



Family Variables and Tendencies of Drug Abuse among Undergraduate Students in Africa: The Case of the University of Calabar, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined family variables and tendencies of drugs abuse among undergraduate students in Africa, with focus on the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria. The Ex post facto design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 1,324 undergraduate student mainly from Faculty of Education. A sample of 200 undergraduate students was selected from Faculty of Education. The instrument for data collection was family variables and undergraduate tendencies of drugs abuse in University of Calabar “(FUUTDAU)”. The instrument was validated by experts in Educational foundation, Guidance and Counselling, and experts in measurement and evaluation, faculty of Education. The instrument comprises of 25 items. Oneway analysis of variance was used as a statistical tool for data analysis from the findings, it was revealed that family variable plays a positive role towards undergraduate tendencies for drugs abuse. From the finding of the study, it was recommended that among others that our Rich Parent should also devote their time, without allowing their financial status to influence their wards negatively.

Keywords: Family Variables, Drugs, Abuse, Undergraduate, Students, Guidance and Counseling.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Esuabana, S. B. (2019). Family Variables and Tendencies of Drug Abuse among Undergraduate Students in Africa: The Case of the University of Calabar, Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 12(4), 448-455.

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INTRODUCTION

The family can have a powerful influence on shaping the attitudes, values and behavior of children. The family is viewed as the basic source of strength, providing nurturance, and support for its members as well as ensuring stability. The family may be seen as protecting and sustaining both strong and weak members. The family may be viewed as a mechanism for family members to interact with larger society, such as peer groups, schools, work colleagues and supervisors. The family may also be seen as an important point of intervention

that is a natural organizational unit for transferring and building social and community values. In the same vein the family may be a source of tension, problem and pathology. Stability of relationship, environment and expectations are powerful forces in helping people manage their lives, particularly important children, teenagers and young adults. The problem of balancing discipline and control of children with nurturing support to encourage their exploration, understanding of the world and self — realization may be complicated by drug abuse problems (UNDCP, 1995).

Drug abuse also known as substance abuse means harmful use of alcohol or other drugs. It is a poorly adaptive behavior pattern, lasting more than one month, in which a person continues to use a substance after knowingly being harmed by it or uses it repeatedly in a hazardous situation. Abuse can lead to substance dependence (addiction) which may be physiological or psychological, or both, and is likely to continue into adulthood (Papalia, Old & Feldman, 2001). The broader context of addictive substances includes tobacco, alcohol and solvents. All these ‘substances have several important characteristics in common. They alter the function of the human brain and have an impact on behavior. The most widely used addictive substances alcohol and tobacco are harmful with extensive damage to the individual, family and the community (Harrisson & Gfroerer, 2002) According to Fatoye and Morakinyo (2002) in their study of drug abuse among secondary school students in rural and urban communities in south Western Nigeria found out that the most commonly abused drugs were salicylate analgesics (48.7%), stimulants (20.9%), antibiotics (16.6%) alcohol (13.4%), hypnotic sedatives (8.9%) and tobacco (3.0%) They equally found out that the current and lifetime use of alcohol and tobacco was significantly more common among the males and among those in the rural school for the majority of the students, initiation into drug use started at a very early age (under 14 years) and from parental influenced Otieno and Ofulla (2009) showed in their study that majority of students who were abusing drugs were aged between 16-18 years. They also indicated by the age of 15 years some of the respondents were already abusing drugs.

Parental Factors Associated with Drug Abuse

Collins (2004) points out three factors that can affect the likelihood of alcohol to include:

- **Parental models:** How parents behave often influences the subsequent behaviour of children when parents drink excessively or abuse drugs, children sometimes vow to completely abstain. More often however they follow the parental example. It has been estimated that 40 to 60 percent of children of alcoholic parents become alcoholics themselves.
- **Parental Attitudes:** Parental permissiveness and parental rejection can both stimulate chemical use and abuse. When parents do not care whether or not their children drink alcohol and do not show any concerns about the dangers of drugs or alcohol abuse, then misuse and abuse often follows.
- **Cultural Expectations:** If a culture has clear guidelines about the use of alcohol or drugs abuse, it is less likely for the children to abuse it. Some Nigerian cultures are in tolerant of drunkenness, since drunkenness is the norm in such traditions, then conditions are set up which may lead many younger ones into drug and alcohol abuse.

In the same vein a report of the San Diego County Grand Jury stated that “it is difficult for children to say no to drugs and alcohol when they find that their parents and relatives are using them” Sander (2004) quotes the sentiments of a teenager who Leonard, Elden, Wong, Zucker, Puttler, Fitzgerald, Hussong, Chassin and Mudar who said, “My parents drink booze

every time they go out to dinner or have friends over so I drink and do dope what' s the difference”.

McDowell and Hosteller (1996) posited that dysfunctional family environment can influence a young person's abuse of drugs. Leonard, Elden, Wong, Zucker, Puttler, Fitzgerald, Hussong, Chassin and Mudar (2000) asserted that limited parental control can influence children drug abuse. Also Waidron (1998) opined that parents drug use can influence adolescents directly through a genetic predisposition and through modeling the behaviour, it can also influence adolescents indirectly through impaired parenting and limited control when the parent is under the influence of substance. Broody, Ge, Katz and Arias (2000) posited that parents' attitudes toward alcohol and drug use, and especially father's attitudes towards alcohol and drug use are associated closely with young children's attitude toward alcohol and drug use.

Fletcher and Jefferies (1999) posited that parenting style can influence drug abuse. Authoritative parenting style that is warm, nurturing interactions combined with age - appropriate structure and limits is associate with decreased likelihood of drug abuse in adolescents; while permissive parenting style can influence adolescents drug abuse Teichman and Kefir (2000) posited that Parental rejection is associated with adolescents favourable attitudes towards both substance use and abuse. They went further to state that adolescents who feel rejected by their fathers are at even greater risk for substance use and abuse than adolescents who feel rejected by their mothers.

Family environment, particularly, parenting deficits such as inconsistency, harsh discipline, marital conflict, financial constrain, and ritual disruption and conflicted siblings relations are factors than can influence adolescents drug abuse (Phares, 2003). Otieno and Ofulla (2009) in their study of 458 students of Kasimu town revealed that students from low social economic class of Kisumu town were more involved with drug abuse 28.0 % compared to those from high socio - economic class areas of the town 21.5 %. Their study also showed that family influence has an influence on drug abusers in that students who abused drugs came from families where other family members abuse drugs. These included immediate family members' alike parents and siblings. In the same vein, Lafinhan and Arowolo (2002) carried out a study among students of selected secondary schools in Ile-Ife, Osun State of Nigeria; they found that the reasons for drug abuse among students were that cigarette and alcoholism were common problems among students, lack of parental care and too much freedom contributed to the problem of drug abuse. Students whose parents had television sets, radio and video were more involved in the abuse of drugs.

Behavioral Implications of Drug Abuse among Young People

Drug abuse by adolescents has potentially serious negative ramifications, within the family environment, adolescents who abuse drugs often experience poor parent—child communication, poor parental supervision and discipline and interpersonal conflict with their parents and siblings (Gilvarry, 2000). Within the peer network, adolescent substance abusers often are involved with development peer group and are encouraged in conflict with peers. (Dishion, McCord & Poulin, 1999). Within the larger community adolescent behaviours are often involved delinquent behaviours and illegal activities (Gilvarry, 2000). Within the school environment, adolescent drug abusers often show inadequate academic performance and increased levels of emotional and behavioural problems (BuksteinaVanttaselt, 1995). According to Nwachukwu and Ekanem (2007), the following are risk factors in adolescents as activators of alcohols and other drug abuse (a) positive family history of alcohol (b) Parental loss of control (c) Poor family moral values and (d) tolerance of alcohol and cigarettes use in the family

Statement of the Problem

The increasing numbers of young alcoholics and drug abusers have risen to the level of causing education sector much concern. The problem become more sever when students start relying on drug and think that they need it to escape from problems at school. This problem constitutes one of the greatest factors that hinder educational excellent in today's schools. The following are risk factors in adolescents as activators of alcohols and other drug abuse (a) positive family history of alcohol (b) Parental loss of control (c) Poor family moral values and (d) tolerance of alcohol and cigarettes use in the family.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study was to examine family variables and undergraduates tendencies of drugs abuse in university of Calabar. To achieve its aim, the study examined the following:

- To examine how parenting style influences undergraduate students in Africa using the University of Calabar as its case study.
- To evaluate the extent to which socio-economic factors can influence undergraduate students in Africa, also the University of Calabar as its case study.

Statement of hypotheses

The hypothesis guiding this study states that:

- Parenting styles has no significant effect on undergraduates' tendencies towards drugs abuse.
- Parental socio-economic status does not significantly influence undergraduates' tendencies towards drugs abuse.

METHOD OF STUDY

The place of this study was cross River State. Specifically, the study centered on the family background of the undergraduates students in university of Calabar. The research design used for this study is the Ex- post- facto design. It is aimed at investigating possible course and, effect of relationships. The population of this study consisted of 1,324 undergraduates in faculty of education. A total of 200 undergraduates drawn through multi stage proportionate sampling technique was used to collect the sample from the population. The instrument used for this study is titled: "Family Variables and Undergraduates tendencies towards Drug Abuse". The instrument is divided into four (4) sections. Section A of the instrument requested students' family variables or demographic data; section B requested students of their parenting styles and parental economic status, while section C students' tendencies towards drug abuse. The instrument was validated by experts in Test and Measurement and evaluation, Guidance and counselling. These expert ensured face and content validity of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was carried out by conducting a pilot test; this was conducted by using 50 students of cross River university of Technology. A test re-test method was used. One-Way analysis of variance was used formula was used to analyze data and a reliability index of .78 was obtained.

RESULTS

Parenting Variables and Drug Abuse

The study argument here is that parenting styles has no significant effect on undergraduates' tendencies towards drugs abuse. The independent variable of this hypothesis is parenting styles which was classified into four category (democratic, autocratic, laissez faire, and situational); while the dependent variable is undergraduates tendencies towards drugs abuse. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Summary of data and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the influence parenting styles on undergraduates' tendencies towards drugs abuse in University of Calabar

Parenting style	N	X	SD
Autocratic	20	16.6552	3.21021
Democratic	34	18.0233	3.01968
Laissez faire	55	18.5000	2.06279
Situational	59	17.0508	3.03669
Total	181	17.6188	2.89319
Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS
Between groups	91.820	3	30.607
			F
			3.829
			P
			*.011
Within groups	1414.876	177	7.994
Total	1506.696180		

$P < .05$, $df = 3, 177$.

The result in table 1 shows that the calculated F-value of 3.829 is significant with p-value of .011 at .05 level of significance with 3 and 177 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is rejected. This result therefore implies that parenting styles has a significant influence on undergraduates' tendencies towards drugs abuse in the University of Calabar

Table 2: Post Hoc tests on parenting styles and undergraduate tendencies towards drugs abuse Multiple Comparisons

(I) Parenting styles	(J) Parenting styles	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Autocratic	Autocratic	-1.36808*	.67937	.046	-2.7088	-.274
	Autocratic	-1.84483*	.65994	.006	-3.1472	-.5425
	Autocratic	-.39568	.64119	.538	-1.6610	.8697
Democratic	Democratic	1.36808*	.67937	.046	.0274	2.7088
	Democratic	-.47674	.58802	.419	-1.6372	.6837
	Democratic	.97241	.56691	.088	-.1464	2.0912
Laissez faire	Laissez faire	1.84483*	.65994	.006	.5425	3.1472
	Laissez faire	.47674	.58802	.419	-.6837	1.6372
	Laissez faire	1.44915*	.54347	.008	.3766	2.5217
Situational	Situational	.39568	.64119	.538	-.8697	1.6610
	Situational	-.97241	.56691	.088	-2.0912	.1464
	Situational	-1.44915*	.54347	.008	-2.5217	-.3766

*.The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

It can be seen from the table 2 that lassie faire parenting style provides more influence on their teaching performance than autocratic styles (mean difference = 1.84483, $p < .05$): In the same veins lassie faire style also provide more influence than autocratic style (mean difference = 1.36808, $p < .05$). Moreover, situational style provide more influence than autocratic (mean difference = .39568, $p > .05$) and also democratic (mean difference = -.97241, $p > .088$). However, the difference in lassie faire style and autocratic style and democratic style are not significant at .05 level of significance.

Parental Socio-economic status and Tendencies of Drug abuse

The argument presented here is that parental socio-economic status does not significantly influence undergraduates' tendencies towards drugs abuse. The independent variable of this hypothesis is parental socio-economic status which was classified into four category (poor, average, rich and very rich); while the dependent variable is undergraduate tendencies towards drugs abuse. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table3.

Table 3: Summary of data and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the Parental socio-economic status does not significantly influence undergraduates' tendencies towards drugs abuse

Parental socio-economic status		N	X	SD	
Poor level		28	18.3571	2.36039	
Average level		50	18.3000	2.69732	
Rich level		55	17.4364	3.03537	
Very rich		48	16.6875	2.99045	
Total		181	17.6188	2.89319	
Sources of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P
Between groups	81.928	3	27.309	3.393	*.019.
Within groups	1424.768	177	8.050		
Total	1506.696180				

$P < .05$, $df=3, 177$.

The result in table 3 shows that the calculated F-value of 3.3 93 is significant with p-value of .019 at .05 level of significance with 3 and 177 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is rejected. This result therefore implies that Parental socio-economic status has significantly influence undergraduates tendencies of drugs abuse.

It can be seen from the table 8 that rich level provides more influence on parental socio-economic status of undergraduate tendencies of drugs abuse than poor level (mean difference = .92078, $p > .05$). In the same veins average level provide same influence with poor level (mean = .05714, $p > .05$). Moreover, very rich level fathers also provide more influence than poor level (mean difference = 1.66964, $p > .05$) and also average level (mean difference = 1.61250, $p < .05$). However, the difference in very rich fathers, and poorly oriented fathers and very richly oriented fathers and average level fathers was significant at .05 level of significance while others were not significant at .05 level of level of significant.

Table 4: Post 1-bc tests on parent socio-economic status on undergraduates' tendencies of drugs abuse Multiple Comparisons LSD

(I) Parent socio-economic status	(J) parent socio-economic status		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Dimension2	Poor	Dimension3	Average	.0514	.66968	.932	-1.2644	1.3787
			Rich	.92078	.65866	.164	-.3791	2.2206
			Very Rich	1.6694*	.67467	.014	.3382	3.0011
	Average	Dimension3	Poor	-.05714	.66968	.932	-1.3787	1.2644
			Rich	.86364	.55439	.121	-.2304	1.9577
			Very Rich	1.61250*	.57331	.005	.4811	2.7439
	Rich	Dimension3	Poor	-.92078	.65866	.164	-2.2206	.3791
			Average	-.86364	.55439	.121	-1.9577	.2304
			Very rich	.74886	.56041	.183	-.3571	1.8548
	Very Rich	Dimension3	Poor	-1.66964*	.67467	.014	-3.0011	-.3382
			Average	-1.61250*	.57331	.005	-2.7439	-.4811
			Rich	-.74886	.56041	.183	-1.8548	.3571

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the study findings revealed that family variable plays vital role in the undergraduate's student's tendencies towards drugs abuse in university of Calabar. Based on the study findings and conclusion, it was recommended that:

- Parents who are somehow not very rich should not consider their economic status as the least in the economy thereby losing focus of good parenting towards their wards.
- Parents who are very rich in the society should not allow their economic status to overwhelm their students so as to become drugs addict with the influence of their wealthy parent.
- Parents irrespective of the kind of work they do, should find little time to take care of their wards, monitor their activities and their peers and renders advice when necessary.

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