

DRUG DEPENDENCY AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

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Abstract

This study investigated drug dependency among youths in Nigeria and its implications for teachers. Two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated. Survey design was used in carrying out the research. A total of 300 respondents Questionnaire was designed to elicit information from the respondents. Mean, Standard deviation and X-square were used to analyse the data. Findings of the study revealed that: some Nigerian youths are highly dependent on drugs, the factors responsible for dependency include peer-group pressure, modelling, parental influence, inferiority complex, psychic stress and tension, drug dependence can lead to death, schizophrenia, psychosis, brain depression, mental and liver dysfunction, hallucinations among others. Teachers were of the opinion that drug dependency affects youths negatively. Based on the findings, it is recommended that sensitization programs should be organized for youth to be aware of the debilitating effect of drug dependency so as to discourage it among them.

Keywords: Drug Abuse, Drug Dependency, Youths, Implication, Teachers

Introduction

Drug abuse or substance abuse refers to the use of certain chemicals for the purpose of creating pleasurable effects on the brain which lead to dependency. Apart from the long term damage to the body drug abuse causes, drug dependents who use needles are also at risk of contracting HIV and hepatitis B and C infections. Mandal, (2019). Globally, some 35 million people, up from an earlier estimate of 30.5 million, suffer from drug use disorders and require treatment services. The death toll is also higher: 585,000 people died as a result of drug use in 2017, World Drug Report (2019).United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018) reported the prevalence of drug use in Nigeria is estimated at 14.4 per cent or 14.3 million people. Drug

use was most common among those who were between the ages of 25 and 39 years and cannabis was the most commonly used drug followed by opioids, mainly the non-medical use of prescription opioids and cough syrup WHO, (2014) maintained that drug dependence could be psychological and physical and that depending on drug can lead to both. As the former makes one not to feel comfortable without it and places him on no emotional or no affective condition and out of reason, this alters the state of body physiology which produce restlessness, discomfort, twitching of muscles, inability to eat, vomiting, slight fever and deviated blood pressure. All these are indices of the malfunctioning of the body which has been established. Abdalla, (2003) argued that the major problem that arises from the consumption of psychoactive drugs is dependence, the compulsion to use the drugs despite any deterioration in health, work, or social activities. Dependence varies from drug to drug in its extent and effect. Drug abuse which leads to dependency is a problem that is caused by social, economic, political, legal and cultural factors existing within the society. Most of these factors determine the typical pattern of drugs that are being abused in Nigeria. Drug abuse blocks meaningful use of time, energy and creative thinking and destroy a persons' ambition to become great, making him hopeless and unproductive. These serious facts notwithstanding, various research reports have confirmed that Nigerian youths in both urban and rural areas and of different socio-economic backgrounds have indulged in the use and abuse of dangerous and illicit drugs Auwal, (2003). Studies have shown that drug dependency has some relationships with personality of the individual. Evren et al (2007) indicated an association between personality and substance choice using Cloninger's Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) to discriminate alcohol and drug dependents. Also, Chassin et al, (2004) reported that heavy drinking/heavy drug use group was at risk for alcohol and drug dependence and persistent dependence and showed more familial alcoholism, negative emotionality, and low constraint. The moderate drinking/experimental drug use group was at risk for alcohol dependence but not comorbid or persistent dependence and showed less negative emotionality and higher constraint. Familial alcoholism raised risk for alcohol and drug use and dependence in part because children from alcoholic families were more impulsive and lower in agreeableness. Valero et al, (2014) revealed that [neuroticism](#) and [impulsivity](#) are the personality variables most consistently associated with drug-dependent patients and were the most relevant variables in the resulting model, but their association appeared to be hierarchically organized. In the personality characterization of these patients, neuroticism became the main discriminant dimension, whereas impulsivity played a differential role, explained by means of an interaction effect. Decision tree learning models appear to be a heuristic theoretical and empirical approximation to the study of relevant variables, such as [personality traits](#), in drug-dependency research. On the other hand, Jones et al, (2005) Found that scores on self-report measures of sensation seeking and impulsivity were related to group status, and only sensation seeking evidenced a significant relationship with group status when both variables were considered in a regression analysis. Williamson et al, (1997) reported that personality traits related to neuroticism and disinhibition have been consistently associated with substance use disorders (SUDs). Results revealed that anti-sociality and certain core personality traits predicted multiple types of substance pathology. In addition, several personality traits were differentially associated with alcohol, drug, and tobacco symptomatology. Arias, et al (2008) found that lifetime ADHD prevalence in the substance disorder (SD) sample was 5.22% (vs. 0.85% in a group of individuals without SD). ADHD was associated with an earlier age of first substance use, more SD and [psychiatric diagnoses](#), a greater likelihood of attempted suicide, and more

hospitalizations. After controlling for conduct disorder, there were unique effects of ADHD on age of first substance use and number of SD diagnoses. Kroencke et al (2020) investigated the effects of substance use on changes in broad personality traits. Results indicated that individuals with low levels of conscientiousness, life satisfaction, and self-esteem, as well as high levels of neuroticism, used more drugs on average (between-person effects). In contrast, we found little evidence for personality change following substance use (within-person effects). Forghani & Abadi, (2016) quasi-experimented the effect of group therapy with transactional analysis approach on emotional intelligence, executive functions and drug dependency and the results showed that group psychotherapy with the TA approach was effective in improving EI, executive functions and decreasing drug dependency ($P < 0.05$).

Research Questions

To investigate the problem of this study the following research questions were formulated:

1. Do Nigerian youths dependent on drugs?
2. What are the factors responsible for the youths' dependency on drugs?
3. What are the possible effects of drug dependency on the personality of the youths?

Methodology

The study employed survey design because it allows for subjects to be observed in their natural setting (Lambert, 2019). The study was conducted in Kaduna Metropolis. The population used was 550 primary school teachers from 25 primary schools out of which 200 teachers were selected through simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using questionnaire of 18 items structured on a four-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated by lecturers from Psychology, Measurement and Evaluation and counseling using face validity the instrument.

A pilot test was carried out using test-retest of the questionnaires to establish its reliability. Cronbach Alpha and coefficient was used with the result showing 0.82 which showed a good reliability of the instrument. 200 questionnaires were administered to the respondents with the help of research assistants. The data collected were analyzed using mean and Chi-square (X^2).

Results

TABLE 1: On whether Nigerian Youths are Dependent on Drug

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DIAGREE	X MEAN
Nigerian Youths are highly Dependent on drugs	30	40	23	—	3.08

On this table, the mean of 3.08 shows that the majority of the teachers saw it as a fact that Nigerian youths are highly dependent on drugs.

TABLE 2: The Factors that Influence the Youths into Drug Dependent

	S A	A	D	S D	X	(Mean)
1 Parental influence	80	21				3.83
2 Peer group press	93	7				3.93
3 Pure/modeling						
4 Curiosity	73	20	78			2.93
5 Interiority complex	60	40				2.60
6 Media						
7 Advertisements		42	37		21	2.21
8 Ignorance	4	41	38		17	2.32
9 Tension	20	62	13		5	2.97
10 Release mental						

The table above showed that 9 out of 10 possible factors influencing the youths into depending on drugs were accepted. This followed the high mean score of 2.51 to 3.93 out of 4.0 with peer pressure and modeling having 3.93 to be the most accepted and was followed by parental influence with 3.83. Also 3 out of the 12 factors were rejected due to their low means that were below 2.30; and Ignorance 2.32 for the accepted ones see Table 2 above.

TABLE 3: on the Effects of Drug Dependence on the Personality Development of the Youths.

Drug Dependence among the Youths	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	X
Mean					
1 Lead to delusion	27	61	9	3	3.12
2 Lead to hallucination	33	59	7	1	3.24
3 Affect vision	61	33	5	1	3.54
4 Affect central nervous System	73	27			3.73
5 Lead to impairment of judgment	79	21			3.73
6 Lead to poor Co-ordination	58	40	2		3.59
7 Lead to schizophrenia	40	52	6		3.32
8 Lead to neurosis	71	29			3.71
9 Lead to criminal acts	58	27	13	2	3.41
10 Affect emotional/ Cognitive condition	81	19			3.81
11 Lead to diarrhea	12	27	57	4	2.47
12 Lead to slight fever	22	34	36	8	2.80

Table 3 showed that 38 out of 39 tested possible effects of drug dependent on the personality development of the youths were accepted as positive. This was due to the fact that they have high means above 2.50 and majority of them have 3.5 mean and above. Only 1 out of the 39 tested effects were rejected by the doctors, that is, that that lead to diarrhea which has the mean of 2.47.

Discussion

The finding indicated that many Nigerian youths depend on drugs, this is in agreement with the United Nations Office On Drugs and Crime (2018) reported that the prevalence of drug use in Nigeria is estimated at 14.4 per cent or 14.3 million people. Drug use was most common among those who were between the ages of 25 and 39 years and cannabis was the most commonly used drug followed by opioids, mainly the non-medical use of prescription opioids and cough syrup. The reasons for their being dependent on drugs were seen to be ranging from peer group pressure and modeling, parental influence, curiosity, inferiority complex, mobility, competition, boasting, escape from psychic stress and tension to release of mental frustration. Abdalla, (2003) had similar argument, he believed that the major problem that arises from drug dependence, is the compulsion to use the drugs despite deterioration in health, work, or social activities. Dependence varies from drug to drug in its extent and effect, that dependency is a problem that is caused by social, economic, political, legal and cultural factors existing within the society. This study revealed that there are so many negative effects of youths-drug dependency on their individual personality. This corroborated with studies of Kroencke et al, (2020) who discovered that individuals with low levels of conscientiousness, life satisfaction, and self-esteem, as well as high levels of neuroticism, used more drugs on average. In contrast, it found little evidence for personality change following substance use. On the other hand, Valero et al, (2014) revealed that [neuroticism](#) and [impulsivity](#) are the

personality variables most consistently associated with drug-dependent patients. In the personality characterization of these patients, neuroticism became the main discriminant dimension, whereas impulsivity played a differential role, explained by means of an interaction effect. Decision tree learning models appear to be a heuristic theoretical and empirical approximation to the study of relevant variables, such as [personality traits](#), in drug-dependency research. Similarly, Williamson et al, (1997) reported that personality traits related to neuroticism and disinhibitions have been consistently associated with substance use disorders (SUDs). It is further revealed that anti-sociality and certain core personality traits predicted multiple types of substance pathology. In addition, several personality traits were differentially associated with alcohol, drug, and tobacco symptomatology. Arias, et al (2008) found that lifetime

ADHD was associated with an earlier age of first substance use, more SD and [psychiatric diagnoses](#), a greater likelihood of attempted suicide, and more hospitalizations. After controlling for conduct disorder, there were unique effects of ADHD on age of first substance use and number of SD diagnoses.

Recommendations

- Forghani & Abadi, (2016) found out that group psychotherapy with the TA approach was effective in improving EI, executive functions and decreasing drug dependency ($P < 0.05$).
- Government should try to establish means of reducing tension and emotional stress such as well-organized students' centers in our institutions of higher learning, recreation centers in our towns and cities and provide job opportunities for the youths.
- Constant enlightenment campaign on the effects of drugs should be carried out in our towns, villages and cities to educate the youths, villagers, community leaders and parents on the dangers of drug dependence.
- Parents should try their best to know the peer group members of their children and try to control and direct them to avoid indulgence on drugs.
- Finally, we can reduce the rate of dependency on drugs by the youths of Nigeria through good proper moral education and sound upbringing, through good leadership, by setting moral standard both in government, business and social clubs. By having conscientious and upright hardworking role-models in the communities that will encourage the development through the pursuit of excellence.

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