

## Substance Abuse and Criminality: A Study of Youths in Kaduna North Local Government Area of Kaduna State Nigeria

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### Abstract

The increasing rate of criminality among youths in Kaduna North local government area of Kaduna State, Nigeria has necessitated the need to examine the relationship that exists between substance abuse and criminality in the area. Hence, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between substance abuse and criminality in Kaduna North local government area. The study adopted the Subculture Theory. The research sample a total of three hundred and ninety-two (392), which were obtained through the snowballing method. The data was analyzed using simple percentage tables, cross-tabulation, and Chi-square, which are contained in SPSS Version 20. The following were the findings of this study: Youths who consume substances frequently are more likely to be involved in crime than those who consume less. This also means that youth involvement in crime is influenced by their daily usage of substances. The study recommends that restrictions should be put on the sale of drugs. Government should pass laws that will stiffen the penalty for criminality that is influenced by substance use so that that will serve as deterrent to others.

**Keywords:** Substance Abuse, Criminality, Youths

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## **Introduction**

Youths are seen as an active group of individuals in society who are held to high expectations. Youths are held in such high regard by society that they think they are essential to accomplishing societal objectives such as economic success, political stability, and social fairness. They are seen to be the most precious assets for fostering any social progress. Every human civilization relies on you as the engines and cornerstones. Youths have served and created many civilizations throughout history, which currently offer economic balance, political stability, and social fairness. Substance misuse is a serious issue that has a negative impact on many young people's creativity, mental capacity, and productivity (Siro, 2014). Substance misuse impacts all sections of society in all nations, according to Garba (2005). Substance addiction has a negative impact on young people's independence and development, which is one of the world's most significant assets.

Those young individuals abuse such narcotics in order to do those heinous crimes. Substance abuse is also known as drug abuse or addiction. It is the behavior of a consumer who consumes a substance in quantities or in ways that are harmful to themselves or others. This frequently results in chronic, relapsing brain illness marked by obsessive drug seeking and use, despite the negative effects.

According to KADBUSA (2021), one out of every ten Kaduna State inhabitants misuse narcotics, and 10% of Kaduna State people have drug-related difficulties. Substance misuse is a dangerous practice that has resulted in many and significant issues in our society, with teenagers being the primary sufferers. Because of peer and parental influence, parental negligence, social and mass media, and other factors, many kids throughout the country become drug addicts. The media, communities, parents, and the general public are all concerned about the numerous difficulties caused by young people who misuse drugs. (Karofi, 2005).

Many of these crimes were committed while under the influence of psychotropic drugs such as alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, marijuana, and some pain relievers. Crime is as ancient as the human race, and it has infiltrated every level of human society to the point where no culture can claim to be devoid of it. A crime, according to Sampson and Laub (1993), is an act or omission that is punishable by imprisonment and/or a monetary penalty. It might alternatively be described as an infraction that extends beyond the private sphere into the public sphere, including the violation of prohibitory norms or regulations that are subject to legitimate penalties or consequences, and

which necessitates the involvement of a public authority. Murder, abduction, robbery, burglary, rape, drunk driving, assault, and other crimes have all been committed over time.

Hence, scholars and policymakers have long been interested in the link between substance abuse and crime, as evidenced by a large body of literature ranging from seminal works like Terry and Pellens' *The Opium Problem* (1928) to more recent works like Karofi (2005) and Nasiru, Musawa, Hassan, and Ejembi's *Nasiru, Musawa, Hassan, and Ejembi's* (2019). These connections have also been the focus of decades of psychological, social, and criminological study. As a result, criminological study is presently focused on understanding the link between drug misuse and criminal conduct. This research was undertaken in Kaduna North LGA for the purpose of specificity, in order to investigate substance abuse and criminality as it exists in Kaduna North LGA and to provide solutions to the concerns.

### **Objective**

To examine the relationship between substance abuse and criminality

### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: Youths who consume substance frequently are not more likely to be involve in crime than those who consume less

H<sub>1</sub>: Youths who consume substance frequently are more likely to be involve in crime than those who consume less

### **Subculture Theory of crime**

Cohen, A. K., proposed the subculture theory in 1955. The subculture theory arose from the study of the Chicago School on Gangs and evolved into a series of hypotheses suggesting that some groups or subcultures in society have values and attitudes that are conducive to crime and violence via the symbolic interactionism school. Theorists argue that if this pattern of offending can be identified and managed, the shift from young offender to chronic criminal may be broken. Some theories are functionalist, thinking that criminal behaviour is driven by economic requirements, while others argue that deviance is motivated by social class. According to the theory, crime is the

result of young people being drawn together into so-called subcultures where deviant values and moral notions predominate.

## **Methodology**

The correlational research design was adopted in this study. This is because correlational research methodology aids in the verification and explanation of variable relationships. The quantitative technique was chosen in this study because it enabled the researcher to work with statistics and figures. The use of questionnaires, which were utilized in this research, is also supported by this approach. This research was conducted in Kaduna. North is a Nigerian local government area in Kaduna State. The town of Doka is where the organization's headquarters are located. It covers 72 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population density of 5,883.1 km<sup>2</sup>. The population prediction for 2016 is 492,100 people [NPC population census projection, 2016]. The population of the region is diverse, although the Hausa constitute the majority ethnic group. Islam is the most widely practiced religion. Males make up 51.3 percent of the population, while females make up 48.7%. The population also revealed that teenagers aged 18 to 39 comprised 32.7 percent, children 51.7 percent, and adults 15.6 percent of the study's population. This study's demographic includes substance-abusing minors in the LGA between the ages of 18 and 39. Three hundred and ninety-two (392) respondents made up the study's sample size. Because the population of this research was not specified, the sample size was determined using the snowballing approach, commonly known as the referral method. The respondents were given semi-structured questionnaires, which were immediately retrieved with the aid of 13 research assistants. The data was cleaned, coded, and analyzed using frequency tables, percentage tables, and inferential statistics. Chi-square and Pearson Product Moment were employed to assess the hypotheses in this study. The Statistical Package for Social Science was used to analyze the data (SPSS version 20).

## **Result**

### **Demographic Profile of Respondents**

**Table 1: Socio Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Sex Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	227	57.9
Female	165	42.1
Total	392	100.0
<b>Age Category</b>		
18-23	58	14.8
24-29	119	30.4
30-35	139	35.4
36-39	76	19.4
Total	392	100.0
<b>Religion</b>		
Islam	172	43.9
Christianity	189	48.2
Others	31	7.9
Total	392	100.0
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Yoruba	61	17.0
Hausa	120	33.4
Igbo	97	27.0
Others	81	22.6
Total	359	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	202	51.6
Married	97	24.7
Divorced	43	11.0

Widowed	31	7.9
Separated	15	3.8
Others	4	1.0
Total	392	100.0
<hr/> <b>Education</b>		
Informal Education	47	12.0
Primary Education	31	7.9
Secondary Education	140	35.7
Tertiary Education	158	40.3
Others	16	4.1
Total	392	100.0
<hr/> <b>Employment status</b>		
Employed	94	24.0
Self Employed	137	34.9
Unemployed	161	41.1
Total	392	100.0
<hr/> <b>If employed, what type?</b>		
Civil Service	44	13.3
Public Service	46	13.9
Business	108	32.6
Artisan	75	22.7
Others	58	17.5
Total	331	100.0
<hr/> <b>Level of Monthly Income</b>		
Less than ₦10000	100	25.5
₦10001 – ₦20000	62	15.8
₦20001 – ₦30000	78	19.9
₦30001 – ₦40000	71	18.1
₦40001 and above	81	20.7
Total	392	100.0

Table 1 showed the sex of the respondents. 57.9% of the respondents were male, while 42.1% were female. Their age as at their last birthday shows that 14.8% of the respondents were between 18 and 23 years of age, 30.4% were between the ages of 24 and 29 years, 35.4% were between the ages of 30-35 years, and 19.4% were from 36 to 39 years. Also, the data distribution of respondents by religion in the same table shows that 48.2% of the respondents were Christians, 43.9% were Muslims, and 7.9% practiced other religions like Atheism. The table showed the ethnicity of the respondents. 17.0% of the respondents were Yorubas, 33.4% were Hausas, 27.0% were Igbos, and 22.0% were from other ethnic groups like Fulani, Jaba, and Bajju. Their marital status indicates that 51.6% of the respondents were single, 24.7% were married, 11.0% were divorced, 7.9% were widowed, 3.8% were separated, and 1.0% were cohabiting.

The table reveals the current level of education attained by 12.0% of the respondents who had informal educational background, 7.9% had primary education, 35.7% had secondary education, and 40.3% had tertiary education, while 4.1% had other educational background. The distribution of respondents by employment status shows that 34.9% of the respondents were self-employed, 24.0% were employed, while 41.1% fell under the category of unemployed. The types of employment showed that 13.3% of the respondents were civil servants, 13.9% were public servants, 32.6% were employed in private businesses, and 22.7% were employed by artisans, while 17.5% were employed by other bodies such as unions. The income level of the respondents showed that 25.5% of them earned less than ₦10,000, 15.8% earned between ₦10,001 and ₦20,000, 19.9% earned between ₦20,001 and ₦30,000, and 18.1% earned between ₦30,001 and ₦40,000, while 20.7% earned more than ₦40,001.

**Table 2: Substance abuse**

Type of substance used	Frequency	Percentage
Marijuana(Wiwi)	90	24.2
Amphetamine (Kwaya)	39	10.5
Codeine Syrup	47	12.6
Tobacco and Kolanut	28	7.5
Alcohol	63	16.9
Shisha	17	4.6
Local Brew (Burukutu)	20	5.4

Snuff	43	11.6
Glue (Sholisho)	2	0.5
Others	23	6.2
Total	372	100.0
<hr/> <b>Age of first substance use</b>		
18-23	215	56.6
24-29	70	18.4
30-35	74	19.5
36-39	21	5.5
Total	380	100.0
<hr/> <b>Where substance users learnt their habit from</b>		
Friends	210	56.6
Parents	46	12.4
Teachers	25	6.7
Relatives	69	18.6
Others	21	5.7
Total	371	100.0
<hr/> <b>Frequency of Substance usage</b>		
Daily	183	49.1
Weekly	88	23.6
Monthly	49	13.1
Occasionally	53	14.2
Total	373	100.0
<hr/> <b>Frequency of usage In the last one month</b>		
1-5 times	73	20.0
6-10 times	72	19.7
11-15 times	69	18.9
16 - 20 times	62	17.0
21 times and above	89	24.4
Total	365	100.0
<hr/> <b>Quantity take in kilograms</b>		
1-5kg	94	29.7
6-10 kg	81	25.6
11-15kg	47	14.8
16-20 kg	64	20.2

21kg and above	31	9.8
Total	317	100.0

Table 2 reveals some background information about the drug abusers. The distribution of respondents by the type of substance showed that 24.2% used marijuana (Wiwi), while 0.5% used glue (Sholisho). The age at which the respondents used the first substance showed that 56.6% of the respondents took their first substance between the ages of 18–23, while 5.5% began substance abuse between the ages of 36–39 years. The result further shows that 56.6% of the respondents learned substance abuse from their friends, while 5.7% learnt it from other people like their neighbours. Also, 49.1% of the respondents use substances daily, while 13.1% use substances monthly. Still on the table, 24.4% of the respondents showed that they had taken substances more than 21 times in the last month, while 18.9% indicated that they had only taken substances between 6–10 times in the last month. With regards to the quantity taken, the table shows that 22.8% of the respondents take between 51 and 100 mil, while 16.1% take more than 201 mil. Also, 29.7% of the respondents take between 1 and 5 kg of substances, while 9.8% take more than 21 kg of substances.

**Table 3: Last Crime Committed**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Involvement in crime</b>		
No	147	41.6
Yes	206	58.4
Total	353	100.0
<b>Type of crime involved in</b>		
Thuggery	61	29.6
Burglary	46	22.3
Pick Pocketing	32	15.5
Rape	27	13.1
Drug dealing	10	4.9
419 syndromes	15	7.3
Gambling	6	2.9
Prostitution	9	4.4
Total	206	100.0

Table 3 showed that, 41.6% of the respondents indicates that they have never been arrested by security agent for crime while 58.4% of them have been arrested by security agent for crime. Also, 29.6% of the respondents indicated that thuggery is the crime that is most associated with drugs, 22.3% indicated burglary, and 15.5% indicated pick pocketing were the three most common crime committed by the substance abusers.

## Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub>: Youths who consume substance frequently are not more likely to be involve in crime than those who consume less

H<sub>1</sub>: Youths who consume substance frequently are more likely to be involve in crime than those who consume less

Table 4. Relationship between frequency of substance abuse and involvement in crime

Frequency of Substance usage	Involvement in crime		
	No	Yes	Total
Daily	56(15.9%)	118(33.4%)	174(49.3%)
Weekly	43(12.2%)	39(11.0%)	82(23.2%)
Monthly	31(8.8%)	14(4.0%)	45(12.7%)
Occasionally	17(4.8%)	35(9.9%)	52(14.7%)
Total	147(41.6%)	206(58.4%)	353(100.0%)

X-Cal = 25.800, X-tab = 7.81, df = 3, sig (p-value) = 0.000

Table 4 turns out that 33.4% of people who use substances on a daily basis and most (9.9%) of people who use substances on an occasional basis have been involved in crimes before. Most people who use substances weekly and monthly, 12.2% and 8.8%, have never been involved in crime before. Only those who used substances daily and occasionally weekly have been involved in crime before. Hence there is an association between frequency of substance usage and involvement in crime. With the result in the table, there is a statistically significant relationship between the frequency of substance usage and involvement in crime using the chi-square test tool because the calculated value (X-Cal), which was 25.800, was more than the table value (X-tab), which was 7.81 at df = 3. Also, the result shows that the P-value (significance level), which is

0.000, is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis which states that Youths who consume substance frequently are not more likely to be involve in crime than those who consume less and accept the alternative hypothesis which state that Youths who consume substance frequently are more likely to be involve in crime than those who consume less. This means that Youths who consume substance frequently are more likely to be involve in crime than those who consume less. This also means that youths involvement in crime is influenced by their daily usage of substance.

## **Discussion**

The study found that most of the substance abusers that were sampled in the study were males, which supports many findings by the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality (2017) that suggest that males are more likely to abuse all types of substances than females. The study further found that most of the youths that abused substances were between the ages of 30 and 35 years of age, which is the latter part of their youthful age because the Nigerian Youth Policy (Federal Ministry of Youths and Development [FMYD], 2009) puts the age of youths between 18 and 35 years. More Christians and Hausas participated in the study, while very many of the participants were single with tertiary education but unemployed with a monthly income of less than N10,000.

The study found that marijuana (Wiwi) was the most abused substance among youths in Kaduna North. This finding is also corroborated by many findings (Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality 2017; UNODC, 2018; Ikoh, Smah, Okwanya, Clement and Aposhi, 2019). Marijuana/cannabis was the most abused substance among youths. The study found that the majority of the substance abusers in Kaduna North took their first substance at the ages of 18–23 years. This is contrary to the findings of UNODC (2018) that the teenage years of between 12 and 17 years are the most vulnerable ages for substance abusers.

The study also found that most youths learnt substance abuse from their friends. This finding corroborated the findings of Beardslee, Datta, Byrd, Meier, Prins, Cerda and Pardini (2018). Alcohol use, marijuana use, and offending (black participants only) increased in the year after boys

began affiliating with more peers who engaged in similar behaviors. Many of those who participated in the study reported using the substance on a daily basis, more than 21 times in the previous month. The study also found out that the youths use between 51 and 100 milligrams and between 1 and 5 kilograms in a month.

The study found that youths who frequently consume substances are more likely to be involved in crime than those who consume them less frequently. These findings also supported the finding of Sharma, Sharma and Barkataki (2016) that the greater the involvement in substance abuse, the more severe the violence and criminality. This also means that youth involvement in crime is influenced by their daily usage of substances. These findings also supported the finding of Sharma, Sharma and Barkataki (2016) that substance use has been shown to play a contributory role in criminal behavior.

The implication of this theory for the findings is that many of the youths in Kaduna North belong to subculture groups who abuse substances. These groups are friendship groups where they learn to abuse substances. They exhibit negative values such as frequent abuse of substances, which makes it easy for them to perpetrate crimes under the influence of the substance. Thus, the more they consume the substances, the easier it becomes for them to commit the crime.

## **Conclusion**

The study concludes that there is a link between substance abuse and criminality in that youths who consume substances frequently are more likely to be involved in crime than those who consume less. Most of the youths in Kaduna North L.G.A that get involved in criminality are influenced by their daily usage of substances.

## **Recommendations**

1. The study recommends, among other things, that since marijuana (Wiwi) is the most abused substance, the NDLEA and Kaduna State Bureau for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment need to carry out constant raids of the area, especially to apprehend those marijuana (Wiwi) vendors in the area and also trace their source of the substance so that the circulation of the substance in circulation can be reduced.

2. Tertiary institutions should endeavor to organize substance abuse workshops as frequently as possible and it should be made compulsory for all students to attend so that they can learn its implications for crime.
3. The government should pass laws that will stiffen the penalty for criminality that is influenced by substance use so that it will serve as a deterrent to others.

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