

Prediction of Risky Alcohol Use among Ugandan Youth: A Case Study of at Marie Stopes and Youth Reproductive Health Clinics

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Abstract

Alcohol use imposes a significant global burden of disease among the youth. We investigated the level and risk factors of alcohol use among the youth seeking health services at Marie Stopes Uganda (MSU) and Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU) clinics in Mbarara Municipality, Southwestern Uganda. This was a descriptive cross sectional study conducted at Marie Stopes Uganda (MSU) and Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU) Clinics in Mbarara Municipality, southwestern Uganda. 336 youth attending the MSU and RHU clinics for health care services between August 1, 2012 and September 1, 2012 were included in the study. We used the AUDIT to examine alcohol use. Descriptive statistics and logistic regression models were used to test the study objectives. About 80% of youth reported any alcohol use (n=270). Residing closer to the source of alcohol drunk in the past fortnight, history of familial alcohol misuse, other substance use and being employed youth were positively associated with alcohol use. Prevalence of alcohol use among the youth was found to be high. Residing closer to the source of alcohol, history of familial alcohol misuse, other substance use and being employed bear implications for alcohol use.

This work is partly presented at 3rd International Conference On Pharmaceutics & Novel Drug Delivery Systems Dubai, UAE December 05-06, 2018

Keywords

Alcohol use; Alcohol misuse and youth; Marie Stopes clinic; Youth reproductive health clinic; Uganda

Background

Alcohol use remains a global burden of disease [1]. The level of alcohol use among the youth is a public health problem in Sub-Saharan Africa, is high and increasing among youth [2]. In the Global Schoolbased (GSBHS) survey in Uganda, 64% of youth in schools reported alcohol use [3]. In the recent years, the age of alcohol use has changed, such that slightly more young people (ages 15-24 years) report higher alcohol use than older ages. Moreover, youth who use alcohol experience social problems such as school dropout [4], economic and mental health problems. Further, they are more likely to have fatal accidents. A study conducted in Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital revealed that more than 14% deaths were attributed to alcohol-related accidents.

As regards socio-cultural factors, sports galas and marriage ceremonies for instance expose the youth to alcohol use. Such influences make alcohol to be indiscriminately accessible to the youth in almost all places [9-11]. Worse still, a number of acts such as the Enguli Act (1964) that were put in place to regulate alcohol use are not only old but rarely enforced [10]. Enguli act (1964) was enacted to regulate use of illicit home-distilled alcohol in Uganda.

Methods**Study design**

This was a descriptive, cross sectional study conducted at Marie Stopes Uganda (MSU) and Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU) Clinics in Mbarara Municipality, southwestern Uganda. Study population and ethics All the youth presenting to the MSU and RHU clinics for health care services between August 1, 2012 and September 1, 2012 were eligible for inclusion in the study. His study was approved by the Mbarara University of Science and

Technology Review Ethics Committee of (MUST-REC). Written consent was sought from those receiving health care services.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used for reporting the primary study outcomes. To test for associations, predictor factors were cross-tabulated with dichotomized alcohol use (alcohol drinkers and alcohol non-drinkers) through bivariate logistic regression. Independent variables with $p \leq 0.05$ were entered into the multivariate logistic regression. Odds ratios, p values and confidence intervals are reported. The analyses were conducted using Stata.

Eligibility

The youth of ages 15-24 years, seeking sexual reproductive health services were consecutively recruited from the outpatient register in MSU and RHU clinics. Youth were excluded if they were too sick, as they were not able to give sound informed consent. Alternate visits were made until the sample size was obtained.

Conclusion

The prevalence of alcohol use among the youth was high. This high prevalence could be mainly due to socio-cultural activities the youth engage in. The main risk factors for alcohol use were other substance use, proximity, familial alcohol misuse, and being employed.

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