



Research Article

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The Functional and Interactive Perspectives of Substance Use among Young People in Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the functional and interactive perspectives of substance use among young people in Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 400 respondents in the four (4) faculties of the institution. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation. The findings revealed three domains (changing mood, social purposes, and sexual effects) of functional structure as the major reasons for substance use. The interactive perspective revealed that interpersonal influences ranked highest characterised by peer pressure (54.3%). Intrapersonal influences of substance use were to gain courage and to relieve stress. The study recommended the need for education on the use of illicit substance, and intervention strategies to reduce the usage as well as consequences as this could negatively impact the health of young people and increase the likelihood of anti-social behaviours in families and school-dropouts.

Keywords: substance use, young people, interaction, function, perspective, perception

1. Introduction

Substance or drug usage without professional recommendation is a major social problem and concern both in global south and global north with Nigerian not being exempted. The public health challenges associated with the use of illicit substance in nations of the world has suffered a considerable cost as a result of damages caused by its abuse (World Drug Report, 2005). Psychoactive substance use whether

ingested orally, inhaled or sniffed can be abused when it poses danger to the normal functioning of body systems and could modify perception and behaviours of an individual (Balogun, 2006; World Health Organization, WHO, 2003; Okoye, 2001). Although not all substance use is detrimental to health, it becomes detrimental based on the frequency of its use (Rickwood et al., 2005). In the global south especially Europe, United Kingdom, and the United States of America, adolescents are major users of different drug types (Johnston, et al, 2000; Boys et al., 2001; European Monitoring Centre of Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2008). In Nigeria, a representation of global north the use of drugs is higher among the age group of 15-39 years with the widespread in the Southern region. (United Nations Office Drugs and Crimes, UNDOC, 2018). The majorly consumed drugs include cannabis, opioids - tramadol and cough syrup with codeine by 10.6 million, 4.6 million and 2.4 million respectively among the 250 million Nigerian populace (UNDOC, 2018; National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). The commonly consumed drug in Nigeria is also similar both in Europe and United States of America.

According to Olugbenga-Bello et al., (2009), majority of Nigerian undergraduates usually fall within the age range of 15-25 years and could be referred to as young people. Young people have taken to drugs which is detrimental to their health, social and academic performance. The use of illicit substance like cocaine, heroin and amphetamine was associated with lower rate of disease and death when compared to alcohol and tobacco (Obot & Shekhar, 2005). Nevertheless, substance use such as cocaine, heroin, amphetamine or alcohol are widely discouraged (Odejide, 2000). Psychoactive use of drug or substance data is not readily available especially for young people in Nigeria. Although, World Health Organisation (2007) initiated a (WHO, 2007) Global school-based health survey with an aspect addressing substance use among the 13-15 years individuals in African and American regions.

However, there is need to explore and address the perspectives of functions and the interactions of substance usage among young people. The importance of the perspectives of substance use among young people is crucial to gain insight and have a better view of factors contributing to the experimental, exploration and risk-taking behaviours of this developmental phase. Arising from these, this study investigated the prevalence of substance use, functional and interactive perspectives of substance use among undergraduate students in Moshood Abiola Polytechnic Abeokuta, Ogun State Nigeria.

The study addresses the following objectives:

1. identify the major substance use;
2. ascertain the reasons for substance use; and
3. identify major factors interacting with substance use

2. Theoretical Approach

This study applied the functionalist and interactionist perspectives out of the four sociological theories to understand substance use among young people. Guerrero (2005) described the four major perspectives from which substance use can be understood- conflict, feminist, interactionist, and functionalist. The focus of this study is the application of functionalist and interactionist perspectives. Functionalist perspective provides clue and reasons associated with substance use. Functional structure includes the major reasons for substance use among young people (Guerrero, 2005; Boys et al., 2001).

On the other hand, with interactionism, it is believed that people take to substance use because of their relationship with others (Guerrero, 2005). This theory of drug use takes the position that drug-taking behavior is caused by several large pattern of intra-individual and extra-individual forces. Huba, et al. (1979b) in which they identified and differentiated four major domains of interest hypothetically.

3. Previous Literature

Substance use is common among young people in tertiary institutions in Nigeria for different reasons. For instance, in polytechnics, Danjuma, et al. (2015) investigated the viewpoint of 220 students on the non-conventional use of substance among youth in a polytechnic in Niger state, Nigeria. Unconventional substance was identified as deliberate inhalation of whitish end of lizard dung,

hydrogen sulphide gas, seed of zakani, premium motor spirit, rubber solution, Nail polish cleaners, pawpaw leaves and seed, moringa leaves, gun powder, tear gas, toilet odours among others. The findings revealed that the use of unconventional substance was common among rural settlers (73.7%) while 50% reported that most of the unconventional users are aware of dangers associated. The implication of this is that substance use has sociocultural backings among its users.

Furthermore, use of substance does not exempt private schools despite security measures in place to checkmate students. Adekeye, et al. (2015), assessed alcohol and substance use among undergraduates in two private Universities in Southwest Nigeria. Alcohol Assessment Questionnaire was adopted to address the prevalence, and the relationship between parental use, peer influence and gender on student's use of alcohol and other substance among 431 adolescents. The findings revealed cigarette, alcohol, and coffee drinking as major substance use with male students consuming more substance than females. Major reasons for consuming substance were for boldness and strength, enjoyment, and curiosity. Okoza, et al. (2009) examined the types of drugs students' abuse in a private university. Students in the University abused drugs such as alcohol, kolanut, tobacco, marijuana, librium, valium, dexamphetamine, mandrax, Chinese capsule and cocaine; students used drugs mostly once a week; the functional use of drug was to feel good, to keep awake, to sleep, or to enhance sex.

In the same vein in public University, Essien (2010), study on drug use and abuse at Federal university of Technology, Minna. with 200 students discovered that majority of the substance users were males, with few females between 15-35 years. Students from polygamous homes were susceptible to external influence and pro-drug pressure from friends. Also, students from influential families tend to become substance users because of their higher allowances received from home. The researchers also claimed that students from low-income homes engaged in drugs to improve their low-self-esteem/control which could predispose them to further health problems and antisocial victims. Ehirim, et al. (2011) discovered that prevalence of alcohol use was high among male undergraduate students in Owerri, South-East Nigeria. The study reported that 45.5% of the 378 alcohol users admitted that it makes them feel bad while 55.5% enjoyed the good feelings they derived from it. Majority said it enhances pleasure during sexual intercourse while 46.3% reported residual depressive felling or remorse hours after use.

In Kenya, Atwoli, et al. (2011) study on prevalence of substance among college students in Eldoret, Western Kenya showed that alcohol consumption has effect on the behaviours including quarrels and fights, loss and damage to property, regretted sex, unprotected sex, and medical problems. In Brazil, Brandão et al., conducted a study on the prevalence of Alcohol Consumption among the students newly enrolled at a public University in Alagoas. Among the 1435 of newly admitted students, it was observed that 71.3% had used alcohol – beer and wine while 56.7% of those who said they had drunk to intoxication were men. Majority started drinking alcohol from homes, followed by homes of their friends and colleagues (interpersonal interaction). Consumption of alcohol had negative effect on the education pursuits of students such as skipping classes. Among Medical students, substance use seems to be common. In Jamaica, a study on psychoactive substance uses among medical/health faculty undergraduate students revealed that alcohol to be the most widely used substance and half of the respondents reported their age of first use of psychoactive substance at 15-19 years (Whitehorne-Smith, et al., 2015). Also, Makanjuola, et al. (2007), study on psychoactive substance use among 1,420 registered medical students in Nigerian found that the most currently used substances were mild stimulants (33.3%), alcohol (13.6%), sedative (7.3%), and tobacco (3.2%). Except for tobacco, the use of these substances seemed to be only instrumental.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The study utilised descriptive survey design to investigate the functional and interactive perspectives of substance use among young people in Moshood Abiola Polytechnic Ojere, Abeokuta. Moshood

Abiola Polytechnic was established in 1980 with only 220 students and was named after Moshood Abiola in 1993. Abeokuta is the capital city of Ogun State located at southwest zone of Nigeria with 3million inhabitants occupying 16,400-kilometre landmass. The school has four (4) faculties namely: Faculty of business and management studies, Faculty of communication and information technology, Faculty of environmental studies, and Engineering faculty and Faculty of science and technology.

4.2 Participants

The participants were 400 young people studying at the polytechnic from four faculties. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 217 males and 183 females (*Mean* = 22 years, *SD* = 2.94) as seen in Table 1. The stages for the selection involved random selection of four faculty available in the polytechnic. Then, random selection of four (4) departments from the various faculties as well as selection of four (4) programmes from the various department (OND 1, OND 2 and HND 1, HND 2) and lastly, the selection of hundred (100) students (fifty male and fifty female) each from the four selected department in appropriate programmes.

4.3 Research Instrument, Data Collection and Data Analysis

World Health Organization (WHO, 1980) questionnaire on drug-use surveys was adapted and validated to address the focus of the study. employed. The questionnaire was divided into three (3) categories in which the first section contains respondent's information on socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, while the second contains information on the functions of substance use, the third section contains information on the interactive perspective influencing substance abuse. The questionnaires were administered during general classes that bring students in a particular level together, and collected on the spot. This ensured 100% response rate.

4.4 Results

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 400)

Variables	Frequency (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age			
15-20	142 (35.5)		
21-25	206 (51.5)	22 years	2.949
26-30	43 (10.8)		
31-35	9 (2.3)		
Sex			
Male	217 (54.2)		
Female	183 (45.7)		
Marital Status			
Single	379 (94.8)		
Married	20 (5.0)		
Divorced	1 (0.2)		
Level			
ND-1	118 (29.4)		
ND-2	91 (22.8)		
HND-1	92 (23.0)		
HND-2	99 (24.8)		
Religion			
Christianity	268 (67.0)		
Islam	125 (31.2)		
Traditional	7 (1.8)		

Functional structure reveals the major reasons for substance use among young people. With the changing of mood structure, young people feel high (46.8%), and get courage to socialise (35%) get excited (32.0%) once they take substance. The social purposes of using substance among young people includes relate with peers (37.1%); and sexual effect is basically to have desire for sex and perform well during sexual intercourse (33.0%).

Table 2: Functional Reasons for Substance abuse (n = 400).

Variables	YES Frequency (%)	NO Frequency (%)
I use it because my friends are taking it.	151 (37.1)	249 (62.2)
I use substances to feel high.	187 (46.8)	213 (53.2)
I use it when I want to socialize	140 (35.0)	260 (65.0)
I use substances to relieve stress and feel good	121 (30.5)	278 (69.5)
I use substances to feel on top like adults	64 (16.0)	336 (84.0)
I take substances because my parents, uncles/role models use it	54 (13.5)	346 (86.5)
Substances gets me excited	128 (32.0)	272 (68.0)
I use substance when I desire to have sex or perform well during sex	132 (33.0)	268 (67.0)

Table 3 presents the mean responses of factors influencing substance use by participants. The interpersonal influences ranked highest characterised by peer pressure with mean score of 2.21. Intrapersonal influences of substance use were to gain courage and to relieve stress with mean response of 1.92 and 1.61 respectively. Of course, with sociocultural perspective, family background, role model usage, and easy availability of substance that could be paid attention to factors to be consider in any cultural context influencing young people's use of drug.

Table 3: Mean Responses of Factors Influencing Substances abuse by young people (N = 400)

Variables	Major Freq. (%)	Minor Freq. (%)	Not Factor Freq. (%)	Mean	Rank
Peer pressure	217 (54.3)	50 (12.5)	133 (33.2)	2.21	1 st
Easy Availability of substance	72 (18.0)	113 (28.3)	215 (53.8)	1.63	3 rd
Role model usage	86 (21.5)	83 (20.8)	231 (57.8)	1.60	6 th
Attendance of social functions	75 (18.8)	102 (25.4)	223 (55.8)	1.62	4 th
Desire to remain `awake at night	74 (18.5)	82 (20.5)	244 (61.0)	1.57	8 th
Family background	52 (13.0)	78 (19.6)	270 (67.8)	1.45	9 th
Relieve stress	94 (23.6)	76 (19.0)	230 (57.5)	1.61	5 th
Living with someone who uses drugs	58 (14.5)	126 (31.5)	216 (54.3)	1.60	7 th
Gaining courage	155 (38.8)	71 (17.8)	174 (43.5)	1.92	2 nd

Also, the effect of substance and drug use is evident in feeling high, sleep disturbance, and craving for more substance use with mean response of

5. Discussion of Findings

Majority of the young people were between age 21 and 25 years, followed by age 15-20 years with average mean age of 22. This seems to be consistent with those of Olugbenga-Bello, Adebipe and Abodurin (2009) that majority of Nigerian undergraduates usually fall within the age range of 14-25 years. These findings also corroborate that of UNODC (2018) of young people between 15-39 has been grossly engaged in substance use. This affirms Adekeye et al., (2015), discovery indeed that this age bracket is a time of experimentation, exploration, curiosity and identity search. The findings also showed that majority (54.2%) of the respondents were males as against their female counterparts of

183 (45.7%) and majority (94.8%) of the respondents were single. This implies that male students are more likely to use and abuses drugs than female. This is consistent with the data obtained by Essien (2010) and Brandao *et al.*, that males consume more alcohol than females. According to Ehirim *et al.*, unmarried students have the free will of abusing substances than married ones. Substance abuse are easily associated with male genders living alone (Makanjuola *et al.*, 2007),(Daramola & Obembe, 2007). This could be attributed to less responsibility and carefree life lived by these set of undergraduates who have little or no partner and family to cater for or report to except for their distant parents. However, if not curbed, could pose a great detriment to their health, society, and future. Though both religions enjoined members against substance abuse but it is now evident that Christians abuses substances more than any religion. Laws which prohibit substance abuse such as sharia law in northern Nigeria has contributed to alcohol abuse reduction but give rise to other unconventional substances. Nevertheless, little or no study exist to back this claim.

The current study found that the commonly consumed substance among young people include alcohol, cigarette, cough syrup and codeine without doctor's prescription. There are similarities between the responses of young people in this study and those described by UNODC (2018). Adekeye, *et al.* (2015), Whitehorne-Smith, *et al.* (2015) and Brandao *et al.*, asserted that cannabis, alcohol, cigarette, cough syrup and coffee drinking were major substance use in the society, tertiary institutions be it polytechnics, private and public universities. In fact, Brandao *et al.*, (2011) discovered that some of the undergraduates started consuming alcohol from home before their admission into the university. This implies that the prevalence of alcohol seems it's impossible to be eroded in any society. However, in this study most young people start drinking alcohol from the age of 19 years and above.

Based on theoretical perspectives, the functional structure includes the major reasons for substance use among young people (Guererro, 2005; Boys *et al.* 2001). With the changing of mood structure, young people feel high, socialise, get excited, and relieve stress. This finding is consistent with that of Ehirim, *et al.* (2011) who discovered that majority of the undergraduates for their study opine that substance use enhances pleasure during sexual intercourse while 46.3% reported residual depressive felling or remorse hours after use The social purposes of using substance among young people is because their friends consume substance, socialise, gain mature identity. This finding corroborates the ideas of Brandão *et al.*, (2011) that majority of young people are enticed to drink alcohol as they company with their friends and colleague's home. The sexual effect is basically to have desire for sex and perform well during sexual intercourse. This finding is in line with Okoza *et al.* (2009) who investigated various drugs and one major discovery was that the functional use of the drug was to enhance sex. However, Atwoli, *et al.* (2011) affirms a note of caution that use of substance has been traced to negative effects on young people because they engage in unprotected sex and regretted having sex. This functional domains results shows association with interactive perspective. This is simply because taking for instance, interpersonal relations with friend had led some young people to use substance. Generally, only few young people consume substance because their parent's uncles or role models consume it. This is an unanticipated finding though, as one will expect young people to take after their loved ones. A possible explanation for this could be that the role models, parents or relatives of young people do not consume any illicit substance. However, this explanation is with caution since it lacks scientific backings. Other reasons discovered in the study are in line with. Adekeye *et al.*, (2015), including bring bold and strong, enjoyment, curiosity among others.

According to Huba *et al.* (1979), three domains of interactive perspective of substance use has been established to further explain the factors influencing young people including interpersonal – intimate support system; intrapersonal – individual personality and character and Sociocultural. – culture and environment. which includes; interpersonal, intrapersonal and sociocultural. The interpersonal influences ranked highest and was characterized by peer pressure. Peer pressure was the most interesting finding in relation to interpersonal domain of interactive perspective of drug use. The implication of this is that peer influence is a major factor to substance use among young people. This result may be explained by the fact that young people mingle and company with peers

who have similar interest, of same age or almost and may come from same background and social class. This could further lead to their being influenced into delinquent behaviours that are anti-social and pose grave danger to their holistic development. An important agent of socialization such as university environment opens door to another agent of socialization called peer group that are capable of reorienting young people into benign drinking that can lead to addiction. The frequency of opportunity for peer interaction skyrockets during the university education and peers influences the consumption of beverage (Brandao *et al.*). Desire to have sex or perform well during sex as found in this study could lead to drug and alcohol intoxication which concurrently affect judgment, leading to unsafe sexual practices. Adekeye *et al.*, (2015) implies that undergraduates engage in substance use in order to have intrapersonal strength. One important finding with respect to sociocultural domain is the easy availability of substance use and family background. This implies that the family and environment young people stay will determine their consumption pattern of substance use. Although these are minor factors, but the menace of substance use cannot be curbed without closure of this open access. Danjuma *et al.* (2015) allude to the fact that the non-conventional users are cultural than health conscious.

6. Conclusion

Substance use is inevitable in any society. However, this study has been able to show that the disadvantages of illicit substance use is more than the advantages. Alcohol, cigarette, codeine and marijuana has gained ground in the heart and minds of young people as they are the mostly consumed. Furthermore, the study discovered domains of functional and interactive perspective of substance use which can provide more details for policy makers, researchers and counsellors to provide strategies in curbing substance use among young people. The domains of functional structure of substance use include changing mood, social purposes and sexual effects.

Regardless of the function and interaction of substance, the side effects can affect the health of young people which can lead to sudden death if caution is not taken and drastic steps towards intervention strategies must be introduced to young people who abuse substance. The study recommends that there is need for education and intervention strategies on the negative consequence of substance use. Also, there should be drug education and regular counselling of young people to create and sustain the awareness, orientate and re orientate on the consequences of substance abuse.

The implication of socio-demographic findings provides insight into the role age, sex, religion plays in substance use, abuse, dependency and addiction. Conclusion that can be drawn from these is that adolescence and young adults is a delicate developmental period that predisposes them to substance abuse. These age groups (15 - 35 years) should be watched closely by their parents, families and lecturers. Available research present from academic and non-academic standpoint has it that the family is the most crucial factor in protecting children and young people from drug abuse and other dangers. When parents spend quality time with their children and monitor their activities, it helps ameliorate vulnerability to substance use in children. Therefore, a family skills training programme aimed at equipping parents with the skills they need to help to protect their families from drug abuse should be instituted. According to United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (2009). Guide to implanting family skills training programmes for drug abuse prevention, this intervention will not focus only on biological parents, but all significant others (grandparents, aunts, older siblings, hired caregivers, adoptive and foster parents) in a child's life since they have been found to serve as a risk and protective factors in substance abuse.

7. Recommendations

Emanating from the findings, discussions and conclusions in this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. The researcher advocates regular counseling of undergraduates to create and sustain the awareness of the consequences of substance abuse among adolescents, young adults and adult in tertiary institutions.
2. The student Union governments (SUG) should organize an awareness program every session to orientate and re-orientate students on the negative effects of substances abuse.
3. Federal Government should set up new national health policy that will ensure the effective control of the availability and accessibility of these substances and review existing policies and a cross-national study similar to the present study should be conducted using undergraduate students.
4. Parents and school authorities should focus on preventing early use of drugs or alcohol in order to reduce or eradicate future drug use and addiction.

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