

EMERGENT FEMALE SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN KONTAGORA TOWNSHIP, NIGER STATE

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ABSTRACT

The scourge of substance abuse is not new across human societies, Nigeria inclusive. However, abuse of drugs and other substances in the past are connected with men folk. In contemporary Nigeria, the misuse or abuse of substances both locally and industrially processed is in the recent years becoming popular among female youths. The study examined the commonly abused substances by the female youths (locally and industrially processed), means of accessing the substances and the predisposing factors. Merton's structural-strain theory and Sutherland's differential association theory were adopted. The study adopted a qualitative technique in the process of data collection. In-depth interview, key informants interview and observation instruments were used to collect data. Combination of purposive and snowball sampling procedures were utilized. The collected data were analyzed using content/thematic analysis which were presented in narratives manner (with verbatim quotations) based on each research objectives, sub-merged and interpreted on the basis of sub-themes. The study revealed that pharmaceutical drug substance such as cough syrups with codeine, Roche, Rafenol etc, are being abused by the female youths, and some local substances like Indian hemp, babba juji etc. to a very minimal degree. The findings revealed that much of the substances abused were accessed in the patent medicine shops and other dealers in the town. Equally, the finding identified peer group influence, poor parental control, life frustration, etc. as some of the factors that predispose female youth's into substance abuse. The study recommends that, the menace of substance abuse can be addressed through collective efforts of government, civil societies, NGOs, FBOs, including parents and guardians as well as other members of the society.

Keywords: Drugs, Substance, Substance Abuse, Youths

Introduction

From time immemorial, people have been identifying and using plants and other substances that alter their health conditions and state of consciousness across human societies (Abdullahi, 1999). The use of these drugs does not constitute any danger, because drugs correctly administered have been a blessing to human beings. However, chronic use of substances can cause serious and sometimes irreversible damage to human physical and psychological development (Sambo, 2008). These substances comprise all kinds of drugs, such as tablets, syrups, balms and capsules which are sold at patent medicine stores, at pharmaceutical shops, and by street itinerant hawkers. They also include locally and industrially processed or produced substances such as beverages, chemicals, marijuana, cigarettes, alcohol, leaves or bark of trees and the likes. They can be harmful, if misused or abused, and when the use is continuous, it could lead to addiction. Substance abuse is defined as the excessive and persistent self-administration of any drug substance without due regard to medically or culturally accepted patterns (Haladu, 2003). Radda (1994) refers to substance abuse as the excessive and persistent self-administration of any drug without due regard for accepted medical practice.

Substance abuse, in whatever form, is a social menace that threatens the abuser's personal development, family's reputation, and society's socio-economic, cultural and political structures. The problem was previously associated with males but, the rate at which young ladies between the age brackets 18-25 years abuse industrially processed drugs and other locally processed substances which are intoxicants is very alarming. This has a number of negative consequences on society's progress. For example, Siro (2008) identified violence, high rate of divorce and marital instability as parts

of the side effects of substance abuse. Furthermore, substance abusers involve in the act due to one reason or the other. The existence of varieties of drug substances, many ways of accessing the substances and other factors influencing the abuse of substances among females undermines the efforts of the law enforcement agents to tackle the problem.

In Nigeria, the general observation shows that some people procure and utilize substances like Tramadol, Indian hemp etc for every activity they engage in. The situation has been in many states of Nigeria, including Niger State and Kontagora Local Government, especially among adolescents and youths of both sexes who constitute the high risk group. Consequently, if the abuse of substances persists among females, the effects will not only affect them, but equally their children and the society at large. Against this background the study investigated the emergent female substance abuse among female youths in Kontagora Township, and specifically the study identified the locally and industrially processed commonly abused substances by the female youth, the means of female youths' accessibility to substances of abuse and the predisposing factors for female youths involvement in substance abuse

Though studies were conducted on substance abuse among youths (males and females) in many parts of Nigeria, like Shehu (2012) in Kano, Magaji (2012) in Sokoto Okaza and Aluede (2009) in Ekpoma, Egbuonu, Chukwuka and Uwakwe (2004) in Anambra, but none have been conducted in Kontagora, particularly focusing on female youths. Therefore, the findings of this study would educate the female youths on the commonly abused substances, means of accessing the substances, predisposing factors as well as its effects on their health's and general wellbeing in order for them to desist from such acts.

Equally, the study provides useful information to the law enforcement agencies on the menace of female substance abuse. The study serves as reference materials of immense benefit to academics, social researchers such as Criminologists. The work is also relevant to policy makers, development donor agencies, NGOs and other bodies who have a significant interest in physical, psychological and sociological development of female youths. This study sensitizes government on the urgent need to revisit its existing regulations with the view to amending them so as to stand the test of time. This will allow the law enforcement agencies improve on their control measures in dealing with the problem. Also, the findings of the study would awaken members of the public and parents on the need to do more in sensitizing their children and wards on negative effects of substance abuse.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Commonly Abuse Substances

Study by Siro (2008) revealed that the abuse of certain substances such as Benelyn and Tutolyn with codeine, Tramadol and Roche are very common among youths in Nigeria especially the female youths. Similarly, a study by Musa (2012) found out that 65% of the female respondents in Tarauni Local Government Area of Kano abused Benelyn with codeine. Also, study by Magaji (2012a) revealed that 58.8% of the female respondents abused Codeine, 35.7% abused amphetamines, 13.3% Alcohol, 7.8 Marijuana, 20% Inhalants, 25% Cocaine and 11.1% Solvents, respectively. Shehu (2012) reported that cough syrups with codeine has now become a fashionable style of drug of abuse in Nigeria especially among youths (males/females) both in and out of school, in the streets and adults in their homes. Radda (2006) related that in certain parts of Nigeria,

alcohol is used essentially at ceremonial festivals and during religious rituals. He further buttressed that, in northern Nigeria (Kano), for example, kola nut, which has caffeine, has been used regularly by aged people and during ceremonies. Tobacco smoking is also a common habit among many Nigerians with an addition of the recent phenomena of youth abusing Benelyn, more especially among young females.

Access to Substances of Abuse

Substances of abuse are accessed from variety of sources. Studies by Dukku (2012), Ebie (1988) and Bukarti (2009) revealed that substance users access the substances of abuse because of their availability in many places like patent medicine stores, motor parks, and unlicensed drug dealers/hawkers and so on. In the same vein, the findings of Magaji (2012) indicated that majority of respondents access the substances of abuse through friends (22.1%), from patent medicine shops (21.7%), and 18.6% from underground agents while others from other sources. Bukarti (2009) posited that there was availability of various kinds of drugs in Nigeria despite the existence of laws that ban the sales and abuse of some drug substances; different kinds of drug substances like sedatives and stimulants are easily available in patent medicine shops, moving sales vehicles and open market, itinerant hawkers, hawkers of locally processed substances of abuse. Equally, Shehu (2012) pointed out that whenever drugs are available in our societies and people have easy access to them without legislation guiding the sales, people are more likely to abuse them and continue with the abuse, this is very common in Nigeria where substances of abuse are easily accessible in many places and consequently female youths access and use substances like codeine, Roche etc. Also, Dukku (2012) noted that drugs can only be abused when they are available

irrespective of strong desire in individual without availability (supply) there can be no drug abuse.

Predisposing Factors for Substance Abuse

Many factors have been identified for the causes of deviant acts in general and drug abuse in particular. Uzoka (1990) and Ebie (1988) reported that drug abuse is a learned behaviour just like any other normative behavior. In the view of Anumonye (1990) those are not smoking while in contact with smokers began learning the habit and eventually became chain smokers. He further reported that promiscuous behaviours, sexual perversions or prostitution are often experienced through films, videos, electronic media etc. which often stimulate female youths into acting behaviour like film stars or movie actresses and eventually substance abuse and addiction. Youth's engagement in anti-social behaviour has been observed to be socially and culturally stimulated, especially female substance abuse. In the view of Sutherland (1939) deviant acts such as substance abuse among female youths are learnt in the process of interaction just like any other behaviour. Dambazau (1999) linked the occurrence of deviant acts such as drug abuse to poverty and unemployment which he argued created an environment which bred frustration and increased stress which resulted to feelings of hopelessness, especially in a country where there is no provision for social welfare in order to give temporary relief to the poor and unemployed. Merton (1957) asserted that deviant act such as substance abuse is associated with social strain (frustration) faced by some members of the society due to their difficulties in finding access to legitimate means of attaining structural goals. Haladu (2003) reported that substance abuse is not result from one factor rather it results from many factors which includes: experimental curiosity, peer group

influence, lack of parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions and availability of substance of abuse in the society.

Structural-strain Theory

Structural-Strain theory was developed by Robert K. Merton (1910-2003) to explain why deviant behaviour occurs in society. The theory argues that social environment influences people's behaviours. The theory further argued that a person's behavior shapes his/her attitudes towards culturally defined goals and the institutionalized means of achieving those goals. In an attempt to achieve these goals, people use different ways either by conforming to or by deviating from such cultural expectations. According to this theory people who aspire for the culturally prescribed goals but are denied the opportunities to realize those goals will experience what is termed "social strains". Deviant acts like substance abuse is therefore, seen as a result of lack of connection between the societies' emphasis on some institutional goals and the availability of widely prescribed means of achieving certain set of goals. It is because of these strains in finding access to legitimate means that some members of society turn to deviant acts.

Merton examines five basic forms of adaptation: conformity to social norms, which is the most common and exact opposite of deviance. Other forms of adaptation are: innovation-accepting the goals of society but using improper means, for example, female youth's whose parents cannot cater for their material needs may easily be lured into deviant acts like involvement into substance abuse; or a female youth whose parents forced her to get married to someone against her choice may become frustrated and likely involved into substance abuse or a female youth who grew up without mother at home and suffers maltreatment in the hand of her

step mother may likely get entrapped into substance abuse as a means of calming down her worries etc. Ritualism is accepting the means but rejecting the goal. Retreatism is rejecting both the goals and the means. And rebellion is rejecting both goals and means and providing a substitute. According to this theory, people are uniformly committed to the society's set goals but they encounter difficulties and unequal access to the means defined by society as legitimate for reaching those goals. Therefore, if society denies people the opportunity to achieve success through socially approved means; some individuals are likely to choose illegitimate avenues in order to attain the goals of society (happiness, satisfaction, pleasure etc.) through engaging in acts such as prostitution, substance abuse among female youths etc.

Differential Association Theory

This theory was developed by Edwin H. Sutherland (1883-1950) to explain why deviant acts occur in the society. Differential association theory generally assumed that humans are born neutral, but they virtually learn all behaviours, beliefs and tendencies from the social environment. The theory has nine assumptions, but the main arguments of the theory are: deviant behaviours are learnt through the process of interaction just like any other normative behaviour, a person becomes deviant because of an excess of definitions favourable to violation of law over definitions unfavourable to violation of law. For example, female youth's involvement into substance abuse because of the existence and easy access to different kinds of substances of abuse in the society, or a female youth may likely get involved in substance abuse because of associating with friends abusers etc. Though these theories focused mainly on the influence of social and environmental factors as they predispose deviant acts in the society, but have failed to take into consideration the

influence of other factors like biological and psychological to deviant causation; but still the theories are found to be relevant in addressing the issue under study.

Methodology

The study is an exploratory research that focused on an emerging issue. As such, In-depth Interview (IDI), Key Informant Interview (KII) instruments and observation were used in data collection. The study utilized three categories of target population; these are: female youths, law enforcement agents and sellers of substances of abuse (locally and industrially processed). The participant of the study comprises of nineteen (19) respondents; out of this number, twelve female youths involved in substance abuse were interviewed. Then four officials of the law enforcement agents, two patent medicine store owners/sellers and one hawker of locally processed substances of abuse were selected. Since Kontagora town has six political wards, two female youths involved in substance abuse were selected from each ward. The participants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling procedures. Purposive sampling technique involves deliberate selection of participants who possessed the required information and were willing to reveal it, while snowball sampling technique involved a deliberate selection of a participant, who after being interviewed suggest when asked, the other participants that possessed the required information

In order to elicit adequate information, each participant was interviewed for a minimum of 30 to 45 minutes. In-depth interviews were conducted with the female youths involved in substance abuse, while Key informants interview was conducted with the sellers of substances of abuse (locally and industrially processed) and the Law Enforcement officials. The interview with female youths involved in substance abuse

and the hawkers of locally processed substances of abuse were conducted in Hausa language, the local language of the study area. Each of the interviews were conducted at the convenient places like sharp corner, pharmacy and morocco joints suggested by each interviewee and also at the appropriate time mostly in the evening. Audio recorder was used to record all the conversations. During each interview session, Research Assistant (RA) was employed as a note taker. The Research Assistant (RA) assisted in locating the interviewees at various identified joints in the study area.

The data collected were analyzed using content/thematic analysis. The responses elicited in Hausa are translated into English language before the analysis. The service of an expert was employed to that effect. Data were presented based on the three (3) major themes (objectives). Each theme has two or more sub-themes under it. Interview questions were derived from the study objectives. Therefore, data collected under each objective were presented on the basis of themes (objectives) and then presented in a narrative manner (through verbatim quotations), sub-merged and interpreted on the basis of sub-themes (questions that fall under a particular objective). The analysis then followed these themes one after the other and findings presented in accordance with the objectives of the study having carefully scrutinized the transcribed text. The participants voluntarily participated in the study and their consents were sought. The information obtained was treated with high level of confidentiality, and anonymity was guaranteed as assurance was given to all the interviewees that all the information was purely meant for academic purpose.

Findings

This section presents and analyses the data obtained from the field. The section is divided into three themes and each theme has sub theme under it: commonly abused substances (locally and industrially processed), access to substances of abuse and predisposing factors.

Commonly Abused Substances

The responses of majority of the female interviewees revealed that the commonly substances of abuse in Kontagora are cough syrups with codeine such as Benelyn, Tutolyn, Parkalin, Tuxil-T and Cofe-N-syrups. Others were Rafenol, Roche, Tamadol, Emzol-5tablets, Cigarette, and Alcohol. Other local substances abused by the subjects are Indian hemp, Local beer such as *Giyan babba juji, duma, makarho*, as well as lizard excreta, but the level of abusing these local substances were far less than that of the industrially processed.

A 25 years female substance abuser from Kudu ward revealed that:

The commonly abused substances by the female youths in Kontagora include: Emzol_5, usually used by psychiatric patients, Diazepam (D⁵), Rafenol tablet, Cofe-N-, and Tutolyn syrup with Codeine (IDI).

However, KII responses revealed that female youths are now abusing pharmaceutical drugs in Kontagora. A 35 year old male patent medicine store owner from Kudu ward, sharp corner area pointed out that:

Female youths in Kontagora town nowadays are commonly found abusing substances like: cough syrups with codeine such as tutolyn, Parkalin, and Benelyn. They also abuse tablets such as: Roche, Rafenol, Tramadol as well as Alcohol (KII).

Responses of KII with the officials of the law enforcement agencies involving the NDLEA, the Police and Civil Defense corps equally indicate that the commonly abused substances by the female youths in Kontagora are virtually pharmaceutical drug substances. A 45 years old male NDLEA official claimed that:

Although I am still very new in this area command but, from the record on ground the major substances of abuse by the female youths in this town are particularly cough syrup with codeine (KII).

On the locally processed substances commonly abused by the female youths in Kontagora the responses showed that though female youths equally engaged in the abuse of these local substances, but the level of its abuse is relatively low compared with the abuse of industrially processed substances, especially pharmaceutical drugs substances. Interviewees 21 years old from Yamma, 25 years old from Kudu and 19 year old from Arewa wards reveal that Indian hemp is the common local substance abused by the female youths in Kontagora. For a 22 years old interviewee from Magajiya ward, the local substance of abuse by the female youths of Kontagora include: *Babbajuji*, *Gutter* and *Lizard excreta*. However, other interviewees could not mention any local substance commonly abuse by the female youths in the

study area. A 47 year old seller of locally processed substances of abuse from Kudu ward revealed that:

Female youths in Kontagora abuse locally processed substances such as *Giyan duma* (*langenariasicerariai.e bottle gourd*), *Giyanbabbajuji* (*Daturameteli.e hairy thoen apple*), and *Giyanmakarho* (*Afromorsialoxiflorai.e false dalbergia as well as wiwi* (Indian hemp) (KII).

The law enforcement official pointed that the only obvious local substance of abuse by the subjects is Indian hemp, though to very minimal degree compared to the level of abusing the industrially processed substances

Furthermore, the researcher observed in some of the identified patent medicine shops where these substances in question are sold, the level of patronage of these substances by the female youths is alarming; this is because some of these girls can come to freely buy these substances several times in a day. Equally, it was observed that in almost all the interview sessions with most of these female substance users, while the interview was going own some of the interviewees were taken one substance of abuse or the other such as Indian hemp, Cigarettes, Codeine syrup and Rafenol tablets and the likes.

Table.1: Showing the Recorded Cases of Female Substance Abuse from the Law Enforcement Agencies in Kontagora

AGENCIES	YEAR	NO. OF CASES
NDLEA	2014	2
	2015	2
NIGERIAN POLICE FORCE	2014	2
	2015	2
NIGERIAN SECURITY AND CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS	2014	2
	2015	1
TOTAL		11

Source: Laws Enforcement Agencies in Kontagora (2015)

From the findings, it can be deduced that the common substances of abuse by the female youths in Kontagora Township are virtually pharmaceutical drug substances such as cough syrup with codeine (Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkaline etc.), others are Roche, Rafenol and Tramadol tablets as well as alcohol but to a minimum degree. The abuse of locally substances was also discovered but to a very low degree, and this may be attributed to the availability and easy access to these substances in most of the patent medicine shops and other dealers across the town. The identified locally substances of abuse include: Indian hemp, Local beer (*Giyana duma*, *babbajuji*, *makarho*, *burukutu*, *ogogoro* and the likes), as well as Lizard excreta.

Access to Substances of Abuse

Response from almost all the female youths interviewed revealed that they accessed the substances from the patent medicine shops, local vendors/itinerant hawkers, friend, boyfriends as well as other dealers who sale in secret substances like Indian hemp. Participants from Central, Gabas, Yamma, Kudu, one from Arewa 20 years and one from 25 years old from Magajiya revealed that they often access the drug substances from the patent medicine stores and other vendors in the town, while some get the said substances from their friend or boyfriends. In the view of 23 years old from central ward:

I use to buy the substance from the patent medicine shop and sometimes, if I desire to take it and I do not have the money to buy it, I used to sale my Clothes or any valuable items belonging to me just to have the money to buy it (IDI).

The responses of the KII with patent medicine sellers were almost similar with that of the female interviewees. A 35 years old male

seller of industrially processed substance of abuse revealed that:

Some of these ladies come to buy these substances themselves, but for those that feel shy they normally send someone to buy for them, and because they are our customers whenever we see them we know what they normally come to buy, so the money they give or sent determines the quantity that will be given to them (KII).

In the views of the NDLEA officials, most of these substances are found sold by the patent medicine stores and other vendors in the local markets, and these are the places they sourced these substances they abuse.

On the availability of substances of abused, almost all the interviewees claim that these substances are always readily available. Both participants from Central, Arewa and one from Kudu, Magajiya, Yamma and Gabas ward noted that these substances are always readily available in most of the patent medicine shops and other dealers who sale in secret substances like Indian hemp, because it is prohibited by law.

Response of the (KII) with NDLEA officials confirmed that these substances are always available at the door steps of the abusers. Similarly, Police officer shared the same view stressing that most of the substances abused by these females are accessed in the patent medicine shops, but for the Indian hemp, they normally get it from the dealers in many places in the town, while others from their friends or boy's friends. In his own view, a 26 years old male Civil Defense official revealed that:

Most of these females' abusers access the substances they use in the patent medicine stores around the town, but for the Indian hemp there are places they normally get

it, like Jamaica area, sharp corner, Sagi area and Tudun wada (KII).

An analysis of the response above indicates that these substances abused by female youths in the study area are always readily available at their door steps. These may not be unconnected to the fact that, most of the substances abused by the subjects are ordinary medicines for the treatment of cough, pains and as analgesic which otherwise known as counter drugs that are always available in patent medicine stores and other vendors in the local market, and which are not banned by the law.

Predisposing Factors for Substance Abuse

Responses from majority of the female youths' interviewed revealed that most of the female youths get involved in substance abuse due to the following reasons: peer group influence, life frustration, poor parental control, closeness to where substances of abuse are sold, proximity to where substance abuse are been done, betrayal from boyfriends, government failure to address the problem coupled with the insincerity and corruption on the part of the law enforcement officers etc. In the view of a 23 years old interviewee from central ward the immediate cause for her involvement into substance abuse while crying and shading tears narrated that:

I got involved in this act due to an attempted forced marriage by my parent with my late sister's husband against my wish. And because I have someone I am in love with, so that made me to become frustrated and I even ran away from home and eventually met a friend who was in this act. That person advised me to use codeine syrup and Rafenole tablets that they will make me forget my worries and with the aid of one late Hassan Na Morocco who first gave me the substance and I tried

and it worked for me, so I continue up till now (IDI).

Also, a 25 years old female abuser from Gabas ward narrated that:

I became involved into substance abuse, because I was in love with a guy, but my parents rejected my proposal to get married to him, just because they do not like him, on several occasions my parents get us arrested by the police just to separate us but all in vein, so because of this crises, I became worried and frustrated and eventually because the guy is already into this act lured me into it, he convinced me that if I used these substances that they will take away my worries, so I tried once and it worked me, so I continue up to this moment (IDI).

According to a 20 years old interviewee from Arewa ward:

I became involved in this act of abusing substances because of betrayal from the boyfriend I so much loved, which made me to be worried to the extent that I could not sleep all the time. So I was advised by my friends who do not want to see me in that condition. They asked me to try the substance that it would clear away my worries and problems, so they gave me Roche and Codeine and they worked for me well and that was how it all started (IDI).

A 19 year old interviewee from Arewa ward revealed that frustration and life pressure pushed her into substance abuse, she narrated:

My involvement in substance abuse was due to fact that I grew

up without a mother in the house, because she was divorced when I was very young and I have been maltreated by my step mother which made me become frustrated and always spent most of my times outside with friends whom I always share my experience with, eventually, I became involved in this act through friends who are already into it (IDI).

Regarding closeness to where substances of abuse are done and proximity to where the acts are been done responses indicated that closeness to where substances of abuse are being sold, and proximity to where these acts are being done are less connected with female youths involvement in substance abuse in Kontagora, as confirmed by nine interviewees, with the exception of one interviewee each from Magajiya, Arewa and Yamma ward, who reveal that closeness to where substances of abuse are been sold and abuse are done are connected to female youths involvement into substance abuse.

Responses from the (KII) with other stakeholders show a mixed views, particularly the two sellers of patent medicine. A 35 years old male seller of patent medicine from kudu ward noted that:

Closeness to where substances of abuse are being sold, and proximity to where this act are being done have no connection with female youths involvement in substance abuse, because for him, many of these females are coming from far distance to buy these substances (KII).

On the other hand, both sellers of substances of abuse revealed that closeness to where substances are sold, and nearness to where abuse are been done can also contribute to female youths involvement into substance

abuse. Equally, all the officials law enforcement agencies point out that proximity to where they are sold, and closeness to where the acts are been done are also connected with female youths involvement to substance abuse in Kontagora.

A 47 years old seller of locally processed substance of abuse noted that:

Most of the female youths get involved in substance abuse due to the following reasons: poor or lack of parental care, improper upbringing as well as availability and closeness to where substances are sold and nearness to where the acts are been done are connected to their involvement into this acts (KII)

In the view of a 45 years old NDLEA official:

Substance abuse among female folks in Kontagora is attributed to two factors; the cultural and social factors, socially unlike other part of the country like south and east where female are abusing alcohol (beer) which are not available here in the north, so the females here are abusing cough syrups, and the cultural factor is that, unlike other part of the country female here cannot go to beer Palou and abuse beer and they want to feel high i.e. they want to have something that will make them high (KII).

An analysis of the responses of both IDI and KII showed that many factors were responsible for female youth's substance abuse. Some of these factors include among others; peer group influence, poor parental control/negligence/deprivation, attempt forced marriage, betrayals from part of the boyfriends, frustration, corruption on the part of the law enforcement officials, availability of substances of abuse in the town and so on.

Discussion of the major findings

This study comprises of three objectives, each of the objective was addressed by the data gathered. The following are the discussion of the major findings from the study.

Commonly Abused Substances

The commonly industrially processed substances of abuse by the female youths in Kontagora Township were virtually pharmaceutical drug substances such as cough syrups with codeine (Tutolyn, Benelyn, Parkaline, Tuxil, Cofe-Netc.), others are Roche tables, Rafenol, Tramadol, *farin malam* (a tablet usually used by the psychiatric patient), diazepam (D⁵) and emzol-5-tablets. Similarly, female youths are abusing Alcohol, Cigarettes but to a minimal degree. And the locally processed substances abused by the female youths in Kontagora Township include: Indian hemp (*Cannabis Sativa*), local beer such as *Ogogoro*, *burukutu*, Palm wine, *giyan makarho*, *babba Juji*, *duma*, as well as lizard sheets. However, the abuse of the locally processed substances by the female youths is not as common as that of the industrially processed substances, especially the pharmaceutical drug substances as the study reveal.

The findings of this study corroborate the findings of some other studies. For instance, the study by Siro (2008) revealed that the abuse of certain substances such as Benelyn and Tutolyn with codeine, Tramadol and Roche are very common among youths in Nigeria especially the female youths. Similarly, a study by Musa (2012) found out that 65% of the female respondents in Tarauni Local Government Area of Kano abused Benelyn with codeine. Also, study by Magaji (2012a) revealed that 58.8% of the female respondents abused Codeine, 35.7% abused amphetamines, 13.3% Alcohol, 7.8 Marijuana, 20% Inhalants, 25% Cocaine and 11.1% Solvents, respectively. Shehu (2012) reported that cough syrups with codeine has now become a fashionable style of drug of abuse in Nigeria

especially among youths (males/females) both in and out of school, in the streets and adults in their homes. Radda (2006) averred that in certain parts of Nigeria, alcohol is used essentially at ceremonial festivals and during religious rituals. He further buttressed that, in northern Nigeria (Kano), for example, kola nut, which has caffeine, has been used regularly by aged people and during ceremonies. Tobacco smoking is also a common habit among many Nigerians with an addition of the recent phenomena of youth abusing Benelyn, more especially among young females (Radda, 2006).

The study also found that majority of the female youths involved in the abuse of substances falls within the age bracket of 15 to 26 years. This collaborate the work of Radda (1994) who reported that available research data shows that mostly affected category of people for substance abuse falls within the age bracket of 10 to 35 years. Equally, Siro (2008) confirmed that the rate at which young ladies between the age brackets 18-25 years abuse industrially processed drugs and other locally processed substances which are intoxicants is very alarming. This is in line with at the findings of Musa (2012) whose findings revealed that 84% of the female respondents that engaged in the abuse of substances are single. It also buttressed the findings of Magaji (2012a) who points out that majority of the female respondents are single and young ladies.

Furthermore, the study also found that substance abuse among female youths is a recent phenomenon. This finding supports the finding of Musa (2012) who indicates that majority of the female abusers spends within the period of 1 to 3 years abusing substances.

Access to Substances of Abuse

The study found that majority of the female abusers access the substances of abuse in the patent medicine stores available in the town with less difficulty. Other sources of the substances of abuse are from friends,

boyfriends and other dealers in town who sell in secret as well as other locally processed substances of abuse at the out skirt of the town as well as hawkers in the town. This agrees with the finding of Dukku (2012), Ebie (1988) and Bukarti (2009) who revealed that substance users access the substances of abuse because of their availability in many places like patent medicine stores, motor parks, and unlicensed drug dealers/hawkers and so on. In the same vein, the finding of Magaji (2012) indicates that majority of respondents access the substances of abuse through friends (22.1%), from patent medicine shops (21.7%), and 18.6% from underground agents while others from other sources.

On the availability of the substances in Kontagora Township, majority of the interviewees revealed that these substances are readily available in the town. This finding agrees with the report of Bukarti (2009) who posited that there was availability of various kinds of drugs in Nigeria despite the existence of laws that ban the sales and abuse of some drug substances; different kinds of drug substances like sedatives and stimulants are easily available in patent medicine shops, moving sales vehicles and open market, itinerant hawkers, hawkers of locally processed substances of abuse. Equally, Shehu (2012) pointed out that whenever drugs are available in our societies and people have easy access to them without legislation guiding the sales, people are more likely to abuse them and continue with the abuse, this is very common in Nigeria where substances of abuse are easily accessible in many places and consequently female youths access and use substances like codeine, Roche etc. Also, Dukku (2012) noted that drugs can only be abused when they are available irrespective of strong desire in individual without availability (supply) there can be no drug abuse. He further reveals that the stand of literature on drug uses specifically indicate that the

opportunity to take a given drug depends on easy access of it, such that without the availability of such substances, the abuse will not take place.

The findings above revealed that factors such as peer group influence, feeling among etc. predisposes female youths to substance and both of which are products of intimate association/interaction which also buttressed Sutherland's differential association theory that generally assumed that humans are born neutral, but they virtually learn all behaviours, beliefs and tendencies from the social environment. Consequently, acts such as substance abuse among female youths as the products of learning resulting from intimate interaction between members of society.

Predisposing Factors for Substance Abuse

The study identified many reasons for female youths involvement in substances abuse, some among the major reasons include: peer group influence, availability of the substances of abuse in the town, poor parental control/negligence/deprivation, attempt forced marriage, betrayals of love from the part of boys friends, frustration, corruption on the part of law enforcement officials and so on. This finding supports the works of Uzoka (1990) and Ebie (1988) who reported that drug abuse is a learned behaviour just like any other normative behavior. Equally, the findings buttressed the view of Anumonye (1990) who posited that those not smoking while in contact with smokers began learning the habit and eventually became chain smokers. Youth's engagement in anti-social behaviour has been observed to be socially and culturally stimulated, especially female substance abuse. This finding also agrees with the view of Sutherland (1939) who related that deviant acts such as substance abuse among female youths are learnt in the process of interaction just like any other behaviour.

Another factor found to be responsible for female youth's involvement in substance abuse is frustration. This finding is in accord with the work of Dambazau (1999) who linked the occurrence of deviant acts such as drug abuse to poverty and unemployment which he argued created an environment which bred frustration and increased stress which resulted to feelings of hopelessness, especially in a country where there is no provision for social welfare in order to give temporary relief to the poor and unemployed. This finding also supports the view of Merton (1957) who asserted that deviant act such as substance abuse is associated with social strain (frustration) faced by some members of the society due to their difficulties in finding access to legitimate means of attaining structural goals. The finding also agrees with the finding of Haladu (2003) who reported that substance abuse is not result from one factor rather it results from many factors which includes: experimental curiosity, peer group influence, lack of parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions and availability of substance of abuse in the society.

Analysis of data depicts that substance abuse among female is determined by some factors such as unemployment, loneliness, life frustration, desire to get material wealth (money) etc, both of which are products of social structure of the society. Thus it underscores Merton's structural strain theory which maintained that, deviant acts like substance abuse among female youths are result of inconsistencies between the societal cultural goals and the prescribed means of attaining structural goals.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Female youths in Kontagora have in the recent past found to be involved in the act of abusing drugs and other related substance. However, the existence of this act of abusing substances is both among the married and unmarried females, but the unmarried constitutes the

majority. The commonly abused substances by the subjects are virtually pharmaceutical drug substances such as cough syrup with codeine, Roche, Rafenol tablets etc. Other locally processed substances identified to be abused by the female youths include: Indian hemp, local beer (*burukutu, ogogoro, giyanbabbajui, makarhho and duma*), *babbajui*, lizard excreta and likes. Many factors have been identified to be responsible for female youth's involvement in substance abuse in Kontagora. Among these factors are peer group influences, poor parental care, frustration, availability of the substances abuse in the town. In order to address the menace of substance abuse in Kontagora, the following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

- i Government must as a matter of urgency take frantic measures on the indiscriminate sales of the identified substances that are prone to be abused by the youths. This can be achieved by classifying those substances as controlled and some as illegal and as such should be ban from sale and abuse.
- ii Parents/guardians should as a necessity take their responsibilities of giving their children/wards proper socialization. This can be achieved by determining the peers/friends their children/wards associate with regularly.
- iii Government should introduce into the existing school syllabuses "Drugs Education" at all levels of schools. This will go a long way in creating awareness among the children and young person's on the dangers associated with substance abuse.
- iv Religious/traditional leaders and NGOs should complement law enforcement agencies by embarking on serious enlightenment campaigns against the dangers of substance abuse using print and electronic media in public places.

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