

## Family socio-economic status and substance abuse in the FCT Abuja: The nexus

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### Abstract

This study traced the background of substance abuse to pre-historic times and primitive era of Romans, Greek, and Egyptians abuse of Mushrooms, opiate, castor oil, alcohol etc. to the present realities of substance abuse in Nigeria which is said to have engulfed 14.3 million Nigerians in recent times. The Research questions were carefully crafted to capture socio-economic factors associated with adolescents in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, Nigeria. The literature conceptualized the key variables of the study and theoretical reviews including Criminological theories and empirical analyses of previous studies. The study employed descriptive survey research design the population of the study was 3, 839,200 projected for FCT Abuja. Several sampling techniques were used to sample 1, 338 respondents covering the six Area Councils in the FCT, Abuja. SPSS Graph-pad, frequencies, percentage and Cumulative graphs was used to present the data from the field while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. Some of the major findings includes the fact that socio-economic and habitual dispositions of parent's influence adolescents' abuse of substances in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. The following recommendations were advanced, Parents must ensure they exhibit good behavioral dispositions and practice before their wards, Wealthy parents should ensure genuine reasons for release of fund and monitor friends of your wards.

**Keywords:** Family, Socio-Economic, Status, Substance, Abuse, Nexus.

### Introduction

Human beings have used substances in various forms since prehistoric times. Primitive humans ate plants such as mushrooms Romans, Greeks and Egyptians used various plants, water, alcohol, opium and castor-oil for physiological effects, therapeutically, and for Analgesic and Sedatives purposes. Arete, (1980: Cited from Ogunremi & Rotimi, 1979). The sudden rise in the numbers of substance users particularly among the youths across the globe is disturbing. It is believed that substance use and abuse have become popular due to ease of its distribution across domestic and national borders as well as the availability of funding from people of all walks of life. Many nations have decried the teeming number of people particularly youths' population who are engage in substance use and abuse as a means of adapting to the socio-economic stress caused by economic hardship around the World, Africa, Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja in particular.

The process of forming harmful habit in substance usage is a growing problem in the world today. Although, use of alcohol and tobacco are legal in most countries, both result from habit formation of substance abuse/addiction. They contribute to poor health and have caused sudden death of several millions of people each year. Substance abuse causes enormous health, family and social problems throughout the world and threatens national integration especially in multi ethnic society like Nigeria (Ugah, 2000).

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To comprehend the prevalence of substance-abuse in Nigeria, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Vienna posits that:

“...The past year prevalence of any substance use in Nigeria is estimated at 14.4 per cent or 14.3 million people aged between 15 and 64 years. The extent of substance use in Nigeria is comparatively high when compared with the 2016 global annual prevalence of any substance use of 5.6 per cent among the adult population”. P-UNODC, World Drug Report (2018. p.9.)

However, the skeletal statistics have indicated that Northern states in Nigeria have the highest prevalence rate of substance abuse in Nigeria and particularly Kano state rank top in the recent chart released by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) National Bureau of statistics, 2018). The propelling socio-cultural factors determining substance abuse on adolescents in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja cannot be over-emphasized in the face of increased social vices such as armed robbery, rape, gangsterism, political thuggery, terrorism, militancy and the rise of other criminal activities that threaten the society's health and security (Osemene, 2021).

Increase in production, distribution, promotion and easy availability of substance together with the changing values of society have resulted in rising substance abuse related problems emerging as a major public health concern worldwide. Sociologists, social workers, psychiatrists, other mental health professionals, educators, and politicians are ever more identifying substance use and abuse as a critical public health problem. Despite attempts to limit access to psychoactive substances by young persons, the use of such substances is common among adults, adolescents and its' growing in some groups as asserted by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, thus:

“...presently, the issue of substance abuse is gaining momentum and it is eating deep into the foundation of our society. Drugs produced for the right means including other substances are now used wrongly by people for unworthy purposes...” (NDLEA, 2019).

National security implies protection, through a variety of means, of vital economic and political interests, the loss of this could threaten fundamental values and the vitality of the state (Jordan, & Taylor, 1981). It is also seen as the capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and well-being (Maier, 1999). Thus, security is the physical and mental assurance that an individual has within the society or state that he/she is not under any threat arising from any conduct of another individual or group. However, substance abuse is a domestic and international factor that is affecting the physical, psychological and socioeconomic well-being of Nigerian youths and as such it is a threat to the existing peace, order and stability of the polity.

Substance abuse is one social phenomenon that is prevalent among people irrespective of age and gender. It is quite disturbing that a high percentage of relatively young people or teenagers are hooked on all types of substances including herbs, social and prescriptive drugs and even designers' drugs. The United Nations (2004) decried that, there was a lack of accurate epidemiological data on the prevalence of substance use among women, which made it difficult to convince stakeholders of the need to address substance abuse holistically.

It was further observed by Ogunremi and Rotimi (1979), Ubom (2004), Obiamaka (2004) that, the use of illicit substances and alcohol is higher among men in all age groups and population studied in Africa showed that the rate of cocaine dependency and cocaine base paste is higher among youths in Africa. Based on results from the 2002 national prevalence survey, marijuana use has stabilized among adolescents aged 12- to 18-year. Among women, there has

been a change in patterns of substance use from solitary to group, to street use; and among older women, use of pharmaceutical substances is associated with emotional disorders. As in other countries, women with substance use problems are more likely than men to have family responsibilities and experience greater stigma as a result of their substance use. In Nigeria, the case is not different as young women are now getting seriously involved in drugs and substances abuse (Daniels, 2015).

In the case of Nigeria, recent statistics show that substances that are commonly used or abused by youths in Kano, Kwara, Niger, Oyo and Imo states among others include; Dunlop Solution, Lacasera Tom-tom, Codeine, Tutoline, Coca Cola Maggi seasoning, Gutter, Pit-latrane, Amphetamine, Red/White capsules (which are psychoactive drugs), the benzodiazepines such as Diazepan (valium) and recently a central nervous stimulant (Pemoline) which has newly appeared in the Nigerian scene (NDLEA, 2018).

It is also recognized in Nigeria and other developing countries that a different kind of substance problem exists. This could be described as substance misuse. A substance misuse describes the uninformed and ignorant use of drugs for ailments and indications not normally considered as indication for the substance use. The menace of substance abuses and misuse has become increasingly rampant among young and old, educated and uneducated, married and unmarried people in the society despite the psychological, social and health challenges it poses. As such, the health implication is a threat to Nigerian national security (Osamene, 2021). Substance users often link their behaviour to several factors prominent among them is the social and cultural dimensions of society. Nyambura (2018) posits that 88.33% of Kenyan adolescents that abuse substances were socially and culturally influenced. Socio-cultural factors could be attributed to the facts that adolescents out of school are moving away from dependence and the protective confines of the family towards relative independence and social productivity.

No single or generic set of variables can explain the misuse or abuse of substances for every individual. Depending on an individual's biological makeup, developmental stage, and interaction with various environmental forces, individual risk, vulnerability, and resilience to substance abuse and addiction will vary for different factors at different time. (American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP, 1999). Nigeria society, which enjoys cultural diversity, has a history of use of plant products, viz., cannabis, opium, and home brewed alcohol beverages within a defined socio-cultural framework over the years. The National Working Group on Armed Violence (NWGAV) and Action on Armed Violence (AOAV, 2012) posited that over half (56%) of the Political Violence and Domestic Violence recorded by Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED) involves rioting, protesting, spouse abuse, theft and burglary. These acts cannot be exonerated from substance usage by the perpetrators. This was also corroborated by the United Nation office of Drug and Crime (UNODC, 2019), that increasing rate of school drop-outs, among adolescents, increasing rape cases in adolescents, growing number of mentally sick persons, unsafe sexual relationships among adolescents etc. in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja metropolis are accounted for in the use of Cannabis, Cough Syrups. (Containing Codeine and Dextrometophen) and Pharmaceutical Opioids (Tramadol, Codeine, Morphine) and Alcohol. This indicates groups of substances with high prevalence in the FCT (Abuja). The report concluded that the estimated substance use prevalence is 10.0% in the FCT (Abuja) roughly estimated at about 180,000 users annually.

## Objectives

- I. How does parental income influence adolescents' abuse of substance in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja?

- II. What strategic interventions could mitigate the abuse of substances among adolescents in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja?

### **Hypothesis**

- I. Differences in parental income is not likely to create access and abuse of substances among adolescents of different income status.

### **Theoretical framework**

This study is anchored on the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological system theory and Bandura's Social learning theory respectively. These theories are more appropriate because they are both centred on the individual abusers' role and what the society is offering through interaction. The Ecological system theory views Substance abuse and society which the individuals interact as a system which are interrelated and interdependent through the five (5) layers of identity by Bronfenbrenner. This theory identifies the individuals (adolescents) as the core of activities in the theory, since the individuals' are the host of values, customs, morals and the behavioral changing engine. The individual now relates to the remaining other four (4) variables. At the Micro-system, the institutions which influence the individuals to take substances/drugs or not are identified to include the Family, School and Religion. Institutions play specific roles in pushing and pulling the individuals into behavior(s) which include substances to meet his yearnings and aspiration within societal Provisions

At the Mesosystem, the interconnections between the Microsystems, the interaction and influences between the family and teachers, the child and his peers etc. all yield either positive or negative results often leading to behavioural change. Exosystem involves social setting and the individual's immediate context. The forces and challenges created by society compel some individuals to embark on the adventure with grave consequence such as that of substances/drugs in order to make a living in the midst of competition. Macro-system is the culture in which the individuals live such as developing industrialized countries, socioeconomic status, poverty and ethnicity. The child school, parent, peers, etc. are all parts of the Macro-level of interaction. Summarily, Bronfenbrenner 1979 sees the five (5) levels of society as interrelated and independent especially as its capacity to influence is unquantifiable leading to a society determined by pull and push factors within the cultural context.

The social learning theory of Bandura 1979 holds that behaviour is learnt through observing, imitating and direct instruction in the social context or environment. In addition, reward and punishment also reinforce behavior learned. The social learning theory emphasized interaction between two or more people for learning to take place that is, the family, peer group, school etc. all provide for learning of a new behaviour especially as it relates to use of substances or drugs. Bandura uphold that the learner is not passive but an active participant in learning, observation and receiving direct learning process. Hence, the learner become dependent on knowledge acquired. This theory has also been used to explain the emergence and maintenance of deviance behaviour especially aggression and addictive behaviours. Both the probability of being exposed to certain behaviours and nature of reinforcement are dependent on group norms.

These theories have direct links and explainable relationship with the learning, use and maintenance of substance/drug abuse in a socio-cultural setting of communities like those found in the FCT Abuja and Nigeria by extension.

## Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research design. According the Research Advisors (2006), a population ranging from 2,500,000 to 10, 000,000 will sampled 1,353. At 99% confidence level and 3.5% margin error, a sample of 1,353 respondents was drowned for the study. This study employed multi-stage sampling technique towards achieving desired research objectives. The study utilized both primary and secondary methods of data collection. The primary data employed the use of questionnaires and in-depth interview. The questionnaire was administered to respondents in the selected wards within Abaji, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje and Kwali Area Councils. A total of 1,338 questionnaires were distributed to the chosen sample with the help of five (5) research assistants. The data collected for this study was analyzed through the use of SPSS Graph-pad, frequencies, percentage and Cumulative graphs to present the data from the field. More so, ANOVA was used to test the study hypotheses. The qualitative data generated was analyzed using secondary data from relevant journals, unpublished dissertations, In-depth interviews, conference proceedings, periodicals online text books and materials relating to the study.

## The Data

**Table 1: Frequency and percentage of the parental income/social status influence adolescents' abuse of substance in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria.**

Items	N	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Total (%)
Economic status of parents influence adolescents to abuse substances	1338	823 (61.5%)	419 (31.3%)	96 (7.2%)	100
Social status of parents influence adolescents to abuse substances	1338	777 (58.1%)	467 (34.9%)	94 (7.0%)	100
Adolescents from less privilege homes are prone to abuse substances	1338	662 (49.5%)	566 (42.3%)	110 (8.2%)	100
Mothers who are well to do are prone to have adolescents who abuse substances	1338	646 (48.3%)	584 (43.6%)	108 (8.1%)	100
Fathers who are well to do are prone to have adolescents who abuse substances	1338	680 (50.8%)	539 (40.3%)	119 (8.9%)	100
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>717.6 (53.64%)</b>	<b>515 (38.48%)</b>	<b>105.4 (7.88%)</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Author's Field Survey (2022)

Table 1 reveals the total percentage of the respondents' opinion on how parental income/social status influence adolescents' abuse of substances in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. The result shows that 823 of the respondents representing 61.5% agreed that Parents income/social status influence adolescents' attitude towards substance abuse. 419 of the respondents (31.3%) disagreed. While 96 (7.2%) of the respondents were undecided that Parents income/social status influence adolescents' attitude towards substance abuse. Furthermore, 777 of the respondents representing 58.1% agreed that parents with high social status are likely to have adolescents who abuses substance, 467 of the respondents representing 34.9% disagreed. While 94 (7.0%) of the respondents were undecided.

Likewise, the results further show that 662 (49.5%) agreed that respondents from less privilege home may be prone to abuse substances, 566 (42.3%) disagreed, while 110 (8.2%) of the respondents were undecided. In addition, 646 (48.3%) and 584 (43.6%) Agreed and disagreed respectively that Mothers who are wealthy are prone to have adolescents' who abuse substances while 108 (8.1%) were undecided. Consequently, Fathers that are wealthy are prone to have adolescents to abuse substances as revealed in this study i.e. 680 (50.8%) and 539

(40.3%) agreed and disagreed while 119 (8.9%) remained undecided. On the opinion of parents who sells substances are likely to have adolescents who abuse substances was overwhelmingly accepted by respondents of 92% and only 8% had argued against this remark.

Qualitative data from the in-depth interview supported the findings as captured by quantitative data above. thus:

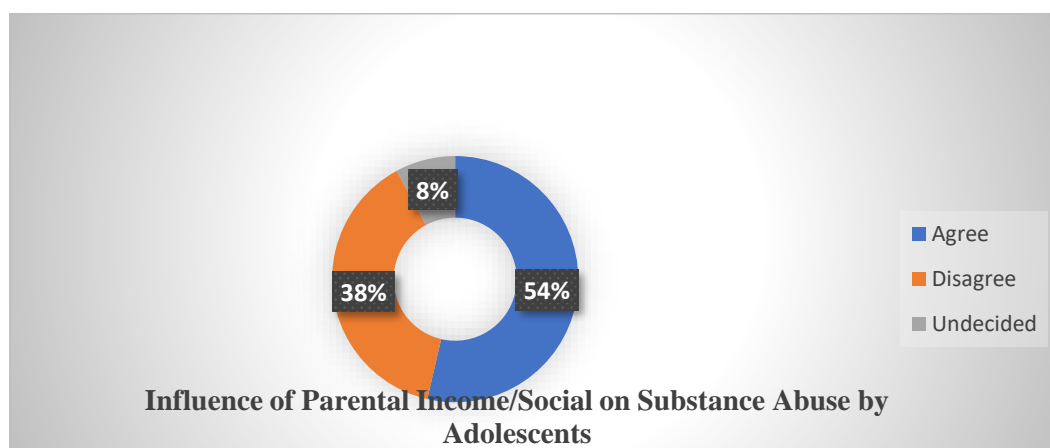
“...Parents, many a times give money to their adolescents’ to please them, some adolescents tell lies in order to have access to cash. There are cases of adolescents collecting money for field trips excessively and they may not travel out of the community... and because parents don’t care they wouldn’t whether their adolescents’ children travelled or not... in some cases adolescents’ benefits from their peers and through them they get access to some substances. most of the adolescents from wealthy families provide support to others in a view that they are all one in the business”. [interviewee: IDI, with some Community Leaders in the FCT].

A parent revealed that:

“...I give a sum of Ten thousand (10,000) to my Son on Monthly basis for up-keep (detergent for washing clothes, weekly hairdo, transport to school, and breakfast while in school... I don’t ask him how he spends the stipends ... I only send him alert at the end of every month”. [interviewee: IDI, with a parent in one of area councils of the FCT].

The overall perception of the respondents in this population shows that 717.6 (54%) agreed that income/social status of parents’ influence adolescents’ abuse of substances in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, while 515 (38%) disagreed and only 105 (8.9%) were undecided. The result was further illustrated with a Pie-chart below.

**Fig. 1: Influence of Parental Income/Social Status on Adolescents’ Substances Abuse in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria.**



**Source:** Author’s Field Survey (2022).

Figure 1 This figure revealed the distribution of percentage of the respondents’ Parental income/social status to influence adolescents’ abuse of substances in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. This implies that more of the respondents (54%) agreed while 38% disagreed and 8% were undecided; that it’s undeniable that income/social status of parent’s influence adolescents’ abuse of substances in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja.

## Test of Hypothesis

Differences in parental income is not likely to create access and abuse of substances among adolescents of different income status. To test this formulated hypothesis, Analysis of Variance was used and the result is as presented in Table 4.7.2.

**Table 1: ANOVA comparison of the perception of adolescent based on their parent income/social status in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria.**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3432.074	4	858.019	5.177	.000
Within Groups	220943.279	1333	165.749		
Total	224375.353	1337			

**Source:** Author's Field Survey 2022.

Results in table 1: shows post-test findings of the respondents' perception of Adolescent who abuse substances between parents with different income status. The results show  $F(4, 1333) = 5.17$ ,  $P = (0.01) < 0.05$ , and therefore indicates a significant difference between the respondents' perception of Adolescent who abuse substances between parents with different income statuses. Therefore, differences in parental income is not likely to create access and abuse of substances among adolescents of different income statuses was rejected.

**Table: 4.3.2.1: To determine the direction of the significant difference Scheffe's multiple comparisons were conducted and the result is presented below.**

(I) Income	(J) Income	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1000-5000	6000-10000	1.425	.831	.568	-1.14	3.99
	11000-15000	4.645*	1.182	.004	1.00	8.29
	16000-20000	1.907	1.359	.741	-2.29	6.10
	21000 and above	-1.549	1.359	.861	-5.74	2.64
6000-10000	1000-5000	-1.425	.831	.568	-3.99	1.14
	11000-15000	3.220	1.209	.131	-.51	6.95
	16000-20000	.482	1.383	.998	-3.78	4.75
	21000 and above	-2.974	1.383	.328	-7.24	1.29
11000-15000	1000-5000	-4.645*	1.182	.004	-8.29	-1.00
	6000-10000	-3.220	1.209	.131	-6.95	.51
	16000-20000	-2.738	1.618	.581	-7.73	2.25
	21000 and above	-6.195*	1.618	.006	-11.19	-1.20
16000-20000	1000-5000	-1.907	1.359	.741	-6.10	2.29
	6000-10000	-.482	1.383	.998	-4.75	3.78
	11000-15000	2.738	1.618	.581	-2.25	7.73
	21000 and above	-3.457	1.752	.421	-8.86	1.95
21000 and above	1000-5000	1.549	1.359	.861	-2.64	5.74
	6000-10000	2.974	1.383	.328	-1.29	7.24
	11000-15000	6.195*	1.618	.006	1.20	11.19
	16000-20000	3.457	1.752	.421	-1.95	8.86

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

**Source:** Author's Field Survey 2022

Scheffe's multiple comparisons analysis on Table 1. indicated that the observed significant difference was between Adolescent of parents who earned 1000 – 5000, 6000 - 10,000, 11,000 – 15,000 and parents that earn 21,000 and above. With the mean difference of 4.645, P value  $(0.01) < 0.05$  levels. There was a significant difference between Adolescent of parents who earned 1000 – 5, 000, Mean difference of -4.645 and P value of  $(0.01) < 0.05$  levels. Mean difference of -6.20 and P value of  $(0.01) < 0.05$  levels. and 21,000 and above the mean difference is 6.20, P-value of .01 which also is significant at 0.05 levels. The mean difference is in favour of Adolescent whose parents earn 21,000 and above. It is important to note that there was no significant in the income among the other groups.

Summarily therefore, the significance at .004 and .006 found in the four (4) categorizations in the above table access substances through other means rather than their parents' economic status. Substance group association has proof significant in providing access to usage of substances as established in this study.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of this study. Thus:

- I. That Parents are fundamental models in influencing the lives of their adolescents in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria.
- II. Parent socio-economic status greatly facilitate adolescents abuse of substances in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria.
- III. The hypothesis that states differences in parental income is not likely to create access and abuse of substances among adolescents of different income statuses was rejected.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby advanced in line with the findings of the study.

- I. Parents must make sure they exhibit good behavioral dispositions and practice before their wards and should live up to their expectations in dedicating adequate and quality time for socialization of their adolescents in order to impart good morals, ethics and ideals especially over their male adolescents as well as their female counterparts to help build a healthy generation.
- II. Wealthy parents should ensure genuine reasons for release of funds and monitor friends of their wards; on the other hand, Government should set aside periodic funding for the conduct of surveys for a data bank on substance use and abuse; the information should be utilized in policy formulation, planning and implementation.

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