

**INFLUENCE OF DRUG USE ON YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN CRIMINAL  
ACTIVITIES IN KIBOKONI ESTATE MVITA CONSTITUENCY, MOMBASA  
COUNTY, KENYA**

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**Abstract**

This study's objective was to evaluate the impact of drug usage on youth involvement in criminal activity in Mombasa County, Kenya's Kibokoni Estate (Old Town), Mvita Constituency. The study used a descriptive research approach. The NACADA team and the local government served as the study's NGOs, and the research's target demographic was young people (18 to 35 years old). The study was sampled using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Since it is uncertain what percentage of young people use marijuana and engage in violent behavior, the project sample for adolescents was computed using Fishers Formulae to get a sample size of 3200 respondents. In addition to secondary data gathered from journals, papers, books, and legal provisions among the scholarly sources of data, a semi-structured questionnaire was the key data collection tool. Data was collected, edited, coded, and entered into a social science statistical tool for analysis. Both descriptive (frequency, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics were used in this study's analysis. The descriptive analysis uncovered significant patterns in respondents' behavior regarding drug use and criminal engagement. Specifically, respondents indicated a troubling prevalence of bhang use, with a mean score indicating frequent engagement. Moreover, respondents reported their involvement in criminal activities, highlighting the intricate connection between substance abuse and unlawful behavior. The study recommends for development and implementation of community-based educational initiatives, enhancement of law enforcement efforts to disrupt drug trafficking networks and creation of robust support systems for at-risk youth.

**Keywords:** *Drug Use, Youth Involvement, Criminal Activities*

**INTRODUCTION**

Bhang, also known as cannabis or marijuana, is a natural drug that can alter a living thing's perception, mood, cognition, behavior, or motor function when consumed. It is a substance of abuse because the way people use it differs from the accepted social or medical norms in a particular culture (WHO, 2017). The dependence on cannabis develops as a result of repeated misuse. The drug user experiences this as an emotional (psychic) and occasionally physical urge. In order to experience the drug's effects and to prevent the discomfort of its absence, it is defined by behavioral and other responses that always include a compulsion to take the drug continuously or frequently. Tolerance, the condition in which a drug user needs to consume more of the drug to get the same results they did previously, may or may not exist

(Martin, 2020; Mwaluko, 2019). Cannabis and other drugs may make some people dependent (Mbatia, 2019).

Any component of the hemp plant (*Cannabis sativa*) or its extracts that alters a person's psyche and body are referred to as marijuana in the United States. The term marijuana may simply be a translation of Mary Jane, a slang term for cheap tobacco used in Mexico. It only refers to a cannabis extract by the 19th century's end. The hemp plant produces a liquid that pours out as the flowers and seed heads develop. The liquid is known as hashish when it is in this pure state. Hashish also refers to the resinous material extracted from cannabis when the plant is soaked in a solvent such as alcohol (Canadian Commission of Inquiry, 2020). However, the National Research Council came to the conclusion after reviewing the relevant literature that chronic marijuana use may change the neural system in ways that actually encourage violence (National Research council, 2022). Furthermore, frequent cannabis usage has been linked repeatedly to violent crime and property destruction among young people (Dembo et al., 2013; Salmelainen, 2020; Baker, 2014). Therefore, even if it only affects a small portion of the population, the topic of whether marijuana usage contributes to crime is still up for debate. Crime is not a new phenomenon on a global or local scale, but the intensity and nature of crime varies across borders.

Surprisingly few research has specifically looked at the link between cannabis usage and criminal activity. According to the psychopharmacological paradigm (Goldstein, 2015), drug users commit violent and/or non-violent crimes as a result of the drug's strong psychoactive effects. Except for adolescents (youths), there is very little evidence to support this concept in the case of marijuana. There is some question that any link shown in the data is causal in nature because laboratory studies generally demonstrate that marijuana, unlike alcohol, momentarily decreases aggression and violence (Mizcek et al., 2021; White and Gorman, 2020). Nevertheless, some data suggest a link between persistent marijuana use and a higher risk of acting violently (White and Hansell, 2008; Kaplan and Damphousse, 2013).

According to Pacula and Kilmer (2014), even while cannabis usage may momentarily reduce aggression in the general population, it is likely that some people who use cannabis become more aggressive. For instance, in controlled laboratory research, variables such as subject characteristics, such as gender, violent dispositions, and cognitive capacities, as well as experimental settings, such as whether the subject was provoked, affect the link between alcohol use and aggression (Bushman, 2021).

Frequent cannabis use is associated with both violent crime and nonviolent delinquency among young people, according to much stronger data (Salmelainen, 2005; Fergusson and Horwood, 2013; Baker, 2020). After taking into account variations in developmental traits, demography, and other substance usage, the association remained (Baker, 2020). In their analysis of the effects of adolescent marijuana use, Fergusson and Horwood (2017) took four measures of delinquency into account: three or more violent offenses, three or more property offenses, being arrested by the police, and being found guilty of an offense in court. Each of these results had a dose-response association with the frequency of marijuana usage by the age of 16. After controlling for confounders, this continued, indicating that it was not entirely explained by the traits of teenagers who start using marijuana regularly by the age of 16. It continued even after drug usage and criminal activity in the user's peer group were adjusted, showing that affiliation with criminal and drug-using peers could not account for it.

Economic crime is defined as criminal activity that is driven by the need to earn money to support one's own drug addiction (Goldstein, 2021). Marijuana consumption is less expensive than other illicit drugs and does not frequently result in users developing compulsive tendencies of criminal activity. However, research points to the possibility of some economically motivated crime, at least among young people.

The massive profits made from the selling of illegal drugs and the lack of effective law enforcement to settle disputes are the driving forces behind this violence. It is unlikely that marijuana markets would encounter the same level of violence as the heroin and cocaine markets for a number of reasons. There is some evidence that marijuana markets have sparked violence in a few locations around the US, although these incidents have been incredibly rare and highly localized (Goldstein et al., 2009; ONDCP, 2018). For instance, Goldstein et al. (2021) discovered that only 6 of the 414 drug-related killings in New York City were connected to marijuana. The marijuana market in New York City was not linked to the violence witnessed in the crack market, despite marijuana vendors dominating outdoor parks and streets in the early 1980s, according to ethnographic research on the city's drug trade. The vast majority of marijuana purchases in the US now take place in secret; as a result, dealers cannot even see their rivals (ONDCP 2018, Taylor et al. 2018). Even the majority of people who have been arrested (median: 71%) say they bought marijuana inside. Only four locations had a higher than 50% arrest rate for marijuana purchases done outside (Taylor et al., 2018).

Sub-Saharan Africa is gradually becoming a major problem in Africa with regard to the illicit drug trade. Bhang, crack, cocaine, opium, and ecstasy are among the most advanced and synthetic narcotics that are making their way into the continent. Large youthful and vulnerable populations in Africa are becoming the illicit drug industry's target market. More than half of the population of Cote d'Ivoire is under the age of 18, and the number of "street children" is rising. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 data, there are a lot of people under the age of 18 in most African nations, including Botswana, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Egypt, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Togo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Young people's drug use in Africa is linked to the psychological and social harm caused by social unrest and civil war. In other words, it is linked to the difficult socioeconomic and material circumstances present in the majority of the continent's nations. In addition to the risk of rising youth and child usage, Southern Africa is becoming as a key hub for the transshipment of drugs internationally and as a significant dagga producer (Honwana & Lamb, 2008). The stability and long-term socioeconomic development plans in southern Africa are threatened by all of these concerns. According to Onoge (2020) in Adebayo (2013), crime is dysfunctional because it imperils the stability of society. As a result, it is a social issue that calls for determined efforts to find a long-term solution. Urbanization has been accompanied with an increase in crime, violence, and lawlessness, particularly in developing nations. One of the primary issues that urban people face on a daily basis is the rising violence and lack of security. According to a global study, 60% of all urban residents in developing countries have experienced criminal activity.

Cannabis (also known as "bhang") has been found to be the most popular illegal substance taken by young people in Kenya (Kaigwa, 2013; Mwenesi, 2015; Namwonja, 2020; University of Nairobi, 2021; Yambo and Acuda, 2015). Cannabis abuse is on the rise, according to statistics provided for Kenya by the Anti-Narcotics Police Unit. Over 94 billion shillings worth of bhang and its byproducts (hashish, cannabis resin, and cannabis oil) were captured between 1992 and 1999. About 8,786 people were detained between 1997 and 1999 on suspicion of growing, selling, or consuming marijuana. In addition, 636 acres of cannabis had been burned after being found between 1992 and 1999. Even in rural areas, where cannabis is one of the most commonly consumed narcotics by secondary school students, this situation has grown and become a concern at the school level. In contrast to the previous category, which included those aged 17 to 25, the base level has now been enlarged to cover people as young as 14 years old, according to Dr. Abdool of the UNDCP (Sunday Nation, March 14, 2019). Therefore, the issue is not just present in secondary schools and

universities, but also in primary schools in Kenya, where it is believed that 50% of youth-related crimes are frequently tied to drug misuse. Some young people claimed to have engaged in illegal activity while high on bhang. This supports Dentler's (2007) claim that drug addiction affects a person's moral character, causing their character to degenerate and their behaviors to become bad. Drug use was identified by Makhoha (2008) as one among the variables influencing male delinquents in Kamiti prisoners to conduct deadly offenses. Drug usage, particularly bhang smoking, has also been linked to incidences of disturbance at schools and colleges.

Additionally, crime makes no distinction between rich and emerging nations, as seen in Kenya, which is still dealing with the consequences of an increase in criminal activity in its metropolitan areas. As youth unemployment rates rise, which is especially pronounced in metropolitan areas, an increasing trend in crime among young is reflected in an increase in their involvement in violent criminal activity. Mushanga (2020), who defined crime as an act committed or omitted that is injurious to the state, a person, or both, was one of many scholars who used different definitions of crime. He continues by saying that the act in question must be expressly forbade by an active criminal statute.

Furthermore, an UN-Habitat (2018) study in Kenya revealed that rising juvenile crime has major repercussions, particularly in Africa, where more than two thirds of the population in many cities is between the ages of 12 and 25. The majority of these young people reside in unregulated housing without access to security, basic amenities, or activities. According to crime statistics, Kenya's crime rate was declining as of 2005, but reports also suggest that Kenyans generally feel uneasy (United Nations, 2018). In Kenya, as in many other nations, young people are perceived to be, and are frequently among, the main perpetrators of crime. Young guys between the ages of 16 and 25 make up more than 50% of all criminals in Kenya who have been found guilty. Nairobi County is ruled by 14 organized criminal gangs, according to a report by the National Crime Research Centre (NCRC), who intimidate locals in exchange for ransom. The majority of the gangs are active in regions with weak policing, such as informal settlements.

Marginalized communities in the Coast region are frequently the targets of drug dealers, especially in the impoverished ghettos surrounding the major cities. This leads to social disintegration, an increase in crime and urban crime, as well as a greater likelihood of conflict between the state and its citizens. The persistence and increase in crime continue to erode the social fabric of society, particularly in the cities. Both locally and globally, crime is not a recent phenomenon, although within different borders, the severity and type of crime varies. Additionally, crime makes no distinction between wealthy and developing nations, like Kenya, which is still dealing with the consequences of a rise in urban crime. An increase in young involvement in violent criminal activity is reflected in an increasing crime trend in urban regions, which has been linked to the youth unemployment rate increase, which is significantly more pronounced in urban areas. Similar to Old Town, the gang's members are thought to have started out as football players. To support their extravagant lifestyles, the majority of them steal and are drug addicts. The gang is a breakaway of the "wakali-kweli," which means truly difficult, and the "wakali-wao," which means the toughest of them all and whose bases are in the Kisauni area of coastal region.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Abuse of drugs and other substances is a serious issue for young people all over the world. Many governments are less conscious of the societal issues brought on by problem drinking and substance misuse among youngsters, even though the majority of governments do not allow substance abuse among their population. Youth substance misuse has historically been addressed with a contemptuous attitude and a reflex to try to hide the issue, motivated more by moral principles than a concern for the potential health consequences.

Second, it has come to light that alcohol and drug abuse (ADA) is a widespread issue in Kenya and is no longer just a problem among teenagers. According to recent studies, adult alcohol and drug misuse in Kenya is now so prevalent that it threatens to destroy society at a rate of 16% (NACADA, 2022). The study is informed by the fact that insufficient research has been done to ascertain how drug use and substance addiction affect young people's productivity.

Whether used on or off the job, alcohol and drug usage has a negative influence on worker productivity. According to Larson et al. (2020), rates of problematic substance use differ by career. The occupations with the highest rates of illicit drug use often include those in the food service industry, construction, the arts, design, entertainment, sports, and the media. People with severe alcohol consumption disorders exhibit comparable patterns (Frone, 2020). According to a poll of more than 300 human resources experts, 67% of them think that substance use among young people is one of the most important problems they deal with, with implications for absenteeism, decreased productivity, and a negative influence on their company's brand. Young workers who use illegal drugs and/or alcohol heavily have greater absenteeism and job turnover rates than those who do not use illicit drugs and/or alcohol heavily (SAMHSA, 2018), and they are also more likely to have injuries on the job (Spicer, Miller, & Smith, 2022).

There is also evidence of research on juvenile crime, like Omboto, Ondiek, Odera, and Ayugi's qualitative study on the factors influencing juvenile delinquency and adolescent crime in Kenya from 2022 and Tume's elements influencing urban crime focus from 2020 with a focus on Nakuru, Kenya. Makokha (2008) discovered that offenders who were incarcerated were concentrated in metropolitan areas because there were more possibilities for them to engage in criminal activity there. In order to close the aforementioned gap, the researcher conducted this investigation against this background.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Empirical literature Review**

Previous research has linked drug use and substance addiction among young people to the availability of drugs. According to studies by Yambo (2005) and Haji (2018), easy access to drugs is one of the factors contributing to an increase in drug use and criminal activity among students. Most commonly consumed substances are those that are produced locally or are illegally brought into the nation. Since Kenya has been identified as one of the nations used as a transit country by international drug traffickers from Asia and Latin America, the rate of drug circulation there is significant (Daily Nation May 8, 2015). The numerous instances of drug traffickers being apprehended at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport lend credence to the assertion. As indicated by the firing of 32 KQ employees in 2002 (Daily Nation, 20 June 2002), many airline personnel are becoming involved in drug trafficking.

On August 27, 2018, the then-Minister of Education, Honorable George Saitoti, made a speech at the official closure of the African Convention of Principals (ACP) in Kenya. He observed that some African towns have been recognized as either hard drug destinations or distribution hubs. It was well known that drug traffickers and moguls would target young people as a profitable market for their unethical trade. He added that drug and substance misuse could be one of the main factors in some situations of institutional indiscipline and criminal activity. Due to the fact that failure to handle this issue would destroy Kenyan young and, in turn, this nation's future, the fight against drugs and substance misuse was one that Kenya could not afford to lose (The East African Standards, January 19th, 2018).

Despite the ease with which narcotics and other substances of abuse are accessible, many young people would refrain from abusing if they were made aware of the consequences. According to Ambo et al. (2013), drug usage is primarily learned via classmates, friends, and close families and relatives. The group propagates misinformation about drugs by portraying

the behavior as a healthy, enjoyable, cool way of life and a sign of maturity. When someone with little knowledge of drugs is given this information, they are more likely to start taking drugs, abuse them in the future, and develop criminal tendencies. People consume illegal drugs because they are readily available and because those who stand to profit financially from their sale are promoting them, claim Merton and Nisbert (2020).

### Theoretical Literature Framework

#### Problem Behavior Theory

The problem behavior theory was created by Jessor and Jessor (1977, 1978), and it emphasizes the deviance-prone lifestyle that many adolescents and young adults (who make up the majority of those who use illicit drugs in or around the workplace) lead. Adolescents that lead deviance-prone lifestyles often engage in alcohol abuse, illegal drug use, early sexual activity, frequent sexual activity, academic issues, deviant views, and delinquent behavior. Several studies have tested this idea, and they have all discovered high correlations between these abnormal behaviors, hence validating the theory (Donovan and Jessor, 1985; Gillmore et al., 1991; Newcomb and Bentler, 1988).

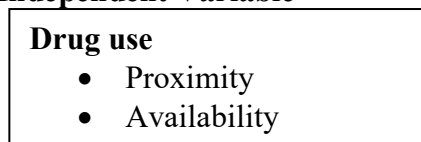
According to Newcomb (1988), drug and alcohol use at work is most closely linked to theft, physical violence, and drug dealing, followed by sexual activity and breaching the law. The use of alcohol at work, which is often viewed as less deviant than the use of other drugs, was not as closely linked to other types of deviance. Deviance variables explained 36% of the variation in the use of other hard drugs and 20% of the variation in workplace cocaine usage, but just 6% of the variation in self-reported workplace alcohol use.

The general pattern of behavior linked with deviance appears to include a number of the workplace correlates of alcohol and other drug use, such as work avoidance, benefit misuse, irresponsibility, and low workplace rule abidance. Even while it's possible that some of these behaviors were directly influenced by alcohol and other drug usage, many of them appear to be traits of general deviance rather than the results of a specific alcohol- or drug-induced impairment.

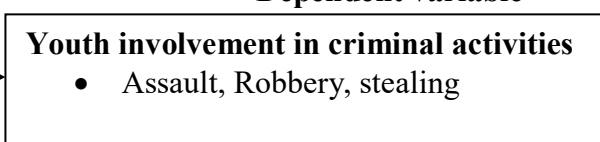
#### Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework, according to Orodho (2017), is a style of presentation where a researcher conceptualizes or depicts the connections between variables and illustrates those connections graphically or diagrammatically. The conceptual framework in this study is a hypothetical model that identifies the ideas or variables being studied and illustrates how they are related.

#### Independent Variable



#### Dependent variable



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Researcher (2024)

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design for the study was descriptive. Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) noted that descriptive design can be used to gather data about people's attitudes, opinions, or behaviors. She adds that researchers can gather, present, and interpret material using descriptive designs in order to provide clarification.

The study was conducted in Mombasa County's Mvita Constituency in Kibokoni-old Town. According to information from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2023, Mvita constituency in Mombasa County Kenya has a total population of 75, 988 people constituting 37165, males and 37,988 females. Local administration, including chiefs and sub chiefs, village elders, ward representatives, counselors, criminal justice system personnel, medical

professionals from the designated sites, and other stake holders, would form secondary target demographic. 3200 people will live in the Kibokoni area of Mombasa County as a whole.

The three subdivisions of Kibokoni that served as the project's initial study sites was chosen through the use of purposive sampling. This is a result of the locations' accessibility and closeness to the researcher. The sample for the study was collected using stratified sampling techniques. Following the application of stratified sampling, which divides the area into three sub-divisions, random selection of the selected categories was used.

A questionnaire was utilised to gather primary data.

With the use of statistical software, the data collected from the surveys was edited, coded, and entered into the computer. Given that the study is descriptive, analytical techniques that are descriptive in nature was needed, including percentages, means, variances, and standard deviation, as well as inferential statistical tools like correlation analysis. The results were displayed in tables to improve clarity.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Response Rate

With a total sample size of 320 individuals and 246 responses received, the response rate of the study was 76.875%. This indicates that nearly 77% of the individuals approached for participation in the study provided responses, suggesting a relatively high level of engagement and cooperation within the sample population.

### Influence of drug use on youth involvement in criminal activities

**Table 1: Influence of drug use on youth involvement in criminal activities**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev
In your area, how often do the youths engage in bhang use?	246	1.00	5.00	4.1341	1.48265
Have you ever been involved in criminal activities?	246	1.00	5.00	3.2195	1.72159
Rate the use of drugs of people you know	246	1.00	5.00	3.2276	1.72763
How often do you perceive the influence of drug use on your involvement in criminal activities?	246	1.00	5.00	3.6098	1.69337
Valid N (listwise)	246				

The study examined how drug use on youth influence their involvement in criminal activities. The study did a descriptive analysis and found out that with a mean of 4.1341 and a standard deviation of 1.48265 most of the respondent indicated that they often do engage in bhang use. While with a mean of 3.2195 and a standard deviation of 1.72159 the respondents indicated the rate of their involvement in criminal activities. On the other hand, with a mean of 3.2276 and a standard deviation of 1.72763 the respondents rated the use of drugs of people they know or are close to. The study analysis continued and found out that with a mean of 3.6098 and a standard deviation of 1.69337 the patricians stated how often they perceive the influence of drug use and involvement in criminal activities. Table 7 of the study explain more the findings of the study.

### Inferential analysis

#### Correlations

**Table 2: Correlations**

Involvement in criminal activities	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	246	
Drug use	Pearson Correlation	.732**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

The correlations analysis indicates a strong positive correlation between drug use and youth involvement in criminal activities ( $r = .732$ ,  $p < .001$ ), suggesting that individuals who engage in drug use are highly likely to be involved in criminal activities.

Previous research has established a clear link between drug use among young people and the accessibility of drugs, which often leads to increased involvement in criminal activities. Studies conducted by Yambo (2005) and Haji (2018) have emphasized that easy access to drugs significantly contributes to drug use and criminal behavior among students. This issue is particularly pronounced in Kenya, which serves as a transit country for international drug traffickers from Asia and Latin America, resulting in a widespread circulation of drugs within the nation (Daily Nation, May 8, 2015). The prevalence of drug trafficking is evident in various instances, such as the interception of traffickers at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, including cases involving airline personnel (Daily Nation, June 20, 2002).

*"Drug use among youth often starts as experimentation or peer influence. However, it can quickly escalate, leading to increased involvement in criminal activities as individuals seek to sustain their drug habits."*

*"The link between drug use and criminal behavior is complex and multifaceted. It's not just about the direct effects of drugs on behavior but also about the social and economic factors that drive individuals towards criminality."*

*"In our discussions with young people, many highlighted how easy access to drugs in their communities contributes to their involvement in criminal activities. They spoke about drug dealers targeting vulnerable youth and the pressure to join in to fit in with their peers."*

Furthermore, the remarks made by the then-Minister of Education, Honorable George Saitoti, during the African Convention of Principals in Kenya in 2018 underscored the role of drug misuse in institutional indiscipline and criminal activity among youth (The East African Standards, January 19, 2018). Saitoti emphasized that drug traffickers often target young people as a lucrative market for their illicit trade, posing a significant threat to the nation's youth and future. Despite the accessibility of narcotics, many young people would abstain from drug abuse if they were properly educated about its consequences (Ambo et al., 2013). However, misinformation about drugs perpetuated by peers and family members can lead to the initiation and sustained abuse of drugs, ultimately contributing to criminal tendencies (Ambo et al., 2013).

*"One recurring theme in our interviews was the role of trauma and adverse childhood experiences in driving substance abuse and criminal behavior. Many young people spoke about using drugs as a way to cope with past traumas or to escape from difficult circumstances."*

*"Interestingly, some participants mentioned the lack of alternative opportunities and resources in their communities as a contributing factor to their involvement in drug use and subsequent criminal activities. They expressed a desire for more support and opportunities for positive engagement."*

Moreover, Merton and Nisbert (2020) assert that people are drawn to illegal drugs due to their ready availability and the financial incentives provided by those who profit from their sale. This aligns with the findings of the descriptive analysis presented in Table 7, which illustrates the influence of drug use on youth involvement in criminal activities. The results of the study indicate that drug use, particularly the frequent engagement in bhang use among respondents, is associated with increased involvement in criminal activities. These insights shed light on the complex interplay between drug use, accessibility, peer influence, and



criminal behavior among young people, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address substance abuse and its associated consequences.

## **CONCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **ConcuSSIONS**

In conclusion, the influence of drug use on youth involvement in criminal activities is a pressing concern that requires urgent attention. The research highlights a clear connection between easy access to drugs and increased criminal behavior among young people, where drug trafficking is rampant. This issue not only stems from the direct effects of substance use but is also deeply intertwined with social and economic factors that push youth toward criminality. To address this crisis effectively, it is crucial to implement comprehensive strategies that target both prevention and intervention.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends for development and implementation of community-based educational initiatives that inform young people about the dangers of drug use and its consequences on health and behavior. Tailored programs that engage youth in discussions about peer pressure and misinformation can help dismantle myths surrounding drug use.

There is need to enhance law enforcement efforts to disrupt drug trafficking networks targeting young people. This includes increased surveillance in areas known for drug distribution and collaborating with local communities to report suspicious activities.

The government should create a robust support systems for at-risk youth, including counseling services and mentorship programs that provide positive alternatives to drug use and criminal behavior. Engaging young people in constructive activities can mitigate their vulnerability to drug dealers.

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