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THE PREDISPOSING INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL IDENTITY, SOCIAL COGNITION AND PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of social identity, social cognition, and perceived discrimination on the predisposition to substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey research design was adopted and data was gathered using standardized scale of measurement on three Independent variable and one dependent variable. With a sample of 588 students selected from five public and private polytechnics in Oyo state using a multi-stage sampling technique, data were collected using standardized questionnaires assessing social identity, social cognition, perceived discrimination, and predisposition to substance abuse Results from t.test and multiple regression analysis indicated that perceived discrimination significantly predicted predisposition to substance abuse($R = .271$; $R^2 = .069$; $F_{(3,584)} = 15.39$; $p<.001$). This implies that social identity, social cognition and perceived discrimination jointly accounted for about 6.9% of the observable variance in substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo state. Social cognition, particularly beliefs about the positive consequences of substance use, also emerged as a significant predictor ($R^2 =.031$, $F_{(1,586)} = 19.62$; $p <.001$)accounting for 3.1% of the variance. While social identity ($t = 3.03$, $df =361$; $P <.01$) implies that student who reported low level of social identity engage in more substance abuse than their counterpart who reported high social identity. Specifically, the relationship between perceived discrimination and substance abuse was stronger for students with lower in-group identification ($\beta = -.18$, $p < .05$). These findings suggest that perceived discrimination and social cognition play significant roles in predisposing polytechnic students to substance abuse. The study highlights the need for interventions addressing both cognitive and social factors to mitigate substance abuse risk in this population.

Keywords: Social cognition, Social identity, Perceived discrimination, Substance abuse, Polytechnics.

INTRODUCTION

Substances may be classified as either natural or synthetic. Substances, in essence, are materials other than food that, when ingested, impact the bodily system. Substances are mostly utilised in medical contexts for illness prevention and treatment, categorised as narcotics, hallucinogens, stimulants, and inhalants. Substance abuse is the self-administration of chemicals to alter behaviour, characterised by substance dependency, habituation, and addiction (Tor-Anyin, 2015). Petters (2015) defines substances as entities that alter the functioning of the mind or body These are psychotropic substances, in contrast to other agents employed for the treatment of various illnesses. Substances are historically sourced from numerous origins and utilised for the prevention and treatment of several diseases (Rimfat, 2019). However, substance

abuse is the order of the day, especially among the youths, both within and outside tertiary institutions, particularly in Nigeria. Substance abuse is the self-administration of chemicals to alter behaviour, characterised by substance dependency, habituation, and addiction (Tor-Anyin, 2015). Petters (2015) defines substances as entities that alter the functioning of the mind or body Substance abuse, denotes the intermittent and excessive consumption of substances in contravention of medical guidance (Bolu-Steve & Adeboye, 2016). Substance misuse has emerged as a significant threat to global health and a critical health issue, particularly among young individuals. Over the past two decades, there has been a prevailing perception in Nigeria, similar to that in other nations, that substance use and misuse is primarily an issue of wealthy countries. Ekpo (1996) asserts that "the use of substances has transitioned from the international arena to the Nigerian context." This results from swift social transformation and the disintegration of the value system in Nigeria. Substance misuse has significantly impacted traditional values and systems, escalating to frightening levels with potentially devastating consequences if unaddressed. Since the late 1960s, the incidence of substance misuse has risen (Ekpo, 2006).

Substance misuse has significantly impacted traditional values and systems, escalating to frightening levels with potentially devastating consequences if unaddressed. Substance misuse among undergraduate students in higher education institutions poses a considerable public health issue, affecting academic performance, mental health, and general well-being. Although several individual and contextual factors influence drug use behaviours, the impact of psychological elements, including social identity, social cognition, and perceived prejudice, remains under examined. Comprehending the interplay of these social elements in shaping drug use behaviours among adolescents is essential for formulating effective preventive and intervention measures. Substance addiction is a major public health issue in Nigeria, with cannabis, tramadol, codeine, and heroin among the most frequently misused substances. The 2018 National Substance Use Survey by the National Bureau of Statistics and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicated that the prevalence of substance use in Nigeria was around 14.4% among those aged 15-64 years. The economic and social ramifications of substance addiction, encompassing healthcare expenditures, criminal activity, and declines in productivity, pose considerable issues for Nigeria.

For many individuals, the detrimental effects of alcohol remain unrecognised; hence, its intake is perceived as a characteristic of socialisation, and the associated pleasure significantly contributes to its misuse and the resulting repercussions (Balogun, 2006). Chronic alcohol usage may result in an individual's indifference towards family, friendships, health, and social standing (Balogun and Adesuyan, 1996).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social cognition and problematic alcohol use
A set of cognitive abilities that facilitate successful social interactions is known as social cognition. These abilities include the ability to perceive, analyze, interpret, and react to social cues. Social cognition ideas in drug addiction study how people process social information and the effects this has on their understanding and participation in substance use behaviors. Drug abuse may be positively correlated with traits such as psychopathy and a lack of empathy (CU characteristics), suggesting that a person's cognitive processing of social connections has a substantial impact on their drug use habits. In addition, there is increasing recognition that social functioning may be hampered and an addiction cycle may be sustained by impairments in social cognition, which may be exacerbated by substance use.

Discrimination and Susceptibility to Substance Use

It is necessary to comprehend the relationship between stereotyping and prejudice as well as the effectiveness of the minority stress model in order to examine how social identity and discrimination affect teen drug use (Meyer, 2013).   This idea contends that societal stigma, internalized homophobia, and discrimination may create an atmosphere that is stressful and unfriendly for human communities. Experienced prejudice is regarded as an independent variable in many research, and it has been positively correlated with a number of negative outcomes for young people (e.g., Brody, Kogan & Chen, 2012).

According to one study, prejudice may impact drug use or be a factor in delinquent behaviors and adolescent rage (Whitbeck, Hoyt, McMorris, 2001).   When a young person carefully considers upsetting discriminatory experiences from others, this appears to be possible.   McCabe et al. (2010) examined the relationship between drug use and discrimination among three sexually distinct groups (lesbian, gay, and bisexual people). More over two-thirds of the participants said they had encountered prejudice in some capacity during their lives, sometimes in combination with gender or racial/ethnic discrimination. These were associated with the individuals' inclination to use larger amounts of drugs and associated conditions.

Predisposition to Substance Misuse

 The notion of predisposition to substance misuse encompasses a range of internal and extrinsic characteristics that may increase an individual's likelihood of engaging in drug and alcohol use and abuse.

Research among Nigerian undergraduate students has indicated concerning prevalence rates of psychoactive drug use. A cross-sectional research by Emman and Tunde (2021) at Imo State University revealed a notable lifetime prevalence of 84.5% for drug use. Alcohol consumption was significantly prevalent among these students, with 82.5% indicating they had consumed it at least once.   Other often cited substances encompass cannabis and many prescription medications, including tramadol and codeine.

Risky activities, such as the use and abuse of psychoactive substances—Substances that primarily affect the brain and cause sleepiness, excitement, or mood changes in users—are a part of this search. Worse yet, these behaviours often lead to addiction. Creating a sense of identity is a difficult task for adolescents. Adolescents who are maturing can reflect on who they are and what makes them special because of their new cognitive abilities. Self-concept and self-esteem are the two components that make up identity (American Psychological Association, 2002).

Self esteem is the way one feels about one's self-concept, whereas self-concept is the set of views one has about oneself, including characteristics, roles, objectives, interests, values, and religious and political convictions. Students are prepared to experiment with new behaviours because of all the developmental changes they go through. Risky behaviour because of this exploration is typical of the growth of adolescents (Sue, et al, 2019).

Social identity, social cognition, and perceived discrimination are important psychosocial factors that may play a role in predicting and control or management of substance abuse among adolescents.

Social identity refers to the sense of belonging to a particular group or community, such as a sports team, academic department, or cultural organization. It shapes individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and interactions with others, influencing their choices related to substance use.

Social cognition involves the perception and interpretation of social cues, including peer influence, media messages, and societal norms regarding substance use. Adolescents' cognitive processes, such as decision-making, risk assessment, and problem-solving, may also be influenced by their social cognition, impacting their likelihood of engaging in substance abuse.

Perceived discrimination, on the other hand, refers to the belief that one is being treated unfairly or unfavorably due to their social identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation.

Adolescents who experience discrimination may be more likely to turn to substances as a coping mechanism, to alleviate stress, anxiety, or feelings of alienation.

Understanding the interplay between these psychosocial factors is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies to address substance abuse among adolescents in tertiary institutions. By identifying individuals at higher risk for substance abuse based on their social identity, social cognition, and experiences of discrimination, targeted approaches can be implemented to provide support, education, and resources to promote healthier behaviors and choices.

Related studies

The group value model, which was later renamed the relational model, emphasizes how belonging to a group may provide one a sense of identity and self-worth.   According to a self-identification view on behavior, people act in ways that are consistent with their perception of themselves, whereas a social-identity perspective looks at how social identity influences behavior linked to health.   Depending on the value system of the group, it has been demonstrated that group identification, which includes engagement, influences people's views about drug use in different ways.   Verkooijen, de Vries, and Nielson (2017) examined how group identification affected teens who belonged to one, two, or three subgroups' regular use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana.   The findings of the study showed that individuals in groups characterized by boisterous and vivacious behaviors were more likely to take drugs than members of organizations with more subdued and religious tendencies.   Interestingly, even drug users try to reinvent themselves in order to give drug use some positive connotations.

Similar to the connection between belonging to a peer group and engaging in activities, which are linked to identity discovery and a feeling of community, participation in activities is recognized as the foundation of social identity.   A recent study by Ravn (2017) used a focus group methodology to examine how young recreational drug users construct their self- and other-identities. They found that participants grouped along six dimensions of drug practice: age, context-specific drug knowledge, general drug knowledge, drug checking practices, and recognition of one's position within the surrounding drug scene.   The researchers decided to investigate perceived prejudice and social identity among Ibadan secondary school students about drug intake in light of empirical data suggesting that these factors may influence teen drug usage.   Depending on existing cultural beliefs about their group identification, group members can get either courteous or insulting treatment. Teenage residents of Ibadan, like those in other demographics, commonly face a variety of stereotypes, such as the idea that the city's "historical identity" is "filthy" and "dirty" (Ajala, 2011).   According to the present researchers' remarks from an in-person interview with these kids, their "aggressors" used "filthiness" and "hygiene issues" as justifications for making fun of and excluding them.   Academic performance, excessive verbalization, and tiredness were other issues.   Aware of the hostility society has shown them because of false presumptions, victims continue to reflect on the rude and discriminatory behavior they believe to be against their moral principles.   The three foundations of an individual's group engagement—respect, pride, and identification—are all violated by discrimination.   To combat this, people may choose to take drugs or do other self-destructive behaviors in an effort to lessen their sense of helplessness. This provides a convincing justification for continuing to investigate how social identity and discrimination affect juvenile drug use in school environments.

Statement of the Problem

The prevalence of substance abuse among students in tertiary institutions is a growing concern, with detrimental effects on academic performance, mental health, and interpersonal conflicts which typically snowball its harms from campus to society at large. With the increasing availability and social acceptance of various psychoactive substances, many students are engaging in substance use as a coping mechanism for stress, academic pressure, and social dynamics.

The prevalence of substance abuse in this demographic is worsened by several factors, including peer influence, mental health issues, and inadequate access to support services. Consequently, this leads to a range of negative outcomes, including poor academic performance, increased dropout rates, engaging in criminality and a higher incidence of mental health disorders. Cognitive processes that support predisposition towards substance abuse are under-researched at present. An understanding of these, such as social cognition, social identity and perceived discrimination would address efforts at reducing substance abuse, especially among adolescents in tertiary institutions, hence the present study.

Objectives of the Study:
1) To investigate the relationship between social identity and substance abuse among undergraduate students in public and private polytechnics in Oyo State
2) To examine how social cognition influences the likelihood of engaging in substance abuse among undergraduate students in public and private polytechnics in Oyo State
3) To explore the impact of perceived discrimination on substance abuse among undergraduate students in public and private polytechnics in Oyo State
4) To assess the combined predictive power of social identity, social cognition, and perceived discrimination in predicting substance abuse among undergraduate students in public and private polytechnics in Oyo State

Hypotheses
1: Oyo state polytechnic students with low level of social identity will significantly engage in more substance abuse compared to Oyo state polytechnic students with level of social identity.
2: Oyo state polytechnic students with higher perceived discrimination will significantly engage in more substance abuse compared to Oyo state polytechnic students with lower perceived discrimination
3: Male Oyo state polytechnic students will significantly abuse substance more than female polytechnic students in Oyo state
4: Social cognition will significantly influence substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo state.
H5: Social identity, Social cognition and perceived discrimination will have a joint and independent influence on substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo state

METHODOLOGY
Design
This study employed a cross-sectional ex-post facto research approach to examine the connection between the variables of interest.   To put it another way, it is a type of design in which the researcher examines, independently, the effects of the variables of interest—social cognition, social identity, and perceived discrimination—on a dependent variable. .

Settings
This study was conducted among students in Polytechnics in Oyo State. The state nicknamed the "Pace Setter State" is noted for being the site for some of the oldest and prominent institutions in Africa such as University of Ibadan and The Polytechnic Ibadan. The state was selected because of being diverse with many tribes and ethnic group and pedagogical resourceful students and has a population of 2.1million (NBS, 2022). Oyo State has ten (10) polytechnics, one (1) federal polytechnic, four (4) state Polytechnics and Five (5) private polytechnics (NBTE, 2024).

Sampling Procedures:
Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. The Polytechnics were first divided into Federal, State and Privately owned. The next step was to classify the institutions to Public

and Private, because there was only one federal polytechnic in the state. Three Public institutions and two private institutions were then randomly selected for data collection.

With a total population of about 42,261 (NBTE) Student statistics), using Yarmane (1967) sample size calculation method, the minimum sample size needed for the study is 534 participants, and an additional 5% of the participants was added for abrasion, making the total number of 588 .

The selected participants' age ranged between 18 and 35; Mean age was 21.1 (SD = .588). Their sex shows that 291 (49.0%) were Males, and 297 (50.0%) were Females. Religion distribution revealed that 340 (57.8%) were Christians, 246 (41.8%) were Muslims and 2 for others (0.3%) were others. In terms of their level, 266 (42.2.9%) were ND 1, 185 (31.5%) were ND 2, 130 (22.1%) were HND 1, 7 (1.2%) were HND 2. The Population size for the research was 42,216 both male and female students

Procedure for Data collection
The researcher requested permission to proceed with the study after informing the school administration of its goal and obtaining informed consent. Using the questionnaire, the researcher described the goal of the data collection. The individuals were chosen through the technique of purposive sampling. When gathering information from possible participants who voluntarily expressed interest in taking part in the study, the informed consent issue was evidently respected.

Instrument
A structured questionnaire was used to collect the relevant data for the study. The questionnaire consisted of standard adopted scales with adequate psychometric properties. The questionnaire was five sections: Sections A to E measuring, socio-demographic characteristics of participants and scales measuring social identity, social cognition, perceived discrimination and substance abuse.

Section A: Demographic Factors
This consisted of Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents which included age, gender, Tribe, educational qualification and religion.

Section B: Social Identity
The Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV) is a research instrument intended to evaluate and delineate several facets of identity. Kindly examine each thing meticulously and reflect on its relevance to your situation.

Personal Identity Orientation, or PI, Relational Identity Orientation is indicated by the symbol RI. Whereas CI stands for Collective Identity Orientation, SI stands for Social Identity Orientation.

 Ten items for the new relationship measure were developed through psychometric research on a sample of 199 female undergraduate students (alpha =.92; M = 40.7). Significantly positive correlations with different measures of relational self-concept demonstrated convergent validity. Several measures of personal, social, and collective self-concept orientations showed weak to moderate positive correlations with the relationship scale, indicating discriminant validity (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000; Kashima & Hardie, 2000; Singelis, 1994). Our new four-factor model—personal, relational, social, and community identity orientations—is effective, according to the preliminary findings. The subsequent phase in the development of the AIQ-IV will involve investigating gender and cultural disparities in the averages and correlates of the new relational identity orientation scale. AIQ-IV consists of 45 items, each evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree = Not relevant to my identity to somewhat important to my identity. 3 = Moderately significant to my identity 4 = Extremely significant to my identity 5 = Crucially significant to my identity, which is scored in reverse.

Section C: Social Cognition Questionnaire
A research analyzing two hypotheses drawn from the social phobia model proposed by Clark and Wells (1995) used the Social Cognitions Questionnaire--Modified Version (SCQ; McManus,

Sacadura, & Clark, 2008) to assess social fears. Wells, Stopa, and Clark first developed the SCQ in 1993 as an unpublished document. The SCT-PAIAGS's face validity, content validity, construct validity, and reliability were examined in order to assess its psychometric qualities. A cross-sectional research of 400 Tehrani high school girls was conducted to evaluate factor structure. For the SCT-PAIAGS, the effect score, content validity index, and content validity ratio varied from 4.6 to 4.9, 0.97 to 1, and 0.91 to 1, respectively. A six-component structure—self-efficacy, self-regulation, outcome expectation, family and friend support, and self-efficacy for conquering challenges—was verified by confirmatory factor analysis. T-values, fit indices, and factor loadings all showed that the SCT model suited the data well. While the intraclass correlation coefficient ranged from 0.73 to 0.90, the Cronbach's α value varied from 0.78 to 0.85. showed a Cronbach's alpha (α) of 0.72, indicating an acceptable person separation reliability, and demonstrated equivalency between the 25-item and 10-item SPSI-R versions. However, no study has simultaneously assessed the psychometric properties of the 10-, 25-, and 52-item SPSI-R. Furthermore, research on the sensitivity to identify change is limited. Since the SPSI-R is widely used in intervention research, sensitivity to change is a crucial trait to evaluate. Randomized trials that compare proven-effective medicines with placebo or other approaches are a common strategy for assessing a measure's ability to detect change. Specify the frequency of each thought's occurrence throughout the last week; Evaluate each notion on a scale from 1 to 5. 1= Thought is absent; 2= Thought is seldom; 3= Thought happens in about half of the instances when I am anxious; 4= Thought is typically present; 5= Thought is consistently present when I am anxious

Section D: Perceived Discrimination
Perceived Discrimination Scale The prejudice Scale, developed by Gonzales, Henderson, and Noonan (2016), has been extensively utilised to assess individuals' subjective experiences of daily prejudice.

The Everyday Discrimination Scale's psychometric characteristics were investigated in this study using a sample of 120 Black teens, 65 of whom were male and 55 of whom were female. The young person filled out the Child Behavior Checklist-Youth Self-Report Form and the Everyday Discrimination Scale. According to a t-test investigation, there was no significant difference in the Everyday Discrimination Scale scores between males and girls (p > 0.18). Item-total correlations ranged from 0.50 to 0.70 (mean=0.61), while the alpha reliability score was 0.87. At p < 0.0001, the split-half dependability coefficient was 0.83. Approximately 49% of the standardized variance could be explained by a single factor, according to a principal component analysis. Both internalizing and externalizing symptoms were significantly correlated with the Everyday Discrimination Scale score (ps < 0.0002), according to correlation studies. Reliability assessments for the EDS were conducted, resulting in a singular factor with strong internal consistency (α=0.92). Younger, more educated participants indicated a higher perception of prejudice, whereas retired or widowed individuals reported a lower perception. Convergent validity was demonstrated by the correlation between feelings of anguish, rage, and hostility, which escalated with increasing perceived discrimination (all p<0.001). The 10-item Perceived Scale assesses the frequency with which individuals perceive mistreatment or unfairness from others based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or other attributes, utilising Yes and No responses. The alpha reliability value was 0.87, with item-total correlations varying from 0.50 to 0.70 (mean=0.61). The split-half dependability coefficient was 0.83 (p < 0.0001).

Section E: Substance Misuse
Harvey Skinner developed the 10-item Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST-10) in 1982 as a self-report screening instrument. The Drug Abuse Screen Test (DAST-10) was created as a brief self-report instrument for research on treatment evaluation, clinical case identification, and population screening. Both adults and older teenagers can use it. It was created for the quick assessment

of substance abuse and may be self-administered by people or carried out by medical experts. This test is a condensed version of the original DAST, which consists of 28 items.

With a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 and strong convergent validity (r=0.76) when compared to the Drug Use Disorders Identification Test (DUDIT), the DAST-10 is a psychometrically sound drug addiction screening instrument. Additionally, at the optimal cut-off value of 4, the DAST-10 showed sensitivity and specificity scores of 0.98 and 0.91, respectively, whereas a single component accounted for 59.35% of the total variation. By successfully differentiating between those with drug use disorders and those with alcohol dependency, the DAST-10 showed good discriminant validity.

A physician can provide this brief screening tool, which has ten items, or the person can complete it on their own. There must be a yes-or-no response to every question. The Persian version of the DAST-10 had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.93. This shows that the device has exceptional reliability (> 0.70). Assign one point for each "yes" response on the DAST-10, except for question (3), where a "no" response is worth one point and a "yes" response is worth zero. The range of the DAST-10 scores is 0 to 10.

RESULTS

HYPOTHESIS ONE:
Oyo State polytechnic students with low level of social identity will significantly engage in more substance abuse compared to Oyo State polytechnic students with high level of social identity.

Table 1: t-test for independent sample showing Low and High Social identity differences on Substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State.

Social Identity	N	x̄	S.D	df	t	P
Low	182	2.30	2.08			
				361	3.03	<.01
High	181	1.69	1.70			

Result from Table 1 reveals that there is a significant difference between low level of social identity and high level of social identity on substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State (t = 3.03, df =361; P <.01). This indicates that student who reported low level of social identity engage in more substance abuse than their counterpart who reported high social identity. The result aligns with the stated hypothesis; therefore, the stated hypothesis is accepted.

HYPOTHESIS TWO:
Oyo State polytechnic students with higher perceived discrimination will significantly have increased substance abuse compared to Oyo State polytechnic students with lower perceived discrimination.

Table 2: t-test for independent sample showing High and Low Perceived Discrimination differences on Substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State.

Perceived Discrimination	N	x̄	S.D	df	t	P
High	211	2.45	2.12			
				381	5.03	<.001
Low	172	1.48	1.53			

Result from Table 2 reveals that there is a significant difference between high perceived discrimination and low perceived discrimination on substance abuse among polytechnic students

in Oyo State (t = 5.03, df =381; P <.001). This indicates that student who perceived high level of discrimination engage in more substance abuse than their counterpart who perceived lower level of discrimination. The result aligns with the stated hypothesis; therefore, the stated hypothesis is accepted.

HYPOTHESIS THREE:
Male Oyo State polytechnic students will significantly abuse substance more than female polytechnic students in Oyo State.

Table 3: t-test for independent sample showing Gender differences on Substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State.

	N	x̄	S.D	Df	t	P
Gender						
Male	291	2.14	2.07	586	2.44	<.01
Female	297	1.77	1.59			

Result from Table 3 reveals that there is a significant difference between male and female on substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State (t = 2.44, df =586; P <.01). This indicates that male students engage in more substance abuse than their female counterpart. The result aligns with the stated hypothesis; therefore, the stated hypothesis is accepted.

HYPOTHESIS FOUR:
Social identity, Social cognition and Perceived discrimination will have a joint and independent influence on substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State.

Table 4: Summary of Multiple Regression Showing the joint and independent influence of Social identity, Social cognition and Perceived discrimination as predictors of substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State.

Predictors	β	T	P	R	R²	F	P
Social Identity		-.091	-2.272	<.05			
Social Cognition	.095	2.096	<.05	.271	.069	15.39	<.001
Perceived Discrimination	.192	4.254	<.001				

Table 4 presents the summary of multiple regression which shows that Social identity, Social cognition and Perceived discrimination are significant joint predictors of substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State (R = .271; R^2 = .069; $F_{(3,584)}$ = 15.39; p<.001). This implies that social identity, social cognition and perceived discrimination jointly accounted for about 6.9% of the observable variance in substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State. In the same vein, all the predictors; social identity (β = -.091, t = -2.272; p<.05), social cognition (β = .095, t = 2.096; p<.05), and perceived discrimination (β = .192, t = 4.254; p<.001) are independent predictors of substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State. This fully confirm the stated hypothesis; therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. Note: Social identity low and high norm is set at ½ SD ± below and above the mean Perceived discrimination high and low is set at ½ SD ± above and below the mean

DISCUSSION

Findings show that among Oyo State polytechnic students, there is a substantial difference in substance misuse between those with low and high levels of social identity. This suggests that students with lower social identification levels misuse drugs more frequently than their peers with higher social identity levels. The findings are in line with earlier research by Verkooijen, de Vries, and Nielson (2017), who examined the impact of group identity on the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use among teens who belong to one, two, or three subgroups, reported that those who participated in loud and active activities were more likely to take drugs than people who had peaceful and devout beliefs. This might be interpreted as the students could not identify themselves with a particular peer group, their self esteem could probably be low as well, and to "boost" up this, they engage in substance abuse to at least feel that they "belong" even if it would only be temporary (Until the drug effects wear off) or have a false sense of confidence in themselves so that they would be able to interact more with co-students or significant others. Coupled with the above was the finding that those who scored high on perceived discrimination also engaged in substance abuse

The findings are in line with earlier study of Becker (1973) who believed that values held high, such as sociocultural ones could significantly influence the misuse or abuse of substance, if they are not adequately present in individual's environment.. This could be that, in the light of the first hypothesis, the lack of social identity could also correlate positively with low or negative perceived discrimination (i.e. self-imposed imaginary discrimination).

Gender differences was equally recorded in this study where males were more likely to engage in substance abuse than females. This is expected, given the patriarchal system in the society where men get more attention than women in social order. However, it has been documented that the gap in gender differences in drug abuse is gradually closing up (Ebigbo et al., 2012; Nelson and Abikoye, 2019). The difference observed in the present study could be because of the population (students in tertiary institution), used in the study.

The fourth hypothesis, according to which social cognition will have a major impact on substance misuse among Oyo State polytechnic students, was validated and approved. The outcome shows that drug misuse is greatly influenced by social cognition. The findings are in line with earlier research. Ravn (2017) used a focus group approach to study the self- and other-identity constructions of young recreational drug users and discovered that participants clustered along six dimensions of drug practice, including age, general and context-specific drug knowledge, drug-checking practices, and acknowledging one's place in the surrounding drug scene.

The fifth hypothesis, according to which drug misuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State will be influenced jointly and independently by social identity, social cognition, and perceived discrimination, was validated and approved. The findings indicate that among Oyo State polytechnic students, drug misuse is significantly predicted by social identity, social cognition, and perceived prejudice. Similarly, among Oyo State polytechnic students, drug misuse is independently predicted by social identity, social cognition, and felt prejudice. The results are consistent with earlier studies; Brook, Pahl, Morojele, and Brook (2021) examined the impact of peer, parental, environmental, demographic, and personal factors on teen drug use in South Africa. Poor socioeconomic status (as measured by measures of amenities and hunger prevalence), victimization, and prejudice were the environmental stressors that were examined. The results of the environmental stressor category showed that teens who used drugs more frequently reported more instances of discrimination and self-harm than teens who used drugs less frequently. This result suggests that there may be a reversal of the relationship between drug use and discrimination.

Conclusion

In conclusion, It could be said the way people think, particularly, students,0 could predispose them to drug abuse knowing full well that cognition is like foundation for manifestation of overt behavioural acts/dispositions, and the present study confirmed this poor social cognition related

well with perceived discrimination (which is in the cognitive realm of the individual) which also correlated positively with social identity, where those with low social identity engaged in substance abuse more than their cohorts with high social identity. Hypothesis five showed that all these, jointly contributed about student 6.9 % of the variance observed.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to address substance abuse among polytechnic students in Oyo State:
 Institutions should implement programs that foster a sense of belonging among students. This can be achieved through peer mentoring, student organizations, and extracurricular activities that strengthen social connections and reduce isolation.
Schools should establish policies that promote inclusivity and diversity, ensuring that all students feel valued and respected. Awareness campaigns and counseling services should be provided to address issues related to discrimination and its psychological effects.
Cognitive-based intervention programs should be introduced to help students develop healthier thought patterns and coping mechanisms. This may include cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)-based workshops and life skills training.

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