

**WE LIVE WITH IT! ECOLOGICAL EXPLANATION OF SUBSTANCE CONSUMPTION IN RURAL AND SLUMMY METROPOLIS**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Substance intake and abuse have eaten deep into every nook and craning of the society we live with devastating effects. The risky behaviours attributed to teenagers are excessive intake of alcohol, sedatives, depressants, and other psychoactive substances which affects the central nervous system (CNS). Teenagers living or exposed to disadvantaged environments are more likely to get involved in “hard” drugs, such as cocaine and are also more likely to take marijuana while in school. However, societal affluence does not always protect against and may increase the risk of substance use among youth. Therefore, the study examined the nexus between substance consumption and location and identify the social and cultural factors influencing substance consumption. Differential Association, Structural Strain, and Rational Choice theories were used to explain how the linkages between culture, society and substance intake. This is a survey of black spots in Bariga and Badagry areas of Lagos State as they represent clusters of substance abusers. Forty and about twenty black spots were selected from Bariga and Badagry with ten respondents from each of these spots. The study found that locations do not determine the intake of substance among youth. Socio-economic status is no indicator of the habit of abusing a substance. However, certain cultural practices allow the consumption of substances within their practice. Policies needed to be formulated to reduce the incidences of substance abuse. Movies and music clips encouraging substance use should be banned and the entertainers should be sanctioned appropriately.*

**Introduction**

From the start of human history, humans are always in the search to make their lives better. The environment, at the beginning of time, controls the activities of the early men, but the table has turned, and there is a continuing effort to capture the society. Substance use is one of the many ways humans have devised to improve their livelihood (Smart, 2007). However, teenagers engage in substance intake without knowing the implications of their actions. They use the substances to alter the functions of their bodies (Ekpenyong & Aakpege, 2014). Substance intake and abuse have eaten deep into every nook and craning of the society we live with devastating effect. Generally, it is believed that youths, especially teenagers, like to live an unmonitored life by an older person.

Substance consumption is becoming a culture of the youths, and the media plays a lot of role in this phenomenon. The 21<sup>st</sup>-century Nigerian musicians display substance consumption images in their music videos, and this could be a determining factor of substance consumption among teenagers. This study focuses on alcohol, stimulant and depressant drugs, and marijuana use because they are the primary substances used by youths and teenagers. Substance abuse by teenagers has become a problem of epidemic proportion (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2009).

Environments with high crime rates are identified as societies with conditions that strain the lives of those inhabiting them and are also connected with teenage alcohol and drug use (Dumbili, 2013). In Lagos State, crime rates are not only problematic but also on the increase, which makes the state the most dangerous place to live in Nigeria (Nigerian Police Force, 2017), where the rate of “index crimes” (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) has been consistently three times higher than Abuja, that ranks second in the country (NPF, 2017).

In the Lagos metropolis, the crime rate is exceptionally high, ranging from pickpocket to armed robbery. However, the crime rate in Lagos is not entirely distributed as some places experience higher rates than other places (Groves, Stanley & Sher, 2007). Environments that are tagged ‘disadvantaged’ are well known to have a low level of informal social control (Simons-Morton, Pickett, Boyce, ter Bo & Vollebergh, 2010); due to this conjectural fact, almost everybody in such society can easily access substance. Teenagers look up to older persons as their mentors and are likely to observe them on the street, especially those who are drunk or "high," and societal attitudes are perceived by residents to be more pro-substance use (Fayombo & Aremu, 2000).

In Badagry, heavy drinking is a ritual of male bonding for labourers enjoying casual work schedules, whereas in some urban areas, getting drunk is part of a display of male dominance for lower class men. Both male and female teenagers drink both more moderately and more often (Fawa, 2003). After all, differences in alcohol use among all teenagers are more substantial by acculturation level than by national origin or heritage (Nielsen & Ford, 2001). Third, the process of acculturation could also affect substance use. Acculturation involves both individuals- and community-level changes that result from contact between two cultural practices (Balogun, 2006). It is identified as an essential risk factor for substance use and abuse (Makanjuola, Daramola & Obembe, 2007) both among Mexican immigrants and U.S.-born Mexican Americans (Samaniego and Gonzales 1999; Vega and Gil 1999).

With Nigeria's population climbing to 200 million, there have been an estimation that about 14.4 per cent (range 14 per cent - 14.8 per cent) of Nigeria's population which is about 14.3 million persons who are between the age bracket of 15 and 64 years have been involved in the use of the substance in the year 2017. This estimation reflects on account of people who have been involved in the use of any substance at least once in their life (Adekeye, 2012).

The substance that has been mostly abused in Nigeria in the past year is cannabis, which is closely accompanied by pharmaceutical opioids (mainly tramadol, and to lesser effective codeine or morphine) and, cough syrups containing codeine. Drugs such as pharmaceutical opioids, tranquilisers/sedatives, and amphetamine refer to the use of narcotics without cognisance of a doctor's advice and for reasons other than medical. It is estimated that about less than 0.4% of people are high-risk drug user's per cent of the population, which is approximately 376,000 people and of which about 90% of them use opioid (Awoyinfu Development, 2012).

Based on the preceding, the study examines the nexus between location and substance consumption, social factors influencing substance consumption, and cultural practices that encourages substance consumption.

## **Methods**

This is a survey of selected clusters of *Black Spots* in Bariga and Badagry. The study identified Black Spots in the selected areas. The black spots were found around the parks, famous street, nodal streets, markets, and other notable areas. In all, about Eighty were identified in bariga, while 39 were identified at Badagry. For extensive coverage, half of the number were randomly selected in the areas. As such, forty were selected in Bariga and twenty in Badagry.

In all these selected Black Spots, ten respondents were conveniently selected due to the nature of the location and the effects of the substances consumed. In all, a representative sample of 600 was chosen across the clusters.

The questionnaire was adopted as a quantitative instrument for the study and they were researcher-administered for guidance and certainty of responses. This method was adopted due to the sensitive nature of the study. The construction of the questionnaire was guided by the objectives of this study.

Secondary data were collected from some libraries within Lagos State. Various relevant literature will be obtained from libraries and the virtual space like ProQuest, Jstor, Agora, EBSCOhost, and others on the critical words of study. The quantitative data were explained with the software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The report was analysed on bivariate and multivariate levels.

**Findings**

**Table 1: Percentage Distribution of the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	333	55.5
Female	267	44.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
10-20	261	44.8
21-30	311	53.4
31-40	8	1.4
41+	2	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Primary (FSLC)	14	2.3
S.S.C.E	252	42.3
OND/Diploma	136	22.8
B.Sc/HND	194	32.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Single	501	83.9
Married	80	13.4
Divorced	12	2.0
Separated	4	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Employed	216	37.2
Unemployed	365	62.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Religious affiliation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
African Traditional Religion (ATR)	17	2.9
Christianity	395	66.6
Islam	180	30.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Hausa	16	2.7
Igbo	101	16.9
Yoruba	438	73.5
Other	41	6.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bariga	382	63.9
Badagry	216	36.1

<b>Total</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>State of Origin</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Lagos	205	36.8
Ogun	87	15.6
Osun	44	7.9
Others	221	39.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Fieldwork 2019**

The demographic characteristics table shows that there was more male represented in the survey. There were 55.5% male respondents and 44.5% female respondents. The 44.5% of the respondents were between 10 -20 years, 53.4% respondents were between 21 -30 years, 1.4% respondents were between 31 – 40 years and just 0.3% respondents were above 41 years old. The table also showed that 2.3%, 42.3%, 22.8% and 32.6% of respondents have primary, secondary, OND/Diploma and B.Sc/HND educational levels respectively.

The single respondents in terms of marital status among them were highly significant as 83.9% of the respondents are single, married individuals constituted 12.4% of the respondents, while 2% of the respondents were divorced and 0.7% have separated from their spouses. The table also showed that 37.2% of the respondents were employed, while 62.8% of the respondents were unemployed.

There were more Christians represented in the study. Christianity, Islam and ATR respondents were 66.6%, 30.4% and 2.7% respectively. There were more Southwesterners in the survey due to where the study was carried out. Yoruba respondents were 73.5%, 16.9% of the respondents are Igbos, and 2.7% respondents were Hausa. The study focused on two locations and they are Bariga and Badagry. The former had 63.9% respondents while the latter had 36.1% of the respondents. The state of origins of the respondents were Lagos with 36.8% of the respondents, Ogun with 15.6% of the respondents, Osun with 7.9% of the respondents and others constituted 39.7% respondents.

### **Substance Consumption and Location**

**Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents on Substance intake and location**

<b>Familiarisation with the word ‘substance abuse</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	489	82.3
No	105	17.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Substance Intake</b>		
Yes	212	35.8
No	380	64.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Types of substance intake</b>		
Alcohol	212	56.4
Weed	74	19.9
Drugs	90	23.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Frequency of substance intake</b>		
Rare	159	29.1
Often	119	21.8
Never	269	49.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Fieldwork 2019**

Table 2 shows that 82.3% of the respondents said they were familiar with the subject matter. However, 17.7% of the respondents said they are not familiar with the word under study. This implies there would be up to date information concerning the investigation. The table also shows that 64.2% of the respondents said they do not take substance, while 35.8% of the respondent agreed to take substance.

Alcohol is the most consumed substance as 56.4% of the respondents subscribed to that. Drugs consumption came second on the list with 23.9% respondents agreeing to that, and 19.9% respondents said they take weed. Also, 56.2% of the respondents agreed that the use of substance is disapproved in their community, but 43.8% respondents argued that there is no sort of disapproval of substance in their communities. 46.7% of the respondents learnt about substance from their friends.

The table also showed that social media is the second stronger influencer with 15.2% respondent choosing this. 12.6% of the respondents said their family members introduced them to substance. For those that chose neighbours and schoolmates, the respondents were 11.6% and 14% respectively. Alcohol is the substance that is mostly abused with 51% of the respondents subscribing to this. Weed and drugs followed with 39.7% and 9.3% respectively. The table shows that young adults abuse substance more compared to teenagers. Statistics show that teenagers that abuse substance is 36% while young adults are 64% of the entire population.

**Factors Influencing Substance Consumption**

**Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Factors Influencing Substance Consumption**

<b>Stay with your parents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	349	58.8
No	245	41.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Divorced parents</b>		
Yes	97	16.7
No	485	83.3
Total	582	100.0
<b>Adequate parental care</b>		
Yes	476	83.2
No	96	16.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Motivation to substance</b>		
Availability	108	36.5
Societal Acceptance	36	12.2
Peer Group	98	33.1
Stress	54	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Effects of substance on you</b>		
Tipsiness	72	46.8
Mood change	41	26.6
Others	41	26.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Substance affect your academics or activities</b>		
Yes	51	12.4
No	359	87.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Effects of substance abuse</b>		
Highness	19	43.2
Thinking	14	31.8
Others	11	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Factors responsible for your choice of substance intake</b>		
Stress	29	20.9
Peer group	53	38.1
Others	57	41.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Affordability of these substances</b>		
Yes	233	58.4
No	166	41.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Fieldwork 2019**

The table shows that 58.8% of the respondents stay with their parents, while 41.2% do not remain with their parents. The table also shows that 16% of the respondents have parents that are divorced, while

83.3% of the respondents do not have parents that are divorced. There was adequate parental care received by the respondents. 83.2% of the respondents received sufficient parental care, while 16.8% did not.

The study also shows that different things contributed to their motivation to take the substance. The greatest motivation is availability, with 36.5% owing their motivation to this. 12.2%, 33.1% and 18.2% of the respondents said their motives were based on societal acceptance, peer group and stress. The most significant effect of substance on users is highness with 46.8% of the respondents claiming this. The mood change is also an effect that was claimed by respondents.

The table shows that only 12.4% of the respondents claimed that substance intake affects their academics. The remaining 87.6% claimed their academics and academic performance has never been affected by substance intake. Peer group influence is responsible for the respondent's choice of substance intake. 20.9% of the respondents claimed they use substance to ease themselves of stress. The study also shows that 58.4% of the respondents claimed that substances are highly affordable to them, while 41.6% of the respondents claimed it is not accessible.

### **Cultural Influence on Substance Consumption**

**Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Influence of Culture on Substance Consumption**

<b>Influence of Culture on Substance Consumption</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	216	37.6
No	358	62.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Kinds of substance culture permits</b>		
Alcohol	170	98.3
Others	3	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Awareness of parents</b>		
Yes	123	32.1
No	260	67.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Reaction of parents</b>		
Good	53	18.2
Bad	122	41.8
Indifferent	117	40.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Knowing anyone in the family with a history of substance abuse</b>		
Yes	216	38.0
No	353	62.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Positive perception of people who abuse substance</b>		
Yes	142	31.1
No	315	68.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Government role in the control of substance abuse</b>		
Yes	274	49.5
No	280	50.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Fieldwork 2019

This table shows that 62.4% of the respondents claimed that their culture does not support substance intake. 37.6% of the respondents claimed that their culture supports some sort of substance intake. It is not surprising that 32.1% of the respondents claimed that their parents know about their substance intake, while 67.9% of the respondents claimed that their parents do not know they take substances. Most of their parents see substance intake as a bad thing with 41.8% respondents falling into this category. Parents that saw it as a good thing were 18.2% while 40.1% of the respondents were indifferent. As regards influence, 62% of the respondents do not have family members that abuse substances, while 38% of the respondents said they have family members that abuse substance. The table shows that 31.1% of the respondents see substance intake as normal but 68.9% of the respondents see substance intake as abnormal. The study shows that there is no clear-cut conclusion on if government is instrumental in the stop against substance abuse. Respondents that chose yes constituted 49.5% of the entire respondents while 50.5% said government is not instrumental in the stop against substance intake.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis One**

H<sub>0</sub> There is no significant relationship between substance intake and geographical locations

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.325 <sup>a</sup>	1	.127	.130	.075
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	2.061	1	.151		
Likelihood Ratio	2.345	1	.126		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.321	1	.128		
N of Valid Cases	590				

**Result**

The chi-square calculated value is 2.325<sup>a</sup> with 1 degree of freedom at 5% level of significance is 0.127. The decision rule is that the Null (H<sub>0</sub>) will be accepted if the value is above 0.05. If otherwise, the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) will be accepted. Thus, the null hypothesis will be accepted, while the alternative hypothesis will be rejected. The hypothesis states “There is no significant relationship between substance intake and geographical locations”. Locations do not determine the intake of substance among youths.

**Hypothesis Two**

H<sub>0</sub> Substance abusers are not aware of the consequences involved in the abuse of substances

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.521 <sup>a</sup>	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	19.497	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.594	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	510		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.70.



## **Result**

The chi-square calculated value is 21.521<sup>a</sup> with 2 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 0.127. The decision rule is that the Null ( $H_0$ ) will be accepted if the value is above 0.05. If otherwise, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) will be accepted.

Thus, the null hypothesis will be rejected, while the alternative hypothesis will be accepted.

The hypothesis states “Substance abusers are aware of the consequences involved in the abuse of substances”. Youths that abuse substances are aware of the consequences of their actions, and still they do what they feel like doing.

## **Discussion of Findings**

From the hypotheses tested in this study, it was discovered that there is no significant relationship between substance intake and geographical locations. Locations do not determine the consumption of substance among youths. Substance abusers are, however, aware of the consequences involved in the abuse of substances and their socio-economic status is no indicator of their habit of abusing substance. However, most of the married respondents avoided abusing substance, unlike the single youths in the study.

Substance abuse is not location-bound, and thus, in the same location, there can be an abuser of drug and non-abuser. However, individuals living in areas that are classified as disadvantaged environments are more likely to get involved in substance use (Crum, 2016). Due to the availability of uncontrolled blackspots, there is high tendency for the presence of high population of substance consumers in some areas because of the accessibility to the substance, higher awareness to the making of this consumable substances, and affordability of the substances.

There are various social factors responsible for the intake of substances. Affordability, accessibility, peers, family and the media are all the factors accountable for substance intake. The study found out that most of the youths are aware of the consequences of abusing substance. The research shows that most cultures frown at the use of substance, but some cultures permit alcohol because it is believed to be essential in some of their festivals. The enlightenment campaign of the government needs to be intensified even if over half of the still claimed the government has no role to play in the curbing of substance abuse.

From the study, it was found out that substance consumption is an intrinsic component of African culture. It is used in many herbal concoctions used for various traditional treatment of ailment such as *agbo*, *agbojedi*, and some other forms of substances are directly used for treatment of ailment directly such as palm wine (emu funfun). Alcohol and other substances are used in libations, traditional mode of worship, cultural and traditional celebration of marriages and marriage rite, obligations and rights, hence making substance consumption socially and culturally acceptable. Substances of abuse are usually novel with no specific of content, no specific formulation or components, but are usually experimental, and trial and error and dependency on the efficacy of the effect and choice, the substance of abuse becomes popular and more patronised e.g LaCasera drink, and tomtom, ‘lacomtom’, ‘jabo’, ‘skruchies’ among others depending on the local names created in the particular location.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

From the hypotheses tested in this study, it was discovered that there is no significant relationship between substance intake and geographical locations. Locations do not determine the intake of substance among youths.

Substance abusers are, however, aware of the consequences involved in the abuse of substances and their socio-economic status is no indicator of their habit of abusing substance. However, most of the married respondents avoided abusing substance, unlike the single youths in the study.

The campaigns on substance use put across by the government and NGOs are not enough to make the youths stop the habit of abusing substances.

1. **Policies.** The government should formulate strategies that will reduce the sales of substance in Nigeria. In 2018, there was a ban on the importation of tramadol and benylin but these substances are still sold on the streets of Lagos State. There is a need for monitoring the sales of these substances.

2. **Mass media campaigns.** These efforts should be aimed at changing norms regarding drug use by demonstrating negative consequences for use, positive consequences for non-use, changing opinions about the prevalence of use or the types of people who use, and increasing skills for resisting drugs. Media avenues might include the use of billboards, newspapers, radio, and television, as well as collaborations with the entertainment industry, music videos, and interactive media.
3. **Community organising and coalitions.** These efforts require collaboration among several community entities to develop community-wide strategies for reducing substance use. They generally would involve representatives from community agencies working together to specify goals for reducing substance use, develop collaborative strategies for reaching those goals, and implement those strategies over several years. Often, these community planning groups would be grassroots in nature, involving and empowering community residents in addition to professional staff.
4. **Ban of movies and music portraying substance use.** The entertaining industry has recently been encouraging some deviant behaviours like the use of substance and this have influenced the behaviours of the youths that have taken these celebrities as their role model.

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