ABSTRACT

The tide of fighting drug abuse among youths in the society is increasing on daily bases with more forces against government efforts getting stronger. The paper investigated the diametrical relationship between urban youths and drug consumption in rivers state, Nigeria. Information was sought from published articles and internet source. The study utilized well-structured questionnaires designed in a four-point Likert’s scale fashion to elucidate information from the nine states of the oil producing states. Secondary information were obtained through journal articles, textbooks, and internet sources. The paper was anchored on “Nature Theory”. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages, tables, frequency counts, mean (x) deviation (criterion cut-off of 2.5) to answer research questions, compare effects and present the socioeconomic characteristics variables of the respondents (youths on drug abuse). Findings revealed that, more of the respondents were youths within. On the occupational level, greater numbers of the respondents were students at a younger age. Respondents with O’ level and first degree reflected more among those involved in drug abuse. The paper found that drug abuse were as a result of peer group influence, to cushion the effects of stress from family pressure and to belong to class were all accepted and above the criterion cut-off point. The study found that consumption of Tramadol was discovered as the most commonly abused drug in Rivers State. It was found the youths are the most exposed group to drug abuse in Rivers State. The paper recommended for continues government collaboration with relevant agencies. Drug Law Enforcement Agency to continue to fight against importation, exportation and consumption of illicit drugs in the Nigeria. Advocacy and public awareness campaigns against drug abuse should be made functional in the urban areas to enlighten the youths on the dangers of drug abuse. All the established regulatory surveillance for fighting drug trafficking and consumption should also be deployed into the urban areas to check small illicit drug cartels.

Keywords: Urban youths, Drug Consumption, Diametrical Relationship
Introduction
The fundamental way if handling ones health is through exercise, healthy diet or medical treatment and application of medication which is the intake of drugs. Its consumption causes a change it the body physiology to terminate the health condition for which it was consumed. Drugs are classified according based on the reason for their consumption. Drugs have numerous important to human which can never be over-emphasized. They are not just and only useful to humans but are equally useful to animals as well. Human administer needed drugs to their animals mostly when they uncover that they are ill or unhealthy. Drugs are essential substances in life of living thing especially when they are ill or sick and also needed to make living healthier. Some drugs can be utilized for therapeutic reasons and are needed substance for better health. However, presently and especially in Rivers State, usefulness of drugs for medicinal purpose has been sabotaged and undermined as drugs are currently being abused by people especially and particularly young people for other unwanted purposes. They use it unlawfully, without Doctors’ prescription thus becoming harmful to them (Samba, 2008).

The effect of wrong use of drug among youths in Nigeiran is currently a serious or damaging moral problem. Drug abuse has made faces of numerous youth in Nigeria rough and brought harmful and disgusting repute and effects to many Nigerian societies (Giade, 2012; Oshadi, Aine and Onejole, 2010). Many are deliberately abusing these drugs illegally and intentionally just as means of being high and when they intend to engage in criminal operations. Most drug users especially youths depend or rely on different kinds of drugs for everyday activities. WHO in their report state that drug which comprises of tobacco and alcohol have resulted to numerous road accidents and claimed more lives compare to any other illness on mankind globally. International based drug trafficking operation is presently gaining strength while International based cooperation against Drug Trafficking is presently losing grip and lacks organization needed for fight against spreading and distribution of illicit drugs globally.

The global narcotics report indicated that level of confiscation to these drugs has reduced to less than ten percent of the drugs circulation level globally, whereas international based mortality number for drug related abuse have skyrocketed since 1988. In United States and between 1976 to 1993 medical emergencies which arise due to cocaine intake increased by 100 percent, while emergency cases that arise due to heroine increased by 6 percent and emergency case that arise due to cannabis increased by 155 percent. Within same period, cocaine addicts among teenagers who are within twelve and seventeen years increased by 166 percent in many nations. Drugs are used and abused daily and drug use and abuse results from many factors, including Peer influence, desire for highness, fulfilment of sexual urge, and engagement in criminal operation.

The problem of wrong use of drugs or drug abuse in Nigeria is currently a serious legal and moral concern. Most young people have resorted to misuse of drugs, presently, the rate with which young people abuse and misuse drugs is so outrageous, worrisome and alarming that numerous effort are put together to curtail and eradicate it. The more youths abuse these drugs, the more the effort being put together to curtail and eradicate it loses strength. Drug addiction or abuse has destructive consequences on youths. “It not only destroys affected person but also has damaging effect on everybody who works or know such individual (Barber, 1967). Addiction to drugs is unfortunate tragedy in most Nigerian societies.
Statement of Problem

Presently in Nigeria drug abuse among young people is common phenomenon, and the female forks are also involved in this destructive act. A research done and reported recently stated that female forks make up 15-20 percent of people addicted to drug while male forks make up nearly 50-55 percent. A retrospective research conducted by NDLEA in 2008 reported that those who abuse drugs consist of students, traders, unskilled workers and unemployed youths. Drug abuse is part of setback witnessed in Nigerian society today especially in urban cities. Most psychiatric hospitals in Rivers State are presently rehabilitation centres where most youths with addictive problem are undergoing drug treatment. Presently number of young people with insanity is more than number of old people with insanity and this issue is tied to indiscriminate and uncontrollable drug abuse. Some young person have drop-out from school because there level of addiction to drug is so high that they can no longer cope with school activities and their sanity has been severely damaged by drugs. Many young people are wanderers, homeless, rapist, derelicts, and thug, unemployed and armed robbers because of drug addiction. Many lives and property have been wasted to violence and accident because of drug addictions. Young people who are the hope and foundation of our families, society and nations at large have sabotaged their lives due to drug addiction.

People from all walks of life use drugs in different forms. This could be in their natural form like leaves, roots, tree, barks-herbs etc. These are sometimes even mixed for treatment of ailment or prepared (pharmacologically) for different application. This means that “drug” almost has universal usage in human societies. By implication therefore, these drugs are useful in different way and for different reasons including cure and or prevention of diseases, change or control behavior and alleviation of physical and mental stress (WHO). However, use of certain drugs, (particularly psychoactive drugs) has reached dimension which is currently considered or observed as abused and poses serious threat to social harmony or wellbeing of young people (UNODC) (2005). It is in reaction to this and to ensure proper reduction of such drugs that various technique like legislation, punishment, rehabilitation public enlightenment etc have become imperative. The question raised is whether the introduction of legislation, punishment, rehabilitation public enlightenment been able to ameliorate issues bordering on drug consumption by the youths in urban cities in Rivers State? Given this fact, this study sets out to unravel the root causes of youth consumption of drugs in the urban areas. That’s the gap filled by this paper.

The specific objective of this paper is to investigate the diametrical relationship in urban youths consumption of drug consumption in Rivers State, Nigeria. General objectives of the study are to;

a) Ascertain factors responsible for urban drug consumption in Rivers State.

b) identify the type of drugs that are used by urban youths in Rivers State

c) Determine the age and sex distribution of urban youth consumption of drugs in Rivers State.

The following research questions were raised to guide the objective of the study.

1) What are factors responsible for urban drug consumption in Rivers State?

2) What are main types of drugs used by urban youths in Rivers State?

d) What are the age distributions of urban youth consumption of drugs in Rivers State?

This paper focused on ascertaining the factors type and the age bracket and sex of youths involved in drug consumption in the Rivers State irrespective government establishment of
legislations, prescribed punishments and rehabilitation programs of government to control the consumption of hard drugs in Rivers State, Nigeria.

his study will be of immense benefit to students, communities' stakeholders, government, NGOs, privately owned rehabilitation centres The study will also be beneficial to government agencies, students and research fellows. Students, including research fellows will find the study very beneficial in the area of literature and future studies and as referral reports. This study focuses on urban youth drug consumption in cities in Rivers State. It investigates the root causes of urban drug consumption and its effect on youths.

The paper is divided into sections to accommodate the relevant issues for discussion to enable proper clarification on the subject matter. The first section introduced the work and brought forward the problem statement which prompted the work and gave the focus of the paper. The second section took a swipe on empirical literature of previous scholarly studies relating to the topic. The third section gave the study methodology, population and study sample size. Section four analyzed available data and the results obtained. The fifth section summarized the work with conclusion and recommendations as suggestions on how to remediate the challenges found therein.

**Literature Review**

**Conceptual Underpinning**

*Urban youths:* Urban has to do with densely populated areas or sub-urban part of a city with more of the population made up of youths. Group of young men and women found in a populated part of a city, mostly young people with the age of 12 and 18 years in a crowded populated suburb. (Wikipedia, 2021), urban can be found within or outside a city town formed through urbanization and quite distinct from hamlet or village.

*Drug Consumption:* This refers to improper use of drugs. It is different from drug use. it is sometimes called addiction. Drug consumption occurs when one is inappropriately taking drugs without doctor's prescriptions. Drug consumption may be to reduce depression or intoxicated as to act abnormally or be able to do something extraordinary. It can be of help to people who do not withstand crowd or public presence. It is an addiction usually taken for a purpose (Eric et al, 2018).

*Diametrical Relationship:* is a union that is not recognized. When the outcome of an action or activity is opposite, the expected result, where issues are purely different or diametrical means to opposite, antithetical, not in order as prescribed, contradictory, or contrary. It explains the negative effects of drugs on the life patterns of youths.

*Reduction of Drug Consumption or Control of consciousness alteration*:

There exist numerous therapies to remediate the health conditions of drug addicted individuals in the society. Sometimes combination of therapies is appropriate and may start with the following;

*Behavioral therapies:* talk therapy (psychotherapy) or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is convenient for the treatment of cases of addiction to build self-esteem and coping mechanisms.
**Detoxification**: this has to do with abstinence from drug consumption to enable excretion of all harmful substances and wastes deposited in the body system by drugs. It certainly requires health supervision by medical expert.

**Medication-assisted Therapy**: during the process of detoxification, further medicines relevant to detoxification can help in controlling the desire and thirst for illicit drugs to speed withdrawal.

Other disorders that can be treated with both psychologists and cognitive behavioral therapy are not limited to; life/everyday challenges, chronic pains, eating disorders, mental illness, substance consumption disorders and sleeping disorders.

**Types of Illicit drugs and Reason for drug consumption**
In the society today, there are different types of drugs consumed by young men and women for different enhancement purposes. These drugs and intentions are shown in the table below and not limited to;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Hard Drugs</th>
<th>Reason for Hard Drug Consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamines</td>
<td>To induce themselves to work above their physical capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used sanitary pads</td>
<td>Because of parental deprivation at various levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ammonia Sniff</td>
<td>To be able to facilitate communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamine</td>
<td>To belong to a social group or class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feces of Lizard</td>
<td>Pressure from friends and peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>Abuse of prescription drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedatives</td>
<td>Socioeconomic statues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramadol</td>
<td>To overcome shyness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis</td>
<td>To overcome illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opioids</td>
<td>To gain confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>For self medication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>For pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solvent</td>
<td>Stress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Societal Implications of Drug Abuse**
Drug abuse in Nigeria is serious social problem by reason of increasing range of social costs associated with it. Some of these are manifest and measurable while other are latent and difficult to quantify. There are cost implications of drug in the society. Though much has been reviewed in this regard, nevertheless, we shall specifically address a few of them here. These include:

1. **Crime**: There is observed notable connection between usage and crime, example alcohol abuse is appreciable correlated to violent crimes. In fact, it was ascertained that over fifty percent of those who commit murder and other violent based crimes took alcohol immediately before such crime. Also users of drugs usually depend on criminal networks who supply these drugs.

2. **Accidents**: Also, alcohol usage is responsible for most fatal accidents in highway. Alcohol consumption is reason for fifty percent of road accidents annually. The costs of damaged property and medical based expenses incurred from alcohol related accidents account in billions yearly (Ian Robertson).
3. **Disregard for the law:** in Nigeria, the laws that control drug use define most Nigerians as criminals. For instance most student in Nigerian students have already broken laws relating to usage of marijuana. Also most Nigerians are given criminal records and served jail time for acts that many believe should not be regulated by criminal code.

4. **Economic loses:** The economic losses due to criminal activities connected to drug use are enormous, not to mention billions sink in illegal drug business. Finally, note that drug abuse is antecedent of moral decadence in most societies. For example, drug trade promotes acquisition of fast wealth, corruption and violation. Similarly, drug abuse disrupts healthy living and cause emergence of deviated behaviour. Therefore, every attempt should avail in Nigeria to control drug problem among our youths who from available evidence constitute the high-risk group.

**Drug control intervention strategies**

Laws pertaining to illicit drugs such as Indian hemp, heroine have been in the public domain to fight and control drug use. We shall have brief review of such laws at this point. The laws that regulate importation, exportation, manufacture, transaction and use of drugs in Federal Republic of Nigeria include:

- **(a) The Food and Drug Act 1974**
  Food and drugs act of 1974 was enacted in said year to regulate importation, exportation, manufacture, transaction and use of drugs in Federal Republic of Nigeria, section 3 of this Act, except for conditions stipulated, prohibits importation, exportation distribution and manufacture of drugs which are under control of convention on psychoactive drugs of 1971.

- **(b) The Poisons and Pharmacy Act Cap 152 1974**
  The provisions of this act states that where unauthorized person has imported a psychoactive substance under control in dangerous drugs Act Cap. 48 or in Poisons and Pharmacy Act Cap. 152 or in food and drugs Act 1974, and such drugs identity is not yet ascertained, holding charge can be made, invoking provisions of section 20 of poisons and pharmacy, Act which impose restriction on importation, sale and deliver of poison stated in first schedule of such Act, similarly, a holding charge can be preferred against possession of psychoactive substance or drug until such is identified, by invoking poisons and pharmacy Act which prohibits possession of poisons unqualified and unauthorized person.

- **(c) The Dangerous Drugs Act Cap 48**
  The Act finally states that “Any police officer or an inspector authorized by the chief medical adviser hereby designated as director of medical services of Federal Ministry of health, has power to enter any premises where dangerous drugs are sold manufacture or distributed and shall demand for inspection of any book or documents relating to dealing with such drugs. He can also inspect any stock of such drugs Dangerous Drugs Act regulates importation, manufacture sale and use of coca leave, cocaine, heroin, morphine prepared and raw opium, Indian hemp, and resins obtained from plant. Section 6 of Act prohibits importation and exportation in Nigeria of prepared opium. Section 7 of same

- **(d) The Indian hemp Act 1966**
  A person who unlawfully imports or sells drug was on conviction to be summarily sentenced to death or imprisonment for not less than 15 years, while an individual found guilty or
exporting Indian hemp was imprisoned for not less than 10 years. Also, person found guilty of smoking or unlawfully possession of Indian hemp or occupier of premises where Indian hemp is sold smoked or prepared for smoking was imprisonment for period of not less than 10 years. While a person knowingly in possession of any pipe or other utensils for smoking of Indian hemp is found guilty to conviction to imprisonment for not less than five years.

(e) The Social Implications of Drug Laws
The underlying social implications of these drugs laws is that they are need as instrument for what is generally termed ―moral persuasion‖ and to enforce considerable degree of conformity where they may appear sufficiently ineffective. Thus, appropriate fines and sanctions tend ‘to serve as detriment, keeping in mind that certain infliction of harm through drug offences may have social repercussions. Therefore, these laws are to protect society and individuals to ensure that drug offenders are liable to penalties, some of which may actually appear too severe. To this, end; punishment should be pragmatic as possible to ensure steady and effective enforcement.

(f) Drug Demand Reduction Programs
The drug demand reduction programmes are being initiated by National Drug Law enforcement Agency in conjunction with Federal Ministries Committees and Non-Governmental organization such programmes are:

(ii) Public Enlightenment through awareness programs.
(iii) Drug abuse education for schools.
(iv) Drug abuse education for general public.
(v) Guidance and counseling for general public
(vi) Social welfare and rehabilitation

Diametrical Relationship between Urban Youths and Drug Consumption
This is unrecognized union that benefits only one party. When the outcome of an action or activity is opposite, the expected result, where issues are purely different or diametrical means to opposite, antithetical, not in order as prescribed, contradictory, or contrary. It explains the negative effects of drugs on the life patterns of youths. It is diametrical because the consumer ends up in a momentary enjoyment with great income loss and ends up committing crime, may get involved in accident if driving after taking drugs. The consumer becomes offender to the law as he/she is consuming item prohibited by law. In some countries, offender faces summary execution by firing squad. It also attracts life sentences and the as offender my loose his/her life in the process if not permanent mental disorder.

Theoretical Framework
Theories of Drug Abuse
Several theories have been propounded to support the study of alcohol and drug abuse found under different topics in medical and Psychiatric studies such as;

(a) “The abstinence mandate alcoholic use disorder
(b) Alcoholic caused chemical changes in the brain
(c) Tonaexia: An addiction to training
(d) The use of slang in sub-cultures”
(e) Political views genetic cause
(f) Disease cause video gaming
(g) Childhood trauma
These disorder situation are disaggregated into:

- “Nature Theory
- Genetic/Biological Theory
- Disease Theory
- Psychological Theory
- Sociological Theory/Learning Theory
- Sub-cultural/Age Graded Theory
- Socio Control/Bonding Theory
- Interactional Theory
- Anomie/Strain Theory
- Social Conflict Theory”

Source: Author’s Desk Research, 2022


**Nature Theory**

This paper hinges on “Nature Theory” propounded by Andrew Weil 1986. The theory tried to explain the alteration of human innate consciousness drive. It is recognized that in early infancy, it is easy for alterations to occur in human brain/consciousness as they engage in activities. Weil was of the view that in early life, manifestation of character/behavior mostly in infants tend to rock themselves into calmness, state of blissfulness by infants springing spinning themselves or being by hyperventilating purposefully, to come up/produce dizzy mental state. However, as people advance in life, they discover that they were being put in such state by some available substance. Andrew, (1986) discovered that such mental consciousness alteration could only be reached through drug mechanism as they lack the capacity to achieve such distinct state on their own except through drugs.

In support, is the use of psychoactive ubiquity substance/drugs by human beings in the society and drugs have been considered appropriate channel in achieving such mental height for past years. Irrespective of the danger they pose to the society. Supporters of this theory have anchored their claims on consciousness alteration by people through none-drug related ways as that of infants discussed above. According to Andrew Weil, researchers have found that most times, drug consumption has been linked to to performance of sports activities and augured that drug use should not be totally be condemned or as pathological, that its influence can manifest in different forms. It was the opinion of Andrew Weil education not based on drug addiction should be established to enable information flow on benefits of drug free society.

**Empirical Review**

There are numerous definitions of what constitute drug abuse as put forward by different scholars, this means that different literature exist on what drug is and when it is abused. (Agha, 2003, Okoye, 2001 Nevadomsky, 1998, Odejide 2000). For example, (Lakhenpal, and Agnihutri, 2007). (Oluremi, 2012) opening the discussion is the work of Eric, Chikweru, & Akpelu, (2018) on “effects of drug abuse on the academic performance of secondary school students in Emohua local government area of Rivers State.. The study adopted descriptive statistics and chi-Square in the analysis and discovered alcohol, marijuana, tobacco and other illicit drugs were used by students. The paper recommended for enlightenment of students on the dangers of hard drugs in the society. Okechukwu et al, (2021) in their study of The Pattern of Psychoactive Substance Use among Undergraduates in the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria used EPI-info 2000 statistical package for analysis and found higher while the use of tobacco was lower. Dependency rates on drugs was found to be
higher on heroine, cocaine and cannabis. The paper recommended for enlightenment of youths against the use of hard drugs.

Investigating societal variables and Prevalence of Substance Abuse among Youths in Calabar by Nwafor, (2016), the author examined societal variables and prevalence of substance abuse in Calabar, Simple Percentages and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis were the statistical tools used for data analysis. The study revealed existing significance between drug abuse and youth delinquency in the area. It was recommended that government should arrest and prosecute offenders. Christopher et al, (2020) inquired into the effect of drug abuse in ozuaha youths in ozuaha community in Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers state. Pearson Production Movement Correlation (PPMC) test method which gave a coefficient (r) of 0.89. it was found that drug abuse severely affected youth in the community. Drug use adversely affected youths. Drug abuse could lead to increase in crime wave in the place, the paper recommended for all embracing effort by both parents and government to assist in increase in their efforts to battle the menace of hard drug through establish project. It was found that drug abuse negatively affected mental state of many of the young men and women.

Furthermore, according to WHO technical Report series 516, drug is any substances that when taken by living organisms have capacity to modify its functions. The definitions however seem neutral and arbitrary because there is no specification on what substance in particular constitute “drug”. Also, it is essential to know that drug, whatever it is, is materialization based on human direction and intervention. And so it is seen purely as reaction of man to one reason or another. The question which appears significant is whether drug(s) is result of man’s direction or intervention for social utilization, when is it said to be abused or why would its use be problem or say deviant behaviour? Before one proceed to present a review of existing but limited literature on drug abuse, particularly placed within Nigerian context. I would state that although this study is purely sociological one, it cannot be wholly devoid of some fundamental biochemical explanations and expressions, particularly those relating to medicine and pharmacology. This is because any concrete understanding of issue of drugs especially drug that affect social behaviour, depends upon development of adequate theories to biochemical and behavioral events. But reports have it that an integrating theory has not yet evolved. Also, the problem is formidable and aggravated by lack of appropriate behavioral referents, and often being naïve about their complexities. On another hand theories put forward by social scientist on drugs related issues may completely oversimplify involved biochemical complexities (Ibid, 1981). Hence, the issue at stake is an attempt to synthesize both.

In my thinking, combined approach that would integrate both biochemical and social elements is most desired in our consideration of the problem. We shall now have more elaboration of concepts of “drug use” which is especially desirable at this time. “Use” has been defined as application for a purpose, while “abuse” as making wrong use i. e. misuse. By implication, one could argue that drug use is concerned with application or employment of drugs for particular purpose (however generally for Treatment of ailments) by individual or group of people. Therefore, abuse from this perspective is misuse of drugs in deference of existing drug laws and norms regulating its use. The discussion will now be restricted to the abuse or misuse of drugs. Drugs may then be misused in quite a number of ways. But a Few illustrations or examples will suffice at this point. First, the unauthorized use of drug constitutes an abuse. In this case, such a drug is used in defiance of rules guiding use of such drug. For example, using marijuana which is consumed by Rumueme youths despite existing laws. The Indian hemp Act 1996 and as amended in (975 Act) it is significant that
unauthorized use constitute abuse of individual obtains and or use particular drug for which he or she has not obtained a duly signed or authorized prescription by the instructions of the physician. This could expressed as individual not taking appropriate dosage or such person may take over’ dose. Thirdly, it is important to note that even authorized person owing to negligence of other reasons, fails to prescribe to appropriate dosage to user. The physician in such case may have abused such drug. Finally, it cannot be overstated that discussion would not be restricted to those drugs which are classified as “Dangerous” and some of which do not necessarily require any form of duly authorized prescription.

In addiction especially the psychoactive drugs. In 1992 NDLEA collected data on drugs abuse from schools, patient’s record of those admitted in mental health facilities for drug related issues and recorded interview for individuals arrested due to drug issues. There result revealed that younger people are highest risked group in drug related issues like trafficking and abuse. Friends and class mates constitute over 90% of source of influence to drug abuse mostly psychoactive drugs. Alcohol and cigarette are In Nigeria legal substances but they have caused more physical and social damage to human than any substances ever availed legally for consumption. They are equally called “gateway drugs” because they lead to other more damaging drugs like cocaine (UNDCP, 1988). In Nigeria, it has been reported by WHO and World Heart Foundation's data that smoking results in over 90.0% cases of lung cancer, 30.0% of entire cancers, and 80.0% of other severed lung diseases (Abudu, 2008; Giade, 2011).

Materials and Method

Data Presentation

Research Design

Design for this study is survey and public opinion sampling involving investigation on drug abuse and its effect on youths in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Study Area

This study was conducted in Rivers State with a total land mass of 11,077 Sqkm and is located on latitudes 40 32’ and 50 53’ North and longitudes 70 25’ and 80 25’ east of the equator

Population for the study.

The population is all the youths selected from 9 local governments in Rivers State. Forty (35) samples each were randomly selected from each of 9 local government areas in each of the 3 senatorial zones; (Rivers South-East, Rivers West, Rivers East) of Rivers State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Random sampling technique was adopted in the selection of 315 samples from each of the 9 local government areas from the 4 senatorial districts; in Rivers State. Therefore, survey instrument was administered to 315 respondents.

Validity of the Instrument

This describes the procedures adopted in ensuring that the instrument used measured exactly what it was designed to measure. In this case, the researcher employed the content validity test. Thus, the questionnaire to be administered to the respondents presented to the researcher’s supervisor for scrutiny; and every corrections effected, ensuring that the instrument measured exactly what it was designed to measure without bias.
Reliability of the Instrument
The reliability of the instrument was obtained through a test-retest method. By this method, a trial test was carried out with 20 youths from Port Harcourt. The reliability was ascertained using two major tests: Firstly, data was triangulated using multiple sources. Internal reliability of survey instrument was assessed by means of Cronbach alpha coefficient using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The exercise was repeated after two (2) weeks on the same respondents. The two sets of the responses were computed statistically using Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient(r). The instrument was found to have reliability coefficient value of 0.89 which was considered high enough and adequate for the study.

Methods of Data Collection/Instrumentation
The major technique adopted was questionnaire. The researcher utilized well-structured questionnaires to enable effective data management. The questionnaires were designed in a 4-points Likert’s scale fashion to capture all shades of opinions. Beside the primary data, theoretical/secondary information was obtained from journals, magazines and newspaper and textbooks while primary data were collected during field work. The primary data was mainly questionnaire and interview method of data collection.

Method of Data Analysis
A total number of 300 correctly filled and returned questionnaires were collected sorted and coded for analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages, tables, frequency counts, mean (x) deviation (criterion cut-off of 2.5) to answer research questions, compare effects and present the socioeconomic characteristics variables of the respondents (youths on drug abuse).

Data Presentation

Table 1 Respondents’ Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Senatorial Zone</th>
<th>L. G. A</th>
<th>Sample/Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Rivers South-East</td>
<td>1. Opobo</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Andoni</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Khana</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Rivers West</td>
<td>1. Abua-Odua</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Asari-Toru</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Bonny</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Rivers East</td>
<td>1. Port Harcourt</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ogu-Bolo</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Etche</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Date, 2022

Data Analysis
This study utilized a total of 300 returned, properly filled questionnaires for the analysis. The socioeconomic characteristics of respondents were first addressed in table 2 below.
Table 2. Socioeconomic characteristics of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 – 20</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 25</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 and above</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occupation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trading</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welding</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keke Driving</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Educational Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GCE O’Level Cert.</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Sc Degree</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Sc. Degree &amp; above</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed from Field Data, 2022

Socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents on age, occupation and educational level were analyzed. Their results on table 2 revealed that more of the respondents were youths within the age bracket 15-20 years, showing 29.0 percent. Those found within ages 21-25 years showed 25.3 per cent. Those found with 26-30 and 30 and above revealed 22.0 and 23.6 per cents respectively.

On occupational level, greater numbers of the respondents were students with 36.0 per cents. This is followed by those in keke driving business with 25.3 per cents. Respondents in trading, welding works and farming revealed 13.6, 10.6 and 14.3 per cents respectively. The highest were students who revealed 108 respondents, reflecting 36.0 per cents.

On educational level of respondents, it was discovered that those with GCE O’level certificate had 37.3 per cents. Respondents with B. Sc degree reflected 39.6 per cents while respondents with M. Sc degree and above reflected 23.0 per cents.

**Research Question 1:** What are factors responsible for urban drug consumption in Rivers State?

Table 3: Responses to Factors responsible to Urban Drug Consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Peer group influence is responsible</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td><strong>Accepted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Family pressure</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td><strong>Accepted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>To belong to class</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td><strong>Accepted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>To communicate boldly</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td><strong>Rejected</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Mean</strong> =</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Mean</strong> =</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results in table 3 revealed that taking drugs to be able to boldly communicate was rejected while questions bordering on group influence cushion the effects of stress from family pressure and to belong to class were all accepted having met the criterion cut-off point of 2.5 and above. A total mean value of 11.22 was observed while the grand mean was 2. Above the acceptable cut-off point.

**Research Question 2**: What are main types of drugs used by urban youths in Rivers State?

Table 4: Answering questions on types of drugs consumed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tramadol abuse is more pronounced</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Marijuana is rampantly Abuse</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Cocaine Abuse is widely consumed in the area</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Methamphetamines is mostly consumed</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Mean** = 11.2

**Grand Mean** = 2.80

The type of drugs consumed were answered and analyzed in table 4 above with answered explaining that consumption of Tramadol was accepted with 3.45 points, Marijuana, 2.68, cocaine 2.52 and Methamphetamines 2.57 points all met the criterion cut-off 2.5, the grand mean was also accepted, indicating that all the substances were being consumed by youths in Rivers State.

**Research Question 3**: What are the age and sex distribution of urban youth consumption of drugs in Rivers State?

Table 5: Questions bordering on age of the youths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>15 -20 years youths</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>21 – 25 years youth</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>26 -30 years</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>35 and Above consume drugs more</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Mean** = 11.79

**Grand Mean** = 2.94

On age or respondents as shown in table 5, it was revealed that 2.78, 3.89, 2.67 and 2.45 reflected in the results. Explaining individual result, consumption of drug by youths within the ages of 15-20 years was accepted with 2.78. Youths within 21 and 25 years accepted the
fact that they smoke with a result as high as 3.89. Those within the age bracket of 26-30 accepted consuming drugs with 2.67 while those 35 and above revealed rejection from drug consumption with 2.45 point below the acceptable criterion level

Discussion of Findings

Discussing the findings of this helps in clarification of findings. From the socioeconomic characteristics result revealed that more of the respondents were youths within the age bracket 15-20 years indicating that more of the youths involved in drug consumption are quite young men and women that supposed leader of tomorrow, and possibly with no clear source of livelihood. This conformed with the findings of Okechuku et al, (2021) that more of the hard drug consumers were predominantly people of younger age. Under occupational level, students were found to be more involved in drug consumption indicating that the younger generation seems to be misdirected and not focused in academics. It also agrees with the findings of Okechukwu et al, (2021) in their study of The Pattern of Psychoactive Substance Use among Undergraduates in the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

It was found that people with first B, Sc degree were more involved when looking at the result of people with certificate. It result reflects the question of unemployment as and a carryover attitude from the university. It means such behavior began while the person was a student and may serve as discouragement to others who are yet to get a degree in any discipline. The result is in agreement with the findings of Nwafor, (2016) in a study on Societal Variables and Prevalence of Substance Abuse among Youths in Calabar, which found younger youths involving themselves in drug abuse. Also in tandem with the findings of Christopher et al, (2020) in his inquiry into the effect of drug abuse in Ozuah youths in Ozuah community in Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers state. it was found that drug abuse severely affected youth in the community. Drug use adversely affected youths

On the reasons for drug abuse, revealed that taking drugs to be able to boldly communicate was rejected while questions bordering on group influence. It explains the effect of children not being guided and the type of friend they keep as they are greatly affected by what they see their friend do or consume. The result of major types of drugs consumed revealed that Tramadol is the most prevalent hard drug abused by consumers especially among the youths. It was discovered to be consumed in different forms; as tablet, injection or syrup. Its availability in almost all pharmacy stores makes it prone to consumption and not expensive. Such dangerous drug that can be purchased with N50, N100, and N200 but very effective in destroying the society should be dreaded and control made effective by the government.

Conclusion

The tide of fighting drug abuse among youths in the society is increasing on daily bases with more forces against government efforts getting stronger. The paper concluded that, more of the respondents were youths within. On occupational level, greater numbers of the respondents were students at a younger age. Respondents with O’ level and first degree reflected more among those involved in drug abuse. The paper revealed that taking drugs to be due to group influence cushion the effects of stress from family pressure and to belong to class were all accepted and above the criterion cut-off point. The study found that consumption of Tramadol was discovered as the most commonly abused drug in Rivers State. It was found the youths are the most exposed group to drug abuse in Rivers State.
Recommendations

the study affirmed that studies of drug abuse by secondary school students in Nigeria are not yet robust enough to reveal the types of drugs that are currently being abused, hence the following recommendations;

a) The paper recommended for continues government collaboration with relevant agencies.

b) Drug Las Enforcement Agency to continue to fight against importation, exportation and consumption of illicit drugs in the Nigeria.

c) Advocacy and public awareness campaigns against drug abuse should be made functional in the urban areas to enlighten the youths on the dangers of drug abuse.

d) All the established regulatory surveillance for fighting drug trafficking and consumption should also be deployed into the urban areas to check small illicit drug cartels
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