

BACKGROUND

Substance abuse is among the growing social and public health concern that has affected and still affecting a large proportion of every population. In Africa, substance abuse is a public health concern that is reported to be on the increase. The WHO in 2006, showed that a range of 17-42.8% of youths in Africa are majorly involved in chronic and excessive drinking of alcohol. However, various volatile substance use is embedded deeply in our societies, thus according to WHO report 2009, 10% to 69% of suicides committed annually are under the influence of substance abuse.

OBJECTIVES

This study was done to establish the factors associated with substance use and abuse among students in Kampala International University Uganda in the year 2015. This was mainly due to few interventions on student's substance use and abuse and its health consequences.

METHODS

The study was a descriptive cross-sectional study with one hundred and thirty two (132) KIU students selected by simple random sampling. Quantitative and Qualitative methods of data collection were used. Data were then coded and entered using EPI DATA which was later exported to SPSS for further analysis. The data were presented in tables and bar charts. Bivariate and Multivariate analysis were done to determine associations between the outcome and the independent variables. Also, p-values and 95% CI were used to determine the strength of the association between the outcome and the independent variables.

RESULTS

Out of 150 questionnaires distributed only 132 were recovered. Out of this (132), 105 (79.5%) students cited that they were substance abusers. The most abused substance was Tobacco (19.7%) while the least was Opioids (3.8%). For substance abusers, 53.8% were females while 46.2% were males. Also, the age of initiation with various volatile substances was between 14-22years. The respondents from Somali and Congolese were the major abusers of various substances while the least were respondents from Kenya and Nigeria. In addition, 69.7% of substance abusers were aware of the main health effects of the various substances they are involved with.

CONCLUSION

The proportion of KIU students from the selected sample that were involved in substance use and abuse

was 79.5% and the most abused substance among respondents was Tobacco. Age of the respondents between 28 and 32 years was significantly associated with substance abuse.

RECOMMENDATION

The management and staff of KIU Kansanga Uganda should enact and strictly enforce restrictive measures to reduce the accessibility and usage of various volatile substances in the school premises, hostels and the entire learning environment which will bring about a reduction in the proportion of students that are involved in the practice of substance use and abuse and a decrease in accessing various substances especially tobacco which was the most abused.