

Social Demographic Factors Associated with Drug Abuse Among Undergraduates in Ekiti State

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined social demographic factors associated with drug abuse among undergraduates in Ekiti State. Specifically, the study examined the level of knowledge on drug abuse expressed by university undergraduate students; level of drug abuse among university undergraduate students; and common drugs known as expressed by university undergraduate students. The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey. The population of this study consisted of all the students of Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, while the sample was 200 undergraduate students drawn from seven faculties. The respondents were randomly selected from seven faculties. A self-designed constructed questionnaire tagged “Drug Abuse Questionnaire (DAQ)” was used to collect relevant data for the study. The instrument consisted of five sections namely: Sections A, B, C, D, and E. The validity methods used were face and content validity. The items in the Questionnaire were presented to experts in the fields of Tests and Measurement, Social Studies Education and Guidance & Counselling. The reliability of the instrument was estimated through test re-test method. A co-efficient value of 0.88 was obtained which was considered statistically high to make the instrument reliable. The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents have a high knowledge of drug abuse while only few engage in drug abuse. In addition, peer influence was related to drug abuse among undergraduates but family structure was not related to drug abuse. It was further revealed that male students have higher prevalence of drug abuse than female students despite having similar knowledge of drug abuse. It was recommended among others that discipline should be put in-place by university management to curb drug abuse among undergraduates.*

KEYWORDS: family structure, peer influence, gender, drug abuse, undergraduates

INTRODUCTION

A drug is considered as a substance that modifies perceptions, cognitions, mood behaviour and general body functions (Balogun, 2016; Samson, 2018). Alimi and Olayiwola (2015) described drug abuse as excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to medically or culturally acceptable patterns. Adekeye (2012) posited that a drug is said to be abused when its use is not pharmacologically necessary especially when used in the face of legal prohibition or when socially acceptable beverage is used excessively. The problem of the drug abuse places a significant threat to the social, health, economic fabrics of the families, society and the entire nations (Balogun, 2016; Hamisu, Ahmad & Lim; 2014; Okafor, 2020). The use and abuse of drugs by undergraduates in Ekiti State University have become a huge concern to parents, school management, lecturers' and the society at large. Several students experience mental health challenges, either temporarily or for a long period of time. Some become insane, maladjusted to school situations and eventually drop out of school.

Drug abuse also known as substance abuse can be described as a regular use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts which are harmful to themselves. Also, when an individual persists in use of alcohol or other drugs despite problems related to use of the substance, substance dependence may be diagnosed. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) also observed that drug abuse is over-dependence and misuse of one particular drug with or without a prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioners. They further identified dangerous drugs like cocaine, Indian hemp (marijuana), morphine, heroin, tobacco, ephedrine, valium five and Chinese capsules as few among the drugs commonly abused by youths. Thus, compulsive and repetitive use may result in tolerance to the effect of the drug and results in withdrawal symptoms when use is reduced or stopped.

The various reports of rapid situation assessments of drug abuse and addiction in the country such as Odejide, (2014) and Nkyi, (2015) showed a picture of widespread consumption of cannabis (10.8%), followed by psychotropic substances (mainly the benzodiazepines and amphetamine-type stimulants) 10.6% and to a lesser extent heroin (1.6%) and cocaine (1.4%) in both the urban and rural areas.

There are some socio-demographics factors associated with drug abuse among university students. Family structure can simply be described as families where both parents that is, father-mother household and single parent households. The family environment plays an important role in determining whether the off-springs raised in that family will be well adjusted children, teenagers and finally responsible adults or not. Hence, the family as a social unit performs the initial socialization functions for the child. It is observed that, when conflicts between husband and wife are mismanaged it predicts both marital distress and negative effects for children. In such a

situation, trust and love may be lacking and the children may result to mischief and rebellion. Mbadugha (2012) opined that such children will enter adolescence lacking the security, the psychological stability, the coping skills and sense of belonging within a social order that one gets from growing in a family. At home, some parents even become bad influences because children are impressionable and usually learn to do what they see their parents do. What this means is that a drug-addicted parent will very likely raise child that may also grow to become a drug addict.

Peer's influence has also been often investigated in association with drug abuse. Previous studies (Ekpenyong & Aakpege, 2012; Alimi & Olayiwola, 2015) found similarity between peers in terms of substance use and this similarity has been explained in two ways; socialization and selection process of peers. Peer influence is the outcome of socialization; that is, the peers an individual has influence his or her behavior. According to the social development model that explains the growth of pro-social and anti-social behavior along human's life course, amount of involvement with and reinforcement from individuals who use substance is an influence for a person's increased substance use while the amount of pro-social involvement such as volunteer work is an influence for a person's decreased substance use.

Gender differences in relation to drug abuse has remained a controversial issue among researchers as there seem not to be a clear cut direction of difference between the rate of abuse by both sexes. It appears that sex of a person predisposes him towards abusing certain drugs. The researcher observed that boys seem to be addicted to alcoholic drinks, cigarette smoking, Indian hemp smoking and few rich ones among them take heroin while girls abuse antibiotics and depressants more than boys. This observation is supported by Osalusi and Ojomo (2017) who concluded that students are influenced by alcoholic drinks than their female counterpart.

Drug abuse is a very serious problem among school adolescents and which has slowly made the average Nigerian student to be maimed, sentenced to a life of delinquency, insanity, street walking and premature death. Incessant abuse of drugs by university undergraduates especially Ekiti State University students precipitated the need for this study. It is observed that the use and abuse of drugs by undergraduates in Ekiti State University have become a huge concern to parents, school management, lecturers' and the society at large. Several students experience mental health challenges, either temporarily or for a long period of time. Some become insane, maladjusted to school situations and eventually drop out of school. Family structure and peer influence have been linked with drug abuse among undergraduates.

This study examined social demographic factors associated with drug abuse among undergraduates in Ekiti State. Specifically, the study examined the:

- i.level of knowledge on drug abuse expressed by university undergraduate students;
- ii.level of drug abuse among university undergraduate students;

- iii.common drugs known as expressed by university undergraduate students;
- iv.relationship between peer influence and drug abuse among undergraduates;
- v.relationship between family structure and drug abuse among undergraduates;
- vi.difference between male and female university undergraduate students' knowledge of drug abuse;
and
- vii.difference between the level of drug abuse of male and female university undergraduate students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for this study.

1. What is the level of knowledge on drug abuse expressed by university undergraduate students?
2. What is the level of drug abuse among university undergraduate students?
3. What are the common drugs known as expressed by university undergraduate students?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated for this study.

1. There is no significant relationship between peer influence and drug abuse among undergraduates
2. There is no significant relationship between family structure and drug abuse among undergraduates
3. There is no significant difference between male and female university undergraduate students' knowledge of drug abuse
4. There is no significant difference between the level of drug abuse of male and female university undergraduate students

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey. The population of this study consisted of all the students of Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, while the sample was 200 undergraduate students drawn from seven faculties. The respondents were randomly selected from seven faculties.

A self-designed constructed questionnaire tagged "Drug Abuse Questionnaire (DAQ)" was used to collect relevant data for the study. The instrument consisted of five sections namely: Sections A, B, C, D, and E. Section A of the instrument sought for comprehensive bio-data of the respondents. Section B consisted of 10 items on knowledge of abuse while Section C consisted of 10 items on drug abuse and Section D consisted of 10 items on common drugs abused. The final section which was Section E consisted of 20 items on family structure and peer influence. Section E of the instrument was prepared using Likert type scale which was used as follows: Strongly

Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) while modified Likert type scale was used for other sections of the instrument.

The validity methods used were face and content validity. The items in the Questionnaire were presented to experts in the fields of Tests and Measurement, Social Studies Education and Guidance & Counselling. To ensure face validity of the instrument, the experts helped to determine the face value of the appropriateness of the instrument. To ensure content validity, the experts checked the items and ascertained that the items represented the factors specified in the research questions and hypotheses. In so doing, all irrelevances and ambiguous items were eliminated. The reliability of the instrument was estimated through test re-test method. The instrument was administered on 25 respondents from a university outside the sampled university twice within a period of two weeks; the data collected on the two tests was correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Statistics. A co-efficient value of 0.88 was obtained which was considered statistically high to make the instrument reliable.

The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The research questions were answered using frequency count, percentages, mean, standard deviation and chart. Hypotheses 1 – 2 were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis, while hypothesis 3 and 4 were tested using t-test Analysis. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	83	41.5
Female	117	58.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
16-18 years	9	4.5
18 and above	191	95.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Christianity	196	98.0
Islam	2	1.0
Traditional	2	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 1 reveals that 83 respondents are male which represent the 41.5% of the entire population while female are 117 which represent 58.5% of the total respondents. This implies that there are

more female used in the study. It shows that the respondents between the age ranges of 16-18 years are 9 in number which represent 4.5%. Those between age ranges of 18 and above are 191 which represent 95.5%. It reveals that 196 respondents are Christians which represent 98.0%, 2 respondents representing 1.0% percent are Muslim while 2 of the respondents practice African traditional religion. This shows that Christians are more in the study.

Research Question 1: What is the level of knowledge on drug abuse expressed by university undergraduate students?

Table 2: Frequency table showing the level of knowledge of university undergraduate students on drug abuse

Knowledge on drug abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Low	20	10.0
High	180	90.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 2 shows that 20 respondents fall under low knowledge measure representing 10% while the remaining 180 respondents are fall under high knowledge measurement representing 90%. This implies that majority of the respondents have a high knowledge of drug abuse.

Research Question 2: What is the level of drug abuse among university undergraduate students?

Table 3: Frequency table showing the level of drug abuse among university undergraduate students

Level of Drug abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Low	161	80.5
High	39	19.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 3 reveals that 161 respondents scored low in drug abuse measure representing 80.5% while 39 participants scored high in the measurement of drug abuse representing 19.5%. This connotes that drug abuse is not practiced by majority of the respondents. There are few people engaging in drug abuse.

Research Question 3 What are the common drugs known as expressed by university undergraduate students?

Table 4: Mean and Rank Order Analysis of the common drugs abused as expressed by university undergraduate students

S/N	Common drugs	Mean	Rank Order
1.	Cocaine	1.87	1 st
2.	Marijuana/indian hemp	1.86	2 nd
3.	Tobacco/Nicotine	1.86	2 nd
4.	Hallucinogens	1.85	3 rd
5.	Opium	1.85	3 rd
6.	Stimulants	1.85	3 rd
7.	Steroids	1.85	3 rd
8.	Codeine-based cough syrup	1.85	3 rd
9.	Appetite stimulants	1.85	3 rd
10.	Inhalant	1.84	4 th
11.	Tranquilizers	1.84	4 th
12.	Barbiturates	1.84	4 th

Table 4 shows the common drugs abused expressed by university undergraduate students. Cocaine with a mean score of 1.87 was ranked 1st, marijuana/indian hemp, tobacco/nicotine with a mean score of 1.87 each were ranked 2nd. Hallucinogens, opium, stimulants, steroids, codeine-based cough syrup as well as appetite stimulants with mean score of 1.85 each were ranked 3rd. inhalant, tranquilizers and barbiturates with mean score of 1.84 each were ranked 4th. The result further revealed all the twelve (12) variables had mean scores above the cut-off point (1.50). Therefore, it can be deduced that the common drugs abused as expressed by the university undergraduate students are cocaine, marijuana/indian hemp, tobacco/nicotine, hallucinogens, opium, stimulants, steroids, codeine-based cough syrup, appetite stimulants, inhalant, tranquilizers and barbiturates.

Test of Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between peer influence and drug abuse among undergraduates

Table 5: Correlation between peer influence and drug abuse among university undergraduate students

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig
Peer influence	200	13.60	2.264	.207*	.003
Drug abuse	150	20.10	2.737		

Table 5 reveals the correlation between peer influence and drug abuse. As shown above, peer influence and drug abuse are significantly correlated ($r = .207$; $p < .05$). This means that there is significant relationship between drug abuse and peer influence.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between family structure and drug abuse among undergraduates

Table 6: Correlation between family structure and drug abuse among university undergraduate students

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig
Family structure	200	24.16	2.144	-.100	.161
Drug abuse	200	13.60	2.264		

Table 6 reveals the correlation between family structure and drug abuse. As shown above, family structure and drug abuse are not significantly correlated ($r = -.100$; $p > .05$). This means that there is no significant relationship between drug abuse and family structure. The result further reveals that there is inverse relationship between family structure and drug abuse.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between male and female university undergraduate students' knowledge of drug abuse

Table 7: T-test showing the difference between male and female university undergraduate students knowledge of drug abuse

Variable	N	X	SD	df	T	Mean diff.	P	Remark
Male	83	23.66	4.738	198	1.053	0.662	0.036	Sig.
Female	117	24.32	4.110					

The result from table 7 above reveals that, the value of ($t = 1.053$, $df = 198$, $p < 0.05$). Since $p < 0.05$, therefore, there is significant difference in the knowledge of drug abuse of male and female university undergraduate students. This result further shows that female students have more knowledge of drug abuse than the male students.

Research Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference between the level of drug abuse of male and female university undergraduate students

Table 8: T-test showing the difference in the level of drug abuse involvement of male and female undergraduate students of Ekiti State University

Variable	N	X	SD	df	T	Mean diff.	P	Remark
Male	83	1.35	.480	198	4.889	0.264	0.000	Sig.
Female	117	1.09	.281					

The result from table 8 above shows that, the value of ($t = 4.889$, $df = 198$, $p < 0.05$). Since $p < 0.05$, therefore, there is significant difference in the level of drug abuse of male and female university undergraduate students. Male students are more involved in drug abuse than female students as their mean is higher than female mean despite the increase in the female respondents than male.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents have a high knowledge of drug abuse. It was also revealed that drug abuse is not practiced by majority of the respondents. There are few undergraduate students engaging in drug abuse. This finding contradicted the findings of Oshodi, Aina and Onajole (2010) who concluded in their study that about half of the tertiary institution students engage in drug abuse especially alcohol followed by tobacco.

It was further revealed that the common drugs abused as expressed by the university undergraduate students are alcohol cocaine, marijuana/indian hemp, tobacco/nicotine, hallucinogens, opium, stimulants, steroids, codeine-based cough syrup, appetite stimulants, inhalant, tranquilizers and barbiturates. This finding is in consonance with the submission of Chikere and Mayowa (2011) who found that in a number of school and college surveys in Nigeria, alcohol use is the most common among students, with many drinking students having had their first drink in family settings. Abdulahi (2009) reported that substances like alcohol, local gin, palm wine and over the counter drugs are commonly abused among youths.

On hypotheses testing, the study revealed that there was significant relationship between peer influence and drug abuse among undergraduates. This finding support Alimi and Olayiwola (2015) and Chikere and Mayowa (2012) who reported that students indulge in drug abuse because of various reasons most especially peer influence.

It was however revealed that there was no significant relationship between family structure and drug abuse among undergraduates. This finding contradicted the findings of Manbe (2008) and Fereidouni, Joolae and Fatemi (2014) who found a significant relationship existed between the drug abuse among students and family structure. Alimi and Olayiwola (2015) reported that youth from broken homes report increased levels of drug abuse.

The study also revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female university undergraduate students' knowledge of drug abuse. The study however revealed that there was significant difference between the level of drug abuse of male and female university undergraduate students. Male students were more involved in drug abuse than female students. The reason for this finding might be because male and female had considerably different evaluations about the level of drug consumption. The study showed that male students abused drugs than the female students. This is consistent with previous studies which have found that gender is a significant predictor of drug abuse. For instance Alimi and Olayiwola (2015) conducted a study among respondents and found that gender was a strong predictor of drug abuse. They went further to reveal that male students abuse drugs than the female students and this was also

confirmed by Osalusi and Ojomo (2017) that male students abuse drugs more than their female counterpart.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that majority of the respondents have a high knowledge of drug abuse while only few engage in drug abuse. In addition, peer influence was related to drug abuse among undergraduates but family structure was not related to drug abuse. It was further concluded that male students have higher prevalence of drug abuse than female students despite having similar knowledge of drug abuse.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are listed below:

1. There is need for university management to create more awareness activities of the consequences of drug abuse
2. Discipline should be put in-place by university management to curb drug abuse among undergraduates.
3. The university management should put more effort in implementation of policies enacted by government against substance abuse.
4. Quarterly lectures, workshops or seminars on effect of drug abuse should be delivered in social gatherings.

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