

## Perceived Prevalence of Drug Substance Abuse among Undergraduates of Agriculture in Osun State University, Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Agricultural Development

<sup>1</sup>Idris-Adeniyi, K.M., <sup>2</sup>Adelokun, I.A. and <sup>3</sup>Aderinoye-Abdulwahab, S.A.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development  
Osun State University, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development  
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development  
University of Ilorin, Nigeria

**Corresponding Author:** [kawtharalabi@yahoo.com](mailto:kawtharalabi@yahoo.com), [cakaothar.idris-adeniyi@uniosun.edu.ng](mailto:cakaothar.idris-adeniyi@uniosun.edu.ng)

### Abstract

*Drug abuse is a cancerous cell eating deep into the present and invariably the future of the nation. Youths are the most vulnerable and are deeply involved in this menace, pervading every fibre of the society. This study, therefore investigated the prevalence of drug substance abuse among undergraduates of agriculture in Osun State University. Two stage sampling procedure was utilized to draw sample for the study. First stage involved purposive sampling of 300 level and 500 level students across the four departments in the Faculty of Agriculture, and 40% of students in the two levels were randomly selected in the second stage giving a total sample size of ninety respondents. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit relevant data from the students. The data were summarized using descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency and standard deviation. Results reveals that majority (59.1%) of the students were male, while 66.7% had single parenting background. Means of age and monthly feeding allowance were 22.5 years and ₦16,000, respectively. About 37.5% belonged to no religious group on campus. Results further shows that most (82.8%) of the sampled respondents had no family history of drug abuse though 18.9% were found abusing drugs. Drugs commonly abused included codeine ( $\bar{x} = 1.449$ ), alcohol ( $\bar{x} = 1.382$ ), marijuana ( $\bar{x} = 1.329$ ) and tramadol ( $\bar{x} = 1.295$ ). Over half (58.8%) of the drug abusers were influenced by the university environment, while 41.2% had abused drugs for 3 to 4 years. Students abuse drugs for experimental curiosity (26.7%), availability of drug substances (22.2%) and psycho-emotional stress relief (22.2%) among other perceived reasons. Respondents had strong perception for the facts that poor parent upbringing can make students abuse drugs (239), students abuse drugs to boost their intelligence (236) and peer pressure can force students into drug abuse (231). Nevertheless, 65.6% of abusers were willing to quit drug abuse. The study concluded that a significant proportion of the sampled respondents abused drugs and recommended that the university management, religious bodies on campus and other relevant organizations endeavour to organise sensitization campaigns on the adverse effects of drug abuse on healthy and productive living, on a regular basis.*

**Keywords:** Prevalence, Drug Substance Abuse, Youths, Sustainable Development

### Introduction

The menace of drug abuse, which has been on the increase in recent years especially among the youths, has been one of the challenges facing the world

today and also threatening our future survival. Drug abuse implies excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to the medically or

culturally accepted patterns. Abdullahi (2009) described drug abuse as the use of drugs to the extent that interferes with the health and social function of an individual. In essence, drug abuse may be said to be an arbitrary over dependence or misuse of any drug or other related substances with or without a prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioners. It can also be viewed as the unlawful overdose in the use of drug(s) for personal satisfaction. Odejide (2000) warned that drug abusers who exhibit symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, behaviour changes, fatigue and loss or increase in appetite should be treated by medical experts and counsellors to save them from deadly diseases. This explains that drug abuse could have grave effects on users. Virtually any substance whose ingestion can result in a euphoric ("high") feeling can be abused; however, the most common types of abused drugs according to NAFDAC as cited by Haladu (2003) are categorized as stimulants, hallucinogens, narcotics, sedatives, miscellaneous, and tranquilizers. Various causes of drug abuse could include experimental curiosity, especially among youths; peer group influence; lack of parental/guardian supervision; personality problems due to socio-economic conditions of family; the need for strength for undertaking long hours of work. Other causes include; uncensored availability of the drugs; low self-esteem and depression as a result of various challenges faced. According to Adolescents Health Information Project AHIP (2001), drug abusers exhibit varying signs and symptoms ranging from poor physical, emotional and psychological coordination, indifference to good hygiene, awkward physical appearance, body aura and behavioural pattern, use of cover up scents, downward troll in school or work place performance, chronic lying, dishonesty, cheating and stealing, trouble with law enforcement agencies, change of friends to reduced motivation, energy,

self-discipline and self-esteem etc. Drug abuse has various effects on its victims. Some of these effects are direct outcome of the signs and symptoms earlier highlighted. Mba (2008) identified numerous negative effects of drug abuse on the body chemistry to include but not limited to physical problems like liver cirrhosis, pancreatic, peptic ulcer, tuberculosis, hypertension, neurological disorder, cardiac deficits, psychiatric problems, loss of appetite, nausea, sinusitis, bronchitis, cancer, strokes, and heart attack, irritability, exaggerated self-confidence, sleeplessness, and psychiatric complications, anemia, damaged kidney and stomach bleeding, poor perception, cough, drowsiness and sleep, unconsciousness and even death.

The African youth charter recognizes youth as any people between 18 - 35 years of age. However, Federal Ministry of Youths and Sports in Nigeria recently described youths to be any Nigerian between the ages of 15 and 29 years in the Revised National Youth Policy of 2019 (Punch newspaper, 2019). According to the National Youth Policy (2009), advancements in information and communication technology exposes youth to a variety of values and ways of thinking which differ from that of the previous generations. The impact of drug abuse among Nigerian youths has been associated with the loss of our societal values and ideals (Aluede, 2001). This is evident as the youths are seen all around with very low aspiration for a brighter future, some being used as political thugs; some are into prostitution, while others are all across police cells and prison yards as a result of various degrees of crimes. Melis *et al.*, (2005) explained that drugs also alter the normal biological and psychological functioning of the body, especially the central nervous system, leaving a lot of young and bright minds unhealthy and physically unsound. The United Nation World Drug Report of 2016 estimated that 1 in 20 adults, or a

quarter of a billion people between the ages of 15 and 64 years, used at least one psychoactive drug in 2014. Of these, over 29 million people worldwide suffer from drug use disorders (World drug report, 2016). Degenhardt *et al.*, (2008) reported that among the third world countries, Nigeria ranks the highest user of dangerous drugs such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, benzodiazepines, cocaine and opioids. Oshodi *et al.*, (2010) stated that literature has shown a steady increase in the prevalence of drug use and its associated consequences within the last three decades.

Majority of the Nigerian youths ignorantly depend on one form of drug or the other (such as tobacco, indian hemp, cocaine, heroine, alcohol, ephedrine, caffeine etc. for their various daily activities (Oshikoya and Alli, 2006). Some were introduced to the drugs by friends, family members and peers unsuspectingly and they have gone so deep that they find it almost impossible to do without it. This has resulted in serious emotional, physiological and psychological defects while also affecting severely the potentials and talents that would have added to the growth and development of the nation. Despite the efforts of different organizations to reduce the problems caused by drug abuse, students in tertiary institutions have assumed to be the most susceptible to drug use among different youth groups in Nigeria. This is because they enjoy and misuse a level of freedom available to them as a result of living outside of their parents and/or guardian's watch.

The theoretical framework for this study is found in the social bond theory propounded by Hirschi (1969) who assumed that humans have a natural tendency to delinquency, distinguished four different forms of social bonds as attachment, commitment, involvement and belief and emphasized their influence on social control. Attachment which is the most relevant to this study describes the

strength of the bonds and relationships that exist with an individual's social environment. The relationship with parents is particularly important, but other institutions and actors such as school or friends also play a role. The attachment to the circle of friends can either promote or prevent deviance depending on what the circle of friends represent. Therefore, this theory has practically mirrored the impacts of parenting and peer influence on the conduct of individuals as social entities. Nigerian youths, are symbol of hope for the country and particularly undergraduates of agriculture have remained the major hope for the much desired sustainable agricultural development driven by innovation and technology. The incidence of drug use amongst these youths has continued to dash this hope, and if not duly curtailed may lead to national disaster. Hence, a comprehensive empirical study on the prevalence of drug abuse among undergraduates of agriculture was necessitated with a view to making necessary recommendations. Specifically, this study addressed the following objectives: described the socioeconomic characteristics of the selected undergraduates of agriculture; examined the kinds and frequency of drugs abused among respondents; assessed the perceived reasons that predispose respondents to drug abuse as well as students' perception of drug abuse.

### **Methodology**

This Study was carried out at the College of Agriculture of Osun State University, Nigeria. Osun State University was founded in the year 2007 and began academic programmes during the 2007/2008 academic session. The University runs a multi-campus system specifically having six campuses distributed across the six administrative zones of Osun State. College of Agriculture is situated at the ancient town of Ejigbo, and comprises of Departments of Agricultural Economics and Extension,

Agronomy, Animal Science, and Fisheries & Wildlife Management as at the time of conducting this study. The targeted population for this study included male and female undergraduates of the four Departments in the College of Agriculture, during the 2017/1018 academic session. Two-stage sampling procedure was employed to select sample for the study. First stage involved the purposive selection of 300 level and 500 level students across all the Departments in the College of Agriculture to give a total of 252 students while the second stage involved simple random sampling of 40% of the 252 students to give a total sample size of 101 respondents in all, but only 90 questionnaires were recovered giving 89.1% response rate. Socioeconomic characteristics were measured at the appropriate levels, the commonly abused drugs in literature were listed from which respondents were asked to choose and indicate frequency of abuse, probable reasons for drug abuse as established in literature were also listed for respondents to choose from while weighted scores were computed (by multiplying the frequencies of respondents by the scores assigned to their responses for each statement and adding the total scores for each statement altogether) to rank the perceptual statements in their order of strength.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Socioeconomic characteristics**

Table 2 shows that more than half (54.4%) of the sampled undergraduates of agriculture were in the age range of 19-23 years with a mean age of  $22.5 \pm 3.4$  years. This is in consonance with Onofa, Adamson, Ighoroje and Majekodunmi (2016) who reported the mean age of students of tertiary institutions in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria as  $23.6 \pm 2.6$  years. Male students constituted 59.1% of the sample, 40.5% of them were Christians, while 66.7% were being raised by single parent. Lateef and Ibrahim (2016) affirmed that the consistent rise in

drug abuse among youths is attributable mainly to psychological and social problems which include relief from anxiety, parenting style, peer pressure and accessibility to drugs. Results further reveal the mean monthly feeding allowance of the respondents as  $\text{₦}16,000 \pm 5,567$ . This amount is somewhat on the high side when compared with the prevailing minimum wage of  $\text{₦}18,000$  in the country at the time of data collection, thereby predisposing respondents to drug use since they can afford it. Table 2 also reveals that 34.1% of the respondents were members of Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN) on campus, 28.41% of them were members of University Joint Christian Campus Fellowship (UJCCF), while 37.5% did not belong to any religious group. Result in the Table further shows that only 16.7% of the respondents had family history of drugs abuse while 18.9% of the students were abusers of drugs. This shows that a significant number of the students abused one form of drug or the other. Results in Table 3 further reveal that 52.9% of the drug abusers started using drugs after gaining admission to the university, while 47.06% were into drug abuse before they were admitted to the university. This result affirms the report of Ogbueghu and Ugwu (2016) that there was a significant relationship between university environment and drug abuse among their sampled university students in Anambra state, Nigeria. Meanwhile, the drug abusers among the sampled respondents in this study have been involved in drug use for over four years on the average.

### **Kinds and frequencies of drugs abused**

Result in Table 3 shows that 41.2% of the students abusing drugs took codeine once in two days, tramadol once a week (23.5%), while they consumed both rohypnol and marijuana once in a week (58.8%). Furthermore, they took cigarette daily (29.4%), alcohol once in a week (52.9%), while they took kolanut and

nescafe once in a week (29.4%). The most abused drugs included codeine (1.45), alcohol (1.38) and marijuana (1.33). Overall, codeine (1.45) was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> as the most abused drug followed by alcohol (1.38) and marijuana (1.33).

#### **Perceived reasons for drug abuse**

Result in Table 4 shows that 26.7% of the respondents believed that experimental curiosity was the main reason why students abuse drugs while 22.2% apiece of the respondents believed that availability of drugs and need to relieve emotional and psychological stress predisposes students to drug use respectively. Furthermore, 18.9% and 17.8% of the respondents perceived personal problem/socioeconomic condition and need for energy to work for longer hours as the reason for drug abuse in the study area. About 16.7% of the respondents believed that parental negligence was responsible for drug abuse while 15.7% adduced personal/socio-economic problems as the reason for drug abuse, and 14.4% of them upheld prevention of drug use withdrawal syndrome as the reason for continuous drug use.

#### **Respondents' perception of drug substance abuse**

As revealed in Table 5, respondents had strongest perception for the fact that poor parents' upbringing makes students abuse drugs. This is closely followed by students take drugs to increase intelligence (236), peer pressure/influence can force students into drug abuse (231) and ready availability of drug substance can lead to abuse (229) which were subsequently ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, respectively among other perceptual statements. This result is in tandem with Ogbueghu and Ugwu (2016), who reported that poor teachers/parental example and improper upbringing could be a factor in students' abuse of drugs.

#### **Respondents' future plan of action to end drug abuse**

Result in Table 6 shows that, majority (64.7%) of the drug abusers were opened to stop the act in the nearest future, 23.5% had no plan to end drug use, while the remaining 11.8% of the respondents were undecided about stopping drug abuse. This result suggests that majority of the sampled drug abusers planned to end drug use in the nearest future even though appreciable numbers had no plan to quit drug use, while some were undecided. Hence, efforts should be made by all concerned stakeholders to reinforce the decision of some abusers to quit, while students should be continuously educated on the danger of drug abuse because once the act is started, it becomes very difficult to quit. Kiiru (2004) suggested that appropriate intervention, health education efforts, support and referral system should be established in tertiary institutions to help curb this habit and counseling programmes should be incorporated into the Universities health care system

#### **Conclusion and recommendations**

Gainful engagement of well trained and adequately skilled responsible and responsive graduates in different facets of life is pivotal to sustainable development. The study established that majority of the sampled undergraduates of agriculture were male with an average age of  $22.5 \pm 3.4$  years who were mainly raised by single parents with an average monthly allowance of ₦16,000  $\pm$  5,567. An appreciable proportion of the respondents were involved in drug substances abuse most especially codeine, alcohol, and marijuana while the university environment influenced their drug use. Meanwhile, respondents' topmost perceived reason for drug abuse was found as experimental curiosity while they strongly believed that poor parental upbringing can predispose students to drug use. In a bid to achieve the much desired sustainable agricultural development, the study proposed the following recommendations based on major findings:

- i. Parents/guardians should limit the amount of cash at the disposal of the students but rather give them bulk of food items and other daily needs to school
- ii. Parents/guardian should always be close to their wards as they approach adolescence and counsel them regularly on the evils of drug abuse.
- iii. Drug abuse and its attendant consequences should be included in the curriculum of general courses in universities and other higher institutions while motivational speakers and personnel from the drug law enforcement agency should be out-sourced at periodic intervals to engage students on the consequences of drug abuse.
- iv. Religious bodies on campus should continue to appeal to the senses of the students on the evils of drug abuse, from spiritual points of view while emerging social media are also utilized to raise students' awareness on the risks of drug abuse.
- v. Benefits of healthy lifestyle choices and skills needed in making responsible decisions to resist drug abuse among students should be emphasized in periodic training programmes at the institutions of higher learning.

### References

- Aluede, O. O. (2001). Factors influencing student unrest in tertiary institutions in Edo state of Nigeria. *Educational Research Quarterly*. 24(3) 10-26
- Hirschi, Travis (1969): Causes of delinquency. 3. print. Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press
- Kiiru, D. (2004). Youth in Peril: Alcohol and Drug abuse in Kenya, NACADA 2004
- Kobiowu, S. V. (2006). "The social and academic implications of drug abuse among undergraduates: A case study of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria", *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*. 11(1), 661-68. *Nigeria National Youth Policy 2009*. <https://www.k4health.org/toolkits/youthpolicy/nigeria-national-youth-policy-and-strategic-plan-action>
- Lateef, K.O. and Ibrahim, D.O. (2016). Social and Psychological Determinants of Drug Abuse among In-School Adolescents In Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Volume 6, Issue 10, October 2016 332 ISSN 2250-3153
- Mba, A. I. (2008). "Counselling techniques for the rehabilitation of drug addicts in Nigeria, *The Counsellor*, 18(1) 10-18.
- Melis, M., Spiga S., and Diana, M. (2005) The dopamine hypothesis of drug addiction: hypodopaminergic state. *Int Rev Neurobiol*. ;63:101–154.
- Ogbueghu, S. N. and Ugwu I. O. (2016). Drug substance abuse amongst university students in Anambra State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Applied, Management and Social Sciences (GOJAMSS)*; Vol.12 77 – 87 (ISSN: 2276 – 9013).
- Onofa, L. U., Adamson, T., Ighoroje, M. and Majekodunmi, M.

- (2016). Prevalence and Patterns of Drug Abuse among Students of Tertiary Institutions in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria *Interjntional Journal of Psychatry*.
- Osikoya, K. A. and Alli, A. (2006). Perception of drug abuse among Nigerian undergraduates. *World Journal of Medical Sciences*. 1(2), 133-139.
- Radda, S. I. (2009), "Youth Counter-Culture: Studies in Cultural Sociology," in Abdullahi, A, S, *et. al*, (eds). *Foludex printers Ibadan*.
- The Punch Newspaper (2019). Nigeria's new youth age classification. Published May 28, 2019.  
<https://punchng.com/nigerias-new-youth-age-classification> (15/02/2020)
- Yusuf, U. L., Gazali, W. A., and Abdullahi, M. (2016). Drug abuse among youths in Nigeria: Implications to National Development. Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Maiduguri. Retrieved from: <http://pdf.semanticscholar.org> (18<sup>th</sup> December 2018).

**Table 1: Frequency distribution of respondents by Department & Level**

Departments	300L	500L	Total selected	Recovered
Agric. Economics & Extension	45	47	37	36
Agronomy	31	23	22	21
Animal Science	32	28	24	16
Fisheries & Wildlife Mgt.	30	16	18	17
<b>Total Sample Size</b>	<b>55.4 %</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>90</b>

**Field survey; 2018****Response rate = 89.1%****Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to socioeconomic characteristics**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
<b>Age (years)</b>			
19-23	49	54.4	<b>22.5± 3.4years</b>
24-28	34	37.8	
29-33	07	7.8	
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	52	59.1	
Female	38	42.2	
<b>Religion</b>			
Christianity	36	40.0	
Islam	45	50.0	
Traditional	9	10.0	
<b>Parental Background</b>			
Single parenting	60	66.7	
Dual parenting	30	33.3	
<b>Monthly Allowance (₦)</b>			
1000-10000	38	42.2	

11000-20000	26	28.9	<b>₦16,000±5,567</b>
21000-30000	13	14.4	
31000-40000	5	5.6	
41000-50000	4	4.4	
> 50000	4	4.4	
<b>Membership of religious groups</b>			
MSSN	30	33.3	
UJCCF	25	27.8	
None	35	38.9	
<b>History of drug abuse</b>			
Family history	15	16.7	
No family history	75	83.3	
<b>Proportion of drug abusers in the sample</b>			
Non-abusers of drugs	73	81.1	
Abusers of drugs	17	18.9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Inception of drug use by abusers</b>			
Before admission	08	47.1	
After admission	09	52.9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Duration of drug abuse (years)</b>			
1-4	11	11.8	<b>4.4±2.1years</b>
5-8	04	23.5	
9-12	02	5.9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Field survey; 2018.****Table 3: Distribution according to kinds and frequencies of drugs abused (n=17)**

S/N	Drugs	Daily	Once in two days	Twice in a week	Once in a week	Mean
1.	Codeine	3(17.6%)	7(41.2%)	1(5.9%)	5(29.4%)	1.45
2.	Tramadol	0(0.0%)	2(11.8%)	1(5.9%)	4(23.5%)	1.30
3.	Rohypnol	2(11.8%)	1(5.9%)	5(29.4%)	10(58.8%)	1.27
4.	Marijuana	2(11.8%)	1(5.9%)	5(29.4%)	10(58.8%)	1.33
5.	Cigarette	5(29.4%)	2(11.8%)	0(0.00%)	5(29.4%)	1.19
6.	Alcohol	4(23.5%)	3(17.6%)	5(29.4%)	9(52.9%)	1.38
7.	Kolanut	2(11.8%)	2(11.8%)	0(0.00%)	5(29.4%)	1.26
8.	Nescafe	1(5.9%)	2(11.8%)	0(0.00%)	5(29.4%)	1.20

**Field survey, 2018**

\*Multiple Responses

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents based on perceived reasons for drug abuse**

S/N	Reasons	Freq.	Percentage
1.	Parental negligence/deprivation	15	16.7
2.	Peer pressure	11	12.2
3.	Experimental curiosity	24	26.7
4.	Personal problem/socio-economic condition	17	18.9
5.	Need for energy to work for long hours	16	17.8
6.	Availability of drugs/easy access	20	22.2
7.	Emotional and psychological stress	20	22.2

8.	Prevention of drug use withdrawal syndrome	13	14.4
----	--	----	------

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Weight	Ran
1.	Poor parents upbringing can make student abuse drugs	20	29	31	10	239	1 <sup>st</sup>
2.	Students take drugs to increase intelligence	25	31	21	13	236	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3.	Peer pressure/influence can force students into drug abuse	14	37	25	14	231	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4.	Ready availability of drug substance can lead to abuse	16	35	21	18	229	4 <sup>th</sup>
5.	Most student take drug out of curiosity	15	37	18	20	227	5 <sup>th</sup>
6.	Students takes drug out of frustration	18	29	24	19	226	6 <sup>th</sup>
7.	Student abuse drug because they have a lot of pocket money	10	32	29	19	213	7 <sup>th</sup>
8.	Academic failure could predispose students to drug abuse	12	26	28	24	206	8 <sup>th</sup>

Field survey, 2018

\*Multiple responses

**Table 5: Distribution of the respondents by perception of drug and substance abuse**

Field survey; 2018 \*Multiple responses

**Table 6: Distribution of respondents based on action plan to stop drug abuse**

Future action plan	Frequency	Percentage
To stop/end drug abuse	11	64.7
To keep abusing drugs	04	23.5
Undecided	02	11.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Field survey, 2018.