ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE USE AS CORRELATES OF HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING OF YOUHTS IN IBADAN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the effects of alcohol and other substance use on health and social well-being among youths in Nigeria. Descriptive research survey design was adopted. Two hundred and twenty-five (225) youths were selected as sample through convenient sampling method. A self-developed, validated Likert-type designed questionnaire with a reliability of 0.86 was used as instrument. Data collected were analysed using simple percentages, frequency count and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that alcohol and other substance use had significant influence on health of youths (r = .603, n= 225, P (.000) < 0.05). The result further showed that there was significant relationship between alcohol and other substance use on psychological well-being of youths (r = .510, n= 225, P(.000) < 0.05). The study concluded that alcohol and other substance use have direct relationship on health while health also has direct relationship on social well-being of youths. The study recommended that sensitization on dangers of alcohol and substance use on health and psychological well-being should further be intensified by social workers and other health stake holders. The challenges of alcohol and substance use among the youths must be tackled headlong to ensure sustainability of a drug-free African society.

Keywords: *Youths, Alcohol and Substance use, Health, Psychosocial well-being, Social Work.*

Introduction

The abuse of alcohol and other substances during adolescence remains a serious public health problem. Alcohol and substance use are highly associated with adolescent suicide. Ojedokun and Shafa (2013) found that for adolescents to be healthy and psychologically balanced, they must stay away from some factors that adversely undermine or compromise their physical, social, intellectual and emotional stability. Societal and economic costs of alcohol and substance abuse are associated with many accidents, fights, driving offenses and unprotected sex and rapes. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) (2010) alcohol and substances use are said to be responsible for 1.8 million deaths and results in disability in approximately 58.3 million people. Health and Social well-being are the result of a combination of physical, social, intellectual and emotional factors in the presence of abundance provision for life sustenance. This is a holistic definition of well-being. The ideas about health and social well-being change over time and vary between different cultures, religion and life stages.

United States Institute of Peace (USIP) (2009) found that alcohol and substance abusers are 17 times more likely to commit suicide than youths who do not. Also, the report further found that approximately 40 percent of the 58.3 million people disabled through alcohol and substance abuse are disabled due to alcohol-related neuropsychiatric disorders. In South Africa, where HIV infection is epidemic, alcohol abusers were found to have exposed themselves to double the risk of this infection. Additionally, alcohol and substance abuse increases the risk of individuals either experiencing or perpetrating sexual violence. Chersich and Rees (2010) reported a situation in the United States where many people were arrested for drinking and driving on regular basis. People under the influence of alcohol commit a large portion of various violent crimes, including child abuse, homicide and suicide. Therefore, alcohol and substance use during adolescence are said to be precarious.

The brain goes through dynamic changes during youthful ages as a result of advancing pubertal maturation. Alcohol and substance use can damage long and short term growth processes in teenagers. Nixon and McClain (2010) found that alcohol abuse during adolescence greatly increases the risk of developing an alcohol use disorder in adulthood due to changes in neuro-circuit that alcohol abuse causes in the vulnerable adolescent brain. Nixon et al (2010) further said that initial consumption among males in studies showed associated increased rates of alcohol abuse within the general population. According to Shin, Edwards, Heeren, and Amodeo (2009), underage drinking is more prevalent among teens that experienced multiple types of childhood maltreatment regardless of parental alcohol abuse, putting them at a greater risk for alcohol use disorders. In the same trend, Beek, Kendler, Moor, Geels, Bartels, Vink, Berg,Willemsen and Boomsma (2012) found that genetic and environmental factors play a role in the development of alcohol use disorders, depending on age. The influence of genetic risk factors in developing alcohol use disorders increase with age, ranging from 28% in adolescence and 58% in adults.

The consequences of substance abuse according to Shin, Edward, Heeren and Amodeo (2009) are acute on both personal and societal level. Also, for the developing young adult, substance and alcohol abuse undermines motivation, interferes with cognitive processes, contributes to debilitating mood disorders, and increases risk of accidental injury or death. For the society at large, adolescence substance abuse extracts a high cost in health care, educational failure, mental health services, drug and alcohol treatment, and juvenile crime. Further, Shin et al (2009) further found that alcohol and other substance abuse are major factors in Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), violent crimes, child abuse and neglect, and unemployment. Adolescence originates from Latin word “adolescere”, meaning "to grow up". It is a transitional stage of physical and psychological human development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood. Ojedokun (2003) tagged adolescence as a turbulent period. The period of adolescence is most closely associated with the teenage years, though its physical, psychological and cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later. The period is more often said to extend from the age of 10 years to some years over 20. Thus, chronological age provides only a rough marker of adolescence, thus, scholars

have found it difficult to agree upon a precise definition of adolescence.

In this trend, Larson and Wilson (2004) said it is a period of multiple transitions involving education, training, employment and unemployment, as well as transitions from one living circumstance to another. A nation, state or culture can have different ages at which an individual is considered (chronologically and legally) mature enough for society to entrust them with certain privileges and responsibilities. Ojedokun (2003) highlighted driving a vehicle, having illegal sexual relations, serving in the armed forces or on a jury, purchasing and drinking alcohol, voting, entering into contracts, finishing certain levels of education and marriage as youthful developmental tasks. According to Bada and Adebiyi (2014), youthful ages involve significant changes in biological, physical, social, psychological, emotional, and community relatedness domains. Alcohol can increase vulnerability to permanent and irreversible consequences such as disability, legal entanglements or death. Premised on the above, it could be deduced that the maintenance and promotion of health is achieved through different combination of physical, mental, and social well-being, sometimes referred to as the health triangle.

In a study conducted by Adekeye, Adusi and Chenube in 2015, it was found that substance use is common among both young and old people but alcohol is the most common substance used by the youths. White and Smith (2009) in a survey of Australian secondary students aged between 12 and 17 years found that 80% had tried alcohol, 14% had used cannabis, and 19 % had used inhalants at some time in their lives. People with substance use disorders often do not recognise or seek help for the problem, and may not be screened for substance abuse when they seek treatment for other health conditions. This means that substance abuse and dependence disorders are often under-recognised and undertreated. Substance use disorders are among the most common of mental health disorders experienced by young people. In another study by Reavley and Cvetkovski (2007), 12.7% of people aged 16-24 were estimated to have a substance use disorder, with higher rates among young men than young women (around 16% of males and 10% of females). Harmful use of alcohol was the most commonly reported substance use disorder (at around 9%). Overall, about half of people with substance use disorders first experience substance use issues by the age of 20 years. Substance dependence however remains less common until later in adolescence and early adulthood.

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) (2007) found that substance use disorders can result in significant short and long-term ill effects. These consequences arise from the type of substance and the way it is used. For example, respiratory problems resulting from smoking and spread of infections such as Hepatitis via injection; from the immediate effects of intoxication such as overdose, traffic accidents and falls, risky sexual behaviour, violence and aggression; from the longer terms physical effect of the drug such as brain damage, liver disease, cancer and the significant mental distress are associated with drug dependence. There is a close relationship between substance use disorders and other mental disorders, and use of some substances may increase the risk of developing certain disorders. However, it is often unclear whether one issue causes the other. It is common for young people with substance use issue to have one or more co-

occurring mental health disorders, such as anxiety, depression and schizophrenia.

Several types of drugs are susceptible to abuse by youth. These drugs range from most common and less expensive such as cigarettes and alcohol to expensive and more deadly such as cocaine, crack and heroin. The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia (CEE) (2012) found that the danger of drug abuse has been defined as "a state of periodic or chronic intoxication, detrimental to the individual and society." The major indication of drug addiction is the irresistible desire to take drugs by any means. Physical dependence manifests itself when drug intake is decreased or stopped resulting in withdrawal syndrome, which leads to a very distressing experience. Psychological dependence is experienced when an abuser relies on a drug to produce feeling of well-being.

Youths who persistently use alcohol and other substances are said to have myriads of problems. These, according to Ann (2000), include academic difficulties, health related problems - including mental health; poor personal relationships and involvement in juvenile justice system. The cognitive and behavioral problems experienced through alcohol and substance use among youths may interfere with their academic performance and also present obstacles to learning for their classmates. It also causes declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, as well as increased potential for dropping out of school. Physical disabilities and diseases, and the effects of possible overdoses are among the health-related consequences of alcohol and substance abuse. In the same vein, mental health problems such as depression, apathy, withdrawal, and other psychosocial dysfunctions are frequently linked to substance abuse among youths. Substance abusing youths are at higher risk than non-users for mental health problems.

Sequel to the above, Ojedokun (2003) said there may be consequences for family and the community at large. Alcohol and other drugs consumption by youths may result in family crises and may jeopardize many aspects of family life. It may result in family dysfunction, whereby both siblings and parents are profoundly affected by alcohol and drug. Ann (2000) in an earlier contribution found that alcohol and substance use drain family's financial and emotional resources. There is an undeniable link between substance abuse and delinquency. Arrest, adjudication, and intervention by the juvenile justice system are eventual consequences for many youths engaged in alcohol and other drug use. It is important to note that possession and use of alcohol and other drugs are illegal for all youths.

Premised on the above, it is needful to stress the role of social workers in rehabilitating youths who are involved in alcohol and substance use. Since social work is a profession for those who have a strong desire to help improve people's lives, helping them cope with issues in their everyday lives, dealing with their relationships, and solving personal and family problems. Helping clients who face a disability or a life-threatening disease or a social problem, such as inadequate housing, unemployment and substance use among others is germane to social work practice. Makanjuola, Aina and Onigbogi (2014) described mental health and substance use as interrelated. Social workers assess and treat individuals with mental illness or substance use problems including use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. Such services include individual and group therapy, outreach, crisis intervention, social

rehabilitation, and teaching skills needed for everyday living. They can as well help plan for supportive services to ease clients' return to the community. Social workers may also be known as clinical or medical social workers.

Statement of Problem

Alcohol and substance use has been the bane of the day in most African countries and indeed across the globe. The effect of alcohol and other substance use is fast reaching. It affects the youths' health and social well-being in so many ways. Youths are becoming retrogressive in educational performance, family cord cohesiveness, cultural norms and values. This has made them to lose identity due to their inability to adhere to the lay down norms. Vital organs such as the brain, liver, the heart and indeed the kidneys are affected as a result of illicit alcoholic drinks. The mental health is thus distorted as a result of hard drug ingestion. The youths are, therefore, prone to acts of rape, vandalism, drunk driving, cultism and terrorism among others. Perhaps the older generation is not helping matters as these acts are learnt from them. The world at large is not at peace because of globalization and offensive technology used to advertise alcohol. In order to prevent acts of terrorism in the nearest future, it is important to pay a very close attention to the developmental stages of youths, especially those who have been involved in early drinking and have been or about to become drug addict. It is on this premise that the researcher tried to find out the effects of alcohol and substance use on health and psychological well-being of youths in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study include:

1. To determine the influence of alcohol and substance use on health of youths in Ibadan, Nigeria.
2. To determine the influence of the alcohol and substance use on psychological well-being of youths in Ibadan Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis I: There is no significant influence of alcohol and substance use on the health of youths in Ibadan Nigeria.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant influence of alcohol and substance use on psychological wellbeing of youths in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Methodology

The design for this study is descriptive research design. Population of the study consisted of 225 adolescents from some of the various alcohol and substance use joints in Ibadan. The population of this study also includes both male and female youths. A convenient sampling technique was used to select 225 youths that served as the participants for the study. Twenty-eight youths were sampled from: Ojoo, Agbowo, Sango, Agodi-Gate, Bodija, Mokola and Beere; while twenty-nine youths were sampled from Iwo Road axis of Ibadan city. A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data. The instrument was divided into 2 sections A and B. Section A featured demographic characteristics while section B dealt with statements related to effects of alcohol and substance use among youths. The rating scale was as follows: SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2 and SD = 1. Facial and content validity of the questionnaire was assessed by other professional colleagues and other lecturers in the adjunct disciplines. Their input was added to the instrument before the final print. The questionnaire was administered on 20 respondents outside the study population was subjected to

Chronbac's Alpha analysis to ensure reliability of instruments which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.86. The researcher with the help of two (2) trained research assistants administered the questionnaire on the youths found in and around different joint of alcohol and other substance use outfits in Ibadan. The data collected were coded for analysis. Frequency count and percentages were used to analyse the demographic characteristics while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMS) was used for data analysis. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results showed that 33(14.6%) of the participants were between 8 to 11 years, 40(17.7 %) of them were between 12 to 15 years while 70(31.1 %) were between 16 to 17 years and the rest 82(46.4 %) were between 18 to 20 years of age. The results showed that 195(86.6%) were male participants and 30(13.3 %) were female respondents.

Hypothesis I: There is no significant influence of alcohol and substance use on the health of youths in Ibadan Nigeria.

Table1: PPMC showing correlation between Alcohol and Substance use and health of youths

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P-value	Remark
Health	20.6089	4.6606	225	.603*	.000	Sig.
Alcohol & Substance use	35.0400	2.9251				

* Sig. at 0.05 level

The results from the above table showed that the r- value is (r = .603, n= 225, P (.000) < 0.05). Therefore, it was concluded that alcohol and substance use significantly influence the health of youths in Ibadan, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of alternative.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect of alcohol and substance use on psychological well-being of youths in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Table 2: PPMC showing correlation between Alcohol and Substance use and Psychological Well-being of Youths.

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P-value	Remark
Psychological well-being	25.9067	4.9004		.510*	.000	Sig.
Alcohol and substance use	35.0400	2.9251	225			

* Sig. at 0.05 level

The results from above table showed that the r- value is($r = .510$, $n= 225$, $P(.000) < 0.05$). It was concluded that alcohol and substance use significantly influence the psychological well-being of youths in Ibadan, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Discussion of findings

Premised on the results of this study, it was found that alcohol and substance use significantly influence health of adolescent in Nigeria. This is evident in literature that the health status of alcoholics and drug abusers is in jeopardy. The result is line with World Health Organisation (WHO) (2011) that alcohol consumption is now the world's third largest risk factor for disease and disability and that almost 4% of all deaths globally are attributed to alcohol. In the same vein, Ojedokun (2003) concluded that alcohol and substance use could bedangerous to health of the youths. As part of health consequences of alcohol and substance use, addiction could be a leading factor of indiscriminate sex that ends in unwanted pregnancy and septic abortions. Nutritional insufficiency, fatigue and stress are some other health consequences of youthful exuberance. The result is in line with Ojedokun and Shafa (2012) that because alcohol and substance use is common among undergraduate students who are youths, the effects on their health could be deleterious. Alcohol and drug addiction could also lead to suicidal attempts and subsequent death of the affected youths. This result is also in line with Skogen (2014) who found that alcohol usage by youths was associated with symptoms of depression, inattention, anxiety and hyperactivity. Skogen's findings also showed that early debut of alcohol and drug use is consistently associated with more symptoms of mental health problems among the youths. In the same vein, the result further supports Australia Drug Foundation (2014) that irresponsible use of alcohol can lead to unsafe sex and impaired brain development. Also, binge drinking can lead young people to take risks and put themselves in dangerous situations such as, hangovers, headaches, nausea and vomiting and tremors or Parkinsonism.

It is pertinent to state that alcohol consumption negatively influences health across life span. Eze, Njoku, Ezeai, Akubue, Ezeanwu, Ugwu and Ofuebe (2017) found that youths are aware of the deleterious influence of alcohol and substance use. Eze et al (2017) in their study further found that excessive alcohol consumption causes alcoholic hepatitis, increases Cancer chances and precipitates sleep disturbances. Also, the immune system is weakened; hence, there is difficulty in fighting off illness. Other effect includes: reduced libido and consequent infertility, early cessation of menstrual flow in women, erectile dysfunction in men, general poor coordination and depressive illness. Furthermore, the result also showed that there is a significant influence of alcohol and substance use on psychological well-being of youths. This result revealed that the youth complained of emotional and psychological disturbances after the ingestion of alcohol and substances such as Indian hemp. Fleming, Lee, Moselen, Clark and Adolescent Research Group (2014) found and expressed concern that the psychological well-being of youths is of critical importance for establishing healthy patterns for adult life. In the same vein, Ojedokun and Shafa (2012) found that alcohol and substance use remain a significant problem for a minority of students and it may cause substantial personal, psychological and economic harm. Compared to other students, youths with very high alcohol and substance use are said

to have poorer health and psychological well-being. To support further, Leigh-Anne (2007) found that most important factorial components of psychological well-being such as self-regard, interpersonal relationships, independence, problem solving, assertiveness, reality testing, stress tolerance, self-actualisation and happiness are conspicuously absent in some of alcohol and substance users.

The social workers have roles to play in the rehabilitation of youths that are involved in alcohol and substance use. Among these roles are the following:

- Social workers form positive relationships with adolescents and families and to develop long term solutions by providing support, advice and guidance.
- Social workers walk closely with youths; they build a supportive and trusting relationship with the young persons and take lead responsibility for child protection. Their roles include protection, promoting health and development, as well as developing and implementing the plans, which seek to improve the quality of life.
- Social worker does not walk alone, but there are varieties of other agencies and there are teams within other departments who provide support in developing a coherent plan.
- Social worker cannot and should not develop the plan alone, but work with other agencies, to address the young person's developing physical, behavioural, social, and emotional and independence needs.

Conclusion

Premised on the above findings, the paper concludes that the high rate of alcohol and substance use among underage youths represents a serious public health and psychological concerns. Pattern of negative alcohol and drug use characterised by frequent intoxication also connotes that there is the need for preventive interventions. Mental health, alcohol and drug-related problems suggest that assessment of alcohol and drug use and misuse would become an integral part of mental health assessment and interventions among youths. It is evident that alcohol and drug abuse, and the frequency and intensity of alcohol consumption are indicators of mental health problems among youths. Therefore, these social problems are better handled by social workers, at least to reduce if not eradicate the menace. The youths of today are the future leaders hence; the older generations have the duty to ensure a brighter future devoid of alcohol and substance use. Mental illnesses which evolved as a result of psychological trauma would be reduced if alcohol and substance use is curtailed among the general populace, including youths.

Implications of the study to social work

- Social workers are in the best position to encourage youth to desist from alcohol consumption and substance use.
- Because alcohol and substance use has become a social problem, the social workers should strive to partake in policy making; restricting consumption of alcohol and drug use to a minimal level among the youths.
- Social workers promote and ensure the rehabilitation of drunks and substance addicts for them to lead a purposeful life.
- Illicit advertisement by alcohol producers has been a lingering social problem posing great challenge to the general populace. It has a more serious implication on the social work practice and it must be addressed immediately through public orientation.

Recommendations

Premised on the findings of this work, it is hereby recommended that:

1. The government should monitor alcohol and other substance use advertisement promo in and around schools or places of notable apprentice workshop, motor parks and other joints is essential for the reduction in consumption.
2. Parents should join their efforts with social workers and other health stake holders to reduce the level of alcohol and substance use among youths particularly for those with high levels of use.
3. Social workers must design approaches to reduce harmful effects of substance use to meet the needs of these youths.
4. State laws to control both sales of alcohol and substance use among young people must be considered and enforced. Punitive measures on offenders should also be ensured.
5. Family and school connections, as well as government services or supports to help young people deal with substance use and other challenges should be strengthened.

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