

## **Substance Abuse and Violence Behaviour Among Youths of Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria**

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## ABSTRACT

The main thrust of this paper is to examine *Substance abuse and violence behaviour among youths of Southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria*. Substance abuse has remained one of the leading causes of social vices in Southern parts of Cross River State and other states in Nigeria. Substance abuse has been associated with violent behavior over time in both developed and developing countries of the world. The pervasiveness of substance abuse has proportionally increased crime and criminality in Nigeria. Substance or drug abuse has become an integral part of human culture, past and present with special reference to the Nigerian society. Violence behaviour has become a normal in a society where youths are restive. Violence related to substance abuse twigs from the trade in drugs, which is focused in poor and rural communities. The work adopts Rational Choice Theory as a framework to the study. The work was carried in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The choice of the study area was because of the crime vulnerability of the District. Data obtained from the study were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. The result shows that substance abuse does not promote violence behaviour among the youths. Based on this, it was recommended that recommends that parents should check the movement and behaviour of their children to avoid substance abuse and development of violence behaviour. The paper also recommends that government security agencies should strengthened security surveillance to control drug peddling.

**KEYWORDS:** Substance, abuse, Violence, behaviour, youths and southern Senatorial District.

## INTRODUCTION

The abuse of substance in human society is as old as man. Substance abuse is sometime called maladaptive pattern of social behaviour. One of the problems faced by developing nations today, specifically Nigeria is the rising number of individuals who are using or abusing substances like, illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco that has served as an impetus to violence among the youths (Fatoye, & Morakinyo 2012). Substance abuse is characterized by a destructive pattern of lifestyle of the individual. The term “substance abuse” does not exclude dependency, but is otherwise used in a similar manner in nonmedical contexts to explain psychosocial behaviour. Some of the drugs most often associated with substance abuse include alcohol, amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines (particularly temazepam, nimetazepam, and flunitrazepam), cocaine, methaqualone, and opioids. A good number of youths in most developing countries of the world today are into substance abuse. The continuous intake of such substances in whatever quantities lead to undesirable consequences and psych-social behaviour among the youths (Abudu, 2008).

In many Third World Countries like Nigeria, alcoholic consumption has been increasing dramatically over the last 18 to 20 years and this has promoted violence behaviour among the youths. Youthful age is considered a critical period of formation and behavioral imitation and responses such as using drugs as a solace to stress, peer pressure and emotional distress (American Journal of Public Health, 1997). Most youths used substances to satisfy a need or to serve a “function”. Like pain relief and pleasurable feelings. Sometimes, substance abuse by the youths is to relieve stress or heighten enjoyment but may lead to violence behaviour. Youths use substances to cope with the lack of basic rights and necessities such as food, clothing, shelter and education, the result may be further infringements by violence behaviour (Spooner, 2015).

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Substance abuse has been a thorny social problem throughout human history. Substance abuse is seen as the harmful use of psycho-active substances like alcohol and other illicit drugs that are considered harmful by the public health regulations. In most developing countries of the world like Nigeria, some of the common substance abused include: alcohol, marijuana (ganja), heroin, cocaine, tobacco (cigarette) etc. Substance abuse is also known as drug abuse. Drug when taken for reasons other than medical, causes damage to the physical or mental functioning of an individual, it becomes 'substance abuse'. The National Household Survey of Drug Use 2017 in Nigeria shows that Alcohol (21.4%), cannabis (3.0%) and opioids (0.7%) that shows that substance abuse is a common social problem in most developing countries of the world including Nigeria. The increasing production, distribution, promotion as well as the availability of substance has resulted in rising substance abuse related problems emerging as a major public health problem in Nigeria. Social worker, psychiatrists, other mental health professionals, are ever more detecting substance use and abuse as a life-threatening public health badly-behaved. Despite attempts to limit access to psychoactive substances by the youths, the use of such substances is common among adult, in most communities in Nigeria. Therefore, substance abuse implies hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. Abuse of substances among the youths is associated with a broad range of high-risk behaviour. Most of the behaviour arising from substance abuse has a profound health, economic and social consequences on the individuals and the entire society (John, Barman, Bal, Chandy, Samuel and Thokchom, 2009). For instance, some youths are pushed in deviant behaviour like unprotected sexual intercourse, interpersonal violence, destruction of property and perform poorly in their in academic programme (De Miranda, 1987). Substance abuse

has a grievous implication on the economy on the country. This is evident in large sums of money that are used in prevention and treatment of the victim at the rehabilitation centers.

## **EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

In every action, there is a reward. Hence, the effects of drug abuse on the youths and drug addicts according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Classified the effects of drug abuse on the following categories: Short-term effects and Long –Term effects. Short-term effects: Drugs are chemical compounds that affect the mind and body and also initiate some changes and response in the body. The effects of substance abuse depend on the drug, dosage, and delivery method. The short-term effects of substance abuse or misusing a prescription medication, can produce has a propensity of producing effects like: changes in appetite, sleeplessness or insomnia, increased heart rate, slurred and changes in cognitive ability. The effects of substance abuse can be holistic, that is it affect the social, physical, mental, economic and religious aspects of the individual life and wellbeing. Long-term effects: Substance abuse have numerous long-term effects on the abusers and the entire society. Continuous substance abuse can alter a person's brain structure and function. Leading to the following long term effects: Depression, anxiety, panic disorders, increased aggression, paranoia and hallucinations. Long-term effects of drug abuse can also affect a person's learning and concentration ability leading to poor result, productivity and proficiency (John, Barman, Bal, Chandy, Samuel and Thokchom, 2009). Chronic drug use can also produce long-term effects of the substance on the individual like: Psychosocial dysfunctions, personality disorders, suicidal thoughts, attempted suicide, and suicide. Cardiovascular disease, stimulants, such as cocaine and methamphetamines, can damage the heart and blood vessels (John, Barman, Bal, Chandy, Samuel and Thokchom, 2009). It also affects coronary artery disease, arrhythmia, and

heart attack. Others are Kidney damage, liver disease and mental disorder. Psychologists have observed that substance abuse among the youths have a long-term effect on the academic performance of the individual. That is the declining grades, absenteeism, hooliganism and dropping out of school as a result of cognitive and behavioral problems experienced arising from substance abused.

### **VIOLENCE BEHAVIOUR AMONG YOUTHS**

Violent behaviour is any behaviour of individual that threatens or harms the individual or destroys property. Violent behaviour among some youths often begins with verbal threats but over time escalates to involve physical harm and attack. Violence is a common type of human behaviour that occurs in every human society whether developed or developing. Violence behaviour can be grouped based on its motivation. For instance, reactive violence. This type of violence typically involves the expression of anger and hostile approach towards hurting others. The issue of violent behaviors among the youths addressed the extreme manifestations of social problems display in violent among the youths. Youths are commonly involved in the following forms of violence behaviour: Physical violence, Sexual violence, Emotional violence, Psychological violence, Spiritual violence, and Cultural violence (Obi and Ozumba, 2007).

Physical Violence: this form of violence behaviour involved the use of someone body organs or an object to control a person's actions. Physical violence always results to physical force with the end products like pain, discomfort or injury, arm-twisting, strangling, burning, stabbing, punching, pushing, slapping and beating. Therefore, physical form of violence is the deliberate use of force against an individual leading to a severe injury and eventual death (Fareo, 2016). Sexual Violence: Another form of violence behaviour associated with youth is the sexual violence. This relates to the

use of force and objects in taking advantage of the individual sexuality. Sexual Violence manifest in form of touching in a sexual manner without consent for instance: kissing, grabbing, fondling among others. Exposing the individual HIV-AIDS status without consent has been classified as a form of sexual violence and this has been linked to some youths who make others vulnerable.

#### Emotional Violence

Emotional abuse is a form of interactive violence that involves all forms of non-physical violence and distress caused through non-verbal and verbal actions and inactions. Emotional abuse is deliberate and manipulative in nature. Like other types of abuse, emotional abuse most often affects those with the least power, resources and low defense mechanism (Krumins, 2011). Emotional abusers have a need to dominate and feel in charge of their victims. Emotional abuse manifest in form of verbal assaults, insults, threats, financial control, work restrictions, and disregard for victims' and among others (O'Hagen, 2006). In whatever magnitude, emotional abuse results in victims feeling powerless, hurt, angry, worthless, afraid and withdrawn.

#### Psychological Violence:

psychological violence is the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to harm another person and cause a psychological discomfort. Psychological violence is an impulse that aggravate the trauma of physical and sexual abuse, and it has also been found to cause long-term damage to a victim's mental wellbeing. Psychological violence has led some of its victims to experiencing depression, attempted suicide, post-traumatic disorder, inferiority complex, low self-esteem among others. Other forms of violence behaviour include: spiritual violence behaviour, cultural Violence behaviour

### **Rational Choice Theory (RTC)**

The Rational Choice Theory was developed by Dereck Cornish and Ronald Clarke (1986) in their book titled *The Reasoning Criminal*. According to the theory if the risk outweighs the benefit to be derived from committing the crime, the potential criminal will engage in the crime but if on the other hand the benefit envisaged is lower than the risk involved in prosecuting the crime then the potential criminal will renege. The key assumptions of the theory can be traced back to the writings of moral philosophers like Adam Smith. The theory's core was subsequently developed by what is now referred to as neoclassical economics. The key three assumptions of the theory is that individuals have selfish preferences, they maximize their own utility and they act independently based on full information. The rational choice theory also known as choice theory or rational action theory, is a theory for understanding and often modelling social and economic as well as individual behaviour. Rational Choice Theory is an approach used by social scientists to understand human behavior. The approach has long been the dominant paradigm in economics, but in recent decades it has become more widely used in other disciplines such as Sociology, psychology, Political Science and among others.

The theory is relevant to the work because some youths who are involved in drug abuse leading to violence is a rational decision actions. The theory is criticized for not being able to explain crimes committed by mentally deranged persons and some minors who do not possess the ability to be rational enough to the extent that they could be held criminally responsible for their actions.

## **Materials and Method**

The work adopts the descriptive research design, this is because this design allows for random sample and attempt to answer research questions in the study. The design also answers questions why the population is behaving or reacting that way, what has been the changes in the population. The design is apt because it allows for close observation of respondents in the study. The work shall be carried out in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. The area has the following local governments: Calabar municipality, Calabar South, Odukpani, Bakassi, and Akampka. For instance, Calabar lies between latitudes  $4^{\circ} 46' 1''$  -  $4^{\circ} 58' 1''$  North of the equator and longitudes  $8^{\circ} 15' 1''$  -  $8^{\circ} 26' 1''$  East of the Greenwich meridian with an approximate area of 1480 km<sup>2</sup>. Calabar is located in a coastal zone within the humid subtropical region and it is affected by weather systems originating from all sides. The city experiences the full influence of the overhead sun throughout the year which provides abundant and constant insolation. Consequently, the atmospheric temperature within the area as observed by Mannion (2002) are constantly high and changes slightly with the year and according to Udo (1975) the mean daily temperature remain around 37<sup>o</sup>c all year round except during the raining season. The area has a relative humidity that is high throughout the year except during the short dry harmattan spell. Calabar has an average of eighty (80 %) percent relative humidity that is sometimes one hundred (100 %) percent much higher in the morning and with an average vapour pressure in the air of 29 millibars throughout the year (NAAR, 1995). Udo (1975) reported that Calabar has the highest amount of relative humidity in Nigeria. Calabar metropolis, going by the 2006 census figures of the National Population Commission (NPC, 2006) has an estimated total population of 371,022. The population of Calabar Municipality is 179,392 with 91,208 males and 88,184 females. Calabar South on the other hand has a total population of 191,630 made up of 95,399 males and 96,231 females, with a projected

annual growth rate of 2.8 percent. The major source of population growth in Calabar is in-migration (Eze, 2008). This inter-mixture of population from neighbouring communities of the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa extractions including a good number of non-Nigerian immigrants has translated into a fusion of cultures which according to Ebong (1980) has brought in the adoption of alien architecture in styles and layout of the city. Currently, Calabar is witnessing a seasonal surge in both vehicular and human population especially during the yuletide seasons when the Christmas carnival takes place. This singular event has great incentives for increased development of new properties (especially in the housing and hospitality sectors), maintenance, decoration and re-decoration of existing ones. On the other hand, Akamkpa Local Government Area is one of the local government areas in Cross River state Nigeria with its administrative headquarters situated in Akamkpa town. According to the 2006 population Census result, the area has a total area: 5,003 km<sup>2</sup>, total population of 151,125 with Postal code: 542. The area has the following political wards: (Egup-Ipa, Ehom, Erei, Iko Ekpe-Rem, Ikpai, Netin, North West (Ito), Oban, Ojuk, Ubang-Hara, Umon, Uyanga). The area has a large land mass with vegetative area that has been used in plantation farming like Cocoa, rubber among others. The people are endured with fertile soil. Hence taking to farming as a major occupation. The place is gradually developing. While, Akpabuyo Local Government Area headquarters is located in the town of Ikot Nakanda, and comprises of several towns which include Atimbo, Eneyo, Ikang, Idundu, Ikot Edem Odo, and Ikot Eyo. Akpabuyo Local Government Area has a postal code of 541 and was created as a local government of its own in 1991.

The Local Government Area falls under the Cross River South Senatorial District and forms a federal constituency alongside Bakkasi LGA and Calabar South. The local government area shares a boundary with Akampa LGA, the Republic of Cameroon, Bakassi LGA, and Calabar South

to the North, East, South, and West respectively. The area has a total area: 1,241 km<sup>2</sup> and a total population (2006): 271,395.

The area is good in fishing, thereby taking fishing as their main occupation. This is made possible because the area is a riverine region. The area is current hosting one of the private universities in Cross River State. Bakassi Local Government Area has its administrative headquarters in Ikang and consists of other towns such as Abana, Akpankanya, Akwa, Amoto, Ambai Ekpa, Archibong, Atai, Ema, Efut Iwang, Ekpot Abia, and Odiong. Bakassi Local Government Area mainly consists of the Oron people and lies between the Cross River estuary. The Local Government Area was created on December 12, 1996, from Akpabuyo Local Government Area and is bounded in the East by the Republic of Cameroon, in the South by Equatorial Guinea and the Bight of Bonny, in the West by the Cross River Estuary, and North by Akpabuyo Local Government Area. The area has a large river that make fishing as their main occupation. The people are also good at farming which provide food security for the people in the area and the state as a whole. Calabar South Local Government Area is located in the town of Anantigha, consisting of the major districts of Anantiga and 12 wards. Total area is 264 km<sup>2</sup>, total population according to the 2006 census 191,630 and a Postal code: 540. The political wards in the area include the following: Calabar South 1, Calabar South 2, Calabar South 3, Calabar South 4, Calabar South 5, Calabar South 6, Calabar South 7, Calabar South 8, Calabar South 9, Calabar South 10, Calabar South 11, Calabar South 12. The area is an adjunct of the Calabar Municipality and a developing city in the area. The people are involved in farming though at the subsistence level.

Odukpani Local Government Area is one of the 18 Local Government Areas in the state and consists of Adiabo Efut, Creek Town, Ekor/Anaku, Eniong, Eki, Obomitiat, Mbiabo, Odot, Odukpani Central, Onim, Ankiong, Ikoneto, Idere, Ukwa Ibom, Inuakpa Okoyong, and other

villages. The area consist of the following districts: (Adiabo Efut, Creek Town, Ekori/Anaku, Eki, Obomitiat, Mbiabo, Eniong, Odot, Odukpani Central, Onim, Ankiong, Ikoneto, Ho, Idere, Ukwabom, Akpap Okoyong, Eniong Abatim, Ito, Inuakpa Okoyong, Okurikang). The area is one of the oldest local Government Areas in the State. The local Government is one of the old local governments that first has contact with the Europeans during the process of colonization. This has made the area to embraced development and civilization at the early stage. The area is blessed with arable land which has made the people great farmers with farming as a means of livelihood.

According to the 2006 population Census result, the study areas (Calabar Municipality, Calabar South, Akamkpa, Odukpani, Akpabuyo and Bakassi Local Government Areas). The study area has the population of 903, 417 (Nine Hundred and Three Thousand, Four Hundred and Seventeen persons). From this population, the sample of the study will be obtained for the study (Kamlesh, Sahu, & Soma, 2016).

A sample of Four Hundred (400) respondents will be selected for the study of equal proportion across the senatorial district of the study area. The sample will be selected across the local Governments in the study areas. The sample will be selected using the Taro Yamane (1962) sample framework. The sampling technique used in the study consist of simple random sampling technique and systematic sampling techniques respectively. The first approach was the selection of political wards from each of the local government areas in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The electoral wards was used as a cluster of the study. The next stage shall be the selection of villages (one each) from these wards using a simple random sampling technique.

The villages were blindly picked for the study. After this, there was selection of household using systematic random sampling technique. At this stage, eighty respondents were selected using the systematic random sampling technique. After a random start, respondents were picked from the

next third house to obtain response to the study. Two sources of data collection were used to obtain information for the study.

**Result and Discussion**

*Objective One*

The first objective was to examine Substance abuse and violence behaviour among youths of Southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria. The result is presented in the table below.

**Correlation Analysis Coefficient of the Relationship between substance abuse and violence behaviour.**

<b>Variabl es</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>EX EY</b>	<b>EX<sup>2</sup> EY<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>EX Y</b>	<b>r- val ue</b>
Substan ce abuse	17.0 1	10.8 6	189 0	1163 57	8293 4	0.03 0
Violenc e behavio ur	4.78	5.81	671 9	8042 9		

**Significant at 0.05 level, df=393, critical r=0.113**

From the result, following the decision rules, it revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.030 is less than the critical r-value of 0.113 at 0.05 level of significance (error limit of the study ) with 393 degree of freedom. (D.F ) With this result, it implies that substance abuse is not related to violence behaviour. From this result, it can be established that there are other factors promoting violence behaviour. That is substance abuse is not the only drive to violence behaviour among the youths.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The result from the descriptive analysis to check the extent to which Substance abuse and violence behaviour among youths of Southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria. But the finding revealed that substance abuse does not promote violence behaviour among the youths. the finding revealed that youth unemployment, poverty (income inequality), bad governance among other factors are the main causes of youth's violence behaviour. The result from the descriptive analysis was subjected to correlation analysis. This is so because the calculated r-value of 0.030 is less than the critical R-value of 0.113 at 0.05 level of significance (error limit of the study ) with 393 degree of freedom. (D.F.). The finding corresponds with that of John, Barman, Bal, Chandy, Samueland Thokchom, (2009) who found evidence that youths violence behaviour does not have any correlates with drug abuse. Their findings revealed that according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2019), there is a growing rate of youths' unemployment which is a catalyst for youths restiveness and violence behaviour. Krumins, (2011) carried out empirical studies and the result shows that the increased in crime wave in some mega cities in Nigeria is linked to joblessness among the youths. The study revealed that the degree of youth unemployment is directly proportional to youths violence behaviour.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Substance abuse and violence behaviour has become a serious social phenomenon in some developing countries like Nigeria. The use of alcohol, tobacco, various drugs is a wide spread phenomenon among some Nigeria youths. The abuse of psychoactive drugs among youths is an issue of national concern because of the associated violence behaviour displayed by these youths. Substance abuse has been an issue of public health in Africa and Nigeria in particular. As substance abuse and violence behaviour is never limited to particular social groups or class in human societies but predominantly among the youths. Therefore, the paper recommends that parents should check the movement and behaviour of their children to avoid substance abuse and development of violence behaviour. The paper also recommends that government security agencies should strengthened security surveillance to control drug peddling.

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