

Evaluation of Factors contributing to high Alcoholism among Youths in
Adumi Village, Arua District Uganda
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ABSTRACT

High rate of alcoholic intake and abuse has become a global epidemic among Youths especially the under aged people. Adumi is a village in Arua district of Uganda. This study was conducted to ascertain the factors that contributed to alcoholism among youths. Youths aged 16 to 17 have the second highest rate (16.4%) of current alcohol abuse in the surveyed countries, and although consumption of alcoholic beverages is illegal for people under 18 years of age. 10.4 million current drinkers were aged 12 to 20 and of this group, nearly half 5.1 million engage in binge drinking, including 2.3 million who would also be classified as heavy drinkers. This study used a descriptive research design with both qualitative and quantitative methods. A sample of 50 respondents were sampled using questionnaires. The data was collected and analyzed using Microsoft excel and then presented using tables and figures. The major factors contributing to alcoholism among the youths in Adumi village were found to be, lack of full time employment leading to idleness of the youths, Peer group influence, easy accessibility, availability and affordability of alcohol in Adumi village without no restrictions. Physical and emotional stress resulting from poor conditions of living leading to psychiatric conditions such as anxiety and depression, chaotic home environments and child negligence leading to school dropouts. Lack of information about the disadvantages of alcoholism from the community development officers and policies to prevent the vice in the study area and the district at large. The government and other stakeholders such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and CBOs should establish youth livelihood programs to combat idleness among the youths and should put in place bylaws on the time of opening bars and also the age of people allowed to drink and make sure that these bylaws are strictly enforced.

Keywords: Alcoholism, Adumi Village, Youths, Abuse and Drinkers.

INTRODUCTION

Alcoholism remains a global public health challenge. Alcoholism refers to the harmful or hazardous use of alcohol [1]. Globally alcoholism is felt both in developed and developing countries as evidenced in a study by [2] carried out in the United States and Canada which showed that among youth aged between 12 to 17 years, an estimated 5.1 million meet the diagnostic criteria for substance abuse and 915,000 are dependent on alcohol. Youth aged 16 to 17 have the second highest rate (16.4%) of current alcohol abuse in the surveyed countries, and although consumption of alcoholic beverages is illegal for people under 21

years of age, 10.4 million current drinkers are aged 12 to 20 and of this group, nearly half 5.1 million engage in binge drinking, including 2.3 million who would also be classified as heavy drinkers [2][1] mention that in previous research carried out in African countries such as Nigeria, Ivory Coast and South Africa, findings have revealed that alcoholism among youth is prevalent and that on an average day in 2009, about 931,000 youths drank alcohol for the first time. In East African countries such as Kenya and Tanzania, previous studies about alcoholism among the youths reveal that alcoholism is high as shown that in 2010, 26,457 youths

were in outpatient treatment due to the negative effects of alcohol while 10,000 were in non-hospital residential treatment due to negative effects of alcohol abuse and 1000 in hospital in patient treatment due to the negative effects of alcohol [3]. It was further estimated that on an average day in 2010, nearly 8,000 youths drank alcohol for the first time [4].

The 2005 World Health Organization (WHO) report ranked Uganda the leading consumer of alcohol in the world with a per capita consumption of 19.5 litres of alcohol per person per annum while the same report of 2012 ranked Uganda the 3rd largest consumer of alcohol per person per annum. [5] of Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL), in their study about substance abuse in Kampala schools showed that alcoholism is rampant among youth, even those in schools and higher institutions of learning as statistics from their study showed that (67%) admitted to occasional use of alcohol. In Adumi Village, Arua District, youth can be seen heavily engaging in negative and risky practices such as alcoholism yet this highly predisposes to many physical and health risks including accidents, school dropout, rape, increased exposure to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection among many others. However, the particular factors contributing to alcoholism among youth in Adumi Village, Arua District remain unknown and this study hence intends to find out these factors and come up with solutions to reduce/prevent alcoholism among the youth.

Statement of the Problem

Alcohol and substance abuse among youth aged 15 - 35 years remains an important public health problem which continues to affect youth worldwide that requires immediate address [5]. Alcoholism among youth has many short- and long-term health effects on the individual as well as the community at large as it has been associated with dependence syndromes as well as behavioral, cognitive and physiological challenges [5]. Despite the efforts of Ministry of Health (MoH) and concerned

programs like the Young Empowered and Healthy (Y.E.A.H) which sensitizes youths on the dangers of alcoholism, youths are still involved in these practices. In Adumi Village, Arua District, youth are seen drinking alcohol throughout the day and night. This has led to increased levels of crime, petty theft, school drop outs, early pregnancy mentally related illness, poor interpersonal relationship development among many other negative and dangerous effects.

Although studies have been carried out in other areas of Uganda about the problem of alcoholism among the youth, no known study has been carried out in Adumi Village, Arua District. Thus, a need to carry out this study to identify these factors associated with high alcoholism so as to devise solutions to mitigate them.

Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to identify the factors contributing to high alcoholism among youths in Adumi Village, Arua District in an effort to develop appropriate interventions to reduce/prevent alcoholism among the youth.

Specific Objectives

- To identify the socio cultural factors contributing to high alcoholism among youths in Adumi Village, Arua District.
- To determine the economic factors contributing to high alcoholism among youths in Adumi Village, Arua District.
- To assess the psychosocial factors contributing to high alcoholism among youth in Adumi Village, Arua District.

Research Questions

- ❖ What socio cultural factors contribute to high alcoholism among youth in Adumi Village, Arua District?
- ❖ What economic factors contribute to high alcoholism among youth in Adumi Village, Arua District?
- ❖ What psychosocial factors contribute to high alcoholism among youth in Adumi Village, Arua District?

Justification of the study

This study identified the factors contributing to high alcoholism among

youth in Adumi Village, Arua District in order to scale up sensitization and health education programmes for youth about the dangers of alcoholism.

The findings were to assist the Ministry of Health Planners and Policy makers by identifying the potential areas which still require policy improvements as well as the development of national sensitization programs targeted at youths about the prevention of alcoholism. The study was

to assist youth in Adumi Village as they would be beneficiaries of improved and more appropriate sensitization and health education as well as improved effort about the prevention of alcoholism among the youth. The study was also to provide a valuable point of reference for researchers carrying out similar studies in future and was also to contribute to the available literature on the factors contributing to alcoholism among youth.

METHODOLOGY

Study design and rationale

The study was a descriptive cross sectional employing quantitative data collection methods. The study was a cross sectional because it was done for a short period of time and descriptive because it was to enable the youths to adequately explain their responses within their own settings. This was because sample group was selected from the entire population identifying the problem and data was collected for a specific period of time in a specific area.

Area of Study

The study was conducted in Adumi Village, Arua District which is found in Northern Uganda and it has an estimated population of 425,000 people while Adumi Village has an estimated population of 18,300 people. The main economic activity carried out in the sub county is agriculture. The study setting was selected because the problem of alcoholism among the youth was prevalent on the ground as had been noted by the researcher.

Study Population

The study included male and female youth aged between 18 - 35 years residing or working in Adumi Village, Arua District.

Sample Size

Sample size determination.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(0.05)^2}$$

$$N = 55$$

$$n = \frac{55}{1 + 55(0.05)^2},$$

$$n = \frac{55}{1.1125}$$

$$n = 50$$

When = number of respondents

The sample size was 50 respondents using simple random sampling method, all youth aged between 18 - 35 years residing or working in Adumi Village, Arua District.

Sampling procedure and rationale

The respondents for the study were selected using convenient sampling method. The researcher selected all the available and eligible respondents available who were free and willing to participate in the study and included them in the study. This continued until a total of 50 respondents were achieved.

Due to the busy nature of the respondents, the researcher administered interview guides to the respondents from their homesteads or in community gathering places such as marketplaces where they were found and this improved efficiency and confidentiality during data collection. The researcher hoped to sample 10 respondents per day for a total of 50 respondents for 5 days.

Inclusion criteria

The study included male and female youth aged between 18 - 35 years residing or working in Adumi Village, Arua District who were available in the village and agreed to consent to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria

The study excluded all those who were not residents of Adumi Village as well as those who refused to consent, mentally ill at the time of interview were not selected to participate in the study.

Definition of Variables

The independent variables for the study included:

- ❖ Socio cultural factors
- ❖ Economic factors
- ❖ Psychological factors

The dependent variables for the study included:

Alcoholism among youth

Research Instruments

Data was collected using semi-structured questionnaire which consisted of both open and closed ended questions.

Data Collection Procedure

Due to the busy nature of the respondents, the researcher administered questionnaire to the respondents from their homesteads or in community gathering places such as marketplaces where they were found and this improved efficiency and confidentiality during data collection. The researcher hoped to sample 10 respondents per day for a total of 50 respondents for 5 days.

Data management

Data management included data editing before leaving the area of study to ensure

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that there were no mistakes or areas left blank, and if any were found, they were corrected before leaving the area of study.

Data analysis and presentation

The collected data was first analyzed by computer programmer after, which the researcher presented them in tables, graphs and pie charts generated by Microsoft Excel.

Ethical Considerations

A letter of introduction was obtained from Kampala International University school of nursing sciences, introducing the researcher and seeking permission to carry out the study from the local council administration of Adumi Village. After permission was granted, the local council chairperson was involved to mobilize and introduce the researcher to the respondents. Participants were assured of maximum confidentiality of all information given. Numbers instead of names were used to identify respondents. The study was only commenced after the objectives of the study were fully and well explained to participants and had consented to participate in the study.

RESULTS
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1: Shows demographic characteristics of the respondents (n=50)

Demographic characteristics		Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18-25 years	32	64
	26-35 years	18	36
Gender	Male	40	80
	Female	10	20
Marital status	Single	28	56
	Married	15	30
	Divorced	7	14
Highest level of education	Primary	20	40
	Secondary level	10	20
	Tertiary level	2	4
	No formal education	18	36
Occupation	Students	13	26
	Self employed	10	20
	Civil servant	6	12
	Unemployed	21	42

Majority 32(64%) of the respondents were between the age of 18-25years compared to 18(36%) who were between 26-35years of age. More than half 40(80%) of the respondents were male while 10(20%) of the respondents were female. Most 28(56%) of the respondents were single compared to 7(14%) of the respondents who were divorced.

Majority 20(40%) of the respondents attained primary level whereas 2(4%) of

the respondents attained tertiary level of education. Less than half 21(42%) of the respondents were unemployed while 6(12%) of the respondents were civil servants.

Social cultural factors contributing to alcoholism among the youth

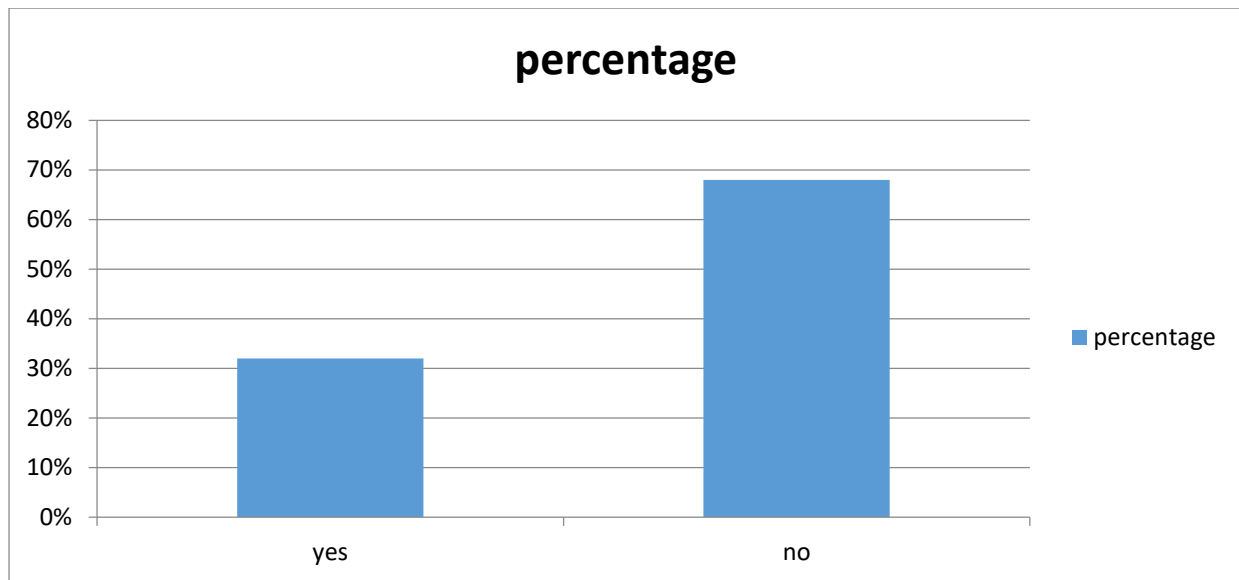


Figure 1: Shows response on whether the respondents had ever heard about alcoholism

Most of the respondents (68%), reported to have never heard about alcoholism, only 32% had ever.

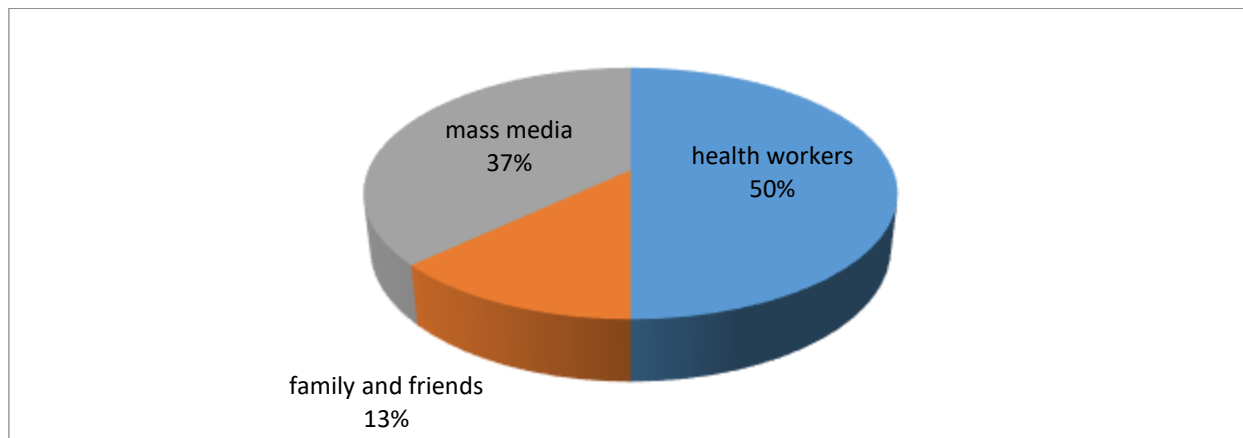


Figure 2: Shows from where the respondents heard about alcoholism

A half of the respondents who had heard about alcoholism got information from

health workers, 37% from mass media and only 13% from family and friends.

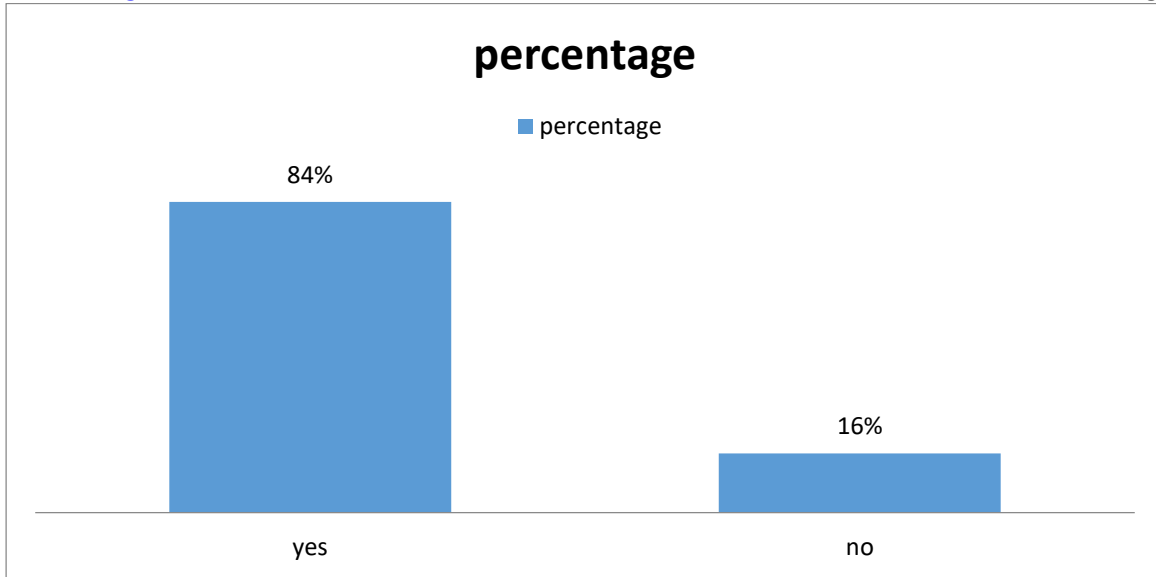


Figure 3: Shows response on whether respondents had ever used alcohol

Most of the respondents (84%) reported having ever used alcohol only 16% had never.

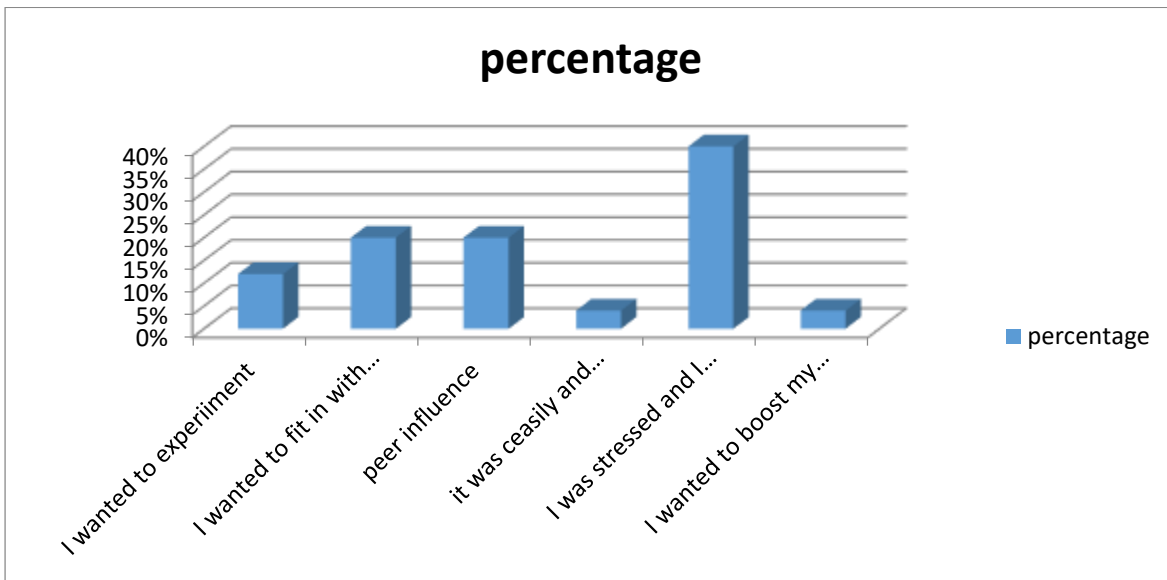


Figure 4: Shows why the respondents first used alcohol

Majority of the respondents reported to having first used alcohol due to stress, only 4% took it due availability,

accessibility and boosting performance in class and relationships.

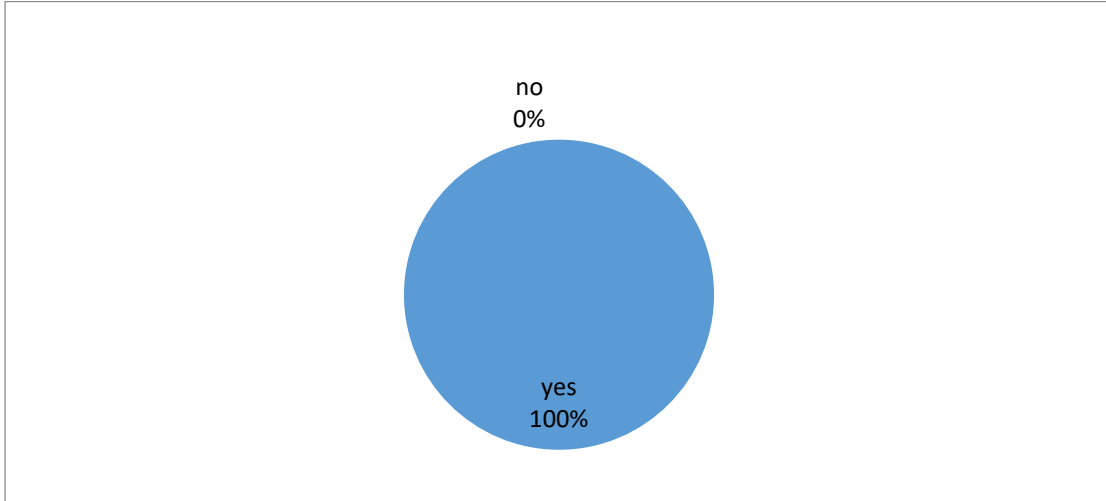


Figure 5: Shows response on whether alcohol is commonly available in the community

All the respondents reported that alcohol was commonly available in their community

Economic factors contributing to alcoholism among youth

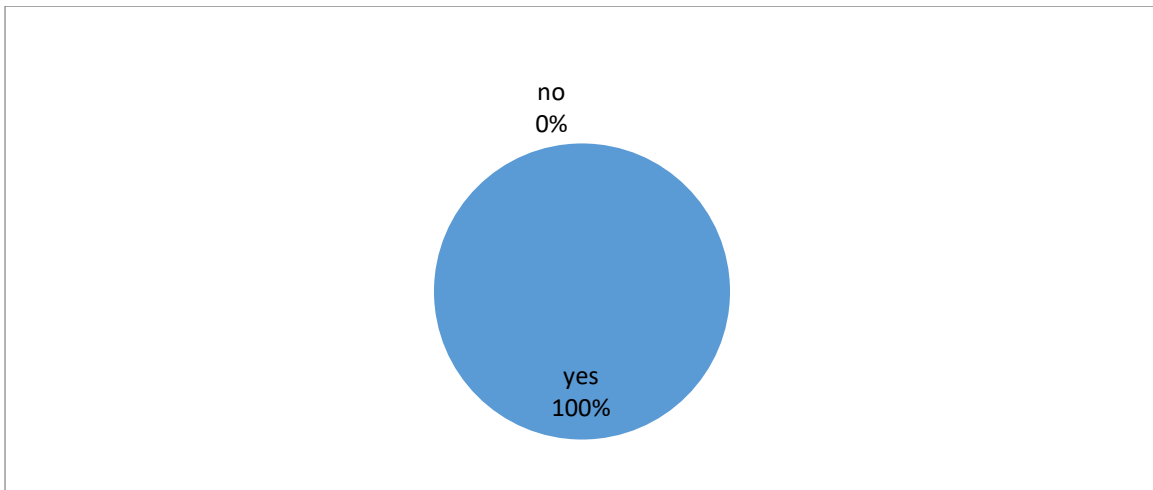


Figure 6: Shows response on whether alcohol is affordable for the community

All the respondents reported that alcohol was affordable for the community

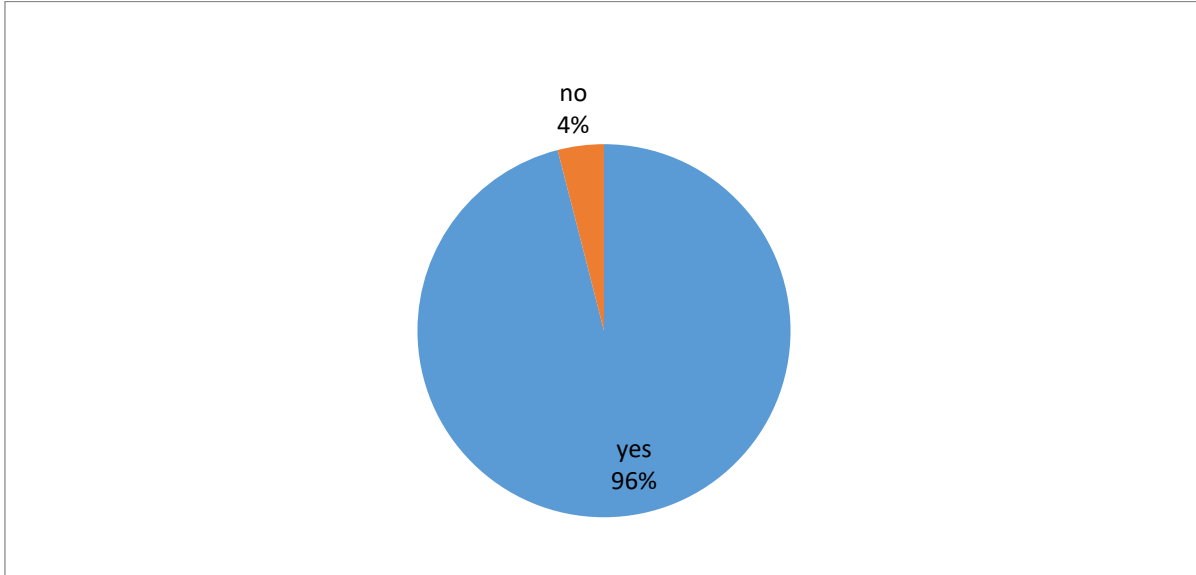


Figure 7: Shows response on whether alcohol was easily accessible in the community

Majority of the respondents (96%) reported that alcohol was easily accessible in the community and only 4% reported that alcohol was not easily accessible.

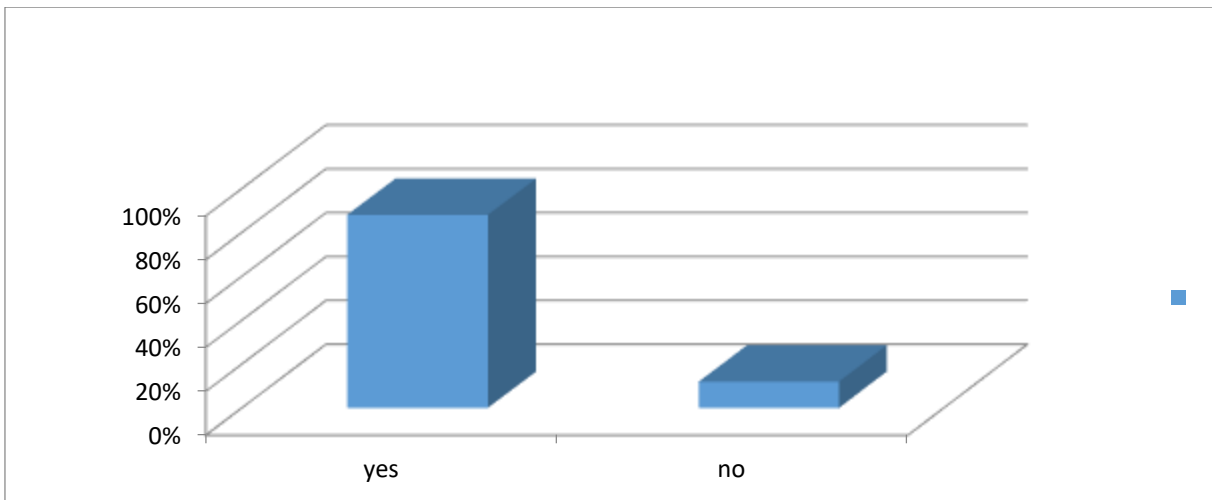


Figure 8: Shows response on whether the dangerous environments contribute to alcohol use

Most of the respondents (88%) reported that dangerous environments contribute to alcohol use and only 12% reported that environment does not contribute to alcohol use.

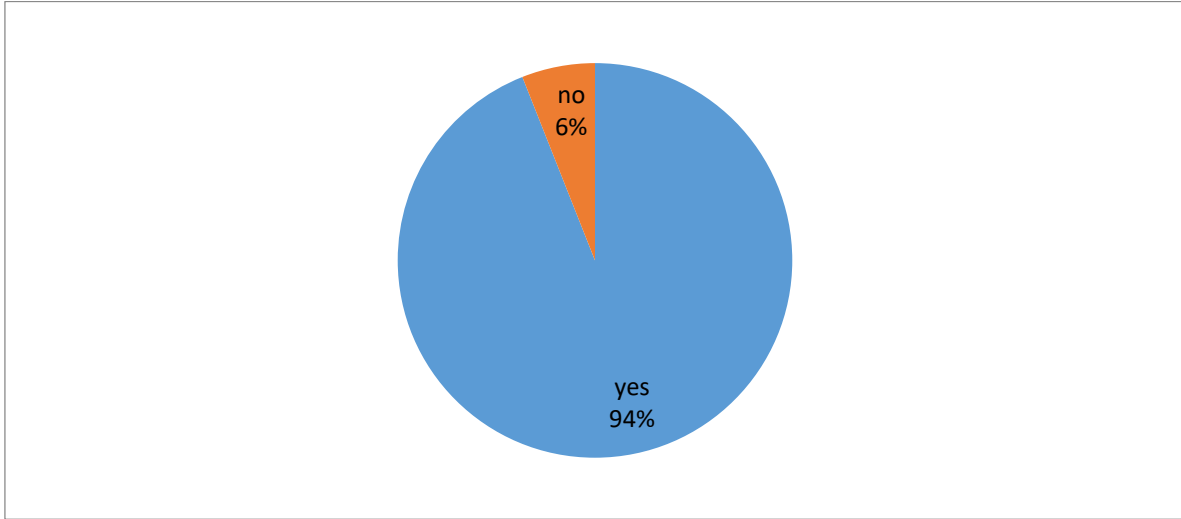


Figure 9: Shows response on whether alcohol offers a way to deal with financial stress or way to cope with physical or emotional abuse

Majority of the respondents (94%) reported that alcohol offers a way to deal with financial stress or a way to cope with

physical or emotional abuse and only 6% disagreed.

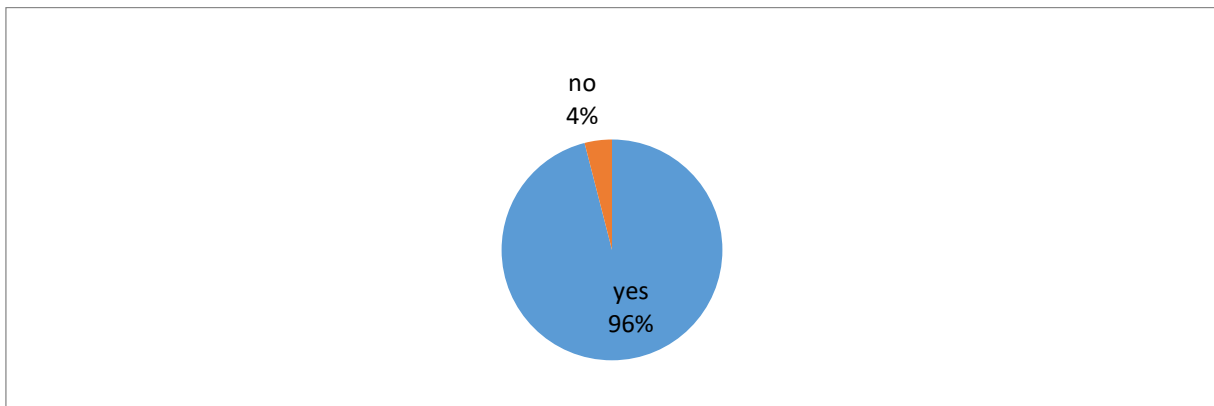


Figure 10: Shows response on whether the affordability of alcohol was one of the contributing factors to alcoholism among youth

Majority of the respondents (96%) reported that affordability of alcohol is one of the contributing factors to

alcoholism among youth and only 4% disagreed.

Psychosocial factors contributing to alcoholism among youth

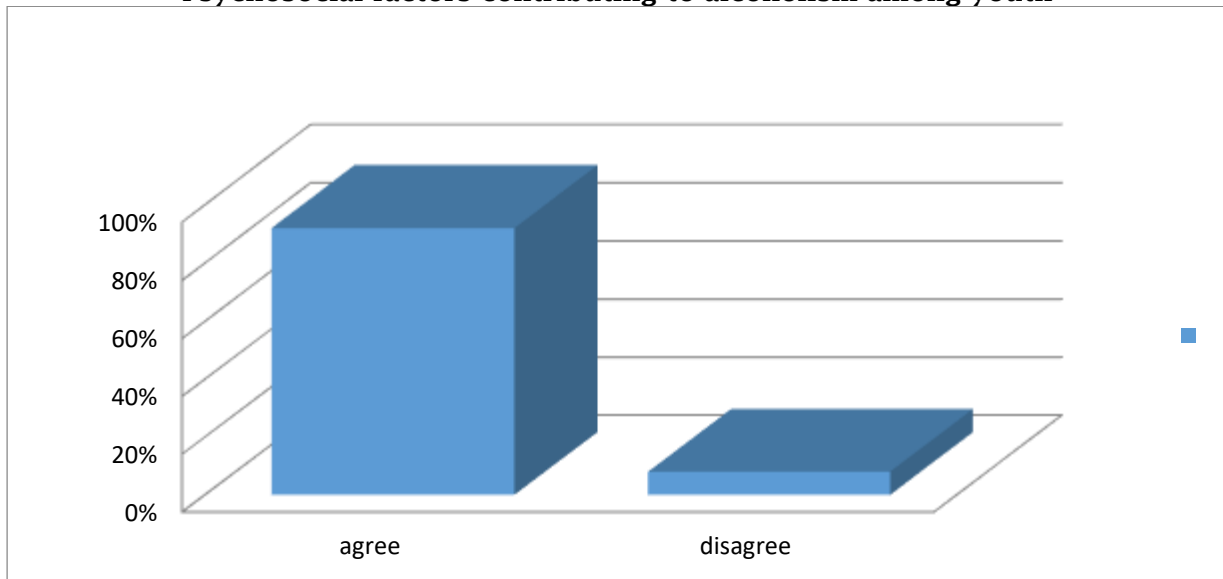


Figure 11: Shows response on whether alcohol use helps to cope with stress as well as escape from their problems

Majority of the respondents (92%) reported that alcohol use helps an individual 8% disagreed.

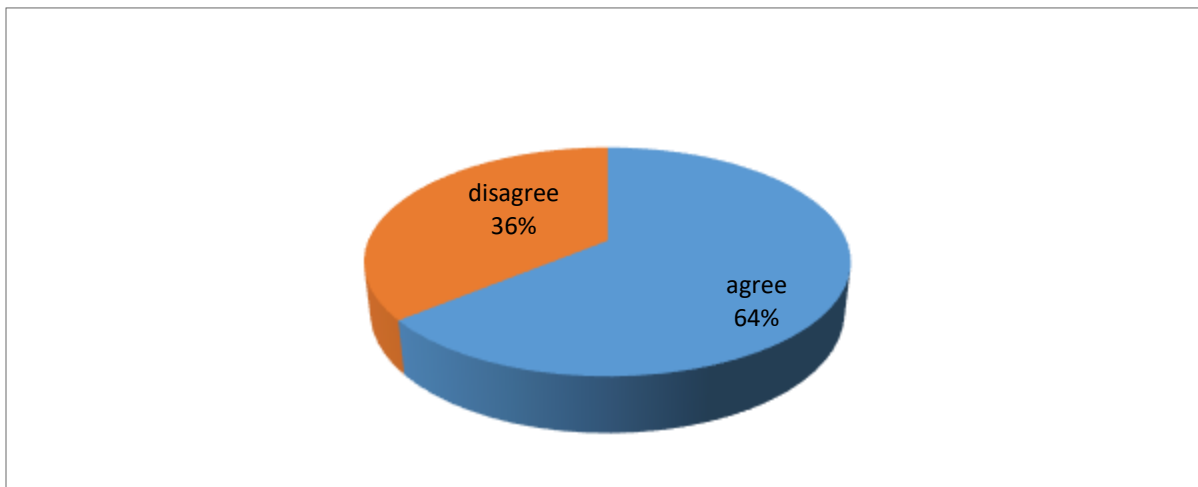


Figure 12: Shows response on whether alcoholism is mainly due to pressure to fit in with a select group of friends.

Most of the respondents (64%) reported that alcoholism is mainly due to pressure

fit in with a select group of friends and only 36% disagreed.

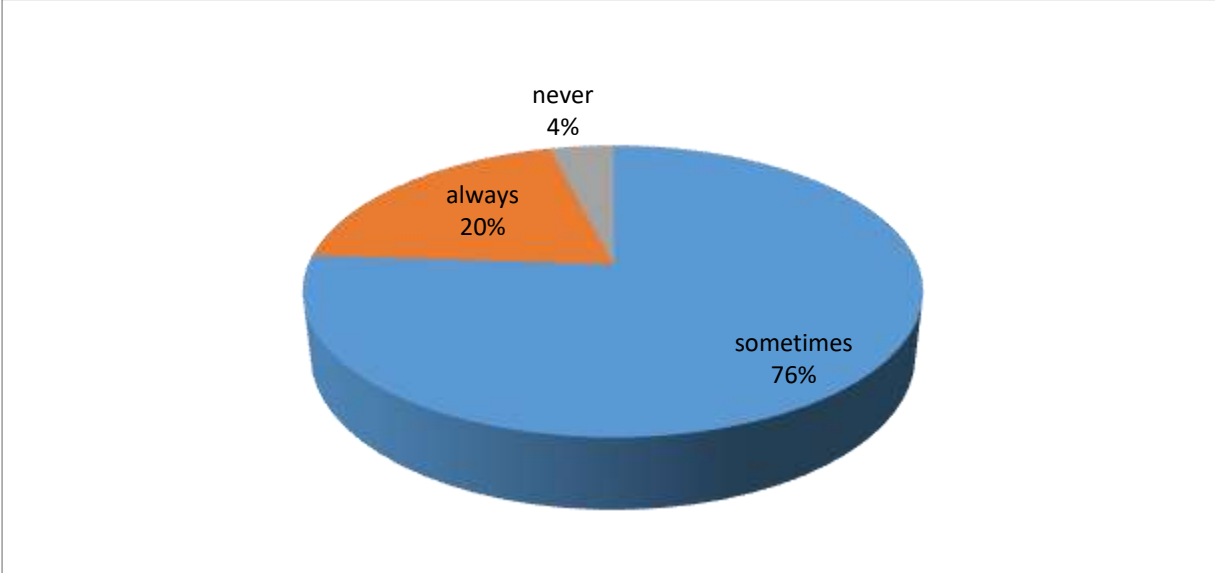


Figure 13: Shows response on whether alcohol helps an individual to deal with stress

Most of the respondents (76%) agreed that alcohol sometimes help an individual to deal with stress, 20% of the respondents

are reported that alcohol always help an individual to deal with stress and only 4% of the respondents disagreed.

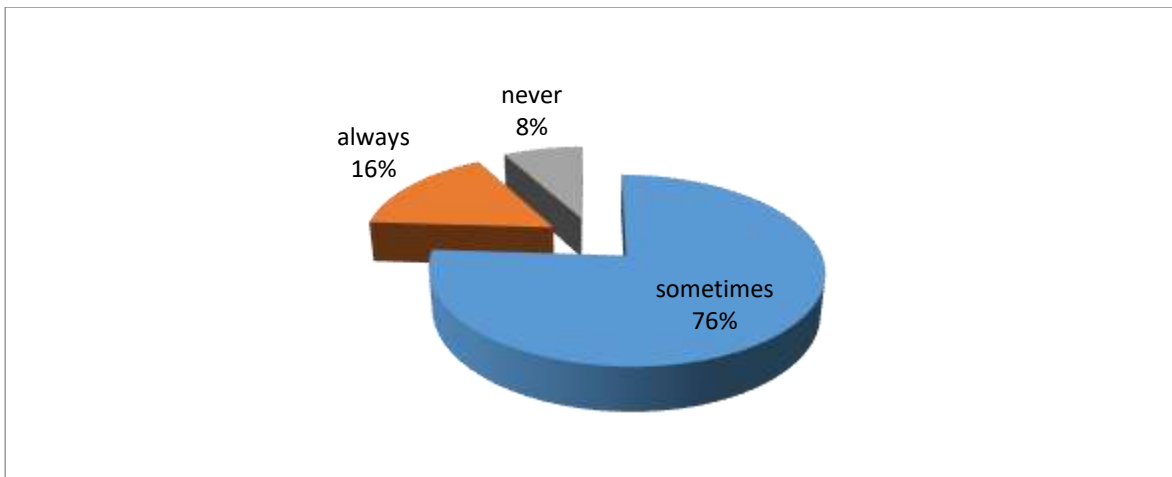


Figure 14: Shows the response on whether alcohol use helps an individual deal with physical, emotional or psychological abuse

Majority of the respondents (76%) agreed that sometimes alcohol use helps an individual to deal with physical,

emotional or psychological abuse, only 8% disagreed.

DISCUSSION

Demographic characteristics

The majority of the respondents (64%) were between the ages of 18 -25 years and only 36% were of ages between 26-35years.This showed that youths in Adumi village start involving in alcoholism at an early age since most of the participants were of the lower youth

ages and the older ones were few. This was in line with a study finding by [2] where they found out that although consumption of alcoholic beverages was illegal for people under 17 years of age, 10.4 million current drinkers were aged 12 to 20 years.

During the study it was found that the majority of the respondents (80%) were males as compared with to the females who were only 20%. This was also in line with a study by [6] in Brazil they noted that gender was often an overlooked factor of alcoholism but evidence in their study showed that men were five times more likely to abuse alcohol than women; which was almost the same case in this study. It was also found out that the singles made up the majority of the drunkard youths at 56% as compared to the married counterparts who were 30% and only 14% reported to have been divorced due to excessive alcohol consumption. This was a bad sign for the area as these young people are supposed to be the future leaders of the Adumi village.

Another striking finding was that despite the free education program provided by government, most of the participants (40%) had dropped out of school at primary level, 36% had no formal education, 20% had reached secondary and only 4% of the respondents had attained tertiary education. This finding was attributed to the excessive consumption of alcohol habit by the youths of Adumi village which led to school dropouts.

Unemployment was also rampant among the respondents at 42%, only 12% were civil servants. Lack of employment and therefore idleness might be one of the major reasons why the youths in the study area involve much in alcoholism. A similar finding was also mentioned by [7] that some of the economic factors contributing to alcoholism among youths is lack of full-time employment opportunities. This was further mentioned by [8], that high levels of unemployment forces youths to be idle and hence attracted into alcoholism by peers and friends. These people end up in bars trying to pass time and also kill stress. Government needs to work on youth employment to save them from this alcoholism vice.

Socio-cultural factors contributing to alcoholism among the youth.

When asked whether the respondents had ever heard about alcoholism, most of the respondents (68%) reported having never heard about it, only 32% had ever. This showed that there was lack of health information among the youths of the study area. Even half of the few who reported to have ever heard about it said they had gotten information from a health worker (50%) of which this was supposed to be from a community development officer, 37% had gotten information from mass media and 13% from family members. When those who had said that they had ever heard about alcoholism were asked what exactly it was, half of them (50%) said that it meant drinking alcohol every day, 32% said it was drinking every type of alcohol while 18% said it was harmful use of alcohol. This showed that only the 18% knew the real meaning of alcoholism. On whether the participants had ever used alcohol, most of them (84%) responded in the affirmative, only 16% reported to have never. This was an alarming finding which needs urgent intervention by the concerned stakeholders or else the future of this area is heading for disaster.

When asked why they had started drinking, the majority (40%) reported that they were stressed and wanted something to take away their stress which the researcher attributed to the rampant youth unemployment and poverty in the area. Among other reasons was peer group influence (20%) and wanting to fit in with friends (20%). The other minor reasons were experimenting, wanting to boost performance both in class and relationships and easy accessibility/cheap availability with 12% and 4% and 4% respectively. These reasons were also found by [5] in his study where he noted that a major reason why youth abuse alcohol is due to peer pressure, need to prove masculinity and coping strategy for stress and escape from their problems. The same reasons were also noted by [9] in their study about prevalence of drug taking among secondary school students in Nairobi.

All the participants agreed in unison that alcohol was commonly available everywhere in the community. This showed that the youth did not need to move long distances to find the alcohol hence making it easy to take any time of the day and night.

Economic factors contributing to alcoholism among the youth.

When asked about the affordability of alcohol, all the respondents reported that alcohol was affordable in their community. This was evidenced by the fact that some local brew was as cheap as five hundred shillings; even some waragi sachets such as cock gin and lion gin among other brands. This made it easy for the youth to buy alcohol at any time they felt like drinking. This issue of affordability was also noted by [10], in his study where he found that due to low prices and small packaging of cheap prices made it highly accessible to even unemployed youth; which was the same case with my study area. Most of the respondents (96%) also reported that alcohol was easily accessible in their community and only 4% denied this easy accessibility issue. This made it easy for the youth to drink any time [11-18]. This finding was in line that of [11], where it was documented that easy accessibility to alcohol in impoverished neighborhoods where some people actually sell alcohol to everyone in hopes of overcoming poverty was one of the reasons for alcoholism

CONCLUSION

From the study findings, the following conclusions were made: Majority of the youth in Adumi start abusing alcohol early in life by 18 to 25 years. The major factors contributing to alcoholism among the youth in Adumi village were found to be, lack of full time employment leading to idleness of the youth, Peer group influence, easy accessibility, availability and affordability of alcohol in Adumi village without any restrictions, Physical and emotional stress resulting from poor conditions of living leading to psychiatric conditions such as anxiety and depression, Chaotic home environments and child negligence leading to school dropouts, Lack of information about the

among the youth. Another factor for alcoholism reported by majority (88%) of the participants was dangerous / impoverished environment. This was also one of the findings by [5] where they noted that slum and street children easily interface with substance abuse; alcohol inclusive [19][20].

On whether alcohol offers a way to deal with financial stress or to cope with physical and emotional abuse, majority (94%) reported that it sometimes does only 6% disagreed. These stresses were attributed to many factors such as unemployment, poverty, and emotional and physical abuse. This was in line with same findings by [12] where they noted poverty as one of the issues promoting alcoholism.

Psychosocial factors contributing to alcoholism among youths Most respondents (64%) reported that alcoholism was mainly due to pressure to fit in with a select group of friends. This was in conformity with the findings of [13], where they noted that being surrounded by friends or mates who abuse alcohol can cause someone to drink in excess. Continuously, the majority of the respondents maintained their earlier stand that alcohol was sometimes remedy for stress and dealing with physical, emotional and psychological abuse as shown in figures 4.3 and 4.4 above [21-24]. Most of the above factors were also noted in studies done by [24-28].

disadvantages of alcoholism from the community development officers and policies to prevent the vice in the study area and the district at large.

Recommendations

After a thorough analysis of the situation in Adumi village, the recommends the following:

- ❖ The government and other stakeholders such as NGOs and CBOs should establish youth livelihood programs to combat idleness among the youth in Adumi village and Arua District at large.
- ❖ The district local government council should put in place bylaws on the time of opening bars and also the age of

people allowed to drink and make sure that these bylaws are strictly enforced.

- ❖ Government should provide employment to the qualified youths to save them from getting frustrated and end up being alcoholics.
- ❖ Parents found neglecting their children should be arrested and worked on as per the law by government and other concerned stakeholders.
- ❖ Government should establish a free technical institution in Adumi village

to cater for the school dropouts and empower them with skills for self-reliance; so as to combat poverty and idleness.

- ❖ Finally, the sub county community development officers should avail information about alcoholism to the youth and help to guide them in positive developmental living. .
- ❖ So here the government and other stake holders should come in vigorously provide peer education to solve the problem.

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