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Abstract

This study aimed to ascertain the implication of community policing in the fight against narcotics use among youth in Rwanda. It was guided by three specific objectives: to assess community policing involvement in decision-making against narcotics use among youth, to evaluate community policing inclusivity in the fight against narcotics use among youth, and to examine community policing capacity to fight against narcotic use among youth. The study employed a descriptive research design. The mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative was used to collect quantitative data using a questionnaire to 124 respondents and qualitative data by use of focus group. A sample size of 292 respondents was calculated using the Slovin's Formula. The sample size was selected using purposeful sampling method among Police members, Kicukiro District officials, Community Policing Members, narcotics users in the rehabilitation process or rehabilitated, and partners. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics by the help of SPSS 21.0 version and descriptive data visualization tools employed in forms frequency tables and cross tabulations. The descriptive results of the objectives indicated a big number of respondents agreed that community policing is involved in decision-making against narcotics use among youth and they agreed that community policing is inclusive in the Kicukiro District. However, the respondents disagreed that community policing has enough capacity to fight against narcotics use among youth. The correlation analysis results supported the descriptive results by revealing that community policing involvement in decision-making, the inclusivity of community policing and its capacity play a positive and significant role in the fight against narcotics use among youth. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended to government of Rwanda and partners to improve the effectiveness of community policing involvement in the fight against narcotics use among youth by arising its capacity in terms of financial resources, equipment, skilled human resources, and sustainable technology.

Keywords: *Community Policing Involvement, Narcotics Use, Youth, Rwanda*

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1. Introduction

The involvement of youth in narcotics use is a global concern, and illicit psychoactive substances are social and public health problems in most countries worldwide (UNODC, 2018). Juvenile delinquency is increasing day after day and it is accompanied by the increased use of narcotics (Griffiths, 2017; Molly et al., 2020). Between 2018-2022, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), American National Survey on Drug Use and Health, and England Survey on Smoking Drinking, and Drug Use among Young People reported a big number of people aged 18 to 25 dying or suffering from drug use disorders.

Young people use more drugs, with use levels today in many countries higher than in the previous generation (World Drug Report, 2020). Illegal acts committed under the influence of drugs are more prevalent among youth with more severe antisocial behaviors (Helene, 2022). In Africa, poverty, political instability, social unrest, and refugee problems contribute to the rapid spread of psychoactive substance abuse, particularly among the youth (World Drug Report, 2022). East Africa is faced with the problem of alcohol abuse, cannabis, and urban slum youth widely paint thinner and other solvents including petrol for abuse. Injecting drug use has also been reported in Kenya, Zanzibar, and Tanzania (World Drug Report, 2022).

Since its creation in 2000, Rwanda National Police (RNP) adopted community policing as a strategy to build a strong partnership with members of the community to fight against crimes. A department for community policing within the Rwanda National Police (RNP) was created to promote proactive partnerships with the public in addressing public safety issues such as social disorder and insecurity including the problems of narcotics use.

Community policing was adopted to encourage citizens to participate in crime-solving. It comes as a strategic and thoughtful plan focused on the proactive prevention of crime and disorder, by partnering with the public to increase police visibility in all communities to solve, prevent and reduce crime (Gatare, 2015). Community policing's effects depend on how communities respond and work from one country to another (Nyamwasa, 2016). According to OSCE (2011), when communities play a key role in defining their own security and safety needs and are involved in planning, implementing and monitoring locally defined solutions to their problems, community safety and security improve considerably. Thus, the inclusivity, capacity and quality of the relationship between community groups, individuals and local security personnel is often the determinant of how reports on offences and the perpetrators are apprehended, investigated and prosecuted and whether effective action is taken locally to prevent future incidents of violence.

The previous studies on community attempt to explain the composition and operation of community policing in crime prevention without exploring its involvement in the decision-making in the resolution of specific issues like narcotics use among youth. Osayekemwen (2022) focusing on a better understanding of community members' involvement in community policing, recognized the importance of community policing as an integral component of peace and security and observed that the community is not involved in the policy-making process from the start, therefore, it is only perceived as a beneficiary of the policy.

The empirical review on the inclusivity of groups like the works of Inzunza (2021) and, Omondi et. al (2021) enumerating the actors, interest groups, or factors to consider in problem-oriented policing and strategies for reducing narcotics use. As for community policing capacity, Yegon's case study (2020) investigated the existing community policing in Kenya and Tanzania, examined

its effectiveness and the challenges faced in addressing community policing strategies, and concluded that the stability of state programs in Kenya and Tanzania depends on an enhanced political environment, efficient and active human resources, financial systems, equipment, and sustainable technology.

Currently, Rwanda is witnessing the prevalent abuse of Tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and other drug use among youth. (Kanyoni, Gishoma, and Ndahindwa, 2015). Rwanda chose community policing as an approach to policing and preventing crime. Community policing has been implemented to work hand in hand with the Rwanda National Police to prevent crimes and behaviors such as narcotics use among youth. As conducting investigations has always been paramount in Rwanda National Police (RNP) missions, community policing has been exploited to build strong investigative functions countrywide, where RNP gets credible information from citizens (Gatare, 2015). Community policing has become popular in Rwanda and citizens are always willing to take it upon themselves and bring up ideas on maintaining public order. The established local entities such as Community Policing Committees (CPCs), Youth Volunteers in Crime Prevention, as well as individual citizens operate in the villages, cells, and sectors to collect information that helps RNP in crime prevention, sensitizing residents about the need to collectively overcome crime and aiding police operations.

2. Research objectives

This study aimed to ascertain community policing involvement in the fight against narcotics use among youth in Rwanda, using the case of the Kicukiro District. It was guided by the following specific objectives:

- (i) To assess community policing involvement in decision-making against narcotics use among youth in the Kicukiro District.
- (ii) To evaluate the inclusivity in the fight against narcotics use among youth in the Kicukiro District.
- (iii) To examine community policing capacity to fight against narcotic use among youth in the Kicukiro District.

3. Empirical Literature

3.1 Community policing Involvement

Scholars discussed Community policing involvement: in research conducted by Osayekemwen (2022) on a better understanding of community members' involvement in community policing in Osun State, Nigeria, respondents were stratified in each of the designated areas, and 400 copies of questionnaire were sent to six areas for quantitative sample. Four community leaders were also purposefully chosen since they possess an adequate understanding of policing in the area. In the findings, Osayekemwen recognized the importance of community policing as an integral component of peace and security policy with 100% of respondents stating that they were aware of community policing. He concluded that while community policing is critical in the battle against crime in every neighborhood, its efficacy is contingent on the community's preparation and support. The researcher recommended communities should be included in the conception and implementation of community policing programs to avoid the perception that the community is

only a beneficiary of the policy, and to promote the concept of cooperation, the community should be involved from the start of the policy formation process.

In the explorative research by Inzunza (2021) on crime prevention, the researcher investigated perceptions of citizens in the stations' neighborhoods about the police's way of work. The study showed that the Colombian police organization is hierarchal, the officers' actions are strongly circumscribed by orders generally, and they have little opportunity to try unorthodox or contextually refined approaches. The researcher concluded that some problems required the mobilization of multiple actors in the communities, not just the police. Social cohesion and collective efficacy are important constructs for understanding citizens' perceptions of crime and how they may collectively maintain social order. Inzunza recommended others actors may be included, for instance, shop-owners, restaurant owners or taxi-companies when addressing robberies.

Yegon's case study (2020) on community policing as a national security strategy in East Africa, investigated the existing community policing in Kenya and Tanzania, examined the effectiveness of community policing strategies on police-citizen relations, and the challenges faced in addressing community policing strategies in Kenya and Tanzania. The sample target is about 200 respondents across the board; 100 from Kenya and 100 from Tanzania. The finding revealed the perception of the impact of community policing on reducing fear of crime is good and satisfactory in both countries. The researcher recommends that, there is a need for the governments to develop national policy on community policing that will guide on better police practice, build trust of people to the police, enhancing community engagement and improvement of police as well as local government agencies hence reducing fear of crime.

3.2 Fight against narcotic use

A study has been conducted by Ikoh et.al (2019) on the factors affecting entry into drug abuse among youth in Lafia Metropolis, Nigeria. A survey method was adopted, and participants were randomly sampled from 10 wards. The results of the logistic regression analyses predicting the odds of arrest as a result of involvement in criminal and anti-social behaviors. Ikoh et.al demonstrated the age, parental occupation, living pattern, deceased parents, educational attainment, ethnic group and family control are shown as control variable. The statistical significance ($P < .05$) of the odds ratio for each covariate category relative to the reference group is provided. He stated the policy lay great emphasis on prevention and punishment, with very little consideration on the causes of drug abuse, and hence addiction and dependence and recommended more commitment should be given to the implementation of government's socio-economic empowerment programme and to the collaboration between the government and the private sector to deliberately create employment that requires low and manual skills.

Omondi et. al (2021) conducted a cross-sectional survey on socioeconomic disparities in drugs and substance abuse in Murang'a County in Kenya to a total of 449 households. The results showed that the difference in the amount spend to acquire drugs was significantly higher amongst the low SES than amongst the high t-test p-value=0,044. There was no significant difference between the high and the middle-income level in expenditures to acquire drugs and substances of abuse p-value=0,0999. Omondi et. Al concluded that socioeconomic disparities exist in the use of drugs and substance abuse. The low-income individuals are at a higher risk of abuse and thus of

economic burden due to catastrophic expenditure acquiring the drugs. Cases of deaths were likely to occur in middle-income groups. He recommended that strategies to reduce narcotics use must address socio-economic disparities through targeted approaches to individuals in low-income groups.

Tuyishimire (2017) conducted a study on the impact of drug trafficking on public security in Kigali City. He used a combination of desk review and analysis, interviews, questionnaires, and observation. Findings showed that there is an absolute relationship between cross-border drug trafficking and public security. Tuyishimire urged governments to fulfill their obligations of stabilizing countries and securing people by controlling cross-border drug trafficking and drug cruelty and called civil society, families, and schools to support public institutions to rid their communities of drugs. The media's role is paramount in raising awareness about the risks of narcotics.

4. Methods and materials

This study used a descriptive research design. The mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative were used to get information related to Community Policing involvement in the fight against narcotics use among youth in the Kicukiro District. Quantitative approach was used to collect statistical information with view to ascertain the Community Policing involvement in decision-making, the inclusivity in fighting against narcotics use, Community policing capacity and the rehabilitation and integration of youth narcotic users in the Kicukiro District. Qualitative approach was used to gather information in form of respondents and key informant views and opinions that helped understanding issues pertaining community policing involvement in the fight against narcotics use among youth.

Bhattacharjee (2012) asserted that descriptive research is directed at making careful observations of a phenomenon of interest. These observations must be based on a scientific method (i.e., must be replicable, precise, etc.), and therefore, are more reliable than casual observations by untrained people. Descriptive studies look at the characteristics of a population; identify problems that exist within a unit, an organization, or a population; or look at variations in characteristics or practices between institutions or even countries (Siedlecki, 2020). In the present research a sample size of 292 respondents was calculated using the Slovin's Formula. The sample size was selected using purposeful sampling method among Police members, Kicukiro District officials, community policing members, narcotics users in the rehabilitation process or rehabilitated, and partners. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics by the help of SPSS 21.0 version and descriptive data visualization tools employed in forms frequency tables and cross tabulations.

Reliability measures the consistency, precision, repeatability, and trustworthiness of research. It refers to the reproducibility of the study results, should the same measurement instruments be applied in different situation (Revelle & Condin, 2019). Validity tests the interpretation of study instruments and refers to whether they measure what they have been reported to be measuring, as supported by evidence and theory in the topic area of investigation (Clark & Watdon, 2019).

In the present study, the researcher payed attention to assuring that the questionnaire includes an adequate set of items that tap the concept and if the scale items represent the domain of the concept being measured. In addition, the validity of data collection tools was ensured through different

validation methods including technical consultations between the researcher and Kicukiro District staff, icyizere Rehabilitation Center staff, Kigali Transit and Rehabilitation Center staff and thereafter with Kicukiro Police Station. The supervisors' review and judgment has been also important.

5. Research findings

5.1 Community policing involvement in decision-making and fight against narcotics use among youth.

The first objective of this research was to assess community policing involvement in decision-making against narcotics use among youth in the Kicukiro District. Involvement in the decision-making against narcotics use among youth was measured by Community Policing Members' participation in the elaboration of the programs relating to the fight against narcotics use, availability of special units in charge of narcotics, and information sharing in narcotics.

Table 1: Community Policing involvement in the decision-making and fight against narcotics use among youth

Statement on involvement in decision-making against narcotics use	Mean	SD
Community policing members participate in the elaboration of the programs relating to the fight against narcotics use	4.19	.878
A special unit is in charge of fighting against narcotics use	4.35	.876
Information is shared between the community, police, and local administration to fight against narcotics use	4.39	.843
Overall Mean	4.31	.679

Source: Field Data, 2023

Key: 5 Strongly agree, 4 Agree, 3 disagree, 2 strongly disagree, 1 I do not know, SD= Standard Deviation

The results in Table 2 show the overall mean of 4.31 which implied that a big number of respondents agreed that community policing is involved in decision-making against narcotics use among youth in the Kicukiro District. These results are supported by Wates (2014) who argued that community policing influence is a crucial element of community participation and it relates to how specific programs involve communities in the shaping of plans, activities, and in all decision-making.

Table 2: Assessment on the fight against narcotics use among youth

Assessment on youth narcotic users rehabilitation and integration	Mean	SD
The number of youth narcotic users giving up is increasing	3.4274	1.17683
The former youth narcotic users are integrated in the community	3.4839	1.13685
There is a drop of youth narcotic new users	3.3790	1.32881
Overall Mean	3.4301	1.00115

Source: Field Data, 2023

Fight Against Narcotics Use among Youth was measured by the rehabilitation and integration of youth narcotic users. This had as metrics a drop of youth narcotic new users, an increase of youth narcotic users giving up and an increase of youth narcotic users integrated in the community. The results in Table 3 show the overall mean of 3.4301 which implied that a big number of respondents disagreed that youth narcotic users are rehabilitated and integrated in the Kicukiro District what implies the respondents find that the fight against narcotics use among youth in Kicukiro District is not significant.

Table 3: Correlation analysis between community policing involvement in decision-making and fight against narcotics use among youth

Involvement in decision-making		Youth narcotic users giving up	Youth narcotic users integration	A drop of youth narcotic new users
Participation in the elaboration of programs	Pearson Correlation	.230*	.080	.225*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.375	.012
	N	124	124	124
A special Unit in charge	Pearson Correlation	.199*	.308**	.198*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027	.001	.028
	N	124	124	12
Information is shared	Pearson Correlation	.143	.108	.195*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.112	.231	.030
	N	124	124	124

Source: Field Data, 2023

The correlation results show a strong positive and significant relationship between the existence of a special unit in charge of fighting against narcotics use and the number of former youth narcotic users integration in the community ($r=0.308$ and $\text{sig}=0,001$) at 0,01 level of significance. Thus, this implies the existence of a special unit in charge of fighting against narcotics use play a strong significant and positive role in the integration of former youth narcotic users in the community.

5.2 Community Policing inclusivity and fight against narcotics use among youth

The second objective was to evaluate the inclusivity in the fight against narcotics use among youth in the Kicukiro District. Inclusivity in the fight against narcotics use among youth was measured by existence of partners invested in the fight against narcotics use among youth, if women, men, and disabilities was invested in the fight against narcotics use among youth and the way in which inequality is addressed.

Table 4: Community Policing inclusivity and fight against narcotics use

Statement on inclusivity of community policing	Mean	SD
Partners are invested in the fight against narcotics use among youth	3.7903	1.17753
Women, men, young, adults, and disabilities are invested in the fight against narcotics use	3.9758	1.07040
There is a way in which inequality is addressed	3.7097	1.18098
Overall Mean	3.8253	.96315

Source: Field Data, 2023

Key: 5 Strongly agree, 4 Agree, 3 disagree, 2 strongly disagree, 1 I do not know, SD= Standard Deviation

The results in Table 5 show the overall mean of 3.8253 which implied that a big number of respondents agreed that community policing was inclusive in the fight against narcotics use in the Kicukiro District. These results are supported by Munyambo (2022) who stated that in Rwanda, community policing, police and other stakeholders and partners are engaged in community policing activities. Inclusivity is how specific programs ensure all groups and interests in the community can participate and the ways in which inequality is addressed (Tozer et. Al, 2020).

Table 5: Correlation analysis between community policing inclusivity and fight against narcotics use among youth

Inclusivity		Youth narcotic users giving up	Youth narcotic users integration	A drop of youth narcotic new users
Partners invested in the fight against narcotics use	Pearson Correlation	.581**	.380**	.290**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001
	N	124	124	124
Women, men, young, adults, and disabilities are invested	Pearson Correlation	.389**	.304**	.315**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000
	N	124	124	124
The way in which inequality is addressed	Pearson Correlation	.347**	.366**	.205*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.022
	N	124	124	124

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

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

Source: Field Data, 2023

The correlation results show a strong positive and significant relationship between different groups are invested in the fight against narcotics use and increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up ($r=0.581$ and $\text{sig}=0.000$), between women, men, young, adults, and disabilities are members of the groups invested in the fight against narcotics use and increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up ($r=0.389$ and $\text{sig}=0.000$), and between the existence of a way in which inequality is addressed and the increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up ($r=0.347$ and $\text{sig}=0.000$) at 0.01 level of significance. Thus, this implies that the fact that different groups were invested in the fight against narcotics use, and women, men, young, adults, disabilities were members of the groups invested in the fight against narcotics use, as well as the existence of a way in which inequality was addressed played a strong significant and positive role in increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up.

5.3 Community Policing capacity and fight against narcotic use among youth

The third objective was to examine community policing capacity to fight against narcotic use among youth in the Kicukiro District. The capacity to fight against narcotic use among youth was measured by the budget allocated to the fight against narcotics use, availability of narcotic rehabilitation centers, and narcotics actor's capacity building.

Table 6: community policing capacity and fight against narcotics use

Statement on capacity of community policing	Mean	SD
The budget allocated to the fight against narcotics use is sufficient	2.4839	1.42842
Availability of equipped rehabilitation centers for narcotic users	3.8790	1.24674
Sufficient capacity building of actors to fight against narcotics use	3.2016	1.35539
Overall Mean	3.1882	1.04397

Source: Field Data, 2023

Key: 5 Strongly agree, 4 Agree, 3 disagree, 2 strongly disagree, 1 I do not know, SD= Standard Deviation

The results in Table 7 show the overall mean of 3.2 which implied that a big number of respondents disagreed that community policing had the capacity to fight against narcotics use among youth in the Kicukiro District. The results are supported by Yegon (2020) who stated that the stability of programs in Kenya and Tanzania depends on an enhanced political environment, efficient and active human resources, financial systems, equipment, and sustainable technology.

Table 7: Correlation analysis between capacity of community policing and fight against narcotics use among youth

Capacity		Youth narcotic users giving up	Youth narcotic users integration	A drop of youth narcotic new users
The budget allocated	Pearson	.422**	.345**	.339**
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	124	124	124
Equipped rehabilitation centers	Pearson	.290**	.317**	.244**
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.006
	N	124	124	124
Capacity building of actors	Pearson	.353**	.342**	.431**
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	124	124	124

Source: Field Data, 2023

The correlation results show a strong positive and significant relationship between the budget allocated to the fight against narcotics use and increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up ($r=0.422$ and $\text{sig}=0,000$), between availability of equipped rehabilitation centers for narcotic users and increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up ($r=0.290$ and $\text{sig}=0,000$), and between the sufficient capacity building of actors to fight against narcotics use and increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up ($r=0.353$ and $\text{sig}=0,000$) at 0,01 level of significance. At the same time, the correlation results show a strong positive and significant relationship between the budget allocated to the fight against narcotics use and the former youth narcotic users' integration in the community ($r=0.345$ and $\text{sig}=0,000$), and between the sufficient capacity building of actors to fight against narcotics use and the former youth narcotic users integration in the community ($r=0.342$ and $\text{sig}=0,000$), at 0,01 level of significance. Thus, this implies that the budget allocated to the fight against narcotics use, the availability of equipped rehabilitation centers for narcotic users and the sufficient capacity building of actors to fight against narcotics use play a strong significant and positive role in the increase of the number of youth narcotic users giving up. Also, this implies that the budget allocated to the fight against narcotics use and the sufficient capacity building of actors to fight against narcotics use play a strong significant and positive role in integration of former youth narcotic users in the community.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aimed to ascertain the implication of community policing in the fight against narcotics use among youth in Rwanda, using the case of the Kicukiro District. The results showed that community policing involvement in decision-making, its inclusivity, and its capacity play a positive and significant role in the fight against narcotic use among youth.

The researcher recommends to the City of Kigali and Kicukiro District to improve the effectiveness of its programs of rehabilitation and integration of youth narcotics users by involving the beneficiaries of those programs in its conception and implementation. The community policing activities relating to the fight against narcotics use among youth should have effective coordination in the Kicukiro District. In addition, the Rwanda Government should set up a National Policy Against narcotics use among youth and other useful regulations. The researcher recommends to the Rwanda Government to strengthen the institutions that are in charge of narcotics trafficking control, should reinforce the programs of fight against the dropout and those against unemployment among youth, and should strengthens awareness against family conflicts and in favor of responsible parents.

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