DOI: https://doi.org/10.67203/gjhrr.2025.cfrfba7u

https://abueducationjournals.com/gjhrr Volume 7, Issue 2 August 2025

INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL CARE ON PREVENTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN SABON GARI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KADUNA STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of parental care on preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State. Utilising a descriptive survey design, the research explores the relationship between the quality of parental care, specific parenting practices, and the likelihood of adolescent substance abuse. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The current estimated population in 2022, at a 2.5% annual increase, is 430,500 for Sabon-Gari. The sample size is three hundred and eighty-four (384). The instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire. The findings reveal that there is a significant relationship between specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State. Moreover, specific parenting practices, including setting clear expectations and consequences, regular family discussions on substance abuse, consistent reinforcement of positive behaviours, structured routines, and parental involvement in school and extracurricular activities, are identified as effective strategies in preventing substance abuse. The study recommends targeted interventions that leverage the positive influence of parental care on adolescent behaviour. These interventions could involve educational programs for parents, particularly mothers, focusing on enhancing parenting skills and fostering open communication about substance abuse risks. The findings also highlight the need for interventions tailored to the age and gender differences among adolescents, recognising that parental support may have a more significant impact on older adolescents. Overall, this research contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on adolescent substance abuse prevention, offering a foundation for the development of evidence-based interventions in Sabon-Gari and similar communities.

Keywords: Parent, Prevention, Substance Abuse

Introduction

Parenting is an important component in the family system and plays a key role in engaging children in assuming diverse and complementary responsibilities. Parents are expected to meet the biological, physical, financial, and health needs of their children (Groenewald & Bhana, 2017). Parents are perceived as enablers who provide children with opportunities and space to engage in meaningful and purposeful activities and relationships as part of their learning. Parents are sometimes faced with considerable challenges in their parenting experiences. Berge, Sundell, and Håkansson (2016), while investigating the role of parenting styles in adolescent substance use in Sweden, defined parenting style as the general style of parenting, as well as substance-specific parenting practices may influence children's substance use behaviour. The result of their study revealed that a neglectful parenting style was associated with worse substance use outcomes across all substances. Parenting style was found to be unrelated to substance use outcomes, with one exception: authoritative parenting style was associated with less frequent drinking. Association with deviant peers, delinquent behaviour, provision of alcohol by parents, and previous use of other substances were associated with substance use outcomes at follow-up (Akorede et al., 2017; Odhiambo et al., 2020; Olubiyi et al., 2019).

Substance abuse has been considered to be one of the most serious problems in every human society. The phenomenon exists in various dimensions such as medical, social, economic, and cultural. Unchecked substance abuse among youths and the entire population could negatively affect general well-being and life expectancy. This is supported by the 2017 World Drug Report, which states that substance abuse is dangerous, affects users' health, and can result in disability and even death (Ann, 2009). The prevalence of substance abuse, such as alcohol, tobacco, and other illicit medications, among adolescents and undergraduates spreading across the globe constitutes an important public concern. It cuts across Central and Eastern Europe, with girls and young women identified with smoking, while it affects a larger population of young people in developing countries like Nigeria (Pradeep, 2021).

Substance abuse is a serious matter that should not be taken lightly. It occurs when you consume too much or in the wrong way alcohol, prescription medications, and other legal and illicit substances. Addiction is not the same as substance misuse. Many people who struggle with substance misuse can quit or adjust their destructive habits. On the other hand, addiction is a disease. It implies that you are unable to stop utilising, although your condition is causing you harm (Pradeep, 2021)

Despite various governments' stringent legislations outlawing illicit use of unprescribed substances across the world, citizens, including adolescents and undergraduates, still get involved to the extent that their health and well-being are threatened, thereby leading to moral decadence and psychological trauma both within the family system and society at large. This, over the years, has become a serious and continuous problem in most of the African nations (Akingbade & Emmanuel, 2018).

However, Substance abuse, a form of risk-taking behaviour among adolescents, is not unconnected with the general features of adolescence as a stage of storm, stress, and confusion characterised by curiosity, exploration, quest for experimentation, and identity search. Some, if not all, of the illicit substances taken by adolescents and undergraduates in particular exert aversive effects on the brain. The effects include, but are not limited to, stimulated sedation and mood swings among the young population. It has been observed that there is a threat to the health and well-being of substance abusers. For instance, abuse of substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, and various other drugs is detrimental to the well-being of the abusers, the family, and the larger society (Olugbenga et al., 2020)

Parental support and monitoring have emerged as two important tools in efforts to reduce adolescent substance use and abuse. Understanding how to use parental support and monitoring in an increasingly refined and targeted manner to prevent adolescent use of substances such as tobacco smoking represents an especially important opportunity to strengthen primary prevention efforts. Parental care has been defined as "parental behaviours toward the child, such as praising, encouraging and giving physical affection, which indicate to the child that he or she is accepted and loved". In practice, parents with high parental care will demonstrate several qualities, such as caring and warmth, willingness to provide advice, and having open discussions with their children. Existing narratives show that children with low parental support often display negative emotions, cannot cope with stress, and more often engage in substance use (Mills et al., 2021)

Parental monitoring has been found to delay alcohol initiation in adolescents, as well as to reduce levels of later drinking. Lack of parental monitoring has been associated with an increased risk of engagement in alcohol use among adolescents. On a related note, high parental monitoring has been associated with improved health-related outcomes in adolescents, such as better mental well-being and less delinquency; improved medication adherence; and reduced substance use and substance use intentions among adolescents, all of which are positively related to substance use (Mills et al., 2021)

Alcohol use by young people is an increasing concern worldwide (WHO, 2015). Alcohol use is initiated at a worrying age; 14% of adolescent girls and 18% of boys between the ages of 13–15 years in low- and middle-income countries (WHO, 2015). Consequently, 5% of deaths of young people below 30 years are attributed to alcohol abuse (WHO, 2016). In Central and Eastern Europe, it was reported that 25% of under-20-year-olds use drugs, with high usage across Western Europe, Australasia, and North America (Romo-Avilés et al., 2016), as well as lifetime cannabis use in these countries. The age of onset was similar across countries (16–19 years) except in South Africa, where it was 20 years (Dykes & Casker, 2021).

The Principles of substance abuse prevention are seven (7) which include the following: Intervening early in childhood can alter the life course trajectory in a positive direction, Intervening early in childhood can both increase protective factors and reduce risk factors, Intervening early in childhood can have positive long-term effects, Intervening in early childhood can have effects on a wide array of behaviours, Early childhood interventions can positively affect children's biological functioning, Early childhood prevention interventions should target the proximal environments of the child, and Positively affecting a child's behaviour through early intervention can elicit positive behaviours in adult caregivers and in other children, improving the overall social environment.

One factor that may contribute to adolescent substance use is parenting styles and how adolescents respond to different types of parenting. Forms of parenting styles and the application of specific parenting behaviours are important in the upbringing of children and adolescents. If parenting styles are not enforced properly, then parents do not develop a healthy form of attachment with their child, which can result in deviant behaviour such as drug abuse (Odhiambo, 2020). Therefore, this study examines the associations between parental support, parental monitoring, and adolescent substance use and whether these associations differ by gender and age group among middle and high school students. Findings may provide new evidence about how to best use parental support and monitoring to prevent adolescent use of substances to reduce the risk of misuse, abuse or addiction in the future.

Adolescent substance abuse is a growing concern with far-reaching implications for the well-being of individuals and communities. Sabon Gari Local Government Area in Kaduna State is not exempt from this challenge, and there is a pressing need to investigate the specific influence of parental care on the prevention of substance abuse among adolescents in this region. Despite the recognition of parental influence on adolescent behaviours, there is a gap in understanding the nuanced dynamics, effective parenting practices, and environmental factors associated with parental care that either contribute to or mitigate the risk of substance abuse.

Research Question

What are the specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State?

Hypothesis

There is no significant specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State.

Materials and Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey design, according to Nworgu (2006), is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. The population for the study consisted of all the Adolescents across Sabon-Gari LGA. The census population of Sabon-Gari is 291,358 (National Population Commission, 2006). The current estimated population in 2022, at a 2.5% annual increase, is 430,500 for Sabon-Gari. Sample size 384 at a confidence level of 95.0% and 0.05 margin of error (Research Adviser, 2006). The instrument for data collection for the study was a questionnaire titled "Influence of

Parental Care on Prevention of Substance Abuse Questionnaire" (IPCPSAQ) developed by the researchers. The questionnaire consisted of three sections, A and B. Section A was designed to obtain demographic characteristics of the respondents that including age, level, among others. Sections B, C, and D contain five (5) items each on the influence of parental care on the prevention of substance abuse, which were rated on a four-point rating scale. The instrument for data collection was validated by three experts: two experts from the Health Education and Human Kinetics Department, one from the College of Medical Sciences, all at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The instrument was administered to the respondents in the sampled schools with the help of two research assistants. The research assistants were briefed by the researchers on the administration and collection of the instruments to ensure maximum return of the instruments. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer all the research questions, while the t-test was used to test the two null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The mean value set at 2.50 was used as a benchmark for decision; any item with a mean value of 2.5 and above was accepted, while any item with a mean value below 2.50 was rejected. The mean was interpreted using the real limit of numbers as follows: 3.50 - 4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA), 2.50 - 3.49 = Agree (A), 1.50 - 2.49 = Disagree (D), and 0.50 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD).

Results

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n = 378)

Variable	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Age	10-14years	45	11.9
	14-18 years	182	48.2
	19-21 years	151	39.9
Gender	Male	267	70.6
	Female	111	29.4
Marital Status	Single	257	68.0
	Married	81	21.0
	Divorced	21	5.5
	Widow	19	5.5
Occupation	Farmer	11	2.9
	Student	289	76.5
	Housewife	47	12.5
	Civil Servant	31	8.1
Parental Status	Parent	277	73.3
	Guardian	54	14.3
	Non-parents	4	1.0
	Poster parents	18	4.8
	Grandparents	25	6.6
Level of Education	No formal Education	9	2.4
	Primary	55	14.6
	Secondary	202	53.6
	Tertiary	112	29.6

Table 1 shows that 182 (48.2%) of the respondents are between the ages of 14-18 years, 151 (39.9%) of the respondents are between the ages of 19 - 21 years, while 45 (11.9%) of the respondents were between the ages of 10-14. Moreover, it shows that 267 (70.6%) are male, while 111 (29.4%) are female. It shows that singles are 257 (68%), married are 81 (21%), divorced are 21 (5.6%), while widows are 19 (5.4%). The majority, 289 (76.5%) of the respondents are students, 47 (12.5.3%) of the respondents are housewives, 31 (8.1%) of the respondents are civil servants, while 11 (2.9%) of the respondents are farmers. It reveals that the majority, 277 (73.3%) of the respondents have parents, 54 (14.3%) of the respondents have guardians, 25 (6.6%) of the respondents have grandparents, 18 (4.8%) of respondents have poster parents, while 04 (1%) of the respondents have no parents. Furthermore, it reveals that the majority, 202 (53.4%) of the respondents have secondary education, 115 (29.6%) of the respondents have a tertiary education, 55 (14.6%) of the respondents have primary education, while 09 (2.4%) of the respondents have no formal education.

Table 2: What are the specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State?

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Setting clear expectations and consequences by parents is an effective strategy in preventing adolescent substance abuse.	3.73	0.69
2	Regular family discussions about the dangers of substance abuse contribute to a healthier environment.	2.59	1.18
3	Consistent reinforcement of positive behaviours by parents helps in deterring substance use.	3.22	0.97
4	Implementing structured routines and rules within the family has a positive impact on preventing substance abuse.	3.37	0.88
5	Parents' involvement in school and extracurricular activities enhances effective preventive measures against substance abuse.	3.67	0.68
	(Mean 2.50 Benchmark)	**3.32**	**0.88**

A careful observation of Table 4 showed the mean scores of the responses on specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The responses for each item were computed, and item 1 had the highest mean score of 3.73, indicating that the majority of the respondents have

made setting clear expectations and consequences by parents is an effective strategy in preventing adolescent substance abuse. All the aforementioned items have a mean score that is higher than the benchmark mean score of 2.5. Similarly, the average mean score of 3.32 was obtained, which is greater than the benchmark mean score of 2.5. This implies that there is a positive attitude towards different parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 3: There is no significant specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State

Variables	N	Aggregate Mean	Std.	df	t-value	P-value
	379	3.32	0.88	378	111.1	0.001
Test mean	379	2.50	0.00			

The result of the one-sample t-test from table 3 revealed that the specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State is significant because the calculated p-value (0.001) is lower than the 0.05 level of significance and the calculated t-value of 111.1 is greater than the 1.972 critical t-value at 378 degrees of freedom (df). The overall mean computed was 3.32, and the standard deviation of 0.88. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, is hereby rejected. The specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State are significant, which implies that the adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State, have a positive response to various parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents.

Discussion of Findings

The quality of parental care and likelihood of substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State is significant, which implies that the adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State have a positive quality of parental care towards substance abuse. A study titled “Parental permissiveness, control, and affect and drug use among adolescents” by Becoña et al. (2013) found that the young people who perceived their parents as permissive and those who perceived less maternal control and higher levels of both paternal and maternal affect were more likely to use alcohol, tobacco, and cannabis. Sex differences were found within this pattern. Variables of maternal affect and control were not influential among males, whereas the general pattern was maintained among females (Akorede et al., 2022). This study highlights the importance of perceived permissiveness and the need to consider parents’ and children’s gender when providing control and affection, as fathers will influence male children, whereas mothers will influence female children. It has also shown similar verdicts in the results of this study.

The specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State are significant, which implies that the adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State, have a positive response to various parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents. A study titled “Parental support and monitoring as associated with adolescent alcohol and tobacco use by gender and age” by Mills et al., (2021) finalized a similar result that parental support was a more significant factor in preventing substance use for older adolescents (high school aged group) than for younger adolescents, irrespective of gender suggesting that parental support may be more impactful and important as adolescents age. As children mature, particularly from middle school to high school, parental support may play a larger role in preventing substance use for older adolescents compared to younger ones. A study titled “Influence of Parenting Style on Drug Abuse among Girls in Secondary Schools in Nakuru County” by Odhiambo et al., (2020) the researcher concluded that parents contribute a lot in spoiling their daughters by; giving them too much pocket money, not guiding them on what channels to watch on television, on what to read in magazines, books etc. Poor relationship between parents and their daughters was also noted as a contributing factor to drug abuse, which automatically leads to a lack of general parental guidance. Poor relationship between girls and their parents was also identified as a key factor that contributes to drug abuse among girls. From the findings, the researcher recommended that parents should ensure that they have strict control over their children by monitoring their behaviour while at home. This would include talking to their children on the dangers of drug abuse on the health, behaviour and general academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the quality of parental care and the likelihood of substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State are significant, which implies that the adolescents in Sabon-Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State have a positive quality of parental care towards substance abuse. The specific parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State are significant, which implies that the adolescents in Sabon-Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State have a positive response to various parenting practices that are most effective in preventing substance abuse among adolescents.

Recommendation

Based on this finding, the study recommends the need to develop interventions to promote the already existing positive influence of parental care on the prevention of substance abuse among adults in Sabon Gari local government area of Kaduna State. These interventions could focus on educating women about the importance of parental care for children's development and supporting them to develop positive parenting skills.

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