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Factors Influencing Substance Abuse among Undergraduate Students in Osun State, Nigeria (Pp. 330-340)

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Abstract

The study investigated the factors influencing substance abuse among undergraduate students in Osun State; Nigeria. A sample of 1, 200 undergraduate students were randomly selected from three tertiary institution in Osun State. Factors Influencing Substance Abuse Questionnaire (FISA) was developed by the researcher to collect the relevant data. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings of the study showed that peer influence is the major factor influencing substance abuse among undergraduate students. The study also revealed that there is significant difference among male and female undergraduate students on factor influencing substance abuse. The study recommended that counselors should be organizing different programs to promote healthy living among undergraduate students.

Introduction

The current trend of substance abuse among youth is a major national concern, it is troubling, it has derogatory effects on youth such as health and behavioural problems, or even death. Falco (1988); as cited by Sambo (2008) viewed that “chronic use of substance can cause serious, sometimes irreversible damage to adolescents’ physical and psychological development. Therefore, the issue of substance abuse has become a worrisome

phenomenon, because youth are dying morally, socially, psychologically and physically. Currently, drugs ranging from alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, heroin to hashish and many others are readily available to youth in Nigeria and this has made many youths to be perpetrators of social vices in the society.

Mersy (2003) described substance abuse as problematic use of alcohol, tobacco, or illicit and /or prescription drugs and it has been referred to as nation's number one health problem. While, David, Derald & Stanley (1990) refers to substance abuse as a pathological pattern or excessive use, in take of a substance even though it may be causing physical damage, jeopardizing safety (such as driving a car while intoxicated) or impairing social relationships and occupational functioning. Need for substance may lead to a pre-occupation with its acquisition and use.

Substance abuse may reduce undergraduate chances of graduating from school or of landing and holding a steady job, it may also be causing student unrest in the campus which will disturb academic calendar and this may also lead to poor academic performance. According to Hawkins, Cataland and Miller (1992) a low level of commitment to education and higher truancy rates appear to be related to substance use among adolescent. Bureau of Justice Statistics (1992) posited that cognitive and behavioral problems experienced by alcohol and drug-using youth may interfere with their academic performance and also present obstacles to learning for their classmates.

Substance abuse is common among undergraduate students; many of them abuse substance such as drug alcohol and tobacco. Alcohol is the most widely used and abused drug among youth, and it causes serious and potentially life threatening problems for this population. Eke Jumba (1991) notes that alcohol is the most abused substance in Nigerian campuses. Denga in Piwana and Haggai (2007) points out that alcohol has become a recreational past time with students, to the extent that students have found a new religion in which drinking alcohol is the major sacrament. This refers to the "Kegites" Fraternity. The findings of Piwana and Haggai (2007) also revealed that the drugs commonly used at cult meetings include first and foremost alcohol and tobacco; all cult groups abuse these two drugs regularly.

In the same vein Ayatse (2005) reported that the materials needed for initiation of cult members include intoxicating wine prepared with

hallucinating drugs such as Indian hemp and cocaine. These drugs will intoxicate the cult members and it will make them to be bold, and under the influence of drug they can kill or destroy their mates or lecturers.

Tobacco is another substance that it is easily been abused by many undergraduates and it has negative effect on mental health of the people. It could be taking in different forms; it can be smokeable, chewable and snuffable. Osu in Piwana and Haggai (2007) points out that tobacco is a narcotic which affects the nervous system by stimulating it.

The effects produced by smoking tobacco depend not on the nicotine that is absorbed from the smoke. Many of the students graduate from tobacco smoking to Marijuana smoking which they believe it will be more powerful on them and make them hyperactive. It is cheap and can easily be purchased from drug peddlers that are increasingly targeting the youth, as a symbol of revolution. They seek to sacrifice at the altar of money and mental derangement self-seeking clamouring for the minds and souls of the young people the action which has negative consequences on the society.

This is evident in Nigeria as revealed by the findings of Okonafua in Amala (1992) and Okatahi (2003) in their studies of some University Undergraduates in Nigeria. Okonafua in Amali (1992) discovered a drug abuse rate of 26% marijuana. Marijuana was discovered to be one of the commonest drugs abused by students. The study he conducted examined the factors like: the population of youths with the aim of identifying the most commonly used drug; the pattern of abuse; the source of drug supply and reasons why the drugs were abused and how they were used. At the end of their study, the researchers discovered that 40% of the 500 students responded and of this 26% used two main drugs. These were stimulant and Marijuana. Two thirds of the Marijuana smoking population had secondary education and the rest one third had Grade II Teacher Education: 70% were from Southern Nigeria, 20% from neighbouring African Countries and the rest from other parts of Nigeria. According to the study, the mood and personality of the users were affected by the drugs they used.

Various reasons were given by students on why they took drugs to feel happy, excited and friendly especially to members of opposite sex. Some said they used drugs for sexual excitements. Twelve of the students said they took drugs for mental alertness and the rest said drugs give them better visual and auditory experience.

In the same vein, Okatachi (2003) carried out a study on predisposing factors associated with drug abuse in Kano and Lagos cities in Nigeria, using a sample of 144 subjects. The study conducted examined the effects of gender family background, and knowledge of drugs and drug abuse. At the end of the study, the researcher discovered that: male tend to abuse drugs more than females; children from unstable homes are more prone to drug abuse than children from stable homes; children from low socio-economic status families are more likely to engage in drug abuse than those from high; children from polygamous families are more likely to engage in drug abuse than those from monogamous families; children having single parents are more likely to engage in drug. A greater number of respondents (66.67%) were not aware of the dangers of drug abuse before they got into it.

While, the study carried out by National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (1997) found a significant association between crimes committed by adolescents and their use of alcohol and other drugs. This shows that many youth can commit crime under the influence of drugs. Therefore, in order to reduce and prevent social vices, moral decadences and crime rate in Nigerian, there is need for more preventive measure to be put in place to reduce the rate or eliminate the acts of substance abuse among the undergraduates in Nigeria. Herein lays the rationale for this study.

Statement of the Problem

The physical, psychological, social and economic consequences of the drug problems among youth are becoming more obvious and disturbing. Young people who persistently abuse substances often experience an array of problems including academic difficulties, health related problems (including mental health), poor peer relationships and involvement in social vices such as stealing, bullying, secret cult activities all these have negative consequences on family members, community and the entire society. According to report from Osun State NDLEA (2010) about eight-four students were caught abusing drug in the year 2009, while, many of them are yet to be caught. Studies have shown that youth constitute the high risk group of drug dependence and substance abuse (Obot, 1989, NDLEA, 1996).

It is logical to think that if this problem of substance abuse persist among undergraduate students it may be difficult for such students to obtain good academic performance, there is also the tendency for increase in anti social tendencies and behavioural problems among undergraduate students in and outside the school. This unfortunate, anti social behaviour therefore, calls for

some intellectual effort to be made to empirically find out the factors influencing substance abuse among undergraduate students in Osun State. This is with the view of suggesting possible way of curbing and preventing substance abuse among this vulnerable but very significant group of people in our society.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors influencing substance abuse among undergraduate students in Osun State.
2. Are there differences among male and female undergraduate students on factors influencing substance abuse?
3. Are there differences among undergraduate students from different religious background on factors influencing substance abuse?
4. Are there differences among undergraduate students on factors influencing substance abuse on the basis of family setting?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in Osun State on the factors influencing substance abuse.
2. There is no significant difference among undergraduate students from different religious background on factors influencing substance abuse.
3. There is no significant difference among undergraduate students on factors influencing substance abuse on the basis of family setting.

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was adopted for this research. The target population for this study consists of all students in the Seven (7) Tertiary Institutions in Osun State. One thousand five hundred (1,200) respondents were randomly selected from three tertiary institutions in Osun State. The multistage sampling technique was used for selecting sample (respondents). At stage one the purposive sampling technique was adopted for selecting three tertiary Institutions (One Polytechnics, One College of Education and One University). Osun State. At stage two, the researcher stratified the respondents into different strata of gender, religious and family setting. At the stage three with the help of school authority of the three Institutions the

researcher employed simple random sampling technique to select 400 students from each institution. However, a total number of 1,200 respondents participated in the society. A 24 item questionnaire tagged "Factors influencing substance Abuse" "The questionnaire contained statements to which respondents were expected to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement on a Four Point Likert Scale. The instruments were validated by experts in research methods at the Osun State University, Osogbo. The reliability of the instrument was determined by a pilot test which was administered on 50 undergraduates who were not part of the sampling for the study. The split half method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and a correlation co-efficient of 0.82 was obtained. Data collected for the study were analyzed using, simple percentage, t-test and Analysis of Variance ANOVA.

Results

Table 1: Shows the mean of the factors influencing substance abuse among undergraduate students. According to the respondents, the major factor influencing substance abuse is PEER factor with a mean of 14.50 such as they want to behave like their friends, pressure from their friends and gangs"; "initiation by friends". The second major factor is SOCIETAL with a mean of 13.90 such as "I have been enticed by the advertisement". I got the awareness from the advertisement ". The third factor is PARENTAL with the mean of 13.78 such as "my parents' drinks alcohol". "Deprivation of parental care"; my parents are hostile". The fourth factor is INDIVIDUAL such as "I use alcohol to drive away shyness"; "I smoke for excitement and pleasure". The fifth factor is SCHOOL "the stress in the school"; "frustration from the lecturers".

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students on factors influencing substance abuse.

Table 2 indicates that the calculated t-value is 10.73 while the critical t-value is 1.96. This shows that there is significant difference between male and female undergraduate Students on factors influencing substance abuse. Based on this result hypothesis one was rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference among undergraduate students from different religious background on factors influencing substance abuse.

Table 3 shows that the calculated f-ratio is 1.64 while the critical f-ratio is 3.00. Since the calculated f-ratio is less than the critical f-ratio, it means there is no significant difference among undergraduate students on factors influencing substance abuse on religious basis.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference among undergraduate students from different family setting on factors influencing substance abuse.

The result of the t-test analysis indicates that there is significant difference among undergraduate students for different family setting on factors influencing substance abuse.

This is because the calculated that value 2.87 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. Therefore hypothesis three was rejected.

Discussion of findings

The first null hypothesis showed that there is significant difference between male and female undergraduates on factors influencing substance abuse. The reason for the differences observed may be due to the fact that many male students involve in substance abuse than their female counterparts. This result seems to confirm the findings of Okatachi (2003) that males tend to abuse drugs more that females. The NSDUH report (2010) also gave credence to the findings of this study when he observed that males living in poverty were nearly twice as likely as their female counterparts to have been in need of substances use treatment.

The second null hypothesis indicated that there is no significant difference among undergraduate students from different religious background on factors influencing substance abuse. The plausible reason for the no significant difference noted in the results may be due to the fact that the undergraduate students behave almost in the same manner, and they have similar thought pattern irrespective of their religious background. These findings agreed with research findings reported by Kamsky (1997) that drug usage appears to be part of development process that is the process of being socialized into gangs and peers.

Table four shows the significant difference among undergraduate students from different family setting on factors influencing substance abuse. The reason for the difference observed may be due to the fact that children from separated family are prone to various vices in the society because many of them lack parental care. This result was supported by findings Okatahi (2003) who reported that children having single parents are more likely to

engage in drug abuse. This is because of inadequate care and supervision given to such children. Conger R.D. et al (1994) also reported that lack of parental support; monitoring and communication have been significantly related to frequency of drinking, heavy drinking and drunkenness among adolescents.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings from this study it is concluded that peer influence is a major factors influencing substance abuse among undergraduate students. The findings of this study revealed that:

(1) There is significant difference among male and female undergraduate students on factors influencing substance abuse. (2) There is no significant difference among undergraduate students from different religious background on factors influencing substance abuse. (3) There is significant difference among undergraduate students from different family setting on factors influencing substance abuse.

Implications for Counseling

Counselors are saddled with enormous task of understanding, promoting and encouraging behaviour patterns that are associated with good health and pursuit of healthy behaviour (Smith, 1998). Hence they tend to be interested in general welfare of students. Their major concern is on how students will develop socially acceptable behaviour and how students will develop their potentiality to the maximum level. Thus, the findings of this study, point to the need to utilize and improve guidance and counseling support services in tertiary institutions of learning with a view to promote healthy living among undergraduates. This can be done by employing more professional counselors into tertiary Institution and give them necessary supports to perform their roles. Counselors should be organizing different programmes to promote healthy living among the undergraduate students, counselors should organize peer support groups among undergraduates (peer educating) that will be saddled with the responsibility of education their peers in order to encourage development of healthy attitudes/behaviour in relation to substance abuse.

The counselor should also be organizing seminars, workshops regularly on healthy living especially on the need to stop and prevent substance abuse.

The counselor should be working in collaboration with agent of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency to give awareness and enlightenment lectures

to undergraduate students on the consequences and hazards of substance abuse. This is necessary because knowledge is power.

Information is one of the powerful tools for behaviour change; therefore there is need for counselors to present messages that appeal young people's motives on the need to stop using substance.

The counselor should be organizing group counseling/individual counseling as rehabilitation programme for those who have been engaging in substance abuse for them to have a change of behaviour.

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Table 1: Summary Table Showing Factors Influencing Substance abuse among undergraduate students

S/N	FACTORS	MEAN	RANKING
1.	Peer	14.50	1st
2.	Societal	13.90	2nd
3.	Parental	13.78	3rd
4.	Individual	13.42	4th
5.	School	13.17	5th

Table 2: Mean Standard Deviations and t-value of Male and Female Undergraduate Students on Factors Influencing Substance Abuse.

Gender	No	– X	SD	DF	t-value	Critical t-value
Male	744	62.83	9.24	2	10.73 1.96	
Female	456	52.32	6.57	1,118		

*P<0.05, df = 2 and 1,118

Table 3: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of undergraduate students from different religious background on factors influencing substance abuse

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	DF	Mean Square	Cal.F-value	Critical F-value
Between Groups	121.2480	2	35.0712	1.64	3.00
Within Groups	7122.1318	1,118	22.4400		
Corrected Total	7243.3798	1,200			

$P > 0.05$ df 2, and 1,118, critical $f = 3.00$. NS

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value of Undergraduate Students Factors Influencing Substance abuse on the basis of family setting.

Family Setting	H	X	SD	DF	t-cal Critical F-value
Intact family	700	58.41	7.42	2	2.87 1.96
Separated family	500	62.60	6.88	1,118	

* $P < 0.05$, df = 2 and 1,118