Quarrel with others	324	29	44	12	9	6
Fighting with others	326	25	48	12	10	6
Stealing to finance drug culture	326	25	42	15	10	8
Withdrawing from other students	320	23	42	14	13	9
Problems with security	325	25	43	12	11	8
Destruction of property	325	27	41	13	11	8
Accumulation of debts	329	32	37	12	12	8
Betting	332	38	37	8	8	9
Mishandling from others due to bad debts	329	31	40	12	7	9
<b>OVER ALL</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>

Findings in table 3 indicates that majority (70%) of the respondents indicated that alcohol and drug abuse had behavioral consequences to the addicts. This concurs with Tullu and Keskis (2015) studies which found that alcohol and drug abuse among students from Makelle university affected their former normal behavior negatively. Information on table 3 further indicate the number of respondents who agreed that alcohol and drugs lead to withdrawal symptoms were 80 %, use of rude language 72%, conflicts with friends 76 %, abuse of others 75%, stealing 67%, shouting along the road 71 % and shouting in the room at night 65%.

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This concurs with Tullu and Keskis (2015) findings that when addicts miss their alcohol and drug of choice develop withdrawal symptoms which lead to a state of feeling confused, unstable behavior, conflicts with friends, showing unethical behavior and getting involved with various antisocial behavior.

Table 4 shows responses on physical consequences of alcohol and drug abuse

Table 4.  
Physical Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Physical consequences of Ada	N	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Hangover	321	53	33	6	4	3
Loss of Body Weight	320	22	40	17	13	8
Regular Accidents	320	29	32	13	16	10
Premature Deaths	317	28	38	14	11	9
Physical injuries due to	322	36	44	8	8	4
Health problems	317	38	42	10	5	6
Discomforts and craving for more	315	32	43	13	8	5
Mental Disorders	316	26	35	17	13	9
Inability to make right	313	33	45	9	6	7
Tolerance leading to increased dosage	318	30	42	12	8	8
Poor hygiene	320	32	38	11	10	9
Risk of contracting HIV/AIDS	313	46	32	7	6	8
<b>Over all</b>		<b>33.8</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7.2</b>

According to information in table 4, the majority (62.5 %) of the respondents indicated that they agreed that alcohol and drug abuse has physical consequences. The table further shows that 86% of the respondents indicated that they agreed that alcohol and drug abuse causes hangover, 80% indicated that it may lead to physical injuries and other health problems, 66% agreed that it leads to premature deaths while 70% indicated that it leads to poor hygiene conditions. This concurs with findings by Deghardt and Hall (2012) that illicit drugs were a major cause of health problems among college students. The findings further concurs with other findings by Tullu and Keskis (2015) that physical health effects of alcohol and drug use include hang over, loss of body weight and physical injuries as result of physical fight when intoxicated or accident which come about due to loss of control when drunk.

The study collected data on social consequences of alcohol and drug abuse and the responses are shown in table 5.

Table 5  
Social Consequences of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

<b>Social consequences of Ada</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>SA %</b>	<b>A %</b>	<b>U %</b>	<b>D %</b>	<b>SD %</b>
Conflicts with colleagues	327	43	40	7	5	5
Bad relationships with others	324	31	50	9	5	6
Disagreements with parents	326	26	45	13	7	8
Loss of friends	322	23	42	13	15	7
Lack of assertiveness	320	25	43	17	8	7
Withdrawal from community liabilities	327	24	42	15	10	9
Inability to socialize with others	314	20	39	15	14	11
Conflict with lecturers	316	20	35	20	18	13
Inability to communicate effectively	317	25	44	13	10	8
Disengagement with community members	321	22	41	16	13	8
Drainage of resources to finance it	318	33	40	12	7	7
<b>Over all</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>8.1</b>

Information on table 5 shows that the majority (82.9 %) of the respondents indicated that they agreed that alcohol and drug abuse has physical consequences. This agrees with a study by Oguntayo, et al (2020) which found that alcohol and drug abuse aggravated social challenges like poor relationships, conflicts with family members, community and society as well as involvement in criminal practices.

According to the data in this table, 83% of the respondents agreed that alcohol and drug abuse made the addicts conflict with colleagues, 81% agreed that it leads to bad relationships with others and 63% agreed that it leads to disengagement with the community members. This concurs with a study by Tullu and Keskis (2015) which found that alcohol and drug abuse damages interpersonal relationships, affects addict’s communication, develop a weak social life, poor socialization and devaluing of social norms. It further agrees with findings by Tulu & Keskis (2015) that students who get into alcohol and drug abuse disengage with community activities and are therefore not able to make positive contributions to their peers and society and may end up eliminating themselves from the community

**4.1 Summary of The research findings**

The study found that alcohol and drug abuse had dare consequences to the addicts psychological wellbeing, academic performance, behavioural, physical as well as social life. Psychological consequences were found to be euphoria, hyperactivity, hopelessness, frustration, depression and insomnia to the user. The study found that addiction affected the mental functioning of students which led to missing of lectures, continuous assessment tests, am end of year examinations. This resulted to poor academic performance, deferment of studies, discontinuation or eventually dropping out of university. The study established



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behavioural consequences included withdrawal symptoms, conflict with friends and university staff, stealing, use of offensive language, disturbing others and accumulation of debts. Physical consequences were found to include loss of body weight, injuries from accidents. Health problems, poor hygiene, risk of HIV/Aids infection and even untimely death.

## 4.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that addiction is a disease like any other and it affects the infected as well as others especially the parents, relatives, friends and society at large. Alcohol and drug addiction leads to academic wastage as many addicts drop out of university either due to their inability to learn or discontinuation on academic grounds. It also leads to wastage of resources in form of money used for treatment and rehabilitation of addiction, time used in follow up and counselling them as well as human labour that would have been provided by the addicts who drop out of university.

## 4.3 Recommendations

- i. To mitigate the effects of drugs addiction, the university management may need to invest in the treatment of the student who get addicted to alcohol and drugs. This may reduce the money, time and human resource wastage that happens when students defer studies or even drop out of university.
- ii. The university management may come up with a rehabilitation Centre where addicted students can have day care or institutionalized services depending on their level of addiction.
- iii. The university need to intensify preventive measures by organizing sensitization meetings, seminars and workshops for students. This sensitization should adopt both demand reduction and supply reduction approaches. Supply reductions is a new phenomenon in fight against drugs where community stake holders come together to form a coalition against drug abuse targeting an area. The university needs to mobilise the stake holders in its surrounding to form a coalition to champion for control drug supply and use in the immediate environment.

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