



A Study of the Prevalence of Substance Consumption Among In-School and Out-of-School Youths in ETI OSA Local Government Area of the Lagos Metropolis

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study quantifies the prevalence of substance use among youth in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of the Lagos Metropolitan Region. This research examines both in and out-of-school youths in a cross-sectional manner. Using a multistage sampling method, four hundred respondents were chosen as the sample population from the Eti-Osa LGA population. Data were gathered using a quantitative, then analysed using SPSS. The study indicated that the group under observation had a high knowledge of problematic substance use (93.5%). That substance use was common and most prevalent in male youth. Indian Hemp and Tramadol were the two most complex substances most frequently consumed. Nonetheless, codeine was more frequently ingested by the individuals under study. These drugs are pretty widely available and reasonably priced. Friends (they inspired 88% of users), followed by social media (41%), movies and entertainment (48%),

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and other sources (48%). The use of drugs is increasing and could soon become out of control. The government must provide the youths with proper management and control through education, campaigns, and counselling.

Keywords: Substance consumption; In-School Youths; Out-of-School Youths.

1. INTRODUCTION

Substance consumption among youths is a growing concern worldwide, especially in urban areas. Lagos Metropolis, one of Africa's most populous cities, has a large youth population, and substance consumption among this group is of significant public health concern (Aliyu & Amadu, 2018). Substance use is known to have adverse effects on physical and mental health, academic performance, social relationships, and the general well-being of individuals. Therefore, understanding the prevalence and factors associated with substance consumption among youths in Lagos Metropolis is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Substance abuse among the youth in the Lagos metropolis has become a significant public health concern in recent years [1]. Substance abuse refers to using drugs or other substances for non-medical purposes, leading to negative physical, social, and psychological consequences. Youth is a critical age group vulnerable to the harmful effects of substance abuse. It can lead to addiction, academic failure, violence, and mental health problems.

The prevalence of substance consumption among youth in Lagos metropolis has been on the rise in recent years. According to a National Bureau of Statistics study, 14.3% of young people aged 15-24 in Lagos state reported using at least one substance in the past year. The most commonly used substances were tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis. Furthermore, the study found that substance use was higher among males than females and was associated with low educational attainment, poverty, and peer influence.

Several studies have investigated the prevalence of substance consumption among youths in the Lagos Metropolis. In a study conducted by Anetor and Oyekan-Thomas [2], the prevalence of substance consumption among youths in Lagos was found to be 35.5%. The study found that the most commonly used substances were

alcohol (28.9%), tobacco (17.5%), and cannabis (11.5%). Another study by Anetor and Oyekan-Thomas [2] reported a prevalence of 23.5% for substance consumption among secondary school students in Lagos State. The study found that the most commonly used substances were alcohol (16.6%), tobacco (7.8%), and cannabis (5.9%).

Several factors contribute to the high prevalence of substance abuse among youth in the Lagos metropolis. These include the availability and accessibility of drugs, peer pressure, inadequate parental supervision, poverty, and cultural factors. Moreover, the lack of adequate prevention and intervention programs and limited access to healthcare services exacerbates the problem.

Therefore, there is a need to examine the prevalence of substance consumption in the Eti Osa Local Government of Lagos Metropolis to bring to the fore salient information. The results of such this can inform the development of evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies that can effectively address the issue.

2. BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Youth and Substance Abuse

The terms "drug" and "substance" can be used interchangeably depending on the context. For instance, The World Health Organization (WHO, 1986 cited in Ani, 2014) defines a drug as any substance that may modify one or more of its functions when taken into the living organism. Okoye [3] views a drug as a substance that could change the body's biological function through its chemical functions. Sussman and Ames [4] define a drug as a substance that can be taken into the body and alters one or more bodily processes. Ebie (1988) describes drugs as chemical substances that interact with our body system to modify the body's physiological and biochemical processes. The modification may be physiological or psychological, as the case may be.

According to the American Psychiatric Association (2000), substance abuse is the ongoing use of a substance despite the social, occupational, psychological or physical problems it causes. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2014) describes substance abuse as the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. Rathus [5] describes substance abuse as a persistent pattern of substance use characterised by frequent intoxication and impairment of physical, social or emotional well-being. The Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NAFDAC) [6] defined drug abuse in the following ways:

- A drug is abused when its use is not medically necessary;
- A drug is abused when a health worker does not recommend it; and
- A drug is abused when the law forbids its use or is socially unacceptable.

Abdulahi [7] viewed drug abuse as the use of drugs to the extent that it interferes with health and social function. Adeyemo [8], cited in Ogunyemi and Musa [9], defines drug abuse as the intentional use of drugs for reasons other than medical purposes. Drug abuse refers to using a given substance that has an unwanted effect on the user [9].

According to Fayombo (1998), drug abuse is taking drugs that are against the law. Such drugs include most psychoactive drugs like cocaine, heroin and cannabis. Furthermore, she described psychoactive drugs as drugs that significantly affect According to Ojedokun (2004), drug abuse is a maladaptive recurrent pattern of using a habit-forming drug that may lead to significant impairment or distress manifestation of failure to fulfil major roles and obligations at school or home. This description explains the impact of drug abuse on secondary school students.

Substance use among adolescents and young adults is a global problem [10]. Substance abuse has been identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of three significant health risks that can lead to devastating health consequences for adolescents (United Nations Office on Drug and Crime, UNODC, 2003). Substance abuse can lead to illness and even death. It is also related to unsafe sex, accidents, violence and loss of productivity (WHO 2001). Substance abuse presents a significant threat to the adolescent population. The problem of

adolescent substance abuse is a major public health problem in most nations of the world. Besides being a significant public health problem, drug abuse is also a social problem with far-reaching consequences [9]. Therefore, it is a kind of risky behaviour, such as unsafe sexual practices, inadequate nourishment, and criminal behaviour [11]. The use and abuse of substances in adolescents are worrisome because the practical use of drugs could eventually proceed into an addiction that has far-reaching adverse consequences on adolescents' well-being both at present and in the future.

Abdulahi [7] stated that drugs significantly influence the brain and psychological functioning, resulting in sedation, stimulation or change in mood or behaviour. According to Onohwosafe [12], drugs are psychoactive substances possessing habit-forming potential. Dinnah and Gire [13] observed that most adolescents who misuse drugs misuse palm wine, the locally brewed alcohol (from sorghum and millet), commonly called *burukutu*. This wine is industrially distilled, such as whisky, brandy, and locally brewed spirit (*ogogoro*).

Adolescence is a distinct and dynamic phase of development in an individual's life, characterised by spurts of physical, mental, emotional and social development. It is when influences outside the family assume greater significance [14].

Adolescents face new opportunities and challenges at this stage of development. It is also a formative stage in terms of sexual and reproductive maturity. With modernisation and the influence of mass media, the sociocultural milieu has changed significantly and resulted in changes in values and norms related to sex and sexual behaviour. Adolescents are now often tempted to have sex [15].

The experimentation and influence of friends and peer groups also mark the phase of adolescence. During this stage of life, adolescents start spending more time outside the home, escaping the adult members of their families' supervision. Lack of knowledge on preventive measures and negotiating skills, adolescents and youth get easily influenced by mass media, friends and peer pressure, leading them to experiment with risky lifestyles such as smoking, alcohol intake, drug consumption and sexual activity.

Alcohol dependency and consumption are almost universal irrespective of caste, class and society in developed countries and among more affluent sections of developing countries. The purpose of taking alcohol and other substances seems to be sensation seeking [16] and the desire for hallucination. However, in the developing world, culturally, the reason for alcohol abuse is strongly associated with a means of tension relief [17]. Undoubtedly, the severity of the problem is more acute in slums as people living in slums are poor, mainly migrants, and are exposed to the modern cosmopolitan western culture. Therefore, the combination of two conflicting situations, i.e. lesser access to resources and higher aspiration for the enjoyment of better life, create stress among individuals, which may lead to psychological, behavioural and physical disorders. This problem aggravates when social networks and peer pressure provide negative social support from family and society (Israel, 1982). These processes ultimately force an individual towards different risk behaviours, where adolescents and youth discharge their frustration through drugs and sex. They learn the process of discharging frustration from their social networks. The social environment and reference group give them the impetus to react in a particular way which may be a risky lifestyle regarding drug abuse and risky sex (Singh and Das, 2011).

A national survey of high school seniors found that, at least once in their lifetime, 80% reported drinking alcohol, 30% reported binge drinking, and 29% smoked marijuana (Johnston, O'Malley, and Bachman, 2002). More than half of high school seniors surveyed reported being intoxicated at least once in their lifetime. In contrast, 20% of their younger peers, 8th graders, reported intoxication at least once in their lifetime [18]. Approximately 1 in 7 adolescents between 12 and 17 met DSM-IV criteria for substance dependence or abuse (Epstein, 2002). As one might expect, these rates are even higher for criminal offenders, runaways, and homeless adolescents [19]. The negative impact of substance use on the outcome and its potentially fatal consequences has been well documented. For example, substance use has been associated with poor academic performance, deviant behaviour, substance abuse in adulthood, and job instability [20,19,21]. Moreover, alcohol

consumption contributed to the top three leading causes of death among U.S. adolescents [22].

Factor analyses have shown that risk factors for adolescent substance use can be divided into four categories: a) psychological functioning, b) familial environment, c) social relationships and d) life stressors. In terms of psychological functioning, substance use and psychological distress (e.g., depression and anxiety) tend to co-occur in adolescence [23,24]. Regarding the familial environment, some studies have found that the nature and quality of familial relationships significantly predict adolescent substance abuse [25,26], with the level of parental monitoring determined to be a protective factor [27,28]. During adolescence, peer relations are significant; the degree to which adolescents believed that their close friends frequently used drugs significantly predicted their onset of marijuana use [29,14,30].

Psychologically and physically stressful life events (i.e., divorce, victimisation, health problems) have been associated with increased substance use over time [30]. Some studies have found that substance use could be predicted among adolescents who witness violence or who were victimised physically and sexually [31,32].

In sum, it is widely known and accepted that substance use has an overwhelmingly negative influence on adolescent behaviour. For this investigation, substance use includes alcohol, marijuana, codeine, chemicals, recreational prescription drug use, and hard drugs (i.e., narcotics, hallucinogens, stimulants, and inhalants). This section aimed to provide information on the prevalence of adolescent substance use and elucidate associated risk factors. Despite much research, much is still to be learned, especially regarding unconventional drug use. Much of the studies on drug use were done on popular types of drugs.

2.2 Prevalence of Substance Abuse

Drug abuse is a major social issue in several parts of the world, including Nigeria. The United Nations Office on Drug and Crime estimated the prevalence of substance abuse in Nigeria to be 14.4 percent in 2017.

Chart 1. Annual Prevalence of Substance Use by Gender in Nigeria, 2017

	Men		Women		National	
	Estimated prevalence	Estimated number*	Estimated prevalence	Estimated number*	Estimated prevalence	Estimated number*
Any drug use	21.8	10,850,000	7.0	3,430,000	14.4	14,300,000
High-risk drug use	0.6	319,000	0.12	57,000	0.4	376,000
People who inject drugs	0.12	61,000	0.04	18,000	0.08	80,000

Source: United Nations Office on Drug and Crime, 2018

This percentage indicates about 14.4 million people aged 15-64 years and that one out of every seven persons aged between 15-64 years abused substances within the country. This prevalence rate is also quite alarming compared to the global rate of 5.6 percent. The UNODC report [33] also showed that drug abuse was higher among males than females and 25-39 and lowest among the age group 24 and below. However, one out of every four drug users in Nigeria is female (See Chart 1).

In a study by Adeyemo [34], the prevalence of drug abuse among university youths in Benin, Edo State, Nigeria, was estimated to be 43.9 percent. This implied that 43.9 percent of the respondents in Adeyemo's [34] study had used substances for non-medical purposes at least once. In Oyo state, Idowu, Aremu, Olumide and Ogunlaja [35] found the prevalence of substance abuse among youths in secondary school to be estimated at 40 percent, with tramadol being the most abused substance (39 percent).

By type of substance abused, the UNODC report [36] showed that cannabis was the most abused substance by youths in Nigeria, followed by opioids and cough syrup (codeine). According to the report, an estimated 10.8 percent of Nigeria's population or 10.6 million people, used cannabis in 2017, and most users were initiated into the use of cannabis at age 19. According to the geo-political zone, drug or substance use was higher in the southern zone than in the north. The prevalence of substance use in the southern geo-political zone ranged between 13.8 percent and 22.4 percent. In contrast, the prevalence for the northern region in 2017 ranged between 10 percent and 13.6 percent. The highest prevalence in the southern region was found in Lagos, and Oyo states, with an annual prevalence of 33 percent (2,117,000 drug users) and 23 percent (930,000 users), respectively, in the year 2017 [33].

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's ecological paradigm was first introduced in the 1970s (1974, 1976, 1977, 1979). Bronfenbrenner's earlier theorising stressed the importance of "place" in the behavioural inclination of youths (the famous concepts of the Microsystems, ecosystem, ecosystem and macrosystem) while discounting the role the person plays in his or her development and focusing too much on context [36]. The ecological systems theory explains child development in terms of the interaction between children and the settings in which they live [36,37,17,38]. Bronfenbrenner's ecological paradigm was first introduced in the 1970s (1974, 1976, 1977, 1979). Bronfenbrenner's earlier theorising stressed the importance of "place" in the behavioural inclination of youths (the famous concepts of the Microsystems, ecosystem, ecosystem and macrosystem) while discounting the role the person plays in his or her development and focusing too much on context [36]. The ecological systems theory explains child development in terms of the interaction between children and the settings in which they live [36,37,17,38]. The ecological systems theory, as proposed by Bronfenbrenner, appraises the impact of the environment on the behavioural outcomes of individuals. Accordingly, the behaviours that individuals portray are a direct result of environmental influences [39,40]. In essence, individuals only exhibit such habits as drug use, substance abuse and criminal behaviours as a result of the influences of the environments where they reside. Environmental influences on behaviour are set in motion according to this theory by four basic components which are; the process – this entails all forms of relationships that exist between the individuals and the individual, whether reciprocal, bidirectional relationships or unidirectional relationships, or whether positive or negative

including lessons from parents, peers, schools and the society at large [41,42]. The person – the influences the society will have on the behaviour of the individual, depends on the differences between males and females, for instance, their varying levels of maturity, coping skills, reasoning and learning among others. The context - refers to the environment with which the individual is in constant physical, social or economic interaction. For example, an adolescent that is in the midst of peers that smoke, drink alcohol and commit a crime is likely to be inducted into the act by his or her peers [43,44]. This context is the most important characteristic of the ecological model. Essentially, therefore, engaging in substance abuse and criminal behaviour among young people in Eti-Osa, Lagos is a matter of the environmental and social context in which they find themselves.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study examines the prevalence of substance consumption among youths in Eti-Osa Local Government Area in Lagos State, Nigeria. The research design chosen for this study is cross-sectional descriptive, which is appropriate considering the size of the study population. The study population comprises in-school and out-of-school youths of both sexes (males and females) in Eti-Osa Local Government. The sample size of approximately 400 participants was determined using Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The study adopted a multistage sampling technique to ensure that every cluster of the study area can be represented in the sample. The data collection instrument was questionnaires and, and quantitative method was used to analyse the data collected. Statistical

Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the quantitative data.

In contrast, content analysis and verbatim quotations were used to analyse the qualitative data. Simple descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages were used to present the analysed data. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$. The study's findings were discussed thematically according to the study objectives and used to support the quantitative analysis results.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Prevalence of Substance Abuse among Youths in Eti-Osa Local Government

This section examines the prevalence of substance abuse among youth in the Eti-Osa local government area of Lagos. In order to do this, the awareness of substances among youth was measured, along with other variables such as their perception of the prevalence of substance abuse, the sex abuse substance the most, the most used substance etc.

On the awareness of substances among youths in Eti-Osa, almost all the participants (93.5 percent) indicated that they are aware of substance abuse in Eti-Osa local government, Lagos, only 6.5 percent indicated that they are unaware of substance abuse in the study area. This shows that the abuse of substances is prevalent in the study area. Below is a graphical representation of the awareness of substance abuse among participants in Eti-Osa.

Table 1. Percentage distribution of the prevalence of substance consumption among youths in Eti-Osa

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Awareness of substances abuse among youths in Eti-Osa	Yes	374	93.5
	No	26	6.5
	Total	400	100
Prevalence is substance abuse among youths in Eti-Osa	Very Prevalent	202	50.5
	Moderately prevalent	112	28
	Not prevalent	86	21.5
	Total	400	100
Which sex abuses substances the most	Males	274	68.5
	Females	126	31.5
	Total	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

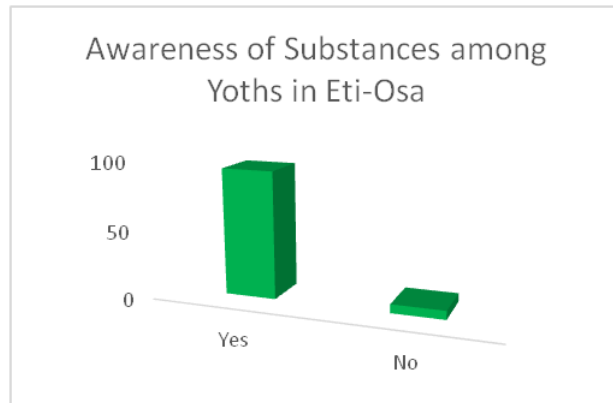


Fig. 1. Awareness of Substances among Youths in Eti-Osa

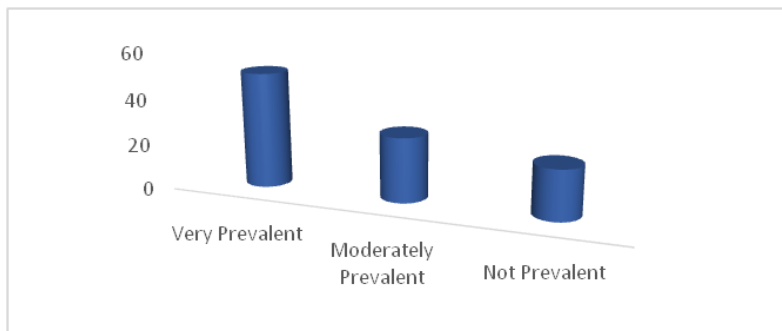


Fig. 2. Prevalence of Substance Abuse among Youths in Eti-Osa

To test the level of prevalence, respondents ranked prevalence levels from very prevalent to not prevalent. According to most respondents (50.5 percent), substance abuse among youths is prevalent in the study area; 28 percent noted that substance abuse among youths is moderately prevalent, while 21.5 percent noted that substance abuse among youths is not prevalent. From the preceding, we can conclude that substance abuse in Eti-Osa is very prevalent.

As shown in Table 2, the abuse of substances is more prevalent among male youths than females. Accordingly, the table shows that 68.5 percent of substance abusers in Eti-Osa are males. In comparison, 31.5 percent of substance abusers are females. Although the percentage of females is significantly lower than males, it is evident that females are also active abusers of substances like their male counterparts. Below is a graphical representation of the prevalence of substance abuse in Eti-Osa by sex.

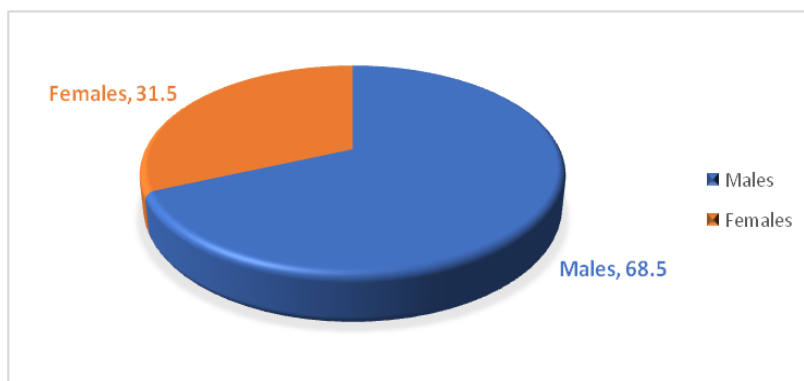


Fig. 3. Prevalence of Substance Abuse by Gender

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 2. Common substances and accessibility to substances

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Most abused substances by youths in Eti-Osa	Indian Hemp	92	23
	Tramadol	86	21.5
	Rohypnol	48	12
	Cough syrup (Codeine) Mixture	76	19
	Gum	30	7.5
	Methylated spirit	17	4.3
	Cigarette	20	5
	Total	400	100
Substances are easily gotten from vendors in the Eti-Osa	Yes	256	64
	No	144	36
	Total	400	100
Vendors who sell substances to youths in Eti-Osa	Pharmacy	6	1.5
	Chemists	50	12.5
	Medicine hawkers	134	33.5
	Mallam's joints	90	22.5
	Paraga hawkers	42	10.5
	Street boys	78	19.5
	Total	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 3. Percentage distribution of the source of information on substances

Variables	Yes	(%)	No	(%)
Television	92	23	308	77
Radio	104	26	296	74
Friends	352	88	48	12
Social media	176	41	224	59
Movies and entertainment	192	48	208	52
Total	400	100	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

While the focus is still on the prevalence of substance abuse in Eti-Osa, this section focuses on substances, the ease of purchase and the significant substance vendors in Eti-Osa. This discussion is essential to complement the discussion on the prevalence of substance abuse because for it to be widely used, it must be widely available, accessible and relatively affordable.

Respondent's opinions were examined on the most commonly abused substances among youths in Eti-Osa. According to respondents, Indian hemp ranked highest with 23 percent, followed by tramadol (21.5 percent), codeine (19 percent), Rohypnol (12 percent), mixture (a combination of various substances, 7.5 percent), cigarette (7.5 percent), methylated spirit (5 percent) and gum (4.3 percent).

Most of the respondents also noted that substances are easy to purchase from vendors in the study area, and some of the vendors from which substances are purchased include; medicine hawkers (33.3 percent), Mallam joints (22.6 percent), street boys (19.4 percent), paraga hawkers (12.9 percent), chemists (10.8 percent) and pharmacies (1.1 percent). From the previous, the three primary sources of substances to youths in the study area are medicine hawkers, Mallam joints and street boys.

Respondents were examined on their information source for various drugs and substances. As shown in Fig. 4, most participants (88 percent) got their information on substances from a friend, 48 percent got theirs from movies and entertainment, 41 percent got it from social media, 26 percent from the radio and 23 percent from the television.

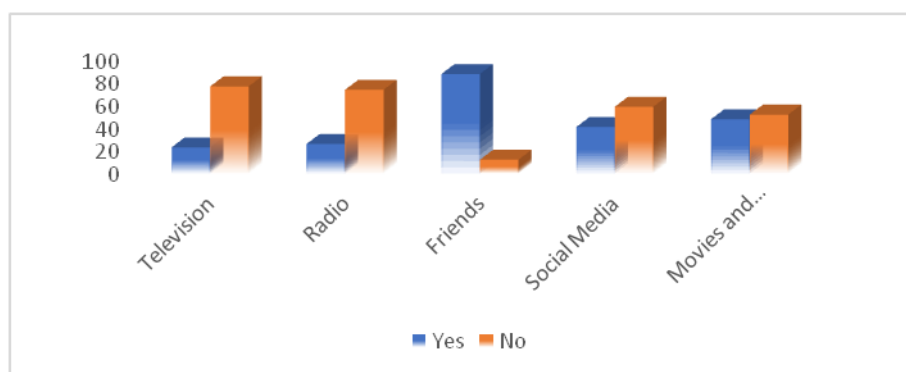


Fig. 4. Sources of Information on Drugs and Substances

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4. Percentage Distribution of the Types of substances used by Youths

Variables		Yes	(%)	No	(%)
Type of substance used	Indian Hemp	216	54	186	46
	Tramadol	172	43	228	57
	Rohypnol	152	38	248	62
	Cough syrup (Codeine)	204	51	196	49
	Mixture	180	45	220	55
	Gum	72	18	328	82
	Methylated spirit	40	10	360	90
	Cigarette	212	53	188	47

Source: Field Survey, 2021

As shown in Table 4, most of the respondents (54 percent) have consumed Indian hemp at least once before, 43 percent have consumed tramadol, 38 percent have consumed Rohypnol, 51 percent have used codeine (cough syrup), 45 percent have consumed mixture, 18 percent have used gum, 10 percent have used methylated spirit, and 53 percent have consumed cigarettes at least once before the time of the survey. From the preceding, the top 3 most substances respondents consume are Indian hemp, cigarettes and codeine.

6. DISCUSSION

The prevalence of substance consumption is ubiquitous as most youths are both aware of the use of substances among youths and attest to the fact that it is very prevalent in the area. Likewise, findings indicated that substance consumption is most common among male youths than females in Eti-Osa Local Government. As expected, some substances were abused more than others. As found by the study, the most frequently abused substance is Indian hemp, followed by tramadol, codeine, Rohypnol, the mixture of various substances, cigarettes, methylated spirit and gum. The study

also found that youths quickly get substances from vendors around the Eti-Osa neighbourhood. The most cited vendor by respondents were medicine hawkers, Mallams and street boys. Finally, a large percentage of the study participants indicated that they had used substances at least once before, and the most used substance by the respondents was Indian hemp.

Although Indian hemp is considered the most popularly used substance by the study population, Codeine and Cigarettes were the most commonly used by this population. Substance use is first determined by knowledge and awareness but guaranteed by the accessibility to the source. Generally, the awareness of substance consumption among the youths is dangerously high at 93.5%. This factor would predispose the younger generation to the consumption of substances, especially in the metropolis of Lagos State.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Substance Consumption as a status offence among youths and a social problem across the

globe is increasing in terms of its prevalence. Its widespread is so alarming and dangerous that it has far more consequences for the upcoming generation. Hence, there is a need for rapid responses to the problem of substance consumption.

Based on the study's findings regarding the prevalence of substance consumption among youth in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area, the following recommendations can be made:

Awareness and education campaigns: There is a need for sustained awareness and education campaigns to educate youth on the risks and consequences of substance consumption. These campaigns should target both in-school and out-of-school youths, using various media channels such as social media, radio, and television.

Parental involvement: Parents have a significant role in preventing youth substance consumption. They should be educated on recognising and addressing early warning signs of substance consumption among their children. They should also be encouraged to engage in open and honest conversations with their children about the risks and consequences of substance consumption.

Government intervention: The government should implement policies and programs targeting youth substance consumption. This includes increasing funding for substance abuse prevention programs in schools and communities, enforcing laws against the sale of illicit substances, and increasing penalties for those who sell drugs to minors.

Access to counselling and treatment: Youth struggling with substance consumption should have access to counselling and treatment services. The government and non-governmental organisations should provide these services in schools and communities to ensure youth access them.

Collaboration and partnerships: Collaboration and partnerships between various stakeholders, such as the government, non-governmental organisations, parents, schools, and communities, are crucial to addressing the problem of substance consumption among youth. These partnerships can help to create a

supportive and coordinated approach to prevention and intervention efforts.

In conclusion, addressing the problem of substance consumption among youth in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area requires a multifaceted approach involving various stakeholders' active participation. By implementing these recommendations, it is possible to reduce the prevalence of substance consumption among youth and create a healthier and safer environment for them to grow and develop.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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