Euro Afro Studies International Journal® (EASIJ.COM)

Predictors of Substance Abuse Among Adolescents in Selected Secondary Schools in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

Substance abuse is a global health phenomenon that varies with each locality. The use of substances such as tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs among adolescents and young adults has created behavioural and health issues, and have become a subject of public concern worldwide, partly because of its potential to contribute to unintentional and intentional injury. Most researchers have worked in this area but the rates of drug abuse are still on the rise. Therefore, this study evaluated predictors of substance abuse among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State, Nigeria. A quantitative descriptive survey research design was adopted with a sample size 400 students drawn from the four selected secondary schools. Multistage sampling technique was employed to select the schools. A validated questionnaire was used with Cronbach's alpha internal consistency, which ranges from 0.816 to 0.875. Data collected were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 23 to generate summaries of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. From the twenty-three (23) independent variables, only four (4) shows that there was significant relationship which are teachers abusing drugs, media and publicity, older sibling influence and parent abusing drugs at p<.001. The report pointed out that most students of the schools had

adequate knowledge of what drug abuse was with a fairly good attitude and yet for one reason or the other, they still engage in the act. It was recommended among others that parents and teachers should be firm and be willing to discourage their children from taking alcohol and other related drugs.

Keywords: Adolescent, Substance Abuse, Predictors, Schools,

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Introduction

Substance abuse is a worldwide health and social problem with different conditions and problems that change with each locality. The use of substances such as tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol among adolescents and young adults has caused behavioural and health issues, and have become a source of global public concern, partly because of its potential to add to unintentional and intentional injury (Shek et al., 2020). According to the World Health Organization, WHO (2019), Substance abuse can be defined as the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol or illicit drugs. It is now a main public health problem all over the world. Worldwide, the hazardous use of alcohol alone has been estimated to cause 3.3 million deaths yearly and at least 15.3 million people have been reported to be suffering from drug use disorder (WHO 2014). The prevalence of substance abuse among youths is increasing. The challenge not only hurts individuals but also negatively affects families and society.

Substance abuse among Nigerian youths has been a menace to overall sustainable development of the nation. Substance abuse is a serious concern, a worldwide and international issue particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. It is seen as escalated factor for economic crises; hence for Nigeria poor economic status, while the youth are supposed to be a major agent of growth and development, some of them have been rendered unproductive by drug abuse. The overall health of the drug user is influenced negatively and behaviours' related with drug abuse make the abuser to commit crime and contagious diseases e.g HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Okafor, 2020). Drug addiction have a global phenomenon that cuts across ethnic boundaries, culture and religion despite the efforts at various Nigerian tiers of government and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to stem its rage in the country, there have been a consistent increase in the number of cases especially among the young adolescents (10-24 years). This increase has led to an increase in cases of cultism, violent disorders as well as mental disorders among Nigerian youths.

An estimate of 2.6 million young people aged 10 to 24 die yearly in the world. These deaths are mostly as a result of preventable causes such as substance abuse. In fact, not less than 18% of boys and 14% of adolescent girls aged 13–15 years in low- and middle-income countries are reported to have been taking alcoholic drinks. (WHO, 2012). This challenge is even more evident in some countries in the Western Pacific region of the world as more than 50% of girls aged 10-19 and more than 80% of boys aged 10-19 had ever consumed alcohol (WHO, 2012). This hazardous situation is also common in Nigeria as previous studies had reported high burden of substance abuse among learners. For instance, Ogunsola and Fatusi submitted that about two-thirds of in-school adolescents in Osun State Nigeria had taken substances in both rural (65.7%) and urban areas (66.0%) respectively (Ogunsola & Fatusi, 2016).

In Ogun State, it has been observed that adolescents both in the private and public schools are common with the habit of substance abuse with mild stimulants like (kolanut and coffee), drinks, marijuana, alcoholic, codeine being the major substances abused in the state (Olawole et.al., 2018). Majority of them are well aware of the illegal substances and its adverse effects on their health but are still indulged in the abuse of these substances as

mentioned by Olawole et al. (2018) which in the long run will not only affect their health but result to negative impact to the family, community and national development.

Many factors have been attributed as predictors of substance use/abuse among adolescents all over the world. Some of these factors include age, family set up, environmental factors, availability of the substance, psychological and biological factors peer pressure or influence, gender, societal norms and values. Soremekun, et al., (2020), in Lagos State, identified gender, type of school management, economic distribution, educational level, as predictors of substance abuse. Olumide, et al., (2014), reported the choice of predictors of substance abuse were guided by findings from previous literature which revealed that adolescent related predictors were age and gender, dichotomized as younger (15-16 years) and older (17-19) groups (representing middle and late adolescent stages respectively). The mean age at initial use of alcohol as 14.2 + or minus 3.1years and that the mean age of cigarette for the first times user as 14.4 + or minus 2.8 years. He also added that family background play a vital role in predicting substance use and abuse.

Anyanwu, et al., (2016) submitted a prevalence of substance abuse among adolescent secondary school students in Abakaliki. It was reported that alcohol (32.9%) was the most commonly abused substance. Lee, et al., (2017) reported prevalence of self-medication in the past year among adolescents which revealed that the most repeatedly reported drugs for self-medication included pain relievers, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (prevalence 31.1%), analgesics (prevalence 19.3%) cold or cough medicine (prevalence 21.6%), and antacid (prevalence 17.3%). They also concluded that the respondents who practiced self-medication, the prevalence of inappropriate self-medication behaviours included using excessive dosage of medication (prevalence 21.6%), not reading drug labels, or instruction (prevalence 10.1%), using excessive dosage of medication (prevalence 21.6%) and using prescription and non-prescription medicine simultaneously without advice from a healthcare provider (prevalence 30.3%). They concluded that lower medication literacy and substance use were related with inappropriate self-medication among adolescence.

It is possible that students who abuse drugs while in school play a key role in influencing acts of indiscipline as they are under the influence of drugs. Research to date has tried to depict who is likely to engage in these behaviours and whether they have negative consequences. For the most part, the consequences examined are typically short-term such as high school graduation, college enrolment, and teenage pregnancy. There are many studies on drug abuse in several states in Nigeria but hardly do we have studies that cover Abeokuta, Ogun State. This study therefore, assessed the predictors of substance use among adolescents in selected secondary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government Area in Ogun State. This study specifically examined:

1. the attitudes of adolescents to substance abuse;
2. the knowledge of adolescents towards substance use; and
3. environmental factors that predispose adolescence to substance abuse;

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for this study:

1. What are the attitudes of adolescents to substance abuse?
2. What is the knowledge of adolescents towards substance use?

3. What are environmental factors that predispose adolescence to substance abuse?

Research Hypothesis

This hypothesis was postulated for this study:

1. There is no relationship between age, gender, family setting, peer pressure and environmental influence to substance abuse in selected secondary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government of Ogun State

Methodology

A quantitative descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The population for the study was male and female adolescent students in selected secondary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government Area of Ogun State. The sample size for this study was determined by using Conchran's formula from population of 6295 adolescents in the four selected schools. A total of 400 adolescents were used for the study. Multi stage sampling technique was adopted. A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect information from the students of the schools based on the objectives of the study and relevant literatures. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that the participants responded by choosing options provided by each question. The validity of the instrument was ascertained and was given to research experts. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained in order to check the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability of predictor of substance abuse yielded 0.754, 0.674 and 0.875 for each of the sections in the instrument.

Data collection refers to gathering information from the respondents. The researcher requested for authority from the school management, the State Ministry of Education and the Babcock research committee. Confidentiality was assured among the students,' teachers and the principals. The data collected was analysed using simple statistics. The questionnaire was checked for completeness accuracy of information and uniformity. The questionnaire was checked to see if there is any error and omission, adequate information legibility and relevant responses. The research questions and hypothesis were analysed with statistical package for social sciences software programme SPSS using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics of multiple regression.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of adolescents to substance abuse?

Table 1:   Attitude of the respondents to substance abuse

Strongly Agree SA, Agree A, Strongly Disagree SD, Disagree D, Not Sure NS   **N = 400**

Variables	SA/A	%	SD/D	%	NS	%
If I use alcohol or drugs, I will have more health problem than other people	258	64.3	140	35	2	0.5
If I do not use alcohol or drugs, I will be happier	323	80.8	140	17.5	7	1.75

Smoking Cigarette fits the kinds of life I want to leave	44	11	350	87.5	5	1.25
Getting drunk every now and then fits with the kind of life I want to leave	54	13.5	300	75	46	11.5
Your closest friends feel that people who use drugs are better off	73	18.3	300	75	27	6.8

Table 1 show the attitudes of adolescent to substance abuse. *If I use alcohol or drugs, I will have more health problem than other people* and *If I do not use alcohol or drugs, I will be happier,* these questions were answered by the majority of the respondents with 258(64.3%), 323(80.8%) respectively. However, majority of the respondents strongly disagree to the reality of these statements; *Smoking Cigarette fits the kinds of life I want to leave, Getting drunk every now and then fits with the kind of life I want to leave and Your closest friends feels that people who use drugs are better off* with 350(87.5%), 300(75) and 300(75) respectively.

Research Question 3: What is the knowledge of adolescents towards substance use?

Table 2: Knowledge of adolescents towards substance use		N = 400		
Variables	**Yes**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Have you used drugs other than those required for medical reasons?		312	78	88	22
Have you abused prescription drugs?		252	63	148	37
Do you abuse more than one drug at a time?		307	76.8	93	23.2
Can you get through the week without using drugs?		208	52	192	48
Are you always able to stop using drugs when you want to?		40	10	360	90
Have you had "blackouts" or "flashbacks" as a result of drug use?		307	76.8	93	23.2

Do you ever feel bad or guilty about your drug use? 65.2	139	34.8	261
Have you lost friends because of your use of drugs? 14	344	86	56
Have you gotten into fights when under the influence of drugs?	33	8.3	367 91.7
Have you been arrested for possession of illegal drugs?	33	8.3	367 91.7
These drugs can be abuse by students: Cocaine, Marijuana, 1.3 Alcohol, Heroin, Cigarette and Tramadol?	395	98.7	5

Table 2 show that majority of the respondents have adequate knowledge of drug and they have abused it in one way or another. This was evidenced with questions such as; *Have you used drugs other than those required for medical reasons?, Have you abused prescription drugs?, Do you abuse more than one drug at a time?, Are you always able to stop using drugs when you want to, Have you had "blackouts" or "flashbacks" as a result of drug use, Do you ever feel bad or guilty about your drug use? These drugs can be abuse by students: Cocaine, Marijuana, Alcohol, Heroin, Cigarette and Tramadol?,* with 312(78), 252(63), 307(76.7), 360(90), 307(76.8), 261(65.3) and 395(98.8) respectively.

Research Question 3: What are environmental factors that predispose adolescence to substance abuse?

Table 3: Environmental factors that predispose adolescence to substance abuse N = 400

Variables	SA/A	%	SD/D	%	UD	%
Parents abusing drugs	244	61	140	35	2	0.5
Older Siblings influence	140	17.5	323	80.8	7	1.75
Mistreatment	200	50	150	37.5	5	1.35
Stress induce	300	75	54	13.5	46	11.5
Lack of role models	150	37.5	200	50	50	12.5
Myth and Media influence	149	37.3	200	50	51	12.7

Curiosity	70	17.5	323	80.8	7	1.7
Peer Pressure	260	65	100	25	40	10
Alcohol use among friends	300	75	54	13.5	46	11.5
Teachers abusing drugs	150	37.5	200	50	50	12.5
No strict teachers in schools 25		100	25	200	50	100
Bad performance	300	75	54	13.5	46	11.5
Drug Dealers	300	75	80	20	20	5

From Table 3, it shows that most of the factors predisposes drug abuse environmentally. Questions such as *Parents abusing drugs, Mistreatment, Stress induce, Peer Pressure, Alcohol use among friends, Bad performance, Drug Dealers* where majority of the respondent strongly agree/agree with 244(61), 200(50), 300(75), 260(65), 300(75), 300(75), 300(75), and 300(75) respectively.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between gender, family setting and environmental influence to substance abuse in selected secondary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government of Ogun State.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.031	.370		5.489	.000	1.304	2.759
	Family_settings)	-.003	.030	-.005	-.110	.912	-.063	.056
	Relationship_parents)	-.166	.066	-.120	-2.514	.012	-.296	-.036
	(Waiting)	-.059	.022	-.139	-2.739	.006	-.101	-.017
	(Plans_parents)	-.031	.027	-.063	-1.150	.251	-.085	.022
	(Problems_friends)	.011	.019	.033	.581	.562	-.027	.049
	(Along_Teachers)	-.002	.025	-.005	-.083	.934	-.051	.047
	(Less_Drink)	-.106	.050	-.148	-2.140	.033	-.204	-.009
	(Less_Cigarettes)	.083	.051	.120	1.633	.103	-.017	.183

(Less_Drugs)	.017	.034	.029	.492	.623	-.051	.085
(Alcohol_Sometimes)	.010	.021	.023	.471	.638	-.032	.052
Parents abusing drugs	-.052	.020	-.134	-2.661	.008	-.090	-.014
Older siblings influence	-.063	.020	-.154	-3.195	.002	-.101	-.024
Mistreatment	-.029	.021	-.075	-1.412	.159	-.070	.012
Stress induce	.096	.043	.126	2.210	.028	.011	.180
Lack role models	-.066	.035	-.102	-1.856	.064	-.135	.004
Myths and media influence	-.039	.017	-.116	-2.297	.022	-.072	-.006
Curiosity	-.021	.031	-.038	-.684	.494	-.083	.040
Peer pressure	-.006	.029	-.014	-.194	.846	-.062	.051
Alcohol use among friends	.011	.027	.026	.404	.686	-.042	.064
Teachers abusing drugs	.052	.018	.152	2.944	.003	.017	.086
No strict teachers in school	-.020	.029	-.047	-.706	.481	-.077	.036
Bad performance	.050	.031	.091	1.602	.110	-.011	.111
Drug dealers	.035	.017	.106	2.103	.036	.002	.068
R = 0.449, R² = 0.202, F = 4.128							

The model shown on Table 4 indicated that the model significantly predicted the substance abuse (gender). The overall model of the five independent variables (IVs) which significantly predicts substance abuse [R^2 = .212, R^2 adj = .153, F (23, 375) = 4.128, p <.001] as seen in Table 4. However, from the twenty-three (23) independent variable, only four (4) independent variables shows that there is a significant relationship which are teachers abusing drugs, media and publicity, older sibling influence and parent abusing drugs with p<.001. Therefore, this hypothesis should be rejected.

Discussion

Table 1 show the attitudes of adolescent to substance abuse. If I use alcohol or drugs, I will have more health problem than other people and If I do not use alcohol or drugs, I will be happier, these questions were answered by the majority of the respondents with 258(64.3%), 323(80.8%) respectively. However, majority of the respondents strongly disagree to the reality of these statements; Smoking Cigarette fits the kinds of life I want to leave, Getting drunk every now and then fits with the kind of life I want to leave and Your closest friends feels that people who use drugs are better off with 350(87.5%), 300(75) and 300(75) respectively. This is relatively in line with previous research as mentioned by Ogunsola and Fatusi reported that about two-thirds of in-school adolescents in Osun State Nigeria had used substances in both rural (65.7%) and urban areas (66.0%) respectively (Ogunsola & Fatusi,

2016). Also, Lawoyin et al in 2005 revealed that 69.3% of secondary school students in Igboora, South-west Nigeria were current users of at least one of the illicit drugs. Alex-Hart in a study among secondary school students in Port Harcourt, Southern Nigeria also revealed that 30.6% of their respondents had ever taken alcoholic drinks before the survey (Alex-Hart et al, 2015). Eeguranti, et al, in a study among secondary school students in Oshogbo, South West Nigeria also reported 20.3% as the prevalence of substance abuse among the respondents (Eeguranti et al, 2009).

Knowledge of adolescent on drug abuse and attitude of adolescent on drug abuse may be closely related even though that is not the direction of the research. The reported pointed out that most secondary school students of the schools had adequate knowledge of what drug abuse was and yet for one reason or the other, they still consist in the abuse. This is also supported by the research of Lee et al., (2017) who mentioned that that there is a prevalence of self-medication in the past year among adolescents which showed that the most frequently reported drugs for self-medication included non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or pain relievers (prevalence 31.1%), cold or cough medicine (prevalence 21.6%), analgesics (prevalence 19.3%) and antacid (prevalence 17.3%). They also reported that of the participants who practiced self-medication, the prevalence of inappropriate self-medication behaviours included not reading drug labels, or instruction (prevalence 10.1%), this was done because of the knowledge involvement.

The model attached on Table 4 predicted the existence of substance abuse. Also, only four variables shows that there is a significant relationship between drug abuse. This is in tangent with the research reported by Mamman et al., (2014), who mentioned that in his research in Nigeria identified the causes of substance abuse among high school students nationwide as: curiosity and desire to find out the effectiveness of a particular drugs, peer pressure, environment, promotion and availability, enjoyment, lack of parental supervision, socio-economic factors of the parents, self-medication of primary psychological disorder, pathological family background and ignorance of the dangers of illicit/illegal drugs use.

Conclusion

Based on the findings on the predators of substance abuse among public secondary school students, the study concluded that most of the students had taken alcohol and other drugs at one time or another in their life time. The study further concluded that the students don't see anything wrong in the conception of marijuana, cocaine, tramadol and other similar drugs. The study equally concluded that there were sufficient environmental influences that have attracted these students both home and in school despite their high knowledge of the danger of drug abuse.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were suggested for further research:
1. Parents and teachers should be firm in their resolve to discourage and ensure that students stop taking or do not take alcohol and other drugs, which are abused, in the schools.

2. There should be a policy from the Federal Government to stop the abuse of drugs in secondary in Nigeria.
3. The parents should also watch out for the type of friends their children associate with both in school, home or worship centres.

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Cite this article:

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