

Effects of Alcohol Consumption and Abuse Among Younger Adults in Nsukka, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Aim: Globally, there has been availability and misuse of alcohol among youths and the consequences have been a thing of serious concern. This study investigates the effects of alcohol consumption and abuse among younger adults in Nsukka, Nigeria. The study used a multi stage random sample of 110 younger adults aged 17-40 years. They were interviewed using in-depth interviews (10) and Focus Group Discussions (10 FGD) that elicited information on the effects of alcohol consumption and abuse among younger adults. The qualitative data generated were analyzed in themes. Results indicate that majority of the respondents negatively perceived alcohol consumption to be depraved due to its health, religious and social implications, especially when it is abused. However, they conserved that many positive benefits are inherent in alcohol consumption if it is not abused. Given the rate of alcohol abuse among younger adults as findings show, there is the urgent need for policies and programmes that will help regulate alcohol consumption and abuse. This will go a long way in sensitizing, rehabilitating and reintegrating alcohol addicts and the at-risk persons to the larger society and the findings has potentials to influence policies on alcoholism.

Keywords: Alcohol, Substance abuse, Youth, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The general acceptability of alcoholic substances as a social beverage as well as its high level of availability and consumption with weak regulation around the world has degenerate to abuse of the substance. In Nigeria for example where alcoholic drinks are consumed across all age, social issues such as alcoholism, truancy, death, gambling etc have raised heightened concerns. Alcohol is one of the few psychoactive drugs of which society both allows and encourages consumption; it is also the world's most widely consumed drug (Machado, Félix Lana, Felisbino-Mendes, & Malta, 2013). Psychoactive substances are chemical substances that, when taken, have the ability to change an individual's consciousness, mood or thinking processes (WHO, 2014). Alcohol is among the most common psychoactive substances used (Akindutire & Adeboyega, 2012; Yakasai, 2010; Yusuf, 2010). The most commonly consumed alcoholic beverage differs across Nations. Overall in Europe, Beer, Wine and Spirits were the top three most consumed beverages (WHO, 2011). Alcohol is as old as human history and in traditional societies; it was not out of place for alcohol to be brewed and served at parties and ceremonies for both adults and the young ones with the younger population enjoying adult supervision (Fumanti, 2010). According to Nwonyi, Effiong and Ubonm (2017), the involvement in alcohol consumption apart from biological and psychological consideration arises as a result of its availability and acceptability.

As shown in a World Health Organization, the worldwide consumption of alcohol was equal to 6.13 liters of pure alcohol consumed per person aged 15 years and older WHO (2011). It shows in a Global World Health Organization Survey on Alcohol and Health conducted in 2008, a five year drinking trend was followed for 18 – 25 year olds. Out of 82 responding countries 80% showed an increase, 11% a decrease, 6% were stable and 12% showed inconclusive trends. Further shown in WHO publication by McAllister and Lancet (WHO, 2011) harmful drinking patterns such as drinking to intoxication and binge drinking seem to be on a rise among adolescent and young adults. Globally, the harmful use of alcohol alone has been estimated to result in 3.3 million deaths each year and at least 15.3 million persons worldwide have been documented to be suffering from drug use disorders with alcohol use topping the chart (WHO, 2017). Additionally, alcohol is the world's third largest risk factor for disease burden and 2.5 million people die as a result of the detrimental consumption of alcohol (WHO, 2014). Around one-fifth of those are youth between ages 15 to 29. Moreover, alcohol causes many serious psychosocial issues. According to Henderson et al. (2013) who surveyed young people in England aged 11 to 15 years old, the consequences of alcohol consumption were also reported to include: 38% having vomited, 29% damaged their clothes, 26% losing money, 23% having a fight and 18% getting into trouble with the police. Further, in Ireland, Priest (2018) stated that alcoholics occupy about 7, 500 mental hospital beds and they form a fair proportion of those who are homeless or who use reception centers.

According to Foster and Marriott (2016), alcoholism or alcohol abuse is associated with a variety of serious health and social problems, including sexually transmitted diseases, low workplace productivity, domestic violence, admissions to emergency healthcare services, acute myocardial infarction, and traffic accidents; with a considerable proportion in young people and ranking third among the main risk factors for premature death and disability (WHO, 2010). Alcohol consumption levels are highest among the youngest age group (between 15-24) and regarding measured occupational groups the highest percentage of respondents who usually have 3-4 or more drinks per occasion are students at 46% (European Commission, 2010). The high rates of substance abuse in student populations have been reported. Secondary school is unique in having the high number

of teenagers who are seemingly battling with self-identity and peer pressure influence. These make them more vulnerable to undertaking even illicit actions (Egbonu, Egbonu & Samuel, 2015).

This precarious situation is also prevalent in Nigeria as previous studies had revealed high burden of substance abuse among students. For instance, Ogunsola and Fatusi (2016) reported that about two-thirds of in-school adolescents in Osun State Nigeria had used substances in both rural (65.7%) and urban areas (66.0%) respectively. Also, Lawoyin et al (2015) revealed that 69.3% of secondary school students in Igboora, South-west Nigeria were current users of at least one of the illicit drugs. Alex-Hart (2015) in a study among secondary school students in Port Harcourt, Southern Nigeria also revealed that 30.6% of their respondents had ever taken alcoholic drinks before the survey while, Yisa et al (2009) showed that lifetime use of any substance among students in Ibadan, South West Nigeria was 15.3%. Eeguranti, et al (2009), in a study among secondary school students in Oshogbo, South West Nigeria also reported 20.3% as the prevalence of substance abuse among the respondents. Many factors have been identified to be responsible for drug abuse among young people, these include: experimental curiosity, peer pressure, poor socio-economic condition at homes and the need for extra energy for daily activities among others. Given this rise in prevalence of alcohol use, it has resulted in varied social and mental health consequences on all.

Factors such as peer pressure, dysfunctional home settings, advertisement and inability to cope with stress have been associated with onset of substance use (Salaudeen, Musa, Akande & Bolarinwa, 2011). In Brazil, the world's fourth leading producer of distilled liquor and beer, drinking has expanded rapidly, a trend that can be associated with various factors such as advertising, low prices, and widespread availability (WHO, 2010; Caetano & Laranteina, 2016). The main cause for alcohol consumption among women in Zambia and other African countries is considered to be associated with the economic status. Poverty has a significant role in the proliferation of prostitution; young women are vulnerable because of these economic factors and tend to consume alcohol as part of their prostitution activities (Singh et al., 2011).

According to WHO (2017) alcohol policies should be made with a main goal of enhancing the social and health wellbeing of the public. The policies should control the market so that children are protected from being lured into alcohol consumption by marketers. They must also prevent those who consume alcohol from harming the innocent around them. Reducing harmful effects of alcohol on health is also an important factor to consider in policy making. Therefore, a World Health Organization (WHO) resolution adopted by the 58 World Health Assembly in 2005 called for a concerted effort at the global, regional, and country level to address the social determinants of harmful use of alcohol and reduce alcohol-related harm (Fekjaer, 2012). Notably, the federal road safety corps (FRSC) of Nigeria has initiated some actions aimed at control of alcohol use by drivers of commercial vehicles (Ebosele et al., 2010). More recently, the Nigerian government introduced the NDLEA agency to checkmate on drugs and alcohol use and abuse. Despite the widespread interventions to raise awareness of the harmful effect of alcohol use and to minimize its usage, global data suggest an increase in alcohol use among young people (Global Status Report, 2017).

The practice of alcohol abuse in Nigeria has been of interest to scholars in the present time. Majority of the research already carried out on alcohol abuse have focused on the prevalence, effects and factors among youths (Ogunsola & Fatusi, 2016; Lawoyin et al., 2015; Alex-Hart, 2015; Yisa et al., 2009; Eeguranti, et al., 2009; Salaudeen, Musa, Akande & Bolarinwa, 2011; Caetano & Laranteina,

2016; Singh et al., 2011). However, none of these studies investigated alcohol abuse and its effects on youths in Nsukka. This study therefore joins the existing conversation on alcohol abuse and consumption as well as aims at closing this research gap by investigating the following research questions: (a) What is the situation of alcohol consumption and abuse among younger adults in Nsukka, Nigeria? (b) What are the factors promoting the consumption of alcohol among younger adults? (c) What are the effects of alcohol abuse among younger adults in Nsukka? It is of the belief that this study will provide results that will affect both local and international campaigns to curb the abuse of alcohol, regulate its consumption as well as combat factors that will promote alcohol abuse in the study area and beyond.

METHODOLOGY

Study Population

The study was carried out among younger adults in Nsukka L.G.A, Enugu State of Nigeria that were between the ages of 17-40 years. The study area was Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. Nsukka LGA comprises twelve autonomous communities Ibagwa, Okutu, Okpuje, Obukpa, Edem, Obimo, Lejja, Ede-Oballa, Nsukka, Ehalumona, Opi, and Umabo from where five communities (Opi, Ede-Oballa, Ibagwa, Nsukka and Obukpa) were purposively selected.

Design and sampling

A multi stage sampling procedure which entails successive selection of community clusters, groups, streets, villages, housing units and respondents was employed (Mason, 2002). In the first stage, the twelve autonomous communities (Ibagwa, Okutu, Okpuje, Obukpa, Edem, Obimo, Lejja, Ede-Oballa, Nsukka, Ehalumona, Opi, and Umabo) were clustered. This cluster choice was to help the researchers get varied demographic data that will be used to analyze the respondents' views on the subject of study. Secondly, a simple random sampling technique through simple balloting was applied to choose five communities (Opi, Ede-Oballa, Ibagwa, Nsukka and Obukpa) from the 12 autonomous communities in Nsukka LGA of Enugu state. Purposive sampling was used next by the researchers to directly choose respondents from the wards those who not only indicated willingness, but were also eligible to participate on account of their age (Bryman, 2016; Bloor, 2001). Only male and females aged 17-40 were eligible for this study.

These participants were invited to the FGDs at specific locations. Each of the 10 FGD sessions consisted of 10 participants summing to 100 participants. Lastly, the snowball technique was adopted in identifying 10 IDI respondents (2 from each of the 5 communities) in Nsukka L.G.A used for the study. However, they were persons who did not feature in the FGD. Snowball technique was applied for the IDI because of the information-rich subject undergoing research and the need for proper referral to information-rich persons, regarding the research topic (Silverman, 2005). These referrals were done by the persons in charge of beer parlors, drinking spots, medical centers etc.

The researchers had a uniform FGD guide which abetted standardization of questions, and they moderated two FGDs alongside a research assistant who doubled as the note taker in the event of technical failure of the recording device. The Research Ethics Review Board had earlier moderated the instrument so as not to instigate negative emotional reactions from participants on account of the subject matter under discussion. FGDs and IDI were conducted in Nsukka dialect (Igbo) and English languages depending on the language proficiency of participants. Participants verbally

consented to the audio-recording of their responses and were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity.

Data-analysis

Audio-taped responses were later transcribed into English. The researchers then read through the transcripts and established themes that were used for the analysis in line with the demands of this study. Analytical themes were developed from the transcripts as guided by the literature reviewed. Participants' anonymity was handled by ensuring all identifying information such as names and addresses, emails, date of birth/age etc. mentioned by the respondents were not shared with anyone else and the original data is kept confidential. Pseudonyms were applied for respondents' anonymity during analysis and writing of data.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Issues of informed consent arise in almost all research that borders on human being (Association of Social Anthropologists, 2011). Since this study is no exception, we therefore, used participation information sheet to inform the participants on what the research entails and equally sought their consent for participation with the use of consent forms. Equally, we selected only participants with capacity to give consent (Department for Constitutional Affairs, 2007). Another ethical issue encountered is confidentiality. To avoid issues of confidentiality, names and other identifying data of participants were kept in confidence and members/interviewees were educated of their privileges to stop the interview or FGD with no explanation (British Sociological Association, 2002). Pseudonyms were used during transcription so that respondents can remain anonymous (British Society of Gerontology, 2012). Ethical consent for this research was obtained from the research ethics review board of the authors' institution.

RESULTS OF FINDINGS

The data present realities of alcohol consumption and its effects on younger adults in Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria. The first theme detailed respondent's knowledge on alcohol; secondly, perceived views on the positive and negative side on the subject matter were examined while the third theme presented the reactions of respondents toward the effects of alcohol consumption and abuse. Also, the factors promoting the consumption of alcohol among the younger generation were examined. Lastly, the study documented roles of social work as solution to the problems of alcohol consumption and abuse. This was achieved through participants' experiences which certainly influenced their attitude and perceptions toward the exercise. Generally, their knowledge on these themes was largely influenced by experiences they have had, witnessed, or heard about.

Knowledge of alcohol

In terms of participant's knowledge of alcohol consumption, 95 percent of them indicated that they had knowledge of the phenomenon. According to them the name is not new and does not sound strange to them. However, some very few had differing knowledge that their local drink (pami) is equally categorized as alcohol. However, only the response of a 22-year-old man, a 29-year-old farmer and a 33-year-old woman were sampled. They opined thus:

Alcohol are usually drinks which contain substance that can make one hyperactive especially when you take more than the percentage your body can carry. It is a popular beverage consumed in almost every occasion in this town. When something good

happens, we drink to celebrate, when something bad happens, we drink to forget the pains or provide alcoholic drinks to host our guests who have come to mourn with us. When nothing happens, we equally drink to thank God for life. Most consumed alcoholic beverage here is our local Palm wine or Life beer, Hero beer among others (FGD 22 years old man).

Alcohol are beverages good for the human health until it is taken in excessive quantity or abused. It intoxicates the abuser and as such, influences the actions and inactions of the abuser. Most of such drinks include Spirits, Gin, Beer etc. The consumers of alcohol are both young and old and most come with warning for consumers such as +18 and the percentage of alcohol (FGD 29 years old male respondent).

The knowledge of alcohol is very much widespread and people know of its effects as intoxicating, however, they are ignorant of the deep effects such intoxication could cause. Again we hardly perceive our local palm wine as a category of alcohol because we are so used to it. ...even though both gender consumes alcohol, it is more likely you find a young woman who doesn't consume alcohol and are less likely to abuse alcohol than their male gender counterparts (IDI 33 year old female respondent).

Positive views on alcohol consumption

Data from this study revealed that participants saw alcohol consumption from a positive light. Most of them posit that the human body/ heart needs alcohol and it energizes them for their daily activities. In addition, they saw alcohol consumption from a positive social angle being that it fosters social cohesion and brings people together in moments of despair and celebration while it equally has traditional importance:

A 36-year-old participant during one of the FGDs conducted with younger men had a positive view to alcohol and its consumption. He linked his response to the reasons why it is good for people to continue consuming alcohol. According to him:

...when you go for any form of gathering and there is no beer, no palm wine or any other form of alcohol, the environment is usually very boring. In fact, there is hardly any gathering in this our area that you won't find alcohol of any sort. Again, alcohol has traditional or cultural importance as we use palm wine or dry gin without them, we cannot consult our chief priests and god (FGD participant, 36-year-old male).

Supporting this fact of positive view in alcohol consumption, majority of the respondents spoke from the angle of health benefits in consuming alcohol. Even though they acknowledged the risks involved in the abuse of alcohol, they don't regret consuming it and had no plan to stop. In the words of one of such men:

...people always concentrate on the consumption of alcohol as something bad whereas the opposite is the case especially when not abused or taken beyond the capacity one's body could carry. I only wish that people who discuss alcohol will not just discuss its effect based on consumption but based on the abuse of it. Of a truth, the human body requires some percentage of alcohol and when taken minimally, it helps to control coronary heart diseases. Again alcohol especially dry Gin or spirits helps to stimulate the human body especially when the weather is cold and lastly, it is believed that our

local alcoholic drink (palm wine) refreshes the brain and smoothens the skin (IDI respondent, 40-year-old male respondent).

Finally, a social dimension in the importance of alcohol consumption was curled from the words of a 25 year old man who concluded that what continues to bring people together in their local community is the consumption of meats digested with alcohol, in his words:

...the meats and drinks we usually have in each social club here is one of the main reasons we come out for meetings of age grades. Most times a drinking bar is an avenue to make new friends and to deepen our old friendships and brotherhood. People hold in high regard, alcoholic drinks offered to them than when such money is given to them. Most important, alcohol consumption smoothens business transaction or agreement as well as helps in resolving arising or already existing conflicts. For example, an alcoholic drink is usually presented to finalize agreements such as land purchase, house rent etc. (FGD participant, 25-year-old man).

Negative views on alcohol consumption

Granting that majority of the participants had positive views towards alcohol consumption; they equally saw it in a negative light as well but only if and when abused. Some others aver that the health, social and behavioral implication for such practice is worse than the gains or its positives. Issues Below are their responses:

...alcohol consumption is not well regulated and there is no consensus on a minimum gauge for drinkers, therefore abuse becomes the order of the day. Both young and old have taken to the misuse of alcohol and as such consume it with reckless abandon. The attached negative effects of alcohol abuse notwithstanding, the prevalence of consumption and abuse remain on the increase (FGD with a 40-year-old participant).

When something lacks regulation, abuse is inevitable; this has been the case of alcohol consumption. I would not encourage my ward to engage in alcohol consumption because it is a prerequisite to alcohol abuse; this is because the majority of alcohol consumers end up abusing it. This has been the cause of so many problems in our society ranging from health, behavioral to social consequences (IDI with 30-year-old woman).

People who consume and abuse alcohol know it is not right but they often just cannot help it especially among the youths who get exited easily. Parents, teachers and even community leaders constantly rebuke the abuse of alcohol especially by youths who should be productively engaged but such warning usually fall on deaf ears. I know most young persons who cannot go a day without getting themselves intoxicated (FGD with younger woman, 25-year-old).

Factors promoting alcohol consumption and abuse

Majority of the participants gave details on factors such as gambling/betting, sports advert, frustrations and free drinks, alcohol abuse home, peer influence etc. as having influences on the intake and consequently abuse of alcohol on younger adults.

A 32-year-old female participant recounted her personal experience from the purview of peer influence. She said:

I used to detest taking alcohol because of the bitter taste. I would always query why people spend their hard earned money to consume bottles of alcohol. However, this changed as I had to force myself to some bottles given the discriminatory practices and stigma friends attach to those who don't and cannot take alcohol. Those days, I usually get left out in social gatherings because I don't consume alcohol, so to feel belonged; I started trying out some alcoholic drinks (IDI participant, 34-year-old female).

Further, other participants also reported that peer influence goes beyond convincing you to consume alcohol; they further lead or influence one to abuse it. Below are direct narratives of a 22 year old male and a 23 year old female on such claim:

It is habitual for people to want their friends to consume what they are consuming and in the same proportion as well. This pressure is usually common among those with the purchasing power to buy more drinks. Consequently, such persons make sure their friends continue to have more and more bottles of drink even without their approval. (IDI participant, 22-year-old male).

Most times they call me as a bar attendant and ask that I keep supplying drinks to other friends even without seeking their approval. Some will tell me to quickly open the cork (cover) of the drink. As soon as the drink is opened, the other friends will have less option to reject it hence are forced to consume beyond their normal gauge (IDI with a female beer parlors attendant aged 23 years).

Another majority of participants mentioned the continuous rise in the advertisement of alcohol, individual and societal frustrations as well as gambling and free drinks are part of the many factors influencing alcohol abuse among youths in the study area. Recounting the situation of unemployment as a depressing factor among youths, a 22-year-old woman stated that such youthful frustrations have in no small way encouraged the abuse of alcohol. She said thus

...again, the situation of unemployment in Nsukka and Nigeria as a whole is well documented and youths are at the receiving ends of such frustrations as orchestrated by the lack of jobs. As a youth, each time I try to think so much about my state of unemployment and lack of support from all sectors, I find myself moving to the nearest bar to drink myself to stupor. This act is bad, but it relieves me of negative thoughts such as depression, suicide amongst others. It gives me a temporal relief of my situation (FGD with a 22 years old female participant).

Effect of alcohol abuse

Alcohol abuse contrives some many effects on those who abuse it and has indirect effects on their friends, families, communities and the society. Below are responses of the effect of alcoholism:

It is no longer news that the abuse of alcohol often leads to violence and other form of conflicts. Among football spectators, those who abuse alcohol at half time or before commencement of a match are usually hyper excited and hyperactive, hence create an environment of argument and violence at the slightest provocation. Beyond football fans which the youths are predominant in, alcohol abuse often lead to a disruption of public peace. It is also among the causes of bullying in schools (FGD, female aged 19 years).

In addition, some other respondents viewed the effects of alcohol to include cultism. Some said that the love for alcohol drinks was the driving force to why some university undergraduates join cult groups especially, the Kegite group. Buttressing this, a 37-year-old lecturer said:

I know a couple of students who joined the Kegite group or cult because of their large consumption and reverence for palm wine popularly called 'holy water'. Therefore, it is really annoying knowing that simple drink habit can make our students join unholy groups against our orientation to them. As an effect of such unholy alliance, they in turn engage in various negative vices and sometimes get expelled from the university... Remember the underlining cause is the love for alcohol and its abuse. Sincerely, excessive consumption of alcohol may equally lead to death, ill health among others (FGD participant, 37 years old male lecturer).

Marital instability and financial drain was also reported by respondents as some of the many effects of alcoholism. Only the response of a married woman was surveyed below on such effects:

I hate seeing anything that contains alcohol. I agree it is not so bad if consumed moderately, but this has not been the case in my home. My husband on a daily basis consumes alcohol in a quantity that is more than his capacity and this has been the bane of our marital issues. Often time after getting himself drunk, he comes home to beat me up at the slightest provocation. Besides that, he would get himself drunk with monies that otherwise should have been used for the welfare of our home and as such we go hungry sometimes if not most times (FGD, married female aged 25 years).

Again, based on health effects of alcohol abuse or high consumption, respondents asserted that it could lead to liver diseases, maternal consequences for expectant mothers, and even more rampant is road accidents which have claimed lots of lives. The response of a 29-year-old shuttle driver and a 28 year old female captured this:

Alcoholism has its many side effects. It is one of the leading causes of liver diseases and this is often the case for those who consume dry gin and other very strong alcohol in large quantum. The liver is therefore made to work more than its capacity and as such breaks down with diseases. This is a fact as there have been many reported cases of liver problems among my friends who consume and abuse alcohol. Again, most people especially drivers and passengers lose their lives as a result of the driver having consumed and abused alcohol before embarking on a journey. This is the reason why we have been warned not to drink and drive. I even hear that in western countries, when an accident happens, they quickly test the driver for alcohol and if found in his system, it attracts huge consequence and insurance companies equally won't indemnify the loss (FGD participant, 29 years old male shuttle driver).

Most pregnant women who abuse alcohol sometimes have maternal complications as some end up giving birth to a deformed or dead child. Some lose their lives in the process of childbirth. Alcoholism of course has health implications on the pregnant woman as well as on the foetus inside of her. This is some reasons women especially the pregnant ones are advised never to abuse alcohol (FGD participant, 28 year old female)

Some medical practitioners who were interviewed gave some medical views on the negative sides of abusing alcohol. Quoting verbatim, they said:

Alcohol interferes with the brain's communication pathways, and can affect the way the brain looks and works. These disruptions can change mood and behavior, and make it harder to think clearly and move with coordination. Again, drinking a lot over a long time or too much on a single occasion can damage the heart, causing problems including Cardiomyopathy, Arrhythmias, Stroke, High blood pressure etc. (IDI with 28year old male medical practitioner).

Heavy drinking takes a toll on the liver, and can lead to a variety of problems and liver inflammations such as steatosis, or fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis, fibrosis, cirrhosis. Alcohol equally causes the pancreas to produce toxic substances that can eventually lead to pancreatitis, a dangerous inflammation and swelling of the blood vessels in the pancreas that prevents proper digestion... (IDI with a 37year old a female medical practitioner).

... yes... there is a strong scientific consensus of an association between alcohol drinking and several types of cancer such as colorectal cancer, breast cancer, liver cancer esophageal cancer and head and neck type of cavity particularly those on the oral cavity (IDI with a 31-year-old female nurse).

DISCUSSIONS

Findings revealed that the majority of the participants acknowledged that the act of excessive consumption of alcohol is inimical to human biopsychosocial wellbeing, but given the perceived and social and cultural positives therein, they don't support an embargo to be placed on the sales of alcohol in the open market. In their view, the quantity of alcohol intake is what should be curbed. Alcohol is reported to have fostered social cohesion among youths and it is used for most cultural practices and celebrations as well as its benefits to the human heart and system. In contrast, the fear of adverse health consequences when abused and the need to maintain bio psychosocial normalcy were the reasons given by those who perceive it negatively and thus clamor for policies that will help discourage high quantity consumption which leads to intoxication and many other negative effects.

Specifically, all participants affirmed to be knowledgeable on the subject of alcohol abuse as the phenomena is not new in their environment. Such view on knowledge of alcohol abuse is not unconnected to the findings of Adekeye (2012), Awosusi and Adegboyega (2013). More so, participants had positive view on alcohol consumption as they reported that it is healthy for the heart and its place in cultural practices cannot be deemphasized. Other studies have also documented same claim of positive sides of consuming alcohol (Dunbar et al., 2012; Tarr, Launay, Cohen & Dunbar, 2015; Tarr, Launay & Dunbar, 2016; Pearce, Launay, & Dunbar, 2015; Dunbar et al., 2016; Dunbar et al., 2017).

In addition, findings of this study further detailed negative views of alcohol consumption among younger adults based on some bio psychosocial considerations and most importantly, such negative perceptions are hinged on factors such as peer pressure, abusive homes, constant celebration with free drinks, frustration, gambling etc. It was in this regard that NASWS (2013) stated that substance use disorders can significantly disrupt a client's family system as it has implications with regard to parenting abilities and the resulting consequences for children involved is a key factor to be

considered. Other studies in support of the negative sides of alcohol consumption are: Foster and Marriott, (2016); Chikere and Mayowa, (2011); Dumbili, (2013).

As regards efforts to combat the practice of alcohol abuse, the study revealed that both governmental and non-governmental agencies are not sleeping on the issue, however, such efforts have not helped matters much regarding the continuous up rise in the abuse of alcohol and its resultant effects. It is in this regard that Audrey and John (2016) averred that the alcohol beverage and hospitality industries have long been viewed as adversaries to public health efforts aimed at reducing alcohol misuse. As a solution, it was suggested by participants that policies on alcohol consumption should transcend beyond paper works as has been the case, sponsorship and advertisement by the alcohol producing and marketing agencies. They should deemphasize the inappropriate consumption of such drinks. Also, substance abuse policies should be implemented and offenders punished. The researchers believe that since youthful frustration is among the reasons youth engage in the abuse of alcohol, alcohol abuse by younger adults should therefore be addressed through the formulation and implementation of policies that can improve the economy of the nation. The emphasis should be specifically on empowerment, health education and sensitization on the dangers of alcohol abuse. These will go a long way in changing the perception of the abusers and consequently reduce the rate of alcohol consumption among the youths.

CONCLUSION

Generally, people take pleasure in daily alcohol consumption, especially with friends in different joints and club houses as means of relaxation. In Nigeria, different alcohol producing companies are also sponsoring football and other sporting events which are largely viewed by the Nigerian youths. Popular Nigerian actors and actresses are paid to advertise alcoholic drinks in Newspapers, Radios, Televisions and Billboards. These however encourage young people to use and abuse alcohol. Adversely, the economic situation in Nigeria has equally heightened the frustrations of youth who in turn rely and abuse alcohol as a coping mechanism. All these could have served as push factors for increased alcohol consumption among the Nigeria youths hence the call for professional intervention.

The burden of alcohol abuse is still high in our study area and the prevalence was significantly higher among youths. It is therefore essential to incorporate substance/alcohol abuse curriculum into the national school curriculum for secondary school students and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Hitherto, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) should intensify their campaigns on alcohol and other related substances in order to have a free society. The campaign against the use of alcohol and misuse of drugs should be more strengthened at the secondary school level because it is the peak of adolescent. Also, government and other relevant authorities should make stringent laws against alcohol abuse as well as alcohol dependence. Further, awareness campaigns on dangers associated with alcohol abuse should be intensified in Nigeria. Social media and other channels of communication should be positively engaged in reaching the youths on this subject. Meanwhile, advertisement of alcoholic drinks using celebrities who are often seen as role models to the younger ones should be discouraged. Lastly, accessibility of alcohol should be strictly monitored and regulated in Nigeria especially among youths and adolescent.

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