

Factors Influencing Engagement in Substance Abuse among Undergraduate Students in Two Universities in Port Harcourt Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study assessed the factors influencing engagement in substance abuse among undergraduate students in two universities in Port Harcourt, Rivers state Nigeria. The study design adopted a descriptive cross sectional survey. The study populations are students in the two selected tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt which are, the University of Port Harcourt and Rivers State University, Nigeria. The sample size for this study was determined using the Leslie Kesh formula ($n=420$ plus attrition rate of 10%). A multistage sampling procedure was used for sample selection. The instrument adopted was the socio-demographic questionnaire locally adapted by Omigbodun (2004) and modified by the researcher. Three hundred and thirty-one copies (331) were retrieved and analyzed, out of four hundred and twenty distributed questionnaires making a return rate of 78.8%. The study revealed 223 (67.3%) males abuse substances than their female counterparts. Sociocultural factors such as: relationships, peers, poor academic performance were shown to have had a very high influence in individual's engagement in substance abuse. The study also indicated a high prevalence of substance abuse with students of the University of Port Harcourt 134 (76.6%) than the Rivers State

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university students 89 (57.1%). There was no significant relationship between the socio-demographic factors and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement; and respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement. It was recommended among others that a broader scope of monitoring styles, early awareness of the consequences of drug abuse and discipline should be put in-place, and this should begin from the individual's family to the school, society and wider institutions.

Keywords: Factors, Undergraduates, Substance Abuse Engagement, Tertiary Institutions,

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Introduction

Substance abuse is a global menace and it is common among certain age groups in many countries. Many young people usually get involved in this practice. These young people are usually students in tertiary institutions. Assessment of the factors that influence substance abuse among students of tertiary institutions is pivotal to ascertaining the predisposing, precipitating, perpetuating as well as the protective factors as they relate to the phenomenon among these students. Over the years, substance abuse was reported mainly among the adult population but recently, the incidence of substance abuse seems to have increased among young people.

Substance is any drug that brings about certain euphoric feeling in a student, when ingested or injected which may become harmful to the students body. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, fifth edition (DSM-V) categories substances into ten (10) classes of drugs which include alcohol; caffeine; cannabis; hallucinogens (with separate categories for phencyclidine or similarly acting arylcyclohexylamines and other hallucinogens); inhalants; opioids; sedatives; hypnotics; anxiolytics; stimulants (amphetamines-type substances cocaine and other stimulants); tobacco and other (or unknown) substances as part of the category (Adeyemo, Ohaeri, Okpala&Oghale, 2016).

Increase in the rate of young people who engage in social vices has constituted nuisance in the society and health problems associated with substance use have reached alarming rate. Adeyemo, Ohaeri, Okpala and Oghale (2016) found that 46.6% of the sample respondents have taken drugs for non-medical purposes at least once which has led high incidence of students' hospitalization in mental health/psychiatric facilities as a result of their involvement in substance abuse, which might culminate into forfeiture of their educational pursuit.

Moreso, Substance use contributes to a wide range of diseases and health conditions. Kruse, Schindler, Williams, Weber, and Clark, (2017) found that substance abuse engagements result to harmful decision making. This has been found to be a consequence of adolescent substance use in adulthood; adolescent may suffer from impulsivity (impulsive choice and impulsive action) which is linked to addiction. Risk seeking and risk taking have been linked to impulsivity which contributes to altered decision making.

Several factors have been found to influence youth substance abuse, according to the study by Hill and Mrug (2015). These factors include the as socio-economic status of the family, peers, individual's school achievements and community affiliations. They also stated that the individual's socio-economic status, levels of parental education and students with lower socio-economic status were more likely to abuse substances.

The variables of this study are factors influencing undergraduates' substance abuse engagement in selected tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. Several socio-demographic characteristics have been linked to young person's engagement in substance abuse. Some of these characteristics include family structure and function, peer influence, socio-economic status and gender, among others.

Based on the foregoing, the study assessed the factors influencing engagement in substance abuse among undergraduate students in two universities in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study specifically:

- i. identified how personal factors influence undergraduates' substance abuse engagement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria;
- ii. identified how family factors influence undergraduates' substance abuse engagement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State Nigeria;

- iii. identified how socio-cultural factors influence undergraduates' substance abuse engagement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State Nigeria;
- iv. identified the prevalence of substance abuse engagement among undergraduates in the selected tertiary institutions;
- v. determined the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement; and
- vi. determined the relationship between respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement based on their institution.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the extent of influence of personal factor on students' engagement in substance abuse in the two selected universities?
2. What is the extent of influence of individuals' family on students' engagement in substance abuse in the selected universities?
3. What is the extent of influence of socio-cultural factors on student's engagement in substance abuse in the two selected universities?
4. What is the prevalence of substance abuse engagement among the undergraduates in the two selected universities?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were generated for this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between socio-demographic factors and factors influencing substance abuse engagement
2. There is no significant relationship between respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement

Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was utilized because the primary goal and aim of this study was to assess the factors influencing undergraduates' substance abuse engagement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study population were undergraduate students in two tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt who are engaged in substance abuse. The sample size used for this study was determined by Leslie Kish formula. Using the Leslie Kesh formula, $n = Z^2pq/d^2$

Where n = sample size

Z = Standard normal value 95% = $(P < 0.05) = 1.96$

P = Prevalence 46.6% = 0.466

q = $1 - p = 1 - 0.466 = 0.534$

d = Level of precision = 5% = (0.05)

Solving the above,

$n = (1.96)^2 \times 0.466 \times 0.534 / 0.05^2$

Therefore, $n = 382$. Attrition rate 10% of 382 = 38 + n

= 382 + 38 = 420

The selection of the sample size was done, using a multi-stage sampling procedure. The instrument adopted was the socio-demographic questionnaire locally adapted by Omigbodun (2004) and modified by the researcher. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questions were designed based on the objectives of the study. The instrument was

corrected by experts in the field of Nursing Science and Tests & Measurement. The instrument was tested by the researcher among 42 students (10% of population) of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, who were not part of the study population in order to check for the internal consistency of the items. Using the Cronbach's alpha, the reliability score for prevalence of substance abuse engagement was 0.808 while factors influencing substance abuse engagement was 0.720.

The data collected through questionnaires were checked, screened and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer the research questions and hypotheses respectively. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage) were used to answer all research questions while Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Statistics was used to test the two hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the extent of influence of personal factor on students' engagement in substance abuse in the two selected universities?

Table 1: Extent to which personal factors influence students' engagement in substance abuse

	Items	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
1.	Individual's uniqueness such as age, seeking sensation or an adventurous personality and lower self-esteem could be associated with substance abuse	234(70.7%)	62(18.8%)	35(10.6%)
2.	Males are more likely to abuse substance than females	223(67.3%)	82(24.8%)	26(7.9%)
3.	Disability and health conditions can influence an individual's engagement in substance abuse	228(68.9%)	70(21.1%)	33(10%)

Table 1 revealed the extent at which personal factors influenced students' engagement in substance abuse in the two selected university. Majority (70.7%) of the undergraduates in the two Universities agreed that individual's uniqueness, lower self-esteem could be associated with substance abuse and 67.3% of the respondents believed that males are more likely to abuse substance than females while most 68.9% of the students concurred that disability and health conditions could also contribute to individuals' engagement in substance abuse. Therefore, this study showed that mostly, males abuse substance than females and disability, health condition and individual uniqueness highly influence substance engagement among undergraduates in Port Harcourt and Rivers state University.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of influence of individuals' family on students' engagement in substance abuse in the selected universities?

Table 2: Extent to which family of individual influences the engagement in substance abuse

	Family factors items	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
1.	Inadequate parental monitoring styles such as parental rules that permit substance use at home can influence the engagement in substance abuse	288(87%)	24(7.2%)	19(5.7%)
2.	Maltreatments in the form of physical	294(88.8%)	14(4.2%)	23(6.9%)

	abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect by some parents and caregivers can influence an individual's engagement in substance abuse			
3.	Low socio-economic status of family could influence the individual's engagement in substance abuse	176(53.1%)	103(31.2%)	52(15.7%)

Table 2 revealed the extent to which family affects the engagement of substance abuse in the two selected university. It showed that majority (87%) of the undergraduates in the Universities agreed that inadequate parental monitoring styles in substances use at home can influence substance abuse engagement. In addition, more than half (88.8%) of the students believed that maltreatments in the form of physical abuse etc. by parents or caregivers can influence individual engagement in substance abuse and 53.1% of the undergraduates agreed to the fact that low socio-economic status of the family could influence individual engagement in substance abuse. Therefore, these findings opined that inadequate parental monitoring styles, maltreatments in the form of physical abuse, sexual abuse and low socio-economic status of the family influence individual's engagement in substance abuse.

Research Question 3: What is the extent of influence of socio-cultural factors on student's engagement in substance abuse in the two selected universities?

Table 3: Extent to which socio-cultural factors influence substance abuse engagement

	Items	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
1.	Relationship or association with peers who use substances can predispose an individual to substance abuse	287(86.7%)	22(6.6%)	22(6.6%)
2.	School influence such as poor academic performance and eventual drop out can influence an individual's engagement in substance abuse	239(72.2%)	50(15.1%)	42(12.7%)
3.	Captivating adverts of substances can influence an individual's engagement in substance abuse	185(55.9%)	59(17.9)	87(26.3%)
4.	Cultural practices may influence an individual's engagement in substance abuse	181(54.7%)	97(29.3%)	53(16%)

Table 3 showed the extent at which socio-cultural factors influence substance abuse engagements. Majority (86.7%) agreed to the fact that relationship with peers who use substances can predispose an individual to substance abuse. Moreso, 72.2% of the undergraduates believed that school influence such as poor academic performance, captivating adverts 55.9% and cultural practices 54.7% will influence an individual's engagement in substance abuse.

Research Question 4: What is the prevalence of substance abuse engagement among the undergraduates in the two selected universities?

Table 4: Prevalence of Undergraduates substance abuse engagement

Institutions	Total	Substance abuse engagement	
		Yes	No
University of port Harcourt	175	134(76.6%)	41(23.4%)
Rivers state university	156	89(57.1%)	67(42.9%)
Total	331	223(67.4%)	108(32.6%)

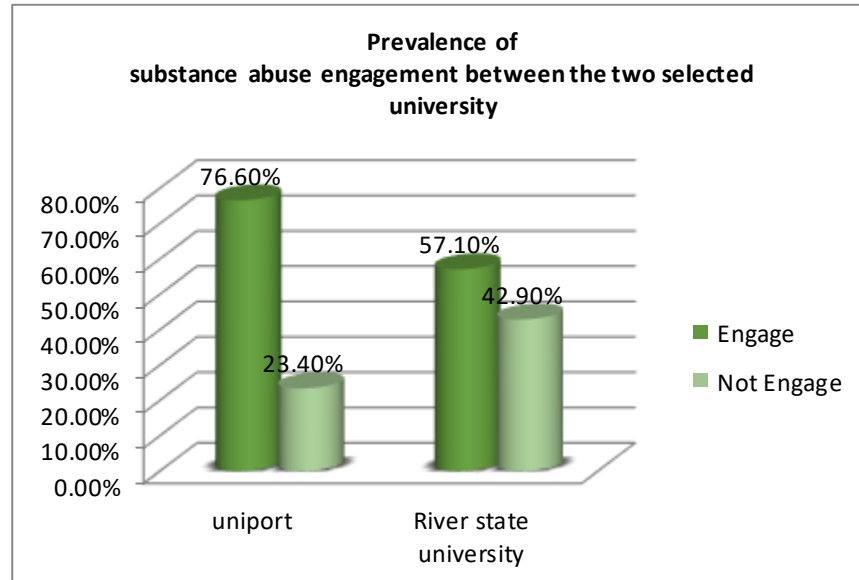


Figure1: Prevalence of substance abuse among the two tertiary institutions

Table 4 and figure 1 shows that more undergraduates in the University of Port Harcourt engaged more in substance abuse than the undergraduates in the River State University with 19.5% prevalence rate. This difference may have arisen from the increased number of undergraduates in the University of Port Harcourt as opposed to the Rivers State University.

Testing of Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between socio-demographic factors and factors influencing substance abuse engagement

Table 5: Relationship between demographic factors and factors influencing substance abuse engagement

Demographic factors	Influencing Factors : r (P-value) N=331		
	Individual	Family	Socio-cultural
Gender	.072(.192)	.043(.433)	-.047(.391)
Age	.084(.127)	.074(.178)	.048(.389)
Position in family	-.024(.660)	.019(.724)	-.019(.735)
Religion	-.059(.283)	-.015(.782)	-.066(.234)
Year of study	.060(.276)	.061(.269)	.015(.784)

Table 5 showed no significant relationship between any of the demographics factors and the factors influencing substance abuse engagements at P-value >0.05. As gender (Ind. Factor, r=0.72; p=0.192 > 0.05, family: r=0.43, p=0.433>0.05, socio-cultural; r= -0.047, p=



0.391>0.05); Age (Ind. Factor: $r=0.084$; $p=0.127 >0.05$, family: $r=0.074$, $p=0.178 >0.05$; for socio-cultural; $r=0.048$, $p=0.389 >0.05$); position in family (Ind. factor; $r= -0.024$, $p=0.660 >0.05$; family: $r=0.19$ $p= 0.724 >0.05$; socio-cultural: $r= -0.019$, $p= 0.735 > 0.05$); Religion (Ind. Factor: $r= -0.59$, $p=0.283 >0.05$; family: $r= - 0.015$, $p =0.782 >0.05$; socio-cultural: $r =-0.066$, $p=0.234 >0.05$) and year of study (Ind. Factor: $r=0.060$, $p=0.266$; family: $r=0.061$ $p=0.269 >0.05$; socio-cultural; $r=0.15$, $p=0.784 > 0.05$). Therefore, this null statement is hereby accepted. Hence, there was no significant relationship between socio-demographic factors and factors influencing substance abuse engagement

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement

Table 6: Relationship between type of family and factors influencing substance abuse engagement among undergraduate

Type of family		Factors influencing substance engagement among undergraduates		
		Individual	Family	Social or cultural
University of Port Harcourt	Pearson correlation	-.143	-.072	.100
	Sig (p-value)	.059	.342	.186
	N	175	175	175
River State University	Pearson correlation	.003	-.066	-.109
	Sig (p-value)	.971	.414	.174
	N	156	156	156

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 showed no significant relationship between the three factors influencing substance abuse engagement and family type in the two institutions because the p-value > 0.05. The family type in Uniport found no significant relationship with the influencing factors as (Ind. Factor: $r= -0.143$, $p=0.059 >0.05$; family factor: $r= -0.072$, $p= 0.342 >0.05$; socio-cultural factor; $r= 0.100$, $p=0.186 >0.05$). Indifferently, River State University family type established no significant relationship with the influencing factors as follows (Ind. Factor: $r= 0.003$, $p=0.971 >0.05$; family factor: $r= -0.066$, $p= 0.414 >0.05$; socio-cultural factor; $r= -0.109$, $p=0.174 > 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Hence, there was no significant relationship between respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement

Discussion

This study investigated the factors influencing undergraduates' substance abuse engagement in two selected tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. Findings to research question one reveals the extent to which personal factors influence students engagement in substance abuse. This study showed that males abuse substance than females. Secondly, disability, health condition and individual uniqueness also influence the substance engagement of undergraduates in the University of Port Harcourt and Rivers state University. These findings correlates with a study conducted by Baron and Kalsher, (2008) on individual uniqueness which found that a relationship between Self-esteem and individual's decision-

making. Substance abuse engagement appears to rise when youths have low self-esteem. Also, Nor, Rozmi, Fauziah, and Salina (2015) found that the complexity of the drugs abused increases with the age of the abuser.

The findings of research question two reveal the extent at which family of the individual affects the engagement of substance abuse. These findings suggest that inadequate parental monitoring styles, maltreatments in form of physical abuse, sexual abuse and low socio-economic status of the family influence individuals' engagement in substance abuse. Parental monitoring styles and maltreatments in form of physical abuse, sexual abuse in a family attracted the mind of children in that home. This correlates with the study conducted by Tang and Loke (2012) who found that children look up to their parents as role models; therefore, smoking on the part of parents and siblings will be regarded by children as an acceptable behaviour. Similarly, Azuiké, Oni and Dirisu, (2012) opined that family support and control showed that most of the parents (43.2%) were moderate in their support and control of their children, 38.5% were permissive, 10.9% were neglectful, 6.5% were authoritarian, and only 0.6% were warm and directive in their style of parenting

The research question three findings showed extent at which socio-cultural factors influence substance abuse engagement. Majority (86.7%) of the respondents from this study agreed that relationship with peers who use substances can predispose an individual to substance abuse. This agrees with the findings from the Health and Social Care Information Centre (2013) which discovered that having a friend who smokes will increase the odds that an adolescent will smoke by 5.45 times, rising to 10.46 times when the adolescent is invited by a friend to smoke. Having a friend who drinks will increase the odds that an adolescent will drink by 1.89 times, increasing to 11.825 times when invited by a friend to drink. Similarly, a qualitative study conducted by Samson (2018) expressed from his study that most of his participants had their first drug use through the company of their peers where they were offered and encouraged to use.

The study also revealed there was no significant relationship between socio-demographic factors and factors influencing substance abuse engagement. This contradicted the findings of Azuiké, Oni and Dirisu (2012) who asserted that young grown-ups who are between 18 years and 25 years old constitute the populace that are most outstandingly powerless to psychoactive drugs misuse, at the same time, young people between 11 and 17 years accounted for the second most outstanding populace with vulnerability to drug abuse.

The study also revealed that there was no significant relationship between respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement. Similarly, Merikangas and McClair (2015) supported this result from their findings which showed that, no significant relationship existed between respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement.

Summary of Major Findings

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. The study revealed that lower self-esteem could be associated with substances abuse and male genders are more likely to engage in the phenomenon.
2. More so, the findings showed that inadequate parental monitoring styles, low economic status of the family could influence individuals in substance abuse engagement.

3. With regards to the social environment, poor academic performance, captivating adverts and cultural practices would influence undergraduates' involvement in substance abuse.
4. The findings showed a high prevalence rate of substance abuse engagement in the University of Port Harcourt than the Rivers State University. This may be as a result of the population size of the University.
5. There was no significant relationship between socio-demographic factors and factors influencing substance abuse engagement.
6. There was no significant relationship between respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement.

Conclusion

The study concluded that family, environment, peers and cultural practices, among others, had a great influence on substance abuse engagement especially among the males. In addition, socio-demographic factors and factors influencing substance abuse engagement were not related likewise respondents' family type and the factors influencing substance abuse engagement.

Recommendations

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

1. A broader scope of monitoring styles, early awareness of the consequences of drug abuse and discipline should be put in-place, and this should begin from the individual's family to the school, society and wider institutions.
2. Effective and thorough discipline including strict monitoring should be practiced in the family and society at large.
3. The Government (Federal, State and Local) should put more effort in implementation of policies enacted against substance abuse.
4. Employment facilities should be created to increase economic status of most parents in discharging their responsibility to their children.
5. Quarterly lectures or seminars on effect of substance abuse should be delivered in social gatherings.

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