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Pattern of Drug and Substance Abuse and Health Implication among Students of Yobe State University Damaturu, Damaturu LGA, Yobe State, Nigeria

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ABTRACT

Substance abuse is a worldwide public health problem and is more experienced in developing countries such as Nigeria. Its pattern varies among the different populations and is influenced by various factors such as age, gender, income, self-care orientation, educational level and environment of the individual. This research delves into the significant determination of the pattern of substance abuse and health implications among students of Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State. Its primary aims involve comprehensively investigating the reasons behind substance abuse, evaluating the types of substances commonly abused and determining which gender abuses drugs more than others. A school-based cross-sectional study in which a descriptive approach was used to obtain quantitative data through the use of a pretested interviewer-administered questionnaire. A cluster sampling technique was used to select eligible respondents from the study population. A p-value of less than 0.005 ($p<0.005$) was considered statistically significant. This study revealed the pattern of substance abuse and health implications among Yobe State University students. The mean age of the respondents was 25.56 years (± 3.7). A high pattern of substance abuse (84.4%) was observed among Yobe State University Students and a higher proportion of the male participants (83.0%) abused drugs and substances more than the female respondents. The study revealed the most commonly abused substances by Yobe State University students were alcohol, cocaine, codeine, and morphine among others. There are no significant reasons why students abuse drugs. Also, the study showed that taking drugs and substances can cause mental illness and also serve as risk factors for most non-communicable diseases as the health implications of substance abuse. The majority of the male respondents consumed and abused drugs/substances more than the female respondents in the school environment.

Keywords: *Damaturu LGA, Drug and Substance Abuse, Health Implications, Patterns, Youths, Undergraduate Students, Yobe State University*

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INTRODUCTION

Drug and substance abuse is emerging as a global public health issue. The recent World Drug Report 2019 of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimated that 271 million (5.5%) of the global population (aged between 15 and 64 years), had used drugs in the previous year. Also, it has been projected that 35 million

individuals will be experiencing drug use disorders. Further, the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017 estimated that, in 2017, there were 585,000 deaths due to drug use, globally (UNODC, 2019). The burden of drug abuse (usage, abuse, and trafficking) has also been related to the four areas of international concern, viz organized crime, illicit financial flows, corruption, and terrorism/insurgency (UNODC, 2017).

In Nigeria, the burden of drug abuse is on the rise and becoming a public health concern. Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa, has developed a reputation as a center for drug trafficking and usage mostly among the youth population. According to the 2018 UNODC report “Drug use in Nigeria” - The first large-scale, nationwide national drug use survey in Nigeria, one in seven persons (aged 15–64 years) had used a drug in the past year. Also, one in five individuals who had used drugs in the past year is suffering from drug-related disorders. Drug abuse has been a cause of many criminal offences such as theft, burglary, sex work, and shoplifting (UNODC, 2018). Nigeria is enormously diverse with over 400 ethnicities and many religious groups (Jess, 2020). Drug abuse is therefore viewed within a broader context in Nigeria, due to its multicultural nature. For instance, most societies do not consider the use of some drugs which do not produce overt behavioral changes as drug abuse.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2019) notes increasing instances of drug and substance abuse. The report notes that up to 275 million people utilized drugs globally in 2020 and that more than 36 million people suffered from drug use disorders. Substance abuse is the indiscriminate use of drugs, the use of illegal drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances, for purposes other than those for which they are meant or in excessive amounts which can cause harm to the abuser or others around them (WHO, 2018).

Drug abuse according to WHO, is defined as the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances including alcohol and illicit drugs while the National Institutes on drug abuse defines it as the use of illegal drugs or misuse of prescription or over-the-counter -drugs for the purpose than those for which they are indicated for or in a manner or quantity other than they are directed (WHO, 2018). Drug abuse is the harmful intake of drugs by individuals in ways or quantities hazardous to them or the people around them (Aminu, 2021). Usually, drug abuse and substance abuse are often used interchangeably but most Physicians prefer to use the word substance abuse. However, drug and substance abuse can be used interchangeably (Osonwa and Arikpo, 2018).

Psychoactive substances are a group of substances, licit and illicit, which when ingested or administered affect mental processes (WHO, 2018). The most commonly abused substances include cannabis, cocaine, tobacco, alcohol, cough syrup containing codeine, and methamphetamine usually referred to as ‘ice’. Psychoactive substances are also defined as chemicals that affect the nervous system and alter the brain's activity. These substances, including alcohol and selected illegal drugs such as cocaine, can lead to dependence syndrome. This behavioral, cognitive and psychological phenomenal cluster develops after continuous use of these substances. It leads to a strong desire to take the drug, thus resulting in difficulties controlling its use and persistence despite its harmful effects on health (UNODC, 2018). Global use of the above-mentioned substances was noted to be prevalent in different regions of the world, whereby in Africa, the use of opioids and other drugs increased from 2010 to 2019 (UNODC, 2021).

The different types of youths that have been identified include the in-school youths which include those in secondary and tertiary institutions and the out-school youths which include those who are unemployed, the artisans, those seeking admission into the tertiary institution and those in the street. The out-of-school youth is an individual who, for one reason or the other, has never been to school or who left school before completion of an academic program.

The out-of-school youth is a heterogeneous group made up of children and adolescents who have never been to school, young people who left school too early, almajiris, street children, area boys and those involved in a wide variety of child labor, among others. This group is not under the supervision of any formal education system - perhaps this explains why their behavior is difficult to monitor and control, even though some of them are learners of trade or apprentices. Most out-of-school youths roam the streets in search of menial jobs. They are engaged in menial jobs such as car wash, load-bearers, gardeners, bush-clearers, fetchers of water, and so on. Some are employed as bus conductors and house help; they stay in motor parks, market places and public places where drugs are freely displayed and advertised. At night, they take refuge in bushes, uncompleted buildings and schools with no gates to take hard drugs, they have delusions and confused personalities and see drugs as a way to relieve them of the realities of life (Ogunsola and Fatusi, 2016).

In Nigeria, substance abuse among these different types of youths varies due to factors such as accessibility, social influences and socio-economic status of the individual. The in-school youths were found to abuse substances such as Alcohol, tobacco, caffeine and cannabis while the out-school youths abuse more street drugs such as cocaine, heroin or methamphetamine, solvents and inhalants, opioids and also cannabis (Ogunwale *et al.*, 2023).

This research work is therefore very crucial as it will help in understanding the pattern of drug and substance abuse, understanding the health implications and also helps to explore an effective control measure and interventions that are tailored towards the Nigerian context that can aid in mitigating the problem and promoting healthier lifestyle among students of Yobe State University Damaturu, Damaturu LGA, Yobe State.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

Yobe is located in the northeastern geopolitical zone of Nigeria and borders four Nigerian states as well as the Republic of Niger (Figure 1). It has a population of 3.4 million people and covers an area of 45,502 square kilometers representing about 5% of the landmass of Nigeria. Yobe is inhibited by the following major tribes; Kanuri, Hausa, Fulani, Karai-Karai, Bade, Ngizim Bolewa and Ngamo (Figure 1). The major livelihood is agriculture, fishing and nomadic pastoralism (NPC, 2006). This study was done among students at the institute of Yobe State University located in Damaturu, Yobe state, Nigeria. It was established under the Yobe state law in 2006 by Alh. Bukar Abba Ibrahim, the then Executive Governor of Yobe State. The University is a public higher education institution which has a total of five faculties with twenty-three departments and a student population of over 5000 enrolments (4227 of male students and 1678 of female students).

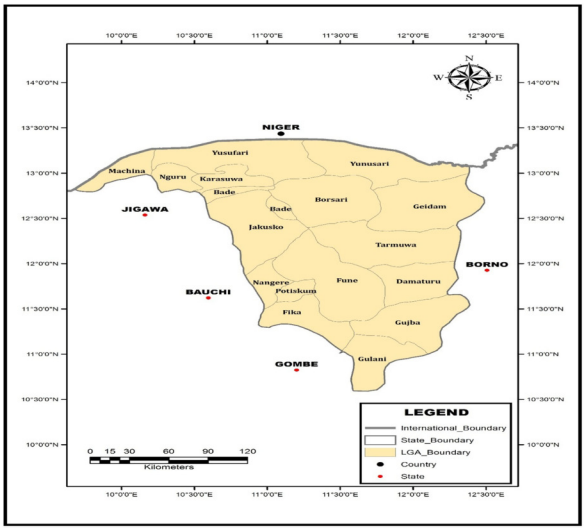

Figure 1*: Map of Yobe State, Nigeria, Showing the Local Government Areas of the State Source: Geospatial Analysis Mapping and Environmental Research Solutions (GAMERS), 2018*

Study design

This research was a school-based cross-sectional study in which a descriptive approach was used to find out the pattern of substance abuse and health implications among students of Yobe State University Damaturu. Quantitative data were obtained through the use of a pretested interviewer-administered questionnaire.

Community entry and advocacy

A letter of introduction was taken to the authorities of the institution selected for the study. Ethical approval was obtained from the Health Research and Ethical Review Committee of the University of Yobe State University and permission from the School Vice Chancellor was sought.

Study population

This study focused on the total population of students currently at the Yobe State University Damaturu, comprising both males and females at different levels of education with the aim of exploring the pattern of substance abuse and health implications among students at the university. An individual who engages in substance use and is achieving their goal may perceive the situation as successful because of the fun, popularity and enhanced performance consequently, he would penetrate some behavior of success in future situations this principle accounts for imitation and maintenance of substance use e.g. A particular musician who had a perceived success in cannabis use, campaigns for the legalization of cannabis use.

An individual view of himself influences what he does and at the Centre of all our reactions all the views held about ourselves, our relationship with others at large. This view is called “self-concept” the fact that every action is meaningful and goal-directed. An objective appraisal of one’s personality may result in classifying oneself as timid and fearful directly there in low self-concept, to make up for his inadequacies he may get involved in Drug abuse to influence the need for great relevance in human activities. The need is a drive at the bottom of a ladder, where the need is physiological to the peak of the pyramid where it is self-actualization where the need is not satisfied, the individual tends to engage in certain activities which the individual perceives to be the way out.

Inclusion criteria

Those included in the study were all youths aged 15-35 years who gave assent/consent and were students of Yobe State University.

Exclusion criteria

Respondents within the stated age range but who had spent some time of less than two sessions in the study setting or who were adjudged to be unable to give valid responses to our questions due to a profound illness were excluded from the study.

Sample size determination

The minimum sample size was determined using the formula for descriptive study. The formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

Where,

n= minimum sample size when the population is greater

than 10000
Z = standard normal deviation set as 1.96 which corresponds to a 95% confidence interval
p = prevalence of substance abuse in the previous study = 41.6% or 0.416 (Idowu *et al*., 2023)
q = 1-p, = 0.584
d = degree of accuracy required usually set as 5% or 0.05
By substituting, n = 373.32

Thus, the minimum sample size was 373.
Since the target population is less than 10,000 then, the formula for descriptive study for a population less than 10,000 was used, thus:

$$nf = \frac{n}{1 + n/N}$$

Where

nf= desired sample size when the population is less than 10000
n= desired sample size when the population is greater than 10000
N= total population size (student enrolment- 5905)
By substituting, nf= 350.89, nf ≈ 351

To compensate for attrition or non-response rate, given an anticipated response rate of 90%, the sample size was calculated using the formula:

$$ns = \frac{n}{0.9}$$

Where,

n = calculated sample size
ns = sample size to compensate for attrition and non-response
0.9 = Taken that a 90% response rate is anticipated
Then, by substituting, ns = 390

To further improve the precision and accuracy of this study, the sample size was further increased to 400.

Sampling technique

A cluster sampling technique was used to select eligible respondents from the study population. Out of the 23 departments at Yobe State University, 10 departments were selected using the simple random sampling method (balloting). Following the stated inclusion/ exclusion criteria, convenient sampling was used to recruit eligible respondents from selected departments within the chosen clusters.

Pre-Test

Ten per cent (10%) of the questionnaire was administered to the students who shared similar characteristics with the study population but were not part of the sample.

The exercise helped in assessing the appropriateness of the questions in eliciting the desired responses from our respondents. Ambiguous questions were either rephrased or removed entirely in line with our study objectives.

Method of data collection and instrument

Data were collected using an interviewer-administered, semi-structured questionnaire adapted from the UNODC Global Assessment Program on Drug Use Toolkit. The questionnaire was sectioned based on the research objectives.

Section A: This collected the socio-demographic data, such as age, sex, religion ethnicity, faculty, department and level of education.

Section B: This comprises a pattern of substance abuse.

Section C: comprises of health implications of substance abuse among the selected students.

It was translated to the local language for our respondents who preferred communicating in their local language. Back translation into English language was carried out by linguistic experts, to preserve the original meanings of the questions being asked. Data were collected by a group of 5 research assistants who were trained and supervised on data collection by the principal investigator.

Validity and reliability of the instrument

To ascertain the face and content validity of the instruments, copies of the instruments will be presented to the researchers' supervisor and co-supervisor for corrections and validation. Their corrections and comments will be used to modify the questionnaire and so the final version will be structured to ensure the content and face validity. In the face of reliability, 10% of the questionnaire will be administered to the students who shared similar characteristics with the study population but not part of the sample. The data obtained will be analyzed to determine the accuracy and consistency of the questionnaire.

Method of data analysis

After data collection, the instruments were thoroughly checked for completeness and consistency. Quantitative data was analysed using IBM Statistical Solution version 25.0). The administered questionnaires were sorted, coded and checked manually for errors and completeness before entry and analysis.

***Descriptive Statistics**:* This was used to provide a summary of the data collected. Frequency counts, percentages, charts, means and rates were used to calculate categorical variables to present the result.

Bivariate Analysis: This was used to examine the relationship between two variables.

Chi-Square Test of Independence: Comparisons of categorical variables and tests of association were done using Chi-square (x^2) tests such as assessing the correlation between knowledge scores and practice scores.

Independent Samples T-Test or One-Way ANOVA: Continuous variables were compared using Students't' tests or ANOVA.

Level of Significance: A p-value of less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$) was considered significant at a 95% confidence level.

Multivariate Analysis: This involves examining the relationship between multiple variables simultaneously. This helps to understand the impact of multiple factors on a particular outcome.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the Health Research and Ethical Review Committee of Yobe State University, Damaturu. Both oral and written consent was sought from the authority of the school, oral consent was sought from the students before data collection.

RESULTS

Demographic Information of Respondents at Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria

The demographic characteristics explored in this project work were Age, Gender, Religion and Ethnicity. Table 1 shows the profile of the participants. The age range for the participants was from below 20 to 35 years. More than half of the respondents 183 (57.0%) belong to the age group 26 to 30 years, followed by 88 (27.4%) of the respondents below 20, whereas about 33 (10.3%) respondents were between the age of 21 to 25 years and remaining 17 (5.3%) respondents are 31 to 35 years. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents 267 (83.2%) were Male while 54 (16.8%) of the respondents were female. About 275 (85.7%) respondents were Muslim while 27 (8.4%) respondents were Christian and 19 (5.9%) respondents belonged to other religions. The result on the ethnicity shows that more than half of 190 (59.2%) respondents were Kanuri while 90 (28%) respondents were Hausa, followed by 8 (2.5%) respondents were Fulani and 33 (10.3%) of the respondents belonged to other tribes.

Pattern of Substance Abuse among the Respondents at Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria

Table 2 presents the pattern of substance abuse from the respondents; the majority of the respondents (99.4%) have heard about substance abuse before. 81% of the respondents heard about substance abuse from the media, and 11.8% heard about substance abuse from the school. 79.1% of the respondents believed that excessive use of drugs, drugs not taken in line with medical prescription, and the use of illegal substances are considered to be substance abuse. 84.7% of the respondents stated that they had once abused substances before, while 51.4% abused Cigarettes, and 31.2% of the respondent abused Alcohol. More than half of the respondents 69.2% still abused drugs and substances in their respective locations in the school whereas 41.4% of the respondents often take it twice a week. 53.6% of the respondents abused drugs at Night clubs, whereas 71% of the respondents intended to quit abusing drugs/substances, 38.9% were advised by elders to stop using and abusing drugs and substances, and 19.3% were advised for medical reasons. In general, the report shows that the majority of the respondents know and use drugs and substances and most of the respondents intend to stop drugging.

Figure 2 shows the common type of substances used by undergraduate students where alcohol was the major substance being abused by 53.5% according to the respondents, whereas 38.3% of the undergraduate students drink Codeine only 1.3% abuse morphine.

Heath Implication of Substance Abuse among the Respondents at Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State

The response to the question presented in (Table 3) shows that the reaction of students about health implications agreed that taking drugs/substances gives a good feeling representing 99.7%, 83.8% agreed that it serves as a risk factor for most diseases in the school, 69.5% also agreed that drug/substance enhances moment for sex, over 75.4% of the respondent agreed that drug/substance gives a sense of warmth, while 66.7% disagreed that drug/substance Causes absenteeism & poor performance in school. 83.8% agreed that precipitates mental symptoms**,** 83.8% also agreed drug/substance causes drowsiness, weakness and accidents, the majority of the respondents agreed that 94.7% had Blurry vision, while 86.9% also agreed that the drug/substance causes residual depressive feelings of remorse, 73.8% of the respondent also agreed that drug/substance causes difficulty in thinking & problem solving, 81.9% agreed that it led to chronic illness, and 83.8% of the respondent agreed that drug/substance causes death.

DISCUSSION

Widespread ignorance of the probable ill effects of certain drugs and legal prohibitions against the illegal use of such drugs constitute an obstacle to any epidemiological study of drug abuse in Nigeria. The consequent reluctance on the part of abusers to cooperate in such studies for fear of

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Participants at Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State.

Demographic factors	Particulars	Frequency (n=321)	Percent (%)
Age	Below 20	88	27.4
	21-25	33	10.3
	26-30	183	57.0
	31-35	17	5.3
Mean age 25.565 years (± 3.7).			
Gender	Female	54	16.0
	Male	267	83.0
Religion	Christianity	27	8.4
	Islam	275	85.7
	Other	19	5.9
Ethnicity	Hausa	90	28
	Fulani	8	2.5
	Kanuri	190	59.2
	Other	33	10.3
Total		**321**	**100**

Table 2: Pattern of Substance Abuse of the Participants at Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State.

Pattern of Substance Abuse	Particulars	Frequency (n=321)	Percent (%)
Have you heard about substance abuse before	Yes	319	99.4
	No	-	-
	Missing value	2	0.6
If yes, through what means	Friend	6	1.9
	Media	260	81.0
	Parents	15	4.7
	Schools	38	11.8
	Missing value	2	.6
What do you consider to be substance abuse	Excessive use of drug	48	15.0
	Drugs not taken in line with medical prescription	6	1.9
	The use of illegal substances	13	4.0
	All of the above	254	79.1
Have you ever abused any substance before	Yes	272	84.7
	No	46	14.3
	Missing value	3	0.9
If yes, what type	Alcohol	100	31.2
	Cocaine	5	1.6
	Cigarette	165	51.4
	Marijuana	1	0.3
	Codeine	2	0.6
	Others	1	0.3
	Missing value	47	14.6
Do you still use drugs/substance	Yes	222	69.2
	No	57	17.8
	Missing value	42	13.1
If yes, how often	Always	36	11.2
	Weekly	47	14.6
	Twice a week	133	41.4
	Monthly	4	1.2
	Others	2	0.6
	Missing value	99	30.8
where do you take drugs/ substance	School café	2	0.6
	Night club	172	53.6
	Roadside joint	44	13.7
	Others	74	23.1
	Missing value	29	9.0
Do you intend to quit	Yes	228	71.0
	No	45	14.0
	Missing value	48	15.0
If yes, what reason?	Religion	42	13.1
	Advice from elders	125	38.9
	Medical reason	62	19.3
	Missing value	92	28.7
Total		321	100

prosecution or stigmatization appears understandable, though misguided. Nevertheless, it is necessary to have an idea, of the nature and size of the problem if meaningful and effective preventive measures are contemplated.

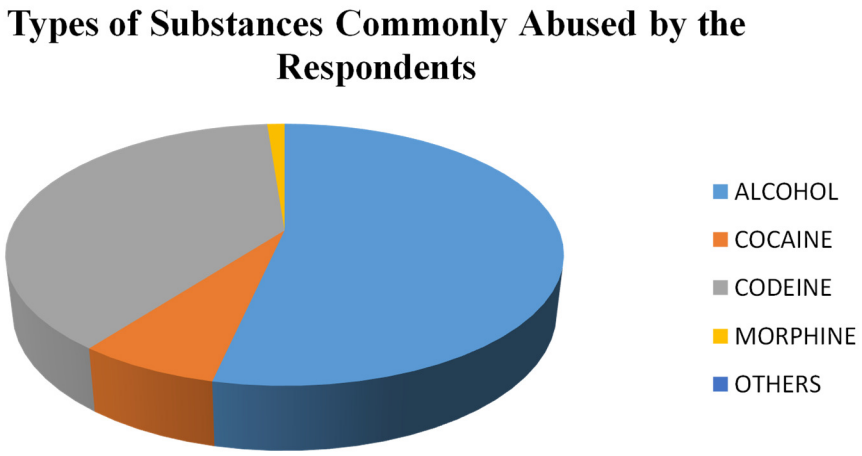

Figure 2*: Types of substances commonly abused by the respondents*

Table 3: Heath Implication of the Participants at Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State.

Heath Implication of the Participants	Particulars	Frequency (n=321)	Percent (%)
Taking drugs/substances gives a good feeling	Agree	320	99.7
	Disagree	1	0.3
Serves as risk factors for most diseases	Agree	269	83.8
	Disagree	52	16.2
It enhances the moment of sex	Agree	223	69.5
	Disagree	98	30.5
It gives a sense of warmth	Agree	242	75.4
	Disagree	79	24.6
Causes absenteeism & poor performance in school	Agree	107	33.3
	Disagree	214	66.7
It precipitates mental symptoms	Agree	269	83.8
	Disagree	52	16.2
Causes drowsiness, weakness & accident	Agree	269	83.8
	Disagree	52	16.2
Blurry vision	Agree	304	94.7
	Disagree	17	5.3
Causes residual depressive feelings of remorse	Agree	279	86.9
	Disagree	42	13.1
Difficulty in thinking & problem solving	Agree	237	73.8
	Disagree	84	26.2
Lead to chronic illness	Agree	263	81.9
	Disagree	58	18.1
Death	Agree	269	83.8
	Disagree	52	16.2
Total		321	100

Sample size (n): 321

This study revealed the pattern of substance abuse and health implications among Yobe State University students. This study revealed the pattern of substance abuse and health implications among Yobe State University students. The mean age of the respondents was 25.56 years (± 3.7) which is similar to the findings of Lucky *et al.* (2016) who

reported 23.63 ± 2.64 years. This can be due to the type of institutions studied (Tertiary). A high pattern of substance abuse (84.4%) was observed among Yobe State University Students and this is higher than the findings of Lucky *et al.* (2016) who reported 69.2% in their study. This difference can be due to the study area, subjects and sampling techniques employed. A higher proportion of the male participants (83.0%) abused drugs and substances more than the female respondents which agreed with Makanjuola *et al.* (2007) who also stated that male students abused drugs more than females. This can be due to the Nigerian culture and societal attitude which sends the male child to school and the female to their husband's house when they are of age. Our finding is not in agreement with Bassey and Aniekpeno (2021) that out of the 41 male respondents, 20 (48.8%) were current users of one form of drug or another, while 46 (34.1%) out of the 135 female respondents were current users of drugs/substances. The disparity can be due to study area, year of the study, subjects of the study and their access to drugs. This study also revealed the most common types of substances being abused by Yobe State University students were alcohol, cocaine, codeine, and morphine among others and this also concurs with the findings of Haliru (2023). This can be due to significant reasons why students abused drugs such as an increased sense of warmth and good feelings among the respondents. Also, the study showed that taking drugs and substances can cause mental illness and also serve as risk factors for most non-communicable diseases as the health implications of substance abuse (Lucky *et al.,* 2016). The majority of the male respondents consumed and abused drugs/substances more than the female respondents in the school environment (Lucky *et al.,* 2016). This can be due to the rugged nature of males compared to females.

The strengths of the study lie in the use of well-standardized, internationally accepted instruments for data collection as this eased the comparability of the findings with those of similar surveys elsewhere. The study utilized a large sample size comprising student intake from all parts of the country. The limitations include its cross-sectional design which was not the best in assessing the trend and roles of the perceived contributory factors. A longitudinal design in which students are followed up from admission to graduation would be ideal. There was a problem of non-response, which might have introduced unknown errors; this was perhaps in common with other self-administered questionnaire surveys on drug use. However, the effects of nonresponse could not invalidate the finding as the majority of the target population participated in the study. The findings that sizable a number of students in this study started using drugs while in primary and secondary school points to the need for the early institution of preventive measures. It also calls for a formal policy of inculcating drug education into the academic curriculum for primary and secondary schools. There is also the need for a policy in Nigerian tertiary institutions to confidentially identify and assist drug-dependent students to overcome the habit and prevent the problem in those who are yet to be affected. Efforts should also be made to curtail the relatively easy access of students and the populace in general to benzodiazepines and other prescription drugs. This can be done by banning the chemist shops from selling prescription drugs. The bigger pharmacy shops would sell after verifying the doctors' signatures.

Conclusion

The overall lifetime prevalence of substance use among Yobe State University undergraduate students is high. The most commonly used substances among students are alcohol and cigarettes. Drug abuse among undergraduate students constitutes one of the deadliest menaces faced by Nigerians today. It has been identified as a social vice that must be eradicated. Although the government has currently championed the campaign against drug abuse, drug abusers exhibit some anomalous behavior due to their reliance on drugs. They can be helped by Counsellors to overcome their problem. Counsellors are also required to provide drug abuse education to the students in our secondary school and tertiary institutions. Drug abuse counselling is therefore recommended as an integral part of the school curriculum; a method of management which focuses on specific problems arising from the abuse of drugs.

A high pattern of substance abuse was observed among Yobe State University Students and a higher proportion of the male participants abused drugs and substances more than the female respondents.

The researcher believes that there is an urgent need for tertiary institutions to introduce the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) as a forum whereby parents and lecturers would interact to identify the problems of the students who abused drugs/substances with a view to finding lasting solutions to such. Counsellors attached to the various universities should monitor and identify drug abusers and provide counselling therapies for them to adjust to normal life.

Recommendations

Drug and substance abuse among undergraduate students is a serious issue that can have detrimental effects on their health, academic performance, and overall well-being. To address this problem, universities and colleges can consider implementing the following recommendations:

i. Prevention Programs: Establish comprehensive prevention programs that educate students about the risks and consequences of drug and substance abuse. These programs can include workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns.

ii. Counseling Services: Offer easily accessible counselling services for students struggling with substance

abuse. Providing support and resources can help students overcome their challenges and seek help when needed.

iii. Support Groups: Facilitate support groups or peer-to-peer counselling services where students can find encouragement and motivation to overcome addiction. Peer support can be a powerful tool in promoting recovery.

iv. Campus Policies: Enforce strict campus policies regarding drug and substance abuse, including disciplinary actions for offenders. Creating a safe and drug-free environment is essential in curbing substance abuse among students.

v. Collaboration with External Resources: Partner with external organizations, such as rehabilitation centers and mental health clinics, to provide additional support and treatment options for students in need of specialized care. By implementing these recommendations, universities can play a proactive role in addressing drug and substance abuse among undergraduate students and fostering a healthier and more supportive campus environment.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no competing interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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