

Youth Alcoholism among Campus Undergraduates in Cameroon: Implications for Indiscipline in University Neighbourhoods

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Abstract: This research examined the consumption of alcoholic substances among university undergraduates with concerns around the associated boisterous behaviours. It precisely paid attention on the extent to which alcoholism fuels the rise of acts of indiscipline by young people in university neighbourhoods and tested the following hypothesis; there is a significant association between alcoholism and students indiscipline in university neighbourhoods in Cameroon. The study implored the survey research design with a sample of 323 participants, 195 males and 128 females within the age range of 16 - 30 selected through the purposive, snowball and convenient sampling techniques. A questionnaire and a support interview guide were administered on the participants for data collection. Bivariate linear regression analysis aided by the F-test indicated that youth alcoholism significantly contributed to the rise of acts of indiscipline within university neighbourhoods in Cameroon. In definite terms, alcoholism [$F(1, 321) = 279.26, p < .001$], was considerably linked with students' unruliness. Descriptively, boozing recorded a 66% value and was exceedingly connected with sexual crimes, violence, pornography, physical assault, misuse of school fees, duping of parents and sale of property as major cases of indiscipline among others. The enquiry recommended the following: parents should continue to follow up and counsel their teenagers while they are in the university, local administrators should regulate alcoholic entrepreneurship within the university milieu, universities should implement socio-cultural activities like sports, games and entertainment that will occupy students, counselling units should be task to do more by sensitizing and doing a follow up of young people who engage in alcoholism, students should be encouraged to form positive peer relationships that will make and not mar their future and personal development.

Keywords: Youth, alcoholism, youth alcoholism, indiscipline, university neighbourhoods.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, there has been a global upsurge in the number of young people seeking to build their careers, fulfill their life dreams and contribute to national development by integrating into the world economy via national and international structures and systems. This reflects (Lo-oh, 2014) who posited that development objectives, not only in Cameroon but across the many African developing economies cannot be met without the full involvement of young people who must be taken into account in event of any youth or development driven policy. In Cameroon, the quest for youth empowerment through university education has led to an unprecedented increase in university student enrollment figures which numbered about 500.000 (Ministry of Higher Education, 2020).

The status quo has mobilized more high school leavers out of their homes into tertiary institutions across the national territory with the sole motive to acquire higher education. The proportion of mobility from home to university has ignited a relocation ascension which has in turn transformed university neighbourhoods into overpopulated zones. As observed, there seems to be a change in status from dependent lads under home care to independent big boys and girls with benefits such as freedom and individually controlled shelter and accommodation in hostels and bungalows (Lo-oh and Afumbom, 2017).

Remarkably, transition from home to university introduces opportunities for socialization, friendships, and peer relationships, observation and modelling of new behavior traits and life styles as well as novel experiences around the new environment commonly shared with other adolescents (Afumbom, 2015). Such circumstances are sometimes aggravated by the nonexistence of parental regulatory mechanisms which has provoked the trendy disruptive behaviours exhibited the youths. This reflects Carstens (2013) who posited that there is a widespread belief that harmful behaviour among young people particularly university students had reached a historically unprecedented height.

Evidence based observations reveal increase in fears by parents, staff, clergy, civil society, students themselves and local administrators' who have jointly engaged in continuous efforts to curb the spread of such immoral acts (Lo-oh & Afumbom, 2017). The objective is to sanitize the university neighborhoods in Cameroon so as to accord it the moral and academic status it deserves. However, these adolescents seem to be overridden by the presence of numerous inns, night clubs and alcoholic distribution outlets both off and on licensed which seem to negatively spice the vicinity of student hostels with melodious rhythms from latest musical genres from national internationally acclaimed musicians. This is in line with (Kaynak et al., 2014) who indicated that there is unsafe alcohol ingestion among young people, especially students. Davoren, Cronin, Perry, O'Connor (2016) found that University students are at risk for substance abuse behaviours because of changes in lifestyle, reduced parental support, and stress.

Additionally, scholars have argued that not only do students drink more alcohol than non-student populations (Hallett, 2014; Skylar, 2021) but that they also combine the intake of other drugs and this leads to many problems and disorderly behaviours amongst this group. For example, research revealed that students drank heavier than their non-students counterparts (Verhoog et al., 2020) while Morioka et al. (2018) reported other drug-related disorders among this group which have been considered in this study as acts of indiscipline such as forceful sexual behaviour, violent fights, misappropriation of pocket money and school fees among others.

Background to the study

As indicated by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (1981) the term youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (1981) also states that youth is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job. Definition of youth perhaps changes with circumstances, especially with the changes in demographic, financial, economic and socio-cultural settings. One of the most recent yet negative attribute that characterizes the youthful population is usage of alcoholic substances which as observed seems to be more common in university milieus.

According to Chesang (2013) alcohol is contained in drinks such as beer, wine, brandy, spirits and whisky. It is an extremely potent drug which acts on the body primarily as a depressant and lowers down the brain activity. However, in low doses it can be a stimulant. If used in excess, it will damage or even kill body tissues including muscles and brain cells. Its consumption causes a number of marked changes in behaviour. Even low doses impair judgement and coordination. Within university neighbourhoods the abuse of this substance seems to have links with youth's engagement in disruptive behaviours such as sexual harassment, vandalism, verbal and physical aggression and sometimes pick-pocketing due to improper brain coordination.

Bennett (1997) viewed alcohol as a drink that is as dangerous as cocaine and heroin. He went further to note that the unfortunate thing about it is that, unlike other similarly dangerous drugs, it appears to enjoy greater acceptance and its consumption is often openly applauded by the government, press and manufacturers. In Cameroon the situation is challenging because it is viewed as a burgeoning economic enterprise. University milieus due to its populous youthful nature are therefore seen as fruitful hubs for alcoholism in bars, night clubs, parties and most especially during matriculation and graduation ceremonies. But the sad realities associated to it are abounding reflecting Bada and Adebisi's (2014) position that alcohol consumption appears very rampant in schools which leads to social problems.

The influence of alcoholism on youths has created anxieties and troubling thoughts in parents, schools, society and even the government due to acts of indiscipline that accrue from it with adverse consequences on the society and moral advancement cum holistic development of the students. One of the most critical factors destroying young people today is alcohol or substance abuse. This confirms Aquilano (2008) who suggested that it is a social malady contributing to rape, crime, academic under achievement, sexual behaviour, addiction, and numerous health, mental health, and emotional disorders.

Most young people drink in order to conform to the norms of a particular group while others majorly engage in alcohol drinking for ego assertion as a result of desire to be independent. For other adolescents they engage in drinking in order to reduce frustration, relieve boredom, fatigue and in addition they perceive that it could help them to escape harsh realities of their world. World Health Organization (2004), stated the side effect of alcohol on individuals and society at large; psychological disorder, untimely death and health problems to mention in summary. Regardless of these negative effects, occupants of university neighbourhoods still celebrate occasions with alcoholic drinks; be it matriculation, graduation ceremonies, birthday parties, academic success, new romantic partners, successful gambling bets and financial crimes just to name a few. All these are factors that enhance the consumption of alcoholic substances by students.

Another issue is that young people join different peer groups and identify themselves with these groups by participating in their activities so as not to be rejected. According to Mello (1996) in (Bada, & Adebisi, 2014) alcohol consumption among students is on the increase and they are mostly influenced to drinking alcohol by their friends. A young person who is attached to a peer group that values anti-social activities inevitably finds it difficult to resist the encouragement of peer group members in such negative behaviour as it intoxicates behaviours (including assaults, vandalism and public nuisance).

Heavy alcohol consumption in the university student population is associated with numerous negative consequences. Survey data indicate that over 696,000 university students in Nigeria are assaulted each year by another student who has been drinking, 599,000 sustain alcohol-related injuries each year, and 1,700 die annually as a result of such injuries (Adewuya, 2005). High rates of alcohol use are also associated with risky sexual behaviour among University students, Obot and Ibanga (2002) reported that over 97,000 University students are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or alcohol. Another 100,000 reported being too intoxicated to know whether or not they consented to having sex (Heap, 1998; Obot, 2000) cited in (Afumbom, 2015). The situation in universities in Cameroon seems not to be different as posited by the media, government authorities and civil society. However a study of this nature was imperative as it sought to uncover the social malaise with a view of attempting solutions.

According to Fasick (1984) many negative experiences by young people occur during adolescence, a period during which they according to Erikson (1968) and developmental literature are in a state of crises. Although some students are often above adolescence probably in emerging adulthood, over control at home and inadequate exposure warrants them to experience adolescent crises later on specifically in university neighbourhoods when they gain sudden freedom. The sudden biological changes in their bodies, pressure from peers, the environment at large and the unending desire to discover themselves heightens the difficulties of the period. Finding themselves in a very uncontrolled and laissez-faire context of university life only exacerbates the worries of indiscipline they face.

As propounded by Giroux (1998) youth are no longer seen as at-risk, they are the risk. This is true because environmental challenges particularly those in university neighbourhoods are not enough to permit young people to engage in acts of indiscipline. In fact the presence of drinking spots, night clubs, partying and consumption of alcoholic substances is common across the society but the way in which the youths abuse all of these seems to be a central problem. The youth ought to avoid such temptations, focus on their careers and dreams if they must succeed, have a bright future and integrate into the national economy. But their reluctance to abstain or even drink responsibly particularly in university neighbourhoods has raised an alarm and today youth alcoholism is being perceived by many as a burning societal vice.

The foregoing discourse depicts a clear picture of some university neighbourhoods in Cameroon like Molyko (University of Buea), Bambili (University of Bamenda), Bonas (University of Yaounde 1) and Soa (University of Yaounde 2) among others. Unfortunately this is the home of a majority of university students in Cameroon, whose parents, sponsors, and the government have invested a lot upon in order to have them trained into maturity both morally and intellectually as future citizens of the nation. From a psychological point of view as propounded by Giroux (1998), the contemporary neighbourhood settings and environment where most youth group together is certainly not the right context where they can be groomed to and nurtured to maturity intellectually and academically.

The foregoing as observed stems from the fact that there are numerous boozing spots that do not only distribute and facilitate substance abuse but also propagate associated negativities like prostitution, drunkenness, excess public smoking that is harmful, violent quarrels and fights, improper spending of pocket money and school fees, numerous gambling opportunities, pick pocketing and many others. As such, it will certainly not be an easy task for young people to emerge therein as true leaders of tomorrow as well as for the economic, social and political emergence of the nation by 2035.

Worried about the degrading nature of students discipline in university neighbourhoods in Cameroon this study investigated youth alcoholism as a predictor of indiscipline within university contexts in Cameroon.

Statement of the problem

Government officials, local administrators, university hierarchy, parents, civil society, media organs and students have all raised concerns about the degrading nature of university neighbourhoods which play host to youth alcoholism with negative outcomes such as substance abuse, uncontrolled partying, financial crimes, violent fights, irresponsible sexual practices, gambling expeditions, vandalism, public nuisance among others. The foregoing confirms the position of the Food and Agricultural Organization - World Drink Trends (2003) that alcoholic consumption is high in Cameroon and consumers are disruptive towards society. The status quo in university neighbourhoods is facilitated by peers and gangs who pressurize members to conform and comply to their social norms by manifesting the foregoing acts of indiscipline on a constant bases. This downplays on their morality, paints an immoral picture of university neighborhoods' and narrows the possibilities of youths becoming future agents of change and leaders of the future. Seemingly this disrupts the functioning of universities and scarce resources are loaded into the dustbin with much negative rhetoric about young people as engines that will drive the future of the nation into prosperity.

Purpose of study

The purpose of the study was to investigate youth alcoholism and indiscipline in some university neighbourhoods in Cameroon. The specific objective was to determine the extent to which alcoholism leads to the rise and practice of acts of indiscipline in some university neighbourhoods in Cameroon.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW**Theoretical Review**

As indicated in Harris's (1998, 1995) group socialization theory, there are two important points about young people. Primordially, parenting has no long term effects on the way children reason and behave. Secondly peer groups have a primary environmental influence on children's mentality and behaviour. In line with this study, the group that some young people identify with when out of the home is most often peer groups with whom they share common characteristics. This group plays a significant role in youth's life. Such is the case with youths in university neighbourhoods who practice many aspects of youth alcoholism such as hanging out in bars late at night, clubbing, partying, date rape, violence, immoral romantic relationships, misuse of pocket allowance and financial crimes just to be looked upon as heroes among peers.

Erikson (1968) posited that the primary goal in the developmental stage of adolescence is to answer the question: "Who am I?" This being the case, it is natural to assume that in determining one's identity, one would seek others within the same age group to grow and learn together and understand the social norms and values of their society. In so doing youth commonly engage in a common culture with different kinds of unique practices such as drinking of alcohol, smoking, dressing alike, dating, gambling and formation of gangs as part of conformity and the need to belong and be accepted by their peers. This is a common situation in today's university neighbourhood in Cameroon.

The aforementioned theories reflect the situation in university neighbourhoods where some young people in the transition from home to school gain sudden independence from parental control adopting new roles and gaining new experiences in the university neighborhoods influenced by peers and environmental settings. This new and sudden independence paves the way for experiments and trials of all sorts. One of such experiences is constant and uncontrolled intake of alcohol with far reaching consequences on their discipline and moral formation.

It is mainly for this reason that Hall (1904) described adolescence as the period of "storm and stress" for adolescents. Even though it can be rightly said that many students in universities are already in their twenties way above the adolescent stage, a majority of them still experience the adolescent crisis. This happens because some of them forfeited the adolescent experiences sometimes because of too much parental control, low socialization rate and sometimes too reserved nature. However the situation is often different in the university with an outburst or sudden realization of the need to involve, conform and be recognized.

As a result therefore, youth particularly those from universities in Cameroon often engage acts of indiscipline which are often in contrast to the rules and regulations governing their studentship in the schools (universities) where they happen to be undergoing learning. This is assumed to be some form of indiscipline.

Conceptual Review

The concept of youth

The future of any country depends on the youths in that country. No meaningful development can take place without youths' active participation. According to Azubuike (2009) the youths are the greatest asset of any nation and should be well molded and nurtured for the future of the nation. Agbaje (2012) stated that youths are not only leaders of tomorrow, but partners of today. As a matter of fact a nation's future can be predicted based on the quality of its youths. According to Kumar (2008) if the youths lose their way or direction, it would become very serious and alarming for a Nation.

According to African Youth Charter (2004) youth means every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. Ford and Lerner (2013) also stated that youth is a young person who has not yet reached adulthood and refers to the time before you become an adult. According to Azubuike (2013) youth is the time of life when one is young, but often means the time between childhood and adulthood (maturity). Soludo (2013) also defined youthful age as the appearance, freshness, vigour, spirit, etc., characteristic of one who is young. African Youth Charter (2004) further characterized youthful age as a period filled with life and ambition, energy, anxiousness, dynamic and always bubbling in spirit. The surplus energy of the youths when well exploited is vital to national socio-economic development.

Nature of youths in university neighbourhoods

According to Oluremi (2012) adolescents who are also youths in universities prefer an autonomous and independent life that is free from adult control, thereby engaging in various delinquent acts such as drug abuse, rape, robbery, cultism and vandalism, all of which are dangerous not only to school but to the home and the nation at large. The intake of alcohol by young people in university neighbourhoods has led to an increase in moral decadence, violence, thugs, madness and murder, (Oluremi, 2012).

As indicated by Ngozi, Omenyi and Odimegwu (2010) youths in universities often face a different dimension of life as they engage in the transition from home to the new environment. Universities often do not provide support, care and feelings associated with the home as such the youths are often not connected to campus as they are to their homes. This perception of support and care in university is referred to as school connectedness - a feeling that enables young people to become more involved in school activities with more possibilities of academic achievement and social wellbeing. Lee and Davis (cited in Summers, 2007) defined connectedness as a student's psychological sense of belonging on a campus.

However most young people in universities due to the challenges and crises rocking the stage of life in which they find themselves (adolescence and emerging adulthood) find it difficult connecting with university life because of the absence of support and care systems as those offered at home. In the face of the status quo, they turn to their peers and participate in deviant as well as immorality under the influence of alcohol.

Youth alcoholism

According to Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2008; Hibell, Guttormsson, Ahlström, Balakireva, Bjarnason & Kokkevi, (2009), alcohol is the drug most commonly used by youths. This is supported by Betten, Vettenburg, Steketee & Jonkman (2013) who have opined that the majority of youths begin using alcohol at a very young age. This is the time at which young people often go out for the very first time, and when the influence of parents decreases while that of friends increases. When creating a personal social life, it seems that a part of this phase includes experimenting with stimulants.

According to Betten, Vettenburg, Steketee & Jonkman (2013) a more peer-oriented lifestyle has the strongest association with alcohol use, and this is true for many analyses and country clusters. It should not come as a surprise that a more peer-oriented lifestyle is strongly associated with alcohol use, (Crosnoe, Muller, & Frank, 2004). Peer relationships are important for youth drinking because they are primary groups where attitudes and behaviours are learned. According to social learning theory, an individual learns to drink in small, informal groups (Baron, 2003). It is in these intimate settings that people are taught, through imitation and reinforcement, to hold attitudes that are favourable or unfavourable to drug use. Within families where alcohol is used, adolescents may observe alcohol use, acquire favourable attitudes toward alcohol use, and begin using alcohol themselves.

Similarly, if their friends drink alcohol, adolescents are likely to receive positive social reinforcement from their friends for drinking (Kandel & Chen, 1995). Also, there is a growing concern about the use of alcohol among young people. Several recent studies indicate that students not only drink more, but also start drinking at a younger age (Hibell, 2009). In addition, there is a growing trend that young people drink more excessively (Betten, Vettenburg, Steketee & Jonkman 2013).

In the words of Betten, Vettenburg, Steketee & Jonkman (2013) teenagers with low self-control have a much higher prevalence of drinking alcohol. More important from a prevention perspective is however the observation that low self-control is more prevalent in the more vulnerable social groups (i.e. students in disorganized schools and neighbourhoods, and among students living with disrupted families or families characterized by low bonding and weak parental supervision). They have further indicated that alcohol misuse is a problem in most countries and youths are extremely vulnerable to alcohol initiation.

Common misdemeanors associated include vandalism, property damage (Wechsler, et al 1995) and police involvement e.g. arrests for public drunkenness or (Rotimi, 2005). These are frequent among among university students during matriculations or convocation ceremonies under the influence of alcohol. Alcohol use is associated with certain types of sexual activity. Crime often plays a role in unprotected casual sex, group sex and anal sex when participants in these activities are under the influence of alcohol. Alcohol use has also been linked to early sexual experiences. Alcohol use and sexual risk behaviours are particularly prevalent in settings such as nightclubs, bars, dark houses, highway, eating joints and motels, and brothels. (Nkereuwem & Ekpenyong, 2014)

Indiscipline

As revealed by Bear (1998) and Gabor (1995) most present day school discipline problems come in the form of verbal abuse, violence, bullying and disorderly behaviour which is often facilitated by and exhibited by young people under the influence of alcohol and other drugs. All of these as observed are consequences of alcohol abuse. According to Yahaya (2005) serious breaches of school discipline policy include; assault by students on teachers and other students, verbal abuse, offensive language against teachers and other students, sexual and other forms of harassment, threat and intimidation of teachers and other students, possessing offensive weapons, supplying or using illegal drugs, intrusions into the school or classrooms by adults with the intention of confronting teachers.

Ruberu (2003) acknowledged that general discipline in universities has deteriorated to such an extent that indiscipline tends to become the accepted norm. The students, the teachers and even the administration are afflicted with this calamity. A consequence of allowing this to continue unchecked, ignored and disregarded has increased chaotic incidents and activities within university neighbourhoods. He further revealed that chaos and anarchy in universities was evident in the frequent student clashes, staff student conflicts, absenteeism, gang fights, cheating in exams falsification of results, violence, destruction of property and other documents.

Indiscipline is also any act that diverges from the acceptable societal norms and values (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). According to Abidoyi and Onweazu (2010) indiscipline refers to improper behaviour exhibited by an individual or group of people within the school or community. Digispace (2016) observed that indiscipline is characterized by disobedience, drunkenness, rioting, corruption, fighting, harassing or bullying other students and teachers, laziness and quarrelling among others. He further explained that, disobedience is the main feature of indiscipline. Undisciplined students violate the school rules and regulations at will. Rosen (1997) also identified acts of indiscipline as defiance to school authority, class destruction, truancy, fighting, the use of profanity, damaging school property, violation of school dress code, theft/stealing, absenteeism without permission.

Contextually, youths living in university neighbourhoods today are like no other young people in history. While the older generation was once their age, they never experienced the kinds of difficulties and pressures that are experienced in contemporary society. To name a few of these difficulties as revealed by Sulaiman (2008) cited in Lo-oh & Afumbom (2017) young people face violence, easy access to drugs, alcohol, graphic sexual images on billboards, magazine covers, easy access to internet sites, multiple gambling opportunities and movies as well as music stars who portray immorality in songs, dance and dressing which are common within the university neighbourhoods.

All of these are aspects of youth culture closely linked to indiscipline which they manifest and exhibit partly because of the neighbourhoods in which they live and in some cases facilitated by pressure from peers. As observed, this is truly a complicated and challenging time for young people to develop and grow into intellectuals and morally upright citizens (leaders of tomorrow) which is the prime of their studies in the university. The situation is exacerbated by the presence of numerous bars, multiple tv channels, cheap and uncontrolled cyber cafes, clubs, fashion shops and gambling opportunities or spots created haphazardly. This is sometimes done with support from unscrupulous local administrators and officials thus paving the way for new urban and societal disorder within the university neighbourhoods.

Fon, Acha and Abia (2014) posited that alcohol consumption amongst student populations requires more attention. Notwithstanding, the alcohol use or drinking patterns amongst students who are among the main consumers of alcohol in Cameroon is still vague, thus limiting possible decisions to ameliorate the situation. It is partly based on this assertion that this study was carried out.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study was quantitative in nature and used the survey research design. This design was used because extensive surveys were found to be useful in describing the characteristics of the large population of university neighbourhoods in Cameroon. The design ensured a more accurate sample to collect valid data with which to draw conclusions and make important decisions about this investigation. This design was therefore found very convenient to the present study as it targeted thousands of university students within the neighbourhood of some universities in Cameroon.

Population and sample

The target population of the study comprised of students in university neighbourhoods in Cameroon. Since it was not scientifically possible to reach out to all students found in University neighbourhoods in Cameroon within the time frame of this study, an accessible population considered students of the Molyko neighbourhood of the University of Buea with an estimated population of 19,599 students. The sample size was 377. Purposeful sampling procedure was used to enlist participants. They were contacted in the hostels located around bars, casinos and night clubs. They were briefed on what they were required to do and their consent obtained. Again, the snowball sampling technique was adopted. The respondents were found in different locations within the university neighbourhood like in snack bars, night clubs, casinos and hostels. Thus it was difficult to identify those who were students and who actually practiced/manifested some aspects of youth culture with impunity. The snowball sampling technique thus enabled the researcher to first identify a few respondents who practiced the different aspects of youth culture and then subsequently used them to trace and identify other youth with similar characteristics who could not have been located by the researcher alone.

Instruments

The main instrument used in this study was the questionnaire. The study used one questionnaire titled Students Questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 70 items and was divided into 3 sections: Section A for questions on demographics with 10 items, Section B for questions on sub variables on the independent variable(youth culture) with 10 items per indicator giving a total of 50 items and Section C on questions relating to the dependent variable (discipline problems) with 10 items. The questionnaire was based on the Likert scale which used short statements or phrases with responses ranging from Strongly agree- Agree-Disagree- Strongly disagree. The responses were abbreviated with the following points attached to each response - SA-4, A-3, D-2, and SD-1.

Administration of instrument

The researcher personally conducted and supervised the distribution and administration of the questionnaire. The administration of the instruments was in most cases done by research participants initially identified by the researcher (snowball). The researcher also answered questions posed by respondents based on doubts about the confidentiality of their responses. This was done to save time, clarify doubts, ensure a smooth response process and proper handling of the instruments. Also the researcher wanted the process to be purely scientific and void of any malpractices where others will influence the responses of some respondents.

Method of data analysis

Bivariate linear regression was used as inferential statistical tool to establish the predictive power of youth alcoholism on student's indiscipline in university neighbourhoods in Cameroon. All the hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance.

Findings

To what extent does alcoholism predict students discipline problems in universities in Cameroon?

To provide an answer to this research question, frequencies and percentages of the various weighted responses are presented in the table below alongside the mean and standard deviation as measures of central tendency and dispersion respectively.

Table 1. Showing youth's attitude towards alcoholism

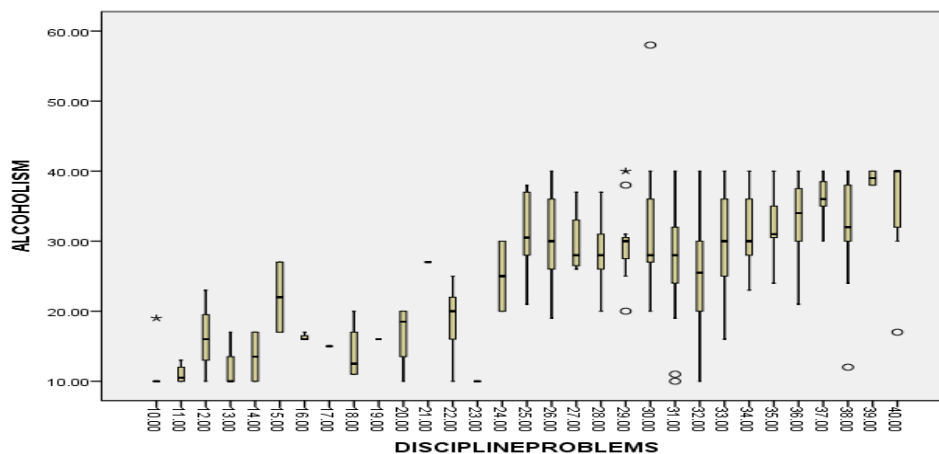
Issues	Agree		Disagree		Mean	S.Dev
	f	%	f	%		
Drink alcohol with peers during school hours	252	78	71	21.9	3.14	1.00
Smoke cigarettes/other drugs when drinking alcohol	155	48	168	52	2.52	1.03
Get drunk after drinking	261	80.8	61	18.8	3.33	1.98
Rebel against authorities and rules due to alcohol	243	75.3	80	24.8	3.08	1.02
Insult/assault others under influence of alcohol	256	79.2	67	20.7	3.15	.98
Increase in desire for sex under influence of alcohol	263	81.5	60	18.6	3.33	.97
Fight with dangerous objects like broken bottles	186	57.6	137	42.2	2.73	1.13
Use of school fees to buy alcohol	171	52.9	152	47.1	2.68	1.12
Demand extra money from parents to buy alcohol	174	53.9	149	46.1	2.70	1.10
Borrow money from friends/others to buy alcohol	170	52.6	153	47.4	2.70	1.13
Grand Total	2131	66	1098	34	29.36	11.46

The table above reveals that 252(78%) students consume alcohol with peers at times during school hours while 71(21.9%) do not. 155(48%) students smoke cigarettes and other drugs when drinking alcohol while 168(52%) do not. When students were asked if they get drunk after drinking, 261(80.8%) admitted while 61(18.8%) refuted the claim. 243(75.3%) students asserted that alcohol gives them the courage to rebel against authorities while 80(24.8%) disagreed. When under the influence of alcohol, 256(79.2%) students said they insult and assault others while 67(20.7%) denied this assertion. Finding out if alcohol increases desire for sex; 263(81.5%) students accepted while 60(18.6%) refused. 186(57.6%) students admitted that they use dangerous objects like broken bottles to fight due to alcohol and 137(42.2%) denied.

When students were asked if they at times use their school fees for alcohol consumption, 171(52.9%) accepted, while 152(47.1%) refused. 174(53.9%) students intimated that they demand extra money from their parents to purchase alcohol while 149(46.1%) do not, and 170(52.6%) borrow money in order to buy alcohol while 153(47.4%) said they do not.

The values of the mean and standard deviation are interpreted on the likert scale based on a decision rule which states that if $\bar{x} \geq 2.5$ the students' responses are positively oriented (SA, A) and if $\bar{x} \leq 2.5$ the students' responses are negatively oriented (SD, D). The mean for the ten items on alcoholism is 29.36, which on the likert scale is 3.0 (agree) with a standard deviation value of 11.46 indicates a deviation of +1 from the mean value on the scale. This is an indication of the fact that majority of the students' responses were positively directed and clustered on agree, giving a less spread tendency (+1) across the likert scale. This is clearly seen in the box plot which is a summary plot indicating measures of central tendency and outliers. There are very few outliers from the mean response as observed in the plot and the whiskers indicating the maximum and minimum responses from the students on the various items based on alcoholism among youth.

Summarily, from a descriptive statistic view point, majority of students positively opined that to a great extent (66%) alcoholism among youth predicts students' discipline problems in universities in Cameroon while minority (34%) held a negative view.

**Figure 1. Box plot examining measures of central tendencies and outliers on alcoholism**

From an interview conducted with students, 6(30%) opined that some of the misbehaviours associated with alcoholism include: Strong desire for sex, fighting, absenteeism, tiredness, smoking, abusive language, violence and aggression. 6(30%) were of the opinion that quarrelling and insults are associated with alcoholism. 5(25%) pointed out that acts of misbehaviours are: Drunkenness, sleeping on the road/gutter, vomiting on others, urinating on others, while 3(15%) said alcoholism leads to disrespect for others and uncontrolled/careless talking.

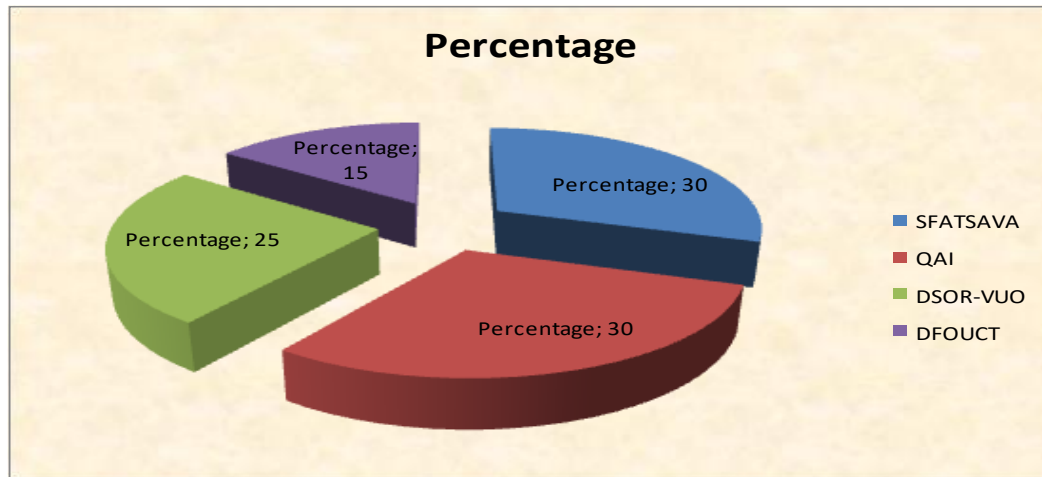


Figure 2. Interview responses on alcoholism

Key:

SFATSAVA= Strong desire for sex, fighting, absenteeism, tiredness, smoking, abusive language, violence and aggression

QAI= Quarrelling and insult

DSOR-VUO= Drunkenness, sleeping on the road/gutter, vomiting on others, urinate on others

DFOU/CT= Disrespect for other, uncontrolled/careless talking

Testing of hypothesis one

Ho. Alcoholism does not significantly predict students discipline problems in university neighbourhoods in Cameroon.

Ha. Alcoholism significantly predicts students discipline problems in university neighbourhoods in Cameroon.

Table 2. Showing Pearson Correlation

		INDISCIPLINE	ALCOHOLISM
Pearson Correlation	Indiscipline	1.000	.682
	Alcoholism	.682	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Indiscipline	.	.000
	Alcoholism	.000	.
N	Indiscipline	323	323
	Alcoholism	323	323

In computing a bivariate linear regression, the first output is the Pearson correlation which reveals a statistically significant association between youth alcoholism and indiscipline among youth. Thus, the Pearson statistic is calculated, $rp(322) = .68$, $p = .001$. The direction of the correlation is positive, which means that acts of indiscipline are mostly associated to students who consume alcohol in university neighbourhoods, while those who do not consume alcohol are less associated with discipline problems. Using Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the effect size is large (68%).

Table 3: Summary results

Variable	F-test	sig	Df	Adjusted R-square	Decision rule	Findings
Alcoholism	279.26	0.001	1	.46	If $p > 0.05$ H_a is rejected and if $p < 0.05$ H_a is retained	Youth alcoholism is significantly associated to acts of indiscipline among students in university neighbourhoods

4. DISCUSSIONS

Alcoholism and students' discipline problems.

The findings of this study from the hypothesis tested indicated that youth alcoholism is significantly related to student's indiscipline in university neighbourhoods. This implies that students consume alcohol with peers during school hours, smoke cigarettes and other drugs when drinking as such they get drunk and become courageous to rebel against authorities insult/assault others and most often engage in fierce fights using dangerous objects. This also means that because of alcohol, their desire for sex increases thus influencing them to engage in force sex/rape and sometimes commercial sex.

This is in line with Spoth, & Greenberg (2005) who opined that youth who drink heavily are at increased risk of short and long term behavioural problems such as drunkenness, fights, aggression and abuse). Also the use and abuse of alcohol is the cause of many social problems, such as increase in crime rate and high proportion of accidental injury among university students (Obot and Ibanga 2002). The strong bond between substance abuse and students discipline problems' also ties with Reed, Amaro, Matsumoto & Kaysen (2009) who propounded that substance use predisposed university students to physical injury due to violent fights. Another confirmation was seen in the writings of Ngesu & Masese (2008) who indicated that lack of morals and strikes in school were caused by alcoholism by students.

The uncontrolled consumption of alcohol in university neighborhoods as seen in the findings ties with Bada and Adebisi (2014). They revealed that environmental influences on alcohol intake includes acceptance of alcohol use by the society, through mass media, role models and this acceptance is demonstrated by lack of formal laws enforcement and social disapproval for those who engage in dangerous drinking or create problems while drunk. This has a way of sending messages to the younger generation that such behaviour is accepted. Such acts include assaults, vandalism and public nuisance. This reflects the FAO-World Drink Trends report (2003) which indicated that unrecorded alcohol consumption in Cameroon is high, citizens are ruined by consuming it and they become disruptive towards the society.

The findings are also in line with Harris (1995, 1998) theoretical position which suggested that parenting has no long term effects on the way children reason and behave. Secondly peer groups have a primary environmental influence on children's mentality and behaviour. When young people transit from home and settle in university neighborhoods they forget and relegate to the background parental advice and home training as they now seek and work closely with peers in times of joy and sadness. Consumption of large quantities of alcohol seems to be a common practice among peers within university settings as they socialize. This is further confirmed by the World Health Organization (2004) that alcohol consumption is usually due to environmental factors, friends or peer group, social wellbeing and uncontrollable drinking habits of young people.

The findings also support an earlier position by Foxcroft, Ireland, Lister-Sharp, Lowe, & Breen (2003) who indicated that there is hazardous alcohol consumption among young people, especially students (Pasch, Perry, Stigler, & Komro, 2009). Scholars equally argued that not only do students drink more alcohol than non-student populations (Kypri, Langley, & Stephenson, 2005; Kypri et al., 2009; Kypri, Cronin, & Wright, 2005) but that they also use other drugs and this leads to many problems and disruptive behaviours amongst this group. For example, Dawson, Grant, Stinson, & Chou's (2004) revealed that youths in school milieus drank heavier than their non-students counterparts while Caldeira, Arria, O'Grady, Vincent, & Wish (2008) reported other drug-related disorders among this group which have been considered in this study as acts of indiscipline such as forceful sexual behaviour, violent fights, misappropriation of pocket money and school fees among others.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded based on the findings from the field already presented above and as supported by literature that there is a significant relationship between youth alcoholism and indiscipline in university neighbourhoods in Cameroon. This was seen in the fact that the coming together of young people in university neighbourhoods for the purpose of education, and career development exposes them to other peers from diverse backgrounds as well as to bars, night clubs and gambling outlets and neighborhood immoral activities which provoke acts of indiscipline by students as already mentioned. Previous research found that harmful levels of liquor intake was linked to augmented smoking and drug use (Witkiewitz, et al., 2012). Additionally, the ingestion of psychoactive ingredients is tantamount to addiction syndromes, multiple behavioral manifestations and cognitive and physiological phenomena that develop after repeated use.

The study also concluded that the situation has created fertile grounds for youths to practice immorality such as indiscriminate consumption of alcohol, drug abuse, uncontrolled sexual activities, and deliberate exposure of body parts and betting of money on games of chance amongst others with their peers thus deteriorating the moral status of university neighborhoods. The status quo reflects Mohantey (1999) who earlier propounded that youths in university neighbourhoods behave differently from those who live elsewhere like at home with parents. He posited that students have more relative freedom from parental and familial control and because of their freedom; they often take risks which other segments of the population can seldom take without concern for consequences. Most of these as revealed has a negative influence on their moral development.

This study equally concluded that university neighbourhoods in Cameroon facilitate uncontrolled use of alcohol leading to the emergence of discipline problems like prostitution, drunkenness, excess public smoking that is harmful, violent quarrels and fights, improper spending of pocket money and school fees, half naked and indecent dressing that exposes sensitive body parts and excess betting on games of chance. This is a social vice that is giving the entire nation particularly parents and university hierarchy as well as landlords sleepless nights. Earlier research by the World Health Organization-WHO (2019) in Cameroon even in secondary, young people drink a lot of alcohol. This indicates that before students enroll in universities, they are already accustomed to drinking alcohol. Other findings in the same context reveal that alcohol abuse by university students has negative consequences such as poor academic performance; missed tests and examinations; sexual assault; and poor health such as nausea, hurt, injury, vomiting, and memory loss.

This also confirms Giroux (1998) who posited that the contemporary neighbourhood settings and environment where most youth group together is certainly not the right environment where they can be groomed to and nurtured to maturity intellectually and academically. This is similarly true in some Cameroonian university settings because of over exposure to alcohol and associated drugs. Njabe and Baronese (2019) reported that students who drink regularly face both social and mental health consequences while Mekonen et al. (2017) established that they are likely to experience psychological and academic problems.

As a result, this study advocates that effective counselling to youths, collaboration between parents, university hierarchy, community agencies, nongovernmental organizations and political leaders at various levels of governance could go a long way in curbing the abuse of alcoholic beverages as well as the associated discipline problems. The researcher also proposed that university hierarchies can create parent-university-student forums and organize cultural, sporting and leisure activities that will sway away the attention of students from the negativities of the neighbourhood.

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