



Substance abuse among female youths: An evaluation of selected Local Governments in Niger State

Aminu Sani

aminusani1976@gmail.com

Department of Sociology, IBB University-Nigeria

Abstract

The study investigated substance abuse by females in some selected Local Government Areas of Niger State. It examined the commonly abused substances (locally and industrially processed), the means of accessing the substances as well predisposing factors for female youth substance abuse. Merton's structural-strain theory and Sutherland's differential association theory were adopted. The study utilized qualitative method of data collection. A total of 43 participants were interviewed. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select the sample from the population. Data collected were analysed thematically and presented in a narrative manner (with verbatim quotations) based on research objectives, sub-merged and interpreted on the basis of sub-themes. The study revealed that pharmaceutical drug substance such as codeine syrups were the most commonly abused substances by the subjects. Equally, local substances like Indian hemp were also abused. Findings revealed that much of the substances abused are accessed from patent medicine shops, friends, itinerants' street hawkers and other dealers in the study areas. The study identified peer group influence, poor parental control, life frustration, closeness to where substances abused are sold and abused, betrayal from boy friends, poor legal framework, insincerity and corruption on the part of some law enforcement officials as the predisposing factors for female substance abuse. The study recommends that, the problem can be addressed through collective efforts of Government at all levels, civil societies, NGOs, FBOs, parents, other stake holders and guardians as well as other members of the society.

Keywords: Drugs, Substance, Substance Abuse, Youth

1. Introduction

For a very long time in the history of mankind, people have been identifying and using plants, trees, herbs, roots and other substances as medicine for the treatment of diseases and other ailments. Some of these substances are drugs that people ingest, inhale, absorb or apply/rub on to their bodies, as industrially processed chemical components which are capable of affecting the physiological functions of an organism. These substances comprise all kinds of medicine, such as tablets, syrups, balms and capsules which are sold at patent medicine stores, at pharmaceutical shops, and by street itinerant hawkers. They also include locally and industrially processed or produced substances such as beverages,



chemicals, marijuana, cigarettes, alcohol and the likes. They can be harmful, if misused or abused, and when the use is continuous, it could lead to addiction (Abdullahi, 1999).

In Nigeria today, the general observation shows that some people procure and utilize substances for every activity they engage in. The situation has been in many states of Nigeria, including Niger state, especially among adolescents and youths of both sexes who constitute the high risk group. Substance abuse, in whatever form, is a social problem that threatens the abuser's personal development, his family's reputation, and society's socio-economic, cultural and political structures and this has a number of negative consequences on society's progress. For example, Siro (2008) identified violence, high rate of divorce and marital instability as part of the side effects of substance abuse. And if this act persists among females, the effects will not only be on them, but equally their children and the society at large. Against this background, the study attempt an empirical investigation on the commonly abused substances among female youths, means of accessing the substances and factors predisposing female youths to the abuse of substances in some selected local Government's areas of Niger state.

This emanates from the realizations by the researcher that, though several researches were conducted on substance abuse among youths (males and females) in many parts of Nigeria, but none was carried out in Niger State which particularly focused on females.

2. Literature review

In viewing the subject matter theoretically, Structural-Strain theory developed by Robert K. Merton (1910-2003) explains deviant behaviour in society. The theory argues that social environment influences people's behaviours and Person's behaviour shapes his attitudes towards culturally defined goals and the institutionalized means of achieving those goals. In an attempt to achieve these goals, people use different ways either by conforming to or by deviating from such cultural expectations. According to this theory, people who aspire for the culturally prescribed goals but are denied the opportunities to realize those goals experience what he termed "social strains". It is because of these strains in finding access to legitimate means that some members of society turn to deviant acts.

Merton (1947) examines five basic forms of adaptation: conformity to social norms, which is the most common and exact opposite of deviance. Other forms of adaptation are: innovation-accepting the goals of society but using improper means, for example, female youth whose parents cannot cater for their material needs may easily be lured into deviant acts like involvement into substance abuse; or a female youth who grew up without mother at home and suffers maltreatment in the hands of others may likely get entrapped into substance abuse as a means of calming down her worries etc. Ritualism is accepting the means but rejecting the goal. Retreatism is rejecting both the goals and the means. And rebellion is rejecting both goals and means and providing a substitute. Consequently, if society denies people the opportunity to achieve success through socially approved means; some individuals are likely to choose illegitimate avenues in order to attain the goals of



society (happiness, satisfaction, pleasure etc.) through engaging in acts such as prostitution, substance abuse among female youths, etc.

Other related theory on the subject matter is differential association theory of Edwin H. Sutherland (1883-1950) whose main arguments are that: deviant behaviours are learnt through the process of interaction just like any other normative behaviour, a person becomes deviant because of an excess of definitions favourable to violation of law over definitions unfavourable to violation of law. For example, female youth's involvement in substance abuse because of the existence and easy access to different kinds of substances of abuse in the society, or a female youth may likely get involved in substance abuse because of associating with friends abusers etc

Available literatures and empirical studies have revealed the most commonly abused substances by the females in contemporary times. For instance, a study by Musa (2012) on Benelyn consumption among female in Tarauni Local Government Area of Kano State indicates that majority of the respondents constituting 65% abused Benelyn and that they were introduced by their friends either in schools or out of schools, and his findings also revealed that majority of the respondents fall within the ages 18-23 years. Also, Siro (2008) reveals that the common substances of abuse in Kano include: cough syrup with codeine, Indian hemp, rubber solution and 'Gadagi' though low abuse is recorded on heroin, cocaine and Roche. Similarly, Abdullahi (2003) reveals that non-medical Substances used by youths include: *Hankufa* (*waltheria americana*), *goro* (kolanut), *tabagari* (powdered tobacco), and *dan kamaru* (bitter root usually imported from Cameroon

In a study of 400 students by Magaji (2012a) on substance abuse among undergraduates of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 58.8% of the female respondents abused Codeine, 35.7% abused amphetamines, 13.3% Alcohol, 7.8 Marijuana, 20% Inhalants, 25% Cocaine and 11.1% Solvents, respectively. Shehu (2012), reports that cough syrups with codeine has now become a fashionable style of drug of abuse in Nigeria especially among youths (males/females) both in and out of school, in the streets and adults in their homes. Radda (2006) argues that in certain parts of Nigeria, alcohol is used essentially at ceremonial festivals and during religious rituals. He further buttressed that, in northern Nigeria (Kano), for example, kola nut, which has caffeine, has been used regularly by aged people and during ceremonies. Tobacco smoking is also a common habit among many Nigerians with an addition of the recent phenomena of youth abusing Benelyn, more especially among young females (Radda, 2006).

On the access to substances of abuse by the subjects, studies reveal that there are different ways substances of abuse are accessed. For instance, Ebie (1988) identifies two major factors which contribute to the problem of drug abuse in Nigeria and these are the supply and the demand of drugs. The supply side of it are the factors that contribute to the supply of drugs like factories, patent medicine stores, hospitals, drug traffickers/pushers, dealers of cannabis, ill-prepared law enforcement agencies, etc., all of which facilitate the supply side. The demand side on the other hand, deals with factors associated with abuse of a



particular drug. Bukarti (2009) and Abdullahi (1999), report that there is unrestricted availability of various kinds of drugs in Nigeria despite the existence of restrictive laws; drugs like sedatives and stimulants are easily accessible in shops, mobile shops, patent medicine stores and open market and so on. Furthermore, they argued that the tendency to abuse drug is enhanced by the state of affairs in Nigeria. Dukku (2012) notes that drugs can only be abused when they are available, irrespective of strong desire in individual; without availability (supply) there can be no drug abuse. He further reveals that the stands of literature on drug use specifically indicate that the opportunity to take a given drug depends on easy access of it, such that without the availability of such substances, the abuse will not take place. Studies by Dukku (2012), Ebie (1988) and Burkati (2009) reveal that female youths often access substances of abuse due to their availability in many places like patent medicine stores, motor parks, unlicensed drug sellers/hawkers and the poor legal framework and ill prepared laws in Nigeria, because much of the substances of abuse are not prohibited by the law thereby limiting the effort of the law enforcement agencies to control the circulation of these substances in the market.

Equally, Shehu (2012) points out that whenever drugs are available in our societies and people have easy access to them without legislation guiding the sales, people are more likely to abuse them and continue with the abuse, this is very common in Nigeria where substances of abuse are easily accessible in many places and consequently female youths access and use substances like codeine, Roche etc. Abdullahi (1999), notes that the sources of dependence providing drugs to include: patent medicine shops, off license mobile sellers (using bicycles and motorcycles, motor vehicles) road hawkers to mention among others. He further revealed that almost all the respondents noted that the drugs are not difficult to get unless one is new to the environment in Kano where substances of abuse are sold.

Regarding the predisposing factors for substance abuse by females, empirical studies and available literature reveal many factors to be responsible.. For instance, Durkheim used the term anomie in an attempt to explain why deviant acts such as drug abuse, theft and so on occur in human society. In his work "suicide", he argued that deviance is a result of social and personal disorganization. He argued that in normal time, norms are clear and are followed by almost everybody, but in periods of social disorganization people find themselves in confusing situation. In this period, the ability to differentiate between acceptable behaviour and deviant act becomes difficult. Therefore, it is not surprising for some people to behave contrary to the social norms by engaging in deviant acts such as female youth's engagement in substance abuse, prostitution, theft etc. among the female youths. Uzoka (1990), reports that drug abuse is a learned behaviour like any other normative behaviour. Consequently, if the behaviour of drug abuse is reinforcing the individual persistence use of drug tends to be maintained. He further maintained that there are primary reinforcers i.e. events that have inherent ability to provide the recipient with reward or satisfaction and the secondary/learned reinforcers. The view of Uzoka support the argument of Sutherland (1939) who posits that deviant acts such as substance abuse among female youths are learnt in the process of interaction just like any other behaviour.



Wilfred (2009) notes that Nigerian youths in general and female youths in particular often get involved in substance abuse in order to express the need for independence or hostility towards the adult world. He further argued that since adolescents often live in a fantasy world most of the time, the peculiarity of their personalities often lures them into substance abuse, such as alcohol consumption, smoking habits, even hard drugs. Due to personality difficulties, or desire to get rid of stress or strenuous situations or circumstances, some youths of both sexes also indulge in substance abuse in order to minimize internal or external discomfort, though it provides only a temporary relief, most of the times. Sexual inadequacies may also result in the use of substances such as stimulants (Odebiyi, 1990). Haladu (2003), summaries the causes of substance abuse in general and among females in particular as follows: experimental curiosity, peer group influence, lack of parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions and availability of substance of abuse.

3. Methodology

The study covered three selected local Governments Areas of Niger State. These are Kontagora, Magama, and Wushishi. Focus was on the major and most populous districts within these Local Governments; as such the sample selection was done taking into consideration the population size of each of the selected local Government. The participants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling procedures. Both sampling techniques were used because of the sensitive nature of the issue and subjects under study (stigmatization, fear of arrest by law enforcement officials, gender difference between researcher and female interviewees). Also, these sampling techniques were applied, because it is not all the female youths in the study locations that are involved in substance abuse. Three categories of target population were used; these are: female youths, law enforcement agents and sellers of substances of abuse (locally and industrially processed). A sample of forty three (43) participants were used; out of this number, twenty six (26) female youths involved in substance abuse were interviewed, ten (10) officials of law enforcement agents, four (4) patent medicine store owners/sellers and three hawkers of locally processed substances of abuse were interviewed. Since local Government areas are divided into districts and political wards, two female youths involved in substance abuse were selected from each ward. Interviews were conducted with female youths involved in substance abuse who are identified to possess detailed knowledge of the issue under study, using a guide. Equally, interviews were conducted with the officials of law enforcement agencies (National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Nigeria Police and Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps), sellers/owners of patent medicine stores and sellers/hawkers of locally processed substances of abuse using a guide. These of people are identified to possess special knowledge about the subject of the study. Each participant was interviewed for a minimum of 30 minutes. The interview with female youths involved in substance abuse and the hawkers of locally processed substances of abuse were conducted with Hausa language, the local language of the study areas. Each of the interviews were conducted at the convenient places and time suggested by each interviewee/participant. Audio recorder was used to record all the conversations. During each interview session,



Research Assistants (RAs) were employed as note takers. Also, the Research Assistants (RAs) assisted the researchers in locating the interviewees. In-depth Interview (IDI) and Key Informant Interview (KII) instruments were used in order to have in-depth and detailed information about issues under study. Questions for the interviews were derived from the research objectives.

Data analysis was done thematically. The responses elicited in local languages were transcribed and translated into English language before the analysis. The service of experts was employed to that effect. The data is presented based on the five (3) major themes (objectives). Each theme has two or more sub-themes under it. Therefore, collected data under each objective is presented on the basis of themes (objectives) and matrix tables and then presented in a narrative manner (using verbatim quotations), and interpreted on the basis of sub-themes (questions that fall under a particular objective). Analysis then followed these themes one after the other and findings presented in accordance with the objectives of the study having carefully scrutinized the transcribed texts.

4. Presentation of Findings for the Study

This section presents and analyses data. The data were presented in a narrative manner (through verbal quotations) and based on the study objectives/research questions. The transcribed interviews were analysed and discussed on the basis of themes and sub-themes, such as commonly abused substances (locally and industrially processed), access to substances of abuse (accessibility and availability of substances of abuse etc.) and predisposing factors (associating with friends substance users, geographical proximity to substance abuse joints and selling points etc.). Matrix presentation is shown; the analysis then followed these themes one after the other to present the findings. Interviewees' responses to the questions under each objective are presented in the matrix tables in Appendix section.

Commonly Abused Substances (Locally and Industrially Processed)

This theme examined the substances commonly abused (locally and industrially processed) by the female youths in the three selected local Governments (Kontagora, Wushishi and Magama) of Niger state.

An interviewee from Kontagora reveals that:

The commonly abused substances by the female youths include: Farin Malam "usually used by Psychiatric patients", Wiwi, Roche, Magadon, Codien Diazepan, Orijeje and Zaplon tablet. (IDI).

A participant from Wushishi revealed that the commonly substances of abuse by the female youths are:

Alcohol, Wiwi (Indian hemp), coughs syrup expectorants mixed with Cocacola, Heritage, Hot, kwaya and Codien syrups Roche, Rafenol tablets and Codeine syrup. (IDI)



Similarly, an interviewee from Magama reveals that the commonly substances of abuse by the female youths include: Tutolyn with codeine syrup and Roche tablet.

However, KII responses reveal that female youths are now into abusing pharmaceutical drugs in Kontagora Township. A patent medicine store owner in kontagora points out that:

Female youths in Kontagora town nowadays are abusing substances like: cough syrups with codeine such as Tutolyn, Parkalin, and Benelyn. They also abuse tablets such as: Roche, Rafenol, Tramadol as well Wiwi (Indian hemp) (KII).

In the view of locally processed substances of abuse seller in Magama (Salka), the commonly substances abused by female youths include:

Wiwi (Indian hemp), local beer such as: Caincain, Burkutu Bummi, Babba juji, Gwana, They also abuse substances like Cof-N, Emzolyn syrups, Roche, Magadon, Lexotan tablets which are sold in the patent medicine stores. (IDI)

An NDLEA official notes that the commonly abused substances by the females in Kontagora Township are cough syrup with codeine (Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkalin. They also abuse Rafenol, Roche, Diazapan tablets and the likes. He adds that

"This syrups come from different forms used for the suppression and relieving cough, this drugs has some little content of codeine which is a derivate of opiate and is psychoactive substances. Opiate is a pharmacology that described a rug derived from opium, opium comes from a poppy plant, it is industrially process, it is highly abused among unmarried women, and this drug can be purchased directly from medicine stores, drug hawkers and some few stores. (KII)

Furthermore, the researchers observed that female youths in Kontagora, Magama and Wushishi were actually involved in the abuse of both locally and industrially processed substances. It was observed in some of the identified patent medicine shops where these substances in question are sold, the researcher noticed the level patronage of these substances is alarming; this is because some of these girls can come to freely buy these substances several times in a day. Equally, it was observed that in almost all the interview sessions with most of these female substance users, while the interview was going own some of the interviewees were taken one substance of abuse or the other such as Indian hemp, Cigarettes, Codeine syrup and Rafenol, Roche, Tramadol tablets and the likes.

From the foregoing responses, it can be deduced that the preferred substances of abuse by the female youths are virtually pharmaceutical drug substances like cough codeine syrups, (Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkaline) Rafenol, Roche, Tramadol, Magadon, Diazapan, Farin Malam tablets well as alcohol and the likes, and this may not be unconnected with the availability and easy access of these substances in most of the patent medicine shops across, road side dealers and other hawkers in the study areas, particularly Kontagora town.



The abuse of locally substances was also discovered but to a very low degree. The identified locally substances of abuse include: Indian hemp, Local beer (*Giyana duma, Babbajuji, Makarho, Burukutu, Oogoro, Bummi, Orijeje* and the likes) especially in Magama and Wushishi.

Access to Substances of Abuse

Responses on the access to the substances of abuse revealed that the subjects accessed the substances from the different sources as presented below:

A participant from Kontagora narrated that:

I usually buy the substance from the patent medicine shop and sometimes, if I desire to take it and I do not have the money to buy, I can sell my Clothes or any of my valuable items just to have the money to buy it (IDI).

Another interviewee from Magama noted that:

Female youths access the substances of abuse through different ways especially those that are into it for long, particularly from the patent medicine shops and some other road side dealers in the town. (IDI)

The responses of patent medicine sellers were almost similar with that of female interviewees. A patent medicine seller from Kontagora reveals that most of these girls buy these substances from us in the chemist, from other vendors and some get it from their friends that are into it. Equally, a seller of the locally processed substance of abuse reveals that some of these girls come to buy these substances themselves while some sent someone to buy for them. He further reveals that since some of them are our customers whenever we see them we know what they normally come to buy, so the money they give or sent determines the quantity that will be given to them. In the views of the NDLEA official, most of these substances are found sold by the patent medicine stores and other vendors in the local markets, and these are the places they sourced these substances they abuse.

In his own view, a 26 years old male Civil Defense official revealed that:

Most of these females' abusers access the substances they use in the patent medicine stores around the town, but for the Indian hemp there are places they normally get it, like Jamaica area, sharp corner, Sagi area and Tudun Wada (KII).

From the responses above, it can be concluded that female youths have many sources of these substances of abuse, some among the identified places of access include; patent medicine shops, local vendor, local markets, road side dealers friends, boyfriends as well as other dealers who sales substances like Indian hemp in secret.

Predisposing Factors for Substance Abuse

Many factors were identified to predispose female youths into substance abuse as presented in the responses below:



For an interviewee from Kontagora:

I got involved into this act, because I was in love with a guy, but my parents do not want him, and on several occasions my parents get us arrested by the police or civil defense just to separate us but all in vein, so because of this crises, I became worried and frustrated and eventually because the guy is already into this act lured me into it, he convinced me that if I use these substances that they will take away my worries, so I tried once and it worked me, so I continue up to this moment (IDI).

An interviewee from Magama noted:

I became involved in this act because of betrayal from the boyfriend I so much loved, which made me worried to the extent that I could not sleep all the time. So I was advised by my friends who do not want to see me in that condition. They asked me to try the substance that it would clear away my worries and problems, so they gave me Roche and Codeine and they worked for me and since that time I continued up to now (IDI).

Another interviewee from Wushishi revealed that frustration and life pressure pushed her into substance abuse: according to her:

I got involved into this act due to fact that I grew up without a mother in the house, because she was divorced when I was very little, and I have been maltreated from my step mother which made me become frustrated and always spent most of my times outside with friends whom I always share my experience with, eventually, I became involved in this act through friends who are already into it (IDI).

From the responses above, it is clear that frustration, peer group influence, parental deprivation and neglects are among the major factors responsible for female youths' involvement in substance abuse the study areas. In general, an analysis of the responses showed that no single reason can said to be solely responsible for female youths involvement in substance abuse, but rather a number of reasons and/factors which include among others: friends/peers influence, frustration, betrayal of the girls from boyfriends, parental neglect, boyfriends influence on the girls among others. Equally, associating with friend's substance abusers is another predisposing factor as noted by majority of the participants, with the exception of few who claims that they do not associate with friends who involved in substance abuse.

In the same vein responses from other stake holders show that peer group influence is one of the strong factors responsible for female youth's involvement in substance abuse. Both sellers of patent medicine reveal that most of these females have friends and some have boyfriends that they abuse these substances together. In the same vein, officials of the law enforcement agencies reveal that associating with friends abusers is considered among the



major factor that predisposes most of the female youths into substance abuse in the study areas.

Furthermore, responses indicates connection between female substance abuse and geographical proximity to substance abuse selling points, and proximity to substance abuse in Kontagora, as confirmed by most interviewees, with the exception of few interviewee each from Magama and Wushishi who believed that closeness to where substances of abuse are been sold and abuse are done are less connected to female youths involvement into substance abuse.

A patent medicine seller from Kontagora notes that:

Proximity to substance abuse Joints and Selling Points have no connection with female youths involvement in substance abuse, because for him, many of these females are coming from far distance to buy these substances (KII).

A seller of patent medicine from Magama reveals that closeness to where substances are sold, and nearness to where abuse are been done can also contribute to female youths involvement into substance abuse. Similarly, a seller of the locally processed substances of abuse affirms that closeness to where the substances of abuse are sold, and proximity to where the abuse are done are among the predisposing factors for female youths involvement in substances abuse

For the NDLEA officials proximity to substance abuse Joints and Selling Points can also predisposes female youths into substance abuse in Kontagora. In the same vein, the police and the civil defense officials reveal that geographical proximity substance Abuse Joints and Selling Points are among the factors that predisposes some females to substance abuse.

A seller of locally processed substance of abuse from Wushishi notes that:

Most of the female youths get involved in substance abuse due to the following reasons: poor or lack of parental care, improper upbringing as well as availability and closeness to where substances are sold and nearness to where the acts are been done are connected to their involvement into this acts (KII)

In the view of an NDLEA official:

Substance abuse among female youths can be attributed to many factors such as peer group influence, depression, social pathology, advertisement of drugs in both print and electronic media, to feel good/high, easy availability of substances, curiosity as well as environmental influence from family, schools, neighborhood and work place (KII).

An analysis of the responses showed that many factors were responsible for female youth's substance abuse. Some among others are; peer group influence, poor parental control/negligence/deprivation, attempt forced marriage, betrayals from part of boyfriends,



frustration and corruption on the part of the law enforcement officials, availability and easy access of substances of abuse in the study areas and so on.

Discussion of the Major Findings

This study has three objectives, each of the objective was addressed by the data gathered. The following are the discussion of the major findings from the study.

Commonly Abused Substances

The commonly industrially processed substances of abuse by the female youths in Kontagora, Magma and Wushishi were virtually pharmaceutical drug substances such as cough syrups with codeine (Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkaline, Tuxil, Cofe-Netc.), others are Roche tablets, Rafenol, Tramadol, *Farin malam* (a tablet usually used by the psychiatric patient), diazepam (D⁵) and emzol-5-tablets. Similarly, female youths are abusing Alcohol, Cigarettes but to a minimal degree. The local substances includes: Indian hemp (Cannabis Sativa), local beer such as *Ogogoro, Burukutu*, Palm wine, *Bummi, Giyan Makarho, Babba Juji, Duma*, as well as lizard excreta. However, the abuse of the locally processed substances by the female youths is more common in Magama and Wushishi than in Kontagora and both are not as common as that of the industrially processed substances, especially the pharmaceutical drug substances as the study reveal.

The findings of this study collaborate the findings of some empirical studies. For instance, a study by Musa (2012) found out that 65% of the female respondents in Tarauni Local Government Area of Kano abused Benelyn with codeine. Shehu (2012) reports that cough syrups with codeine has now become a fashionable style of drug of abuse in Nigeria especially among youths (males/females) both in and out of school, in the streets and adults in their homes. Also, a study by Magaji (2012a) revealed that 58.8% of the female respondents abused Codeine, 35.7% abused amphetamines, 13.3% Alcohol, 7.8 Marijuana, 20% Inhalants, 25% Cocaine and 11.1% Solvents, respectively. Also findings by Siro (2008) revealed that the abuse of certain substances such as Benelyn and Tutolyn with codeine, Tramadol and Roche are very common among youths in Nigeria especially the female youths. Radda (2006) relates that in certain parts of Nigeria, alcohol is used essentially at ceremonial festivals and during religious rituals. He further buttressed that, in northern Nigeria (Kano), for example, kola nut, which has caffeine, has been used regularly by aged people and during ceremonies. Tobacco smoking is also a common habit among many Nigerians with an addition of the recent phenomena of youth abusing Benelyn, more especially among young females (Radda, 2006).

The study also found that significant number of the female youths involved in the abuse of substances falls within the age bracket of 15 to 26 years. This collaborate the work of Radda (1994) who reports that available research data shows that mostly affected category of people for substance abuse falls within the age bracket of 10 to 35 years. Equally, Siro (2008) confirms that the rate at which young ladies between the age brackets 18-25 years abuse industrially processed drugs and other locally processed substances which are intoxicants is very alarming.



The study also revealed that both married and unmarried female youths are involved in substance abuse, but majority of the respondents that are involved in the abuse of substances are unmarried young ladies. This is in line with the findings of Magaji (2012a) who points out that majority of the female respondents are single and young ladies. It also buttressed the findings of Musa (2012) whose findings reveal that 84% of the female respondents that engaged in the abuse of substances are single.

Access to Substances of Abuse

The findings of this study revealed that majority of the female abusers get the substances of abuse in the patent medicine stores available in the towns with less difficulty. Other sources are friends, boyfriends and other dealers in towns who sell in secret as well as other locally processed substances of abuse at the out skirt of the towns including hawkers/local vendors in the town. This agrees with the finding of Magaji (2012) who indicates that majority of respondents access the substances of abuse through friends (22.1%), from patent medicine shops (21.7%), and 18.6% from underground agents while others from other sources. It also agrees with the findings of Dukku (2012), Ebie (1988) and Bukarti (2009) who revealed that substance users access the substances of abuse because of their availability in many places like patent medicine stores, motor parks, and unlicensed drug dealers/hawkers and so on.

Findings of this study indicate that the availability of the substances in many places in the study areas predisposes many young ladies into substance abuse. This finding agrees with the report of Shehu (2012) who points out that whenever drugs are available in our societies and people have easy access to them without legislation guiding the sales, people are more likely to abuse them and continue with the abuse, this is very common in Nigeria where substances of abuse are easily accessible in many places and consequently female youths access and use substances like codeine, Roche etc. It also buttressed the findings of Bukarti (2009) who posits that there was availability of various kinds of drugs in Nigeria despite the existence of laws that ban the sales and abuse of some drug substances; different kinds of drug substances like sedatives and stimulants are easily available in patent medicine shops, moving sales vehicles and open market, itinerant hawkers, hawkers of locally processed substances of abuse. Equally, it relates with the findings of Dukku (2012) who notes that drugs can only be abused when they are available irrespective of strong desire in individual without availability (supply) there can be no drug abuse. He further reveals that the stand of literature on drug uses specifically indicate that the opportunity to take a given drug depends on easy access of it, such that without the availability of such substances, the abuse will not take place.

Predisposing Factors for Substance Abuse

The study identified many reasons for female youths involvement in substances abuse, some among the major reasons include: peer group influence, availability of the substances of abuse in the town, poor parental control/negligence/deprivation, attempt forced marriage, betrayals of love from the part of boys friends, frustration, corruption on the part of law enforcement officials and so on. The findings agrees with the report of Haladu



(2003) who points that substance abuse is not result from one factor rather it results from many factors which includes: experimental curiosity, peer group influence, lack of parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions and availability of substance of abuse in the society. This finding supports the works of Uzoka (1990) and Ebie (1988) who report that drug abuse is a learned behaviour just like any other normative behaviour. Equally, the findings buttressed the view of Anumonye (1990) who posits that those not smoking while in contact with smokers began learning the habit and eventually became chain smokers. He further reports that promiscuous behaviours, sexual pervasions or prostitution are often experienced through films, videos, electronic media etc. which often stimulates female youths into acting behaviour like film stars or movie actresses and eventually substance abuse and addiction. Youth's engagement in anti-social behaviour has been observed to be socially and culturally stimulated, especially female substance abuse.

The findings revealed that factors such as peer group influence, feeling among, curiosity etc. predisposes female youths to substance and both of which are products of intimate association/interaction. This buttressed Sutherland's differential association theory that generally assumed that humans are born neutral, but they virtually learn all behaviours, beliefs and tendencies from the social environment. Consequently, acts such as substance abuse among female youths as the products of learning resulting from intimate interaction between members of society.

Equally, the finding of the study revealed that frustration is another factor responsible for female youths involvement in substance abuse. This finding is in accord with the work of Dambazau (1999) who linked the occurrence of deviant acts such as drug abuse to poverty and unemployment which he argued created an environment which bred frustration and increased stress which resulted to feelings of hopelessness, especially in a country where there is no provision for social welfare in order to give temporary relief to the poor and unemployed. This finding also supports the view of Merton (1957) who asserts that deviant act such as substance abuse is associated with social strain (frustration) faced by some members of the society due to their difficulties in finding access to legitimate means of attaining structural goals.

Analysis of data above depicts that substance abuse among female is determined by some factors such as unemployment, loneliness, life frustration, desire to get material wealth (money) etc, both of which are products of social structure of the society. Thus it underscores Merton's structural strain theory which maintained that, deviant acts like substance abuse among female youths are result of inconsistencies between the societal cultural goals and the prescribed means of attaining structural goals.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Female youths in the study areas have been found to be involved in the acts of abusing drugs and other related substances. The existence of these acts is common among both the married and unmarried females, but the unmarried constitutes the majority. Among the major commonly abused substances are pharmaceutical drug substances such as cough



syrup with codeine, Roche, Rafenol, Shisha tablets etc. Other locally processed substances abused by the female youths include: Indian hemp, local beer (*burukutu, ogogoro, gyan babba juji, makarhho and duma*), *babba Juji*, lizard excreta and likes. Many factors have been identified to be responsible for female youths involvement in substance abuse, among which are peer group influences, poor parental care, frustration, availability of the substances abuse etc. In order to address this problem of substance abuse, the following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

Parents, guardians and caregivers should take their responsibilities of giving their children/wards proper socialization serious. This can be achieved by ensuring that their children and wards are constantly monitored to ensure that they associates and or make friends with good peers.

Government should introduce into the existing school syllabuses “Drugs Education” at all levels of schools. This will go a long way in creating awareness among the children and young person’s on the dangers associated with substance abuse.

Government must take measures on the indiscriminate sales of the identified substances that are prone to be abused by the youths. This can be achieved by classifying those substances as controlled and some as illegal and as such should be ban from sale and abuse.

Religious/traditional leaders and NGOs should complement law enforcement agencies by embarking on serious enlightenment campaigns, preaching and admonishing in their places of worships against the dangers of substance abuse using print and electronic media in public places.

References

- Abdullahi, S. (2003). The use of traditional drugs amongst the youth: The case of “Gadagi”, in A. Garba, (Eds). *Youth and drug abuse in Nigeria: Strategies for Counseling*,
- Abdullahi, S. (1999). Drug dependence in Kano: An explanatory analysis. *Bayero Journal of Art, Social and Management Sciences*, (6) 1-15.
- Abdullahi, S. (2003). Youth deviance and traditional authority in Kano metropolitan: Some issues. A paper presented at the 40th anniversary of the Emirship of His Royal Highness, Alhaji (DR) Ado Bayero; the Emir of Kano *Management and Control* (433-449) Kano: Matasa Press.
- Anumonye, A. (1990). Drug use among young people in Lagos, Nigeria. *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 32; 39 – 45
- Bukarti, A.B. (2009). *Drug abuse and societal destruction: A Nigerian perspective*. Lagos: Islamic Heritage Foundation, Nigeria.
- Dambazau, A. B. (1999). *Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Kaduna: NDA Press.
- Dukku, A. M. (2012). The availability-proneness theory: The Gadagi experience in Kano. *Bayero Journal of Social and Management Science*, 1(3), 90-103.
- Ebie, J. C. (1988). Overview of demand reduction. Hand Book of the Africa Training Courses on Drug Dependence, 27-42.



- Eneh, A. U. & Stanley, P. C. (2004). Pattern of substance use among secondary schoolstudents in Rivers State. *Nigerian Journal of Medicine*, 13 (1)5, 36 -39.
- Haladu, A.A. (2003). Outreach strategies for curbing drug abuse among out-of-school youth in Nigeria: A challenge for community based organization (CBOS), in A.Garba,(Eds.), *Youth and drug abuse in Nigeria: Strategies for counseling, Management and Control*. Kano: Matasa Press.
- Haruna, K. (2002). Kontagora Emirate and its local administrative set up since 1911. *KedaNewsletter*, 1(1), 3-6
- Magaji, A.A. (2012a). Explanation of drug abuse among youth in Argungu Township, Kebbi State. Unpublished M.Sc. Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Sociology, Bayero University, Kano.
- Magaji, A. A. (2012b). Substance abuse among undergraduate students of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. *Sokoto Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2(1), 136-147
- Merton, R. (1947). Social Structure and Anomie in Johnson, N., Leonard, S. & Marvin, W. *Sociology of crime and delinquency*. (Eds.) John Wiley & Sons Inc. New York.
- Musa, A. A (2012). Substance abuse: A study of benelyn consumption among females in Tarauni Local Government Area, Kano State. *Journal of Sociological Studies*, 1(3), 11-30.
- Odebiyi, A. (1990). Self-medication with prescriptive drugs: A pattern of health behaviour amongst students in a Nigerian university. *Journal Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, 7(3), 120-136
- Radda, S. I. (2006). Drug abuse and its consequences on the youth in, *Essays on Local Government Administration: Fostering Better Service Delivery, Record Keeping Accounting and Empowerment at the Local Level*. Shehu Dalhatu, (Eds) Benchmark publishers
- Radda, S. I. (1994). A Sociological analysis of alcohol consumption among youth in Katsina. Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis Submitted to Sociology Dept. BUK
- Social Science Association of Nigeria (2002). *Interdisciplinary methodologies in social science .Abuja*. A publication by United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization.
- Shehu, A. (2012). *The youth and effects of drug abuse*. Daylight Global Resources, Sokoto, Nigeria.
- Siro, A. A. (2008). A study of drug abuse among the youth in metropolitan Kano. An unpublished M.Sc. Dissertation Submitted to Department of Sociology, Bayero University, Kano.
- Smart, R. G. (1991). World trends in alcohol consumption. *World Health Forum*, (12), 99-103.
- Sutherland, E. H. (1939). Differential Association, in Johnson, N., Leonard, S. & Marvin, W. *Sociology of crime and delinquency*. (Eds.) John Wiley & Sons Inc. New York.
- Uzoka, A. F. (1990). *Psychological aspect of drug abuse*. Lagos: Jafana Ventures



Watt, F. (1997). A Journal on drug abuse viewpoints, in Musa, A. A. Substance abuse: A study of benelyn consumption among females in Tarauni Local Government Area, Kano State. *Journal of Sociological Studies*, 1(3), 11-30.

Wilfred, S. (2009). Drug intake and pathogenesis: The case of the youths, counseling agents and care givers. *Benue journal of sociology*, 2(1), 11-28

APPENDICES

Matrix I: Commonly Abused Substances

Female interviewees	Codein syrups like: Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkaline, Tuxil, Cofe-N., Roche tables, Rafenol, Tramadol, diazepam (D ⁵) Emzol-5-tablets, Magadon, Alcohol, Indian hemp (Cannabis Sativa), Shisha, Hakin Maye, local beer like <i>Ogogoro, Burukutu</i> , Palm wine <i>Bummi, Giyan Makarho, Babba Juji, Duma</i> , Kurkura, lizard etc.
Law enforcement officials	Pharmaceutical drug substances: Cough syrups with codeine (Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkaline, Tuxil, Cofe-Netc.), others are Roche tables, Rafenol, Tramadol, <i>Farin malam</i> (a tablet usually used by the psychiatric patient), diazepam (D ⁵) emzol-5-tablets, Alcohol, Cigarettes, Snuff (both Nigeria made and the one usually imported from Ghana), local substances includes: Indian hemp (Cannabis Sativa), lizard etc.
Sellers of substances of abuse (industrially & industrially processed)	Cough syrups with codeine like Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkaline, Tuxil, Cofe-Netc, Roche tables, Rafenol, Tramadol, <i>Farin malam</i> valian 5 (D ⁵) emzol-5-tablets, Alcohol, Cigarettes, Indian hemp (Cannabis Sativa), lizard, local beer like <i>Ogogoro, Burukutu</i> , Palm wine etc.

Matrix II: Access to Substances of Abuse

Female interviewees	Patent medicine stores, local vendors/itinerant hawkers, friends, boys friends who use drug and other dealers in town
Law enforcement officials	Patent medicine stores and local vendors for pharmaceutical drugs, Jamaica, Sharp corner joints, Sagi area for Indian hemp, friends, boy's friends.
Sellers of substances of abuse (industrially & industrially processed)	Patent medicine shops, friends, boyfriends who use drugs, other dealers in town for the locally processed substances.

Matrix III: Predisposing Factors

Female interviewees	Peer group influence/friends, associating with friends/boys friends who use drug substance, life frustration, frustration as a result of betrayal of love from boyfriends, attempt forced marriage, poor parental control, pleasure seeking, availability of the substances, Government failure to address the problem, corruption and in- sincerity of some law enforcement officials.
Law enforcement officials	Feel among/experimental curiosity, peer group influence, lack of parental guide, availability of the substances of abuse in the town. Frustration from inability for some of them to get husband's to marry poverty, unemployment.
Sellers of substances of abuse (locally and industrially processed)	Poor or lack of parental care, peer group influence, frustration, availability of substances of abuse in the town, closeness to where substances of abuse are sold and proximity to where abuse are done