

# IMPACT OF DRUG ABUSE ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES: PERSPECTIVES OF AGBOWO COMMUNITY

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## ABSTRACT

Drug and substance abuse has really become a menace in our society. It has eaten deep to the social life of many undergraduate students and youths that they do not socialize without ingestion of one drug or the other. In their belief that it serves as an elixir that revitalize, rejuvenate and galvanized them to do greater things.

The paper adopted a community based cross section descriptive survey research design targeting a population of undergraduate students living around Agbowo community, Ibadan. 600 students were sampled and the results were subjected to analysis using SPSS 20.0 software.

The paper revealed that there is a significant relationship between the rate of drug abuse and economic status of their parent ( $\chi^2_c = 52.99$ ,  $df=2$   $P \leq 0.005$ ), there is a significance found between rate of drug abuse and their state of mental health ( $\chi^2_c = 56.08$ ,  $df=2$   $P \leq 0.005$ ) there were no significant difference between rate of drug abuse and their gender status ( $t_c = 0.82$ ,  $df= 598$ ,  $P \geq 0.05$ ). The study also reveal that there are no difference between the rate of drug abuse and student's religion ( $t_c = 0.13$ ,  $df= 599$ ,  $P \geq 0.05$ ).

The paper concludes that government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parents and religious organization and the society at large needed to intensify efforts in sensitizing the youth on the evil that are associated with drug and substance abuse. There is need to teach young children right from the formative age till they reach puberty about evils of drug abuse.

**Keywords :** Impact, Drug Abuse, Mental Health, undergraduate students

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse and substance abuse has really been a major vice that is common among the undergraduate students and youth in general. It has been a stimulant to many heinous and cruel crime in the society as the addiction to drugs has made many of the users become mentally unstable and most time become irrational in their behaviour.

Youths and adolescents are categories of human being that falls within the age range of thirteen and forty years. One can observe that this particular group of people is full of energy and has propensity for high and fast tempo life which drug or substance abuse can enhance.

According to Yusuf, Gazali and Abdulahi (2016), youths are the most susceptible and deeply involve group in the social menace of drugs abuse. However, drugs abuse among the youths has ruled discussion in the conventional media recently. The menace of drugs abuse in Nigeria has reached a frightening proportion and it permeated every thread in the society.

It is more common among the undergraduate's students of many higher institutions as they use most of this drug as a stimulant in order for them to be able to prepare for examination. Many of these drugs prevent them from sleeping for days thereby affecting their circadian rhythm. Once the circadian

rhythm is disturbed, the body becomes less rested and prone to stress. Prolonged states of restlessness can lead to mental instabilities in the life of drug abuser.

Mental illness is when a person's mind has not been in perfect state of health. The minds of mentally ill patients are either affected by events around them or as a result of substance or physical abuse.

## Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this paper is to determine impact of drug abuse on the mental health of University undergraduates: perspectives of Agbowo community while the specific objectives are:

- i. To know whether there is a relationship between parental status and student's rate of drug abuse
- ii. To determine whether there is a relationship between rate of drug abuse and their state of mental health
- iii. To determine whether gender influences rate of drug abuse.
- iv. To know whether their religion influences rate of drug abuse

## Review of the related Literature

Drug abuse is a menace that has been ravaging the nation for a long period of time. It is a major concern because the youth particularly those that fall under the age of 15 to 45 years old are much affected. Substance abuse is a worldwide challenge with negative effects on health, wealth and security of countries (UNODC, 2010).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Report (2005), stated that about 200 million people, or 5 percent of the world's population age between 15 and 65 have used drugs at least once in the last 12 months. It is the youth that form the nucleus of wealth earner

of any nation. It is therefore a major concern that drug addiction and abuse are more prevalent among them.

Amina (2016) argued that there are different kinds of drugs including the hard drugs and the prescribed drugs. "When you abuse any of them, it becomes drug abuse. When we talk of drug abuse, it could be the hard drugs including cocaine, weed among others and when we talk about prescribed drugs we mean codeine even though it's meant for medication some people use it for something else.

Coleman (2010) sees drug abuse as the situation when drug is taken more than it is prescribed. It could also be seen as the use of illicit drugs, or the abuse of prescription or over – the – counter drugs.

National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) report of 2010 also revealed that over 11% of people in the North-West zone use drugs. Onofa et.al. (2016) stated that Nigeria ranks among the highest users of dangerous drugs such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, benzodiazepines, cocaine and opioids. A review of the literature clearly indicates that there has been a steady increase in the prevalence of drug use and its associated consequences within the last three decades.

According to Yusuf et.al (2016) the commonly abused drugs are:

- **Alcohol:** Though legal, alcohol is a deadly substance, chiefly to a developing fetus when a mother drinks this drug during pregnancy. One of the most shared addictions, alcoholism can have overwhelming effects on the alcoholic individual's physical health, as well as his or her ability to function interpersonally and at work. Example of alcohol, beer, stout, ogogoro, burukutu, aspetesi, pito, palmwine, sapele water, kai kai they all contain alcohol.

- **Cocaine:** A drug that tends to arouse the nervous system, cocaine can be inhaled in powder form, smoked when in the form of rocks ("crack" cocaine), or injected when made into a liquid.
- **Nicotine:** The addictive material found in cigarettes, nicotine is actually one of the most addictive substances that exist. In fact, nicotine addiction is often compared to the intense addictiveness associated with opiates like heroin.
- **Phencyclidine:** Usually mentioned to as PCP, this drug can cause the user to feel extremely fearful, become quite violent and to have an uncommon amount of bodily strength. This can make the individual quite dangerous to others.
- **Sedative, hypnotic, or ant anxiety drugs:** As these substances subdue or depress the nervous system, they can cause death by respiratory arrest of the person who either uses these drugs in overdose or who mixes one or more of these drugs with another nervous system depressant drug (like alcohol, another sedative drug, or an opiate).

According to Mohasoa (2010) youth use substances because they are overawed by the tasks in their own lives or families, and society at large.

Yusuf et.al (2016) further stated that young people who doggedly abuse substances often experience an array of problems, including academic difficulties, health-related problems (including mental health), poor peer relationships, and involvement with the juvenile justice system. Additionally, there are consequences for family members, the community, and the entire society.

The effects of drug abuse and addiction on the academic performance of students are viewed by Akers (1991), Ballas (2006) and Akus (2010) to include:

1. it deadens the nervous system

2. It increases the heart beat
3. It causes the blood vessels to dilate
4. It causes bad digestion notably of vitamin B especially when taken on empty stomach.
5. It interferes with the power of judgment and poisons the higher brain and nerve centre.
6. Aggressiveness
7. Hopelessness
8. Selfishness
9. Impotence
10. Chest or lung pain
11. Frequent illness
12. Frequent hangovers.

Attah et.al (2016) postulates that hard drugs make the student develops unbalanced, the student tend to go mad and started behaving unusually, hence infiltrate a lot of diseases into the system of the student and may eventually lead to death.

## Research Design and population

The study was carried out among University undergraduate students living in Agbowo Community of Ibadan Nigeria, adopting a community based cross section descriptive survey research design targeting a population of undergraduate students living around Agbowo community, Ibadan.

## Data Analysis

600 students were sampled and the results were subjected to analysis using SPSS 20.0 software and basic statistical analyses such as frequency distributions, cross-tabulations and tests of statistical significance were carried out. Chi-square was used as a test of significance for categorical variables. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for continuous variables. A P-value less than 0.05 were accepted as significant for each statistical test.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age**

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
Under 15 years	-	-
16-20 Years	250	41.7%
21-25 Years	165	27.5%
26-30 Years	135	22.5%
31-35 Years	50	8.3%
36-40 Years	-	-
41 Years and above	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table I shows the frequency distribution of respondents by age. The highest distribution of the respondents fall within the age range of 16-25years (41.7%), age 21-25years (27.5%), age 26-30years (22.5%), age 31-35years (8.3%) this is corroborated by Attah et.al (2016) in his study that 38% of his respondents falls within 15-25 years.

**Table 2: Frequency distribution of Respondents by Sex**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	300	50.0%
Female	300	50.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table shows that the sex distribution of the respondents are equally distributed with both gender having (300)50% each. This negates the assertion of Attah et.al (2016) that the majority of the respondents are male giving 146(76%) while 46 (24%) are female

**Table 3: Chi square analysis of the rate of drug abuse of students and parental status**

Economic Status of Parents	Rate of Drug Abuse		Total	X <sup>o</sup> Cal value	X <sup>o</sup> Crit value	d .f	Sig. Level
	High	Low					
Rich	100	100	200				
Moderately Rich	60	140	200	52.99	5.99	2	0.005

Poor	120	80	200				
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>600</b>				

There is significant relationship between the rates of drug abuse of students and their parental economic status.

**Table 4: Chi square analysis of the rate of drug abuse of students and their state of mental health**

State mental Health	Influence of drug abuse		Total	X <sup>o</sup> Cal value	X <sup>o</sup> Crit value	d.f	Sig. Level	Rem
	High	Low						
Normal	82	102	184					
Moderately normal	110	90	200	56.08	5.99	2	0.005	S*
Abnormal	86	130	216					
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>600</b>					

There is significant relationship between the rates of drug abuse of students and their state of mental health.

**Table 5: t-test analysis showing the use of drugs of students and their sex**

Variables	NO	X-	SD	d.f	t.val	t.crit	Remark	
Rate of male drug abuse	300	30.16	7.54		598	0.82	1.960	N.S
Rate of female drug abuse	300	300	30.56					

There is no significance difference between the rate of drug abuse of students and their sex.

**Table 6: t – test showing the influence of drug abuse and religion of students**

Variables	NO	X-	SD	d.f	t.val	t.crit	Remark
Students' religion	380	65.3	9.8				
Students'	220	63.7	8.2				

<b>Religion</b>				<b>599</b>	<b>0.13</b>	<b>1.960</b>	<b>N.S</b>
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There is no significant difference in the influence rate of drug abuse and students' religion.

## Discussion

The results shows that the age of respondents were 16-25 years (41.7%), age 21-25 years 27.5%, age 26-30 years 22.5%, age 31-35 years 8.3% this corroborated by Attah et.al (2016) that 38% falls between the ages of 15-25 years, 42% are between the age of 26-35 years, 20% are between the age 35-46 years and none is of age 46 years above: both gender had 50% respondents each. This negates the assertion of Attah et.al (2016) that the majority of the respondents are male 76% while 24% are female: There is significant relationship between the rates of drug abuse of students and their parental economic status: There is no significant relationship between the rates of drug abuse of students and their state of mental health; There is no significance difference between the rate of drug abuse of students and their sex and there is no significant difference in the influence rate of drug abuse and students' religion.

## Conclusion

Drug abuse is a menace that needed to be tackle headlong as the recent revelations has shown that excessive abuse drugs leads to mental instability, grogginess and in severe case death. It is therefore worrisome if the economic population of the country is involved in this. There is need to put concerted effort into nipping the acts in the bud by all stakeholders in the economy right from the government, pharmaceutical companies, distributing chains, health workers, NGOs and Parents.

## Recommendations

The suggestions that arises as a result of this study are education and counselling programmes that will make towards establishing greater self-esteem in students should be instituted to fight drug abuse, effects of the drug on the performance of the students should be emphasize in the schools from primary level to tertiary institutions as this will go a long way in preparing the students against the dangers inherent in the illicit use of non-prescribed drugs, community and religious leaders should be enlightened on how to prevent drug abuse among the use; parents should enlighten and guide their wards on the side effects of drug misuse and other related problems: Periodic enlightenment programmes on the of drugs should be done on campuses of higher institutions of learning from time to time to prevent further use of drugs by students.

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