Drug use and Criminality in Baganga, Davao Oriental

ANALUNA C. BASTIDA
Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology
Mati City, Davao Oriental

JAY ARVIE M. MAGWANGAY
Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology
Mati City, Davao Oriental

GLADYS C. SAYMAN
Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology
Mati City, Davao Oriental

ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between drug use and criminality in Baganga, Davao Oriental, focusing on the socio-demographic profiles of offenders, the types of crimes committed, and the role of drug use in criminal behavior. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were gathered through surveys, interviews, and official police records. The findings reveal that drug-related offenses are prevalent among young adults, with economic and social factors significantly influencing criminal involvement. The study also highlights the need for enhanced community interventions, rehabilitation programs, and law enforcement strategies to address the growing issue of drug-related crimes. The results provide valuable insights for policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and community leaders in developing effective crime prevention initiatives. Additionally, these findings can serve as a valuable resource for police authorities and the local government in educating young people about the dangers of drug use and criminal behavior.

Keywords: Baganga, criminality, drug use, leaders, rehabilitation program

INTRODUCTION

Drug addiction is one of the most significant concerns that the world is facing today. A growing number of youths using drugs is becoming rampant, which the government is prohibiting. It is also identified as a significant problem among the existing learning institutions. According to the report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2005), the use of illicit drugs has increased throughout recent years. Further reports state that the increasing availability of many kinds of drugs is the major world trend nowadays. This was supported by the report released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2004), where 4.8% of the global population consumes drugs.

Addiction and drug-related crime are two of the most intractable social problems that the United States is facing. Drug-related crime undoubtedly accounts for a large part of the external costs of illicit drug use. A study by Godfrey et al. (2003) estimated that around 88% of the economic and social costs of class A drug use in England and Wales in 2000 were attributable to crime and policing costs. While the UK Drug Harm Index attempts to measure the trend over time in drug-related social harms, it assigns over 2/3 67% of its weight to property crime (MacDonald et al., 2005). In Australia in 2005, it was estimated that 41%-51% of crime was attributable to drug use and that crime was responsible for 56% of the tangible costs arising from illicit drugs in 2005 (Collins and Lapsley, 2008).

According to the study of the Nationwide Survey on the Nature and Extent of Drug Abuse in the Philippines in 2015, the current drug use prevalence among Filipinos aged 10 to 69 years old is 2.3%, or an estimated 1.8 million used. Reports of drug-related crime are standard in the Philippine media. The primary concern tends to be towards shabu use, which gets the most media attention. It does seem that illegal drug use is on the rise, and this has worrying implications for the future (Bernasco and Jacques, 2015). An urgent education for young people as to the dangers of drug use is needed, and there is also a great need to help campaign for rehabilitating those who were already addicted to escape their misery (Kavutha, 2015). Failure to do so could result in further deterioration within many Filipino communities.

Davao Oriental is considered a promising province due to its strong potential for industrial, commercial, agricultural, and aquaculture development. Its strategic location and economic characteristics may also make it vulnerable to becoming a hub for illegal drug activities. Drug-related crimes, including abuse, manufacturing, and trafficking, remain serious concerns across many countries. Due to these factors, this study was conducted intentionally to identify the types of crimes associated with drug use in Baganga, Davao Oriental. This will help provide insights into the cause of the addiction and its impact and also the possible effect if the population of drug addicts continues to rise. It also includes information on the effects of this act and the current status of the drug addicts. Moreover, this study will serve as a reference for the residents in Baganga, Davao Oriental, especially regarding the use of drugs. Through this study, they will be able to identify the possible effects of drug addiction in their locality. It will also serve as a guide for decision-making on what program will be conducted by the local government to lessen the population of drug users in Baganga, Davao Oriental.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a descriptive method to study drug use and criminality. Descriptive research was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena

to describe "what exists" concerning variables or conditions in a situation (Key, 1997). The method used is the combination of a survey and an observation made by the researchers. This study asked the drug users for their perspective regarding the question asked by the researcher on drug use and problems.

Data Collection

The researchers sent a request letter to the office of the Philippine National Police in the municipality of Baganga to obtain the necessary information for the study.

The researchers employed textual, graphical, and tabular methods to present the collected data. These data were presented through pie charts, histograms, cross-tabs, and bar graphs. Right after each data presentation, the researchers interpreted and discussed the means of the chart.

The researchers assured the respondents that their real identities would be kept confidential and private. The researchers respected the privacy, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivities of the respondents. Any specific agreements made with the participants will be fulfilled. In addition, the researchers did not manipulate the data collected in the study to provide a substantive and real output for this research.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the socio-demographic and economic profile of the respondents, the researchers first determined the total number of drug users, which was one hundred eighty-nine (189), by using Slovin's formula with an allowable error of 0.05 and a total number of one hundred twenty-eight (128).

In the socio-demographic and economic profile of the respondents, the researchers determined the highest ranges of age and financial status using frequency counts. In terms of gender, religion, civil status, educational attainment as well as source of income, the researchers also used the frequency counts to analyze the number of responses of the respondents to the following question; after getting the result of each question, researchers divided it to the total number of respondents and multiplied to 100 to get the percentage in each response.

This kind of drug is commonly used.

To determine the types of drugs commonly used by the respondents, the researchers employed frequency counts to identify the highest and lowest responses to each question. After getting all the number of responses from the respondents, researchers got the percentage of each response by dividing the number of responses by the total number of respondents, and the result was multiplied by 100 to get the percentage of each drug used.

Crimes committed about drug use.

In identifying the crimes committed concerning drug use, the researchers also used the frequency counts to analyze the number of responses of the respondents to the following question; after getting the result of each question, researchers divided it into the total number of respondents and multiplied to one hundred (100). After obtaining all the results, the researcher interpreted them by analyzing the survey questionnaire used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Socio-demographic profile

Gender

Out of the 128 respondents in the study, 101 (79%) were male, and 27 (21%) were female, as shown in Table 1. This implied that males are essentially using drugs for various reasons.

This data could be supported by the research conducted by Cotto et al. (2010), which indicates that males engage in drug use at much higher rates than females, particularly with substances such as alcohol, marijuana, and the nonmedical consumption of prescription medications.

Table 1. The gender of the respondents .

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	101	79%
Female	27	21%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Age

Table 2 presents the age of the respondents. Based on this, the majority of drug users belong to the age bracket of 18 to 23, which had a total of 41 or 32%, followed by 36 to 41 years old, 24 or 19%, and 24 to 29 years old, 22 or 17%. The lowest age bracket was 42 to 47, 8 or 6%.

It showed that younger respondents were more prone to drug users during the conduct of the study than any other age stage. This data could be supported by the study of Beynon et al. (2010), in which both historically and currently, UK policies on illegal drug use have been primarily focused on younger people.

Table 2. Age of the respondents.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-23	41	32%
36-41	24	19%
24-29	22	17%
30-35	19	15%
48-53	14	11%
42-47	8	6%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Religion

As to the religion of the respondents, it can be viewed from Table 3 that Catholics are the majority, with a total of 114, or 89% of the total population surveyed, affected by drug addiction. In contrast, those from Islam comprise 11, or 9%, and the others (3) make up 2%. This is true because the majority of those affected in the Philippines are Roman Catholic (80%), while others are Protestants (20%).

Table 3. Religion of respondents.

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Catholic	114	89%
Islam	11	9%
Others	3	2%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Civil status

Based on the results of Table 4, the majority of respondents, totaling 63 or 49%, fell under both single and married categories, and the remaining 2, or 2%, belonged to a separate category.

Numerous studies have been done to find trends in alcohol and drug dependence within single and married groups, and it has been found that an individual's marital status can indeed affect the likelihood of falling victim to alcohol addiction or drug abuse. Research conducted by Kendler et al. (2017) indicates that people who go through marital dissolution—like divorce or separation—are at a considerably elevated risk of developing alcohol dependence when compared to those who stay married. Their findings also imply that entering a new marriage can mitigate this risk, suggesting that the stability and social support linked to marriage may act as a protective factor against substance abuse.

Table 4. Civil status of the respondents.

Civil status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	63	49%
Married	63	49%
Separated	2	2%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Educational attainment

In terms of educational attainment of the respondents, it can be deduced from the table that the respondents were dominated by the high school level with 36 or 28%, followed by the elementary level with 31 or 24%, high school graduate with 24 or 19%, elementary graduate with 20 or 16%, next by the college level with 13 or 10%, college graduate with 3 or 2%, and finally by the vocational graduate with 1% (Table 5).

This data could be supported by the study of Saha et al. (2016), which found that people with less education tended to use substances more frequently than those with higher educational qualifications. In particular, the research revealed that decreased educational attainment correlated with a greater incidence of substance use, indicating that the level of education significantly influences substance use behaviors.

Table 5. Educational attainment of the respondents.

Educational attainment	Frequency	Percentage
High School Level	36	28%
Elementary Level	31	24%
High School Graduate	24	19%
Elementary Graduate	20	16%
College Level	13	10%
College Graduate	3	2%
Vocational Graduate	1	1%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Economic status

When analyzed according to economic status, it showed from the table that the majority of the respondents belong to the low economic class with 76 or 59%, which comprised more than half of the total population, followed further by the middle class with 47 or 37% and finally by the upper class with 5 or 4% respectively (Table 6).

This was supported by the study of Luthar et al. (2008), where families that belong to the low socio-economic status have attitudes that are more tolerant towards substance use. Furthermore, peer influence on substance use was more pronounced among youth in urban areas than those in rural settings, indicating that urban environments might provide easier access to substances and peer networks that promote their consumption (Wilson and Donnermeyer, 2006).

Table 6. Economic status of the respondents.

Economic Class	Frequency	Percentage
Low Class (PHP. 5,000 below per month)	76	59%
Middle Class (PHP. 6,000 to PHP. 15,000 per month)	47	37%
Upper Class (PHP. 15,000 above per month)	2	4%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Source of income

As for the source of income of the respondents, it can be gleaned that farming had the highest response, with a total of 44 or 34%, followed by drivers with 37 or 29%, laborers with 21 or 16%, and so on. This was considered because farming was the primary source of income in the municipality. The study also found out that most of the drug users had no stable job (Table 7).

Table 7. Distribution of respondent's occupation.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farmer	44	34%
Driver	37	29%
Laborer	21	16%
Business/Woman	11	9%
Fish Vendor	4	3%
Fisherman	3	2%
Carpenter	3	2%
Government Employee	2	2%
Agent	1	1%
Mechanic	1	1%
Service crew	1	1%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Commonly used drugs

Type of drugs used

Presented in Table 8 are the types of drugs commonly used by the respondents. It showed that the majority of the respondents were using marijuana, 91 or 71% of the total population, and 37 or 29% of respondents were using shabu. Showed that marijuana was the available and most affordable drug in the municipality. According to a survey carried out in 2015 across the Philippines by the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) revealed that marijuana was the most frequently used illegal drug, with 76.3% of participants indicating they had used it. Following marijuana was methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu), reported by 47.7% of respondents. The study pointed out that the prevalent use of marijuana is due to its low cost and easy availability, especially in rural and economically disadvantaged urban regions.

Table 8. Respondents' response as to types of drugs used.

Type of drugs	Frequency	Percentage
Marijuana	91	71%
Shabu	37	29%
Total	**128**	**100%**

Crime committed

Presented in Table 9 are the responses of the respondents regarding the crime committed when they were using the drug as can be seen from the table, among the four crimes presented by the researchers. Robbery gets the highest response from the r espondents with 53 or 41%, followed by rape with 40 or 31%, murder with 28 or 22%, and finally by theft with 7 or 6%. It is indicated that most of the respondent's responses in terms of crime committed about drug use are robbery.

Another dimension of drug-related crime was whether the offense was committed to obtain money (or goods to sell to get money) to support drug use. The research conducted by Pierce et al. (2017) and Kuhns et al. (2017) backs the assertion that robbery is the most prevalent crime associated with drug use, as both studies emphasize that those with drug dependencies, especially opioid users, frequently commit offenses such as robbery and burglary to support their addiction, with robbery serving as a direct and violent method to acquire funds for drugs.

Table 9. Crimes committed in relation to drug use.

Crime	Frequency	Percentage
Robbery	53	41%
Rape	40	31%
Murder	28	22%
Theft	7	6%
Total	**128**	**100%**

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, this study determines that the typical characteristics of drug users in the Municipality of Baganga correspond with the demographic trends noted in similar studies—predominantly males aged 18 to 23, often affiliated with the Catholic faith, either single or married, possessing a high school education, and originating from the low-income farming segment. Among the participants, marijuana was identified as the most frequently used drug, illustrating its widespread presence in the region. Additionally, robbery was recognized as the most prevalent crime linked to drug usage, a sentiment strongly corroborated by the respondents. These findings emphasize the necessity for focused intervention programs that tackle not only substance abuse but also the socio-economic and criminal ramifications within the community. To mitigate drug-related criminal activities, the findings underline the importance of strengthened law enforcement, community engagement, and rehabilitation programs. Establishing preventive measures and support networks requires collaboration among local authorities, law enforcement, and community leaders. Policymakers can utilize this data to formulate strategies that effectively address drug-related crime.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

REFERENCES

Bernasco, W., and Jacques, S. (2015). Where do dealers solicit customers and sell them drugs? A micro-level multiple method study. Journal of Contemporary criminal justice, 31(4),376-408. doi.org/10.1177/10439862156085

Beynon, C., Stimson, G., and Lawson, E. (2010). Illegal drug use in the age of ageing. British Journal of General Practice, 60(576), 481-482. doi.org/10.3399/bjgp10X514710

Board, D. D. (2015). Nationwide survey on the nature and extent of drug abuse in the Philippines. Quezon City, Philippines.

Collins, D., and Lapsley, H. M. (2008). The costs of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug abuse to Australian society in 2004/05 (p. 143). Canberra: Department of Health and Ageing.

Cotto, J. H., Davis, E., Dowling, G. J., Elcano, J. C., Staton, A. B., and Weiss, S. R. (2010). Gender effects on drug use, abuse, and dependence: a special analysis of results from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Gender medicine, 7(5), 402-413.

Godfrey, C., Eaton, G., McDougall, C., and Culyer, A. (2002). The economic and social costs of class a drug use in England and Wales, 2000: Home Office research study 249.

Kavutha, M. J., and Kariuki, M. (2015). Influence of drug use on academic performance among secondary school students in Matinyani District, Kenya. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 5(11), 726-732.

Kendler, K. S., Lönn, S. L., Salvatore, J., Sundquist, J., and Sundquist, K. (2017). Divorce and the onset of alcohol use disorder: a Swedish population-based longitudinal cohort and co-relative study. American Journal of Psychiatry, 174(5), 451-458. doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.2016.16050589

Key, J. P. (1997). Research design in occupational education. Oklahoma State University. Luthar, S. S., Barkin, S. H., and Crossman, E. J. (2013). "I can, therefore I must": Fragility in the upper-middle classes. Development and psychopathology, 25(4pt2), 1529-1549. doi.org/10.1017/S0954579413000758

MacDonald, Z., Tinsley, L., Collingwood, J., Jamieson, P., and Pudney, S. (2005). Measuring the harm from illegal drugs using the Drug Harm Index.

Saha, T. D., Kerridge, B. T., Goldstein, R. B., Chou, S. P., Zhang, H., Jung, J., and Grant, B.F. (2016). Nonmedical prescription opioid use and DSM-5 nonmedical prescription opioid use disorder in the United States. The Journal of clinical psychiatry, 77(6), 1 2 8 5 5 . doi.org/10.4088/JCP.15m10386

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2005). World Drug Report 2005. United Nations. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2004). World drug report 2004: Volume 1 Analysis. United Nations.

Wilson, J. M., and Donnermeyer, J. F. (2006). Urbanity, rurality, and adolescent substance use. Criminal Justice Review, 31(4), 337-356. doi.org/10.1177/0734016806295582