EFFECT OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project was carried out by **TITUS KUMBO BILIKISU** with Mat. No. **SSC2106144** in the Department of Social Work, University of Benin, Benin City and approved as adequate in scope and quality for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of the award of Bachelor of Science (B Sc.) Degree in Social Work.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for His guidance and mercy throughout my studies.

It is also dedicated to my beloved parents (Mr and Mrs Titus Kumbo).

ABSTRACT

The effects of drug use on first-year students at University of Benin (UNIBEN) were the focus of this study. The goals were to determine what elements were at play, assess how it affected things like social relationships, psychological health, and academic achievement, and to look at how social work treatments may help. This descriptive survey study surveyed 400 undergraduates (100L-400L) using Taro-Yamane determination techniques, in addition to 20 university health/mental-health professionals and 10 administrative staff members who were picked at random. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect data, and then descriptive statistics (means, frequencies, percentages, and standard deviations) were the main tools for analysis. Based on the results, it seems that the main reasons why students at the University of Benin (UNIBEN) use drugs are: peer pressure, academic stress and pressure, natural curiosity, lack of parental supervision, and the ease of access to drugs on and around campus. There will be measurable drops in focus and performance in the classroom, more absences, mental health issues (such as anxiety and depression), worsening physical health, and more participation in antisocial behaviors (such as cult membership, aggressiveness, and truancy). The importance of social workers to prevention and rehabilitation initiatives was emphasized by participants. Awareness campaigns, counseling, referrals to rehabilitation, student orientation, and cooperation across departments are all part of these endeavors. But there are institutional constraints that restrict the breadth of services provided, such as insufficient financing and a lack of qualified social workers. According to the results, drug abuse is a complex problem among college students, calling for holistic solutions based on ecological principles. Among other things, the study pushed for more funding and institutional support for campus social work units, more structured counseling and peer support programs, more targeted awareness and screening campaigns, and better partnerships between health services, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), and other organizations to improve drug abuse prevention, early detection, and rehabilitation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Drug abuse can be broadly defined as the willful and improper use of any substance, legal or illicit, for any reason other than its medically prescribed function. Substance self-administration that goes beyond accepted medical and societal norms is a part of this. The detrimental effects of drug usage on a person's social and economic life, as well as their cognitive function, emotional health, and conduct, are particularly concerning.

Many different societies have long relied on natural remedies and preventatives made from plants and botanicals. Oral transmission of information about these compounds was crucial to traditional medicine systems for many years. Misuse of pharmaceutical interventions, especially by teenagers, can have devastating social, psychological, and physiological effects, despite the fact that they can be helpful when used appropriately.

Adolescent and young adult drug misuse is now a major issue in public health today. Research shows that many young people still consume drugs, even though there have been many campaigns and lessons about the risks of substance consumption. Socioeconomic influences, familial context, academic duress, curiosity, and peer pressure all play significant roles in shaping this behavior.

One of the main problems is figuring out why so many undergraduates abuse substances. The rise in substance usage at many universities is due to a complex interplay of many different causes. Academic pressure, family dynamics, emotional instability, inquisitiveness, and societal influences are all part of this. Peer pressure is another factor. As they gain more freedom at university, students often encounter settings where substance use is normalized or romanticized. Factors that also play a significant role include insufficient family direction, inadequate coping methods, and limited access to mental health support. It is crucial to understand and recognize these root reasons so that we can create a nurturing learning environment and effective prevention plans.

Undergraduate drug abuse has far-reaching effects on the entire university and community, as well as on society at large. Among the many difficulties that students who abuse substances at the University of Benin often face are a decline in academic performance, problems with interpersonal relationships, inability to make sound decisions, and mental health issues like addiction, depression, and anxiety. Issues with discipline, physical health, and, in extreme circumstances, dropping out of school or engaging in illegal activities are all possible outcomes of chronic substance abuse. These consequences stunt the pupils' development and sabotage the school's goal of producing well-informed, civic-minded individuals who can aid in the progress of their country.

Substance abuse is more common among college students because of the transient character of their lives there. Academic challenges, social pressures, and more autonomy can sometimes lead to insufficient coping skills, like as substance addiction. Over 296 million people, or about 5.8% of the global population aged 15–64, were estimated to have taken drugs at least once in the preceding year, according to recent data from the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2022). This is a significant rise from prior estimates.

Substance addiction has become more common in Nigeria, with the most affected age group being 13–35 years old, according to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). Alarming levels of substance use were discovered in all six geopolitical zones during a national survey that was jointly administered by the NDLEA and UNODC. In Edo State, at least 20% of university students reported having used a psychoactive substance at least once (Oluwasola, Layefa, & Babaleye, 2021). South West: 17.32%; South East: 13.50%; North Central: 11.71%; and North East: 8.54% are the other regional data. Hemce, Cannabis continues to be the most frequently abused illicit substance in Nigeria, with tobacco, codeine-based syrups, tramadol, and, most recently, methamphetamines and opioids, following in that order.

The academic performance, physical health, and mental well-being of students are significantly impacted by drug abuse. It is linked to lower academic performance, increased risk of communicable diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDS), higher attrition rates, and

involvement in illicit activities. The intellectual and social development of young individuals is compromised by the misuse of drugs, which ultimately threatens national development. This is due to the fact that students represent the future workforce and leadership of the country.

Reports from state educational boards, including those from Bayelsa and Edo States, highlight troubling trends in student use of alcohol, tobacco, and hard drugs, despite efforts by regulatory bodies like NAFDAC and civil society organizations. Around 40% of students are involved in substance abuse in some way.

As a prominent tertiary institution in Nigeria, the University of Benin is not immune to this escalating threat. Undergraduates are increasingly reporting substance use, which is manifested in the form of academic decline, behavioral issues, and mental health crises. Numerous students who succumb to substance abuse are observed to withdraw from their academic pursuits and social obligations, occasionally resorting to criminal activity or becoming public nuisances.

Yakasai (2020) underscored the pressing necessity for public awareness and collaborative action to prevent further escalation during the inauguration of a national anti-drug campaign in Lagos. He cautioned that the next victims could be young Nigerians, their families, and communities if no action is taken.

A multi-sectoral approach is necessary to combat substance abuse. Although government agencies are essential for enforcement and regulation, the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as social workers, is essential. Mental health counseling, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Motivational interviewing, Brief interventions, Medically assisted treatments, Behavioral couples therapy, and Psycho-social support and rehabilitation programs are among the critical intervention strategies that social workers offer.

Consequently, social workers assist as frontline agents in resolving the emotional, psychological, and behavioral concerns that are linked to substance misuse. Their responsibilities are particularly critical in the identification of at-risk students, the provision of preventive education, and the facilitation of recovery and reintegration. Social workers are skilled in the provision of intervention and support through behavioral therapy, mental health advocacy, rehabilitation, and counseling. Social workers can be instrumental in the University of Benin by identifying at-risk students, conducting substance education programs, creating awareness, and facilitating access to treatment and recovery services. Social workers can contribute to the development of a more academically productive and healthier student body by collaborating with university authorities, families, and health professionals to decrease the prevalence and impact of substance abuse.

It is imperative to examine the impact of drug abuse on undergraduate students at the University of Benin, given the rising prevalence of drug use among Nigerian undergraduates and the potential consequences for the country's future. The objective of this investigation is to investigate the prevalence, causes, and repercussions of substance abuse, as well as to identify effective intervention strategies to reduce its impact through social work and other support systems.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The rising rate of drug abuse among Nigerian university students is a major issue in terms of both public health and education. Substance abuse, including the use of cannabis, tramadol, codeine, alcohol, and synthetic pharmaceuticals, is on the rise among students at several universities, including the University of Benin. Substance abuse is common as a coping mechanism for many people's problems with mental health, social pressures, scholastic pressure, and emotional instability. Unfortunately, being abused is often linked to a drop in academic performance, mental health issues like anxiety and despair, and deviant behaviors like absenteeism, violence, and hazardous sexual activity. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) data from 2023 shows that more over 14.3 million Nigerians, including a large percentage of students and teenagers, used drugs in the past year. Government agencies like the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and school authorities tried to intervene, but drug misuse remained a persistent threat to kids' academic progress, welfare, and future prospects.

There is a noticeable lack of study on the role of social workers in reducing the impact of substance addiction on adolescents in Nigeria. This is despite the fact that many studies have looked at how and why this behavior occurs on college campuses. Counseling, intervention, and rehabilitation procedures are all within the scope of practice for social workers, who have extensive training in mental health and behavioral assistance. However, they have not been fully utilized or integrated into Nigeria's higher education system. One possible explanation for the persistent rise in student substance addiction despite efforts to raise awareness and implement policies is the lack of effective intervention programs. The lack of campus-based support networks for students struggling with substance-related disorders and the insufficient enforcement of drug laws highlight the requirement for a more professional and inclusive approach to student welfare.

Students at schools like the University of Benin often have long-lasting effects of substance misuse on their academic performance and social lives, even though the problem may not always be obvious at first. Discipline problems, mental health challenges, chronic absenteeism, sexual exploitation, and gang violence are all on the increase. As a result of diminished classroom participation, poor results, and eventual resignation from school, many children turn to substances as a coping mechanism for personal discontent, academic stress, or peer pressure. It is critical to assess the effectiveness of social work measures in reducing the effects of this trend and to determine its root causes in view of recent data indicating a persistent increase in the use

of stimulants and narcotics among college students. Consequently, this study aims to fill this important gap by exploring the origins, effects, and prevention strategies of drug addiction among University of Benin undergraduates and the role that social workers might play in this pressing societal issue.

1.3 Research Objectives

The definite objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigate the factors that contribute to substance addiction among undergraduate students at the University of Benin.
2. Evaluate the impact of substance addiction on undergraduate students at the University of Benin.
3. Examine the role of social workers in reducing the effects of substance addiction on undergraduate students at the University of Benin.

1.4 Research Questions

To guide this study, the following research questions were raised:

1. What are the factors that contribute to substance addiction among undergraduate students at the University of Benin?
2. What is the impact of substance addiction on undergraduate students at the University of Benin?

3. What role do social workers play in reducing the effects of substance addiction on undergraduate students at the University of Benin?

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study will assess undergraduate students from 100L to 400L in chosen faculties at the University of Benin. It will include kids from different departments and schools to ensure a comprehensive test. In order to round out the data obtained from the respondents, the inquiry will also look at the perspectives of students in the social work and other counseling-related departments.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is be relevant to various stakeholders including the universities administrators, Policy makers, Social Workers, students and parents.

The findings of this study can be used by university counseling centers and administrators to create and implement intervention programs that are more tailored to students' needs. By gaining an understanding of the root causes—such as academic pressure, social factors, and peer pressure—universities may design educational campaigns, counseling services, and support networks that tackle the problems head-on. But in the long run, this will help create a school climate that is healthier and more focused on academics.

In order to help policymakers create evidence-based strategies to decrease drug usage in tertiary institutions, this study offers empirical data and contextual analysis. Once lawmakers at all levels have a better grasp of the causes and consequences of drug abuse among students, they will be better able to provide funds to programs that combat the

problem and help those who have struggled with addiction recover. Along with fostering safer learning settings, these rules may also promote cooperation among healthcare practitioners, schools, and police departments.

The importance of social workers as key players in the fight against substance misuse is shown by this research, which highlights their crucial roles in intervention and prevention. Based on these findings, social workers can better guide students through the counseling, education, and outreach processes that they offer. The study goes on to detail how social workers can help affected persons and how they can engage with university officials, families, and community groups to create lasting plans for rehabilitation and behavioral change.

The study's findings on the causes of drug misuse and its negative impacts on students' personal, social, and academic lives are a discovery for parents and students alike. The dangers of substance abuse, including health problems, social disintegration, and academic failure, are meant to be more widely known. Raising this level of consciousness is critical if we want parents to take a more active role in guiding their children and if we want pupils to remain drug-free. Through preventative education and open communication between parents and students, we can create a powerful barrier to drug experimentation and abuse.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides relevant literature review on the topic of substance abuse and its effects on University of Benin undergraduates. Included in this chapter are relevant a conceptual review , theoretical studies and empirical investigations.

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study was grounded in social ecology theory. The all-encompassing social ecology theory rests on the shoulders of two other separate but related theories. One is an ecological idea that aims to create a community where people are interdependent and live in peace with the natural world. In 1960, Murray Bookchin created it. Urie Bronfenbrenner came up with the other hypothesis in 1961; it's a social science theory. As a psychologist, Bronfenbrenner was interested in studying how social institutions and personal growth interact with one another (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Interactions between social and natural elements are the focus of this theory. According to social ecology theory, which stress the interdependence of people and their material, cultural, and social surroundings, human growth is intricate and ever-changing. The theory states that many interrelated systems have an impact on individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Influences on behavior can be categorized into five areas according to Winch (2012): intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and societal. Therefore, according to social ecology theory, people are both affected by and active participants in the ecosystems in which they live. It stresses how important it is to understand the two-way

connections between people and their settings, as well as the ecological setting in which they grow up. Numerous researchers have put forth arguments that lend credence to the hypothesis of social ecology. They stress how all-encompassing it is since it takes into account all the different levels of impact on human development. The theory provides a thorough framework for understanding human development by highlighting the interplay between people and their surroundings (Cowan and co-authors, 2005). In addition, social ecology theory has practical implementations in a variety of disciplines, including education, psychology, and social work, by promoting positive developmental outcomes through the guidance of interventions and policies.

However, social ecology theory is not without its detractors and advocates. A number of critics have pointed out that the theory places too much weight on external causes and not enough on internal ones, such as the role of free will and psychology. Critics contend that it fails to recognize the significance of individual characteristics, including cognitive abilities and personality traits, in the process of development. Furthermore, there are debates regarding the theory's ability to effectively address the issues of power, inequality, and cultural diversity within ecological systems (Bowers and co-authors, 2015). Substance addiction intervention among youth, especially students, requires a multipronged strategy, which is why this theory is relevant to the present study. Therefore, it is the responsibility of social workers to comprehend the theory in its application to substance addiction victims in order to ensure the efficacy of their intervention.

As cited by Winch (2012:11), McLeroy (1988) also delineates the five components of the social ecology theory as follows:

> *When studying what influences people's actions, it's important to think about both their interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts. Acquiring and maintaining these qualities can be achieved through practice and study. "Interpersonal factors" are the interactions with others that influence an individual's sense of self and sense of belonging. Examples of individuals who fell under this category include family members, acquaintances, and peers.*
> *Institutional elements, such as laws, regulations, policies, and structures, can either constrain or promote behavior. Community influences encompass societal norms and preexisting social networks. Factors at the societal level include local, regional, and federal policies and legislation that regulate or endorse health and other social behaviors.*

Figure 2.1 diagrammatically illustrates each of these levels of influence.

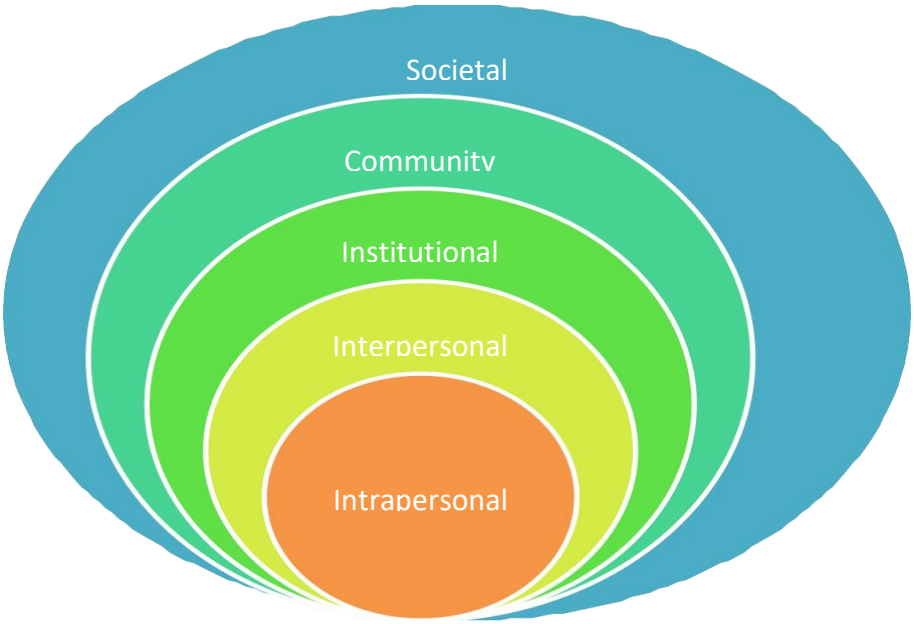

Figure 2.1 Social Ecological Model (adapted from Gillen, *et al*, 2014).

2.2 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The subsequent review pertains to the pertinent concepts of this investigation:

2.2.1 Concept of Drug/Drug Abuse

The concept of drigs has been defined in many fields, with different fields giving different meanings to the term in different contexts. Drugs are defined in pharmacological and biomedical contexts as any molecule that, when given to an organism, influences its biochemical or physiological processes (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). Therapeutic uses of drugs include curing disease or

alleviating symptoms, whereas non-medical uses include altering one's mood or perspective. This multi-use quality has led to many different understandings and uses, including legal medicinal prescriptions, recreational use, and illegal activities.

Oliha (2014) argues that a substance's chemical characteristics might impact physiological reactions as well as the user's mental, emotional, and behavioral states. The World Health Organization (2022) adds to this by noting that any substance that changes one or more of the body's functions upon introduction is considered a drug. Drug misuse is complex, according to scholars like the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2023). They highlight the pharmacological impacts as well as the sociocultural and psychological implications.

Alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, and prescription pharmaceuticals are examples of legal narcotics, while cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine are examples of illicit narcotics. Both classes have the potential for abuse, especially when used in excess of the prescribed doses or when taken without a doctor's supervision (National Institute for Drug Abuse [NIDA], 2023). Consequently, pharmaceutical abuse has become a major issue in public health, affecting healthcare systems, social stability, and individual wellbeing on a global scale,

2.2.2 Dimensions of Drug Abuse

Drug misuse is a complex issue that reflects many aspects of substance misconduct through its patterns and repercussions. All of the following are included in this:

2.2.2.1 Drug Abuse

Substance misuse refers to the harmful and dysfunctional use of psychoactive substances, including illegal narcotics and alcohol, often without a valid medical reason (NIDA, 2023). In most cases, it involves ingesting chemicals to alleviate stress, boost performance, or achieve euphoric benefits. Substance intake without a clear pharmaceutical need is known as drug abuse, as defined by Hamisu and Ahmad (2014), and it often leads to detrimental social, psychological, and physical outcomes.

Adeyemo and co-authors (2016), using Haladu (2003), highlight that drug abuse is defined as the excessive or chronic self-administration of substances that violates cultural or medical norms. Similarly, Adebusuyi (2009) lists other types of drug misuse, such as:

1. Using medicine that isn't meant for a specific medical issue.
2. The sole purpose of substance use is to achieve euphoric or social effects.
3. Substance abuse that substantially impairs functioning in everyday life.
4. Drunkenness brought on by the regular use of substances that are accepted in society.
5. Ill-effects of drug use, including opioids, cannabis, and LSD.

Sixth, taking more medicine than prescribed.

The misuse of legal pharmaceuticals, alcohol, and tobacco products is also considered drug abuse (WHO, 2022).

2.2.2.2 Multiple Drug Use

When more than one drug is consumed at the same time or in a sequential fashion, this practice is known as polydrug usage. Combining drugs with similar sedative effects (such alcohol and benzodiazepines) increases the risk of harmful interactions and side effects (UNODC, 2023). Polydrug users are at increased risk for complex health problems, including mental health disorders, due to the unanticipated synergy of many substances (Sznitman & Kolobov, 2021).

2.2.2.3 Drug Overdose

A drug overdose occurs when a person consumes more of a substance or drugs than their body can safely process or remove. Overdoses, whether unintentional or deliberate, can cause a wide variety of symptoms, including confusion, respiratory depression, coma, and death (WHO, 2022). One of the most preventable causes of death globally, especially among young individuals, is medication toxicity, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2023).

2.2.2.4 Drug Misuse

When people use substances incorrectly, inappropriately, or in excess, it is called misuse. Medication errors can occur when people do not take their medication as directed or when they use it for anything other than what was intended. The pursuit of euphoric

benefits is common in misuse, which differs from abuse but can nonetheless lead to negative outcomes (NIDA, 2023) even if it is unintentional. By informing the general population on proper pharmaceutical usage, we can greatly reduce the likelihood of drug abuse, especially with narcotics and antibiotics.

2.2.2.5 Drug Addiction

Drug addiction, also known as substance use disorder, is defined by compulsive drug seeking and use despite negative consequences and is a chronic, relapsing condition (APA, 2022). Addiction is caused by a complex interplay of environmental, psychological, and neurological variables. The brain then changes in a way that makes the behavior more frequent, which increases tolerance and eventually dependency (Koob & Volkow, 2021).

People who struggle with addiction may exhibit symptoms such as a lack of focus, unpredictable behavior, and impaired judgment. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2023) lists a number of societal effects, including rising healthcare expenditures, a decline in family and community ties, and an uptick in crime.

2.2.2.6 Drug Dependence

Drug dependence occurs when a person's regular functioning is dependent on the presence of a substance. Substance dependency can manifest in two ways: physically, when the user experiences symptoms of withdrawal when they stop taking the drug, and

psychologically, when the drug starts to play a central role in their thoughts and actions (Adebusuyi, 2009; APA, 2022).

Opioids, alcohol, and benzodiazepines are commonly connected to physical dependency, while cannabis, cocaine, and amphetamines are linked to psychological dependence because of their effects on mood and cognition (NIDA, 2023). A person experiencing withdrawal may feel mild anger and anxiety or very physically ill with convulsions, vertigo, and tremors.

2.2.3 Prevalence of drug abuse among undergraduate students in Nigeria

Studies on student drug addiction have been steadily rising in Nigeria in recent years, likely reflecting a general belief that this demographic is particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of substance misuse. In a study of psychoactive substance use among secondary school kids in Effurun and Warri, Nevadomsky (1982) reported a lifetime prevalence of 70% for alcohol and 25% for tobacco. The use of cannabis by students is commonplace on school grounds (Miller and Plant, 1996). Fifteen percent of the patients admitted to the drug unit at Benin City's Psychiatric Hospital Uselu were students, according to research by Binitie (1987). It was also noted by Nevadomsky (1985) that pupils use hypnosedatives to calm their nerves before tests.

There is some evidence that psychostimulants can help students stay awake and focused for longer periods of time, which could be useful for their academic performance (Ebie,

1988; Adelekan, 1989; Adelekan et al, 1992; Olatawura & Odejide, 1974). For undergraduates at Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, amphetamines(40%), marijuana(13%), and mandrax (9%), according to research by Ogunremi and Okonofua (1977). More over half of the undergraduates surveyed by Nevadomsky (1985) had tried kolanut, coffee, or alcohol by the time they were 17 years old, according to his study on substance addiction at the University of Benin. According to a survey that examined students' perspectives on drug usage, the majority of students (87%), while a minority (30%), held the view that drugs had positive benefits (Pela, 1988). However, according to Anochie (1999), nearly half of the pupils had an unfavorable view of substances and thought they could hurt them. Odejide and co-authors (1989) found that among secondary school students in the cities of Ibadan and Abeokuta, both in the southwestern area of Nigeria, 56% had a cumulative prevalence of alcohol use and 51% had a similar prevalence in other substances. Some studies have even suggested that the average age of first drug use is as low as 10 or 11 years old, which is consistent with previous research (NDLEA, 1991; NDLEA, 1992; Edafiadhe, 2005). Edo state is located in the south-south geopolitical zone, and Oshodi (1981) studied the usage of psychoactive substances among secondary school pupils in Benin-city and Odighi village. According to the research, 87% of Benin City residents and 71% of Odighi village people have drank alcohol at least once. A study of 1020 students in Port-Harcourt's senior high school found that 50% of the students had used the drug at some point in their lives, while 19% had used it recently (Anochie and co-authors, 1999). Presently, alcohol

usage was highest at 25%, followed by cigarette use at 2.5%, and amphetamine use at 1.9%. A lifetime prevalence rate of alcohol use was 47.2% and a current usage prevalence rate of 20.2% were reported by Fatoye (2007) in a study of substance use among undergraduate students at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-ife.

People who live with their parents or guardians had a lower rate of alcohol intake compared to those who live alone or with friends, according to the study. Prior studies have reached similar conclusions (Adelekan and co-authors, 1992; Ndom and co-authors, 1996). Based on data collected from three separate secondary schools in Sokoto state, a region in the northwest geopolitical zone of Nigeria, Nnaji (2000) found that stimulant coffee was the most commonly used psychoactive drug, with an average prevalence of 30% among the students surveyed. Nearly a quarter of that total comes from inhalants like gasoline and glue. Next on the list are alcoholic beverages (22%), cannabis (15.4%), and tobacco (13%). While admitting to using psychoactive substances, they all held a negative attitude toward the practice. This lines up with the way religion forbids drinking because people who do so are seen as careless by society. Coffee, kolanut, and tobacco are not on the list of banned substances, though. Research by Adewuya (2007) on alcohol use disorder among undergraduates at Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile-Ife, Osun state, found that greater monthly allowances were associated with a higher prevalence of the disorder.

2.2.3.2 Drug Abuse among Undergraduate Students in Nigeria

Substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria is a growing public health concern due to a number of factors, including economic hardship, peer pressure, increased access to legal and illegal drugs, and urbanization. Due to their youth, being in a vital stage of identity development and self-exploration, undergraduate students, in particular, are at a high risk of experimenting with psychoactive substances. During this stage of development, individuals often engage in risky behaviors like substance misuse due to their increased independence and exposure to different social standards (Ajayi and co-authors, 2021; Ugwu and co-authors, 2020).

The use of drugs is on the rise at Nigerian universities, according to recent empirical research. As an example, Yahaya and Danladi (2022) found that more than half of the undergraduates in northern Nigeria had used some kind of psychoactive substance at some point in their lives, with alcohol, cannabis, and tramadol being the most commonly abused. Over 40% of undergraduates had engaged in substance usage, according to Ekanem and co-authors (2021), who surveyed many universities. Stress from school, pressure from peers, and the desire to have fun were the main drivers of this conduct.

The most often abused substances among Nigerian students include alcohol, cannabis, tramadol, codeine syrup, rohypnol, and tobacco; the misuse of prescription drugs is also on the rise (Omole and co-authors, 2020). The increasing use of sedatives and analgesics for recreational purposes offers a significant challenge, even if alcohol consumption remains the most common substance. As an example, Ibrahim and

Agunbiade (2022) found that university students in southwestern Nigeria often used tramadol to control their emotions or stay awake during exams.

According to Ajayi and co-authors (2021) and Alao and co-authors (2022), students who are male are more likely to use alcohol, cannabis, and cigarettes, whereas students who are female are more likely to use sedatives and appetite suppressants. There have been reports of gender disparities. These differences are influenced by cultural and geographical variables as well. The use of alcohol is strictly forbidden in northern Nigeria due to Islamic rules (Sharia), yet people often turn to codeine and tramadol as alternatives (Tawasu, 2005; Yahaya & Danladi, 2022).

Furthermore, it has been found that substance addiction is significantly predicted by socioeconomic position, limited psychosocial support, and scholastic challenges. Substance addiction was more common among students from low-income families and those who reported high levels of academic stress (2023). In addition, Ugwu and co-authors (2020) found that students are significantly more likely to be exposed to drugs through informal networks on campus and peer pressure.

Furthermore, there is a growing trend of people dealing with both substance misuse and mental health issues simultaneously. High rates of depression, anxiety, and inadequate coping methods have been linked to the onset and continuation of substance use among students, according to studies (Alao and co-authors, 2022; Bello and co-authors, 2023). There is a disconnect between what students know and what they do as many of them still

use substances, even though there have been several programs to raise awareness. The problem is exacerbated since substances, especially those that do not require prescriptions, are easily accessible.

Colleges and government agencies have responded to this trend by instituting anti-drug initiatives, counseling facilities, wellness programs, and peer education. However, many of these initiatives are either underfunded or poorly carried out. It is necessary to address the many drivers of substance abuse among undergraduates, according to Ibrahim and Agunbiade (2022). Comprehensive approaches should include mental health integration, community-based outreach, stronger on-campus rules, and peer-led therapies.

Therefore, several factors, including personal weaknesses, institutional shortcomings, and larger social effects, contribute to the high rate of substance addiction among undergraduates in Nigeria. Since substance use is always changing, especially due to the rise in prescription medicine abuse, it is crucial to implement targeted interventions that deal with mental health, peer pressure, substance availability, and socio-cultural factors. Educators, parents, police, medical professionals, and lawmakers must all work together in a multi-sectoral effort to solve the problem.

2.2.4 Drug Abuse from a Global Perspective

A major contributor to the global illness load, disability, and death toll is the use of narcotics, alcoholic beverages, and tobacco products. Nearly 4.7% of all deaths each year are attributed to harmful alcohol drinking, according to the World Health

Organization (WHO) (WHO, 2024). This amounts to about 2.6 million people. Tobacco use is a leading cause of avoidable death worldwide, accounting for over 8 million deaths per year (WHO, 2024). Substance abuse, whether legal or illicit, continues to worsen health concerns, especially among working-age adults and adolescents, despite increased worldwide awareness of the problem.

Worldwide, an estimated 316 million people used illicit substances in 2022, a 23% rise from the previous decade, according to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2024). Among illegal substances, cannabis is the most popular, with an estimated 244 million users; next on the list are opioids, amphetamines, and cocaine (UNODC, 2024). Reuters reports that in 2024, cocaine's accessibility and use were further amplified due to the record-breaking global production of 3,708 metric tons.

Two measures of substance abuse's effects are disability-adjusted life years and death rates. The gold standard for measuring the worldwide impact of disease is the Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) model, which was first proposed by Murray and Lopez (1996). It takes into account both the years of life lost due to incapacity and the years of life lost due to early mortality. A larger amount of harm is caused by legal substances like alcohol and tobacco than by illegal drugs, according to research (WHO, 2004; WHO, 2024).

There is an increasing number of social and environmental problems associated with drug use and manufacture. The growth of organized drug trafficking and associated criminal activities is exacerbated by global instability, economic strain, and inadequate regulatory frameworks, according to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2024). Drug usage is roughly three times the global norm in countries like Nigeria, where the national prevalence is estimated at 14.4% (Guardian Nigeria, 2024). The situation in many poor nations is similar to this pattern, with limited access to therapy and insufficient enforcement.

Substance abuse is significantly linked to a variety of negative outcomes, including but not limited to mental health issues, aggressive conduct, and traffic accidents, particularly among young adults. For example, according to the National Institute of Alcohol Addiction and Alcoholism (2024), the top three causes of death for young people are car accidents, accidental injuries, and homicide. Concerns about the potential psychological effects of increased tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) potency have sparked international discussion in response to the legalization of cannabis in several industrialized nations (such as the Netherlands) (MacCoun & Reuter, 2001).

According to a cross-national survey conducted in the US by Knight and co-authors (2002), 31% of college students were found to be abusing alcohol, while 6% were dependent. Similarly, out of all American college students aged 18–29, 7% matched the DSM–IV criteria for alcohol abuse and 9.2% met the criteria for alcohol dependence,

according to Dawson and co-authors (2004). Regardless of where you are in the world, these findings hold true: young people are still the most susceptible. Factors such as reduced religious observance, the impact of peers, and early participation contribute to this vulnerability (Weitzman & Wechsler, 2000; Grant & Dawson, 1997).

Situations in Africa are similar. According to studies done in Kenya by Acuda (1982), the most commonly reported substances for misuse were alcohol, cannabis, and tranquilizers. The prevalence of alcohol use disorder was greater among adults, while the prevalence of cannabis intake was higher among teenagers. The percentage of European university students from Belgium who met the diagnostic criteria for alcohol consumption was 14.1%, according to Aertgeerts and co-authors (1999). Alcohol is still the most common psychoactive substance in the world, according to a comprehensive review by Gonzalez-Willhein (2007); cannabis comes in second.

2.2.5 Predisposing Factors of Drug Abuse among Undergraduates

The complex nature of substance abuse among college freshmen calls for an investigation of several elements, including personal psychology, group dynamics, and the larger social context. According to the ecological paradigm (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; WHO, 2014), interactions between different levels can make people more susceptible to or more protected against substance use.

2.2.5.1 Intrapersonal Factors

Students' increasing substance usage is significantly correlated with certain intrapersonal psychological traits, such as low self-esteem, impulsivity, sensation-seeking tendencies, depression, and anxiety. Researchers Glozah, Adu, and Komesuor (2015) found that among Ghanaian youth, those who reported higher levels of self-efficacy were far less likely to try with drugs and to use them regularly. Another personality feature that increases vulnerability is sensation-seeking behaviors, as shown by Bannink and co-authors (2015). U.S. college students who smoked hookah often exhibited similar features of seeking sensation, according to Gathuru and co-authors (2015).

Alao and co-authors (2022) and Bello and co-authors (2023) found that students may be more likely to self-medicate with alcohol or prescription medicines if they are experiencing psychological discomfort due to academic obligations, financial difficulty, or living in an inadequate environment. Because relieving stress through substance use maintains the cycle, this coping method often leads to more negative outcomes. Genetic influences on reward circuits and hormonal differences are examples of biological predispositions that modify risk. The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports that between 40 and 60% of an individual's susceptibility to addiction is influenced by hereditary factors (NIDA, 2020). Distinct patterns of substance use are associated with innate differences between sexes, according to Becker and colleagues (2012). These variances include variations in neurotransmitter responses and hormonal cycles.

Important aspects of an individual's personality include their age and gender. Across the globe, it has been found that male students are more likely to drink, smoke, and use cannabis, while female students are more likely to abuse prescription stimulants and sedatives (Ajayi and co-authors, 2021; Bello and co-authors, 2023). A developmental stage marked by exploration and developing self-perceptions, late adolescence and early adulthood is generally when one's susceptibility to specific obstacles reaches its peak (Grant & Dawson, 1997). Such intrapersonal factors often interact with one another; for example, a young man in school who suffers from depression and poor self-esteem may be more likely to abuse substances.

2.2.5.2 Interpersonal Factors

When it comes to substance use habits, students' social settings have a major role. These contexts include their peer groups, family dynamics, and close personal interactions. One very powerful factor is the influence of one's peers. Undergraduates are more likely to experiment with drugs and alcohol if they have close friends who do so or if they are members of fraternities or other organizations that promote drinking and drug use (Ugwu and co-authors, 2020). That Bronfenbrenner's ecological model is supported by a 2014 study by Salameh and colleagues, who discovered that young adults who reported higher levels of sociability were more likely to start and maintain substance use.

The dynamics inside the family also play an important role. Teenagers are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors and have a worse sense of danger when their parents are

neglectful or argue with them, according to research by Jurík and co-authors (2013). According to research by NIDA (2020) and Alao and co-authors (2022), the likelihood of substance abuse among students is higher in homes where such practices are common or when parents do not provide enough supervision. Students in Rwanda who had experienced the death of a parent or both were more likely to experiment with drugs and alcohol, which may be explained by the combination of psychological trauma and a lack of adult supervision, according to research by Kanyoni and co-authors (2015).

Additionally, substance abuse is both caused by and preceded by social isolation. Substance abuse is more common among young adults who feel socially excluded, according to WHO (2014). Additionally, students without social networks were shown to be at a higher risk, as pointed out by Kanyoni and co-authors (2015), demonstrating the preventive role of a socially friendly setting. According to Terrion (2012), recovering students may face social challenges, such as forming friendships in communities where substance use is normalized.

2.2.5.3 Institutional, Community, 1and Societal Factors

Students' substance use habits are impacted by a variety of factors, including intrapersonal and interpersonal effects as well as broader institutional, community, and social influences. Important considerations include university policies on drug and alcohol usage, campus climate, and availability of mental health assistance. Substance abuse among students is on the rise, according to Ibrahim and Agunbiade (2022), who cite lax enforcement of college policies, limited access to counseling services, and the

abundance of off-campus entertainment venues as causes. Factors at the community level include things like the availability of support services, the socioeconomic status of the neighborhood, and the presence of law enforcement. Laws and social standards, such as those pertaining to the promotion of alcohol, the restriction of cannabis, and the stigmatization of mental illness, all have an impact on how students see substance use. To give only one example, certain countries' liberal views on alcohol normalize heavy drinking among young people.

2.2.5.4) First Level of Institutional

The sources that were considered indicate that schools have a significant impact on the frequency and severity of drug abuse among their student bodies. We will go over some of the factors that lead to substance misuse and how institutions should respond to this problem.

2.2.5.5 Factors at institutional level

College campuses are the first places where most young adults openly declare their freedom from parental influence. Students usually choose to experiment with novel substances in university, as long as the campus atmosphere permits (Jaouahir and co-authors, 2015). Welsh university students are at a higher risk of substance dependence than their American counterparts because of increased freedom and novel stresses (Bennett and co-authors, 2014). Three main variables, according to research, lead to drug usage among college students: (1) less parental supervision, (2) easy access to drugs on campus, and (3) peer pressure. In 2011, researchers Jafari and co-authors from Tehran

University found that among current smokers (61.3%) and new smokers (63.3%), more than two-thirds reported an increase in their smoking activity when they started college.

There is a lot of writing about drug misuse in academic journals about universities. According to Lashley and co-authors (2011), substance misconduct and other risky behaviors are more common among students who spend more time on campus. Lewis, Likis-Werle and co-authors (2012) cites studies that suggests the appealing environment of college campuses promotes excessive drinking. Primack and co-authors (2012) found that American college students who live at home with their parents or guardians are less prone to substance abuse than their on-campus counterparts. Stress makes young individuals, especially those in college, more likely to engage in obsessive behaviors, according to Kurt (2015).

The high levels of stress and anxiety on campus contribute to the increased frequency of drug misconduct. According to Demery and co-authors (2012), some students may find that the adjustment to university life is difficult, which might exacerbate or cause their mental health issues to deteriorate. Academic stress is worsened when mental health issues, such as trouble focusing on reading, are present (Demery and co-authors, 2012). Demery and co-authors (2012) found that when young people with mental health issues start college, their symptoms often worsen, making them more likely to develop a substance addiction. In addition, many adolescents who struggle with mental health issues are the first to experiment with substances. In their study, Demery and co-authors Around 19.8% of Swiss high school seniors are now attending college.

According to a study by Maier and co-authors (2013), those who used psychoactive substances while going through difficult times in their lives were more likely to report positive results. Substance misuse is a real risk that students face as they adjust to college life. One example of this is the use of alcohol and other drugs by Hispanics in the US as unhealthy coping mechanisms while they adapt to American culture (Chavez-Palacios and co-authors, 2012). Moving to a new place, changing friendship groups, or starting a love relationship are all examples of life transitions that necessitate new habits, and the World Health Organization reports that these changes can be stressful. There are a number of factors that contribute to the involvement of substance addiction among college students.

Substance addiction for cognitive improvement is a growing concern for modern educational institutions, and this problem is not limited to campus settings. College student methylphenidate use is like doping in sports, according to Beyer, Staunton, and Moodley (2014). While the use of neuro-enhancer drugs to increase academic performance is currently not seen as an ethical concern, doping—which is defined as the use of illegal chemicals to fraudulently enhance performance in competitions—is viewed as both unethical and unlawful by Beyer and co-authors (2014). The use of cognitive enhancement, analogous to doping in sports, is gaining popularity in academia (NIDA, 2014). Cognitive enhancement is defined by academics Bostrom and Sanberg as "the amplification or extension of the core capacities of the mind through the improvement or augmentation of internal information processing systems," per the work of Sattler, Sauer,

Mehlkop, and Graeff (2013). Some college students abuse stimulants believing they will improve their academic performance, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2014).

Substance dependence intended at neuro-enhancement has a disproportionate influence on university students in wealthy nations. According to Maier and co-authors (2013), there is an increased tendency for German students to abuse drugs that are meant to improve cognitive skills like memory and focus. Approximately 3% to 11% of American students and 0.7% to 4.5% of German students presently abuse or show a readiness to misuse pharmacological drugs meant to improve reading ability, according to a literature analysis by Sattler and co-authors (2013). In comparison, 23% of North American doctors and 20% of German magazine readers fall into this category. Swiss university students frequently use drugs that enhance cognitive abilities. Numerous research mentioned by Trunzo and co-authors (2014) show that college students use energy drinks while studying or working on school projects. The use of energy drinks as a quick way to stay attentive during extended study sessions or to get ahead in school is more common among those who have trouble managing social problems (Trunzo and co-authors, 2014).

Drug use for neuro-enhancement is not uncommon in underdeveloped countries, according to research, even if it is less common in wealthy nations. The rigorous academic atmosphere in medical schools was thought to be linked to the illegal use of methylphenidate among South African medical students (Beyer and co-authors, 2014).

An estimated 19.7 percent of students at Hawassa University admitted to taking drugs or alcohol to improve their study habits (Daniels and co-authors, 2013). Students at Axum University reported using drugs mostly to help them concentrate more in a 2013 research by Gebreslassie and co-authors on substance abuse at the university.

College and university students often turn to substance addiction as a way to manage the stress that comes with demanding academics and the pressure to succeed. College students who are worried about their grades often utilize neuro-enhancers (Maier and co-authors, 2013). Study participant X said, "Exams presented the most significant challenges, as the necessity to meet a predetermined performance threshold for advancement to the subsequent stage introduced considerable pressure" (Demery and co-authors, 2012). Students often turn to drug usage as a way to manage the stress that comes with academics, according to the sources provided by Maier and co-authors (2013). Many students throughout the world blame academic pressure for their substance abuse, yet research shows the opposite is true. College students, according to Trunzo and co-authors (2014), have a skewed view of the benefits of caffeine-containing goods. Consumption of energy drinks was associated with worse academic performance, according to Trunzo and co-authors (2014).

Students who abuse many substances have worse academic performance than those who abuse only one, according to Webster and colleagues (2014). Verhagen and co-authors (2015) found that drug misbehavior was more common among students from lower socioeconomic groups in the Netherlands. Researchers in the Netherlands found that

students with a little academic disadvantage were far less likely to start using alcohol and cannabis once a week, which contradicts the results of other research (Fischer and co-authors, 2013). According to Fischer and co-authors (2013), students with cognitive impairments are more likely to experiment with and develop a reliance on illegal drugs like cocaine compared to student bodies without difficulties.

Similar to consumer behavior shown in other groups, the accessibility of drugs greatly impacts the possibility for college students to abuse them (Goreishi and co-authors, 2013). College students often partake in the consumption of cigarettes, alcohol, and other legal drugs due to their extensive availability to teenagers (Warren and co-authors, 2015; WHO). When pharmacies are located near campuses, drug misbehavior among students may increase quickly (Terrion, 2012). A related but separate crucial concern for students, especially those in underdeveloped nations, is the availability of addictive drugs. The low cost of illegal drugs makes them accessible to a large number of students (Goreishi and co-authors, 2013; WHO).

2.2.5.6 Community Level factor

There are community-based programs that aim to reduce substance abuse, and research points to a number of underlying causes that exacerbate the problem.

Issues at the Community Level: Prevalent conventions and cultural values impact community members, according to substantial research. When drugs are widely available in a community, abuse is likely to follow suit. Research on the effect of cultural traditions and norms on individual behavior by Gil-Lacruz and co-authors (2013)

lends credence to this view. Christian and Muslim teenagers who abuse drugs are not dissimilar. While khat serves a similar purpose in Muslim communities, wine is traditionally used to commemorate social gatherings in many Christian communities (WHO). Several studies have found that students are more likely to abuse drugs due to the availability of addictive substances and the prevalence of drug abuse (Bannink and co-authors, 2015; Beck and co-authors, 2014; Jaouahir and co-authors, 2015).

Various factors, including societal standards, attitudes, and beliefs, impact substance use among young individuals (Pischke and co-authors, 2012). Both Bannink and co-authors (2015) and Birhanu and co-authors (2014) found that students from drug-normalizing cultures are more likely to abuse substances.

2.2.5.7 Society Level factors

There are, in reality, macroeconomic considerations and intervention plans. What follows is a summary of the main points and approaches of national substance abuse prevention.

Factors that determine drug abuse at society level

The prevalence of drug use disorders among students is influenced by many policies, laws, rules, and the political will of those in power, according to the Social Ecological Model (Winch, 2012). According to Beck and co-authors (2014), this conclusion has been supported by other investigations. Addiction to substances is associated with high monetary costs. Although certain players in the drug trade stand to gain financially, the

formal economy suffers as a result of the trade's effects on things like income inequality, market equilibrium, the strength of legal frameworks, and corruption (UNDP, 2015).

The United Nations estimates that the illegal drug trade is worth $332 billion per year (2015).

According to CDA (2013), South Africa lost R101 billion in 2005 due to the illegal drug trade. Approximately 6.4% of the GDP is included by this. According to Falls and co-authors (2015), there are several negative outcomes linked to drug misuse in kids, such as increased risk of adult drug dependency, higher rates of morbidity and death, and personality problems. The devastating effects of drug addiction on the health, economics, and overall welfare of young people in underdeveloped nations cannot be overstated. This is due to the fact that addicted children face even greater challenges in developing nations where resources such as education, adequate nutrition, and healthcare are few (Al'Absi, 2014). "...the youth of South Africa are particularly hard hit due to increases in harmful use of alcohol and the abuse of illicit drugs," said Ms. Bathabile Dlamini, South Africa's Minister of Social Development. The CDA made this claim in 2013. Low academic performance, broken social and interpersonal relationships, financial issues, and mental health concerns are only a few of the negative outcomes linked to drug consumption among college students, according to Javier and co-authors (2013) and and co-authors (2015). Goreishi and Shajari (2013) state that there are significant

psychological, interpersonal, and physiological effects of drug use among university students. Warren and co-authors (2015) found that 12% of American high school pupils match the diagnostic criteria for a drug use disorder. All of this will make individuals less invested in making their neighborhoods better.

2.2.6 Effects of Drug/Substance Abuse

The use of drugs by students has far-reaching consequences on their interpersonal relationships, communities, and society as a whole.

Effects of Drug Abuse at Intrapersonal Level

Several undesirable outcomes are linked to substance misuse. Substance misuse causes the annual deaths of millions and the permanent impairments of millions more (Kassa and co-authors, 2014). The misuse of illegal substances, including alcohol, results in an extra 17.6 million DALYs, whereas drug misuse accounts for around 20 million DALYs globally (Khoo and co-authors, 2014). Furthermore, although smoking accounts for 5 million fatalities annually, alcohol use is responsible for around 2.5 million (Verhagen and co-authors, 2015). It is possible for any drug to be harmful to humans. Death by overdose or other serious consequences, such as addiction or organ damage, may ensue. The chemical, the dose, and the application could determine the sort and degree of injury, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Effects of drug abuse at institutional level

The educational process is profoundly affected by drug misuse among college students because it intensifies their age-appropriate delinquent behaviors. Cigarette smokers and alcoholics were more likely to have been victims of violence, according to research by Umana, Fawole, and Adeoye (2014) (2.36; 95% CI 1.82-3.06 and 2.46; 95% CI 1.58-3.83, respectively). Research conducted by Kassa and co-authors (2014) found that around one-third of the students at Hawassa University had engaged in physical altercations after drug use. Students' academic performance is also negatively impacted by substance misuse. Substance abuse among college students may be associated with worse grades, contrary to popular belief (Javier and co-authors, 2013; Trunzo and co-authors, 2014).

2.2.7 Government Efforts on Drug Abuse Reduction and Eradication

One wonders whether the administration of Nigeria gives any thought to the subject of drug usage given the severity of the situation.

In an unusual move, the federal government of Nigeria established the NDLEA (via the enforcement of Decree 48 of 1989) and other organization-based policies in response to the dramatic increase in drug trafficking, drug use, and addiction. The young and productive population of Nigeria has been the focus of several programs that try to reduce and eventually eradicate substance misuse. One of the newest branches of the NDLEA is Drug Demand Reduction. As part of its objective to educate the public on the dangers of drug usage and decrease drug demand, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) conducts outreach to various groups such as schools, market women, road

transport workers, craftspeople, etc. The agency's long-term goal is to create a society that is free of drugs and accepted by society. The twenty-one non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who provide the NDLEA with money and support for drug abuse prevention, counseling, and treatment are already collaborating with the drug reduction program department of the agency.

Concerning the efficacy of counseling offenders, incarceration of offenders, and school expulsion as means to reduce drug addiction, researchers were divided. Counseling services to assist with substance usage, anti-abuse curricula, drug education programs for families, and drug awareness units should all be established.

2.2.8 Intervention measures by social workers and other stakeholders

Intrapersonal interventions aim to improve people's resilience by changing their personality traits, ways of thinking, and emotional regulation abilities. A number of studies have shown that cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) may reduce drug use among teenagers and young adults. Recent meta-analyses and RCTs have shown that CBT is a useful tool in the fight against substance abuse. According to many studies (Magill and co-authors, 2023; Alghamdi, 2023; Carroll & Rounsaville, 2010; Alghamdi, 2023), this holds true regardless of whether it is used in-person, online, or via an app. It may also be used in conjunction with Motivational Interviewing or Contingency Management.

In the context of college student populations, personalized CBT approaches are especially beneficial. Park and co-authors (2014) found that interventions tailored to individual impulsivity levels and binge-drinking motivations—emphasizing healthy alternatives and coping strategies—resulted in more significant decreases in substance use. Similarly, early interventions that utilize cognitive restructuring to address distorted thinking patterns have shown promise in preventing relapse and fostering adaptive behavioral change (Alghamdi, 2023) .

College students have demonstrated a substantial increase in the utilization of integrative behavioral therapies, mindfulness-based practices, and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). A 2023 comprehensive review by Teixeira and co-authors indicated that mindfulness training decreased anxiety and cravings, enhanced emotional tolerance, and promoted overall psychological well-being in younger populations participating in interventions involving psychoactive substances. Individuals susceptible to emotional instability or impulsivity may derive advantages from these methodologies, as they cultivate self-regulation, fortitude in challenging circumstances, and sound ethical judgment.

Furthermore, computerized Goal Management Training and other technology-assisted cognitive training modalities may improve impulse control and decision-making abilities. The integration of this training with online cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) modules has been proposed as a method to mitigate treatment disparities, particularly among

students who may be reluctant to pursue face-to-face assistance (Anderson and co-authors, 2022; Carroll & Rounsaville, 2010).

Screening and personalized brief interventions (PBIs) represent another significant intrapersonal strategy for pupils with a history of problematic substance use. As indicated by Andes and co-authors (2014), interventions targeting high-risk populations, including those who misuse prescription opioids, may incorporate psychoeducational elements, individualized feedback protocols, and motivational enhancement techniques. These strategies align with the recommendations presented at the 2012 Villanova Summit.

Subsequent to these interventions, notably positive results have been observed, particularly with treatments emphasizing cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness practices, impulse regulation training, and personalized motivational support. Essential elements encompass a modular architecture, personalized adaptation based on user characteristics, and the deliberate application of technology to promote interaction and facilitate scalability (Magill and co-authors, 2023; Teixeira and co-authors, 2023; Anderson and co-authors, 2022).

2.2.8 Intervention Dimensions for Reducing Drug Abuse Among Undergraduates

Interventions designed to address substance addiction among undergraduates must consider several ecological levels, encompassing intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and societal factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; WHO, 2014). To ensure the efficacy of initiatives, it is imperative to adapt both the content and its

execution to the specific attributes, interpersonal relationships, and contextual environment of each individual.

2.2.8.1 Interventions at the Intrapersonal Level

Research indicates that cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) interventions, administered either in-person or via digital modalities, can contribute to decreased rates of substance use disorders among young adults (Magill and co-authors, 2023; digital CBT meta-analysis, 2024). Magill and co-authors (2023) reported that cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) demonstrated efficacy in diminishing substance use. This was achieved through instruction in coping strategies and the modification of cognitive distortions.

Interventions tailored to specific traits, such as impulsivity and sensation seeking, often demonstrate enhanced efficacy. Park and associates (2014) found that substance use among college students was substantially diminished through interventions specifically designed to address their individual levels of impulsivity and motivations for excessive alcohol consumption. In a 2024 publication of the International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction, a reduced likelihood of substance use was observed among students utilizing digital cognitive behavioral therapy platforms. The observed effects were significantly more evident among mature pupils and those who utilized alternative technologies.

Students experiencing stress or various mental health challenges may derive significant advantages from third-generation cognitive behavioral therapy approaches, such as

mindfulness and acceptance-based therapies, which offer supplementary benefits, including the reduction of cravings and the enhancement of emotional regulation (Teixeira and co-authors, 2023).

Screening and individualized brief interventions (PBIs) are essential, particularly for individuals exhibiting indicators of prescription drug misuse. At the 2012 Villanova Summit (Andes and co-authors, 2014), motivational interviewing and tailored feedback were highlighted as promising approaches to mitigate prescription opioid misuse. Substantial empirical data corroborates the efficacy of previously discussed intrapersonal strategies, including cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness techniques, digital interventions, and positive behavioral interventions (PBIs). The efficacy of these strategies is notably enhanced through personalization based on individual risk assessments and dissemination in accessible formats (Magill and co-authors, 2023; digital CBT meta-analysis, 2024).

2.2.8.2 Interventions at the Interpersonal Level

Interpersonally, these programs seek to foster beneficial behaviors by leveraging both informal communication and familial relationships. Research suggests that targeted advertising designed to alter students' perceptions of social norms can decrease their consumption of alcohol and cannabis. A systematic review published in 2024 indicated that the provision of normative feedback resulted in modest yet statistically significant

decreases in substance use ($g = -0.12$, $p < .01$). The meta-analysis encompassed 52 randomized controlled studies. Large-scale online social norms campaigns resulted in significant reductions in two cluster-randomized trials conducted in Belgium and Germany. The incorporation of student-led initiatives, video blogs, and parodies within these campaigns demonstrates the effective utilization of educational strategies and peer influence (Frontiers in Public Health, 2021; Archives of Public Health, 2024). The importance of peer-led programs is comparable to that of programs involving family members. Mirlashari and co-authors (2012) reported that prevention programs incorporating family involvement, enhanced parental supervision, and parental education regarding substance use risks effectively decreased early adolescent substance use, with these positive outcomes extending into the college years. Another model demonstrating potential is peer education: Alsanosy and co-authors (2013) reported positive results in diminishing khat consumption among Ethiopian students via peer-led interventions. The social capital perspective (Terrion, 2012; Demery and co-authors, 2012) suggests that recovery and the prevention of relapse are facilitated by the implementation of supportive peer networks.

2.2.8.3 Interventions at institution level

Undergraduate students constitute a critical demographic for drug-prevention initiatives, given that this period frequently marks the initial experimentation with illicit substances. The study conducted by Gathuru and co-authors (2015) indicates that substance use,

particularly hookah smoking, is prevalent among university students. The statistic that 84.5% of hookah users in a 2014 study performed within the United States were college students underscores the significance of university campuses as focal points for intervention initiatives. Furthermore, as posited by Chavez Palacios and co-authors (2012), this population segment warrants primary consideration in prevention initiatives, given college students' heightened vulnerability stemming from their propensity to diverge from traditional values and behavioral standards.

The formulation of policies and the development of prevention programs constitute the initial phases of effective institutional responses. Despite the recent legalization of recreational cannabis in Minnesota, institutions of higher education, including the University of Minnesota and Macalester College, maintain their prohibition of the substance on campus. This is attributable to the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA), which illustrates the influence of federal regulations on institutional substance policies (Axios, 2023). A considerable transformation is occurring within the United Kingdom. Presently, Universities UK (2024) is advocating for a shift away from stringent zero-tolerance policies toward harm-reduction strategies that prioritize student well-being. This encompasses the provision of drug-checking services and non-punitive support networks. This observation underscores the growing consensus that punitive measures deter students from seeking help, as opposed to mitigating substance use.

Conventional health education approaches, including those that utilize fear-based

communication, have exhibited restricted effectiveness. A systematic review of university-based illicit drug prevention programs, encompassing the years 1987 to 2020, demonstrated considerable heterogeneity in outcomes and suggested that programs solely employing educational interventions were largely ineffectual (Ghani and co-authors, 2024). Also, according to Bennett and Holloway (2014) and Lewis and co-authors (2012), students are sceptical of alarmist messages about alcohol risks because they see them as exaggerated. This makes the messages much less effective.

Programs that focus on developing skills and include supervised practice, on the other hand, have shown to be quite effective. Studies carried out by Ghani and colleagues (2024) showed that programs that combined training with practical application had moderate to large effect sizes ($g = 0.45$), which was more effective than programs that only provided information ($g \approx 0.13$). These results are in line with the existing research that supports all-encompassing preventative approaches, such as social norms education, motivational interviewing, and specialized assistance.

Colleges and universities are expanding their extracurricular programs to complement their academic offerings. Housing free of substances, peer support groups, community service projects, and monitored social gatherings are all parts of the University of Michigan's all-encompassing strategy for substance abuse prevention (University of Michigan AOD Policy, no date). Extra support for this all-encompassing approach comes from empirical findings showing that students who take part in campus-wide organized extracurricular activities had lower rates of substance intake (BMC systematic studies).

An additional critical component is the policies and environmental rules that control access. Results from California universities show that providing substance-free housing and outright banning alcohol on campus reduces heavy drinking by about 30% (Wechsler and co-authors, 2001; PMC, 2019). Gruenewald and co-authors (2013) show that limiting retail outlets mitigates consumption by restricting accessibility, and enforcement of proximity laws, such as imposing restrictions on sales near educational institutions, shows to be similarly effective. These results highlight the importance of regional policy in shaping student behavior.

Policy on alcohol and drug use, including health risk communication, disciplinary actions for violations, and counseling services, must be established and enforced by educational institutions according to statutes like DFSCA and the U.S. Department of Education General Administrative Regulations (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2018; PMC, 2019). Still, there are problems with enforcement and consistency in institutions; for example, there is a lack of compliance with smoke-free campus policies (Roditis and co-authors, 2015) and people are reluctant to seek therapy in environments where punishment is prevalent (Times Higher Education, 2024).

2.3 Empirical Review

There have been prior research efforts that are relevant to the present investigations. What follows is an analysis of these:

Researchers Adeyemo, Okpala, and Oghale (2016) looked examined how common drug abuse was among Nigerian college students in Benin City. The problem of substance abuse is becoming more and more prominent in Nigeria. The purpose of this study was to quantify the prevalence of drug abuse among college students at a school in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey methodology was utilized in the investigation. Eight hundred students (n=800) were a part of this study. In order to collect data, a structured questionnaire was used. This study tested three hypotheses and three areas of interest. When analyzing the data, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used, along with descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient. A larger percentage of respondents were male students, and the bulk of respondents were young adults (aged 20–25), according to the results. Nearly half of those who took the survey admitted to using drugs or alcohol for reasons other than medical ones. The two substances that were most often abused were coffee and alcohol. Peer pressure, poor parental direction, and poor teacher- student connections are the main reasons why kids use substances, according to most respondents. The results also showed that the alternative hypothesis is validated, disproving the null hypothesis that there is no significant association between UNIBEN students' substance misuse and their campus environment. Students should be made more aware of the harmful repercussions of substance misuse through public health campaigns that aim to discourage them from using drugs.

Similarly, research done by Ipinmisho (2016), who was the Director General of NDLEA, argued that the widespread problem of substance addiction affects practically every region within Nigeria's geographical zones. Twenty percent of Edo State, Nigeria, students have tried a psychoactive substance; 37 percent think According to Oliha (2014), 47 percent of the country's substance abuse sufferers live in the northwest, 172 percent in the southwest, 135 percent in the southeast, 117 percent in the north-central region, and 86 percent in the northeast. Amphetamine, cocaine, heroin, glue, methamphetamine, paint thinner, cement, animal excrement, spirits, codeine-containing cough medicines, and a host of other narcotics are being abused by an increasing number of Nigerians.

Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of young people in Nigeria who are dependent on substances. Those at high risk for substance misuse in our culture include teenagers and young adults (male and female) between the ages of thirteen and thirty-five, according to studies carried out by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) from the beginning. According to a joint NDLEA and UNODC Rapid Situation Assessment of the Drug Problem in Nigeria, certain groups are more likely to abuse substances than others. These groups include students, the jobless, artisans, commercial sex workers, long-distance drivers, and street children.

Ambrose Alli University medical students in Ekpoma, Edo State, were the subjects of a comprehensive investigation by Aweh (2012) into the frequency and patterns of psychoactive substance use. Using a descriptive survey methodology, the investigation

was conducted. Of the people surveyed, 65% were men and 83% identified as Christian. According to the findings, the average age of first use for psychoactive substances was less than 10 years. Tobacco had a lifetime prevalence rate of 15.9%, alcohol of 62.1%, tranquilizers of 6.8%, cannabis of 5.7%, amphetamines of 5.7%, opioids of 2.7%, and sedatives of 1.7%. Among the substances that were commonly used at the time of the survey, 21.1% were alcoholic beverages, 3.0% were cigarettes, 1.4% were cannabis, 0.5% were amphetamines, 1.1% were sedatives, and 1.1% were analgesics.

Okoye and Nwaka-Nwandu (2019) also looked at drug misuse and illegal activity on Nigerian college campuses. The research team used a quantitative survey methodology with random sampling techniques to identify 376 individuals for the study. Frequency tables were a methodical presentation of the analyzed data. Among other things, the study's results show that the government, parents, teachers, guidance counselors, and the rest of society need to work together to combat drug abuse because of the many forms and consequences of this harmful behavior among students. This engagement ought to go beyond merely denouncing others and should instead embody a life of excellence. The selling of dangerous substances like codeine, alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco should be outlawed on school grounds and in the immediate area. Because drug misuse has far-reaching consequences, including cultism, theft, prostitution, a drop in academic attainment, and societal violence, it is imperative that schools establish drug-free zones. Among other things, the report suggests that Ambrose Alli University's administration

should institute rules to curb drug misuse and host seminars to educate families on how to recognize the warning signals of drug usage in their children at an early age.

Oliha (2014) looked at drug usage among teenagers attending Nigeria's University of Benin in the state of Edo. This study used a survey as its methodological methodology. Two hundred students, 100 male and 100 female, were selected at random from five different departments. In order to collect relevant data, an established instrument called the Drug Habit Inventory (DHI, Fayombo, 1998) was used. A t-test and descriptive statistics were used to assess the collected data. Although there was no statistically significant difference in the academic performance of teenage drug abusers compared to non-abusers, the data do show a noteworthy difference between male and female abusers and between drug abusers and non-abusers. In order to reduce drug abuse among college freshmen, recommendations were made based on the results.

Taking a different tack, Daley and Feit (2013) investigated the several roles that social workers play in the fight against and treatment of substance abuse. Substance use disorders are a major problem in public health and society; they affect people, their families, and the world at large in deep and far-reaching ways. This empirical study highlights the many roles that social workers play in helping those affected by alcohol and drug dependence with prevention, intervention, and recovery support. Using studies done by the Clinical Trials Network (CTN) of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the article outlines evidence-based strategies that social workers are actively implementing in many settings, such as healthcare, education, mental health, and family

services. The authors argue that addiction has far-reaching negative effects on society's physical and mental health, as well as on family relationships, the prevalence of psychiatric comorbidities, and the economy. As part of their multidisciplinary job, social workers advocate for changes in legislation and cultural norms in service delivery, as well as take part in screenings, provide brief interventions, and administer psychological therapies. In order for social workers to tackle addiction holistically in both clinical and community settings, the research emphasized the need for systemic prevention approaches and comprehensive care frameworks.

In addition, Diraditsile and Mabote (2019) investigated problems related to substance abuse, children, and social work methods. It was quantitative in nature and used a descriptive survey approach. One hundred students from Botswana's Tshwaragano Junior Secondary School were randomly selected to fill out standardized questionnaires that collected data. Using SPSS, the data were quantitatively analyzed after being thoroughly coded. Both the University of Botswana's Institutional Review Board and the Ministry of Education and Skills Development authorized the study activities and gave access to the school grounds. Also, parents' or guardians' informed consent was obtained before any data was collected. The results show that there is a correlation between students' psychological difficulties and their use of several illicit substances. Also proven was the fact that substance abuse continued unchecked in schools despite government program initiatives to eradicate the problem. According to the study's findings, social workers can do a better job of fighting substance abuse if they take an active part in this

area and advocate for their clients to get the most effective treatments. In order to make schools better places for kids to learn, the study says that gathering credible empirical evidence will raise people's consciousness about the problem.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is an explanation of the procedures for carrying out this study. Included in this chapter are the following steps: research design; study population characterization; sample selection and sampling methodology; instrument development; instrument validation and reliability assessment; instrument administration; and data analysis techniques.

3.1 Research design

This study will use a survey methodology in conjunction with a descriptive research strategy. To characterize the present phenomena about the influence of substance addiction among undergraduates at the University of Benin, this research will collect data from a sample of the population. As a result, it is a descriptive survey. Since it is a descriptive study, a structured questionnaire will be used to obtain quantitative data.

3.2 Population of the study

Undergraduates admitted for the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 school years make up the study's population, with 6,200, 6,200, and 6,500 people, respectively. Therefore, 18,700 undergraduates made up the entire sample for the poll. ***[Source: University Admission Office Records, 2025].***

3.3 Sample size and Sampling Procedure

The study's sample size will be decided using a probabilistic method called Taro Yamane's (1967) formula, which is used to determine the sample size from a known population (Israel, 2018)..

n. = N/ 1+ N(e)Δ2

N= 20444 which is population size;

n= sample size?

e = percentage level of significance (0.05).

The calculation formula of Taro Yamane is presented as follows.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N\,(e)2}$$

Substitute numbers in formula

$$n = \frac{18700}{1+18700(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{18700}{1+(18700x0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{18700}{1+(46.75)}$$

$$n = \frac{18700}{47.75}$$

$$n = 400$$

$$n \cong 400$$

Therefore, the study will use a sample of 400 adults (defined as those who are 18 years old or older and who are currently enrolled as undergraduates at Uniben) to draw its conclusions. To get specific information on the social workers' interventions about drug misuse, we will also sample ten administrative staff members from the university and twenty mental/health workers from the university's health center.

3.4 Research Instrument

A standardized questionnaire that has been carefully designed by researchers will be used to collect the data. Sections A–E make up the questionnaire's overall format. First, we'll take a look at the demographics. After that, Sections B, C, D, and E will assess how drug usage among University of Benin undergraduates began, what effects it has had, and how social workers might help reduce those effects.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

Lecturers from the University of Benin's Department of Social Work will personally validate the questionnaire. The experts will check the questionnaire items and make any necessary changes to improve the instrument's quality and scope.

3.6 Reliability of the Instrument

The instruments' reliability will be evaluated using a pilot test methodology. Twenty postgraduate students and ten teachers from the University of Benin in Benin City will

be given the questionnaires. With SPSS version 24, we will do the Cronbach's alpha test. An adequate level of instrument reliability is indicated by a result greater than 0.70. .

3.7 Method of Data Collection

Subjects included in the data collection process include university administrators, mental health experts, and undergraduate students. Online sampling using a Google Form published on multiple respondents' social media platforms, including WhatsApp, will be carried out by the researcher with the help of two research assistants to collect data.

3.8 Method of Data analysis

Mean and standard deviation, two measures of central tendency and dispersion, will be used to examine the obtained data in order to answer the study questions. The discrepancy between the mean and individual responses can then be more easily calculated.

The scale used is in four categories and are as follows;

Strongly Agree (SA)	= 4 points
Agree (A)	= 3 points
Disagree (D)	= 2 points
Strongly Disagree (SD)	= 1 point

In addition, to determine their status, we will use the total mean response for the specific items. The response will be marked as "agreed" according to the decision criterion, which states that the mean ($\bar{x}$) must be equal to or greater than 2.50. As an opposite, a "disagreed" response will be marked if the mean falls below 2.50. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 22, will be used to conduct the subsequent analyses.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results obtained from the quantitative data of the study are presented in this chapter, which is divided into three main parts. First, the chapter gives the demographics of the participants. Then, it answers the main study questions with data from section two. Finally, the chapter explains the findings in section three.

4.1 Distribution of Questionnaires

Table 1: Questionnaires' Distribution and Return

Options	Frequency	Percent (%)
Returned	390	97.5
Not Returned	10	2.5
Total	**400**	**100.0**

Note: All percentages were expressed in relative to 400 (total questionnaire).

Results show that out of 400 questionnaires distributed, 390 were returned, according to the data in the table above. Of the total respondents, this number makes up 97.5%. In contrast, 10 respondents (or 2.5%) did not complete the surveys. This indicates that almost 97.5% of the participants responded.

4.2 Socio-demographic variables

The sociodemographic variables of the sampled University of Benin's students and staff is presented in this section. Age, gender, religion, degree of education, marital status, and GPA are all part of the students' sociodemographic profile. Administrative officers and healthcare professionals made up the University of Benin (UNIBEN) staff that was polled. Their age, gender, occupation, and years of experience made up their sociodemographic profile, which is outlined below:

Table 2: Gender of the respondents (Students and UNIBEN Staff)

	Students		UNIBEN staff	
Sex	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	265	67.9	12	40.0
Female	125	32.1	18	60.0
Total	**390**	**100.0**	**30**	**100.0**

Source: Survey, 2025

Table 2 shows that out of a total of 265 responders (or 67.9% of the sample), the vast majority were male students. A total of 125 people (or 32.1% of the total) filled out the survey. On the other hand, out of the total number of responders from the UNIBEN staff demographic, 12 were male and 18 were female, making up 60.0% of the total.

That male and female undergraduates and university staff of both sexes participated in the study is supported by the data.

With 185 respondents (or 47.44%), students made up the biggest respondent category, with the majority being between the ages of 21 and 25, as seen in Table 3. The student body's age distribution was as follows: The age groups represented by the students were as follows: 30 (7.69%), 127 (32.56%), 43 (11.03%), and 5 (1.28%) were in the 18–20, 26–30, 31–35, and 36+ years old categories, respectively.

On the flip side, among the UNIBEN staff demographic, those between the ages of 36 and 40 made up the most share of responders (33.33%). In terms of other personnel, the ages of the respondents were as follows: 1 (3.33%), 8 (23.33%), 2 (6.67%), 5 (16.67%), 10 (3.33%), and 2 (6.67%) for those aged 18–25, 26–30, 31–35, 41–45, 46–50, and over 50, respectively.

Based on the statement provided, it appears that both the student body and the personnel were adults, meaning they were over the age of 18. The age distribution of the personnel was also diverse. So, their input will make this study even more valuable.

According to the statistics in the above table, the majority of respondents (160 out of 400) were students in their fourth year of college. Among the students enrolled, 25 (6.4%), 85 (21.8%), and 120 (30.8%) were in the 100L, 200L, and 300L levels, respectively, which is different from the rest of the student body. It may be inferred from this that the

survey takers hail from a range of academic ranks at the University. That is why their input will improve the study.

According to the data in the above table, 363 students (or 93.1% of the total) identified only one marital status. Some 25 students (or 0.5%) were married, and 2 more (or 0.5%) were divorced; this is in stark contrast to the majority of students. But nobody who filled out the survey lists themselves as a widow or widower. It appears that the respondents come from a variety of marital backgrounds. That is why their input will improve the study.

Table 3: Age of the respondents (Students and UNIBEN Staff)

Age (years)	Students	
	Frequency	Percent
18-20	30	7.69
21-25	185	47.44
26-30	127	32.56
31-35	43	11.03
36 and above	5	1.28
Total	**390**	**100.0**
Age (years)	**UNIBEN staff**	
	(Frequency)	**(Percent)**
18-25	1	3.33
26-30	8	23.33
31-35	2	6.67
36-40	10	33.33
41-45	5	16.67
46-50	3	10.00
50 and Above	2	6.67
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Source: Survey, 2025

According to Table 3, most of the respondents (185 in total, or 47.44%) were students in the age bracket of 21–25. In contrast, there were 30 students (7.69%), 127 students (32.56%), 43 students (11.03%), and 5 students (1.28%) whose ages fell into the following categories: 18–20, 26–30, 31–35, and 36 and up, respectively.

On the other hand, between the ages of 36 and 40, there were 10 respondents (or 33.33 percent) from the UNIBEN personnel. The remaining staff members were as follows: 1 respondent (3.33 percent), 8 respondents (23.3 percent), 2 respondents (6.67%), 5 (16.67 percent), 3 (10 percent), and 2 (6.67%). The age groups for these individuals were 18–25, 26–30, 31–35, 41–45, 46–50, and above 5 years, respectively.

The previous statement implied that the personnel and pupils were all adults, meaning they were at least 18 years old, and that they represented a wide range of ages. Consequently, the study will benefit more from their input.

Table 4: Level of the respondents (Students)

	Students	
Level	**Frequency**	**Percent**
100L	25	6.4
200L	85	21.8
300L	120	30.8
400L	160	41.0
Total	**390**	**100.0**

Source: Survey, 2025

Among the student respondents, 160 (or 41.0% of the total) were enrolled in 400L, as shown in the table above. On the other hand, there were 25 students (6.4%) in the 100L group, 85 students (21.8%) in the 200L group, and 120 students (30.8%) in the 300L group. This shows that the responses come from all walks of life at the University. Hence, the study will benefit more from their input.

Table 5: Marital status of the respondents (Students)

	Students	
Marital status	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Single	363	93.1
Married	25	6.4
Divorced	2	0.5
Widowed/Widower	Nil	0
Total	**390**	**100.0**

Source: Survey, 2025

From the above table, it shows that out of the total number of student respondents (363 or 93.1% of the total), the vast majority are single. The remaining 25 students (or 0.5%) were either married or divorced, while 2 students (or 0.5%) were neither. No respondents, however, have ever been widowed or have lost a spouse to death. It can be inferred from this that the respondents represent a wide range of marital situation. Hence, the study will benefit more from their input.

Table 6: Grade Point Average (GPA) of the respondents (Students) in the last semester

	Students	
GPA	**Frequency**	**Percent**
<2.5	14	3.6
2.5-3.5	215	55.1
3.5 - 4.5	128	37.9
4.5 – 5.0	13	3.3
Total	**390**	**100.0**

Source: Survey, 2025

According to the data shown in the table 6, out of the 215 student responders (or 55.1% of the total), the vast majority had GPAs between 2.5 and 3.5. At the same time, there were additional students whose GPAs fell outside of the specified ranges: 14 respondents (3.6% of the total), 128 respondents (37.1%), and 13 respondents (3.3%). That there is a wide variety of pupils with high and low GPAs among the responders is evident. Hence, the study will benefit more from their input.

Table 7: Job position of the respondents (UNIBEN staff)

	UNIBEN staff	
Job position	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Administrative officer	10	33.3
Health Worker	15	50.0
Health Assistant	5	16.7
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Source: Survey, 2025

Table 7 shows that out of the total number of respondents, 15 (or 50%) are health care workers. This suggests that most of the respondents are staff members. In the meantime, there were 10 administrative officers (or 33.3% of the total staff) and 5 health assistants (16.7% of the total staff). Administrative officers and those working in health care made up the bulk of the workers, according to this. Consequently, the study will benefit from their input, which is based on their responsibilities within the academic environment.

Table 8: The respondents' years of experience (UNIBEN staff)

Years of experience	UNIBEN staff	
	Frequency	Percent
1-5	3	10.0
6-10	12	40.0
11-15	10	33.3
16-20	5	16.7
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Source: Survey, 2025

Based on the data in Table 8, most of the participants were characterized as staff. Twelve people, or 40% of the total, had six to ten years of experience. In the meantime, there were three more staff members who contributed 10% of the total, ten more who contributed 33.3%, and five more who contributed 16.7%; their tenures were 1-5, 11-15, and 16-20 years, respectively. This points to the staff having a wealth of experience. Hence, the study will benefit from their input because it is based on their expertise in a university setting.

4.3 Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the primary causes of drug abuse among undergraduate students in University of Benin?

To answer the question 1 above, question Items 1 to 5 of the students' questionnaire were employed as presented below:

Table 9: Students and health workers' Perspectives on the Causes of Drug Abuse among Undergraduate Students in University of Benin

S/N	Item	SA (n/%)	A (n/%)	D (n/%)	SD (n/%)	Total (N)	Mean	Rank	Decision
1	Peer influence is a major factor driving drug abuse among undergraduates.	205 (48.7%)	151 (35.9%)	38 (9.0%)	26 (6.4%)	420	3.27	1st	Agreed
2	Academic stress and pressure lead students to abuse drugs.	183 (43.6%)	162 (38.5%)	43 (10.3%)	32 (7.6%)	420	3.18	2nd	Agreed
3	Family background and poor parental control influence students' drug use.	172 (41.0%)	151 (35.9%)	59 (14.1%)	38 (9.0%)	420	3.09	3rd	Agreed
4	Easy access to drugs contributes to their widespread use on campus.	162 (38.5%)	140 (33.3%)	65 (15.5%)	53 (12.6%)	420	2.98	4th	Agreed
5	Social media and pop culture glamorize drug use among students.	140 (33.3%)	129 (30.7%)	75 (17.9%)	76 (18.1%)	420	2.79	5th	Agreed
	Overall Mean						**3.06**		**Agreed**

Likert Scale Scores: SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2, SD = 1,
Mean> 2.50 Agreed, Mean <2.50 = Not Agreed

As shown in Table 9, both students and health care providers at the University of Benin were asked about the reasons why undergraduates there abuse drugs. With mean scores that surpass the decision threshold of 2.50, the results show that most respondents agreed that all the listed variables were major causes of the rising drug usage prevalence on campus. With a mean score of 3.06, most people agree that many different social and environmental factors influence drug usage among college students.

Peer influence stood out among the identified categories, with an impressive mean score of 3.27. This suggests that students' substance misuse is greatly influenced by social pressure from their friends and group affiliations. Many college students probably start using drugs through their friends or in an effort to fit in with a certain clique, according to this research.

With an average grade of 3.18, academic stress and pressure was the second most often mentioned factor. Some undergraduates may resort to drug usage as a coping mechanism due to the academic constraints that students face, including workload, exam anxiety, and competition.

Similarly, pupils' vulnerability to substance misuse is significantly increased by unstable home circumstances, inadequate supervision, and limited parental influence (mean = 3.09), which ranks third overall. Findings highlight the importance of home environment and upbringing in shaping students' moral and behavioral choices.

Additionally, it was acknowledged as a significant factor because drugs were easily accessible on campus (mean = 2.98). This points to the belief that children are more likely to experiment with drugs and maintain their use if there is lax enforcement and illegal substances are easily accessible on or near university premises.

And lastly, with a mean score of 2.79, the glamorization of drug use in popular culture and social media was determined to be the least significant influence. Despite being lower than other reasons, this mean is still higher than the 2.50 benchmark, indicating that students' attitudes and behaviors toward drugs are subtly impacted by exposure to entertainment media and online content that normalize or celebrate substance use.

Undergraduates at the University of Benin are more likely to take drugs if the identified criteria are considered, according to the total mean score of 3.06, which is higher than the decision threshold of 2.50 on a 4-point Likert scale. This average number indicates a fair amount of agreement, suggesting that drug usage among students is seen as more than just a behavioral issue; it is deeply rooted in the students' social, academic, and environmental circumstances.

Research Question 2: *What are the effects of drug abuse on undergraduate students in University of Benin?*

To answer the question 2 above, question Items 6 to 10 of the students' questionnaire were employed as presented below:

Table 10: Students' Perspectives on the Effects of Drug Abuse Among Undergraduate Students in University of Benin (N = 420)

S/N	Item	SA (n/%)	A (n/%)	D (n/%)	SD (n/%)	Total (N)	Mean	Rank	Decision
1	Drug abuse negatively affects students' academic performance.	190 (45.2%)	158 (37.6%)	44 (10.5%)	28 (6.7%)	420	3.21	1st	Agreed
2	Drug abuse contributes to poor physical and mental health.	180 (42.9%)	165 (39.3%)	48 (11.4%)	27 (6.4%)	420	3.18	2nd	Agreed
3	Students who abuse drugs are more likely to engage in crime.	175 (41.7%)	160 (38.1%)	50 (11.9%)	35 (8.3%)	420	3.13	3rd	Agreed
4	Drug abuse increases the risk of students dropping out of school.	160 (38.1%)	155 (36.9%)	60 (14.3%)	45 (10.7%)	420	3.02	4th	Agreed
5	Drug dependence creates long-term socio-economic consequences.	150 (35.7%)	150 (35.7%)	65 (15.5%)	55 (13.1%)	420	2.94	5th	Agreed
Overall mean 3.10									**Agreed**

Likert Scale Scores: SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2, SD = 1,
Mean> 2.50 Agreed, Mean <2.50 = Not Agreed

Table 10 shows how individuals from the University of Benin's student body and the medical community view the effects of drug usage on our undergraduates. There was a clear consensus among respondents that substance misuse had many negative effects on students' life, since all of the things enumerated earned mean scores over the 2.50 decision threshold. Substance addiction is widely recognized as having considerable and far-reaching repercussions throughout the university community, as indicated by the aggregate mean score of 3.10.

Students' academic performance is negatively affected by substance addiction, according to the most highly evaluated effect (3.21 average). Substance abuse is strongly believed by respondents to be a major cause of undergraduates' decreased concentration, increased absenteeism, poor academic performance, and failure to pass classes.

Following this, the negative effects of substance misuse on one's physical and mental health were strongly regarded (mean = 3.18). This emphasizes how drug abuse causes a host of health problems, including mental instability, exhaustion, depression, and a host of others, all of which can impair one's capacity to study and general well-being.

Similarly, respondents agreed that drug abuse increases the likelihood of criminal behavior among students (mean = 3.13). There is a strong association between substance addiction and antisocial actions on campus, including stealing, fighting, and involvement with cults. The fourth item, which states that drug misuse increases the chance of pupils falling out of school, had an average score of 3.02. This shows that most people agree that substance abuse makes it harder for students to learn and can even lead to expulsion or withdrawal. With a mean score of 2.94, the least unanimous agreement was that drug dependency has long-term socio-economic effects; this shows that people are aware that addiction to drugs may cause problems with money, unemployment, and social isolation when they graduate.

With a mean score of 3.10, there is a moderate level of agreement that drug misuse has serious consequences for undergraduates' academic performance, mental health, and social and economic standing. This indicates that substance abuse is a systemic problem that affects kids' academic performance, health, and future production, rather than just an individual behavioral issue. The results highlight the need for extensive institutional interventions such university-wide drug policy enforcement, health education programs, and counseling services.

Substance misuse is seen by many at the University of Benin as a major threat to personal growth and the institution's viability, according to the overall mean. Consequently, in order to safeguard pupils' academic performance and welfare, it is imperative that lawmakers, parents, healthcare providers, and educators work together to improve preventative and rehabilitative measures.

Research Question 3: *What is the role of social workers in mitigating the impact of drug abuse among undergraduate students in the University of Benin?*

To answer the question 3 above, question Items 11 to 15 of the students' questionnaire were employed as presented below:

Research Question 3: *What is the role of social workers in mitigating the impact of drug abuse among undergraduate students in the University of Benin?*

To answer the question 3 above, question Items 11 to 15 of the students' questionnaire were employed as presented below:

Table 11: Students' Perspectives on the Role of Social Workers in Mitigating Drug Abuse in University of Benin (N = 420)

S/N	Item	SA (n/%)	A (n/%)	D (n/%)	SD (n/%)	Total (N)	Mean	Rank	Decision
1	Social workers play an important role in creating awareness about drug abuse.	175 (41.7%)	165 (39.3%)	50 (11.9%)	30 (7.1%)	420	3.16	1st	Agreed
2	Counseling services by social workers reduce the incidence of drug abuse.	170 (40.5%)	160 (38.1%)	55 (13.1%)	35 (8.3%)	420	3.11	2nd	Agreed
3	Collaboration between social workers and university authorities helps address drug abuse effectively.	165 (39.3%)	160 (38.1%)	60 (14.3%)	35 (8.3%)	420	3.08	3rd	Agreed
4.	There are not enough trained social workers in the university setting.	150 (35.7%)	150 (35.7%)	70 (16.7%)	50 (11.9%)	420	2.95	5th	Agreed
5.	Social workers are involved in rehabilitation efforts for drug-abusing students.	160 (38.1%)	155 (36.9%)	65 (15.5%)	40 (9.5%)	420	3.04	4th	Agreed
Overall Mean							3.07		

Likert Scale Scores: SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2, SD = 1,
Mean> 2.50 Agreed, Mean <2.50 = Not Agreed

Respondents' views on social workers' roles in combating drug abuse among college students are shown in Table 11. With an overall mean score of 3.07, the research shows that most respondents agree that social workers play an important and complex role in monitoring, preventing, and rehabilitating kids who are abusing substances. The score is higher than the decision criterion of 2.50, indicating a good agreement.

With a mean score of 3.16, the first item determines how much of an impact social workers have on preventing substance misuse by gauging how much of an impact they have on raising awareness about the issue. Thus, social workers' peer-education activities, educational enlightenment programs, and awareness campaigns are considered successful ways for reducing students' vulnerability to drug use.

With an average score of 3.11, respondents were in agreement on the second item, which asked about the impact of social workers' counseling services on reducing substance usage rates. These findings highlight the importance of professional counseling therapies, such as group therapy sessions and individual assistance, in helping adolescents struggling with substance dependence to change their attitudes and behaviors. These results highlight the significance of psychological and social assistance in university health promotion programs.

Similarly, a mean score of 3.08 was recorded for the third item, which assesses the collaboration between university authorities and social workers. Collaboration and

institutional synergy enhance the efficacy of drug prevention and control measures, as highlighted below. An improved strategy for dealing with drug-related concerns on campus can be achieved when social workers work in tandem with health services, school administration, and security organizations.

With a mean score of 3.04 and a ranking of fourth, the fifth item—regarding the involvement of social workers in rehabilitation initiatives—confirms that respondents acknowledge the critical contributions of social workers in rehabilitation. In the aftermath of an intervention, this includes helping kids with reintegration, psychological rehabilitation, and continuous behavioral evaluation.

Item four, which suggests that there is a dearth of social workers with the necessary training inside academic institutions, had the lowest mean score (2.95), although it was still higher than the neutral level. This suggests that respondents are somewhat worried that social work programs in universities may not be able to survive or thrive due to a lack of trained staff. Proactive involvement, timely counseling, and effective rehabilitation of students with substance dependence may be hindered by a lack of skilled people.

Respondents see social workers as crucial in combating drug abuse on college campuses, according to the overall mean score of 3.07. However, if we want social work practice at

universities to be more effective, we need to address a structural restriction, which is the lack of sufficiently educated staff, as shown by the relatively lower mean in item four.

An aggregate mean score of 3.07 shows that most people think social workers are important in reducing drug misuse on college campuses. A comprehensive public health and student welfare policy should include the integration of professional social work services within educational institutions, as this finding highlights. Additionally, it suggests that in order to ensure the consistent provision of services such as prevention, counseling, and rehabilitation, strategic policy initiatives should center on the training, recruitment, and deployment of competent social workers. University efforts to promote healthy lifestyles among students and back national efforts to reduce drug use on campus can be better accomplished through the use of social work frameworks.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section provides a comprehensive review of the results of the research study "Effect of Drug Abuse among Undergraduates at the University of Benin." The questions that guide the conversation are based on the three main goals of the research:

According to the results of the study, the main reasons why students at the University of Benin abuse substances include peer pressure, academic pressure, natural curiosity, lack of parental supervision, and social exposure. The results of this study are in agreement with those of Adeyemo and co-authors (2016) and Yahaya and Danladi (2022), two other

studies that looked at substance use at Nigerian universities and found that academic pressure and loneliness were the main contributors.

Bronfenbrenner (1994) argues that people's behaviors are impacted by the relationships they maintain within their immediate social contexts. The interpersonal part of the Social Ecology Theory is supported by the significance of peer influence as a determinant. Undergraduates, who are often going through a period of coming-of-age, may look up to their peers who use substances as a confidence boost or social connector. Studies by Bello and co-authors (2023) and Ugwu and co-authors (2020) provide more evidence that young adults are more likely to experiment with drugs when their peers accept and even encourage such activity.

Another significant factor that predicted drug usage was academic stress, which supports the conclusions drawn by Alao and co-authors (2022) and Magill and co-authors (2023) that students frequently turn to stimulants like tramadol and caffeine-based chemicals to help them concentrate or calm their nerves. Based on his work within the ecological paradigm, McLeroy (1988) argues that academic expectations, exam stress, and a lack of adequate coping mechanisms can contribute to maladaptive behaviors, and this finding emphasizes the institutional-level impact of the university setting.

Moreover, factors such as family dynamics and inadequate parental supervision were identified as major contributors. Adolescents' inclination for substance use is increased

by parental neglect and low family cohesion, according to the research of Kanyoni and co-authors (2015), which is supported by this finding. Prevention efforts should include family-centered social work strategies that promote emotional stability and parental supervision, rather than relying solely on school-based initiatives.

All things considered, the results show that substance misuse is a socially constructed phenomenon among college students, influenced by both internal (such as anxiety and natural curiosity) and external (such as family and friends) variables, as well as by institutional (especially academic) culture.

Students' academic, social, and psychological results as a result of substance usage were the focus of the second study query. Substance misuse has detrimental effects on many areas of life, including moral values, social behavior, physical and mental health, and academic performance.

Students who use substances are more likely to have worse grades, more absenteeism, and impaired concentration, which is consistent with the results of Adeyemo and co-authors (2016) and Trunzo and co-authors (2014). The main impact was a decrease in academic performance. When people use psychoactive substances, they have trouble remembering things, have trouble paying attention in class, and generally do worse cognitively. Subsequently, NIDA (2023) and others have found that drug use during

adolescence interferes with normal brain development, including in the area of the brain that controls decision-making and planning—the prefrontal cortex.

Behavioural instability, anxiety, and depression were symptoms of psychological discomfort, another noticeable consequence. Substance abuse is a known risk factor for a wide range of mental health complications, and our results are consistent with those of Daley and Feit (2013). Alghamdi (2023) and Teixeira and co-authors (2023) found that students who use substances often have trouble controlling their emotions and have less psychological resilience, which leads to a vicious cycle of dependency and unhealthy habits.

Among other socially problematic behaviors, the study found that substance addiction increases the likelihood of aggressiveness, chronic absenteeism, cult membership, and sexual misconduct. Our results are in line with those of Okoye and Nwaka-Nwandu (2019), who found that there is a direct relationship between drug usage and illegal behavior among students in Nigeria. From a social ecological point of view, these patterns show how community-level variables like social norms, peer pressure, and environmental permissiveness function to perpetuate risky behaviors (Winch, 2012).

There was an increase in the rate of withdrawal from school, decreased involvement in learning, and disciplinary actions when substance use was present at the institutional level. The UNODC reports that in 2024, student substance addiction was a major factor

in the high rates of adolescent unemployment and school dropouts in sub-Saharan Africa. Addiction to substances has far-reaching effects on students' academic performance, mental health, and social lives, jeopardizing both their individual development and the educational goals of colleges and universities.

But thirdly, we looked at how social workers may help lessen the impact of substance usage. Without exception, the results showed that university communities and the general public benefit greatly from social workers' advocacy, counseling, rehabilitation, and awareness-raising efforts.

This lines up with what Diraditsile and Mabote (2019) found; they emphasized the importance of social workers in preventing substance abuse by facilitating peer education programs, promoting rehabilitation services, and providing psychosocial support. Findings from this study support the idea that effective social work practice can help affected adolescents modify their behavior and build coping mechanisms.

Research undertaken by Magill and co-authors (2023) and Alghamdi (2023) has demonstrated that social work interventions, including psychoeducation, motivational interviewing, and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), significantly reduce rates of substance dependency and relapse. As emphasised by Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological paradigm, these interventions are most effective when tailored to match the students' psychological and environmental situations.

The results did, however, point to structural problems, such as a lack of trained social workers, inadequate financing, and a lack of institutional cooperation. The breadth and sustainability of interventions in academic settings are constrained by these constraints. These findings are in line with those of Daley and Feit (2013), who argued that comprehensive addiction management is hindered by the lack of social work integration within educational health systems.

As a result, the report suggests that university administrations and government agencies should invest in student wellness programs, establish social work units, and integrate the NDLEA's drug-prevention framework into campus counseling services. Social workers can make a difference in students' lives and help them behave better by building stronger institutions and encouraging partnerships across different fields.

The study's results back up the claims made by proponents of the Social Ecology Theory, which states that people's activities are the result of chain reactions including personal, interpersonal, social, and institutional factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Winch, 2012). Evidence showed that drug misuse among college freshmen is multi-faceted, influenced by factors such as personal weaknesses, relationships with peers, institutional norms, and academic rigor.

Microsystemically, elements that set things in motion include personal stress and mental instability. Peer networks and family relationships impact risky behavior through

reinforcement or mitigation at the mesosystem level. National drug laws and institutional policies can have an impact on substance use at the ecosystem and macrosystem levels. As a result, the theory provides a thorough framework for comprehending and addressing drug abuse in academic institutions, stressing the need for systemic interventions at all ecological levels..

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the "Effect of Drug Abuse among Undergraduate Students of the University of Benin, Edo State." There were three main goals of the investigation, and related research questions were used to guide it. The Social Ecology Theory put out by Bronfenbrenner (1994) provides the theoretical foundation for this inquiry. This theory states that human behavior is influenced by a web of interconnected systems. Attitudes and behavioral outcomes are shaped by these systems, which include intrapersonal, interpersonal, communal, and societal components. The hypothesis was useful because it helped us understand drug misuse as a result of inherited traits, traumatic experiences, and cultural norms and expectations.

A descriptive survey research approach was used in this study to gather data from a sample of undergraduates and university administrators. The data was collected using a standardized questionnaire. To better understand the perceived causes, effects, and intervention options around substance misuse among the University of Benin student population, the obtained data was examined using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation).

According to the survey, the main reasons why students take substances include academic pressure, peer pressure, natural curiosity, lack of parental monitoring, and

easily accessible narcotics. Students' views on substance usage are substantially affected by social and environmental factors, according to this result.

Substance misuse also has a major effect on one's social behavior, physical and mental health, and academic performance, according to the report. Student substance abuse is associated with a host of negative outcomes, including worse focus and performance in the classroom, higher rates of absenteeism and psychological distress, as well as a host of aberrant behaviors, such as hostility, truancy, and cult membership. Substance misuse hinders undergraduates' intellectual and social development, according to the current research.

Third, social workers have a crucial role in reducing the problem by raising awareness, counseling, and assisting with rehabilitation while also working with university authorities, according to the report. According to the survey, structured counseling programs, awareness-building efforts, student orientation programs, and coordination between social work and other campus departments are all part of effective intervention strategies. However, the research did find certain systemic barriers, such as a lack of funding for student health programs and an absence of trained social workers. In conclusion, the study's findings show that drug misuse among college students is complex and calls for group efforts to address. Promoting a drug-free campus requires the combined efforts of many groups, including students, faculty, staff, social workers, healthcare providers, and lawmakers.

5.2 Conclusion

The research results showed that substance addiction is a major problem among University of Benin undergraduates, impacting their academic performance, mental health, and behavior. According to the study's findings, the main causes of substance usage among students are peer pressure, academic pressure, and insufficient family supervision. So, it's clear that this isn't just a personal problem; it's a systemic obstacle that needs fixing on all fronts.

Furthermore, the research confirmed that substance usage has a negative effect on students' academic performance, their mental and physical health, and their ability to function effectively and peacefully on campus. In order to make sense of these interconnections, Social Ecology Theory provided a useful framework by showing how different ecological systems interact to impact human behavior.

The importance of social work involvement in addressing the widespread problem of substance misuse was highlighted by the study's results. Through their roles as educators, activists, and mediators, social workers raise public awareness, provide counseling, and work in tandem with medical experts to bolster rehabilitation and preventative initiatives. As a result, for the prevention of substance use problems and the promotion of students' overall health and development, it is essential that social work services be integrated into academic framework.

5.3 Recommendations

After the study's findings and conclusions, the following suggestions are made:

1. The University of Benin, in collaboration with health educators and social workers, should organize regular seminars, workshops, and awareness campaigns to discuss the risks of substance addiction. The long-term effects of substance abuse on one's health and performance in school, as well as self-discipline, should be the focal points of these programs.
2. Qualified social workers and psychologists should be on staff at the university's counseling services, or those services should be expanded. Substance abuse treatment programs, mental health counseling, and other confidential services should be available to students at these schools.
3. It is recommended that university administration collaborate with social work departments and practitioners to develop policies, implement preventative programs, and offer student support services. Relevant agencies, including as the NDLEA and the Ministry of Education, should be included in this process.
4. It is important for those in charge of children and youth to get education on their roles in preventing substance usage. Parental education programs and family-centered interventions can help strengthen guidance, emotional support, and good monitoring.
5. The institution should launch programs to encourage positive influence among students, such as peer mentoring and peer education. Under the supervision of

social workers, peer educators can help spread anti-drug messages and identify pupils who may be at risk.

6. In order to strengthen drug prevention policies and ensure strict enforcement on campus, the university should form partnerships with relevant agencies, such as the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It is important to create and communicate a thorough drug policy for institutions that includes both disciplinary actions and rehabilitation plans.
7. Since the university should fund recreational, athletic, and creative programs, students would have healthy ways to relieve stress and interact with others, which can help them avoid substance usage.
8. In particular, at the time of student registration and examinations, it is proposed that health exams and voluntary substance screening be instituted on a periodic basis. Instead than stigmatizing or punishing students who are identified as needing assistance, they should be directed to counseling and rehabilitation programs.
9. In order to keep track of trends, find out how effective intervention programs are, and adapt techniques to changing patterns of substance addiction, educational institutions should support continuous research and regular evaluations of these programs.

10. Nigerian postsecondary institutions should be funded for mental health and social work programs, and the government should establish and implement national frameworks to support drug prevention education.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This study adds to what is already known about the complex web of social, academic, and psychological elements linked to substance misuse among Nigerian undergraduates. This highlights the critical role of social workers in promoting wellness, rehabilitating individuals, and advocating for social policies. This analysis also provides a theoretical and practical foundation for future research and social policy creation by using Social Ecology Theory to show how environmental systems impact behavioral outcomes, such as substance addiction.

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INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Sir/Madam,

EFFECT OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

I am conducting the above study as a requirement for the completion of my first degree in social work from the University of Benin City. The purpose of this study is to investigate effect of drug abuse among undergraduates in University of Benin.

I would like you participate in this study by filling up the attached questionnaire. All information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and only aggregate data will be analyzed and reported. As such, individuals who respond to this questionnaire will not be identified. The filling of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes and your participation is highly appreciated.

I thank you very much for your valuable contribution in participating in this study.

Kind regards,

Titus Kumbo Bilikisu

(Researcher)

QUESTIONNAIRE (STUDENTS)

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. **Your gender**: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. **Your age**: 18-20 [ ] 21-25 [ ] 26-30 [ ] 31-35 [ ] 36 and above
3. Your **religion**: Christian [ ] Muslim [ ] African Traditional Religion [ ]
   Other please describe _____
4. **Level**: 100L [ ] 200L [ ] 300L [ ] 400L [ ]
5. Your **marital status**: single [ ] Married [ ] Divorced [ ] Widowed/widower [ ]
6. What was your GPA in the last semester?: _____

SECTION B: CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE

The next questions ask you about causes of drug abuse

Section B: Causes of Drug Abuse Among Undergraduate Students

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Peer influence is a major factor driving drug abuse among undergraduates.				
2	Easy access to drugs contributes to their widespread use on campus.				
3	Academic stress and pressure lead students to abuse drugs.				
4	Family background and poor parental control influence students' drug use.				

	students.				

Section C: Effects of Drug Abuse on Undergraduate Students

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
6	Drug abuse negatively affects students' academic performance.				
7	Students who abuse drugs are more likely to engage in criminal behavior.				
8	Drug abuse contributes to poor physical and mental health.				
9	Substance abuse among students increases the risk of dropping out.				
10	Drug dependence creates long-term socio-economic consequences for students.				

Section D: Role of Social Workers in Mitigating Drug Abuse

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
11	Social workers play an important role in creating awareness about drug abuse.				
12	Counseling services by social workers reduce the incidence of drug abuse.				
13	Social workers are involved in rehabilitation efforts for drug-abusing students.				

5	Social media and pop culture glamorize drug use among students.				

Section C: Effects of Drug Abuse on Undergraduate Students

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
6	Drug abuse negatively affects students' academic performance.				
7	Students who abuse drugs are more likely to engage in criminal behavior.				
8	Drug abuse contributes to poor physical and mental health.				
9	Substance abuse among students increases the risk of dropping out.				
10	Drug dependence creates long-term socio-economic consequences for students.				

Section D: Role of Social Workers in Mitigating Drug Abuse

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
11	Social workers play an important role in creating awareness about drug abuse.				
12	Counseling services by social workers reduce the incidence of drug abuse.				
13	Social workers are involved in rehabilitation efforts for drug-abusing students.				
14	There are not enough trained social workers in the university setting.				

15	Collaboration between social workers and university authorities helps address drug abuse effectively.				

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE HEALTH WORKERS/ ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

Dear Sir/Madam,

EFFECT OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY.

This study is conducted as a requirement for the completion of first degree in social work from the University of Benin City. The purpose of this study is to investigate social work intervention strategies for victims of drug abuse among undergraduate students of Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma, Edo State.

I would like you participate in this study by filling up the attached questionnaire. All information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and only aggregate data will be analyzed and reported. As such, individuals who respond to this questionnaire will not be identified. The filling of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes and your participation is highly appreciated.

I thank you very much for your valuable contribution in participating in this study.

Kind regards,

Titus Kumbo Bilikisu

(Researcher)

Section A: Socio-demographic profile

Please fill appropriately

1. Gender : male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Age : 18-25 [ ] 26-30 [ ] 31-35[ ] 36-40 [ ] 41-45 [ ] 46-50 [ ] 50 and above [ ]
3. What is your job position: Administrative officer [ ]Health workers [ ] Health Assistant [ ]
4. Other (specify):

   _____

5. Your years of experience 1-5 [ ] 6-10 [ ] 11-15 [ ] 16-20 [ ]

SECTION B: CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE

The next questions ask you about causes of drug abuse

Section B: Causes of Drug Abuse Among Undergraduate Students

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Peer influence is a major factor driving drug abuse among undergraduates.				
2	Easy access to drugs contributes to their widespread use on campus.				
3	Academic stress and pressure lead students to abuse drugs.				
4	Family background and poor parental control influence students' drug use.				
5	Social media and pop culture glamorize drug use among students.				

Section C: Effects of Drug Abuse on Undergraduate Students

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
6	Drug abuse negatively affects students' academic performance.				
7	Students who abuse drugs are more likely to engage in criminal behavior.				
8	Drug abuse contributes to poor physical and mental health.				
9	Substance abuse among students increases the risk of dropping out.				
10	Drug dependence creates long-term socio-economic consequences for students.				

Section D: Role of Social Workers in Mitigating Drug Abuse

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
11	Social workers play an important role in creating awareness about drug abuse.				
12	Counseling services by social workers reduce the incidence of drug abuse.				
13	Social workers are involved in rehabilitation efforts for drug-abusing students.				
14	There are not enough trained social workers in the university setting.				
15	Collaboration between social workers and university authorities helps address drug abuse effectively.				