

University Undergraduate Students and Substance Abuse: A Survey of a State University in Nigeria

Ojo Matthias Olufemi Dada

Department of Sociology, Crawford University of the Apostolic Faith Mission,
Igbesa, Ogun State, Nigeria

Abstract: Substance abuse has become a colossal problem in Nigerian tertiary institutions of learning. With sampled students of Lagos State University in Nigeria ($n = 132$), this study examined the problem of substance abuse among the Nigerian University students. The investigations revealed that alcohol, cigarette and marijuana were the commonest abused substances by these youths. The findings showed that peer groups were the important factor which encouraged the involvement of the university students in substance abuse. The study discovered that the counseling department of the university was not effective in assisting the students affected with the problem of substance abuse and therefore cannot be of any fruitful help. It is recommended that families should be educated on the need to educate their young members on the dangers of the substance abuse. Parenting as an art must be structured to give guidance to the children. Counseling centres must be established and the counselors must be constantly placed on on job training to assist the students who are addicted to the substances abuse. Campaigns against the abuse must be intensified in the society, especially on the university campuses and there must be university strict disciplinary actions against the student substance abusers. The inclusion of drug education in the curricula must be done at all levels of education. The job opportunities must be provided to gainfully employ the potential drug substances sellers. Finally, ongoing researches on drug/substances abuse are encouraged continuously to monitor the trends of the abuse and ways out of this social plague.

Key words: Substance abuse, drug, students, addiction, peer groups

INTRODUCTION

One of the goals of university education in Nigeria is to assist people acquire both the physical and intellectual skills which will enable them to be self-reliant and useful members of the society. The transition to university involves a departure from home, creating physical distance from family and peers and on the other hand, calls for learning how to live alone in a new environment, establishing a new network of peers and other proximal social supports.

The issue of substance abuse by undergraduates in Nigeria calls for a serious attention. Many students are leaving home for the first time and are experiencing the type of freedom usually found in higher educational institution for the first time. They may feel it is time for them to exercise their new adulthood status. Instead of dealing with the demand for social conformity, these young people turn to drug substances to bolster their own identities or to lessen the stress they feel (Coleman, 1974; Witters *et al.*, 1992). Substance abuse according to Makanjuola *et al.* (2007) can be seen as abuse of psychoactive substances. Experience with drug

substances in Nigerian tertiary institutions is a common phenomenon. Many students use substances to quench their curiosities to reduce stress, to feel grown up, etc. The use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana is a common habit among these students.

Drinking of alcohol and smoking of tobacco at young age expose the users to the risk of hard drugs later in life. Alcohol is by far the most popular mood altering substance in Nigeria today. As a social behaviour, drinking also follows a socially determined pattern. Drinking varies with age, education, income, size of community, marital status and religion. Compared to all other age groups, the prevalence of periodic heavy or high risk drinking is greatest among young adults aged 18-24 and university/college students have the highest prevalence of high-risk drinking (Johnson, 1989). This is so because the university is an environment where alcohol is generally available despite legal age prohibitions. University students are consistently found to be at high risk for engaging in both underage drinking and illicit drug use (Aremu, 2008; Obot, 1992). Marijuana is also a widely used illicit substance in Nigeria University.

Marijuana is essentially a social substance used within specific social situations. It is used regularly through a learning process. The people in group of friends that smoke marijuana and tobacco began as a result of pressure from peers combined with a general curiosity (Jones, 1989).

Heavy substance use among university students continues to be a pressing health concern worldwide (Wechsler *et al.*, 1994). There have been a number of researches on the students and substances, especially in countries where there is poor supervision by authorities. (O' Malley and Johnson, 2002; White *et al.*, 1991). Hence, it is imperative to study substances abuse.

The general objective of this research paper is to examine the involvement of the university undergraduate students in substances abuse. However, the following are the sub-objectives of the study:

- To investigate the forms of substance abuse on the university campus
- To examine the relationship between peer group influence and substance abuse
- To investigate the effectiveness of counseling unit in the control of substance abuse

There is some evidence to suggest that substance abuse is a substantial problem among the Nigerian university students living on and off campuses (Adelekan *et al.*, 2000). However, because of time and limited resources, all the university campuses cannot be covered under this study. Hence, the scope of this study is limited to Lagos State University, Nigeria.

Literature review

Substance abuse (A diagnosis): The abuse of various mood-altering substances has been reported to be prevalent among Nigerian youths. Moronkola pointed out that some substances alter mind, change the user's feeling, perception and behavior when they are used because they exert actions on brain. Global studies on substance abuse revealed that early initiation of drug use is one of the best predictors of future drug abuse and dependence. For instance, youths whose drug use started before the age of 14 are more vulnerable to drug problems later in life than those who started using drugs at the age of 21 and above.

Many reasons have been advanced for substance abuse as a phenomenon. For instance, if young men and women who are potential drug addicts continue to reside in the social environment in which past drug use occurred, the use of drug may continue. This is because most cases of drug and abuse emanate from array of psycho-social disorders.

Hence, personality disorders and socio-economic environment are the major determinants of involvement in substances abuse (Ahire, 1996). As a matter of fact, vulnerability may be inherited in the form of heightened susceptibility to a certain types of drug. Substance abuse may also be linked to cultism. Essien (2010), noted that from ancient times, the use of drugs has always been an inseparable part of occultism and youth in Nigerian tertiary institutions are deeply involved in this practice.

Nature and extent of substance abuse in Nigeria: Studies have shown that quite a number of Nigerian youths ignorantly depend on one form of drug or the other for their various daily activities-social, educational, political etc. Some of these drugs may include: Tobacco, India hemp, alcohol etc. Oshikoya and Alli (2006) identified dependence and addiction as one of the major consequences of substance abuse, characterized by compulsive drug craving behaviours that persist even in the face of negative consequences. This is maladaptive and inappropriate to the social environmental setting and therefore may place the individual at risk of harm.

Studies have revealed that Nigerian youths are being offered cigarettes through promotions and musical concerts. Some teens will experiment and stop or continue to use occasionally without significant problems. Others will develop addiction, moving on to more dangerous drugs and causing harm to themselves and the society at large. Despite the efforts of many concerned bodies to curb this menace, many firms and individuals still present these drugs as though they are harmless. However, cannabis (Marijuana) appears to be the most commonly abused drug by the youths. Marijuana is everywhere in Nigeria: cities motor parks, street corners, joints, uncompleted buildings, under flyovers, campuses, etc. A survey in Benin city, Ajegunle in Lagos, Mabushi in Abuja and under flyovers in Onitsha reveals an alarming number of youths involved in the intake of Cannabis (Abudu, 2005).

Abuse of various local plants has been reported in the studies among the youths. The studies confirmed the 10-29 years of age as the most vulnerable group in substance abuse in Nigeria. On the gender distribution of drug abuse, there appears to be current male and female. One of the consequences of increased exposure to Western influences has been the spread of drug use among Nigerian youths.

Causes abuse among undergraduates: The causes of drug abuse are complex. In one dimension, it seems parents are to blame for nurturing children in homes where drugs including alcohol are radically used and abused. On

the other hand, social problems, unpleasant and deficient household and family life and rebellious individuals who show indifference have been other powerful influences (Otto and Tether, 1971). Furthermore, Otto and Tether (1971) listed nine factors contributing to substance abuse. These are: easy access, curiosity, peer group pressure, boredom relief, dissatisfaction, economic affluence, advertising and sales promotion, escapism as well as contact with drug sellers/pushers. An additional cause of drug abuse identified by Jones (1989) was ignorance.

Anumoye (1980) was of the opinion that single factor could not be defined as solely responsible for the abuse but listed the following factors as frequently found among both Nigerians and other nationalities:

- Defective personality including chronic inadequacy, frustration, poor tolerance, insensitivity and egocentricity
- Widespread belief in the magic of medicines
- Enjoyment of induced euphoria and excitement
- Dissatisfaction and disillusionment of young persons
- Search for sharpened perception, especially by music lovers
- Self-medication for primary psychological disorders
- Lack of alternative for various cultural changes

However, Abudu (2005) listed the following factors being responsible for the abuse of drug substances:

- Parental neglects of their children
- The prevalence of drugs in the community
- Pathological family background-broken homes, illegitimate relationships, alcoholic parents or parents' involvement in antisocial and illegal activities
- Peer group influence
- Imitation of film stars and teenage idols
- Inordinate ambition of the youths
- Urbanization and unemployment
- Media adverts-radio, television and bill board
- Ignorance of the dangers of illegal drug use
- Alienation-they feel isolated and want to belong

Studies on substances abuse in Nigerian universities: A survey conducted by Fatoye and Morakinyo (2002) on substance use among undergraduate students in rural and urban communities in South Western Nigeria with a sample size of 542 (made up of 266 male and 276 female), found that the prevalence rate of alcohol use was 26.4%. And that the most commonly abused alcoholic drink was palm wine (60.1%), followed by beer (20.8%) and then locally distilled gin (14.7%). Data collected by Eke (1997),

from 640 university students aged 17 years and above in Anambra State of Nigeria using self administered questionnaire found that 57% of the students had used alcohol.

A survey conducted by Adelekan *et al.* (2000), using a sample of 988 students in Ilorin, Nigeria, found the rate of current users of alcohol to be 18.5%. In the survey conducted by Obot (1992) of 292 school male adolescents (age 11-20 years), found that more than one third (38.7%) of the sample had taken alcohol at least once in their lives. The average age of self initiated drinking was 13.2 years. Past year prevalence of beer use was 28.1% while that of palm wine use was 17.1%.

Eneh and Stanley (2004), surveyed the pattern of substance use among 1049 students of two universities in River State, Nigeria using self-administered questionnaire. The findings revealed that 87% of the respondents were using at least one substance at the time of the survey while 3% were past users in the last 1 year. The substances commonly used included alcohol (65%), kolanut (63.1%), cigarettes (61%), paracetamol (41.5%) and cannabis (26%). Others included tetracycline (25.7%), ampicilin (24.3%) and valium (24%). The study concluded that substances/drug abuse among Nigerian students is assuming a dangerous dimension and hence, a need for immediate intervention for its eradication.

As critically observed by Ngoka and Jones (1989), many undergraduates have traditionally used plants containing chemicals that produce drug. Some examples of these plants are tea and coffee (Caffeine), tobacco (nicotine alkaloids) and other mood-modifying chemical compounds produced or extracted in the chemical laboratory.

Campus residence and substance

Abuse among undergraduates: The rate of excessive drinking varies widely from campus to campus, likewise the rate of marijuana use. Certain campus and environmental factors account for this variation in students substance use (Wechsler *et al.*, 2003). The variations in substance abuse are based on the following criteria.

Availability: The greater the number of alcohol outlets available to students the greater the likelihood of drinking. Having bars on campuses is associated with slightly heightened risk that underage drinking among students will occur.

Advertising and alcohol promotions: Advertising and promotions also increase the risk of drinking. Normally, the level of advertising at neighborhood alcohol outlets

is related to university-wide levels of excessive drinking. Bar promotions hike the risk of undergraduate students drinking with reduction in prices, there is an increase in students favorable impression of the bar, intent to patronize the bar and perceived likelihood of increased in consumption. The relationship between alcohol promotions and alcohol use is more pronounced in drinking college students who are more likely, than non drinking students, to patronize a bar that offers a promotion (Kuo *et al.*, 2003). Studies found that the lower the price of beer in the universities, the higher the rate of drinking (Kuo *et al.*, 2003). In addition, many undergraduate students in universities obtain alcohol and cigarettes for free at parties or at deeply discounted prices from bars catering for age clientele (Chaloupka and Wechsler, 1996).

Athletics: It is has been found that schools in which there is a strong emphasis on athletics have higher rates of substance use than those in which athletics are less of priority (Weitzman *et al.*, 2003). Athletes themselves, also have increased risk of substance use. College athletes report higher levels of substance abuse than non-athletes (Nelson and Wechsler, 2001). College athletes are likelier than non athletes, to consider parties as important to celebrate winnings, to spend hours per day socializing (Nelson and Wechsler, 2001). College athletes are more likely to chew tobacco than non-athletes (Wechsler *et al.*, 1994).

Sanctions: The level of alcohol and other substances abuse is related to the sanctions imposed on the act. Students abusing substances are less common in the states with high restriction and sanction. In these states, there is an increase likelihood of arrest and higher penalties upon conviction (Chaloupka and Wechsler, 1996).

Drinking and other substances abuse are less prevalent among students who attend universities in states with greater restriction and states which devote more resources to enforcing the laws which prevent abuses of substances (Wechsler *et al.*, 2003).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design used for the study is survey. Survey research involves the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions (Schutt, 2004).

Substance abuse is a common phenomenon in all Nigerian tertiary institutions (i.e., universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, etc.) However,

because of time factor and limited resources, the survey research was limited only to Lagos State University, Nigeria.

Lagos State University was established in 1983 by enabling law of Lagos State. Since 1983, the university has grown tremendously with seven faculties (arts, education engineering, law and management sciences). There are also College of Medicine, centres for environmental and science education, planning and general studies, schools of communication, post graduate studies and part-time studies.

The targeted population was all undergraduate students of the university. However, it is not possible to study all the students of the university. Hence, there was a need to select a sample size.

The sample size was 150 students. Researchers used simple random sampling to select five out of all the faculties and other units in the university. Simple random sample was selected so that each member of a population has an equal probability of selection (Clark *et al.*, 1999). However, convenience sampling was used in selecting all the 150 respondents which form the samples. They were subjects of a population used typically to gain information about or insight into entire population. Convenience sampling was used because it was cheap and very quick (Neuman, 2003).

The research instrument used for this study was questionnaire. Students were required, to respond without bias, to all the items and sentences in the instrument, since they were all structured in simple, clear and direct manner. Efforts were made to ensure that the questionnaire measures the desired objectives. The questionnaires were administered by hand delivery and were picked up later. There was no time limit to the completion of the questionnaires by the students. Respondents however were informed to return the questionnaire within a reasonable time.

The ethical issue was taken into strong consideration. Researchers ensured that none of the questionnaire was linked to any student. Therefore, the questionnaires were not designed in the ways that will reveal the identities of the respondents. No names, matriculation number, signatures, etc. were included in. Furthermore, all the responses of the participants were collated and analyzed in aggregate without reflecting individual opinions or reponses. The data supplied were kept confidential and were only used for the purpose of this research work.

Finally, no respondent was coerced into the survey. Researchers explained the purpose of the study to them and sought their co-operation before the research actually started. The consents of the respondents were sought

before given them the instrument (questionnaire) of the study. In area of data analysis; the quantitative data generated from questionnaires were subjected to frequency distribution. A frequency distribution displays the number, percentage (the relative frequencies) or both of cases corresponding to each of a variable's values or group of values (Schutt, 2004). For this study, both frequencies and percentages were generated and inserted into tables. The interpretations were based on the frequencies and percentages generated from the data collated from the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaires distributed were one hundred and fifty. However, only one hundred and thirty two were returned. The efforts made to retrieve the remaining ones proved abortive. Hence, the analysis and discussion of the findings were based on one hundred and thirty two questionnaires that researchers were able to retrieve from the respondents.

In the Table 1, 88 (66.7%) of the respondents were male while 44 (33.3%) of them were female. The marital statuses show that 127 (96.2%) were single while only 5 (3.8%) were married. This clearly shows that majority of the respondents were not married and therefore not under marital obligations.

The age distributions of the respondents reflect that only 7 of them (5.3%) were under 18 years. About 123 of them (93.2%) fell within age bracket 18-35 years while only 2 (1.5%) were 35 years and above. This clearly shows that most of respondents were youths at the prime age. The ethnic variable shows 82 (62.1%) to be Yoruba, 36 respondents (27.3%) were Igbo, 6 respondents (4.5%)

were Hausa and 8 respondents (6.1%) came from other minor ethnic groups in Nigeria. The over-whelming majority that were Yoruba was a clear indication of the fact that Lagos State where the university is located is one of the Yoruba speaking states in Nigeria. Furthermore, the issue of educational policy of catchment areas also allowed the other Yoruba speaking states to have an edge ahead other states in the country in the admission of the students to this university. Hence, one should expect the number of the students that are Yoruba to outnumber other ethnic groups in the country.

Religion was another variable considered. About 99% of the respondents were Christians. This represented 75.0% of the entire respondents. The 30 were Muslims (22.7) while 2 of the respondents were practicing traditional religion. This represented (1.5%) of the total respondent's. Only 1 respondent did not signify any religious practice. This represented only 0.8% of the total percentage of the religion variable.

In order to be precise and to avoid long list of presentation, only the faculties were used in the grouping of students into academic areas of study. Only five faculties of study were represented in the study. The breakdown of the data shows that 27 respondents (20.45%) of the respondents selected were in the faculty of social sciences offering different courses under this faculty. Likewise, 27 respondents (20.45%) were in the faculty of the Arts. About 26 of the respondents (19.7%) were in the faculty of science, the same thing were applicable to the faculties of education and engineering, respectively (Table 2).

For the levels of the respondents at the university, 6 respondents were in 100 level (4.5%), 19 respondents were in 200 level (14.4%) for 300 level we recorded 44 respondents (33.3%) , 59 respondent (44.7%) were in 400 level, for 500 level, researchers had 3 respondents (2.3%) and finally 1 respondent did not indicate any level (0.8%). A cursory look at the table and the analysis show that all the levels in the selected faculties were represented and the respondents cut across all the levels in the faculties.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by their socio bio data

Socio bio data	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	88	66.7
Female	44	33.3
Marital status		
Single	127	96.2
Married	5	3.8
Age		
Under 18	7	5.3
18-35 years	123	93.2
35 years above	2	1.5
Ethnic group		
Yoruba	82	62.1
Igbo	36	27.3
Hausa	6	4.5
Others	8	6.1
Religion		
Christianity	99	75.0
Islam	30	22.7
Traditional religion	2	1.5
No response	1	0.8

Researchers' survey: 2012

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents by educational data

Educational data	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty		
Social sciences	27	20.45
Arts	27	20.45
Sciences	26	19.70
Education	26	19.70
Engineering	26	19.70
Level of the students		
100	6	4.50
200	19	14.40
300	44	33.30
400	59	44.70
500	3	2.30
Missing	1	0.80

Researcher's survey: 2012

Researchers asked the respondents their views on what substance abuse really is, from their own perceptions. Table 3 summarizes the categories of their responses.

A cursory look at the Table 3 shows that 35 respondents (26.5%) described substance abuse as the excessive use of drug and other related substance. For those who described it as any substance that intoxicates, researchers recorded 6 respondents (4.6%). About 19 respondents (14.4%) described it as illegal use of substances. However, 72 respondents cannot give any definition or description of what substance abuse is. This amounted to 54.5% of the entire respondents.

In the questionnaire given to the respondents, researchers asked the respondents to mention the most common substance being abused by the students of the university of the study. The 23 respondents (17.4%) signified that drugs of various types were the most commonly abused. The 37 respondents (28.0%) said it was cigarette/marijuana, 53 respondents (40.2%) were of the opinion that alcohol is the most commonly abused substance by the university students. However, 19 respondents (14.4%) cannot actually say which substance was the most commonly abused. The Table 4 summarizes their responses.

Researchers requested the respondents to say whether they abuse alcohol or not. After the responses were sorted out, the Table 5 summarizes their responses.

A glance at the Table 5 shows that 114 respondents (86.4%) admitted that they actually abused alcoholic drinks. However, 18 respondents 13.6% did not engaged in the abused alcohol.

Apart from alcohol, researchers equally requested the respondents to signify whether they abuse marijuana (cannabis) or not. The Table 6 contains the outcomes of their responses. From the Table 6, only 27 (20.5%) out of 132 respondents, abused marijuana (cannabis). The 105 of the respondents (79.5%) did not abuse the substance.

Table 3: The perceptions of what substance abuse is by the respondents

Categories of responses	Frequency	Percentage
Excess used of drug substance	35	26.5
Taking substances that intoxicate	6	4.6
Using substances illegally	19	14.4
I cannot define what it is	72	54.5
Total	132	100.0

Table 4: Distribution of respondents opinion on commonly abused substance

Substance	Frequency	Percentage
Various drugs	23	17.4
Marijuana/Cigarette	37	28.0
Alcohol	53	40.2
No responses	19	14.4
Total	132	100.0

Researchers survey: 2012

Cigarette is the third substance researchers requested from the respondents to: say whether they abuse it or not. Table 7 shows the outcomes of their responses.

From the Table 7, the analyses show that only 47 (35.6%) abused cigarette and tobacco related substances. 85 (64.4%) out of 132 respondents did not indulge in using cigarette/tobacco.

A cursory look at Tables 5-7 shows that alcohol is the most abused substance (86.4%) followed by cigarette/tobacco related substance (35.6%). Marijuana was the least abused substance from the data (20.5%). It is a clear indication that alcohol was the most abused substance by these students.

The respondents were asked to signify the degree of their accessibility to the substances they abused. Table 8 shows their responses.

About 77 of the respondents (58.33%) claimed that these substances (alcohol, cigarette and marijuana) were highly accessible. According to them, the substances were gotten without any difficulty. About 43 of the respondents (32.57%) said that the substances were fairly accessible while 6 respondents (4.55%) claimed that they were not accessible. Another 6 respondents (4.55%) declined comments on the accessibility of the substances. The high rate of accessibility (both for very accessible and fairly accessible) indicates that these substances (alcohol, cigarette/tobacco substances and marijuana) were accessible for the use of the students. Hence, the

Table 5: Distribution of respondents whether they abuse alcohol or not

Abuse of alcohol	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	114	86.4
No	18	13.6
Total	132	100.0

Table 6: Distribution of respondents whether they abuse marijuana (cannabis) or not

Abuse of marijuana	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	20.5
No	105	79.5
Total	132	100.0

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents whether they abuse cigarette and tobacco related substance or not

Abuse of cigarette	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	35.6
No	85	64.4
Total	132	100.0

Table 8: Distribution of the respondents by how accessible the substances are

How accessible	Frequency	Percentage
Very accessible	77	58.33
Fairly accessible	43	32.57
Not accessible	6	4.55
No response	6	4.55
Total	132	100.00

Researchers' survey: 2012

accessibility of the substances was an indication that they were not censured from the students and no strict laws were in place to prohibit their uses or perhaps those laws were not adequately implemented in the university.

How often the students indulge in substance abuse was also taken into consideration. Table 9 shows the outcomes of how often they use the substances.

Table 9 shows that 57 respondents (43.18%) abused the substances every day. They have made the abuse as part of their daily habit. It was a clear indication that they were addicted to the substances. About 22 respondents (16.67%) abuse the substances few days in a week, 43 respondents (32.57%) take the substances once in a week while 10 respondents (7.58%) were unable to ascertain the frequency of their abuses of the substances.

The questionnaire requested that the respondents should confirm whether they were addicted to these substances or not. Table 10 shows their responses.

A quick glance at the table above shows clearly the slim difference between those who accepted addiction to the substances and those who did not. About 62 respondents (46.97%) declined affirmation to the addiction of the substances. However, 60 respondents (45.45%) admitted addiction to the substances. The 10 respondents (7.58%) cannot really say whether they were addicted or otherwise. Hence, they did not respond to the question.

Researchers thoroughly investigated the cogent reasons why the students under our study indulge in substance abuse. Table 11 shows their responses to this question.

A critical look at the Table 11 shows that 52 (39.4%) of the respondents used substances as a sign of being sociable and acceptable among their peers. They were of the opinion that taking these substances was the only way one can be acceptable and remain sociable among one's peer groups.

Table 9: Distribution of the respondents by how often they abuse the substances

How often they abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	57	43.18
Few days in a week	22	16.67
Once in week	43	32.57
No response	10	7.58
Total	132	100.00

Table 10: Would you say you are not addicted to the substance (s)

Addiction or not	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, not addicted	62	46.97
No, I'm addicted	60	45.45
I cannot say	10	7.58
Total	132	100.00

Researchers' survey: 2012

High mood was another reason signified by the respondents. About 31 respondents (23.5%) affirmed that they took substances to make them be in high mood or to be lively among their colleagues. They were of the opinion that substances remove boredom and tiredness. Relaxation was another reason for substance use, 37 respondents (28.0%) admitted that they actually use the substances to feel relax and cool undue tension and emotion. They considered substances as normalizers of tension and emotion in them. The 4 respondents (3.0%) admitted that they used substances to ensure that they were mentally awaked and sound. They were of the opinion that these substances (especially marijuana) would help their thinking and sharpness of mind. Finally, 5 respondents (3.8%) cannot actually pin point the reason why they use the substances.

We were of the opinion that peer groups exert great influence on the respondents involvement in substance abuse. Peers can have strong buffering effects on the development of later antisocial psychopathology of the individuals (Imtiaz *et al.*, 2010). Hence, researchers requested the respondents to signify whether their peers or friends at school had an impact on them towards their involvement in substance abuse. Table 12 shows the presentation of their responses.

A cursory look at the table above shows that 87 respondents (65.91%) admit to their peers influencing them to smoke or drink substance. About 39 respondents (29.55%) do not admit that their peers influenced them. The 6 respondents (4.54%) cannot decide whether their peers influenced them or not. Hence, no responses were made by them. The overwhelming percentage (65.91%) who admitted to peer group influences, clearly indicates that peer groups can go a long way in causing antisocial behaviours among youths.

Table 11: Distribution of the respondents by the reasons for abusing the substances

Reasons why they abuse substance	Frequency	Percentage
To be sociable among other students	52	39.4
To be in high mood	31	23.5
For relaxation	37	28.0
To be awake and sound	04	3.0
Other reasons	03	2.3
No response	5	3.8
Total	132	100.0

Table 12: Distribution of the respondents whether peer groups influence their involvement in substance abuse or not

Influence from peer group	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	87	65.91
No	39	29.55
No response	6	4.54
Total	132	100.00

Researchers' survey: 2012

Abuse of substances is a serious anti-social behaviour in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The prohibition through various laws made by the school authorities are not helping. Moreover, the counseling departments of these schools seem not to be making a breakthrough in helping Nigerian students in area of substance abuse. Researchers asked the respondents to determine the effectiveness of counseling unit in helping the students, addicted to substances, to get off the hook. Table 13 shows the outcomes of their responses.

A quick glance at the Table 13 that only 8 respondents (6.1%) affirmed that the counseling units were very effective. About 44 respondents (33.33%) were of the opinion that they were averagely effective. The 60 respondents (45.45%) however, reported that the counseling units lack the adequate personnel and needed resources to meet the challenges of the welfare services in this regard. The 20 respondents (15.12%) were unable to determine the level of the effectiveness of the counseling units. Counseling units cannot be underrated in giving welfare and counseling assistances to the problem being faced by the students in our universities and other tertiary institutions on the problem of substance abuse.

Researchers have discovered in this study that alcohol (86.4%) was the most abused substance, followed by cigarette/tobacco substance (35.6%) and finally marijuana (20.5%). The investigation of the study revealed that these substances were very accessible to the students in the university and that to some extent, the students indulged in their abuses, daily, few days a week and weekly as it may be. Some of them admitted their addiction to these substances (46.97) and stated various reasons for using these substances (Table 11).

Researchers discovered that peer groups were the major factor which influenced the involvement of these youths in abuse of substance. Peer pressure plays a major role in luring many adolescents into drug abuse. This is because peer pressure is a fact of teenage and youth life. As they try to depend less on parents, they show more dependency on their friends. In Nigeria, like other parts of the world, one may not enjoy the company of others unless he/she conform to their norms (Fareo, 2012).

Finally, the third objective is to determine the effectiveness of the school counseling unit or department

for the students. Findings reveal that the counseling unit/department is not at all, effective, to the expectation of the university community. Therefore, the counseling unit or department was unable to assist the addicted students to the expected.

CONCLUSION

The abuse of drug substance among youths has become a public concern world-wide, partly because of its potential to contribute to unintentional and intentional injury. Drug abuse and addiction are universal phenomena that extend across socio-economic, cultural, religious and ethnic boundaries.

The abuse of drug substance is a problem that is causing serious concern to both the individuals and governments all over the world. The problem is prevalent among adolescents that in most cases are ignorant about the dangers inherent in drug abuse. Many of them engaged in abuse out of frustration poverty, lack of parental supervision, peer influence and pleasure (Fareo, 2012).

It should be noted that substance abuse is a global health problem with conditions and problem that vary locally and for the fact that it impairs biological functioning in the users as well as social functioning. It is therefore, very imperative to tackle the problem in where the tertiary institutions students who are the major users among the Nigerian youths.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations start from the family level. Researchers agree with Fareo (2012) that family is the nucleus of the social organization. Parents should therefore give their children or wards education on drug and substance abuse. Families must be educated on abuse of substances. Parents should be made to be aware of dangers of the abuse to their children and wards.

The parents must be taught the art of good parenting. Parenting is the consistent pattern by which parents interact with their children along two dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness. Demandingness refers to parental maturity to integrate children into the family demands, supervision, discipline and willingness to confront behaviour problems. Responsiveness refers to the extent to which parents foster individuality, self-regulation and self assertion by consenting to or being aware and supportive of children's needs and demands (Dienye and Oyet, 2011). Both dimensions must be implemented. The implementation will go a long way in solving the problem of substance abuse among Nigerian

Table 13: Distribution of respondents by opinions of how effective are counseling units

Level of effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage
Very effective	8	6.10
Averagely effective	44	33.33
Not effective	60	45.45
Can no determine	20	15.12
Total	132	100.00

Researchers' survey: 2012

youths and other deviant behaviours peculiar to the youths. There is a need for proper guidance during personality building process in the youths by parents and other adults in the communities (Tahir *et al.*, 2011).

Researchers agree with Fareo (2012) that there is a need for the establishment of counseling centres. Counseling units on university campuses can help in minimizing students smoking habit and abuse of other substances. Counselors should help counselees in achieving adaptive attitude, insight and good behaviour. Trained counselors should be employed by the university authorities and such counselors must be involved in constant on job trainings both at home and abroad. Counseling centres in the universities must be adequately funded while logistics assistance must be given to them when needed. There should be interaction between the counseling department and the parents, so that the families will be carried along.

Fareo (2012)'s suggestion that curricula on drug education be designed and added to education curricula at all levels of education is a welcome idea. At the university level, Nigerian universities should incorporate courses which deal with drug education. Such courses must also include in their contents, behaviour modification, adolescent psychology, abnormal psychology and rehabilitation counseling.

Campaigns against substance abuse must be intensified by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in Nigerian society, especially among the students of tertiary institutions. Campaigns must be designed to highlight the dangers of smoking and substance abuse to help the deviant youths on the university campuses.

In addition to this, university authorities must put in place, severe disciplinary measures on students who abuse drug substances on campuses. The disciplinary actions must be carried out strictly without favouritism or any form of partiality. Furthermore, universities must create conventional job opportunities. This will engage the persons involved in the sale of drug substances and discourage them from illegal business of prohibited drug substances.

Finally, since problem of drug abuse has been a major problem occupying the attention of law makers, law enforcers and society as a whole (Ramgoolam, 2010), there must be a need for additional investigations on substance abuse (Ventura and Lambert, 2005). Researchers therefore, recommend further researches on drug abuse in the society, especially among the youths. This will ensure the discoveries of new trends of the abuse among them and how the problem can be totally overcome in the society,

especially on the university campuses. Finally, ongoing researches on drug/substance abuse are encouraged from all academicians to continuously monitor the trends of abuse and ways out of this social plague.

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