

## **Illegal Drug Problem in the City of Ormoc As Perceived By User and Non-User Respondents**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study was conducted primarily to: describe the socio-demographic characteristics of user and non-user respondents; determine the reasons for engaging in illegal drugs among user respondents; document local and national ordinances enacted against illegal drug users; and identify the programs implemented by government and non-government organizations to make the City of Ormoc a drug-free community.*

*The results of the study revealed that the mean age of the illegal drug users was 22 years old. Majority of them were males whose income fell below P10,000.00 in the form of allowance. They were aware of the illegality of the drugs used. Marijuana was the dominant drug abused. Influence of Peers and Curiosity were the topmost reasons why they got into drugs due to misinformation and assurance from friends who claim to have enjoyed the experience as perceived by the respondents.*

*Among the National and Local Ordinances enacted against illegal drugs users in the City of Ormoc were: the implementation of RA 9165 – Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002; LOI 36/97: ALPHA BANAT (Barangay Against Narcotics Abusers and Traffickers) and Information dissemination of the ill effects of drugs through the Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Counsel (BADAC).*

**Keywords:** *Drug Problem, Perceived, Non- user respondents, User respondents*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The illegal drug trade or drug trafficking is a global market. While some drugs are legal to possess and sell, in most jurisdictions laws prohibit the trades of certain types of drugs. Illegal drug trade operates similarly to other underground markets. It ranges from low-level street dealers who may be individual drug user themselves, through street gangs and contractor like middlemen up to multinational empires that rival government in size.

People use drugs because they like what drugs do to their brains. All drugs abused from alcohol to nicotine cause a series of temporary changes in the brain that produce the “high”. One of these changes in site rises in available levels of certain neurotransmitters associated with feeling of pleasure.

Studies reveal an increasingly complex and sophisticated market where the drug taken depends on situation, price, individual preferences and social context. The line between “soft/recreational” drugs and the “harder”, more addictive drugs is becoming blurred. The old social paradigms of drug use being associated with male working class, poor and socially deprived areas have been broken down. Girls are now almost as likely as boys to experience drugs and rural towns can be as affected as the inner cities, the sheer with its affordability, the integration of drugs into the whole area of youth culture, the youth’s susceptibility and the social context of drug-taking including the influence of peers and family of individual decision.

People from all walks of life could have tried drugs and give misleading and alarmist impression of both the scale of everyday drug-taking and its effects on family relationships.

#### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

This study aims to establish the profile of illegal drug users and pushers and determine the extent of drug proliferation in Ormoc City. Specifically, it tries to answer the following questions:

**1.1.1** What are the socio-demographic characteristics of user and non-user respondents?

**1.1.2** What local and national ordinances are enacted against illegal drug users?

**1.1.3** What programs are instituted by various government and non-government organizations to curb the proliferation of illegal drugs?

#### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

**This study aims:**

**1.2.1** To describe the socio-demographic characteristics of user and non-user respondents;

**1.2.2** To determine the reasons for engaging in illegal drugs among user respondents;

**1.2.3** To document local and national ordinances enacted against illegal drug users; and

**1.2.4** To identify the programs implemented by government and non-government organizations to make the City of Ormoc a drug-free community.

### **1.3 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study was conducted in Ormoc City. Sixty respondents comprised the non-user category. Sampling was done from the religious group, the academe and the government unit to comprise twenty respondents from each group who are not engaged in using illegal drugs. Likewise, sixty user-respondents will also be included using the purposive sampling.

The religious group was represented by the parish personnel of Sts. Peter and Paul some lay ministers, catechists and presidents of various religious organization. The government unit was represented by the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* and heads of various agencies and the Philippine National Police.

Respondents from the educators group included sample of teachers from New Ormoc City High School and Western Leyte College.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Locale of the Study**

The study was conducted in Ormoc City in January 2010. Figure 3 presents the map of Ormoc City showing the locale of the study.

### **2.2 Instrumentation**

A survey method utilizing a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire is divided into two: Part I – socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the respondents; Part II –users of illegal drugs and reasons for their use; Part III – National and Local ordinances enacted in relation to drug trafficking; and Part IV - Recommendations to make the City of Ormoc a drug-free community.

### **2.3 Respondents and Sampling Procedure**

The primary data needed in this study were collected with the use of a questionnaire which was distributed and personally collected by the researcher to avoid delay and optimize the use of other resources as time availability. The respondents were purposively selected to represent three sectors of the society: the local government unit, the academe and the religious sector from which fifty respondents were taken to represent each sector with a total of 150 respondents. Drawing of these respondents was done through simple random sampling. Likewise, a purposive sample of 30 users and pushers was included for better comparison of results.

## **III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There were a total of one hundred twenty (120) respondents included in the study. The distribution of the respondents is presented in Table 1. The respondents were taken through simple random sampling from the three groups of non-user respondents: the local government unit, the academe and the religious sector with a total of sixty respondents were taken or twenty sampled respondents from each group. Sixty were taken from 60 user respondents.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the respondents of the study

Variable	Number	Percent
Non-user respondents		
Local Government Unit	20	16.67
Academe	20	16.67
Religious Sector	20	16.67
User respondents	60	50.00
Total	120	100.00

### 3.1 Respondents' Age, Sex, Religion and Civil Status

#### *Non-User Respondents*

The characteristics of the non-user respondents are presented in Table 2. The respondents' ages ranged from 25 years old to 57 years old in the LGU; 28 years old to 55 years old in the academe group while 29 years old to 73 years old in the religious group.

With regards to sex, a great majority (80%) of the respondents in the LGU group were males while more than half (60%) of the respondents in the academe group were females and majority (75%) of the religious group were males. Majority (90%) of the respondents in the LGU were Roman Catholic and similarly with the respondents from the academe. All (100%) of the respondents in the religious group were Roman Catholic. Majority (75%) of the respondents in the LGU were married. More than half (65%) of the respondents from the academe were married and in the religious group a little more than half (55%) were also married.

#### *User respondents*

While the user respondents' ages ranged from 16 years to 38 years old. The findings shows that more than half (55.00%) of the respondents were on their teens. The respondents were male dominated (70%) with females constituting only 18 (30%). Majority (85%) of the respondents were Roman Catholics and a great majority (91.67%) of them were single. The finding implies that the users were young.

**Table 2.** Respondents' Age, Sex, Religion and Civil Status

Characteristics	Non-User						Characteristics	User	
	LGU		Academe		Religious Sector			No.	%age
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age			
Age (years)	4	20.00	2	0.00	3	5.00	Age (years)	33	55.00
	5	25.00	3	15.00	1	15.00		19	31.67
30 and below	1	5.00	3	15.00	3	10.00	20 & below	3	5.00
31-35	3	15.00	3	25.00	2	10.00	21-25	4	6.67
36-40	1	5.00	5	20.00	2	35.00	26-30	1	1.67
41-45	6	30.00	4		7		31-35		
46-50				100.0		100.0	36 & above	60	100.00
50 and above	20	100.00	20	0	20	0			
Sex	16	80.00	8	40.00	5	25.00	Sex	42	70.00
	4	20.00	12	60.00	15	75.00		18	30.00
Male				100.0		100.0	Male		
Female	20	100.00	20	0	20	0	Female	60	100.00
Religion	18	90.00	19	95.00	20	00.00	Religion	51	85.00
Roman Catholic	-	-	1	5.00				4	6.67
Protestant	1	5.00					Roman Catholic	2	3.33
Seventh Day Adventist	1	5.00					Protestant	3	5.00
Iglesia ni Cristo				100.0		100.0	Iglesia ni Cristo		
	20	100.00	20	0	20	0	Others	60	100.00

### 3.2 Respondents' Educational Attainment, Occupation, Source of Income and Estimated Monthly Income

#### *Non User Respondents*

Table 3 presents the educational attainment of the respondents. All of the respondents in the academe group were BS degree holders with 2 (10%) who had post graduate education. In LGU group had 19 (95%) were BS degree holders with 1(5%) who had post graduate education. On the other hand, half (50%) of the respondents in the religious group had high school education while 15% had elementary education.

Majority (85.00%) in the academe were teachers and 2 (10.00%) was a guidance counselor. Eight (40.00%) of the respondents from LGU were policemen. In the religious group, six (30%) were housewife and 5 (25%) were farmers. All respondents (100%) in the academe and LGU had their source of income mainly from employment. In the academe their income ranged from P15,001-20,000.00. Furthermore, majority (80.00%) in the religious group got their income from farming ranging from P10,000.00 and below.

**User Respondents**

More than half (58.33%) of the educational attainment of the user respondents were college level followed by 19 (31/67%) who were in their high school years. More than half (68.33%) of the user respondents' source of income came mainly from their allowance while more than one-fourth (31.67%) got their income from their salary which ranged from P10,000.00 and below.

**Table 3.** Respondents' educational attainment, occupation and sources of income, estimated monthly income

Characteristics	Non-User						User	
	LGU		Academe		Religious Sector		Number	%age
	Number	%age	Number	%age	Number	%age		
Educational attainment								
6 yrs. & below (elem.)					3	15.00	3	5.00
7 – 10 (high school)					5	5.00	19	31.67
11-14 (college)	19	5.00	18	90.00	10	20.00	35	58.33
15 years & above (post graduate)	1	5.00	2	10.00	2	10.00	3	5.00
Total	20	100.00	20	100.00	20	100.00	60	100.00
Occupation								
Brgy. Chairman								
Brgy. Secretary	4	20.00						
Policeman	2	10.00						
Lawyer	8	40.00						
Others	1	5.00						
Teacher/Instructor	5	25.00						
Guidance Counselor			17	85.00				
Librarian			2	10.00				
Missionary			1	5.00				
Businessman					3	15.00		
Farmer					2	10.00		
Housewife					5	25.00		
Student					6	30.00		
Teacher					2	10.00		
Call Center Agent					2	10.00	4	
Café Attendant							3	6.67
Student							41	5.00
Teacher							2	68.33
Technician							3	3.33
Others							7	5.00
Total	20	100.00	20	100.00	20	100.00	20	100.00
Sources of Income*								
Business					10			
Salary			20		2	50.00	19	31.67
Allowance	20	100.00	20	100.00	8	10.00	41	68.33
Others	20	100.00		100.00	20	40.00	60	100.00
Estimated Monthly Income								
Estimated Monthly Income								
P10,000 and below	9	45.00						
P10,001-15,000	2	10.00						
P15,001-20,000	8	40.00	18	90.00	16	80.00	54	90.00
P20,001 and above	1	5.00	2	10.00	4	20.00	2	3.33
Total	20	100.00	20	100.00	20	100.00	4	6.67

**3.3 Membership and Position in an Organization, Involvement in Community Activity and Sponsoring Agency**

*Non-user respondents*

Of the non-users, respondents from LGU were involved in civic activity; in the academe with professional organizations; and in the religious sector in various religious activities. Those were involved took part as members of various community organizations, worked as *bantay-bayan*, and took part in livelihood projects. Two parents were involved as community officials.

**User respondents**

In the user respondents, nineteen were not involved in any community activity. While seventeen were members of Greek Letter Organization. Reasons cited, according to rank, include lack of time, no awareness and disinterest.

**Table 4.** Membership and position in an organization, involvement in community activity and its sponsoring agency.

Characteristics	Non-User						User	
	LGU		Academe		Religious Sector		Number	Rank
	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank		
Membership in Organization*								
Civic	12	1	7	2	2	3	7	3
Greek Letter Org.	2	6	3	4			17	2
Professional	3	3	20	1	2	3	2	5
Religious (CFC, BCBP, FLA, CWL)	2	6	5	3	20	1	2	5
Social	3	3	2	5	2	3	2	5
Sports/Health	3	3			1	4	1	6
None	2	6	1	6			19	1
Total								

\* multiple response

**3.4 Reasons for Using Illegal Drugs**

**Non-User Respondents**

Table 5 shows the reasons for using illegal drugs. They got into drug use because of the influence of peers/group or *barkada* (ranked 1) and lack of parental guidance and concern (rank 2); for curiosity (ranked 3 & 3.5) in the academe and LGU respondents. In the religious group lack of parental guidance and concern and because of the influence of peers/group or *barkada* (ranked 1.5), for curiosity (ranked 2), to forget one’s problems (ranked 3). One’s peers or *barkadas* can greatly influence oneself. Furthermore, the absence of a nurturing family drives them to find solace in these illegal drugs.

**User Respondents**

Users got into drugs out of curiosity (ranked 1); because of the influence of peers/group or *barkada* (ranked 2); enjoyment/pleasure (ranked 3); to forget one’s problem (ranked 4) and lack of parental guidance and concern (ranked 5). The findings imply that people use drugs because they want to know how these substances make them feel. In addition pleasure is a powerful force and something that can give one person pleasure and satisfaction and he will do it again.

**Table 5.** Reasons for using illegal drugs.

Characteristics	Non-User						User	
	LGU		Academe		Religious Sector		Number	Rank
	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank		
Reasons for using illegal drugs	11	3						
	3	7.5						
For curiosity	10	4	13					
Because of extra money	12	2	5	3.5	9	2	54	1
Enjoyment/pleasure			13	7	4	5	13	8
Lack of parental guidance and concern	5	6	14	3.5	3	6	40	3
As a revolt against parents	17	1	8	2	16	1.5	26	5
Because of the influence of peers/group or <i>barkada</i>	8	5	16	6	5	4	15	7
Forget one’s problem	3	7.5	11	1	16	1.5	48	2
To become more aggressive/active			2	5	7	3	34	4
To remove one’s inhibition				8	-		18	6
							9	9

### 3.5 Number of years in using drugs

It can be gleaned from Table 6 that 25 (41.67%) were using illegal drugs for more than a year while 22 (37.67%) were using it in less than a year. The finding implies that the respondents were continuously using the illegal drugs.

**Table 6.** Number of years in using drugs.

No. of years in using illegal drugs	Number	% age
1 year and below	22	36.67
More than 1 year – 5 years	25	41.67
More than 5 years – 10 years	10	16.67
More than 10 years	3	5.00
	60	100.00

### 3.6 Sources of Illegal Drugs

Table 7 shows that more than one-half (63.33%) of the respondents got the illegal drugs from their friends. The finding implies that a friend will no longer hesitate and even not afraid to provide or offer the illegal drugs believing that he will not be turned over to authorities by his friend.

**Table 7.** Sources of illegal drugs.

Source/Provider of Illegal Drugs	Number	% age
Friends	38	63.33
Classmates	5	8.33
Fraternity mates	5	8.33
Neighbor	4	6.67
Pusher	3	5.00
Boyfriend	2	2.33
Stranger	3	5.00
	60	100.00

### 3.7 Drugs Taken

In Table 8, the users enumerated the types of drugs they have tried and used: marijuana (ranked 1), *shabu* (ranked 2), rugby (ranked 3) and cocaine (ranked 4). The finding implies that respondents use different kinds of drugs depending on their mood, drugs availability and what they can afford.

Table 8. Drugs taken bey user respondents.

Drugs Taken	Number	Rank
Marijuana	44	1
Shabu	38	2
Rugby	11	3
Cocaine	9	4
Weed	5	5
Samardine	2	6.5
Metampethamine	2	6.5

### 3.8 Awareness of the Illegality of the Drugs Used

Table 4 presents awareness of the respondents in the illegality of the drugs taken. All (100%) of the user respondents were aware that the drugs they used were illegal. The finding implies that even if they knew it is illegal still they continue using it.

### 3.9 Reasons for taking illegal drugs

Table 9 shows the ranking of the reasons in getting into drugs as perceived by non-user respondents. Influenced of peer group or *barkada* ranked first in the three sectors of respondents. For curiosity and for enjoyment/pleasure ranked second in the LGU and academe, respectively and it ranked 3.5 in the religious sector. Furthermore, to forget one's problem ranked 2 in the religious sector while it ranked 3 in the academe. Lack of parental guidance/concern ranked 3.5 in the religious sector. The finding implies that the users were initiated or recruited by people close to them like peers, friends and neighbors who were engaged in drug use, sales and trafficking.

On the other hand, users of illegal drugs themselves ranked the following reasons why they used it: for curiosity (rank 1); influenced by peers/barkadas (rank 2); and for enjoyment or pleasure (rank 3).

Table 9. Reasons of people using illegal drugs as perceived by the respondents

Characteristics	Non-User						User	
	LGU		Academe		Religious Sector		Number	Rank
	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank		
For curiosity	11	2	9	3.5	15	3.5	54	1
Because of extra money	2	9.5	3	6.5	6	8.5	13	8
Enjoyment/pleasure	7	5.5	10	2	10	5	40	3
Lack of parental guidance/concern	7	5.5	9	3.5	15	3.5	26	5
As a revolt against one's parents	3	7.5	4	5	11	5	15	7
To become more active	3	7.5	2	9	4	11	23	6
Because of the influence of peer group or barkada	17	1	16	1	20	1	48	2
To become more aggressive	4	6	2	9	6	8.5		
To remove one's inhibition			2	9	5	10	9	9
To forget one's problem	9	3	8	4	16	2	34	4
To provide solution to one's problem	2	9.5	3	6.5	8	7	5	10
To be "in" with friends								

### 3.10 Characteristics of illegal drug users as perceived by non-user respondents

Table 10 shows the characteristics of drug users as perceived by non-user respondents. Among the characteristics were: thin, sick & ugly looking ranked 1 in the respondents from the academe group while it ranked 1.5 and ranked 2 in the respondents from LGU and religious sector, respectively. Red, tired and ugly eyes ranked 1 the LGU and religious sector and it ranked 2 in the academe.

Table 10. Characteristics of drug users as perceived by non-user respondents

Characteristics	Non-User					
	LGU		Academe		Religious Sector	
	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
<b>Physical appearance</b>						
1. Thin, sick & ugly looking						
2. Dry skin						
3. Untidy/Dirty look	16	2	17	1	18	2
4. Exhausted look	11	7	12		11	4
5. Skinny body	8	8	14	5	10	
6. No proper hygiene	5	14.5	10		8	
7. No proper posture	4	16	9		7	
	7	9	14		5	
<b>Facial expression</b>						
1. Red, tired eyes and ugly						

eyes	17	1	16	2	19	1
2. With dark circles around the eyes	12	6	15	3.5	16	3
3. Haggard look	14	5	15	3.5	5	
4. Look sleepless	15	4	10		11	4.5
<b>Others</b>						
1. Irritable	6	11	8		5	
2. Erratic behavior	6	11	11		-	
3. Restless	7	9	9		7	
4. Aggressive	5	14.5	12		11	4.5
5. Clenching teeth	4	16	3		2	
6. Smelly	6	11	4		8	
7. Disoriented and lack focus	4	16	8		2	

### 3.11 National and Local Ordinances Enacted Against Illegal Drug Users

Among the National and Local Ordinances enacted against illegal drugs users are as follows:

1. RA 9165 – Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002
2. LOI 36/97: ALPHA BANAT (Barangay Against Narcotics Abusers and Traffickers)

### 3.12 Recommendations to Make the City of Ormoc A Drug-Free Community *Non-user Respondents*

Among the recommendations made by the non-user respondents to attain a drug free community were the following: strict implementation of laws and ordinance related to drug and trafficking and drug abuse (ranked 1); always put the drug problem in the city a priority in the government and take it seriously (ranked 2); no bail for dealers and suppliers (ranked 3); jail both the pushers and the users (ranked 4) and parents must follow-up their children and must inculcate the good values in life. The finding implies that there no strict implementation on the existing laws and ordinances in the city thus, the recommendation.

Table 11. Recommendations to attain a drug-free community

Recommendations	Number*	Rank
Strict implementation of laws and ordinance related to drug and trafficking and drug abuse.	37	1
Always put the drug problem in the city a priority in the government and take it seriously.	33	2
No bail for dealers and suppliers.	30	3
Jail both the pushers and the users	29	4
Parents must follow-up their children and must inculcate the good values in life.	28	5
Raid suspected users	25	6
Close supervision of parents on their children who are potential drug users.	24	7
Community-based activities such as sports	22	8
Family members must spend quality time together	18	9.5
The school administration must conduct symposium on drug awareness most often.	18	9.5
Involvement in any religious activity and drug education to the youth	17	11
Litigate those who violated RA 9165.	15	12.5
Information drive/campaign on the ill-effects of the illegal drugs in every barangay.	15	12.5
Policemen must be vigilant and exert more effort to druglords, pushers and users and put them to prison.	14	13
Counseling for drug victims.	11	14
Impose curfew hours from 10:00 pm to 2:00 am for ages below 18 years old	3	15

\* multiple response

**User respondents**

The user respondents made the following recommendations: provide recreational activities (ranked 1); local government must support and strengthen sports and other worthwhile programs for the youth (ranked 2); implement the law religiously and arrest the pushers (ranked 3.5); police visibility & arrest the pushers (ranked 4.5) and police officials must be sincere in fighting against illegal drugs and parents must have close supervision towards their children (ranked 5.5). The finding implies that the respondents lack sports and games activities during their free time thus engaged themselves in illegal drugs.

**Table 12.** User respondents' recommendations to attain a drug-free community

Recommendations	Number*	Rank
Provide recreational activities/sports activities	33	1
Local government must support and strengthen sports and other worthwhile programs for the youth	28	2
Implement the law religiously	22	3
Police visibility	19	4.5
Arrest the pushers	19	4.5
Police officials must be sincere in fighting against illegal drugs	17	5.5
Parents must have close supervision towards their children	17	5.5
Information drive about the effects of illegal drugs	7	7
Curfew hours shall be implemented	5	8
Raid drug syndicate and put them to jail	3	9
Stop the source to stop the users	2	10

\* multiple response

**IV. CONCLUSION**

In the light of the findings of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn. The respondents regardless of age, income and group are aware of the existence of the anti-drug programs in the community but which are not implemented to some extent. However, the respondents' involvement in the anti-drug campaigns has led some youth to keep busy by joining in barangay programs like sports and religious activities, attending Kasaulugan Sa Pulong (KSP) and doing livelihood projects.

**V. RECOMMENDATION**

**Based on the conclusions, the following are recommended:**

1. Parents need to look after the welfare of their children whose future and development are in their hands. There should be an open communication among family members to establish a harmonious familial atmosphere. It is always important for an individual to know that his family is always there for him since it is in the home where one builds his character and his self-esteem.
2. Laws against drug abuse and illicit trafficking should be enforced forcefully and continuously by law enforcement personnel irrespective of status and influence of people involved in drugs in the community.
3. There should be a provision of more productive activities especially among the male adolescents like being in livelihood projects and sports rather than in drugs.
4. An intensification of drug education and information campaign against the evil effects and consequences of drugs should be led by school teachers and administrators who are equipped with the necessary training and knowledge on drug education.
5. The drug menace is more than a health problem. It is like a cancerous disease destroying the very vitals of society. Illegal drugs are not just illegal; they are immoral, hence, the need to straighten people's moral and religious values. The key is the cooperation of the whole community and its concerned agencies. Make the families drug-free, the workplace drug-free so the populace has an improved society.
6. Implement the Proposed Program for a visible and participative anti-drug campaign.

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