

Original Research Article

Determinants of Substance Use among Out-of-School Youths in Kano Metropolis

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Abstract: Substance use among youths is an increasing global challenge, particularly in urban areas of developing countries. Out-of-school youths are considered a highly vulnerable population due to their exposure to social, economic, and environmental risks. In Kano Metropolis, rising unemployment, peer influence, street life, and availability of psychoactive substances such as cannabis, tramadol, codeine mixtures, inhalants (e.g., solution, glue), and other locally prepared stimulants have contributed to increased experimentation and habitual use among this group. Being out of school reduces protective factors such as structured learning environments, adult supervision, and career prospects, placing youths at heightened risk of substance initiation and dependency. Understanding the determinants of substance use among this population is essential for developing effective prevention, rehabilitation, and policy strategies. The male out of school youths abuse drugs mainly to do something un-usual while females abuse drugs due to friend influence. Factors associated with drug abuse for males are mainly peer group influence and relapse while that for females are lack of parental support and family care among these predisposing factors are influences to start abusing, influences to continue abusing, influences to stop abusing and influences to relapse back to abusing drugs. The continues/relapse factors for substance/drug abuse for males is mainly environmental influences, while for females is peer group influences. A population of 463 out of school youths were taken from eight local governments in Kano metropolis, 257 males and 206 females. The minimum age of the respondents were 18years and maximum age of the respondents were 29 years. A multistage sampling technique was used to collect data using an adapted interview administered semi structured questionnaire, SPSS Version 24 was used to analyse the data.

Keywords: Determinants, Substance Use, Out-of-School, Youths, kano Metropolis.

INTRODUCTION

Youth's substance/drug abuse appears to be influenced by various factors. Both traditional and contemporary addictive substances are abused by young individuals for multiple reasons. This review aims to assess the factors that

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contribute to youth substance abuse (Bunu, *et al.*, 2023). Recognizing that drug abuse is a complex issue with multiple stakeholders across different settings, also key actors' websites were used to identify pertinent scientific literature on factors influencing youth drug abuse (Tesema, *et al.*, 2019). Many literature sources, containing information on the factors influencing youth drug abuse, were included in the study, the most prevalent influencing factors were identified. The literature searches utilized various combinations of the following keywords: “pattern”, “substance abuse”, “drug abuse”, “prevalence”, “predisposing factors”, “factors influence substance abuse”, “out of school” and “school youths” were used for the search. While drug abuse is influenced by several interconnected factors, such as peer influence, this review specifically focuses on studies that examine influential factors of drug abuse among the youth. Additionally, given the political implications surrounding discussions on drug abuse (Substance Abuse Among Youth in Nigeria, 2008, Tesema, *et al.*, 2019). Due to the rampant cases of drug abuse especially among Nigerian youth one may ask the reason why youths engage in it. In an actual sense, there is no single factor to justify the reason why and the major causes of the menace. Below are some of the reasons why youths engage in drug abuse as outlined by various scholars? Accordingly, “the factors include poverty, unemployment/joblessness/idleness, broken homes/inadequate parental supervision, enticement, curiosity, the influence of peer group, the influence of politicians, availability and easy access”, etc (Ilmu, *et al.*, 2020). Unemployment, poverty, and lack of educational engagement increase susceptibility to substance use. Youths without stable livelihoods may use drugs as coping mechanisms or due to idleness (Adeniyi, 2020). Studies show that peer pressure is one of the strongest predictors of drug experimentation among youths (Okoro & Bello, 2019). Out-of-school youths often spend more time in peer groups where drug use is normalized. Stress, trauma, depression, and low self-esteem are significantly associated with substance use (Yusuf, 2018). Youths may also use drugs as a form of self-medication. Urban neighborhoods with high drug availability, weak law enforcement, and open drug markets serve as enabling environments for substance use (Ibrahim & Ademola, 2021). Family instability, absent parents, domestic conflict, and weak parental supervision contribute to youth vulnerability. In some communities, certain substances may be culturally tolerated. Easy access to substances at low cost, especially in informal markets, strongly influences drug use patterns among youths (Nwoke, 2020).

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study Site

This study was conducted in eight Metropolitan Local Government Areas of Kano state i.e Municipal, Gwale, Dala, Fagge, Tarauni, Nasarawa, Kumbotso and Ungogo.

Study Design

The study was a descriptive cross-sectional study design, which involved only male and female out-of-school youths in Kano Metropolitan Area.

Study Population

The study population were males and females out of school youths in Kano metropolis who have agreed to participate voluntarily based on their involvement in the use of drugs/substances.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Males and females aged 15 to 24 years who are out-of-schools. This age range was selected based on the fact that most of the people are within the age of secondary school or early university and are more prone to drugs/substance abuse.
2. Males and female youths who have abused drug in one way or the other

Exclusion Criteria

1. Males and females who are above 24 years and not around during the study.
2. Male and female youths who have never abuse any substance.

Sample Size Determination

The minimum sample size required was estimated using the formula for comparing two proportions.

$$n = \frac{(Z\alpha + Z\beta)^2 [P_1(1-P_1) + P_2(1-P_2)]}{(P_1 - P_2)^2}$$

Where,

n = Minimum sample size for each group

$Z\alpha$ = Value of the standard normal deviate corresponding to 5% level of significance. The value obtained from the normal distribution table = 1.96

$Z\beta$ = Value of standard normal deviate corresponding to the power of the test. To detect differences, 95% power was used for this study. The value obtained from the normal distribution table is 1.64. [(1- β where β = 5%]

P_1 = Proportion of substance abuse among male youths in Nigeria = 94.2% or 0.942.⁵

$$P_2 = \text{Proportion of substance abuse among female youths in Nigeria } 5.8\% \text{ or } 0.58.^5$$

$$(P_1 - P_2) = \text{Minimum difference in Proportion of substance abuse among male youths in Nigeria}$$

$$n = \frac{(1.96 + 1.64)^2 \{0.94(1-0.94) + 0.58(1-0.58)\}}{(0.94 - 0.58)^2}$$

$n = 219$ per group

To address for none response and lost/damage questionnaires, a 10% (21.9) was added

$n=240$ for each study group

Sampling Technique

A multistage sampling technique was used for the purpose of this study. The study involved the following stages, each stage applied different sampling technique.

Study and Consent

Letter of introduction was obtained from the Head of Department, Community Medicine, Bayero University Kano and presented to the research ethics committee of the Kano State Ministry of Health. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the state MoH.

RESULTS

Table 1: Self-Reported reasons for substances abused among male and female out of school

Reasons	Male n=257 (%)	Female n=206 (%)	Total n=463 (%)
Friends/peer group	187 (72.8)	144 (69.9)	331 (71.4)
Family member using drugs	27 (10.5)	15 (7.3)	42 (9.0)
Relax or to relieve tension	238 (92.6)	187 (90.8)	425 (91.7)
Academic failure	51 (19.8)	47 (22.8)	98 (21.1)
Poverty/low socio economic status	215 (83.7)	162 (78.6)	377 (81.4)
Family crises/poor parental care	95 (37.0)	70 (34.0)	165 (35.6)

Table above, shows self-reported reasons for substance abused among study respondents. Relax to relieve tension was found to be the major self-reported reason for substance abused among male (92.6%) and female (90.8%) respectively. Also, poverty/low socio-economic status 83.7% among male and 78.6% among female found as self-reported reason. Friends/peer group was also found to be another self-reported reason among male youths (72.8%) and female youths (69.9%)

Table 2: Factors predisposing male and female out of school youth to substance abuse

Predisposing factors	Male n=257 (%)	Female n=206 (%)	Total n=463 (%)	χ^2	P-value
Friends/peer group					
Yes	187 (56.5)	144 (43.5)	331 (71.5)	0.459	0.535
No	70 (53.0)	62 (47.0)	132 (28.5)		
Family member using drugs					
Yes	27 (64.3)	15 (35.7)	42 (9.1)	1.441	0.257
No	230 (54.6)	191 (45.4)	421 (90.9)		
Relax or to relieve tension					
Yes	238 (56.0)	187 (44.0)	425 (91.8)	0.508	0.499
No	19 (50.0)	19 (50.0)	38 (8.2)		
Academic failure					
Yes	51 (52.0)	47 (48.0)	98 (21.2)	0.605	0.492
No	206 (56.4)	159 (43.6)	365 (78.8)		
Poverty/low socio-economic status					
Yes	215 (57.0)	162 (43.0)	377 (81.4)	1.903	0.187
No	42 (48.8)	44 (51.2)	86 (18.6)		
Family crises/poor parental care					
Yes	95 (57.6)	70 (42.4)	165 (35.6)	0.444	0.558
No	162 (54.4)	136 (45.6)	298 (64.4)		

Above, were found non-statistically significant association ($p>0.05$) between factors predisposing to substances abuse among male and female out of school youths.

Table 3: Reasons for drug abuse among Male and Female out of school youth

Factors	Males n=257 (%)	Females n=206 (%)	Total n=463 (%)	χ^2	P-value
Friends/peer group					
Yes	195 (57.0)	147 (43.0)	342 (73.9)	1.208	0.288
No	62 (51.2)	59 (48.8)	121 (26.1)		
Family member using drugs					
Yes	25 (67.6)	12 (32.4)	37 (8.0)	2.368	0.167
No	232 (54.5)	194 (45.5)	426 (92.0)		
Relax or to relieve tension					
Yes	227 (56.0)	178 (44.0)	405 (87.5)	0.384	0.573
No	30 (51.7)	28 (48.3)	58 (12.5)		
Academic failure					
Yes	45 (51.7)	42 (48.3)	87 (18.8)	0.621	0.473
No	212 (56.4)	164 (43.6)	376 (81.2)		
Poverty/low socio-economic status					
Yes	202 (56.7)	154 (43.3)	356 (76.9)	0.950	0.375
No	55 (51.4)	52 (48.6)	107 (23.1)		
Family crises/poor parental care					
Yes	67 (57.8)	49 (42.2)	116 (25.1)	0.318	0.591
No	190 (54.8)	157 (45.2)	347 (74.9)		

Table above, found to be non-statistically significant association ($p>0.05$) between Factors influences to continuation of substances/drugs abuse among males and females out of school youths.

DISCUSSION

Findings in this study, shows many reasons for drugs/substances abuse among study respondents are relax to relieve tension was found to be the major self-reported reason for substance abused among males (92.6%) and females (90.8%). Also, poverty/low socio-economic status 83.7% among males and 78.6% among females found as self-reported reason. This was higher and contrary to “the factors include poverty, unemployment/joblessness/idleness, broken homes/inadequate parental supervision, enticement, curiosity, the influence of peer group, the influence of politicians, availability and easy access”, etc (Ilmu, *et al.*, 2021).

Friends/peer group influence was also found to be another self-reported reason among male youths (72.8%) and female youths (69.9%), which was higher than what was obtained in a study which found that more than half (57%) of the respondents learned illicit drug intake through intermingling with their friend in the Northwestern states of Nigeria. The study reveals that Jigawa State appears to have rampant misuse of codeine type expectorants (Ilmu, *et al.*, 2021; Nwafor, *et al.*, 2012). A lot of studies have indicated that peer group influences have pushed many youths to engage in antisocial behaviour like drug abuse. The youth intermingle with to some extent have a greater influence on their actions, this is because of the time taken to interact with them be it at home community, at school premises at a playground and so forth living with bad peers who engaged in drug addict make other to emulate from their actions. The most probable explanation for these higher rates could be because the studies were community-based study. There is every likelihood that youngsters with peers who smoke may also engage in the smoking habit at a later life and also adolescents who happened to live in a mix of a friend who does not smoke there every propensity that they are to become non-smokers over time and vice vasa. Intimate personal friends seem to influence one another to smoke and take other substance (Ilmu, *et al.*, 2021).

Also, in this study it was discovered high rate of poverty/low socio-economic status 83.7% among males and 78.6% among females found as self-reported reason. As most of the parents cannot afford the basic requirements for their livelihood, find themselves in slums and ghettos mostly at the downtowns which appear to be crime-prone areas. Socio-economic status of the parents is another triggering factor that can influence drug addiction among the children especially the low-income families. This was similar to findings obtained, children from wealthy families and were not denied anything when we talk about access to material resource also engage themselves in substance abuse for enjoyment and luxury purpose (Nasser, *et al.*, 2018). These socio- economic factors at a time differ from one country to another, for instance, the children of the low-income family are found must likely at greater risk of drug abuse in the middle and low-income countries.

In this study, family crisis or poor parental care was found to be 37.0% among males and 34.0% among female respondents. This was found to be lower when compared with a study conducted in Nigeria on emphasis on the role and influence of the family on the character of its children, he further stressed that if a male child happened to come from the

broken home, he most likely to engage in substance abuse. Similarly, in a study at Sokoto, northern Nigeria study reveals that children of the drug addicts have high propensity having family issues than the child whose parent does not abuse drugs. The child of this parent lacks parental affection and may lead to unseriousness and less allegiance in day to day activities in the society and may lead to drug abuse in a later stage. Some children suffer from prolonged absence of parental affection as a result of divorce and other related matrimonial problems, harsh repression, “parental use of drugs” and prolong quarrel between parents.

Predisposing factors to substances abused among study respondents revealed that family member using drugs were found to be higher (64.3%) among males as the predisposing factor to substances abused, academic failure (48.0%) were found among females as predisposing factor. It is important to inform young individuals if there is a history of addiction in the family. As a parent or guardian, it is crucial to watch for signs that your ward may be abusing drugs. Also, gender is being perceived as one of the individual factors that correlate with individual tendency towards substance abuse. Studies have shown that gender is correlated with substance use behavior (Bartoszek, *et al.*, 2020). This association varies with the different substances but generally it is known that the incidence of use is more among males than females (Chucks and Chinyellu, 2023)

In this study, many factors were found which influences continuation/relapse of substances abuse among study respondents which found that relaxation or to relieve tension was the major factors that influenced to relapse back to abusing substances among study respondents. It was found 88.3% among male and 86.4% among female mentioned relaxed or to relieve tension as the major factor influencing continuation or relapse of substances abuse among youths. This is similar to a study which found young people perceive drug abuse as a common occurrence due to its portrayal in movies, music, and television shows (Bunu, *et al.*, 2023). Having listening to music, watching movies will lead to relaxation or even reduce tension as well. Similar findings, revealed that localized poverty, presence of drugs in schools, aggressive behaviour during early life, environmental factors, hereditary, mental health conditions, boredom, self-medicine, influence of friends among others were contributed to the factors influencing continuation or relapse of substances abuse among youths.

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