



SUBSTANCE PROLIFERATION AND ADDICTION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: A CHALLENGE FOR THE RESCUE OF THE WASTED GENERATION

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Abstract

Substance consumption and addiction is a disorder characterized by a destructive pattern of excessive and persistent self-administration of a substance by young people, particularly students without regard to the medically or culturally accepted patterns leading to significant problems in universities and by extension, the Nigerian society. Despite the overpowering intervention strategies by many keen stakeholders to curb the problem, the number of university students being suck into the menace seems to be escalating day by day. This study, therefore, examines substance proliferation cum addiction among Nigerian students with a view to rescuing the generation trapped in this uninformed consumption of these hard substances. Literatures related to the variables were reviewed, and one hundred (100) respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique and the data was subjected to descriptive particularly percentage frequency table counts in analyzing the research questions. The theoretical framework employed for this study is differential association theory. The findings, among others, show that the proliferation of substances is a threat, not only to the Nigerian students, but also to the entire Nigerian society. Besides, several health challenges such as anxiety, headache, feeling sleepy, confusion and vomiting, mental illness, lungs cancer, and premature deaths are the outcomes of the menace. In addition, the study reveals that the proliferation of substances is responsible for deviant behaviours, particularly the high rate of school drop-outs, strained relationships both within and outside family circles. From the foregoing, the study concludes that since the rampaging activities of secret cults and other nefarious activities in our institutions are also the end products of substances proliferation and addiction, government should embark on public enlightenment campaigns periodically on the dangers of these hard substances consumed inappropriately, while regulatory bodies strengthened to discharge their functions effectively in order to curtail the trend among students so as to motivate them to accomplish their unique purposes in life. Finally, the study recommends that parents and teachers should discourage their wards from these substances which lead to addiction and, also be firm in ensuring that guidance and counseling offices facilitated by professionals are established in all institutions to counsel students and train them to excel in their chosen careers.

Keywords: Social media; Substance proliferation; Addiction; Alcohol; Guidance and counseling

1. Introduction

Substance proliferation and consumption for reasons not unconnected with healthy living has to a large extent been linked to the well-being of mankind from creation. Nowadays, the uninformed consumption of these substances stares mockingly at our faces. We see it in the coughs, wheezing, frequent colds, and respiratory (airway and lung) infections, like bronchitis, and asthma, riots and widespread destruction of life and property in universities, early school dropouts, and vulnerability to injury, among other deviant behaviours. Nevertheless, like any other deviant act, there is, as observed, a disorder that leads to a destructive pattern of anguish from the same substances which originally produced tantalizing effects, and attracted wide patronage for man's comfort. A huge blame has been heaped on peer groups, and at other times, on family background for these health hazards, while ignoring the most common aspect— the social media. Admittedly, peer influence is acknowledged cause of substance proliferation and addiction, and this is sustained by the theory of reasoned action that states that behaviour is predisposed in part by superficial peer norms. But the emergence of social media has made peer connections far easier and wider in term of acquaintances. Thus, the failure of parents and guardians to be on familiar terms with what their children are doing, the kind friends they associate with and even what they do especially on social media is a major blunder, and a forerunner to the state of hopelessness the family has presently been plunged into. The laissez-faire attitude of parents to keep an eye on their children's social media doings summarizes the Columbia University's National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) report that about 9 out of 10 parents do not think that social networking raises their children's risk for substance or alcohol abuse (Mann, 2011). This perception is very erroneous because social media contributes a lot in influencing the new generation's lifestyle unconstructively.

As a result, scholars in the Health Sciences, and other related fields have shown deep apprehension and interest for the security of Nigerian students going by the enormous responsibility positioned on them as leaders of tomorrow, as well as protecting them from patronizing these substances which have, today, become injurious to health. Unfortunately, substance proliferation and its wild consumption are growing in leaps and bounds, winning more souls from social media to the consternation of the Nigerian society. The consumption of substances, for example, alcohol depresses the central nervous system leading to accidents, bad conducts and causing distortion of perception, sleeplessness, mental disorder, hallucination, heart attack and others hazards becoming too rampant in contemporary society. Be it as it may, of all factors influencing substance proliferation and addiction, social media, as earlier observed, has been the most commanding. Regrettably, people seem to forget that almost every transaction, in almost every aspect of human life, the use of social media has become an important and indispensable tool of interaction in day-to-day activities. However, in recent times, the use of social media has engineered substance proliferation and addiction. The explanations being that there are more and more stories and pictures on the social media each and every day, and the information therein is being shared widely, as if it were something cool about it (Adila, Habee, Siti & Nor'izah, 2014).

According to Alan Levitt, Director of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign in New York, research shows that television and music, and movies in particular, really normalize certain kinds of unhealthy behaviour many of which contain scenes of substance and alcohol use (Pozniak, 2014). This is very worrying as the open visual information being dished out online approve that it is acceptable for people to be indulged in substances. This mislead is a serious problem, as these youngsters, especially those who have limited knowledge about substances will always think that it is all right to try for a few times and stop anytime they want. Teens see their peers partying, drinking alcohol or doing substances on social media, and they see these activities as fun, of which they should do so too, and this sends the message to teens that in order to have fun or to be seen cool, using substances is the surest way (TeenZeen, 2012). Disappointed as it is, social media has continuously been used by peer groups to transmit substance norms and values, beliefs, knowledge and practical skills to Nigerian students. The effect of this is evident in the changing ideology, beliefs, and way of life of these young students towards substances. One begins then to imagine the extent of damage this might done to the student as they adopt behaviours probably identified with peers from other nations, and communities, etc., not necessarily accepted by their society.

On the whole, substance proliferation is not a new phenomenon since it has always been around from time immemorial, and the characterization and outcome on victims have not changed. In other words, the substance problem is as old as man. No society is insulated from the off-putting consequences of illicit substances proliferation and addiction since euphoria, hyperactivity, insomnia, anorexia, lethargy and depression have been some of the portrayal and outcome on victims remain same. Further corroborating this position, Deressa (2011) contends that 9% of the expected worldwide population aged 12 or older is classified with dependence on psychoactive substances such as alcohol.

In Nigeria, the problem of substances began to assume very worrisome dimensions at the end of the Second World War following the return of some Nigerian soldiers from mainly, Burma, India, where they had fought. Many analysts are of the opinion that apart from the genocide of Second World War, no other phenomenon has had more debilitating consequences on mankind like the bubonic plague. This observation is anchored on the fact that even the much dreaded HIV/AIDS which has no known cure yet has narcotic substances as one of its principal causes when syringes are shared. Obviously, the return of these soldiers with some seeds of *cannabis sativa*, also known as Indian hemp, which they in turn experimented and discovered that the illicit plant could do well in some parts of the country, is lamentable. With time, the cultivation of *cannabis sativa* began to grow and so was the proliferation, consumption and addiction and also to others that later emerged.

However, the argument surrounding the use of substances such as marijuana which is believed to improve understanding and insight remains flawed since the misconception is based on the belief that people who use or abuse it will become bold, confident or courageous. The question that begs for explanation is: how does improvement in understanding and insight be equated with boldness, confidence or courage? Going by this, this study further attests that substance proliferation sub-culture is permeating the Nigerian society with students in the universities leading the squad. It is in this light that the study of Valente, Gallaher, and Mouttapa (2004) has shown that an individual substance use is associated with, and perhaps causally linked with, substance use by their friends. Succinctly put, peers can be just as influential online as they are in person when it comes to substance use (DeGroat and Gnagey, 2012). What is more, there is disruption of interpersonal relationships particularly within the family, acute and chronic health conditions, marginalization, criminal behaviour, failure to achieve normal adolescent milestones, as well as social and psychological problem, yet these adolescents are expected to be the leaders of the country in the future when they do not even have any focus for the future (Akanbi, Godwin, Anyio, Muhammad & Ajiboye, 2015). Heartbreaking as it is, there has not been an accompanying readiness and committed effort on the part of the society to collectively stamp out this menace or bring it to a manageable degree without being hypocritical since the trade rakes in huge amount of money for benefactors. It is appalling to observe that the inability of government to create jobs has attracted many youths who ordinarily would have been gainfully employed to trade in these substances given that it has become the new wave of making fast and huge money. It generates, according to United Nations (UN) figures, an estimated 9.5 billion dollars in annual revenue.

For non-benefactors, the frightening impact of substance proliferation and its attendant consequences has necessitated the growing strategies of repositioning our students on how to live a normal life devoid of substance addition. However, it must be acknowledged that in itself, the use of substances does not constitute an evil; in fact some substances have been a medical blessing (Maithya, 2009). Agreeing with Maithya, Muoti (2011) argues that since time immemorial, herbs, roots, barks, and leaves have been used to relieve pain and help control diseases. Giving flesh to his argument, Muoti (2011) asserts that in Asia, the Chinese used Opium as a cure of dysentery before the 18th century. In the same vein, European countries such as Britain and Holland exchanged opium growth in their colonies for tea and silk with China (United Nations, 1995).

Facing a moment of reality, there was a time in Nigeria when not much was known about narcotic, except perhaps, when it was meant to refer to Indian hemp. Candidly, Nigerians were largely ignorant of the names and potency of the other substances in the narcotic family. But all this ended in 1984 when three Nigerian students, Benard Ogedegbe, Bartholomew Owoh and Ojuolape were publicly executed by the Buhari/Idiagbon Military government for trafficking in substances. Accepting the foregoing as correct, one could contend that the era of innocence among Nigerians as per exposure and knowledge of substances disappeared thereafter. Since then,

Nigeria has witnessed a paradigm shift towards cocaine and heroin business. In other words, Nigerians hear more about cocaine, heroin and other substances than they hear about common malaria drugs in the media.

Disappointedly, the recent upsurge of interest in tobacco, Indian hemp, cocaine, morphine, heroin, alcohol, ephedrine, madras, caffeine, glue, barbiturates, amphetamines, and other narcotics celebrated in the social media in the last couple of decades has been traced to the rising of major public health and socioeconomic problems in the Nigerian society. Consequent upon this, one of the most disturbing phenomena has been that undergraduates and the unemployed have embraced the consumption of these substances for pleasure rather than for health related reasons. Writing on the menace of the proliferation and consumption of substances, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Report (2005) cited in Attah, Baba, & Audu, (2016) posits that that about 200 million people, or 5 percent of the world's population age between 15 and 65 have used substances at least once in the last 12 months. Adopting the World Drug (2005), the use of illicit substances in all Nations has increased in recent years. The report goes on to observe that the increasing availability of a variety of substances to an ever widening socio-economic spectrum of consumers is disconcerting.

From the foregoing, the level of the proliferation and consumption of substance by younger Nigerians has increased, and raised serious doubts as to whether they can still be regarded as leaders of tomorrow who will take Nigeria out of the present economic and leadership doldrums the country has plunged herself. This doubt hinges on the United Nations (UN) Statistics (2013) which states that 37,000 people in Africa die annually from diseases associated with substance abuse. In the same document, there is an estimated 28 million substance consumers in Africa. Similarly in Uganda, information from the International conference on substance abuse (2013) holds that young people are the most vulnerable section of the population since they are mostly unable to resist peer pressure. Unfortunately, one vexing feature in this statistics is the fact that young people seem to be the target and the consequence has been their poor health conditions.

At this juncture, it is important to recall that in Nigeria, Decree 48 of 1989 prepared the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) as the sole agency saddled with the responsibility of supervising controlling, coordinating all the functions and activities relating to arrest, investigation, prosecution of all offences connected with illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (Akanbi, Godwin, Anyio, Muhammad & Ajiboye, 2015) with the intention of restoring sanity to the society. Since its creation, the Agency has left no one in doubt in its effort to curb the menace among the Nigerians, both old and young. Aside a series of seminars, conferences to eradicate and create awareness on the negative effects of substances on the health of people, more especially the youths, the Agency, according to Attah, et.al (2016) collected substances abuse data from institutions, records of patients admitted at mental health institutions for substance related problems and interview of persons arrested for drug offences, and one of the findings explicates the fact that youths constitute the high risk group involved. Sequel to this, there has been a grave concern by government, parents, teachers, non-governmental organizations and all other relevant agencies on the future of these Nigerian youngsters. It is in this connection that this study examines substances proliferation and addiction among students in Nigerian universities with a view to repositioning them away from the hazards associated with the menace.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In recent times, substance proliferation and addiction have eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian universities and appear to be one issue that casts a gloomy shadow on the entire Nigerian society especially among young people. Reports of young peoples' lives are being ruined by substances and alcohol. In addition, substance consumption has led to unrest and widespread destruction of life and property in schools. Many of these students' behaviours are heavily tied to what they learn, admire and imitate from social media. Wanting to be attractive to others becomes very important in adolescence, and this factor is significant in the development of substance addiction. These adolescent who get involved in risky conducts often have high levels of conflict with their parents and poor self control, suggesting that they engage in such behaviour to manage a stressful life. In all this, the substances proliferation has been threatening and derailing the noble stride of producing well groomed future leaders to drive the economy to the next level.

Based on this, it is the objective of this study is to appraise substance proliferation and addiction in Nigerian universities with a view to rescuing the trapped generation that is almost gone. Specifically the study seeks to:

- i). Examine the impact of substance proliferation on students' health status
- ii). Determine the effects of substance proliferation on academic performance of students
- iii). Evaluate how substance proliferation and addiction among students is influenced by social media

In an attempt to achieve the stated objectives, three research questions were formulated to guide the study and they include:(i) What are the repercussions of substance proliferation on the health status of students?(ii). Does the substance proliferation affect the academic performances of students? (iii). How is substance proliferation and addiction among students influenced by social media?

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Differential Association Theory

The study adopts the Differential Association Theory propounded by Edward Sutherland. In the theory, Sutherland contends that behaviour is as a result of socialization by means of interaction and how people act depends on how those around desire them to act, how much they deviate from or conform to the norms depends on difference (or differentials) in those they associate with. Such assertion varies in frequency, duration, intensity and priority. As he explains, these variables determine what individuals learn or how long they learn it. Furthermore, while deviant behaviour is an expression of acts, needs and values in the psycho- analysis sense, it cannot be explained at the same needs and values. It does not need money to explain deviant behaviour but the choice that an individual makes to fulfil that need such choices are the product of lifelong learning and interaction with other. His conclusions established differential association theory, stating that individuals learn deviant behavior from those close to them who provide models of and opportunities for deviance. According to Sutherland, deviance is less a personal choice and more a result of differential socialization processes. In other words, people who share social characteristics such as social class position may not be deviants. Sutherland submits that deviants learn behaviour through interaction. He continues that if close associates are deviates, there is a strong probability that they learn the techniques and the deviates values that make deviants acts possible. In a nutshell, differential association theory has been chosen as the theoretical framework for this study in preference to others. Although not all delinquent acts can be explained by reference to social contacts and environmental influence, but the social world in which traffickers of substances live and the successive situations to which they respond account for most deviant misconduct. Thus, it is in differential association postulations that the principles of social learning of most deviant behaviour among substance traffickers have eventually been unfolded. It is clear from Sutherland's view that institutionalised means of achieving goals of all ramifications required essentially the same learning process.

3. Methods

The study used survey design because it is directed towards determining the nature of situations as it exists at the time of the study (Maduabum, 2004). Orodho (2009) notes that a survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals and it is the most frequently used method for collecting information about people's habits in a variety of education or social issues. Furthermore, the survey design is preferred because it concerns itself with ascertaining and establishing the status quo, facts or pieces of information at the time of any research. Also Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) argues that the survey design is the best method available to social scientists who are interested in collecting original data for the purposes of describing a population which is too large to observe directly. To achieve the purpose of this study, three research questions were formulated to guide the study with the adoption of differential Association theory as theoretical framework. Literatures related to the variables are reviewed and the total population selected through purposive sampling technique is one hundred and ten undergraduates (respondents) and the instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The instrument was distributed to respondents with help of colleagues used for the study. The returned questionnaires are one hundred (100) in numbers, which was used in this study. The data was subjected to descriptive particularly percentage frequency table counts.

4. Review of Related Literature

4.1 The impact of Substance proliferation

Substance proliferation and addiction has been the heart of study in the developed countries for decades in view of the fact that it poses a great danger to the lives of individuals, society and political stability and security in many countries (United Nations, 1998). The ever-increasing accessibility of substances and alcohol has increased consumption over an ever widening spectrum of consumers. According to a study by the World Drug (2005) and cited by Attah, et.al, (2016), in most of Europe and Asia, opiates accounts for 62 percent of all substance treatment sought. The report further state that 3.3 to 4.1 percent of the global population admits consuming substances. However, the most worrisome trend, the UNDCP Executive Director laments, is the younger ages at which people are becoming addicted. A cursory look at the statistics put forward by Attah and his colleagues, show that those who started heroine use at 15-20 years of age in Pakistan has doubled to almost 24 percent, and in the Czech Republic, it is 37 percent of new substance users has been teenagers between 15 and 19 years old, while in Egypt, heroin consumption is daily becoming a serious problem and nearly 6 percent of secondary and tertiary school students admit to having experimented with substances. Nigeria has suffered from the menace of substances more than from anything else. In this vein, the erstwhile United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan grieves that substances are tearing apart societies, spawning crime, spreading diseases, and killing youths.

While one empathizes with Kofi Annan, it is painful to admit that a bulk of youthful Nigerians is ignorantly depending on one form of substance or the other for their various daily functions. Concurring, Oshikoya and Alli (2006) also discover dependence and addiction as one of the major consequences of the proliferation and consumption of substances amongst Nigerian youths. In the face of this detestable drift, several studies show that youth not only indulged in cannabis abuse, but also stimulants such as amphetamines and cannabis (Obianwu, 2005; and Omage and Oshiloya, 2006). Conclusively, Odejide (2012) maintains that the aftermath of the deliberate use of substances for purposes other than its intended purpose without the supervision of a physician or a medical practitioner results to stress, anxiety, depression, behaviour changes, fatigue and loss or increase in appetite. Further analyzing the impact of substance proliferation and addition in the Nigerian society, Akanbi, et.al (2015) emphasizes that some of the substances demean individuals.

From the foregoing, the level of the proliferation and consumption of substance by younger Nigerians has raised serious doubts as to whether they can still regarded as leaders of tomorrow who will take Nigeria out of the economic and leadership doldrums the country presently finds herself. This doubt hinges on the United Nations (UN) Statistics (2013) which states that 37,000 people in Africa die annually from diseases associated with substance abuse. In the same document, there is an estimated 28 million substance consumers in Africa. Similarly in Uganda, information from the International conference on substance abuse (2013) holds that young people are the most vulnerable section of the population since they are mostly unable to resist peer pressure. Unfortunately, one vexing feature in this statistics is the fact that young people seem to be the target and the consequence has been their poor health conditions.

4.2 Substance proliferation and the health status of Nigerian students

While it is useful to identify competing explanations for why substance proliferation and informed consumption is on the increase, it is important to observe that students behaviour is daily being modified at the detriment of a achieving a fulfilled life. Substantiating this assertion, Musto (2008) avers that there is a maladaptive pattern of use which results in significant impairment leading to failure to fulfill social obligations. Cannabis or marijuana makes it hard to keep track in time and concentration in class work. Students who use it have difficulty in memory, and find it hard to solve problems and most times have difficulties in learning, to some. Marijuana is as tough as cigarette in the lungs, therefore steady users suffer coughs, wheezing, frequent colds, and respiratory (airway and lung) infections, like bronchitis and this can stops a student from attending class. Marijuana raises heartbeat rate and blood pressure. Earlier, Ajala(2002) opines that substances such as alcohol depresses the central nervous system, and leads to accidents, bad conducts and cause distortion of perception. Its abuse is a major factor contributing to the rising incidents of crimes and largely to the social malice, which are becoming too rampant in contemporary society. Prior to Ajala, Haggins (2001) points out that when a man or woman smokes twenty sticks of cigarette a day for 25 years, there will be reduction of 21.5% of his/her life. Haggins further adds that the risk of lungs cancer is between 8 and

15 times higher in cigarette smokers than the non-smokers. For Odejide(2014), the reasons put forward for indulging in substances proliferation includes wanting to feel on top like adults, to feel good, to get excited, to be like friends and to be like stars.

Similarly, Mba (2008) identified numerous negative effects of substances on the body chemistry as follows:

- a. Physical problems e.g. liver cirrhosis, pancreatic, peptic ulcer, tuberculosis, hypertension, neurological disorder.
- b. Mental retardation of the fetus in the womb, growth, deficiency, delayed motor development.
- c. Craniofacial abnormalities, limbs abnormalities and cardiac deficits.
- d. Psychiatric e.g. pathological drunkenness, suicidal behaviour
- e. Socially-broken homes, increased crime rate, sexual offences, homicide and sexually transmitted diseases.
- ii. Tobacco: Causes stimulation of heart and narrowing of blood vessels, producing hypertension, headache, loss of appetite, nausea and delayed growth of the fetus. It also aggravates or causes sinusitis, bronchitis, cancer, stroke and heart attack.
- iii. Stimulants: Lethargy, irritability, exaggerated self confidence, damage nose linings, sleeplessness, and psychiatric complications
- iv. Inhalants: Causes anemia, damage kidney and stomach bleeding.
- v. Narcotics: Causes poor perception, constipation, cough, suppression, vomiting, drowsiness and sleep, unconsciousness and death.

From the stated statistics as shown in Table 5.1, the proliferation and use of substances by adolescents have become one of the most disturbing health related phenomena in Nigeria. Acolagbe (2005) says it is the only way to become part of the jet age subculture. He further contends that the immoderation in alcoholic drinks, cigarettes, Indian hemp and other substances is done out of the curiosity. Since irrational consumption of substances destroys the body cell, Orija (2008) asserts that substance dependent person unknowingly damages his/herself and the society. The effect is a deteriorating health, which may cause mental ill health, deformed babies and untimely death of the individual involved. Sustaining this position, Orija further holds that people who have become dependent on substance are more irritable, moody, absent minded, drop in academic performance and change in mode of dressing. He concludes by maintaining that such people become more demanding with regard to funds, increased appetite and complain often of aches and pains in the body. In a related development, Rebury (2006) maintains that the effects of some substances as follow: Amphetamine; takes away the desires to eat, hence, some persons grow thin and become easy target for diseases. Methedrine makes one feel powerful but aggressive, nervous, talkative and easily excited. The mind becomes deranged due to sleeplessness. In a related development, substances like Indian hemp have the power to impair mental activities. It decreases the male sex hormone called testosterone and as well as interfere with the menstrual cycle in women (Ogunsakin 2007). It also causes mental disorder, hallucination. On its part, cocaine damages the heart and cause heart attack in human beings.

TABLE 5.1 Showing substances abused

S/No	Substances commonly abused leading to addiction	Yes(Percentage)	No (Percentage)
1	Alcohol (beer)	90(90%)	10(10%)
2	Tobacco	88(88%)	12(12%)
3	Opium	95(95%)	5(5%)
4	Heroin	90(90%)	10(10%)
5	Bhang	100(100%)	-
6	Glue	98(98%)	2(2%)
7	Gasoline	80(80%)	20(20%)
8	Cocaine	85(85%)	15(15%)

From the analysis, there is a positive relationship between substance proliferations and the health status of students. Respondents are of the position that the use of substance by students and others through self prescription bought over the counter or from hawkers on self advice has become very disturbing in Nigeria. Writing, Haggins (2001) points out that when an individual smokes twenty sticks of cigarette a day for 25 years, there will be

reduction of 21.5% of such an individual's life. He adds that the risk of lungs cancer is between 8 and 15 times higher in cigarette smokers than the non-smokers. Several students experience mental health problems, either temporarily or for a long period of time. From the field work, it is observed that the proliferations bring about changes in the biological functions of the body of consumers through its chemical actions as they modify perceptions, cognition, mood, and behaviours (Balogun, 2006). Similarly, hallucination, and delusion disrupt the minds of students creating horrible visions, hearing non-existent sounds that may impair their concentration and ability to make effective decisions. Moreover, hemp smoking in some cases promotes aggressiveness to self and causes students loss of motivation, poor health condition of the students, anxiety, restlessness, depression, and hepatitis, etc. all of which retard national development lack of interest in any constructive activities. Unfortunately, substance abuse is a major public health problem all over the world (UNODC, 2005).

TABLE 5.2: Showing the effects of the proliferation of substances on health status of students

S/No	Effects of Substance Abuse on health status	Yes(Percentage)	No (Percentage)
1	Anxiety	90	10(10%)
2	Vomiting	85	15(15%)
3	Headache	90	10(10%)
4	Nervousness	95	5(5%)
5	Red eyes	95	5(5%)
6	Sleepy	97	3(3%)
7	Tired	98	2(2%)
8	Confused	95	5(5%)
9	Lack of co-ordination	96	4(4%)
10	Loss of appetite	85	15(15%)
11	Chest pains	90	10(10%)

With the government being unable to create jobs for the teeming unemployed youth population in order to make life bearable, many have, out of frustration, resorted to the wild consumption of these substances, particularly marijuana which has reached an epidemic level in the present Nigeria society creating a lot of implications on the health status of students (Fayombo and Aremu, 2000). It is observed that aggressive, violent and destructive activities that are common with substance abusers could threaten the safety of family and nation. Some become insane, maladjusted to school situations and eventually drop out of school.

Substance is said to be abused when its consumption causes disorder and is characterized by a destructive pattern leading to significant problem or distress (Njoku 2004). Coleman (2010) sees substance abuse as the scenario when it is taken more than it is prescribed. It could also be seen as the use of illicit substances, or the abuse of prescription or over – the – counter substances. The consumption of hard substances by adolescent students in Nigerian universities has become one of the most disturbing issues in the society nowadays. Since the constant abuse of substances is known to cause psycho-social problems in society, and one only hopes that this intolerable practice and its associated evils will not go ahead to breed deranged generation of youths going by the frequent and rampant substance crises in the Nigerian society. While the frequent and rampant substance proliferation and addiction modify behaviour, producing red eyes or dry mouths or becoming sleepy or very hungry has become an embarrassing phenomenon when one views our youths talking aimlessly as they walk down the streets. In addition, cannabis, aside being linked to mental health problems such as schizophrenia, and when smoked, into the lung, also causes diseases including asthma, among others.

4.3 Substance proliferation and academic performance among students

In contemporary Nigeria, vis-à-vis most parts of the globe, education has come to be regarded mainly as a vehicle for economic, social and political development. There has also been a growing commitment to education by government, individual communities and missionary bodies (Bettinger and Slonim 2007). This commitment on the part of government and other non-state actors has extended to ensure that students are properly groomed and tutored on how best to effectively manage themselves in an ever-changing world.

From the empirical evidence gathered from the field report, there is a significant relationship between the proliferation of substances and poor academic performance of students (Maithya, 2009). In a nutshell, students who persistently abuse substances often experience an array of problems, including academic difficulties, health-related problems, poor peer relationships and involvement with the juvenile justice system. Additionally, there are consequences for family members, the community, and the entire society like conflict between friends, family breakdown, violence, gangs, drug trafficking etc. Declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, and increased potential for dropping out of school are problems associated with adolescent substance abuse. Hawkins, Calatano and Miler (1992) had research finding that low level of commitment to education and higher truancy rates appear to be related to substance use among adolescents.

TABLE 5.3: Showing the effects of the proliferation of substances on Academic performance

S/No	Effects on Academic Performance	Yes(Percentage)	No (Percentage)
1	Students are always having declining grades	90(90%)	10(10%)
2	Truancy is common amongst them	85(85%)	15(15%)
3	Have Low concentration span	95(90%)	5(5%)
4	Lack of interest in studying	95(95%)	5(5%)
5	Lack of interest in extra curriculum activities	95(95%)	5(5%)
6	Strained relationship with other students	97(97%)	3(3%)
7	Indulges in bullying fellow students	98(98%)	2(2%)
8	Involved in theft and prostitution	95(95%)	5(5%)
9	Failure in school academic performance	96(96%)	4(4%)
10	Poor communication between students and the administration	85(85%)	15(15%)
11	Conflict between students and teachers	90(90%)	10(10%)
12	Ineffective classroom communication	88(88%)	12(12%)
13	Ended up as university drop outs	100(100%)	-----

These changes are maladaptive and inappropriate to the social or environmental setting therefore may place the individual at risk of harm. The findings of Odejide (2000) and later Obiamaka (2004), Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2004) and show that the problem of substance proliferation and addiction knows no boundaries or social class. It impedes the development of any society as it is a threat to life, health, academic performance and dignity of the adolescent. Also, decreasing the ability to concentrate in studies as a result getting oneself addicted to alcohol and substances are known to have some detrimental effects on pupils' cognitive abilities. As earlier observed, it undermines students' progress by making them less likely to attend classes or keep up with their studies. It is in line with this strand of thought that psychologists argue, according to Deas et al, (2000), that heavy drinking may lower individuals' expectations about their academic performance. In a nutshell, the consensus of opinion therefore seems to be that students are seriously involved in substance abuse. This, obviously, calls for an in-depth study and analysis aimed at drawing the attention of parents, guardians and all stakeholders on how their actions and inactions have individually and collectively contributed to the ever-increasing problems of substance abuse and addiction in the Nigerian society. Admittedly, the Federal Government established an agency to combat the substance virus with a view to reducing it to the barest minimum, but it is unfortunate that the agency nowadays exists only in name unlike when it was newly established. Consequent upon this, these substances have continued to interfere with the awareness of students' unique potential and interest thus affecting their career development (Kikuvi, 2009).

4.4 Substance proliferation and social media

Substance proliferation and addiction has in recent times been influenced by social media. To an extent that it has become an embarrassing occurrence in Nigerian universities since that sense of feeling good, elation, serenity and power have developed into a problem of dependence and abuse. Writing on substance proliferation, abuse and addiction, Ben-Arie (1985) says it is the consumption, without medical supervision, of medically useful substances which alter mood and behaviour for a purpose other than that for which it is prescribed, or the consumption of any mind changing substances which have no legitimate medical or socially acceptable use.

TABLE 5.4: Showing substance proliferation and the influence of social media

S/No	Substance proliferation and social media	Yes(Percentage)	No (Percentage)
1	I know about substances from the social media	90(90%)	10(10%)
2	My friends also take substances	88(88%)	12(12%)
3	Substances help me cope with stress	95(95%)	5(5%)
4	Substances make me feel good, elation,	90(90%)	10(10%)
5	I take substances and alcohol to feel big among friends	100(100%)	--
6	As seen in the social media, I take substances and alcohol to gain strength	98(98%)	2(2%)
7	I take substances and alcohol to become a celebrity	80(80%)	20(20%)
8	Many students are involved on one substance or another	85(85%)	15(15%)

Contributing to the views of TeenZeen (2012), Adila, et.al (2014) opines that the information youngsters get from the social media has not been able to make them get scared or exclude them from these substances, but rather has made them more interested in wanting to experiment with it themselves. Furthermore, to demonstrate the extent to which social media has made substance proliferation a lot easier and simpler, Mann (2011) writes that Columbia University’s National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) has found that, teens that spend time on Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and other social networking sites are more likely to smoke, drink alcohol, and use substances. Aligning, Adila, et.al(2014) said CASA polled more than 2,000 teens, and the results show that, compared to teens who do not visit social networking sites daily, those who do are five times more likely to use tobacco, three times more likely to drink alcohol and twice as likely to use marijuana. Surprisingly, the teens in the survey said they have seen images of intoxicated kids, including some who are passed out, as well as pictures of peers using substances (Adila, et.al, 2014). Erroneously, the images of intoxicated kids portrays the fact that substance proliferation and addiction is a norm. By implication, it is no big deal for teens to take substances and started indulging in it earlier than expected. This wrong impression has caused serious harms leading to and including substance addiction, risk-taking behaviours, and even death (TeenZeen, 2012). While it is useful to advance explanations why it is not enough to simply teach youngsters about the negative consequences associated with substances, it is also important to make them understand how the media convey information as well, and making it harder for them as young people not to be manipulated (Pozniak, 2014). Substantiating these findings, Kiiru (2004) submits that peer pressure influences youth to use substances under the false impression that some substances increase strength and give wisdom as well as courage to face life.

6. Discussions of findings

From the findings, the repercussions of substance proliferation on the health status of students cannot be overemphasizes. Basically, Nigeria appears to be at a crossroads. There are many unresolved problems in the country but the issue of the upsurge of substance proliferation and addiction rank higher today than ever before. Substances have done much damage to both the polity and psyche of young people. It is important to appreciate the fact that there was a time in Nigeria when not much was know about narcotic, except perhaps, when it was meant to refer to the common neighbour Indian hemp in Nigeria. Despite the hazards of substance proliferation, majority of the Nigerian students ignorantly depend on different substances such as tobacco, Indian hemp, cocaine, morphine, heroin, alcohol, ephedrine, madras, caffeine, glue, barbiturates, amphetamines, et

cetera for their various daily social, educational, political, moral activities. In their study, Oshikoya and Alli (2006) identified dependence and addiction among Nigerian undergraduates as one of the major consequences which is characterized by compulsive substance craving that keeps producing maladaptive and inappropriate behaviours despite the several health hazards that place individuals at risk of harm. Little wonder that the immediate past UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan lamented that substances are tearing apart our societies, spawning crime, spreading disease such as aids, and killing our youths and our future. Corroborating with statistics, Daily Times (2004) states that one in every three students consumes alcohol. Another 8.3% smoke cigarettes while almost one in every ten (9.1%) chew *miraa*. Similarly, 3% smoke bhang and also use hard substances like heroin, cocaine, mandrax and tranquilizers. In her report, NAFDAC (2008) established that alcohol remains the most commonly abused substance with about 61% of the population engaging in its use.

Going by the second research question relating to how substance proliferation affect the academic performances of students, findings have shown that the proliferation, availability and consumption of hard substances affect academic performance of students. This is in agreement with the findings of Ajala (2002), Rebury (2006), Ogunsakin (2007) and Orija (2008) that students experiences internal inefficiencies which leads to declining academic performance; apathy in learning activities and subsequent drop out in schools. Elucidating further, several school going adolescents experience mental health problem, either temporarily or for a long period of time. Some become insane, maladjusted to school situations and eventually drop out of school. Supporting this position, Odejide, (2000) warned that substance abusers exhibit symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, behaviour changes, fatigue and loss or increase in appetite. Corroborating, Akers (1991), Ballas (2006) and Akus (2010) aver that the effects of substance proliferation and addiction on the academic performance of students include: dampening the nervous system, increasing the heart beat, causing the blood vessels to dilate, effecting digestion notably of vitamin B especially when taken on empty stomach, interfering with the power of judgment and poisoning the higher brain and nerve centre. In addition, it leads to aggressiveness, hopelessness, selfishness, impotence, chest or lung pain, regular illness and habitual hangovers. The student spends much money on the purchase of these substances at the detriment of purchasing their academic books. This assertion is supported by the long time held position of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency that there are significant changes manifested in the behaviour of substances abusers, and such behaviour include distinct downward performance in school, increased absenteeism, chronic dishonesty, hostility and reduced self-esteem. In summary, the use of hard substances by students in Nigerian universities needs to be discouraging. This is because the continued abuse of substances among students can likely have adverse effects on academic performance.

With reference to the third research question on how proliferation and addiction among students are influenced by social media, the work of Adila, et.al (2014) succinctly explains how the Columbia University's National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) report show that about 9 out of 10 parents do not think that social networking raises their children's risk for substance or alcohol abuse (Mann, 2011). But in reality, this perception is very erroneous because social media contributes a lot in influencing the new generation's lifestyle unconstructively. Demonstrating further, CASA polled more than 2,000 teens, and the results show that, compared to teens who do not visit social networking sites daily, those who do are five times more likely to use tobacco, three times more likely to drink alcohol and twice as likely to use marijuana. Surprisingly, the teens in the survey said they have seen images of intoxicated kids, including some who are passed out, as well as pictures of peers using substances (Adila, et.al, 2014). Erroneously, the images of intoxicated kids portrays the fact that substance proliferation and addiction is a norm. By implication, it is no big deal for teens to take substances and started indulging in it earlier than expected. This wrong impression has caused serious harms leading to and including substance addiction, risk-taking behaviours, and even death (TeenZeen, 2012). Above all, the study indicates that students are being lured by their friends in the universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education through social media into patronizing substances and later trapped inside the menace. Furthermore, male students are deeply more involved than their female counterparts in substances. Besides, students' involvement in substance addiction courtesy of social media is not a function of the socioeconomic status of their parents, as students from both rich and poor homes engage in the abuse.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has demonstrated that the proliferation of substances in Nigerian society, particularly in universities has opened up a new vista for researchers. The effects of substances proliferation and addiction in Nigerian universities are also experienced by all the countries of the world either developed or developing countries. However, in Nigeria, the proliferation and the uninformed consumption of substances leading to addiction stares mockingly at our faces. We see it in the coughs, wheezing, frequent colds, and respiratory (airway and lung) infections, like bronchitis, and asthma, eating disorders, unrest and widespread destruction of life and property in schools, increased risk of early school dropouts, and not practicing safe sex, and vulnerability to injury, among other deviant behaviours. As a result, the threats on students' health, academic performance, and the high rate of deviant behaviour resulting from social media influence cannot be over emphasized. It is a sore point in the Nigeria's educational sector. Fundamentally, educating these students about the real aftermaths of substances and alcohol abuse will in no small measure help develop an understanding of why they should practice the avoidance -- avoidance principle with substances. For Adila, Habee, Siti & Nor'izah(2014), it is the first hand effort of parents and peers, who are close to the children, to make sure that this problem stays controllable, without letting them to fall deep into the tricks the Internet could bring. In its recent report the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime revealed the role that the proliferation of substances in Nigerian universities plays in funding campus cults and also fueling other criminal activities and prostitution. The proliferation of illicit substances among university students in Nigeria must not be left unchecked. The reasons are many and varied as the drugs themselves are. The work has also stated the effects of these substances/drugs on the abusers. Since substance abuse creates problem for the individual abuser and the society at large, war should be waged against the abuse of substances/drugs by our students. Winning the war on drugs is a laudable, goal, but it is no easy task. In a nutshell, the use of substances by students in Novena and other Nigerian public universities need to be discouraged. This is because; the continued abuse of substances among these students can likely have adverse effects on their entire bodily functions, The following recommendations were made by the researchers to rescue the wasted generation.

1. Government should set up guidance and counselling offices facilitated by professionals to counsel people who indulge in substance abuse. This will help take care of them with emotional needs that they wish to share in confidence but lack the platform to do so and in return end up turning to substance abuse.
2. The National Agency for Food, Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) should arrest the people selling Indian hemp and other hard drugs in the society and the culprits should also be made to pay a fine that is commensurate with the offence committed or sentence to imprisonment with hard labour
3. Parents should not give so much money to their children but if they do, they should ensure that the expenditure is monitored to checkmate any indulgence in substances. The fact that some students have access to a lot of money tempts them to buy substances. Also, parents and teachers should set a good example and keep an eye on their wards and know those they associate with to ensure they do not involve themselves with individuals who abuse substances.
4. There should be total commitment and cooperation from all concerned. Parents, guardians, and university authorities must cooperate together in exchange of information, communication and other logistic areas in tackling the proliferation of illicit substance patronage. Cooperation is highly solicited in ensuring students are saved from self destruction. In addition, lecturers should set a good example to the students and also have better relationships with them. Above all, desist from getting addicted to substances and also appearing drunk in the presence of the students.
5. Since substance addiction is a social problem created by society, all hands must be on deck to change the society or at least thinking of the youths about substances. Awareness should be created to equip students with information on hazards associated with uninformed consumption of substances and how destructive their careers could be.

6. The Judicial system in the country should also be revamp to carry out their mandates without partiality and considerations especially in terms of prosecuting offenders of substances. This will serve as deterrent to others from risking to venture into the trade

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