

Personal Characteristics and Substance Abuse Tendencies among Inmates of Correctional Centres in Cross River State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study examined personal characteristics on substance abuse tendencies among inmates of correctional centers in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of this study four research questions and four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. A population of 790 was used, with a sample size of 392. The sample was selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The instrument (ISAT) was used for data collection and was validated by vetting of experts. The reliability estimate of the instruments was established through Cronbach Alpha reliability method. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Results are presented in mean, standard deviation and percentage. The results of the analysis revealed that, occupation, educational qualification, marital status, gender, and ethnic group significantly influenced substance abuse tendencies among inmates of correctional centers in Cross River State. Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that occupation, educational qualification, marital status, gender, and ethnic group significantly influenced substance abuse among inmate of correctional centres and recommended that the substance abuse treatment should not be tailored to age only but should be sensitive to both young and older inmates and also measures should be put in place to set up correctional centres curriculum for inmates and finally mental health and psychosocial services should be offered to every inmate going into the correctional centres to prepare their minds for the life in incarceration.

Keywords: Abuse of substance, correctional centres, inmates, Cross River State

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of substance abuse is prevalent in correctional centres worldwide. It is a complex issue that requires attention and intervention from various stakeholders. The use of drugs and alcohol in correctional centers can lead to a range of negative consequences, including violence, health problems, and recidivism. Therefore, it is crucial to address the root causes of substance abuse and provide effective treatment and support to those who are struggling with addiction. This requires a collaborative effort from prison staff, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and community organizations. By working together, we can create a safer and healthier environment for everyone in the correctional system.

Inmates of correctional centers are facing public health problems, rejection, isolation, brutality, aggression, depression, anxiety disorders, frustration and mental health problems. Substance abuse is the deliberate use of substance to the extent that it interferes with the health and social function of the individual (SAMHSA (2019). The arbitrary over-defence or misuse of a particular drug with or without prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioner.

Rounds-Bryant and Baker (2015) stated that the ongoing substance abuse in inmates is a concern to all because the inmates are not given adequate treatment, control and prevention in correctional centers and supervision is lacking in the community after they are

discharged, they may have a high potential to become re-addicted and commit a crime after their release.

Employment status and substance abuse tendencies among inmates

Substances use is common in many countries and the resultant abuse of these substances has reported as one of the major public health problem worldwide (Weiss and Leukefeld, 2008). A study of health problem is more in poorly develop countries, the control and prevention are difficult even in advanced societies (UNODC, 2013). This is because health facilities are not equally distributed. In Developing countries, the situation seem to be over whelming due to the Myriads of associated social problem (Obot, 2012; Abasiubong et al., 2014).

Substances abuse is a universal problem. There is no doubt that occupation level of individual inmates appears to have contributed to the use of these substances. In, Nigeria the presence of some of these substances in large quantities in traditional functions and ceremonies implies that the use and abuse are not restricted. This is because of the importance attached to them. Substance like alcohol in the form of palmwine and local gin, kolanut, tobacco and sniff are local substance often required as a custom in many traditional ceremonies (Obot, 2012).

Occupation level plays a vital role in substance abuse among inmates of correctional center and other rehabilitation centers. Generally, Adeyemo (2014) emphasized that Criminal children were in greatest number in families with high employment status. Children from such families do not steady in the class, do not take their studies serious, always roaming the Streets, always spend greater part of time in Beer Parlors, whereas their counterparts from such low occupation status families suffer severe educational handicap.

Abasiubong et al., (2014) conducted a study on a pattern of psychiatric substance use in the Northern region of Nigeria. This study shown that psychoactive substances are commonly used and abuse, especially among the high employment status families in the Northern part of Nigeria. There is need for massive enlightenment campaign to increase awareness and strategies aim at discouraging youth and young adult from indulging in substances.

Asanye (2015) examine the influence of occupational and income level on Tertiary institution student's substances use and abuse in River State. The research findings showed that occupation level has a significant influence on substance used and abused, especially among the high occupational and high income earness homes. The study also revealed that the substances commonly used and abused including cigarette, formalin, tobacco/snuff, Alcohol and sleeping diazepam, Rohypnol).

Jimmy (2015) raised concerns about the disparity in job position between the populations of White and Black prisoners who consume or misuse drugs. The results show that white prisoners were more likely to abuse drugs than black prisoners. Substance abuse included, among other things, using drugs without a prescription or doctor's advice, overdosing, or under dosing. Thus, well-being is influenced by occupational characteristics, which in turn is influenced by one's personality traits. In other words, the relation between personality and well-being is mediated by one's occupational characteristics.

Educational qualification and substance abuse among inmates

Many authors like (Omibogun and Babalolo, 2008; Gureje, 2010; Parry, 2012) admitted that illiteracy and ignorance have contributed significantly to a fair share of this social problem in many rural and urban communities. Anya (2013) showed that the abuse of substances such as Kolanut, Bitter kola, Sleeping (Diazepam, Rohypnol), Cough syrup (Codeine contained syrup) and Benzhekol (Exol) of Nigeria youth is influenced to an appreciable extent by their educational attainment and also what is available in the environment to which inmates are exposed to.

Agwu (2010) investigated the factors that are responsible for substance abuse among senior secondary school student in Aboh Mbaise local Government Area of Imo state, Nigeria. The result showed that dependent on Indian herm was 19.8%; and cannabis abuse, 3.6%. Poor social support, poor education, living in urban areas, psychopathy and a family history of substance use disorder was also discovered.

Pelissier (2015) conducted a study to identity the prevalence of psychoactive substance abuse among incarcerated delinquents in Nigeria and its determinants. The average of first use was 12.6 to 5.9 years. The prevalence of lifetime and cusses tab use of any substance was 88.0% and 64.3% respectively. Prior arrest, being sexually active and family drug use significantly ($P < 0.05$) predicted life time abuse of any substance while being raised in an educated family was protective. Prior arrest, family drug use/abuse and being sexually significantly ($P < .05$) increase life time use of illicit substance while been raised from an educative home significantly ($P < .05$) reduced same. Prior arrest and substance abuse before incarceration significantly ($P < .05$) predicted current abuse of illicit substances while self-esteem and being well educated was protective. Since substance abuse prevalence is high among incarcerated delinquents, the incorporation of substance abuse screening and treatment as part of their programme is advocated.

Wazema and Madhavi (2017) carried out a study on substance abuse and associated factors among inmate in a correctional institution in Jimma, southwest Ethiopia. The results of the study shown presence of four substance use/abuse: alcohol use dependence (AUD), Indian herm abuse, nicotine dependence, and cannabis use disorder.

Marital status and substance abuse among inmates

The role of marital status cannot be underemphasized in the development of substance abuse. Many researchers have found marital status to be a significant determinant in drug abuse. Do married and unmarried person differ in terms of substance habit? Fals-stewart et al. (2011) reported the proportion of married student in the categories of regular and habitual user was higher than that of unmarried ones.

Bagadia (2014) found chronic alcoholism distinctly high among married person. On the century Epstein and McCardy (2010) reported that substance abuse was prevalent among unmarried criminals. Long-term committed relationship, such as marriage, provides the primary form of special support for many individuals.

Merline et al. (2012) analyzed rates of substance abuse among 35 year old adults. The result of the study revealed that married individual was significantly less likely to use and abuse cocaine than unmarried individual: 3.8% of married men and 2.0% of married women reported cocaine use and abuse, whereas 11.4% of unmarried men and 5.1% of unmarried women reported cocaine use/abuse. According to Kaestner, (2017) substance use is related to divorce or separation and remaining unmarried.

Ethnic group and substances abuse among inmates

It has been argued that drug use among black and minority ethnic communities in Europe is “largely unacknowledged, ignored, unrecognized, or hidden” in drugs research. There is some evidence to support this view (Fountain et al., 2004, p. 362). However, the problem is not that ethnicity has not been researched, but that when it has been researched it is often not discussed in the study findings. Indeed, Rounds-Bryant et al. (2003) note that, even in studies where ethnic minorities have been included, many investigators fail to disaggregate the findings by ethnic group. In other words, there is a tendency toward what might be called “ethnicity blindness” in that data on race are collected but not reported. In addition, there is some evidence of what might be called “ethnicity myopia.” In this case, researchers study ethnicity and report the findings. However, the results are presented only in relation to one or two of the most common ethnic groups and no detailed breakdowns for the other ethnic groups are presented

(Fountain et al., 2003). However, there is some research on drug use among ethnic minority groups that has presented the results by ethnic breakdown. One source of information on ethnicity and drug misuse is general population surveys. In the U.S., data from the recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health showed that the prevalence of illicit drug use was highest among American Indians and Alaskan Natives (13 percent) and lowest among Asians (3 percent) (SAMHSA, 2006). In comparison, the prevalence of illicit drug use was 8 percent among whites. Ethnic group differences in drug misuse have also been found in the United Kingdom. The results of the 2001=2002 British Crime Survey showed that the prevalence of illicit drug use in the previous year was highest among mixed race respondents (26 percent) and lowest among Asian respondents (5 percent) (Aust and Smith, 2003). This compares with 12 percent of white respondents.

Another source of information about ethnic group differences in drug misuse can be found in offender population surveys. Data from the U.S. Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program for 1999 showed that black arrestees were more likely to test positive for cannabis and cocaine than white arrestees but were less likely to test positive for methamphetamine. In total, only 1 percent of black arrestees tested positive for methamphetamine compared with 15 percent among white arrestees (National Institute of Justice, 2003).

In fact, methamphetamine use was lower among black arrestees than any other racial group. Conversely, arrestee surveys conducted in South Africa showed that white arrestees were more likely to test positive for any illicit drug than non-white arrestees (67 percent whites, 64 percent colored, 38 percent Africans, and 48 percent Indians=Asians) (Parry et al., 2004).

Wanigaratne et al. (2003) argue that the absence of reliable statistical data on substance misuse has led to drug user stereotypes that have served to mislead both understanding and intervention in drug misuse and its problems. One common stereotype is that drug users are predominately black, an assumption that appears unwarranted even from the brief overview of research above (Wanigaratne et al., 2003).

Research questions

The following research questions were set as to guide the study:

- i. To what extent does employment status influence substance abuse tendency among inmates of correctional centers?
- ii. To what extent does educational level influence substance abuse tendency among inmates of correctional centers?
- lii To what extent does marital status influence substance

abuse tendency among inmates of correctional centers?
 iii. To what extent does ethnic group influence substance abuse tendency among inmates of correctional centers?

Statement of hypotheses

To further guide the study. The following null hypothesis were set:

- i. There is no significant influence of employment status on substance abuse tendency among inmates of correctional centers.
- ii. There is no significant influence of educational level on substance abuse tendency among inmates of correctional centers.
- iii. There is no significant influence of marital status on substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers.
- iv. There is no significant influence of ethnic group on substance abuse tendency among inmates of correctional centers.

Significance of the study

This study may be of great importance to the following beneficiaries of the society: Guidance counsellors, parents, psychologist, government, correctional centers' administrators, students and future researchers.

To the guidance counsellors, the findings of this study may assist them in redressing the problems associated with them. It will also provide information which will help the counselors in counselling setting to understand some of the personal problems which plausibly determines the substance abuse of inmates in the locality.

To the parents, the findings of this study may assist in identifying those substances that always pose a threat or have the potentials of causing harm to their children as well as discouraging them from indulging in those substances.

To the psychologists, the findings of this study may form a basis for future researchers as they may be guided aright on how to identify and solve accordingly this problem of substance abuse behaviour among inmates in relation to their personal characteristics.

To the government, the findings of this study may assist in exposing them to a number of factors that affect students' (youth's) personal characteristics which need special attention. It may also assist the government to see the need for special attention and the need for massive enlightenment campaigns to increase awareness and strategies aimed at discouraging youths

from involving in the use of these dangerous substances.

To the correctional center administrators, the finding of this study may assist them in assessing their contributions to guidance and counselling programmes and its influence on substance abuse of inmates in their respective correctional centers. It will assist them to make continuous efforts in providing adequate social and mental health services in correctional centers.

To the students, the findings of this study may serve as an empirical reference material for students studying for degrees in guidance and counseling in universities and colleges of education in Nigeria and abroad. Finally, it is hoped that findings of this study may assist the future researchers to add to the inconclusive data existing on personal characteristics and also contribute to their understanding of those problems associated with substance abuse.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

A survey research design was selected for the study because Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri (2004) have noted that survey research is a study in which the data are gathered at a particular time with the intention of describing the existing condition of events (phenomenon); identifying standard against which existing conditions can be compared or determining the relationship that exists between specific events.

Research area

This study was carried out in Cross River State, Nigeria. Cross River State is made up 18 Local Government Areas, though there are correctional centres in only six Local Government Areas namely; Calabar South, Biase, Obubra, Ogoja, Ikom and Obudu Local Government Area. The area lies between latitude $4^{\circ}27'$ and $5^{\circ}71'$ North of equator and Longitude 8° and 9° of the Greenwich Meridian. The area is well noted for production of Cash Crop such as Yam, Palmoil, Cassava, Rice, Plantain, Bananas, Kolanuts, Bitter Kola, Vegetables and Fishing. All the local government areas in Cross River State use the English Language as their official medium of communication. Major tourist attractions in the Zone include Calabar International Airport, The Calabar Sea Port, The Tinapa Resort, Export Processing Zone and the Marina Resort. There are six correctional centres in Cross River State.

Population of the study

The population of the study comprised of 790 inmates of

Table 1: Population of inmate in correctional centres in Cross River State.

Centres	Male	Female	Percentage 50%
Adim	64	-	32
Calabar South	533	9	267
Ikom	38	-	19
Obubra	42	-	21
Obudu	19	-	10
Ogoja correctional centre	85	-	43
Total	781	9	392

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the correctional centers in Cross River State. Cross River State has six (6) correctional centres with inmates population as shown in the (Table 1).

Sampling Technique

Simple Random Sampling Procedure was adopted for this study because of the nature of the research. The study was interested in inmates drug abuse tendency in correctional centers, in other words, this was judged by their Personal Characteristics as inmates who can read and write and were available during the study. The simple random sampling procedure was used in other to give everybody equal chances of participating in the study.

Sample

The sample for this study comprised 392 inmates from the six correctional centres indicating 50% of inmates in each of the correctional centre as at the time the research work was carried out.

Instrument

The instrument used for measuring “The influence of Personal Characteristics and inmates substance abuse tendency in correctional centre” is a questionnaire Christened “Inmates Substances Abuse Tendency (ISAT)”. It consisted of seventeen (15) items which the subjects responded to by ticking (√) from options in the appropriate column according to their level of degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the statement.

The instrument “Inmates Substance Abuse Tendency (ISAT)” was designed by the researcher with the assistance of the researcher’s supervisors. The instrument had two parts (1 and 2). The first part sought information on inmates’ personal characteristics such as name of correctional center, local government of correctional centre, gender, age, religion, ethnic group, educational level, employment status and marital status, while the second part on the other hand, had fifteen (15) item and was designed to assess inmates’ responses on their substance abuse tendencies.

All the items on the questionnaire were worded in simple and straight forward form for the inmates to comprehend.

Validity of the instrument

Essentially, validity is one of the two indices needed to establish the effective application of the research instrument. Validity therefore, refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure or extent to which it serves the purpose for which it had been designed. In this regard, face validity was employed to ascertain the way questionnaire items appear to take care of relevant content of the subject area of interest.

Consequently, to ascertain the face validity of the instrument used in this study, the researcher gave the instrument to the project supervisors and two other lecturers who offered the much needed ingredient in terms of grammatical rules and mechanical organization of the instrument.

Data collection

The validated instrument was administered personally by the researcher with the help of some warders. After obtaining permission from the head of the correctional centers to allow the inmates participate in this assignment. Respondents were asked to give honest and unbiased agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire items or statements and the pieces of questionnaire were collected on the spot to ensure less attrition and ensure 100 percent return rates.

Procedure for data preparation/Scoring

Data obtained from the study were coded by assigning numerical codes to each item in the questionnaire, using likert scale as follows; Strongly Agree was assigned 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, and Strongly Disagree 1. For negative worded items, the reverse scoring was adopted. The coding schedule for the research instrument is presented in (Table 2).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Occupation and substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that, occupation

Table 2: Coding schedule for research instrument.

Variables	CODE	Column
Gender	Male	1
	Female	2
Age	Below 30 years	1
	30 -39 years	2
	Above 39 years	3
Religion	Christian	1
	Muslim	2
	Traditional	3
Ethnic group	Efik	1
	Ejakam	2
	Others	3
Educational Level	Primary	1
	Secondary	2
	Tertiary	3
Employment status	Unemployed	1
	Employed	2
	Self employed	0
	Menial Jobs	3
Marital Status	Single	1
	Married	2
	Separate/Divorced	3
Substance Abuse		
Tendency	Add sum of Scores on items	1 – 15

Table 3: Occupation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	high	79	28.2	28.2	28.2
	moderate	123	43.9	43.9	72.1
	low	78	27.9	27.9	100.0
	Total	280	100.0	100.0	

significantly influence substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers (Tables 3 and 4). The finding is in accordance with the perspective on Ella (2013) who observed that occupation which was categorized into two groups: low and high, the students of high occupation level families were found to indulge in substance use and abuse than students of low employment status families. This is so because families with high income always have more problems than the families with low income earning.

Educational qualification and substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers

The study revealed that, educational qualification significantly influence substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers (Tables 4 and 5). The discoveries are in accordance with the perspective on John (2012) who showed that the abuse of substances such as Kolanut, Bitter kola, Sleeping (Diazepam, Rohypnol),

Cough syrup (Codeine contained syrup) and Benzhexol (Exol) of Nigeria youth is influenced to an appreciable extent by their educational attainment and also what is available in the environment to which inmates are exposed to. Agwu (2010) also demonstrated that low level of education significantly influenced substance abuse among inmates of correctional center.

Marital status and substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers

The study revealed that, marital status significantly influence substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers (Tables 4 and 6). The finding of this investigation concurs with that of Merline and colleague (2012) who revealed that married individual was significantly less likely to use and abuse cocaine than unmarried. Perhaps more important is the possibility that marriage may serve as a protective factor among those who have already

Table 4: General description of data (N=280).

Items	No of respondent	Percentage (%)	
Occupation			
Unemployed	93	40.6	
Employed	127	55.5	
Self-employed	9	3.9	
Total	280	100.0	
Educational qualification			
Primary	93	40.6	
Secondary	127	55.5	
Tertiary	9	3.9	
Total	280	100.0	
Marital status			
Single	50	21.8	
Married	91	39.7	
Separated/divorced	88	38.4	
Total	280	100.0	
Ethnic group			
Traditional	74	32.3	
Christian	112	48.9	
Muslim	43	18.8	
Total	280	100.0	
Age			
below 30years	63	27.5	
31-40 years	103	45.0	
41 years and above	63	27.5	
Total	280	100.0	
Variables	N	mean	SD
Substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers	280	36.1107	3.13013

Table 5: Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid high	72	25.7	25.7	25.7
moderate	138	49.3	49.3	75.0
low	70	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	280	100.0	100.0	

Table 6: Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid single	35	12.5	12.5	12.5
married	145	51.8	51.8	64.3
divorced/separated	100	35.7	35.7	100.0
Total	280	100.0	100.0	

Table 7: Ethnic group

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid bekwarra	94	33.6	33.6	33.6
efiks	148	52.9	52.9	86.4
ejahgam	38	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	280	100.0	100.0	

imitated substance use. In contrast, according to Moos (2009), patients who were not married were considerably more likely to experience symptom aggravation over time. Cessation of cocaine use and abuse has also been linked to marital status; in a community sample, cessation of cocaine use/abuse was three times more likely among married people than among unmarried people.

Ethnic group and substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers

The result of the study indicated that, ethnic group significantly influence substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers (Tables 4 and 7). The discoveries are in accordance with the perspective on Komen (2014)

who found out that socially, there is a positive relationship between a student's drug abuse and; large family size, drug abuse by best friend, and highest educational level of parents/ guardian.

Conclusion

The result of the study revealed that, Occupation, Educational qualification, Marital status, Gender, Ethnic group significantly influenced substance abuse among inmates of correctional centers in Cross River State. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that the substance abuse treatment should not be tailored to age but should be sensitive to both young and older inmates.

Recommendations

The study recommended that the substance abuse treatment should not be tailored to age only but should be sensitive to both young and older inmates and also measures should be put in place to set up correctional centres curriculum for inmates and finally mental health and psychosocial services should be offered to every inmate going into the correctional centres to prepare their minds for the life in incarceration.

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