

Parenthood and Drug Abuse among Youths in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study on parenthood and drug abuse among young people in Andoni Local Government Area, Rivers State, was motivated by the uncontrollable use of illicit drugs, alcoholism, and other controlled drugs, as well as their manifestations in crime, moral decay, health issues, poor academic interest, and a high social life. The study used a descriptive, cross-sectional research design. The required data was collected using a structured questionnaire, with a sample size of 440 and a multistage sampling method. The findings revealed a connection between teenage drug abuse in Andoni L.G.A. of Rivers State and the manner of parenting. The findings showed that among young people with good parentage, drug abuse was related to 88 (32.2%) of them, while drug abuse was also connected to 38 (28.5%) of those with bad parentage. Accordingly, the findings imply a connection between good parenting and the high prevalence of drug usage among young people in Andoni L.G.A., Rivers State. The study came to the conclusion that these findings highlight the intricate interaction of factors influencing young people's behaviour and demand an all-encompassing strategy to address substance addiction issues in this group.

Keywords: Parenthood, drug abuse, youths, Andoni local government area

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INTRODUCTION

The consumption of psychoactive substances is an age-long phenomenon. In all known history and culture, psychoactive substances like alcohol and kola nuts, among others, have been in use for several reasons: energizers, elevation of mood, reduction of hunger, stress, and anxiety (James, 2019). Drug abuse, also known as substance abuse, is a pattern of drug use in

which the user consumes drugs in amounts or methods that are harmful to themselves or others. It is a form of substance-related disorder as it contributes to a major public health and social problem worldwide, according to Shubi et al. (2016). According to Manyika et al. (2019), alcohol, marijuana, analgesics, tobacco, caffeine, codeine, and glue, among others, remain the most

commonly used. These substances are used for medicinal, social, experimental, and religious reasons. Drug abuse may be defined as the arbitrary overdependence or misuse of one particular drug with or without a prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioners (Lakhanpal and Agnihotri, 2017). According to Asuka (2017), drug abuse is the harmful use of mind-altering drugs.

It added that the term usually refers to problems with illegal drugs, which also include the harmful use of legal prescription drugs, such as in self-medication. According to Olushola (2019), Nigeria has a serious substance abuse problem. These psychoactive compounds (drugs) that have the potential to cause health and social problems, including substance use disorder (SUD), are categorized into three categories: alcohol, illicit drugs (including cannabis, heroin, and opioids), prescription drugs used for non-medical purposes, and over-the-counter drugs (OTC's).

The crude prevalence of harmful use of alcohol in Nigeria, as reported by Adeloye et al. (2019), has been shown to have many negative consequences for the wellbeing of its users. Several studies conducted in Nigeria have shown that drug abuse among Nigerian youth is associated with poor academic performance of students in Nigeria (Akanbi et al., 2015), low self-esteem (Okafor, 2019), crimes (Ayodele et al., 2018), chronic health conditions (UNODC, 2018), loss of potential manpower, low productivity, and the creation of an unfavourable environment for investors, which of course will affect gross national income as well as internally generated revenue (Kawugana and Faruna, 2018). According to the United Nations Drug Control Programme (2010), there is an increasing menace of drug abuse prevalence. An estimate of 142-272 million people, which is 3.3%–6.0% of the world population annually, between the ages of 15 and 64, abuse drugs and substances, while a huge proportion (45%) are composed of students in colleges and universities. It was further reported that 2.5 million people die each year from drug and substance-related complications, and 30% of the cases are students from tertiary institutions (UNDCP, 2010).

Age is a factor that determines the abuse of drugs among students. Younger students or undergraduates who are faced with developmental tasks have a greater likelihood of using one or more illicit substances. Kiriru (2018) opined that alcohol and drug abuse are infiltrated into society, where youth and young adults are the potential risk groups. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012) reported that drug abusers are between the ages of 16 and 28, with over 60% residing in urban areas and 21% living in rural areas in Kenya. According to several reports from the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (2017), an increase in the use of drugs, especially illicit substances, was seen among youths, and suspected cases of drug trafficking were arrested in Lafia metropolis with 3,683kg of hard drugs,

including 804.22kg of cannabis, 2,873.8kg of tramadol, 5.3g of cocaine, and 57.2 l of codeine syrup.

The prevalence of drug abuse varies by gender. The number of reported cases of drug abuse seems to be high among males as compared with female undergraduates in tertiary schools. Studies by Jagnany et al. (2008) found that 41.5% of boys utilized alcohol, 39% smoked tobacco, and 28.7% used cannabis, while only 4.3% of girls reported the use of alcohol with a mean age of 20.57 years (17–26 years). WHO (2010) defined drug abuse as the harmful and/or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. The World Drug Report (2007) revealed that 21.5% of cases of drug abuse in Ghana aged 15–64 smoked marijuana, with males significantly higher than females.

Also, it was reported in a similar study by Chester (2016) that 62% of male students use illicit drugs and 38% of female students use any form of illicit substance. Bolakale and Markes (2015) added that male undergraduates used 10 different illicit drugs, whereas female counterparts abuse alcohol mostly; 74.2% use tobacco between the ages of 11 and 12, which was strongly significant ($df = 5$, $X^2 = 21.07$, $P = 0.001$). The studies also revealed that 19.4% started using sedatives at the age of 11–12 years, 31.8% use sedatives between the ages of 13–14 years, and 1.4% use cocaine for men only (Bolakale and Markes, 2015). Drug abuse is likely to be higher in male students than female students. Evidence showed a significant difference between male and female students regarding drug abuse, as observed among students in tertiary institutions (Adeoti, 2010). Drug misuse is becoming a major problem for worldwide public health. According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC-2019), 271 million (5.5%) people worldwide (aged 15 to 64) reported using drugs in the preceding year. Additionally, it has been estimated that 35 million people will suffer from drug use disorders. Most youth develop drug abuse habits from their parents. Students whose parents use any form of psychoactive substance, such as tobacco or alcohol, among others, have the likelihood of being victims of drug abuse. Sometimes, parents send children to buy cigarettes, beer, dry gin, Brandywine, etc. and drink in front of the child. Such a student or child will not see the use of those substances as anything dangerous to them. Studies by Adeoti (2010) found a strong and significant influence on the use of illicit drugs based on family setting ($P < 0.05$). In regard to this, students from separated families are prone to vices in society because of a lack of parental care and monitoring. Hence, the issues of poor parental guidance have contributed to social problems in society. Most individuals, especially younger adults, begin to head their families and involve themselves in taking wrong decisions that affect their future. For instance, some parents let their male child know that he is a man and can make his own decisions. To buttress this, studies by Mohasosa

and Mokoena (2017) indicated undergraduates from single parents do not have enough moral support; thereby, evidence showed a significant positive difference in how male and female students regard drug abuse, as observed among students in tertiary institutions (Adeoti, 2010). Factors contribute to drug abuse among young people. Studies illustrated that 172 (59%) of siblings engage in drug abuse and 28% of fathers abuse drugs; also, 47% of family members are drug abusers as compared with 53% of non-abusers of drugs (Chester, 2016). Similar studies indicated that 99% of undergraduates who stay with their parents use drugs, and about 25% of those who live with their parents' smoke cigarettes; a significant association was observed between the use of alcohol and cigarettes and household structure (p.000) (George, 2015a). According to George (2015b), 5.0% of parents introduce illicit drugs to their siblings due to a 14.5% lack of parental guidance in recent times. Therefore, parental factors may likely predict the abuse of drugs among individuals, especially undergraduates in Nigeria.

Friends as well as peer influence contribute to the menace of drug abuse, especially among young adults in tertiary institutions. Youths who keep more friends may likely use substances improperly as compared with those who are careful with their peers. Studies by George (2015a) reported that 34.7% of drug abusers said that their friends introduced it to them. Most undergraduates are lured by friends to take substances in order to maintain their friendship, which gradually leads to addiction. Chester (2016) added that 35% of their best friends engage in drug use, most of whom copied the same from their trusted peers. Friends may likely be the commonest source of drug introduction among undergraduates. Studies by Jagnany et al. (2008) reported that 10.5% of drug abusers were introduced by friends in the hostel to substances such as cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, and cocaine, among others. Also, further studies by Al-Alawi and Shikh (2018) revealed that 28% take illicit drugs with friends and 55% take them alone that were introduced by their friends. Exposure to friends who abuse drugs could serve as a social risk of abusing drugs among students. Several studies indicated that undergraduates who are likely to be drunkards and smokers may have at least one friend who smokes and consumes alcohol (AlAlawi and Shikh, 2018). Peer influence plays a significant role in drug abuse habits, as seen among young adults (Foo et al. 2015).

Drug use and abuse are the primary reasons why many youths have been incarcerated, as well as being a source of youth restiveness, health problems in our society, and the high crime rate and visits today, despite the activities of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). According to Oshikoya and Alli, (2019), drug abuse is a global health and social problem that varies locally. Its use among Nigerian youths has become a subject of public concern worldwide, partly because of its potential

to contribute to unintentional and intentional injuries, crime involvement, demotivation, cognitive values, and sexual defaulting.

Statement of the problem

The quest to exist without solving problems of life seems unending, with the trend of youth involvement in the proliferation of crime, cultist activities, cognitive disabilities, dethronement of morals into murky waters, family destabilization, poor academic interest and performances, and mental diseases ranging from manageable bearable situations to unbearable situations. Nevertheless, drug abuse—not only the use of illicit drugs but prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs—has posed a great threat to the future generation as well as degenerating health conditions following social and experimental exhibitions and peer pressure groups. Capacity change and interference with health and productive life via the intake of drugs prohibited by law, harmful effects, or having taken drugs beyond the prescription of a qualified physician as examined pose a great threat to our unseen future. Consequently, the study was to investigate the relationship between type of parenthood and drug abuse among youths in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research question

The following research question guided the study:

1. What is the level type of parenthood and drug abuse among youths in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State?

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive cross-sectional research design was used for the study. The population of this study comprised all youth in the Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. According to the National Population Commission (2022), there are about 152,214 youths in Andoni Local Government Area. The sample size for this study was 440 youths in the Andoni Local Government Area. The sample size of the study was estimated using the Taro Yamene method for a finite population.

$$S = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

S= sample size

N = total number of population from each selected local government area.

n = sample size

e = level of significance (0.05)

Table 1: The frequency and percentage distribution showing the relationship between the type of parenthood and drug abuse among youths in Andoni L.G.A of Rivers State.

Parenthood	Prevalence of drug abuse		Total
	Low F (%)	High F (%)	
Poor	96(71.6)	38(28.4)	134(100)
Good	185(67.8)	88(32.2)	273(100)
Total	281(69.0)	126(31.0)	407(100)

Decision guide: Likert's 2.5 (50%) and above high while below 2.5 (50%) is low.

Adding 10% non-compliance, the sample size is 440. A multistage sampling procedure was adopted for the study.

Stage 1: Stratified random sampling was used to divide Andoni Local Government Area into 11 political wards.

Stage 2: cluster random sampling of the 11 political wards into 6 groups.

Stage 3: proportionate stratified sampling was carried out to select the number of respondents from the groups.

The instrument used for obtaining data for the study was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated. The split-half method was used to determine the degree of internal consistency of the instrument. Data was coded and analyzed using the statistical product and service solution (SPSS) version 25.0. Statistical tools such as percentages and means were used for the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the type of parenthood and drug abuse among youths in Andoni L.G.A of Rivers State?

Table 1 shows the relationship between the type of parenthood and drug abuse among youths in Andoni L.G.A. of Rivers State. The result revealed that 88 (32.2%) of youths with good parenthood were associated with a high prevalence of drug abuse, whereas those with poor parenthood (38 (28.5%)) were also associated with a high prevalence of drug abuse. Thus, the result implies that there is a relationship between good parenthood and the high prevalence of drug abuse among youths in Andoni L.G.A. of Rivers State.

The result showed that there was a relationship between the high prevalence of drug abuse and a good type of parenthood (88, 32.2%). It further revealed that there was no significant (X^2 value = 0.632, $df = 1$, $P > 0.05$) relationship between the type of parenthood and drug abuse among youths. The findings of this study are similar to those of Adeoti (2010), whose study on factors influencing substance abuse among students in Osun

State revealed parental factors showed a mean of 13.78, indicating that most parents use alcohol, some parents are hostile, and some parents provide poor parental care. The findings of this study are in line with those of Maithya (2009), whose study on drug abuse in secondary schools in Kenya revealed that there was a significant relationship between drug abuse and the use of drugs by other family members and easy access to drugs. A variety of factors contributed to drug abuse, with the majority of students citing curiosity and acceptance by peers as the main reasons. The findings of this study are in keeping with those of Amosun et al. (2010), whose study on the causative factors of substance abuse among selected secondary school students in Ibadan revealed that the causes of substance abuse were numerous, which included family neglect by parents and housework.

The findings of this study showed a relationship between occupation and drug abuse among youths. The result showed that drug abuse was found among the youths who are self-employed (30.0%), followed by those who were students (86.1%), youths who are unemployed (9.3%) and respondents who are civil servants (14.3%). Hence, this result implies that the high prevalence of drug abuse was seen among youths who are self-employed, and there is a relationship between occupation and high drug abuse. This confirms the study carried out by Ashley (2022) in North Carolina, titled What professions have the highest prevalence rate of drug abuse? Police and other law enforcement officers are conditioned by high-stress work environments, emergency situations, demanding job hours, and work fixtures that may make family or leisure time difficult. The extent of the job sometimes exceeds the normal schedule and even poses a high risk to their own lives. That can lead to substance use as a means to cope with the job. However, 1 in 4 police officers has a problem with alcohol or drugs. While the substance use disorder rate for the general population is around 10%, for police officers, it may be anywhere from 20% to 30%.

Conclusion

The study findings indicated a discernible relationship between the type of parenthood and drug abuse among youths in the Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. Surprisingly, 32.2% of youths raised in a context of

what might be considered "good parenthood" were associated with a high prevalence of drug abuse. In a parallel observation, 28.4% of youths subjected to what might be categorized as "poor parenthood" also exhibited a high prevalence of drug abuse. This highlights a notable correlation between the quality of parenthood and the incidence of drug abuse among youths in Andoni L.G.A. of Rivers State. Such results underscore the complex interplay of factors influencing youth behaviour and call for a comprehensive approach to addressing substance abuse issues within this demographic.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were put forward based on the findings of the study:

1. To avoid any behaviour or action that will be detrimental to their children's moral development, parents should set good examples that discourage drug use for their children to imitate. As a result, the sexes of children in their homes should be closely monitored to ensure compliance with moral standards and the kind of friends they keep.
2. The government should also put measures in place that will encourage parents to exhibit a good attitude that will forestall their children and wards from engaging in drug abuse and related vices.

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