

**EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ABUSE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG THE
YOUTH IN RUGYEYO SUB COUNTY, KANUNGU DISTRICT**

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S23/BBUC/BSWA/033

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL
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DECLARATION

I, Ahimbisibwe Agnes, do solemnly declare that the above-mentioned research proposal is my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for the award of an academic credential.

Signature: Date: 28/07/2025

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APPROVAL

This is to validate that the research proposal named. The research work on the "Effects of Alcohol Abuse on Academic Performance among the Youth in Rugyeyo sub county, Kanungu District" has been carried out under my supervision. The research is hereby presented for marking as part of the requirements needed in the award of a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work at the Uganda Christian University, with my approval.

Signature: 

Date:28/07/2025

GATO GILBERT

RESEARCH SUPERVISOR

DEDICATION

In loving memory of my esteemed parents, Mr. Babikingira Julius and Mrs. Twinomuhangi Christine, whose enduring love, counsel, and sacrifice have been the basis of my achievements. Their advice and confidence in me have motivated me to embark on this work with resolute focus.

To my loving husband, Mr. Ndyamuhaki Ivan, whose supportive words, tolerance, and understanding have been a source of strength during the challenging periods of the academic journey. His relentless encouragement has motivated me to continue, even during the periods the journey reached the challenging terrain.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRONYMS	MEANING
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APA	American Psychological Association
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NIAAA	National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO	World Health Organization
GPA	Grade Point Average
LC	Local Council
UYDEL	Uganda Youth Development Link

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview of the Study

Alcohol abuse is increasingly becoming a major concern among the youth in both urban and rural settings across Uganda.

1.1 Background of the Study

In many societies, just like the Rugyeyo sub-county of the Kanungu District, where alcohol is widely available and widely consumed, including by teenagers, the culture of excessive or inappropriate drinking often has serious consequences on many aspects of the lives of the young, especially their schooling. Many of those who engage in alcohol abuse have issues of lack of concentration, poor attendance in classes, poor academic performance, and, in some cases, outright abandonment of schooling.

The study seeks to investigate the influence of alcohol abuse on the academic performance of youths in Rugyeyo Sub-County. It will explore the prevalence of alcohol abuse, the underlying drivers of the problem, and the influence on the outcomes of the study, such as academic achievement, the rate of stay, and the level of student enrollment. By focusing on the issue at the community level, the study will provide valuable information that can frame the community interventions, counseling practices, and sensitization programs that can be tailored to the needs of the child students. In addition, the study highlights the urgency of addressing substance abuse as one of the biggest challenges facing the development of youth and the achievements of students.

1.1.1 Historical Background

Alcohol consumption is an ancient practice that dates back thousands of years across various cultures. Civilizations have long demonstrated patterns of alcohol consumption predominantly associated with religious rituals, medicine, and social cohesion (Dietler, 2006). In the majority of African countries, including Uganda, the traditional practices of beer production and consumption of beer-like brews were highly associated with cultural rites of passage, community celebrations, and the localized economy. But with the passing years, the character of alcohol consumption kept evolving to become more recreational and, in some instances, problematic, especially among the youth.

In colonial and post-colonial periods, the production and control of alcohol in Uganda saw significant changes. The colonial forces instituted tight controls on the production of local brews, frequently organizing the production of local brews into crimes and pushing imported liquors (Dumbili, 2015). Post-independence, the country launched several alcohol policies, like the Enguli Act of 1966, to control production and consumption. However, the consumption of alcohol continued to surge, especially in urban and semi-urban regions like Rugyeyo, due to socioeconomic issues, cultural acceptance of the use of alcohol, and lack of enforcement of laws (World Health Organization [WHO], 2018).

1.1.2 Theoretical Background

The research is informed by the Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura (1977), which stipulates that humans learn behaviors by observing, imitating, and modeling. With reference to alcohol consumption, adolescents tend to emulate drinking practices by peers, parents, or representations on the media that either

normalizes or glorifies alcohol use. As adolescents bear witness to social/ emotion-based reward of alcohol abuse (for example, acceptance by one's friends or relief of tension), they become more inclined to practice these behaviors as well.

In addition, Problem Behaviour Theory by Jessor and Jessor (1977) provides a useful framework by which alcohol abuse can be studied within young people. The theory explains that harmful behaviors, including drugs and alcohol abuse, are interrelated and defined by personality traits, environmental views, and social structures. Young people who face academic pressure, lack of parental advice, or low commitment to their schools may turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism or a display of antisocial behavior, which may have the unintended consequence of undermining their scholarly achievement. These theories provide a good basis on which to explain the prevalence of alcohol abuse among the young and how it can have harmful effects on their school achievements.

1.1.3 Conceptual Background

Alcohol abuse is the excessive or inappropriate use of beer, wine, liquor, or any other type of alcohol that has harmful effects on one's physical health, mental status, or social and academic performance (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism [NIAAA], 2020). In students, alcohol abuse usually occurs as the forms of binge drinking, intermittent intoxication, and dependence, which can affect concentrating, memory recall, attendance in the classes that have been scheduled, and the study interest.

Academic achievement, according to this study, is the level of performance of students as indicated by their grades, test scores, and participation in class. It can

be affected by several factors such as personal behaviors, school settings, family life, and economic status of the people (Peltzer & Pengpid, 2016). As soon as youths start regular drinking, their level of academic achievement will be deteriorating due to absence from classes, low mental functioning, and lack of interest in learning.

Empirical research indicates that alcohol use has a high negative correlation with academic performance. For instance, Musyoka et al.'s (2019) study conducted in Kenya revealed that the students who consumed alcohol more often had lower grades and more absence than those who were non-drinkers. A similar trend has been observed in Uganda, where drinking by students has been observed to be related to increased dropouts, poor school performance, and misconduct (Nabunya et al., 2021).

1.1.4 Contextual Background

In Uganda, the increased trend of alcohol usage by the youthful population is an ever-growing public health challenge. According to the Uganda Ministry of Health (2021), the country is one of the highest-ranking countries with regard to per capita alcohol consumption on the continent of Africa, and a high number of teenagers initiate drinking behaviors during adolescence. Both the rural and the semi-urban areas, including Rugyeyo Sub County of Kanungu District, also suffer just like the above-mentioned places. Because of the lack of leisure activities, high unemployment levels, and the easily available nature of cheap local alcohol such as waragi, many youths of the area have been turning to alcohol consumption.

In the Rugyeyo sub-county, unofficial reports by community leaders and teachers state that the consumption of alcohol by youths is negatively affecting both learning participation and performance. Students who drink excessively often have high absenteeism from school, score poorly on examinations, and have behavioral problems, such as aggression and absence from school. The community has been vocal about the fear that, without the development of special intervention methods, the abuse of alcohol will continue to hinder the educational futures of the sub-county's youthful population.

Moreover, socio-economic challenges such as poverty, influence by peers, negligence by parents, and limitation of access to counseling services exacerbate the problem. Though many efforts have been made by schools and non-governmental organizations to sensitize the dangers of alcohol use, these efforts often lack adequate funding or have short periods of effectiveness. As such, the prevalence of alcohol abuse remains a forceful threat to the academic achievement and future prospect of many youthful persons of Rugyeyo Sub County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In an ideal scenario, it is anticipated that adolescents will concentrate on their educational endeavors during their developmental years to cultivate the essential knowledge and skills requisite for future achievements. Educational institutions and communities operate under the assumption that learners will engage actively in scholarly activities, maintain consistent school attendance, and strive to achieve their highest potential. Education is broadly acknowledged as a critical mechanism for alleviating poverty and serves as a fundamental catalyst for social and economic progress, particularly in rural areas such as Kanungu.

In actuality, the educational achievements of numerous young individuals in Rugyeyo sub county are progressively being compromised by the escalating prevalence of alcohol consumption. Evidence gathered from regional educational institutions and community officials indicates that a portion of the student population partakes in drinking activities during school hours, while others devote their weekends to consuming locally produced alcoholic beverages such as waragi. Consequently, this behavior has resulted in diminished class attendance, impaired focus, recurrent disciplinary issues, and, in certain instances, total withdrawal from school. The availability of inexpensive alcohol, social pressure from peers, and inadequate parental supervision have all played a role in exacerbating this concerning issue.

The consequences of alcohol abuse among teenagers are seriously disconcerting. Educationally, the affected students usually have lower performance, which, in turn, dissipates their potentials for the future and increases their vulnerability to poverty and social exclusion. Socially, alcohol abuse has been blamed for increased cases of teenage pregnancies, early marriages, crimes, and spousal abuse in the area. Despite these negative consequences, the challenge remains poorly addressed, with few study-based statistics available that refer directly to Rugyeyo Sub County to inform effective intervention strategies. The growing concern highlights the vital imperative to investigate the extent to which alcohol abuse is affecting the scholarly accomplishments of the youths within Rugyeyo Sub County. Absent of a clear empirical understanding of the link, efforts that have been made by schools, caregivers, and community leaders might remain inappropriate or ineffective. As such, the study seeks to plug the gap by investigating the influence of alcohol abuse on the scholarly performance of students and providing practical recommendations on safeguarding the scholarly futures of the youth.

1.3 General Objective of the Study

The study mainly concentrates on investigating the impact of alcohol abuse on the achievements of students at the secondary level within Ruyeyo sub-county, Kanungu District.

1.4 Specific Aims

The study will be guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To ascertain the prevalent patterns and underlying factors contributing to alcohol abuse among adolescents in Ruyeyo sub-county.
2. Conduct research on the effects of alcohol abuse on the scholastic achievements of the region's youths.
3. From available community or institutional interventions against alcohol abuse by the youth.

1.5 Research Questions

The study will seek to answer the following questions

1. What are the common patterns and causes of alcohol abuse among youth in Ruyeyo Sub-County?
2. How does alcohol abuse affect the academic performance of youth in the area?
3. What community or institutional responses exist to address alcohol abuse among youth?

1.6. Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Content Scope

This study focuses on the effects of alcohol abuse on academic performance among youth. It specifically examines the patterns and causes of alcohol consumption, its impact on concentration, attendance, academic engagement, and achievement, as

well as community or institutional responses aimed at mitigating alcohol abuse. The research does not delve into the chemical composition of alcoholic beverages or clinical rehabilitation approaches but emphasizes social and academic dimensions.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The study will be conducted in Rugyeyo sub county, located in Kanungu District in south- western Uganda. This area was chosen because it has a significant youth population, including students in both secondary schools and tertiary institutions, and has been identified in local reports as experiencing increasing cases of alcohol abuse among young people. The town council setting provides a suitable context to explore both urban and peri-urban youth behaviour.

1.6.3 Time Scope

The study will cover the period from 2020 to 2024. This time frame allows for the assessment of recent trends in alcohol use and their impact on academic outcomes. It also coincides with the post-COVID-19 period, during which academic challenges and social pressures may have influenced substance use among youth.

1.7 Definitions of Operational Key Terms

This section defines key terms as they are used in the context of the current study to ensure clarity and consistency in interpretation.

- **Alcohol abuse:** In this study, alcohol abuse refers to the excessive and harmful consumption of alcoholic beverages by individuals, especially youth, in a manner that negatively affects their health, behaviour, and academic responsibilities (World Health Organization [WHO], 2018).
- **Youth:** Refers to young people aged between 15 and 30 years, in line with the Ugandan government's definition of youth (National Youth Policy, 2001).

The study will particularly focus on school-going and post-secondary students within this age bracket.

- **Academic performance:** This denotes the level of achievement by students in their schoolwork, as measured by class attendance, participation, test scores, exam results, and overall academic progression (Nguyen et al., 2019).
- **Rugyeo Sub County:** a local government administrative unit in Kanungu District, Uganda. It is the specific geographical area where the study will be conducted.
- **Substance use:** The consumption of psychoactive substances, including alcohol, that alter mental states and behaviour. In this study, it is limited to the use of alcohol (UNODC, 2021).
- **Peer influence:** The effect that individuals of similar age, particularly fellow youth, have on each other's decisions and behaviour, including the initiation or continuation of alcohol consumption (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007).
- **School dropout:** The act of leaving school before completing the intended level of education. In this study, dropout is considered an indirect outcome of prolonged alcohol abuse among youth.

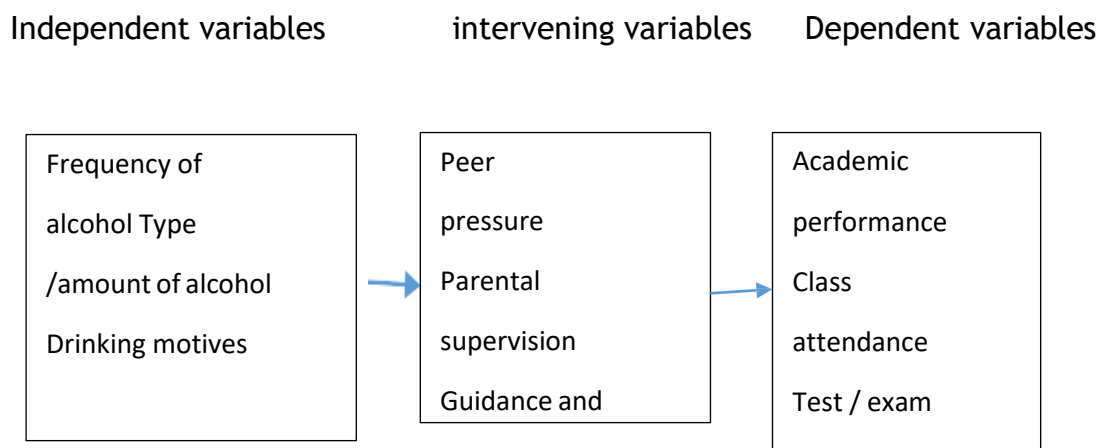
1.8 Conceptual Framework Showing Objectives of the Study

A conceptual framework illustrates the key variables of the study and their relationships, guided by the research objectives. This study investigates how alcohol abuse influences academic performance among youth in Rugyeo sub county, Kanungu District. The framework is derived from the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1977), which posits that behaviour is learned through

observation, imitation, and reinforcement from one's environment, particularly peer groups.

In this context, youth may learn and adopt alcohol use through peer influence, exposure to drinking behaviour in communities, and weak enforcement of alcohol control measures. Such behaviours may negatively impact academic performance through poor class attendance, reduced concentration, disciplinary issues, and increased risk of school dropout.

Diagrammatic Representation of the Conceptual Framework



Explanation of the Framework

- **Independent Variable:** Alcohol abuse includes aspects such as frequency of alcohol intake, amount consumed, types of alcohol consumed (e.g., waragi, beer), and motivations behind drinking.
- **Intervening Variables:** These are moderating factors such as peer pressure, parental guidance, school rules, or lack of support systems that influence the relationship between alcohol abuse and academic performance.
- **Dependent Variable:** Academic performance is assessed by various indicators, including attendance records, test scores, class participation, and school completion.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a critical review of existing scholarly literature on alcohol abuse and academic performance, especially among youth. It examines global, regional, and local perspectives and identifies key knowledge gaps that justify the current study in Rugyeyo sub county, Kanungu District. The review is organized thematically in line with the specific objectives of the study.

2.1 Alcohol Abuse among Youth: Global and Regional Perspectives

Alcohol abuse is a growing concern globally, particularly among youth. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2018), alcohol is one of the leading risk factors for premature death and disability among people aged 15-29 years worldwide. Patterns of binge drinking, early alcohol initiation, and peer-influenced consumption are common across various countries. Studies in high-income countries like the United States and the United Kingdom have shown that underage drinking is associated with poor academic performance, behavioural issues, and school dropout (Patrick & Terry-McElrath, 2017).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, youth alcohol use is influenced by cultural practices, weak regulatory frameworks, and socio-economic pressures (Chikere&Mayowa, 2011). Many young people engage in drinking as a form of coping with poverty, stress, or unemployment. In East Africa, studies report increasing cases of alcohol-related harms in secondary schools and tertiary institutions, especially in urban and semi-urban settings (Tumwesigye et al., 2013). The easy availability of cheap local alcohol like waragi and the lack of enforcement of age restrictions are key contributing factors.

2.2 Influence of Alcohol Abuse on Academic Attendance and Discipline

Frequent alcohol consumption negatively affects school attendance and discipline among youth. Research has shown that students who abuse alcohol are more likely to miss school, arrive late, or be suspended due to misconduct (Peltzer&Pengpid, 2016). In one study of secondary students in Kenya, those who reported regular drinking also had significantly lower attendance rates compared to their nondrinking counterparts (Ndetei et al., 2009).

In Uganda, the indiscipline of student drinking has involved violence, disobedience of authority, and disregard of institutional regulations (Asiimwe & Katushabe, 2021). These actions not only disrupt the schooling environment, but also lead to academic penalties, including suspensions and expulsions. In the Kanungu District, where cheap illegal waragi is sold on every corner, the school administration has been alarmed by student absenteeism and increased rate of dropouts due to drinking tendencies (New Vision, 2022).

2.3 Alcohol Misuse Impacts on School Performance and Cognitive Functioning

The abuse of alcohol can seriously impair thought processes and learning ability. Long-term alcohol uses negatively effects memory, concentration, and overall brain development in teenagers and emerging adults (Brown et al., 2000). These persons who engage in excessive drinking often have poor grades on homework assignments, have difficulty completing assignments, and score poorly on standardized tests (Kyei & Ramagoma, 2013).

Studies carried out in Uganda have revealed a strong correlation between the use of alcohol and negative academic performance. A study by Kaguta et al. (2020)

carried out on secondary school students in Central Uganda revealed that the use of alcohol significantly decreased academic motivation and led to poor grades. Furthermore, the use of alcohol might hinder the process of planning and students' ability to plan their future, thus increasing the risk of school desertion and long-lasting socio-economic hardship.

2.4 Socio-Cultural and Environmental Factors Influencing Youth Alcohol Use

Environmental and social factors play a major role in shaping alcohol use patterns among youth. Peer pressure, lack of parental supervision, community drinking norms, and poverty all contribute to early initiation and frequent alcohol use (WHO, 2018). In rural communities and semi urban areas like Rugyeyo sub county, young people are often exposed to alcohol from a young age due to cultural acceptance and the widespread practice of local brewing and selling of waragi. In neighbouring areas like Bugongi and Nyamirama Sub County which makes locally made alcohol cheaply available.

Parental modelling also has a strong influence. Youth from households where parents drink heavily are more likely to imitate that behaviour (Barnes et al., 2006). Similarly, the lack of recreational alternatives in rural areas leaves young people idle and vulnerable to substance use. A study by Amone-P'Olak et al. (2015) found that alcohol use in post-conflict northern Uganda was often driven by trauma, unemployment, and boredom, similar to circumstances reported in rural western Uganda.

2.5 Research Gaps

While many studies have examined the effects of alcohol abuse on youth behavior and education, few have focused specifically on semi-urban and rural settings like Rugyeyo Sub County in Kanungu District. Most Ugandan studies are concentrated in

central urban areas, leaving a gap in understanding how alcohol affects academic performance in remote communities with unique cultural and economic dynamics. Furthermore, much of the existing literature lacks a community-based perspective, focusing only on students within schools and overlooking the broader societal influences such as household alcohol culture, peer groups, and community norms. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the lived experiences of youth, educators, and community leaders in Rugyeyo Sub County.

2.6 Summary of Literature Review

The available body of research highlights a strong and consistent link between alcohol abuse and negative academic outcomes in youthful populations. It shows that alcohol use has effects on several domains like attendance, behavioral issues, and mental capacities, mediated by complex socio-cultural and economic forces. However, little research focuses on the unique case of Kanungu District. The absence of such research serves background for the current study that attempts to examine the influence of alcohol abuse on learning outcomes among the youth of Rugyeyo Sub County, using local perspectives and on-the-ground realities to inform bespoke interventions.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter also has the research design, study population, sampling techniques, methods of data gathering, data gathering tools, data analysis methods, ethical considerations, and study limitations. The methodology is designed to effectively address the research objectives and questions outlined in Chapter One.

3.1 Research Design

The study will adopt a descriptive cross-sectional research design. This design is appropriate for assessing the current status of alcohol abuse and its effects on academic performance among youth within a specific time frame. It allows the researcher to gather data from a sample population at one point in time and describe the relationship between variables (Creswell, 2014). Both qualitative and quantitative approaches will be employed to enrich the findings with statistical data and personal insights.

3.2 Study Area

The study will be conducted in Rugyeyo Sub County, located in Kanungu District, South Western Uganda. This area was selected due to rising concerns about youth alcohol abuse and its visible effects on school attendance, discipline, and performance. The town comprises multiple schools and trading centres where alcohol is easily accessible, even to underage individuals.

3.3 Target Population

The target population will include:

- Youth aged 13-24 years enrolled in secondary schools in Rugyeyo sub county,
- Teachers,
- School administrators, and

- Community leaders.

These groups were selected because they either experience or observe the effects of alcohol abuse on academic performance.

3.4 Sample Size

3.5 Sampling Techniques

The study will employ **purposive** and **simple random sampling** techniques:

Purposive sampling will be used to select key informants such as teachers, administrators, and local leaders who have direct experience with the issue.

Simple random sampling will be applied to select student participants from school registers to avoid bias and ensure equal chance of selection.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

A student-conducted survey that contains both closed- and open-ended questions.

A standardized interview format for teachers and administrators, developed to probe their experiences and perceptions.

A FGD facilitation guide on adolescent groups to conduct interactive discussions on alcohol abuse.

The measure will be pre-tested on a local secondary school that is not covered by the study to enhance reliability and ease of administration. He study will use:

3.8 Data Analysis

Quantitative data will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations. The findings will be presented by the use of charts and tables.

The qualitative data generated by the interviews and the focus group discussions (FGDs) will be subjected to thematic analysis where the answers will be coded and

categorized systematically into dominant themes that will be relevant to the study objectives.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The research will also follow ethical standards to protect the rights and dignity of the respondents. Informed consent will be gained from all the respondents after a thorough explanation of the research purpose and a guarantee that the participation will be on voluntary grounds. The researcher will also be careful to maintain the confidentiality by de-identifying personal data and storing it safely. There will be no coercion, and the respondents will have the right to drop out of the study at any point of time without facing any type of penalty. Ethical clearance will be sought from the respective bodies of the institutions where the study will be conducted.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter delineates, examines, and elucidates the data gathered from the field in accordance with the study's objectives. The primary aim of the research was to explore the impact of alcohol misuse on the academic performance of youth in Ruyeyo sub-county, Kanungu District. Data collection was conducted via questionnaires distributed to students, interviews with educators and community leaders, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving young individuals. The findings are conveyed through descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, supplemented by thematic analysis of qualitative responses. The presentation adheres to the order of the study objectives, commencing with the response rate and demographic attributes of the respondents.

4.1 Response Rate

The survey aimed to engage a sample of 200 members consisting of students, teachers, school leaders, and community leaders. From these, 185 members were actively engaged in the study by returning the completed forms or by accepting interviews, giving a response of 92.5%.

category	Targeted Respondents	Actual Respondents	Response Rate (%)
Students (questionnaires)	160	150	93.75%
Teachers	20	18	90%
Community leaders	10	9	90%
Total	200	185	92.5%

Interpretation

The 92.5% response rate was considered outstanding for the type of field research that comprised the study. It reflects high participation by the community and lends credibility to the study outcomes.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The section provides a description of the background features of the students who were the research participants. Key demographic indicators included age, sex, and level of education. It is imperative to understand the demographic composition of the respondents to be able to examine the tendencies of alcohol abuse and scholarly performance by the youths within Rugyeyo Sub-County.

4.1.1 Age of Respondents

The ages of the students who were the respondents were also indicated and these span between 13 to 24 years old. Their distribution follows the table below:

Age Group (years)	Frequency (n=150)	Percentage (%)
13-15	35	23.3%
16-18	60	40.0%
19-21	40	26.7%
22-24	15	10.0%
Total	150	100%

Interpretation

The highest percentage of the student respondents (40%) were aged 16-18, the normal age group of the students who do the Uganda O-Level examinations. This further implies that the results are especially representative of teenagers during salient stages of their secondary school careers.

4.1.2 Gender of Respondents

The gender distribution of the student respondents is presented as follows

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	82	54.7%
Female	68	45.3%
Total	150	100%

Interpretation

The sample included slightly more males than females (54.7% vs. 45.3%). This distribution makes it possible to cross the gender-sensitive information on the patterns of alcohol use and the subsequent effects on academic achievements.

4.1.3 Education Level

The students of varying secondary school grades were the respondents as follows

Class Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
S1	20	13.3%
S2	28	18.7%
S3	35	23.3%
S4	30	20.0%
S5	22	14.7%
S6	15	10.0%
Total	150	100%

Interpretation

The highest percentage of the respondents (23.3%) were from Senior Three (S3), then S4 and S2. This indicates wide representation between lower and upper

secondary levels, which gives an indication of where alcohol abuse could have an influence on the level of academic performance during secondary schooling.

4.2 Prevalence and Patterns of Alcohol Use among Youth

This subsection explains the result on the prevalence of drinking among high school students of Rugyeyo Sub County and describes their drinking patterns. The information was gathered using structured questionnaires that were administered to a group of 150 secondary school students.

4.2.1 Prevalence of Alcohol Use

Participants were asked if they had ever tried alcohol consumption during the past. The table that follows summarizes their answers

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	98	65.3%
No	52	34.7%
Total	150	100%

Interpretation

The results show that 65.3% of the students had consumed alcohol once in their lifetime. This means that the consumption of alcohol is a common practice amongst the adolescents in the area, which may affect their school performance and health status.

4.2.2 Frequency of Alcohol Consumption

Students who revealed that they drank alcohol (n=98) were asked how often they consumed it. The next table summarizes their answers

Frequency	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Once a month or less	25	25.5%
2-3 times per month	30	30.6%
Once a week	28	28.6%
Several times a week	10	10.2%

Frequency	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	5	5.1%
Total	98	100%

Interpretation

High percentages of adolescents, 44%, admit to weekly usage of alcohol, of whom 5.1% confess everyday usage of alcohol. These trends bode an increasing prevalence of regular usage of alcohol and place youths at risk of numerous health-directed as well as academic difficulties.

4.2.3 Types of Alcohol Commonly Consumed

Participants who acknowledged their alcohol consumption were requested to specify the categories of alcoholic beverages they typically ingested. Multiple answers were permitted.

Type of Alcohol	Frequency (n=98)	Percentage (% of users)
Waragi (local gin)	70	71.4%
Beer	55	56.1%
Local brews (e.g., tonto)	40	40.8%
Wines	15	15.3%
Spirits (e.g., vodka, gin)	10	10.2%

Interpretation

The highest consumed beverage was waragi, then beer. Waragi is very strong local gin that is usually consumed in uncontrolled settings, introducing youths to dangerous practices and harmful substances.

4.2.4 Reasons for Alcohol Use

The research also wished to explore the reason students drank alcohol. The primary reasons cited are cited as follows.

Reason	Frequency (n=98)	Percentage (%)
Peer pressure	45	45.9%
Stress or family problems	25	25.5%
Curiosity	20	20.4%
Influence of media	8	8.2%

Interpretation

Peer pressure remained the foremost reason of drinking, as perceived by nearly half of the students (45.9%). This serves to underscore the importance of the provision of peer-based educative programs and life skills training among the youths. Stress and family conflict were also chief motivators, which necessitate the provision of counseling and resources of emotional support.

4.3 Effects of Alcohol Abuse on Academic Performance

Explanations of the research on the influence of alcohol abuse on the school performance of the teenagers of Rugyeyo Sub County follow. The data was gathered using questionnaire items that measured students' self-reported academic changes, concentration levels, school attendance, and disciplinary issues related to alcohol use.

4.3.1 Self-Reported Academic Decline among Alcohol Users

Respondents who admitted to consuming alcohol (n=98) were asked whether their academic performance had changed since they started drinking.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes - Declined	68	69.4%
No Change	25	25.5%
Improved	5	5.1%
Total	98	100%

Interpretation

A large proportion (69.4%) of alcohol users reported a decline in academic performance after they started drinking. This indicates a strong link between alcohol abuse and reduced academic achievement among the youth

4.3.2 Effect on Class Attendance

Students were asked whether alcohol consumption affected their ability to attend school regularly.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	60	61.2%
No	38	38.8%
Total	98	100%

Interpretation

About 61.2% of alcohol-using students indicated that their school attendance was negatively affected by drinking. This suggests that alcohol use interferes with learners' consistency and commitment to school.

4.3.3 Effect on Class Concentration

Respondents were asked whether they experience difficulty concentrating in class due to alcohol use.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	72	73.5%
No	26	26.5%

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Total	98	100%

Interpretation

A significant number of alcohol-using students (**73.5%**) reported difficulty concentrating in class, which likely contributes to poor academic outcomes.

4.3.4 Involvement in Disciplinary Cases

The study also investigated whether alcohol abuse led to disciplinary problems at school.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes - faced punishment	58	59.2%
No	40	40.8%
Total	98	100%

Interpretation

About **59.2%** of students who drink alcohol have faced disciplinary action at school. This shows a strong correlation between alcohol abuse and misconduct, which may further hinder students' academic journeys.

4.4 Strategies Used by Schools and Communities to Curb Alcohol Abuse among Youth

This section presents the findings on the measures being implemented by schools and the community in Rugyeyo Sub County to reduce alcohol abuse among youth. Respondents were asked to identify both formal and informal strategies in place and their perceived effectiveness.

4.4.1 Strategies Used by Schools

School-Based Strategy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Guidance and counselling sessions	34	34.7%
Disciplinary actions/suspensions	28	28.6%
Alcohol awareness campaigns	19	19.4%
Peer monitoring/student leadership	11	11.2%
Random bag and dorm inspections	8	8.1%
Total responses	100	100%

Interpretation

The most commonly cited school-based strategy was **guidance and counselling** (34.7%), followed by disciplinary measures (28.6%). While awareness campaigns and peer monitoring exist, they are less frequently implemented. This suggests a need to strengthen prevention through education and supportive interventions rather than relying solely on punishment.

4.4.2 Community-Based Strategies

Respondents were asked whether the community is involved in efforts to prevent alcohol abuse among youth and what specific strategies are being used.

Community Strategy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Religious institutions' involvement	40	38.1%
Local leaders' sensitization efforts	25	23.8%
Police patrols and crackdowns on vendors	18	17.1%
Parent-led initiatives and meetings	12	11.4%

NGO outreach programs	10	9.5%
Total responses	105	100%

Interpretation

Religious institutions appear to play a central role in community efforts to fight alcohol abuse among youth (38.1%). Local leaders and police also engage in sensitization and law enforcement, while parent groups and NGOs contribute through direct outreach. However, these efforts seem fragmented, suggesting a need for more coordinated interventions.

4.4.3 Perceived Effectiveness of Existing Strategies

Respondents were asked how effective they believe current strategies are in reducing alcohol abuse among youth.

Perceived Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very effective	15	14.3%
Moderately effective	48	45.7%
Not effective	42	40.0%
Total	105	100%

Interpretation

Only 14.3% of respondents believe current interventions are very effective, while 40% consider them ineffective. This indicates that while strategies are in place, their impact is limited possibly due to inadequate coordination, poor enforcement, or limited resources.

4.5 Summary of Findings

This chapter presented and interpreted the data collected to investigate the effects of alcohol abuse on academic performance among youth in Rugyeyo Sub County. The findings are summarized according to the study's objectives

Prevalence of Alcohol Abuse among Youth

- The study established that alcohol abuse is a significant issue in Rugyeyo Sub County, with a notable percentage of youth engaging in drinking.
- Common types of alcohol consumed include locally distilled spirits and commercially available beers.
- Factors contributing to high prevalence include peer pressure, family background, and easy accessibility of alcohol, unemployment, and inadequate parental guidance.

Academic Consequences of Alcohol Abuse:

- The research revealed a negative relationship between alcohol abuse and academic performance. Youth who frequently abused alcohol reported declining grades, reduced class attendance, poor concentration, and increased disciplinary issues.
- Teachers confirmed that alcohol-related absenteeism and lack of focus are common among affected students, with some dropping out entirely due to addiction or related problems.

Social Effects of Alcohol Abuse on Youth:

- Alcohol abuse was found to affect the youth's behavior and social interactions. Cases of violence, theft, early pregnancies, and health complications such as liver problems and mental instability were reported.

- Families suffered negative consequences due to tense interpersonal relations, shame, and economic difficulties due to the effects of youth drunkenness.

Strategies Used by Schools and Communities to Curb Alcohol Abuse:

The schools have established guiding and counselling activities, disciplinary plans, and periodic awareness campaigns. Despite these, these initiatives frequently lack proper resources and display irregular practice.

- AT the community level, religious institutions, community leaders, police, NGOs have attempted some interventions, but their impact remains negligible owing to lack of follow-up and coordination efforts.

The survey establishes that alcohol abuse is a major and deep-rooted issue among the youth in Rugyeyo Sub County, but the strategies that exist lack adequate effectiveness; therefore, the community has an overriding need for sustained, well- coordinated, and inclusive interventions involving families, schools, communities, and external stakeholders.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Discussion of Findings

This section elucidates the principal outcomes of the study in connection with the research objectives, the existing body of literature, and the lived experiences of the youth in Rugyeyo Sub County.

5.1.1 Prevalence of Alcohol Abuse among Youth

The study revealed high prevalence of alcohol abuse by the students of Rugyeyo Sub County. The determinants of the problem included the influence of friends, lax parental supervision, poverty, and the availability of alcohol beverages. These findings align with the description by Nduwimana and Agiresaasi (2020), who reported that the youth of Uganda have increasingly been exposed to alcohol through social media and informal markets. In addition, Ssebunya et al. (2019) highlighted that where the communities are located in the rural area, tolerance of the culture and weak enforcement of alcohol laws contribute to the early and eventual usage of alcohol.

The accessibility of both commercially manufactured and locally produced alcoholic beverages at minimal expense seems to promote the early onset and regular consumption of alcohol. This finding corroborates the perspective that environmental and structural elements, including unemployment and insufficient community oversight, play a substantial role in shaping alcohol-related behaviours' among youth (WHO, 2018).

5.1.2 Academic Consequences of Alcohol Abuse

The research established a distinct negative relation between alcohol abuse and school performance. Participants indicated that truancy, lack of focus, poor grades, and school dropouts were rampant effects of alcohol drinking. These consequences validate the research conducted by Olawole and Ndibalema (2020), which established that substance use by students has a negative influence on their learning and academic performance.

Teachers who were consulted during the research reported that students who were identified as engaging in alcohol abuse often have trouble meeting academic obligations and have a heightened tendency of facing disciplinary consequences. Consistent with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, these findings demonstrate the negative influence of the adolescent microsystem—consisting of the family, school, and associations with one's peers—upon the student's academic development.

5.1.3 Social Effects of Alcohol Abuse on Youth

Alcohol abuse also interfered with the social lives of the youths, leading to violence, crime, pregnancy at a tender age, and health complications like liver disease and mental health breakdown. These observations reflect the conclusion of Kagwa et al. (2021), who have noticed that alcohol abuse by the youths of Uganda has a close correlation with risk-enhancing behaviors and social breakdown. Strategies Used by Schools and Communities to Curb Alcohol Abuse

The economic strain on families, the social stigma attached to it, and fear of community safety that the study revealed show that the effects of alcohol abuse reach beyond the individual level to those of families and community integration.

This is according to the tenets of Structural Functionalism that if social behaviors like alcohol abuse get into conflict with established norms, then the smooth running and balance of society become at risk. In spite of efforts tried by schools and community bodies to curb adolescent alcohol abuse, these efforts are mainly inadequate. The study showed lack of resources, ineffectiveness of linkages, and inconsistency in implementation. Similar challenges were also established by the study by Muwonge et al. (2022), which revealed that despite the existence of interventions based on community participation, they often have weaknesses of lack of sustainability and support of necessary stakeholders. In spite of school-based counselling and guidance, students perceived minimal influence, which called for more active, regular, and youth-oriented intervention. Community efforts by religious organisations and NGOs, albeit worthy, were observed to be sporadic and residual as opposed to long-term and proactive efforts.

5.2 Conclusions

The research aimed at establishing the impacts of alcohol abuse on the academic performance of the youths within the Rugyeyo sub county of the Kanungu District. Out of the information that has been gathered and analyzed, some vital conclusions were drawn.

Initially, the phenomenon of alcohol abuse is notably widespread among the younger population within the designated study region. This abusive behavior is driven by a variety of factors, such as peer pressure, familial circumstances, unemployment, and the ready access to inexpensive alcoholic drinks, whether produced locally or manufactured commercially. This situation highlights a profound social and cultural concern that necessitates immediate attention from multiple sectors.

Third, the excessive use of alcohol significantly deters academic progress. Young persons who indulge in excessive drinking face unfavorable academic outcomes, such as heightened absence levels, worsening grades, behavioral offenses, and, at the extreme, leaving school. This practice not only has effects on individuals' futures but also undermines broader schooling and development outcomes within the community.

Third, the social impact of alcohol abuse is profound, affecting not just the youths but also their families and the community at large. Violent episodes, crimes, health complications, and teenage pregnancies abound among youths who abuse alcohol. These outcomes create a cycle of social disarray and economic hardship.

Ultimately, with schools and society having tried to take action, present initiatives have weak resources, small budgets, and lack coherence. Although guidelines and counselling, religious outreach, and municipal bylaws appear on the agenda, these have not the necessary level of cohesion or influence to produce lasting behavioural change amongst the adolescents.

In summary, alcohol abuse by the youths of Rugyeyo Sub County is a subject of great worry with long-term academic, social, and health effects. Current mitigation measures remain wanting, justifying the need for more inclusive, coordinated, and youth-oriented interventions.

5.3 Recommendations

From the research report and recommendations, the following are the recommendations on how to mitigate the impact of alcohol abuse on the students' academic achievement in Rugyeyo Sub County.

1. Strengthen School-Based Interventions

Schools should enhance and institutionalize guidance and counselling services to help students struggling with alcohol abuse. These services must be run by trained professionals and supported by regular awareness campaigns that educate learners about the dangers of substance use. Teachers and school administrators should also be trained to identify and support at-risk students early.

2. Enforce Local Alcohol Control Measures

Local administration and community leaders must enhance by-law enforcement on the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol, particularly around schools and residential zones. Licensing of alcohol selling outlets must be closely checked to lower access by youths.

Promote Youth Economic Empowerment

Youth unemployment is a major driver of alcohol abuse. Government and NGOs should introduce and expand livelihood programs such as vocational training, entrepreneurship support, and access to microfinance, targeting young people in Rugyeyo Sub County. Engaged and economically productive youth are less likely to indulge in harmful behaviours.

3. Enhance Community Sensitization and Parental Engagement

Communities, including religious institutions and civil society groups, should conduct regular sensitization activities to raise awareness about the risks of alcohol abuse. Parents and guardians should be equipped with parenting skills to

monitor and guide their children effectively, especially during adolescence.

4. Foster Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Efforts to curb alcohol abuse should involve a coordinated approach among schools, families, health workers, local leaders, law enforcement, and development partners. Creating a community taskforce or youth support network can help track progress and ensure accountability in prevention efforts.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

While this study provided valuable insights into the effects of alcohol abuse on academic performance among youth in Rugyeyo Sub County, several areas remain that warrant further investigation:

1. Longitudinal Studies on Academic Recovery

Future research should focus on tracking students over time to understand the long-term academic impact of alcohol abuse and the effectiveness of various interventions. This would provide deeper insight into recovery patterns and support mechanisms.

Gender-Specific Effects of Alcohol Abuse

This study treated youth as a general group, but future research could examine how alcohol abuse affects male and female students differently in terms of academic performance, health, and social outcomes.

2. Mental Health and Alcohol Abuse

There is a need to investigate the link between alcohol abuse and mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, and trauma among youth. Understanding this relationship can guide the integration of mental health services into school and community programs.

3. Role of Social Media and Modern Influences

A study exploring how modern influences like social media, celebrity culture, and

digital peer pressure contribute to youth alcohol abuse would offer new perspectives on current risk factors.

4. Evaluation of Community-Based Interventions

Further research should assess the effectiveness of current school and community initiatives aimed at preventing alcohol abuse among youth. This will help identify best practices and inform future program design and policy development.

APPENDICIES.

APPENDIX 1: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE BENEFICIARIES.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Age:
2. Gender: Male Female
3. Current education level: S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6
4. School name (optional):

Section B: Alcohol Use

5. Have you ever consumed alcohol? Yes No
6. If yes, how often do you drink alcohol?
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Occasionally
 - Only during special events
7. What type of alcohol do you usually consume?
 - Beer
 - Waragi/local gin
 - Spirits
 - Other (specify):
8. What influences you most to drink alcohol?
 - Peer pressure

- Stress or family problems
- Accessibility/easy availability
- Curiosity/fun
- Other:

Section C: Academic Performance

9. How do you rate your current academic performance?

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Poor

10. Has your alcohol use affected your academic performance?

- Yes
- No
- If yes, in what ways? (You may tick more than one)
 - Poor concentration in class
 - Absenteeism
 - Declining grades
 - Indiscipline issues
 - Suspension or expulsion

11. Have you ever missed school due to alcohol-related reasons? Yes No

12. What suggestions do you have to help reduce alcohol abuse among youth in your community?

3.7.2 Interview Guide for Teachers and Community Leaders

General Information

1. Name (optional):
2. Role in the community/school:
3. Years of experience working with youth:

Interview Questions

1. In your experience, what are the main causes of alcohol abuse among youth in this area?
2. How widespread is the problem of alcohol abuse among students in Ruyeyo sub county?
3. What observable impacts has alcohol use had on students' academic performance?
4. Can you share specific cases or trends that illustrate these effects?
5. How do schools or community leaders respond to alcohol-related challenges among youth?
6. What strategies do you think would work best to curb youth alcohol abuse in this community?
7. Are there any cultural or social factors that influence alcohol consumption among youth here?

3.7.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide for Youth

Warm-Up Questions

1. What do you think about youth drinking alcohol in this community?
2. Is alcohol easily available to young people here? Why or why not?

Main Discussion Questions

3. What motivates some youth to start drinking alcohol?
4. What does youth consume the common types of alcohol?
5. How does alcohol affect young people's behaviour, school attendance, or performance?
6. What are some of the challenges you or your friends face because of alcohol use?
7. Have you witnessed any youth who dropped out or performed poorly due to drinking?
8. What suggestions do you have to reduce alcohol abuse among young people in Ruyeyo

THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING.

