



PROFILE OF PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCE USE AMONG TRAINEE TEACHERS IN AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The use of psychoactive substances is increasing among youths and Adolescents globally. Nigeria is not exempted and both the electronic and print media are replete with such discussions. The trainers in the secondary schools who are supposed to make impact on the students are assumed to have had adequate knowledge of these substances (while in training) and to refrain from using them as well. It is therefore necessary to look at trainee teachers' substance use profile. The study was carried out in a tertiary institution (Ekiadolor, Benin) that awards National Certificate in Education(NCE).It has a population of 6000 students, 5 schools/faculties and each school has different departments. Second year students were chosen for the study purposively. The departments were determined by convenience sampling method and eighty students were sampled from each of the 5 schools across the various departments randomly. The questionnaires used consisted of a Socio-Demographic Data Sheet and a World Health Organization Instrument on Students Drug Use Survey. Prevalence of the psychoactive substance use are in percentages both for lifetime and current use. Current use in brackets. Alcohol 47.4%(14.4%), cannabis 3.5% (1.3%), Tobacco 3.5% (1%), Tranquilizers 2.5%(1.3%), Solvents 2.5% (0.8%) and Opium 1.3%(0.3%) respectively. Furthermore 91.2% are aware substances can cause harm and the commonest means of accessing information on use of substances was Television and Internet. In conclusion Trainee Teachers need to embrace abstinence from Substance use in order to be able to impact a drug free mindset in their students

Key words; trainee, teachers, psychoactive, substances,

INTRODUCTION

It is commonly discussed in the various media outlets that there is an increasing use of psychoactive substances among youths and adolescents in our society. Some even attempt to use it to explain the rampant crime witnessed today in many communities. These substances are many and varied and they include Alcohol, Cannabis, Heroin, Opium, Tobacco, Tranquilizers, Volatile Solvents and unconventional ones; e.g. lizard excrement (Uwadiae, 2011).

Alcohol use is a challenge worldwide. The American Academy of Pediatrics, (Committee on Substance Use 2010) says "Alcohol use continues to be a major problem from pre-adolescence through young adulthood in the United States". The result of their study substantiated the deleterious effects of alcohol on adolescent brain and emphasized the need to incorporate alcohol use prevention program in communities and educational programs from elementary school through college.

Cannabis is regarded as the most commonly used illegal substance worldwide (Leggett 2006) and approximately 160 million people (4% of world's population) ages 15-64 years have been estimated by John, Robert and Scott (2016) to use cannabis at least once in the past one year. Though this study was not limited to adolescents or young adults it nevertheless still gives insight into the menace of cannabis use as it is at the top of illegal substances used. Similarly the use of illicit drugs and the non medical use of prescription medications are reported to be on the increase and this has been blamed on the increased rate of cannabis use (Denis, 2011).



The World Drug Report (WDR) posted in Wikipedia (WDR 2011 and WDR 2006) rates Nigeria alongside 3 other countries in annual prevalence of opiates use and is only surpassed by 16 others in the world.

The prevalence rate of tobacco use among college adolescents reported by Kapur, Anand, and Kumar (1995) in a state in Northern India was 7.1% for current smoking (defined in the article as “smoked in the last one week”). Their findings also corroborated earlier opinion that peer influence significantly associates with smoking by adolescents.

A survey of 31 European countries by Kokkeri, Fotiou, Arapaki and Richardson (2008) revealed a prevalence rate of 5.6% overall for non medical tranquilizer use. It was also reported to be associated with the use of Tobacco, Alcohol and Illicit drugs. Other correlates reported in the study include truancy, use by friends, siblings and dissatisfaction with relationship with parents.

According to Matthew and Brian (2009) the use of inhalants is among the most pernicious and poorly understood forms of adolescent substance use. Many youths in juvenile justice system have used inhalants. In the article 52% of users met the abuse criteria for DSM-IV.

It appears trainee teachers have been neglected with regards to research on their knowledge, attitude and practice as it concerns psychoactive substances; as evidenced by the dearth of literature on the subject matter. Ironically, teachers play crucial roles in every society. They are pivotal agents of socialization and constitute role models for developing minds. If the future teachers are going to be in a position to effectively inculcate non-use of psychoactive substances on their students, they must have the right disposition towards psychoactive substances. Consequently, the aims of this study were to find out the prevalence rates of psychoactive substance use among trainee teachers and explore their knowledge and attitude towards substances.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Setting

The location of the study was the College of Education Ekiadolor in Ovia North East Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria. It is situated in the outskirts of the city but with easy accessibility by commercial and private motorists. It was established in 1979. The students' population of the institution is over 6,000. There are 5 schools in the College; namely Social Sciences, Vocation and Technology, Arts, Sciences and Language with departments under each school (Ekiadolor 2015).

Instruments

The World Health Organization Questionnaire for Student Drug Use Surveys, designed by Smart et al in (1980) was modified and used for the study. It has 3 parts. The first part, made up of 6 questions, concerns social-demographic data of the respondent. The second part consists of 14 groups of questions containing information on drug use and 2 items for validity check. The third part has a list of optional items, some ethical and moral issues relating to drug use. The psychoactive substances inquire about are tobacco, alcohol, cocaine, cannabis, amphetamine and other stimulants, hallucinogens, organic solvents and sniffing substances, tranquilizers, opium and opiates, sedatives and heroin. Respondents are required to indicate whether they have ever used each of the substances or not and whether they have used them in the past 1 year or in the past 30 days, age at first use and frequency of use are also inquired after. Thus, it is possible to determine 30-day (current), 1-year and life-time prevalence rates.



The instrument has been used in different cultures and countries, including Nigeria. Adayonfo and Akhigbe.(2015). Akanni and Adayonfo (2014) have used it in the state where the current study was carried out. It was validated in Nigeria by Adelekan and Odejide (1989) and found to have a high validity and a mean test-retest reliability coefficient of 0,87 percent for all items in the questionnaire. The modification added questions on harmful effects of substances.

Procedure

A total of 400 questionnaires were administered across the five schools; 80 in each school. Second year (Two hundred level) students (trainee teachers) were selected purposively from each school. Two hundred level students are mid-way in their educational and socioeconomic experiences in the school and as such were thought to be most representative of the students. They have spent at least one session in the school and are likely to have well imbibed the school's subculture; the 1st year students are yet to settle into the institution while the final (3rd) year students are reflecting on life outside the institution and as such may be dropping some aspects of the institution's practices. Departments were selected via convenience sampling method. Before commencement of administration of the questionnaires, two research assistants who are first degree holders were adequately trained on the instrument and its administration. The class captains of 2nd year classes of each of the five schools were approached and the class timetables were gotten from them after due explanation of the study to them. Thereafter the respective lecturers were identified and contacted and they agreed to spare sometime of their lecture periods for the administration of questionnaires to their students. On the day of administration of the questionnaires, the entire class was given explanation about the study and informed that participation was voluntary. Refusal or inability to take part would not count against them in any way. Students who were willing to take part were counted by asking them to take numbers. Convenience sampling method was used to select each student from the classes.

Other ethical considerations were:

- Approval to carry out the study was obtained from the authorities of the College of Education Ekiadolor.
- Informed consent was verbally obtained from the respondents.
- Confidentiality and anonymity were observed and respondents did not have to write their names on the questionnaires.

Any 200 level student of the College who was selected by the sampling method and agreed to participate in the study was included while the exclusion criterion was any student that chose not to participate.

The data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) The statistics used include frequency analysis and chi-square test.

RESULTS

A total of 400 questionnaires were administered 397 were returned and were valid for analysis. Females were over-represented as they accounted for 72.96% of the study population while males were 27.04%. Students in their 2nd year contributed 80.36% and the 1st year students were 19.64%. Table 1 shows the lifetime, past year and current prevalence rates of various psychoactive substances by the respondents, table 2 displays the knowledge, attitude and practice of the respondents with regards to harmful effects of substances, table 3 shows the



sources of information on the harmful effects of substances to the respondents while table 4 shows that there is no significant association between respondents' school and respondents' knowledge of harmful effects of substances

Table 1: Prevalence of Substance Use

Substance	Lifetime	Prevalence	
		Past year	Current
Tobacco			
N	14	6	4
%	3.5	1.5	1
Alcohol			
N	188	119	57
%	47.4	30	14.4
Cannabis			
N	7	5	5
%	1.8	1.3	1.3
Solvents			
N	10	5	3
%	2.5	1.3	0.8
Tranquilizer			
N	10	5	5
%	2.5	1.3	1.3
Opium			
N	5	1	1
%	1.3	0.3	0.3
Heroin			
N	1	0	0
%	0.3	0	0
Other opiate			
N	5	1	1
%	1.3	0.3	0.3

**Table 2: Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of the Respondents on Harmful Effects of Substances**

	N	%
Can substances cause harm		
No	27	6.8
Yes	362	91.2
Is harmful effects of substances part of your curriculum		
No	143	36.0
Yes	226	56.9
Do you need more information on the harmful effects of substances		
No	9	2.3
Yes	209	52.6
Should the harmful effects of substances be added to your curriculum		
No	16	4
Yes	81	20.4
Is there a need to add substance awareness to primary school curriculum		
No	40	10.1
Yes	327	82.4

Table 3: Sources of information on harmful effects of substances

Source	N	%
Radio	50	12.6
Television	146	36.8
Internet	63	15.9
Newspaper	24	6
Friends	22	5.5
School	54	13.6
Others	12	3

Table 4: Association between School and Knowledge of Harmful Effect of Substances

School	Does the use of substance cause any harm		Significance test
	No n (%)	Yes n (%)	
Social Science	4(5)	73(91.2)	$\chi^2 = 6.08$ df = 4
Arts	7(8.8)	71(88.8)	
Science	6(7.6)	73(92.4)	p = 0.66
Vocation and Technology	3(3.8)	76(95.0)	
Language	7(9.1)	68(88.3)	



$\chi^2 = 6.08$; $df = 4$; $p > 0.05$; therefore the school did not significantly differentiate respondents who believed that substances cause harm from those that did not believe.

*Further results of socio-demographic variables are available (Adayonfo & Uwadiae, 2016)

DISCUSSION

Of note in table 1 is the traditional pride of place that alcohol has once again assumed among substances of abuse as well as the leading role of cannabis among illegal substances of abuse. Many literatures are silent on solvents. This research has shown that it is not a convenient position to adopt. With a current use of 0.8%, solvents should begin to attract attention in our respective localities. Edward Jauch (2014) highlights the risk as being the ready availability of such substances as fuel, dry cleaning agents etc. Its lifetime prevalence equals that of tranquilizers which is already in the limelight. Non-prescription tranquilizer use is a case for concern according to Emerita et al (2013) in Brazil. Its lifetime prevalence there was 5% among teenage students. The article also reported that there is shortage of data in low and medium income countries.

Table 2 presents a dilemma. As much as 36% of respondents believe that harmful effects of substances are not part of their curriculum. However there is overwhelming unanimity in wanting creation of substance in elementary schools. The war against substance use still needs to be emphasized in schools and families because television and internet according to the findings here still represent the foremost sources of information on substance use to this group of student (table 3). Table 4 reveals that the students' knowledge of the harmful effects of substances is not influenced by course /school of study.

Conclusion

Psychoactive substance use among teenagers is still a cause for concern in Nigeria. Those who are supposed to impart knowledge on the teenagers [with particular reference in this study] on the harmful effects of these substances have been found in this research to be culpable of the same practice. Work certainly needs to be done in this regard. Psychoactive substance use needs to be an integral part of the curriculum of trainee teachers. The trainers [trainee teachers] need to refrain from substance use if they are to successfully impart a substance free mindset in their students. Families and Schools must step up efforts to teach children and students on the deleterious effects of psychoactive substances and not to abandon the responsibility to television and internet.

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