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Drug Abuse Management Strategies and Reduction of Crime Rate among the Youth in Rwanda. A Case of Gatunda and Karama of Nyagatare District

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Abstract

The overall objective of the study was to assess drug abuse management strategies and reduction of crime rate among youth in Rwanda. The specific objectives were to assess the demand and supply reduction strategy of drug abuse put in place in Nyagatare District, to examine the rate of crime associated with drug abuse among youth in Nyagatare District, to assess the role of harm reduction strategy of drug abuse on reduction of crime rate among youth in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District and to determine the role of community involvement in drug abuse management in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District. This study used a descriptive research design with both quantitative and qualitative data. The target population comprises the District youth culture and sport officers, social affairs at Sector level, cell executive secretaries and heads of villages. In total they were 225 from whom a sample of 144 was selected. Researcher used a simple random sampling technique and data were collected using questionnaire and interview guide. The analysis of data was done through statistical product of service analysis (SPSS) version 21. Bivarate analysis, mean, standard deviation with 95% of inferences, p-value less than 0.05, simple and multiple logistic regression model were all determined. The study findings showed that 1.672 of mean and 0.617 of standard deviation showed that the application of demand, supply and harm reduction strategies were used to achieve reduction of crime related crime among youth. Findings also showed before putting in place strategies, there were high rate of drug abuse related crime as indicated by the mean of 1.826 and 0.629 of standard deviation. As indicated, the rate of drug abuse was at 4% (confirmed at mean of 1.646 and 0.548 of standard deviation).It also shifted to vary between 4%-8% (mean of 2.007 and 0.705 of standard deviation). Drug abuse related crime shifted up to 16% (as indicated by the mean of 1.639 and 0.696 of standard deviation. The study findings showed that harm reduction strategy played

important role as indicated at the mean of 1.535 and standard deviation of 0.566. As indicated, trade restrictions (at mean of 1.957 and 0.830 of standard deviation), involvement of community (at mean of 1.625and standard deviation of 0.553), application of punishments (at mean of 1.772 and 0.674 of standard deviation) were all seen as important in reduction of related crime rate. Thus, the involvement of community measures decision making, taking preventive measures (at mean of 1.806 and 0.519 of standard deviation). As recommendation, there is a need of ongoing awareness campaign of applying different strategies of reducing demand of drug, supply of drug and harm related crime rate.

Keywords: *Drug abuse management strategies, Drug abuse, Drug related crime, Reduction of drug related crime.*

1.0 Background of the study

According to Collins et al (2008), the concept of drug abuse in global perspective is about consumption of harmful products which have negative effects on people's living conditions. The drug abuse worldwide has negative effects on human health and has decreased countries wealth and security. The use of different illicit substances such as cannabis, marijuana and others like alcohol, tobacco and other illegal substances set up one of the outstanding causes of health harms amongst the youth in Rwanda. Some of the youth try using alcohol and cigarettes as they are encouraged by their peers and other different reasons like hard living conditions. However, this can lead to the use of riskier substances including cannabis and cocaine (Bennett & Holloway, 2005).

In Rwanda, Nyagatare District being a border District, is one of the most affected by drug abuse where illicit brew, marijuana and "*Kanyanga*" among others, are smuggled into the country from the neighboring Uganda. This stirs instability, domestic violence and other forms of crime. Nyagatare District and its surrounding villages witness an upsurge in alcohol related social vices such as robbery, rape, school dropout, theft, prostitution, teenage pregnancy and diseases such as HIV/AIDS, etc. As a result of addiction to alcohol, many people of both sexes engage in social vices to raise money to satisfy their insatiable appetite for drugs (James, 2014).

Drug abuse management strategies to reduce crime related basically requires different aspects of prevention such as the intervention of the family, early intervention to provide support for the family, cognitive behavior programme, involving and retaining the local community, designing robust programmes, as well as having sufficient resources like funds (Chesang, 2013).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Some of the problems arising include poor management strategies to fight against the drug abuse in Nyagatare District, the irresponsibility of some local governance leaders, the fear of the drug traffickers by some leaders and some other power that backed up them, lack of awareness of side effects of drugs abuse in the community and not being able to control other factors which encourage the youth to use drugs

The Eastern Province of Rwanda in which Nyagatare District is found (alongside Northern Province) is a gateway for drugs to enter Rwanda. The drugs include *mayirungi*, chief *waragi*, and illicit gin, commonly known as *Kanyanga*. The impact of drug abuse in the region includes conflicts and violence in homes, school dropouts and an increase in crime. The drugs are brought from Uganda by traffickers and dealers locally known in Burera as Abarembetsian of Gicumbi in the Northern region and Nyagatare in North-East are the districts where drug abuse is also considered to be still high (The New Times, 2018)

From the researcher's experience of Nyagatare District, alcohool and drug abuse there have contributed to the increase of the crime rate in different areas of the country. Nyagatare District experiences this since its neighboring countries are the largest producers of such alcohol and drugs and it's easy for the population around to smuggle the drugs without a trace. That is the reason why the researcher intends to assess drug abuse management strategies and reduction of crime rate among youth in Rwanda more specifically in Nyagatare District.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

i. To assess the demand and supply reduction strategy of drug abuse put in place in Nyagatare District

ii. To examine the rate of crime associated with drug abuse among youth in Nyagatare District

iii. To assess the role of harm reduction strategy of drug abuse on reduction of crime rate among youth in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District.

iv. To determine the role of community involvement in drug abuse management in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District.

1.3 Research questions

i. What are the demand and supply reduction strategies of drugs abuse put in place in Nyagatare District?

ii. What are the the rate of crime associated with drug abuse among youth in Nyagatare District?

iii. What is the role of harm reduction strategy of drug abuse on reduction of crime rate among youth in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District?

iv. What is the role of community involvelment in drug abuse management in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District?

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Self Esteem Theory

This theory was established by Branden (2001) and clearly indicated that drug use depends on the supply rate. Therefore, individual with low self-esteem increase the tendency of drug consumption habits than individual with high self-esteem who defend themselves against insecurity and are exceptionally sensitive to changes in social working environment. The implication of low self-esteem theory is that it is the basic psychometric mechanism underlying drug abuse and mostly this account for people with different personality constellations choosing different drugs which might be related to the personality of the abusers.
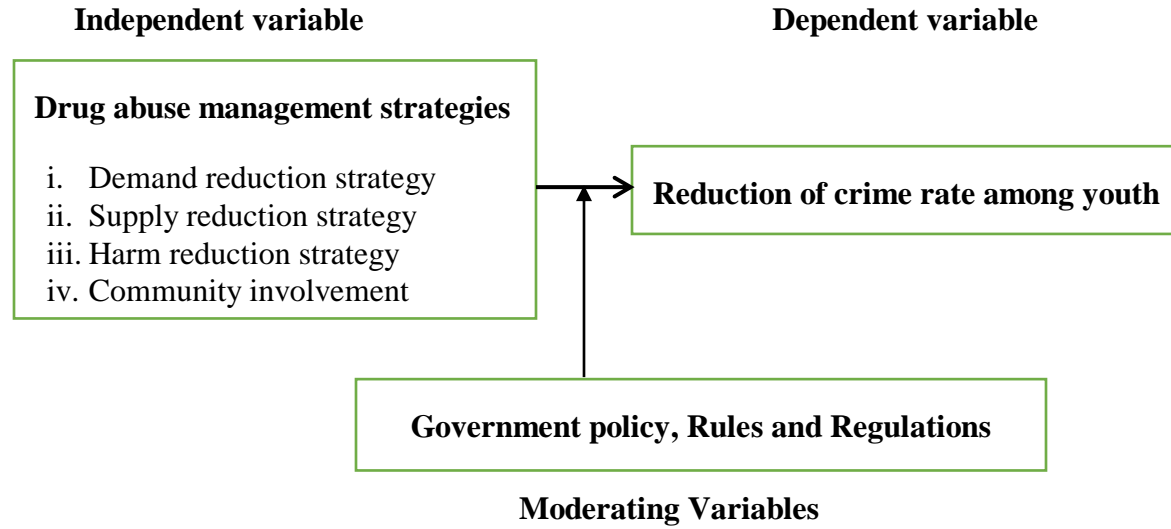
2.1.2 Psychological theory of Drug Use

This theory was advanced by Di Chiara and Imperato, (1988), assumes that drug users constitute syndromes of behaviors which are related to compulsive disorders and gambling can be a psychological approach to description of drug dependence. The theory states that despite the use problems among drug users, they are not able to control drug use. The implication of this theory is that there is the existence of different psychological approaches to the explanation of drug dependences in the form of behavior, cognitive, personality and rational choice among others.

2.1.3 Psycho Dynamic Model

This theory was established by Sigmund (2014) and put more emphasis on people engaging in drugs. The theory revealed that taking more drugs more specifically among young generation leads to worse behavioral aspects among childhood up to adult age. The theory provide instructions on the prevention of drugs to avoid crime related effects. The implication of this theory is that more and effective preventive measures of drug use remain important among generation. The theory also encourage education programmes of drug abuse management in social or community. The theory provides the counselling form of philosophy to allow the youth to gain insight into his unconscious motives and try to enhance self-image in the social working environment.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Independent variable   **Dependent variable**

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Drug abuse management strategies     │
│                                      │              ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
│   i.   Demand reduction strategy     │─────────────▶│ Reduction of crime rate among youth  │
│   ii.  Supply reduction strategy     │              └──────────────────────────────────────┘
│   iii. Harm reduction strategy       │
│   iv.  Community involvement         │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                                                │
                        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
                        │ Government policy, Rules and Regulations   │
                        └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Moderating Variables

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Research, 2022

3.0 Research Methodology

The researcher used a descriptive research design in both mixed methods such as quantitative and qualitative components. This technique was helpful to the researcher as it will assist him in describing events as they are in Nyagatare District about drug abuse management strategies and reduction of crime rate among the youth in Nyagatare District.

The target population comprised the District youth and sports officers, Social affairs in two selected sectors, Cells executive secretaries in two selected sectors, Heads of villages in two selected sectors. The total population was 225 from which 144 sample were selected by use of the formula developed Yamane (1967).

$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$, where n is the sample, N is the total target population, e is the sampling error.

In this study, researcher used a simple random sampling technique to get the representative sample. This technique was chosen by the researcher as it gave equal probability chance of respondents to be selected.

Table 1: Target population

Categories	Number	Proportion	Sample size
District youth and sports officers	2	0.009	1
Social affairs of two sectors	3	0.013	2
Cells executive secretary of two sectors	32	0.142	21
Heads of villages in two selected sectors	188	0.836	120
Total	**225**		**144**

Source: Primary data, 2022

Researcher used three types of instruments such as questionnaire, Interview and documentation. Both questionnaire, Interview and Documentation review were used to collect data about the research topic. The validity measures the accuracy of research instruments while the reliability measures the consistency of research instruments in terms of pilot testing. The reliability measure consists of the degree of similarity and it was measured by pilot test to the research participants to assess their view points on drug abuse management strategies and reduction of crime rate among youth. In this study, the researcher used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) Version 20 as software in analyzing quantitative data from the field. Bivaliate analysis was used to assess the association between dependent and independent variables using P-value. Therefore, this was determined by using simple and multiple logistic regression model, mean and standard deviation. Inference was made using 95% confidence intervals with p-value <0.05.The confidentiality and privacy in collecting was maintained. The researcher gave freedom to all individuals to pick and choose best fit response. Thus, participants were requested not to indicate their names nor any contact information on the questionnaires.

4.0 Research Findings and Discussions

Respondent rate

For all targeted respondents, a 100% participated in this research. This means that all questions distributed to research participants were effectively completed and collected.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Findings of research based on gender of respondents revealed that 72.2% were male and 27.8% were also female. In terms of age, findings showed that 13.2% have less than 20years, 21.5% of respondents had age group of between 20-25 years, 17.4% of respondents had the age group of 25-30years, 27.8% of surveyed respondents had the age group of between30-35yearsl, 14.6% of respondents had age group of 35-40 years old while 5.6% of respondents had the age of between

40-45 years. Findings related to marital status revealed that 45.1% were single, 49.3% were married while 5.6% of respondents were widower.

The findings related to education of respondents showed that 54.2% of respondents have completed primary level of education, 25.0% have completed secondary level of education while 20.8% of surveyed respondents have completed diploma. The study findings also showed that 13.9% of respondents had professional experience of less than 1year, 35.4% of respondents had professional experience of between 1-2years, 42.4% of respondents had professional experience of between 2-3years, and 5.6% of respondents had experience of 4-5years while 2.8% of research participants had experience of 5 years.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

Objective one: Assessment of demand and supply reduction strategy of drug abuse put in place in Nyagatare District

Table 2: Demand and Supply reduction strategy of drug abuse put in place

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	St.D
There were strategies of drugs abuse management	50.0%	46.5%	3.5%	-	-	1.535	0.565
The strategies are implemented to reduce drug use among youth in Nyagatare District	36.1%	59.7%	4.2%	-	-	1.722	0.673
Strategies of drug demand reduction are followed by discouraging consumption habits among youth.	57.6%	38.9%	3.5%	-	-	1.458	0.566
Supply reduction strategy was adopted by discouraging imports of all kinds of drugs to avoid its related crime rate	22.9%	72.9%	4.2%	-	-	1.896	0.773
Strategies were enhanced about drug abuse management by putting in place punishments , penalties against demand and supply of drugs	28.5%	68.1%	3.5%	-	-	1.750	0.509
Overall average	**39.0**	**57.2**	**3.8**			**1.672**	**0.617**

Source: Primary Data, 2022

The study findings revealed that demand and supply strategy of drugs in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District were put in place as showed by 39% of respondents who strongly agreed and 57.2% who also agreed that strategies were established to reduce demand and supply of drugs. Therefore, this matches with the mean score of 1.672and standard deviation of 0.617. Thus, through strategies, drug use reduced among youth in Gatunda and Karama Sectors. As showed, this strategy was related to discouraging consumption habits among youth as confirmed at the mean 1.458 and standard deviation of 0.566, discouraging imports of all kinds of drugs from neighboring countries to avoid its related crime rate as confirmed by respondents at the mean score of 1.896 and standard deviation of 0.773. And by putting in place punishments, penalties against demand and supply of drugs as confirmed at the mean of 1.750 and standard deviation of 0.509.

Objective two: Rate of crime associated with drug abuse among youth in Nyagatare District

Table 3: Rate of crime associated with drug abuse among youth in Nyagatare District

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	St.D
There is high rate of drug abuse related crime among Youth in Nyagatare District	25.7%	70.1%	4.2%	-	-	1.826	0.629
The rate of drug abuse related crime among youth in Nyagatare District is at 4%	38.9%	57.6%	3.5%	-	-	1.646	0.548
The rate of drug abuse related crime among youth in Nyagatare District is between 4 % - 8%.	11.8%	84.0%	4.2%	-	-	2.007	0.705
The rate of drug abuse related crime among youth in Nyagatare District is between 8%-12%	57.6%	38.9%	3.5%	-	-	1.458	0.566
The drug abuse related crime among youth in Nyagatare District is at 16%	44.4%	51.4%	4.2%	-	-	1.639	0.696
Overall average	**35.7**	**60.4**	**3.9**			**1.715**	**0.629**

Source: Primary data, 2022

Research findings showed that 60% of respondents agreed that there was high rate of crime related drugs in selected Sectors of Nyagatare District. This was also strongly confirmed by 36%.This is indicated by the average mean of 1.715 and standard deviation of 0.629.Thus this indicates the negative effects of drug use among youth in Nyagatare District. These findings are in line with the study conducted by Mason and Windle (2011) in USA about drug abuse among youth which showed that the rate of consumption of drug is due to peer group in social working environment. As indicated, adolescents are more victim to drug usage due to substance abusing peers involving in alcoholic drinks.

Objective three: Role of harm reduction strategy of drug abuse on reduction of crime rate among youth.

Table 4: Role of harm reduction strategy of drug abuse on reduction of crime rate among youth

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	St.D
Harm reduction strategy of drugs plays a significant role in reducing crime rate.	50.0%	45.5%	3.5%	-	-	1.535	0.566
Harm reduction strategy comprises trade restrictions of all kinds of drugs for better health condition.	36.8%	59.0%	4.2%	-	-	1.957	0.830
Harm reduction strategy was achieved through community involvement in reduction of drug use.	41.0%	55.6%	3.5%	-	-	1.625	0.553
The application of punishments is one of harm reduction strategy of drug related crime in Nyagatare District.	36.1%	59.7%	4.2%	-	-	1.772	0.674
Overall average	41.0	55.0	4.0			1.722	0.656

Source: Primary Data, 2022

The study findings showed that harm reduction strategy of drugs plays a significant role in reducing crime rate as indicated at the mean of 1.535 and standard deviation of 0.566.Thus, this strategy comprises trade restrictions of all kinds of drugs for better health condition as indicated by the mean of 1.957 and standard deviation of 0.830. And was achieved through community involvement in reduction of drug use as confirmed by the respondents at the mean score of 1.625 and standard deviation of 0.553.

As indicated, application of punishments is one of harm reduction strategy of drug related crime in Nyagatare District as confirmed at the mean score of 1.772 and standard deviation of 0.674. The objective was achieved due to the fact that 41.0%of respondents strongly agreed that harm reduction strategy of drug plays a great role on reduction of crime rate among youth. This was also agreed by 55.0% of respondents at the overall average mean of 1.722 and standard deviation of 0.656.

Objective four: Role of community involvement in drug abuse management in selected sectors of Nyagatare District.

Table 5: Role of community involvement in drug abuse management in selected Sectors

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	St.D
There exists community involvement of drug abuse management in two selected sectors of Nyagatare District.	43.1%	53.5%	3.5%	-	-	1.604	0.557
The community involvement in drug abuse management is facilitated by their involvement in decision making and taking preventive measures.	25.0%	69.4%	5.6%	-	-	1.806	0.519
The community involvement is measured by information sharing and reporting cases of drug use	25.0%	70.8%	4.2%	-	-	1.791	0.500
Overall average	31.0	65.0	4.0			5.201	0.525

Source: Primary Data, 2022

The study findings showed that community play the significant role In reducing consumption habits of drugs among youth as confirmed at the mean score of 1.604 and standard deviation of 0.557.With community involvement in decision making for drug abuse management, this facilitated preventive measures of drug use as confirmed by surveyed respondents at the mean score of 1.806 and standard deviation of 0.519.

Findings also showed that community involvement helped the leaders in information sharing and reporting cases of drug use as indicated by respondents in two selected sectors at the mean score of 1.791 and standard deviation of 0.500.Thus, this objective has been achieved as in indicates the role of community in reducing drugs related crime as strongly agreed and agreed by respondents of Gatunda and Karama at 31.0% and 65.0% respectively. Therefore, the mean score of agreement is 5.201 and the standard deviation of 0.525.

5.0 Conclusions

The results showed there is significance between drug abuse management strategies and reduction of crime rate related drug among youth in Nyagatare District with coefficient of 0.350 and R-square of 0.059. The relationship is positive by applying demand, supply and harm reduction strategies to achieve reduction of crime rate related drugs in Nyagatare District.

6.0 Recommendation

Youths are the most exposed to the drug abuse since some of them get involved in through their friends? Thus, there is a need of ongoing awareness campaign of applying different strategies of

drug demand reduction, drug supply strategy, harm drug reduction strategy and involving community in drug abuse management.

Government of Rwanda with help leaders at the District level, sector level and cell level need to put together their efforts of preventing consequences of drug use among young generation like engaging unprotected sex, robbery, rape, school dropout, theft, prostitution and diseases such as HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, hepatitis, diabetes, oral and liver cancers. All partners including police, self-employed, community need to have commitment in applying strategies regarding prevention of all kinds of drugs affecting young generation in Nyagatare District more specifically in two selected sectors of Gatunda and Karama.

At countrywide, the study is needed to assess the drug abuse management strategies and reduction crime rate among youth. This will be important in assessing rate of drug use and avoidance among young generation and strategies needed to put in place in the whole country.

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