



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Knowledge, attitude, and practice of substance abuse among adolescent in south-west Nigeria

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Abstract

Aim: Gaining understanding of the knowledge, perception, and practice of substance abuse among Adolescent in southwest Nigeria.

Study Design: A non-experimental research design was used for the study, and a total of 133 respondents were selected from cross sectional administered questionnaire in selected secondary schools in Owo Metropolis, Ondo State, Nigeria. The study was carried out at Achievers University Owo, Southwestern Nigeria.

Methodology: Questionnaire from the respondents was used, was simple comprising of logically and easily understandable questions relating to the topic and answering the research question. The questionnaire was made to measure what it is supposed to measure as accurately and consistently as possible. The stactical results of the descriptive data were obtained using the Statical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20) and relevant descriptive and inferential statistical method was employed.

Results: The results revealed a total of 133 students from four different schools in Ile-East Local Government area in Ondo State, Nigeria. The demographic data showed that there were more males among these schools representing 60.2% of the entire sample size. Majority of the sample size also showed between 15 and 16 years old representing 47.4% and 21.8% respectively. 91.7% of them had received information about substance abuse, most of them from their peers (49.6%) and school (27.8%). 78.2% of the respondents indicated, that they had never used psychoactive substance before, majority gave several reasons such as it is a bad for their health which took most reason (38.3%), other reasons include fear of the repercussions (11.3%), and other gave no reason (17.35). Minority of them admitted having used psychoactive substances at a time (21.8%) and 125 of this minority agree that they used it occasionally, when it is available and at parties. 34.6% of the respondents had a family members that abuses drugs or other psychoactive substances, most of them were relatives (15.8%) and their fathers (12.8%), which shows influence family members and relatives have on substance abuse.

Conclusion: The adolescents were analyzed to have fair knowledge of substance abuse, its effect as well as a fair attitude towards it.

Keywords: Substance abuse; Psychoactive substances; Adolescents; Drug rehabilitation; Psychotherapy

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1. Introduction

Substance abuse is a global challenge with detrimental effects on health, wealth, and security of nations (UNODC, 2010). A study (Reddy *et al.*, 2010) reported that 12% of Nigeria youths had ever used at least one illegal drug such as codeine, tramadol, heroin, mandrax and cocaine. This figure is the highest in the region. Given the medical and social harm caused by these drugs, it is important to understand the extent of their use amongst sub populations and explore the effective ways to combat them.

According to Webster dictionary 2018, an adolescent is a young person developing into an adult. Wikipedia also defines an adolescent as a person who is in transitional stage of physical and psychological development. WHO. 2018 gives the age range of adolescents as being from ages 10-19 but different countries have their age range but generally adolescents fall between this age ranges.

According to W.H.O. 2018, substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. According to Wikipedia 2018, substance abuse also known as drug abuse is a patterned use of a drug in which the consumer consumes the substance in amounts or in methods which are harmful to themselves or others.

From the record of drugs abuse in Nigeria, the Northwest has a statistic of 37.47 percent of the drug victims in the country, while the Southwest has been rated second with 17.32 percent, the south-East has been rated third with 13.5percent, North-central has 11.71 percent, while the North-east zone has 8.54 percent of the drug users in the country (Akannam, 2017). In Nigeria, the estimated lifetime consumption of cannabis among the population is 10.8 percent, followed by psychotropic substances like benzothiazines and amphetamine-type stimulants 10.6 percent, heroin 1.6 percent, and cocaine 1.4 percent, in both urban and rural areas. Drugs abuse appears to be common among males with 94.2 percent than female's 5.8 percent, and the age of first use is 10 to 29 years. The use of volatile organic solvents is 0.53 percent, and is widely spread among the street children, in school youth's and women. Multiple drug use happens nationwide with 7.88 percent to varying degree (UNODC, 2010).

The most abused drugs include marijuana, alcohol, amphetamines, hallucinogens, steroids, tobacco, cocaine, heroin, over the counter and prescription drugs such as codeine, valium, Percocet's, pentazocine. (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2014)

Adolescents experiment with drugs or continue taking drugs for several reasons which include: to feel good, to fit in. to feel better, to do better, to experiment (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2014).

Effects of substance abuse range from mild complications such as behavioral changes to severe complications such as physiological diseases, mental health issues among so many. The effects of drug abuse on the body depends on the way in which the abused drug is delivered or its effects on the brain neurotransmitters, these effects include changes in heart rate, changes in appetite, heart attack, heart and lung diseases, hepatitis, brain disorders and mental illnesses (Gateway Drugs and Treatment 2018).

Management of substance abuse include several methods such as voluntary cessation of the use which is usually difficult in most times and can lead to withdrawal syndrome, rehabilitation of drug users in facilities, psychotherapy, occupational therapy. (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2014)

Drug prevention programs are designed to provide the education and support necessary to diminish drug dependency in communities, schools, and the workplace. Drug abuse prevention has become an important first step in informing specific individuals about the dangers of addiction; prevention techniques and where to find recovery help if it should be deemed necessary.

Drug rehabilitation is the processes of medical or psychotherapeutic treatment for dependency on psychoactive substances such as alcohol, prescription drugs, and street drugs such as cocaine, heroin, or amphetamines. The general intent is to enable the patient to confront substance dependence, if present, and cease substance abuse to avoid the psychological, legal, financial, social, and physical consequences that can be caused, especially by extreme abuse. Treatment includes medication for depression or other disorders, counseling by experts and sharing of experience with other addicts.

2. Materials and Methods

Table 1 Demographic Data (Frequency Distribution)

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15	63	47.4
16	29	21.8
17	13	9.8
18	15	11.3
19	13	9.8
SEX		
Male	80	60.2
Female	53	39.8
SCHOOL		
Imade College	29	21.8
Methodist high school	32	24.1
St Louis Grammar School	23	17.3
Owo High School	49	36.8
RELIGION		
Christian	115	86.5
Islam	13	9.8
Traditional	5	3.8
ETHNICITY		
Yoruba	115	86.5
Igbo	14	10.5
Others	4	3.0
CLASS		
SS1	74	55.6
SS2	54	40.6
SS3	5	3.8
FAMILYTYPE		
Monogamous	72	54.1
Polygamous	23	17.3
Single parents	29	21.8
Living with no parents	9	6.8
BIRTH ORDER		
First Child	43	32.3
Second Child	32	24.1
Third Child	36	27.1

Last Child	22	16.5
PARENTS LIVING PATTERN		
Living Together	105	78.9
Live In Different Places	21	15.8
Divorced	3	2.3
Parents Deceased	4	3.0

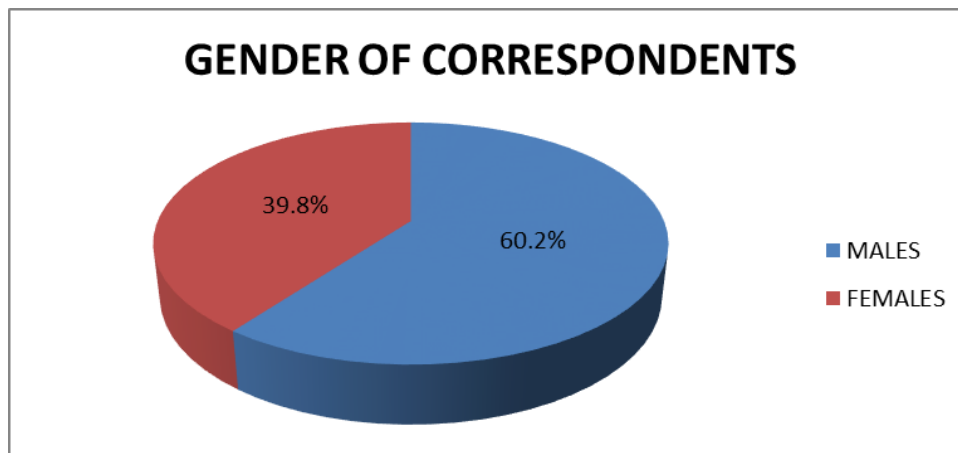


Figure 1 Correspondent's genders.

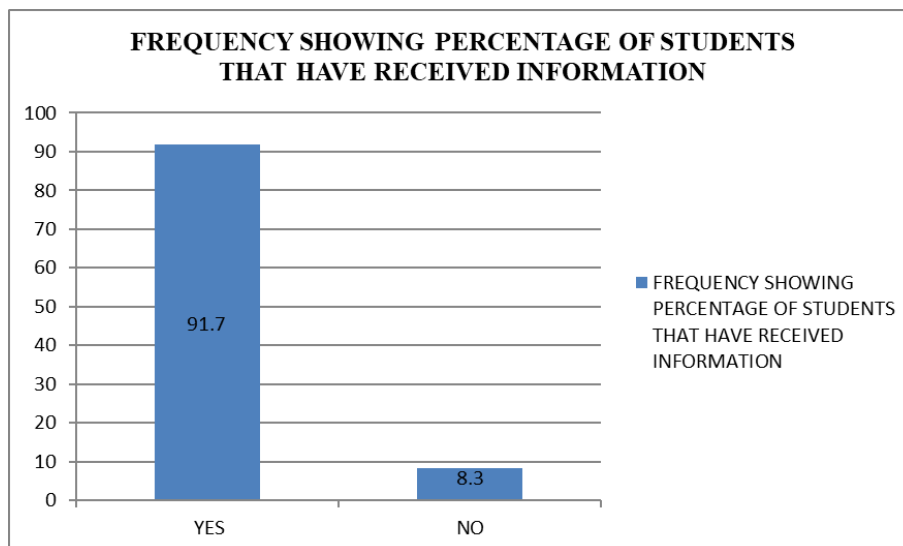


Figure 2 Column showing frequency of students that have received information on substance of abuse

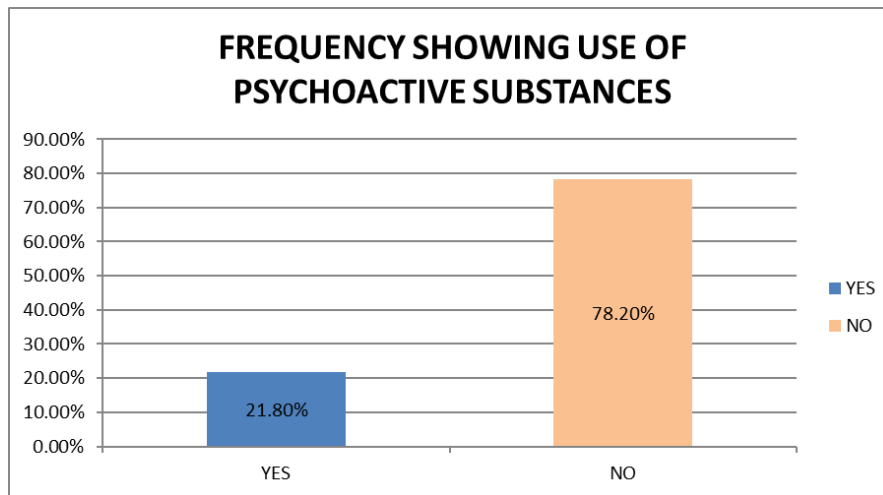


Figure 3 The frequency of adolescents that have used psychoactive substances.

Table 2 Frequency distribution table showing practice of adolescents on substance abuse.

Does any of your family members abuse drugs	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	46	34.6
No	87	65.4
If yes, who?		
Mother	7	5.3
Father	17	12.8
Sibling	1	.8
Distant relative	21	15.8
Source of supply?		
Dealer	11	8.3
Household	4	3.0
Friends	10	7.5
Produced by self	4	3.0
Predisposing factor?		
Ignorance	6	4.5
Curiosity	5	3.8
Peer influence	11	8.3
Easy access to drugs	7	5.3
Route of use?		
Sniffing	1	.8
Smoking	2	1.5
Orally	26	19.5

3. Discussion

In this study questionnaires were distributed which involved 133 correspondents and the demographics showed there were more males 60.2% than females 39.8%, the demographics showed that majority were between ages 15 and 16 years old, majority of the correspondents were Christians 86.5% and from a monogamous family setting 54.1%, most of the parents of the correspondents were living together and majority of the correspondents were the first child of their parents.

Testing the knowledge of the correspondents, it was discovered that as much as 91.1% had at a time received information regardless of the depth on substance abuse, 76.8% of the correspondent's exhibited knowledge on what a drug was and as much as 50% understood what substance abuse was. When asked about types of psychoactive substances, a majority indicated drugs like tramadol and codeine as the most popular types of psychoactive substances they were familiar with. On the dangers of abusing drugs, 54.9% of the correspondents indicated that substance abuse could lead to mental disorders and 24.1% indicated it could lead to death. When asked about the source of their information, up to half 49.6% of the correspondents indicated they got their information from members of their peer group and 29.8% indicated they got their knowledge from school.

Table 5 discusses the attitudes of adolescents towards substance abuse, 78.2% of the correspondents showed a positive attitude towards substance abuse and indicated that they do not accept the use of psychoactive substances and 84.2% indicated they won't advise anyone to abuse substances, 59.4% of the correspondents agreed that there was a risk of addiction from continuous use, and it was possible to protect oneself from addiction. Further testing their attitudes, although 60.9% of them agreed it was easy to get psychoactive substances, as much as 69.9% of them indicated they had no plans to use psychoactive substances.

Assessing the practice of the correspondents, only 21.8% indicated to have ever use any psychoactive substance, most of them occasionally 12.0% and mostly when it is available and at parties, also most of them cited peer influence as a major influence in their decision to use psychoactive substances. In the remaining 78.2% who had never used psychoactive substance, most of them indicated its effect on the health as the major reason for not using psychoactive substances followed by being indifferent and having no reason then fear.

Table 7 talks about the effects of the use psychoactive substances and a majority (80.6%) admitted that use of substances has negative effects and can cause mental disorders, behavioral changes, and other diseases such as diabetes mellitus and cancer, most of the drug users indicated they felt mostly high after using psychoactive substances and felt more accepted among peers.

The concluding part of the research highlighted preventive and control measures for substance abuse and the correspondents generally agreed that school health programs, community health programs, proper education and communication between parents and adolescents were effective in preventing a controlling substance abuse.

Figure 13 and 14 is a correlation table used to test the hypothesis as shown in Figure 13, the p-value is 0.400 which is greater than 0.05, hence, there is no significant relationship between sex and attitude & practice on substance abuse among adolescents.

As shown in Figure 14, the p-value is 0.866 which is greater than 0.05, hence, there is no significant relationship between family type and attitude & practice on substance abuse among adolescents the p-values of both correlation studies testing each hypothesis indicates that both the sex of the individual and family type of the individual has no effect on the adolescent's attitude and practice on substance abuse.

Previous studies on the knowledge attitude and practice of adolescents have been numerous, The findings from the data collected showed that the adolescent's knowledge on substance abuse, psychoactive substances, its types and its effects was fair in Owo Local Government which shows a similar result to the research conducted by Morales et al, (2012) In the study conducted by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in 2009, all the participants were secondary school students/pupils and were found to have adequate knowledge on psychoactive substances. The students considered themselves to be sufficiently informed about drugs, their effects and the problems associated with their use. This research finding is consistent with findings reported by Morales et al, (2012). Also, this research results showed that there was low prevalence on the use of psychoactive substances among adolescents in the selected schools which is also similar to the research carried out by Matthew Onoja in 2010 which showed that the prevalence of substance abuse was 22.1% and 15.3% among private and public secondary school students respectively.

The concluding part of the results showed that adolescents generally believe that school health programs, community health programs, proper education and communication between parents and adolescents were effective in preventing an controlling substance abuse which was similar to a research carried out by Indian Journal of Medical Research in 2013 on the most effective methods of preventing substance abuse in India, they identified several methods of preventing drug abuse such as family prevention, community and school based prevention programmes, and health care providers role and results showed a 20% improvement (in grade point averages), decreased school dropouts, reduce hard drug use by 60% and decreased drug use control problems and progression to heavier drug use (Bharath et al 2013).

4. Conclusion

Adolescents are at very crucial stage of development, due to several changes occurring within their bodies, they tend to make rash decisions which are one of the reasons they engage in several antisocial behaviours and vices hence much effort should be put in guiding adolescents by educating them properly on substance of abuse and its elements. Paramedics personnels in the community, should be trained and equipped with tools to help combat substance abuse, which is fast becoming an issue of national importance.

Recommendations

We recommend that there should be more awareness campaign within the rural communities, Good Parenting in the upbringing of their children with effective communication in educating and counselling of Adolescents is of essence. Government should place a high levy on Alcoholic beverages and ban the importation and sale of psychoactive substances. Government should engage adolescents in recreational and vocational activities can be helpful in diverting their attention from substance abuse. We also suggest that further study, should recruit a large sample subject in different ethnicities within the country to compare and draw conclusions from our study.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of ethical approval

Ethical approval was obtained from Health research Ethics Committee, Achievers University, Owo .

Statement of informed consent

Oral informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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