

**Substance use patterns among athletes in Dar es salaam region.**

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Despite the fact that substance use is among our nation's most pressing social problems that is gaining pace, nothing is evident about substance use practices in athlete population. Substance use pattern among athletes were examined; the focus was on the types, sources and athletes' awareness on substances' effects. The study took place in Dar es Salaam region and athletes from Soccer, Basketball, Handball, Netball and Athletics [races] were involved. It involved a sample of 156 respondents from eight sport clubs, four educational institutions, as well as four sport administrators. A survey design with a stratified cluster sampling technique was used. Questionnaires, interview guide and observational schedule were used for data collection. Pearson's Chi square at 0.05 p values was the main statistical technique for data analysis. It was found that most athletes were polydrug users with depressants [alcohol and marijuana] being prevalent. There was no significant difference in substance use across sex, age groups, athlete clusters and playing levels. It was concluded that substance use by most of the athletes was not attributable to athletic performance, though the use occurred in sport settings. It was also concluded that athletes were fully informed about the side effects of using substances, however recreation and stress coping encouraged them to use substances. It was recommended that the government should assist sports organizations to enforce Laws and Regulations concerning substance use [doping] so as to have substance free sports. Athletes and other society members should be educated on the effects of using substance, hence acquire skills on abstinence from the use of substances.