COMMONLY SUBSTANCES ABUSED AMONG SELECTED UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence of substance abuse among university students, without due consideration to legal, normative, and medical guidelines for their lives, and the lives of others is worrisome, as it foretells potentially disastrous consequences for the users, the family, the communities, and the larger society. This paper interrogates students on the common abuse substances in the selected universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The theoretical framework used was the socio-ecological theory. The study employed a mixed method in recruiting respondents to gather comprehensive insights. The findings showed that one of the social drugs known as alcohol ranked on the ladder of commonly abused substances, followed by marijuana and lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD). What contributed to these common abuse substances is the result of their availability and affordability. Addressing this social problem lies in strong family support and a positive socialization process, healthy peer relationships substance, reduction in substance availability, providing a conducive learning environment and gathering social support from the government and non-governmental organizations.

Keywords: Substance-Abused; Illegal-Drugs; Peer-Influence; University; Sociology

1. Introduction

The pursuit of a university degree certificate as a catalyst to secure a promising job and as a foundation for raising one's standard of living in society has motivated some parents to send their children to study a course at universities for higher education (Onah, Eteng & Unwanung, 2021; Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021). However, the pressures and expectations put on these students by society, the family, the institution of learning, the peer association, and each student's determination often subject some of these students to substance use (Lloyd et al., 2021).

Without controversy, one of the things that keep human beings alive (hail and healthy) is drugs of various categories. Similarly, substances can also send individuals to their early graves, illness, unfulfilled life, and mental instability (Arkell et al., 2022; Rehab 2021). The life and

death phenomena are determined by how individuals keep to the normative patterns, prescription methods, and the substance's legality they consume. In addition, substances that are abused vary and are based on individual users' perceptions, social environment, religious beliefs, peer attachment, sub-cultural groups, and other factors (Hart & Ksir, 2022; Akers, 2017).

Furthermore, the alarming rate of substance abuse among these university students is influenced and depends on other factors, such as; the type of university, availability of the substance, substance affordability, and specific situations including preparation for exams or student unrest (Johnson et al., 2022). However, the motive for abusing any kind of substance by any student or a group of students is often found to be intentional (Durkheim, 1964).

In Nigeria, according to the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (2021), the 2018 National Drug Use Survey report disclosed that around 14.3 million were drug users, of which nearly close to 3 million suffered from drug use consequences at that time. By 2021, the number had increased to 14.4%. Notably, the substance use prevalence in Nigeria is significantly higher than the global average, standing at almost three times the global drug use prevalence of 5.5 per cent. This reveals that substance abuse has been entrenched deeply into the fabric of our society. In all these, the youth appears to be the most vulnerable targeted group by drug peddlers, especially university students. As a result, substance abuse is taking a severe toll on these students with moral, social, psychological, and even physical consequences (Flynn et al., 2022; The World Health Organization 2021).

University education plays a crucial role in shaping the socio-cultural, economic, political, and technological development of a nation. Numerous factors have been conceptually and practically associated with the common substance abuse among university students, including family background, school environment, external influences, peer pressure, societal acceptance through media, individual characteristics, and political and economic factors, among others (Arkell, 2022; Hart & Ksir, 2022; Sullivan, 2021; Dillion, 2020). The general objective of this study is to investigate the prevalence of substances abused among university students in the selected universities in Kwara State.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

a) Determine the perceived meaning of substance abuse among university students in Kwara State.

b) Explore the commonly abuse substances among university students in Kwara State.

2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 The concept of drug or substance

Using Sociological orientation, it revealed that societies define the meaning of substance and the meaning of the drug experience; these definitions differ radically among different societies and subgroups and subcultures within the same society (Hart & Ksir, 2022; Young, 1971). This is buttressed by the fact that the influence of social groups and cultures is evidence in determining what form of drug taking is appropriate or unacceptable. They define which drugs are acceptable and which are not. Similarly, they determine who may use drugs and for what reasons. The social norms also specify the socially required and acceptable quantities of each drug, and the social situations for such drug use while others are disapproved. Based on societal experiences, established values, and substance evaluation, they also defined the expected

actions and effects of drugs on individuals (Goode 2022; Ray, 2002). As a result, a chemical substance may be classified as a drug within one particular definition or context, while not fitting the criteria in another. This leads to the existence of two somewhat independent conceptions of drugs: the popular conception, often associated with illegal drugs, and the psychopharmacological definition, linked to psychoactive drugs. The interplay between societal definitions and psychopharmacological characteristics shapes the understanding and perception of substances in a given society (adapted from Young, 1971).

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (2021) defines substances as chemical drugs capable of altering the functioning of the human body and mind. These include prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, social drugs, and illegal drugs. Similarly, substance broader conceptualization involves any drug that modifies the physiology, sensation, or cognition of an organism (Australian Government, 2019; Doran, 2018). From a sociologic lens, substances encompass a broad array of drugs, ranging from prescription medicines to illegal street drugs, to readily available social products such as alcohol. The sociologist's view of substances and substance abuse goes a good deal further than merely recognizing that there are variable interpretations of similar drug realities and drug-related situations. It also emphasizes that the drug experience and drug effects will vary when different meaning is brought into the drug-taking situation (Arkell et al., 2022; Giddens & Sutton, 2017). Sociologists not only acknowledge the diverse interpretations of drug-related realities and situations, but they also emphasize that the context and meaning brought into the drug-taking experience play a crucial role in shaping the outcomes and effects of substance use.

2.1.2 The Concept of Substance Abuse

The definition of substance abuse exhibits significant variations among scholars, professional groups, and organizations. These differences in definitions extend across cultural, and ethnic groups, religious affiliations, and geographical locations (Anderson, 2022; Smith, et al., 2021 Popov, 2017). According to Anderson (2022) & and AGDHAC (2019), substance abuse involves either the use of any illegal substance or the use of a legal substance in ways that contravene accepted medical, legal, or social norms. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) defines substance abuse as the excessive consumption of psychoactive drugs, such as pain medications, alcohol, and illicit drugs. Du et al. (2020) describe substance abuse as the excessive use of a drug in a manner that is detrimental to oneself, society, or both. Anderson (2022) on the other hand, generally conceptualizes substance abuse as the compulsive, chronic use of drugs whether licit or illicit, when not medically necessary, is not recommended by a health worker, if use is forbidden by law or it is socially unacceptable, or it is socially acceptable, but it is taken excessively.

From a sociological perspective, the definition of substance abuse is seen as a patterned use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods harmful to themselves or others. This includes the use of substances such as social drugs, prescription medication, over-the-counter drugs and illegal drugs, to seek pleasure, experience a high, enhance performance in specific situations, and alter one's perception of reality. The scope of this definition encompasses aspects like the quantity, frequency, type of drugs used, the setting,

the people involved, and the circumstances surrounding the drug use (Dillion, 2020; Durkheim, 1973; Bacon, 1954).

2.1.3 Common Abused Substances by University Students

The most frequently implicated substances, consistently reported by the majority of the studies among university students are Marijuana, Codeine, Amphetamine, Heroin, Cocaine, Diazepam, Cough syrup, Activan, Mandrax and Tramadol. (Johnson et al., 2022 & Dumbili et al.,2021). Jatau et al. (2021) also observed these substances as Marijuana, Syrups (both codeine and non-codeine), Tramadol, Sedatives-benzodiazepines, Cocaine, Heroin, Feces of lizard, Ammonia sniffed from toilet and soak-away, and used sanitary pads and gases from decaying blood matter. Similarly, Alves et al. (2021) asserted that these students, abuse substances like alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, cocaine, marijuana, heroin, inhalants and dissociative drugs.

Various categories of commonly abused substances can be identified based on their effects and properties. These categories according to Anderson (2022); Canton (2021); NIDA (2020); Rehab (2021); and WHO (2020) include:

Social Drugs; which are alcohol (beer, wine, and liquor), tobacco, and nicotine.
Stimulants; Caffeine, Cocaine, Methylenedioxy Methamphetamine, MDMA (Ecstasy/ Molly), and Cathinone. Others are Adderall, Ritalin, and Synthetic Marijuana.
Sedatives; Barbiturates (Amytal, Luminal, and Pentobarbital). Benzodiazepines (Ativan, Valium, and Xanax).

Dissociative; include Ketamine, PCP (phencyclidine), and DXM (Dextromethorphan). Narcotics/Opiates; heroin, codeine, hydrocodone, morphine, methadone, Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet, Fentanyl, and Percodan.

Hallucinogens; include LSD, also known as acid, DMT, Mescaline, and Psilocybin. Almost all Hallucinogens are controlled substances in most countries.

Cannabis; Marijuana leaves, Hash oil, Hashish, and Cannabis-based medicines, such as Sati vex. **Inhalants;** Examples of inhalants include; Fumes of markers, paint, paint thinner, gasoline and glue, Aerosol sprays, Nitrous oxide, and Room deodorizers.

These substances are associated with various degrees of risk and potential harm, making it important to address and raise more awareness about substance abuse and its consequences

2.2 Theoretical framework
2.2.1 Social-Ecological theory

The study adopts the Socio-Ecological theory developed by Bronfenbrenner in 1979. This theory posits that the prevalence of abuse of substances among university students is interwoven. The reason is that it shows the relationship between individuals and their natural, social, and built environments. Additionally, it takes into account factors such as social environment, social norms, cultural conditions, and interactions with others. For example, the microsystem (Individual) plays a significant role in influencing an individual student's attitude in making decisions regarding substance use and abuse. Similarly, factors such as family

involvement in their lives, exposure to substance use among family members, experiences of domestic violence (verbal and physical abuse), or lack of acceptance by family members can all contribute to the likelihood of students engaging in substance abuse.

Likewise, the mesosystem (interpersonal) aspect of the Socio-Ecological theory explores how family experience is connected to school experience, and how peer pressure can tempt or lure students to substance use and compel them into drug taking as an initiation into certain social groups (Marvin, et al., 2016).

Additionally, the exosystem (organizational) component, such as the university, has an opportunity to positively influence various school sectors through the implementation of meaningful school policies backed by concrete actions, provision of counselling services, and promotion of effective awareness among students on the benefits of a substance-free life. From a contextual standpoint, it underscores the role of university managers' perceptions of the school environment's organization, impacted by the prevalence of substance abuse and the easy availability of substances (Golden & Earp, 2012). By addressing these aspects, universities can play a vital role in fostering a safer and healthier environment, minimizing the likelihood of substance abuse among students.

 In the same vein, the macro-system (community) aspect of Socio-Ecological theory posits that some students abuse drugs because such substances are commonly used by a larger percentage of people within their socio-cultural environment. Furthermore, factors such as poverty, availability, and affordability of substances, as well as the influence of various drug advertisements on social or mass media, contribute to substance abuse (Asi & Williams, 2018; Adam et al., 2009; Fisher & Strantz, 1972). For many university students, substance abuse may be perceived as a way of life due to prevailing norms and behaviours within the community.

 Lastly, the chronosystem (public policy) aspect highlights how changes in public policy can significantly influence substance abuse patterns. For example, a chronic substance abuser may be able to turn a new leave through rehabilitation coping methods. Similarly, government decisions to decriminalize certain substances, changing them from illegal to legal substances can also impact substance abuse trends (Rosenbaum & Hanson, 1998). The chronosystem (public policy) allows for an understanding of how changes (and continuities) in public policies over time can shape and influence substance abuse behaviour.

3. Methodology

Study Location: The study was conducted in Kwara State, Nigeria, with the state capital located in Ilorin. Kwara State is one of the oldest states in the North-Central Region of Nigeria. The three selected universities were the University of Ilorin, Ilorin; Kwara State University, Malete; and Landmark University, Omu-Aran, all situated within Kwara State.

Research Design: The study utilized survey design, both quantitative and qualitative research designs (mixed methods) to quantify various variables and their interactions with each other, and to tease out the perceived meanings of substance abuse from the students.

Source of Data: Both primary data and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data was collected through questionnaires administered and in-depth interviews in the field, while secondary data was gathered from journals, publications, and other relevant sources.

Study Population: The study population consisted of undergraduate students from both public and private universities in the selected locations in Kwara State.

Study Sample and Sampling Technique: A sample size of 900 undergraduate students was selected from the study population using Johnson and Gills' sampling size determination and Salkind's recommendation. The distribution of the sample was as follows: University of Ilorin (594), Kwara State University (254), and Landmark University (51). 72.4% was later utilized for the study's analysis. For in-depth interviews, the University of Ilorin had 11 participants, Kwara State University had 7 participants, and Landmark University had 2 participants respectively.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria: The study included only undergraduate students from 100-500 levels, while post-graduates, students pursuing diplomas, and lower certificates, and students with disabilities were excluded from the study.

Research Methods: The study employed a combination of probability and non-probability sampling methods, utilizing purposive, stratified, and simple random sampling techniques.

Research Instrument: The primary instruments used for data collection were questionnaires and in-depth interviews.

Reliability and Validity of Instruments: The instrument used for data collection was considered valid and suitable for measuring the intended variables.
Methods of Data Collection: The study utilized a combination of instruments for data collection including questionnaires and in-depth interviews.

Data Analysis Methods: Data analysis was performed using descriptive statistical techniques, Cramers' V, Pearson Chi-square.
Ethical Consideration: Ethical permission was obtained from Landmark University, and the analyses adhered to the relevant guidelines and regulations of all universities involved in the study. Informed consent was also obtained from all respondents who participated in the study.

4. Findings
4.1   **Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**
In this analysis, the simple percentage frequency distribution was employed. This includes sex and age. Faculty, present level, residence, ethnic group, and religious affiliation, Findings showed that the majority (58.6 per cent) of the respondents were from the University of Ilorin. While 34.8 per cent of the respondents were from Kwara State University, and 6.6 per cent of them were from Landmark University. A majority (57.8 per cent) of the respondents were males, and approximately two-thirds (66.9 per cent) of them were between the ages of 18 and 23 years. The mean and median ages were approximately 21.4 years and 20.9 years respectively, and the age range was 22 years. Findings further showed that 28.7 per cent of the respondents were in the Colleges of Administration, Management, Business and Social Sciences, 12.6 per cent were in the College of Engineering, and 11.0 per cent were in the

College of Arts/Humanities. It was also found that 27.8 per cent of the respondents were in the 200 level of study, 24.7 per cent of them were in the 300 level, and 23.5 per cent were in the 400 level. Moreover, while the majority (56.0 per cent) of the respondents lived off-campus, 29.8 per cent of them lived on campus. Only 7.5 per cent shuffled between campus and off-campus. Findings further demonstrated that 60.1 per cent of the respondents were Yoruba, 19.2 per cent of them were Hausa and 15.0 per cent were Igbo. Moreover, more than half (54.0 per cent) of the respondents practised Christianity and 42.8 per cent practised Islam, only 3.2 per cent were from traditional religion.

Table 4.1. Distribution of respondents by socio-demographic characteristics

Independent Variables	F(n)	%
Name of Institution		
University of Ilorin	382	58.6
Kwara State University	227	34.8
Landmark University	43	6.6
Sex		
Male	377	57.8
Female	275	42.2
Age		
Less than 17 years	73	11.2
18-23 years	436	66.9
24-29 years	117	17.9
30-35 years	25	3.8
More than 36 years	1	.2
Faculty/College		
Administration, Management, Business and Social Sciences	187	28.7
Agriculture	61	9.4
Arts or Humanities	72	11.0
Education	56	8.6
Engineering	82	12.6
Law	29	4.4
Medicine or Health	71	10.9
Pure & Applied Sciences or ICT	94	14.4
Level of Study		
100 Level	108	16.6
200 Level	181	27.8
300 Level	161	24.7
400 Level	153	23.4
500 Level	49	7.5
Residence		
Off-campus	365	56.0

On-campus	194	29.7
Shuffling between campus and off-campus	93	14.3
Ethnicity		
Hausa	125	19.2
Igbo	98	15.0
Yoruba	392	60.1
Others such as Ebira, Ijaw, Urhobo, Igbira, igarra, Efik, Nupe	37	5.7
Religious affiliation		
Christianity	352	54.0
Islam	279	42.8
Traditional	21	3.2

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, (2022).

4.2 **Awareness, Usage, and Abuse of Substance/Drugs**

This section examines the awareness, usage and abuse of substances/drugs, with the results depicted in Chart 4.1. The findings show that every single respondent (100.0 per cent) was aware of one form of substance/drug or the other. Furthermore, nearly all respondents (99.8 per cent) admitted to having used some type of substance/drug, with only one respondent exempt from this category. However, findings revealed that the majority (59.2 per cent) of them had not abused substances/drugs before the survey was carried out. This is instructive because the findings demonstrated that, 40.8 per cent of the respondents had abused substances/drugs.

Chart 4.1: Awareness, Usage and Abuse of Substance/Drug
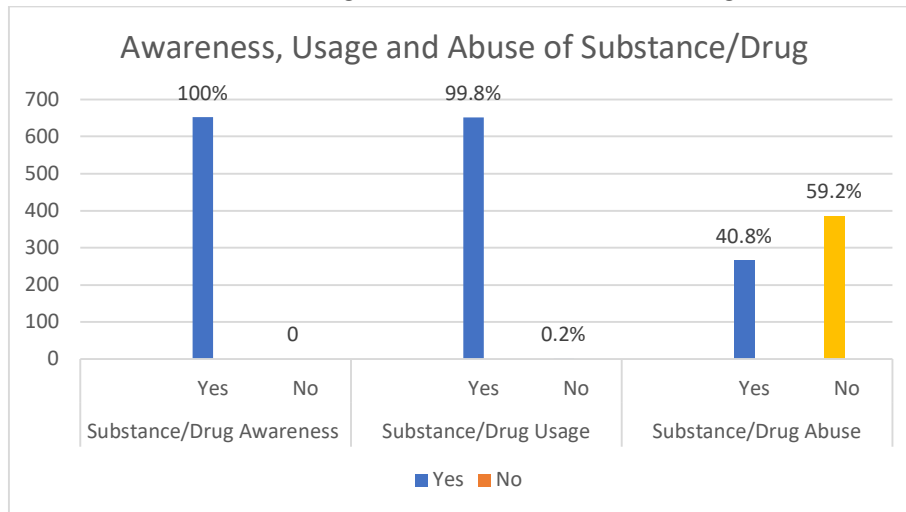
Source: Researcher's fieldwork, (2022).

4.3 **Commonly known and commonly used substances**

This section presents the findings related to commonly known and commonly used substances/drugs. The results revealed that social drugs like alcohol, Tobacco, and nicotine were the most well-known substances/drugs, as almost all respondents (99.7 per cent)

confirmed awareness of them. The second most recognized substances/drugs were anti-malaria drugs such as nivaquine, and blood-tonics like orepthal known by 99.1 per cent of the respondents. The findings also demonstrated that the respondents' awareness of other substances/drugs ranked as follows: Antibiotics (98.6 per cent); Cannabis (97.4 per cent); Opiates or Narcotics (96.5 per cent); Stimulants (95.7 per cent). In terms of commonly used substances/drugs, findings showed that antibiotics such as ampicillin were the most common with 78.4 per cent of the respondents affirming it. In the same vein, 78.1 per cent of the respondents claimed to have used blood tonics such as orepthal and this ranked as the second most common use among them. Anti-malaria came third with 73.9 per cent. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh positions were social drugs, stimulants, opiate/narcotic and inhalants with 64.1 per cent, 59.2 per cent, 57.4 per cent, and 29.4 per cent of the respondents respectively. More detailed findings in Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Distribution of respondents based on commonly known and used substances/drugs

Independent Variables	N	%	Rating
Substances/Drugs Awareness			
Social drugs e.g. Alcohol (beer, wine, and liquor), tobacco, and nicotine	650	99.7	1st
Opiates or narcotics e.g. heroin, cough syrups, codeine, tramadol, etc.	629	96.5	6th
Cannabis e.g. marijuana leaves/weed, hash oil, hashish, etc.	635	97.4	5th
Stimulants e.g. cocaine, caffeine, Adderall, Ritalin, etc.	624	95.7	7th
Sedatives e.g. benzodiazepines, barbiturates, etc.	566	86.8	9th
Inhalants solvent-cold path, nitrous oxide, gasoline glue, etc.	583	89.4	8th
Hallucination e.g. lysergic acid diethylamide, psilocybin, etc.	525	80.5	10th
Dissociative e.g. ketamine, DXM, PCP, etc.	505	77.5	11th
Antibiotics e.g. ampicillin, etc.	643	98.6	4th

Anti-malaria e.g. nivaquine, etc.	646	99.1	2nd
Blood-tonics e.g. orepthal	646	99.1	2nd
Substance/Drug Usage			
Social drugs e.g. alcohol, wine & nicotine (cigarette)	418	64.1	4th
Opiates or narcotics e.g. heroin, cough syrups, codeine, tramadol, etc	374	57.4	6th
Cannabis e.g. marijuana leaves/weed, hash oil, hashish, etc.	190	29.1	8th
Stimulants e.g. cocaine, caffeine, Adderall, Ritalin, etc.	386	59.2	5th
Sedatives e.g. benzodiazepines, barbiturates, etc.	172	26.4	9th
Inhalants solvent-cold path, nitrous oxide, gasoline glue, etc.	192	29.4	7th
Hallucination e.g. lysergic acid diethylamide, psilocybin, etc.	138	21.2	10th
Dissociative e.g. ketamine, DXM, PCP, etc.	135	20.7	11th
Antibiotics e.g. ampicillin, etc.	511	78.4	1st
Anti-malaria e.g. nivaquine, etc.	482	73.9	3rd
Blood-tonics e.g. orepthal	509	78.1	2nd

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, (2022).

4.4: Perceived Meanings of Substance Abuse
The perceived meaning of substance abuse by respondents through in-depth interview

Through in-depth interviews, participants provided their perceived meanings of substance abuse.

As a pattern of use of drugs in which the user consumes the substance in amounts, intensity, frequency, or with methods that are harmful to their social, physical, and mental functioning.

Inappropriate use of substances including social drugs, prescription medication, and illegal drugs

(Male, 400-level student, Federal University)

The second respondent sees the perceived meaning as:

The use of social, legal, or illegal drugs for satisfying the users' immediate, specific, or intentional purpose without regard to the specific prescription or the normative patterns of use.

(Female, 300-level student, State University)

As characterized by repetitive use of drugs in amount, intensity, frequency, or via methods that adversely affect their social, physical, and mental well-being. This includes inappropriate usage of substances, such as social drugs, prescription medication, and illegal drugs.

(Male, 400-level student, Federal University).

Discourse Analysis

However, using discourse analysis to explain the real perceived meaning of substance abuse by participants, the study found out that in participants' explanation of the commonly abuse substance, only prescription medicines and illegal drugs were listed, and social drugs were excluded. Therefore, the perceived meaning of substance abuse found out by the researcher in this study could mean:

Inappropriate use of prescription and illegal substances in amounts, intensity, frequency, or methods that are harmful to the social, physical, and mental functioning of the users.

4.5 Commonly Abused Substances/Drugs

This section presents the findings on the commonly abused category of substances/drugs and the specific substance/drug that was being abused. The results indicated that social drugs were the most commonly abused substance/drug with 37.1 per cent of the respondents affirming it. Which of the social drugs was abused most? Findings showed that alcohol was the most abused substance among the respondents considering the proportion (19.6 per cent) of the respondents who claimed to have abused the substance. This abused substance was followed by 'wine and liquor' (10.4 per cent) and nicotine-like cigarettes (7.1 per cent). Moreover, 'opiates or narcotics' was considered the second most commonly abused substance among the respondents with 31.1 per cent of the respondents claiming to have abused it. Specifically, tramadol was investigated to be the most narcotic substance that was commonly abused, and this was supported by 8.4 per cent of the respondents. Codeine (6.4 per cent), cough syrups (6.0 per cent) and heroine (5.4 per cent) were considered the second, third and fourth most commonly abused narcotic substances. In addition, findings showed that 'stimulants' were the third most abused category of substance/drug among the respondents as it was supported by 29.6 per cent of them. In particular, ecstasy (9.8 per cent), caffeine (7.4 per cent), and cocaine (5.8 per cent) were the first, second and third most abused stimulants among the respondents respectively. Further investigations revealed that cannabis was the fourth most abused category of substance among the respondents, and 27.5 per cent of the respondents stated that they had abused the substance. On the category of cannabis that had been abused, findings showed that marijuana weed or leaves were the most abused cannabis among the respondents as claimed by 16.0 per cent of respondents. Next to marijuana were hash oil (5.8 per cent), cannabis medicine like Sativex (3.4 per cent), and hashish (2.3 per cent).

Table 4.3. Distribution of respondents based on commonly abused substances/drugs

Commonly Abused Substance/Drug	n	%	Rating	Rating
Social drug	**242**	**37.1**		**1st**
Alcohol	128	19.6	First	
Wine and Liquor	68	10.4	Second	
Nicotine like cigarette	46	7.1	Third	
Opiates or narcotics	**203**	**31.1**		**2nd**
Heroin	35	5.4	Fourth	
Cough syrups	39	6.0	Third	
Codeine	42	6.4	Second	
Tramadol	55	8.4	First	
Fentanyl	11	1.7	Sixth	
Morphine	9	1.4	Seventh	
Methadone	12	1.8	Fifth	
Cannabis	**179**	**27.5**		**4th**
Marijuana weed or leaves	104	16.0	First	
Hash oil	38	5.8	Second	
Hashish	15	2.3	Fourth	
Cannabis medicine like Sativex	22	3.4	Third	
Stimulants	**193**	**29.6**		**3rd**
Cocaine	38	5.8	Third	
Caffeine	48	7.4	Second	
Adderall	7	1.1	Fifth	
Methamphetamine	1	0.2	Seventh	
Ecstasy	64	9.8	First	
Ritalin	6	0.9	Sixth	
Cathinone	29	4.4	Fourth	
Sedatives	**98**	**15.0**		**8th**
Librium	17	2.6	Second	
Ativan	11	1.7	Fifth	
Valium	35	5.4	First	
Amytal	13	2.0	Third	
Luminal	10	1.5	Sixth	
Pentobarbital	12	1.8	Fourth	
Inhalants	**132**	**20.2**		**5th**
Solvent cold path	59	9.0	First	
Fumes of makers	27	4.1	Second	
Nitrous oxide	5	0.8	Fifth	
Paint and deodorizers	16	2.5	Fourth	
Gasoline and glue	25	3.8	Third	
Hallucination	**132**	**20.2**		**6th**

lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD)	80	12.3	First	
Psilocybin	22	3.4	Third	
Dimethyltryptamines (DMT)/Mescaline	30	4.6	Second	
Dissociative	**121**	**18.6**		**7th**
Ketamine	48	7.4	First	
Dextromethorphan (DXM)	48	7.4	First	
Phencyclidine (PCP)	25	3.8	Third	

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, (2022).

4.5.1 Quantitative View of Commonly Abused Substances

Probing further in the course of the IDIs conducted during this survey:

The commonly abuse substances are; marijuana, tramadol, codeine, cough syrups, LSD, Sedatives e.g. sleeping pills, Ecstasy/molly, Hallucinogens, Solvent cold-patch, Cocaine, and Heroin.

(Male, 500-level student, State University).

From another participant

Substances that are commonly abused by students are; marijuana, codeine, tramadol, cough syrups, sedatives (Mandrax), Ecstasy/molly, Solvent cold-patch, Hallucinogens, Cocaine, Heroin, Faeces of lizard, Ammonia sniff/Inhalants, used sanitary pad.

(Male, 400-level student, Private University)

Discourse Analysis

These participants shed more light on the substances that are frequently abused among university students, by highlighting the importance of addressing substance abuse issues in educational institutions.

Based on the in-depth interviews, the most commonly abused substances among the respondents are marijuana from the cannabis family, followed by opiates/narcotics such as codeine, cough syrups, and tramadol. Additionally, other commonly abused substances include hallucinogens (LSD), solvent cold-patch/inhalants, sedatives (anti-anxiety or stress medications like Mandrax), and ecstasy/molly.

In responses to participants about objective (i), it was observed that the participants remained silent on the topic of social drugs. None of them mentioned or discussed alcohol, wine, liquor, or nicotine in the context of substance abuse. This indicates a significant aspect of the consequences of social drugs among these students, as they focused solely on prescription medication and illegal drugs in their accounts. Furthermore, it is important to note that marijuana (specifically marijuana leaves/weed) holds the top position among these participants in terms of substance abuse. This could be attributed to its accessibility and relatively lower cost compared to other substances. These findings provide valuable insights into the prevalent patterns of substance abuse among the students, highlighting the need for targeted awareness and intervention efforts to address the specific substances that are commonly misused.

5. Discussion of Findings
5.1 Theoretical Findings

From the findings nearly all university students are aware of the concept of substance abuse based on various definitions that are related to those provided by different researchers and organizations such as Anderson (2022), Johnson et al. (2022), UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) in 2021, and WHO (World Health Organization) in 2020. However, students' perceptions of substance abuse were limited to prescription medications and illegal drugs, since social drugs like alcohol tobacco, and nicotine were not included. The reason for this could be attributed to the socio-ecological theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner in 1979, which suggests that individuals' perceptions and behaviours are influenced by their environment, which includes factors like structure, role requirements, and settings. Social drugs are usually used in ceremonies, psychedelically consumed at homes, for recreational purposes, or taken at various social gatherings, and have become a normalized part of life in certain Nigerian cultures, sub-cultures, religions, and societies, as noted by Adam et al. in 2009 and Fisher & Strantz in 1972. This finding sheds light on the influence of cultural and societal norms on how substance abuse is perceived and may help inform targeted interventions and educational programs to address substance abuse among university students more effectively.

Contrary to the general statement that suggests knowing the meaning of something will lead to its proper use, students' perception regarding both prescription medications and illegal drugs challenges this notion. Specifically, alcohol, a social drug, and marijuana, which is an illegal substance in Nigeria, emerged as the first and the second most abused substance among university students. This raises the question: why do some students deviate from the normative, prescription, and legal meanings society assigns to substances? The answer to this lies in the belief of Sociologists, who argue that no individual is inherently predisposed to be a substance abuser. Instead, various human activities and social settings, influenced by factors such as learning, interaction, and curiosity, have contributed to the development of this habit among students. This is associated with the assertion of Goian in 2019, Durkheim's macro-level concept in sociology of 1964 and Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological theory of 1994 and 1979 respectively. The socio-ecological theory supports this, that the transition from teenager to young adulthood, marked by enrollment in a university, signifies the influence of the norms and values instilled by the family through continuous education, monitoring, and control. The dynamics of family living arrangements and support are pivotal in shaping the behaviour of these students during their school years and into adulthood (Dishion et al., 1995).

Additionally, the motivations align with Tonsing & Barn (2021) and Owie & Eshemogie (2023) respectively on the influence of social and mass media, role modelling, societal messages, environmental factors, and immediate social settings, in aiding commonly abused substances. The positive aspect to consider in these findings is that student behaviour is not solely influenced by their characteristics (intrapersonal factors) but also by various environmental factors.

5.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The selected university students' definitions tallies with most researchers (Anderson, 2022; Hartney, 2022; Johnson et al., 2022; UNODC, 2021; Smith 2021; Michael, 2019; and WHO. 2017). However, the behaviour of some students contradicted the perceived definitions given, as 40.8% of the students indicated that they have abused one substance or the other in their life. This finding aligns with research conducted by UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) in 2021, on the alarming rate of substance abuse in Nigeria. The findings also tallied with

Durkheim's findings of "Suicide" in 1964 which showed us the reasons why people commit suicide. It is not because these people do not know the meaning but various human activities and social settings, influenced by factors such as learning, interaction, and curiosity, have contributed to the development of this habit among these people. The same yardstick is applied to the issue of substance abuse which may be deadly among these university students.

On the most abused substance by university students, participants in IDIs were silenced on social drugs. However, the findings revealed that marijuana was the most abused drug followed by lysergic acid diethylamide, tramadol and codeine respectively. Respondents from the administered questionnaire revealed alcohol, marijuana, lysergic acid diethylamide, tobacco, tramadol, codeine, cough syrups, ecstasy/molly solvent- cold path, sedatives, hallucinogens, cocaine, heroin, faeces of lizard, Ammonia sniff, used sanitary pad as common drug abuse. This also bears relationship to some authors (Johnson et al., 2022; Dumbili, 2021; Holze et al., 2020 & Jalilvand, 2019). The commonly abuse substances among these students were uniformly the same in the three universities. The reason for deduced this was because most of these substances are widely serotogenic hallucinogen substances used by students for recreational, sexual, and psychedelic purposes). The findings indicated that alcohol is the most abused substance, the reason for this may be associated with its social acceptability (UNODC, 2021; Okafor, 2019; & WHO, 2004).

Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

On the commonly abused substance by tertiary students, based on the earlier classifications, social drugs had 37.1% of the total respondents, and alcohol 19.6%, was most abused. The second one came under cannabis, with marijuana claimed at 16.0 %, lysergic acid diethylamide' – LSD at 12.3%, wine and liquor at 10.4%, ecstasy/molly at 9.8%, and solvent cold path at 9%. Others are tramadol 8.4%, caffeine 7.4%, dextromethorphan (DXM) 7.4%, ketamine 7.4%, cigarette 7.1%, codeine 6.4%, cough syrups 6.0%, cocaine 5.8%, hash oil 5.8%, heroin 5.4. Alcohol at the top of the list may be associated with its social acceptability (UNODC, 2021; Okafor, 2019). This shows the influence of social and mass media, role modelling, societal messages, and environmental and immediate settings in socio-ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Marijuana, LSD, and Ecstasy/Molly according to some authors (Johnson et al., 2022; Dumbili, 2021; Holze et al., 2020 & Jalilvand, 2019) because most of these substances are widely serotogenic hallucinogen substances used by students for recreational, sexual, and psychedelic purposes).

The good side of all is that student behaviours are not only influenced by their individual (intrapersonal) characteristics but by other factors in their environment like the family, school, peer, community and national level. In the case of substance abuse among students, chronic substance abusers may turn a new leave through rehabilitation or any other means of coping method.

Since the government in general, and the management of universities have different opportunities to reach different sectors of society and their communities, the government and the university managers can keep the society and the students safe from substances through meaningful policies backup by actions, provision of counselling, provision of effective awareness of the benefits of substance-free life.

CONCLUSIONS

The study found that these students know the perceived meaning of substance abuse, but still, 40.8% of the respondents have abused one drug or the other in their lives. The major reason for abusing these substances was their "intent". This may be so because the majority of these students, who have decided not to have anything done with substance abuse, maintain their stand.

The most abused substances among these students are alcohol, marijuana, and Lysergic Acid Diethylamide. The reasons for in order of preference abusing these substances were revealed to be individual factors (peer or friend engagement), family factors (poor parental supervision and faulty socialization problems), backed up with social situations in which they are approved to be used (social media, and mass media). All these could be reduced to the barest minimum through meaningful university and government policies

RECOMMENDATION

As derived from the study, it is recommended that greater efforts should be put in place by the school authorities, government and non-governmental agencies including religious institutions in organizing seminars and enlightenment programs on the consequences of drug abuse for pupils, students, youths and parents to always demonstrate the adverse effects of substance abuse aside knowing the ordinary meaning.

Efforts be made towards reducing the availability of these substances from primary, secondary, and tertiary production. In the same vein, the distribution of these substances should be monitored to reduce their availability.

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