

Level of Binge Drinking and Drug Use of Freshmen Engineering Students at North Cell CTU- Campuses

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Abstract – *This study assessed and described the behavioral patterns like the level of binge drinking and drug use of the Cebu Technological University (CTU) – North Cell Freshmen Engineering students during the Academic Year 2014-2015 and explored the possible factors that had pushed or constrained the behaviors. Descriptive method was utilized with two sets of questionnaires as the main instruments. Simple percentage and weighted mean were used to calculate and interpret data gathered. Random Sampling was used to get the 20 percent of the total population of freshmen engineering students. The findings revealed that 95 percent of the respondents were of suitable ages to enter college (16- 17 years old). There were 30 -35 percent of the fathers of the engineering students who were high school graduate and 58 percent have very low family income. 93 or 43 percent of the respondents are members of recognized organizations of the school and many of them sometimes join in co- curricular activities of the school. Furthermore, respondents were Generally Close to their families but were Generally Sociable with friends. As revealed, 60 percent of the respondents drank alcohol which includes infrequent drinking to heavy drinking. Moreover, it was determined that the factors that affected the student's alcoholism and low self- esteem were their problems such as the strictness and constant quarrels of their parents, strictness of teachers and insecurities with friends. It was envisioned that results from this study would serve as the basis for a proposed social behavior modification model for all engineering students.*

Keywords: *Social behavior, Behavior modification, alcoholism, drug abuse*

INTRODUCTION

As a nation, we have been in the war on alcohol and drugs for many years. As quoted by Guerrero[1],” it's a war with no rules, no boundaries, no end.”

Alcohol and drug abuse are not new issues, for these have been serious social problems for the last one hundred years [2].

Drug addiction as defined by the World Health Organization is the persistent unnecessary drug use which is unacceptable to medical practice [3]. Simply it means the repeated misuse of any drug to the point where it interferes with the individuals' health or his economic adjustment.

Likewise, alcoholism covers a substantial percentage of the world's social problem. It threatens physical and emotional health, reduces school interest and causes relationship disorder within the family. As quoted by Kendra [4] in Banduras Social Learning Theory, people can learn new information and behaviors by watching other people. Family and friends therefore play a vital role in the promotion or prevention of these behavioral problems.

Globally, WHO[3] reported that there were more than 76 million individuals who have diagnosable drinking problems and people having drug use disorders reached about 15 million [5]. Alarmingly, Hern[6] said that in Southeast Asia, Filipinos were found to be the second highest consumers of alcohol, second only to the Indonesians. In his study, beer appears to be the favorite drink of Filipinos due, principally to its affordability compared to hard drinks. Obviously, it is indeed observable among young college students for that same reason.

Akers [8] pointed out that Social Control Theory and Social Learning Theory explained about drug use and binge drinking. Hirschi's Social Control Theory, clarifies the reason for societal conformity rather than divergent acts of the people. Furthermore, it supports an explanation about social bonds that prevents young adults from abusing drugs and alcohol. Generally speaking, this theory emphasizes the importance of close family ties, active school participation and other community involvement to diminish one's inclination for antisocial behavior.

As such, Lily et al., [9]specified that weakened bonds with the family or the society may result to crimes. As argued by Akers and Sellers[10], crime becomes inevitable in the absence of these bonds.As a result, committing crimes becomes possible for all individuals within society. But those who pursue to preserve familial and societal ties avoid them. As noted by Hirschi [11], these ties are based on *connection* to those both within family and the community, including schoolmates, friends and teachers. Moreover, they stated that commitment to educational or vocation aims, participation in activities at home and outdoor activities decreases ones time to be tangled in antisocial or unacceptable behavior.

In the Philippines, alcohol drinking consists mainly of beer followed by distilled spirits and wine fermented from grapes. Over the year, there has been an upward trend in the drinking of beer. Larger proportions of adult men and among the younger generation, the greatest drinkers are those between 16-20 years [12].

Watching and observing how others use alcohol and drugs influences our decisions to use. For example, if these young people notice attractive people drinking or smoking at a bar, and watch them being rewarded for this behavior, then there's a strong chance that they'll also choose to drink the next time they are in a similar environment[13].

Despite years of drug suppression efforts by all levels of government and by numerous anti-drug trade, drug abuse still reached towns and barangays not previously affected [7]. Obviously, no community in the Philippines has escaped the problems of illicit drug use and alcoholism especially among college students.

The way moral concerns are to be approached has not been determined. Thus, it was mandated in schools to contribute to the wholesome development of young people which include their emotional, moral, physical and social development. Fors [14] noted that some say it is the schools responsibility however others say family and church should take care of the moral education. Nonetheless, information dissemination about drugs and alcohol abuse pose a great challenge on the part of the educators for these require well- trained, and committed teachers to do the task. Someone, somewhere, believes that alcohol and drug education whether in school, home or community works- the reason why continuing studies

are conducted to develop recommendations on social modification to the challenges posed by the behaviors. This study therefore is motivated by an earnest desire to assess the status of alcoholism and drug abuse among engineering students in CTU North cell campuses as a ground for a proposed behavioral modification model.Helping students in goal setting of this study geared towards shaping intervention approaches to students' health concerns.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to assess the level of binge drinking and drug use of Freshmen Engineering students at Cebu Technological University - North Cell campuses during the Academic Year 2015-2016. Precisely, it pursued answers to the following: the personal profile of the respondents in terms of; age and gender; parents' highest educational attainment; occupations of parents and family income;size of the family; study habits; in school, such as: academic performance; membership in recognized and non-recognized school organization; andparticipation in co-curricular activities; outside school activities engaged in: with family;with peer/ friends; and neighborhood. This study is limited to the assessment of the engagement activities manifested related to binge drinking and drug abuse; the extent that the respondents engage in binge drinking and drug abuse; the problems met by the respondents that triggered the aforementioned engagement which served as the basis for the proposed instructional engagement model.

METHODS

Descriptive Survey method was used as a way to collect and analyze the data and findings. A research-structured questionnaire was used as the main data gathering tool. Questionnaires used were pilot tested to Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology students first which provides and analyzes comprehensive information about the students' level of engagement in drug use and binge drinking. It determined as well their closeness to their family and friends and their participation to the community and school activities which could be some factors that could affect engagement in binge drinking and alcoholism. After questionnaire validation, the same questionnaires were used to gather data from the respondents who were the 20% of the total population of the freshmen engineering students of the different CTU Campuses namely CTU- DaanBantayan, CTU- Carmen, CTU- Danao, CTU- Camotes and CTU-

Tuburan. Responses to the survey questionnaire were supported by documentary analysis.

After securing permits from the different Campus Directors through an approved letter by the CTU System President, Research Coordinators of these different campuses were approached to help facilitate the questionnaires. Respondents were given ample time to answer the questionnaire and were ensured that their answers will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Data were tallied and tabulated. Results were carefully counted to minimize errors. These data were then subjected to the following statistical treatment: Weighted mean, was used to conclude the student's level of awareness with regards to the effects of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. It employed the following scoring procedures: Three – point Rating Scale, used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the respondents' utilization of Prohibited Drug and Alcoholic Drinks. Five –point Rating Scale was also used to define the extent of binge drinking of the respondents. The most frequent activity/ activities were marked check.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Binge drinking and drug use refers to the respondents' extent of engagement in drinking alcoholic beverages and drug use. In this study, respondents were given five options to describe the extent of their binge drinking such as *abstainer, infrequent drinker, light drinker, moderate drinker and heavy drinker*.

The findings implied that majority of the respondents with 40 percent of the 217 respondents are abstainer (either non- drinker or former drinker in recovery), 21 percent are moderate drinkers, 17 percent infrequent drinkers, 16 percent light drinkers and only 6% are heavy drinkers. These goes to show that at their young age of 16- 17 years old, they have generally engaged and tried drinking alcoholic beverages already. The researcher realized that alcohol use continues to be one of the most significant problems on college campuses nationwide.

All other signs of drug addiction namely “used drugs other than those required for medical reasons”; “abused prescription drugs”; had flashbacks as a result of drug use”; “feel bad or guilty about drug use”; “parents complain about involvement with drugs”; “had problems between parents due to involvement with drugs”; “lost friends because of use”; “been in trouble because of drug abuse”; “failed in class due to

drug abuse”; “got into fights due to the influence of drugs”; “experienced withdrawal symptoms when they stop taking drugs”; and “had medical problems as a result of drug abuse”; were rated **Never** as indicated by their total average weighted mean of 1.17

With drug abuse, respondent group generally had not practiced drug addiction at all though a few had attested they have tried to use them. These goes to show that mostly of the freshmen had not been addicted with any of the prohibited drugs that could ruin their lives.

Collated from the organized data, the findings revealed that 95 percent of the 217 respondents belonged to ages 16- 17 years old and majority were male students which implied that generally these engineering students are prone to social influence of binge drinking.

Middle-aged or older people tended to explain alcoholism in terms of poor education, social and cultural pressures and biological or genetic mechanisms [15]. This statement of Furnham tend to have some bearing on the research findings that most of their parents graduated only from high school which may have acquired insufficient basic knowledge about social problems and information about alcoholism and drug abuse. Generally, come from lowest level income and thus belong to low economic status which could also be the possible reason for the lack of time to attend to the emotional needs of their children and the lack of sufficient parental guidance.

In all five [5] campuses under study, most Engineering students are moderately studious. Only very less percentage had poor study habits which may be threatening to their upcoming board examination after graduation. Majority though have good academic performance as shown by their general average bracket of grade during the last school year.

Mostly of the respondents do not register or join in any school organizations. Only about 43 percent claimed as member of some recognized organizations as School Publication, Dance Troupe, Choir and others. Many of them were participating in co-curricular activities of the school which enhances their social behavior.

Activities Outside School refers to the activities they engaged in with friends, and in the community. The findings also indicate that majority of the respondents socialize with their friends or peers which is substantial in their social development. As to their undertakings in the neighborhood, findings revealed

that all five groups are generally active in terms of community activities which include religious undertakings as well as cleaning and greening of the surrounding.

Problems Met At Home. Problems met by the students at home that may have triggered the aforementioned drinking of alcoholic beverages include: over strictness of parents; parents' constant quarreling in the presence of their children; high expectations of parents from their children ; conflict and rivalry with siblings; busy schedule of parents at work; parents' lack of financial support and lack of time to listen to their emotional problems. Clearly, factors that affected students' engagement in binge drinking includes their problems met at home the place and the people which are supposed to be the foundation of their behavior.

Problems Met outside Home. The problems they met with their friends include: conflict of ideas; feeling insecure with their looks; refusal to drink with friends in gatherings and pre- marital sex. In school, problems met by the respondents include:insecurities from intelligent classmates; very strict professors; hearing bullies/ insults due to looks and mental abilities and lack of abilities for extra- curricular activities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents were Generally Sociable with friends, a factor which brings these freshmen Engineering Students viable to behavioral problems such as binge drinking and drug use. As revealed, 60 percent of the respondents drank alcohol which includes infrequent drinking to heavy drinking and are usually occurring in parties with friends. Moreover, it was determined that the factors that affected the student's alcoholism and low self- esteem were their problems at home and in their environment such as the strictness and constant quarrels of their parents, strictness of teachers, insecurities with friends and relationship demands.

Majority of the respondents' problems were about their insecurities or having low feeling about themselves that they are not as intelligent or as capable as their classmates and friends.

Enhancing opportunities for students to satisfy their needs for love and belongingness through modeling and develop self- appreciation thereby prevent alcoholism and other behavioral problems are being recommended. The parents and the communities in the north western part of Cebu needed to strengthen

their collaboration in addressing concerns on nurturing the younger generations to address the problems of low self- esteem and engagement in alcohol abuse. Showing good examples at home and in school will have some positive implications in academic performance and behavior of the students.

The researcher would like to recommend the following: integration of Prevention on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Management System (PADAMS) in the Psychology subjects; revisit school policies and rules on alcoholism and drug abuse; sending instructors to updates related to behavioral modification; giving seminars on PADAMS to students as part of general orientation in school; conducting extension program activities to community and parents for information- dissemination about PADAMS and create partnership with other agencies, institutions on matters related to behavior modification of young adults.

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