

Factors and Effects of Substance Misuse Among Young People of Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State

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ABSTRACT

The issue of substance abuse among youths in Obudu L.G.A is becoming increasingly alarming, impacting individuals, families and the broader community. This research explores the underlying factors and repercussions of substance abuse in young people in Obudu L.G.A located in Cross River State, Nigeria. Using a social survey framework, 250 respondents were selected from among youth health workers and leaders of thought through simple random sampling. The survey instrument used was a questionnaire in which 150 copies were administered to the youths, so far the health workers and 50 to leaders of thought. On the whole, 50 youths presenting 20%, could not return theirs and a total of 200 copies were returned, representing 80%, which were used for the data analysis, and the findings were as follows: that there are many factors and effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A. It was also revealed that there are consequences of substance misuse among young people of the Obudu community. The study recommends that following a careful investigation and analysis of the data collected, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Inspectorate Unit should ensure that substance use is inculcated into our school curriculum/syllabus at all levels of education, especially the tertiary institutions, as this will reduce substance misuse and its effects.

Keywords: Substance Misuse, Young People, Factors, Effects.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, substance misuse and consumption continue to grow, particularly in the developing world, with aggressive multinational substance companies emerging. Substance misuse involves the harmful or risky consumption of substances like alcohol, prescription drugs, or illegal drugs, which can result in health issues, societal problems and addiction. It poses a major public health challenge globally and is associated with various negative consequences, including mental health disorders, chronic illnesses and social disruption (World Health Organisation, 2013).

Often, substance misuse starts with experimentation or casual use but can evolve into dependency and addiction, marked by a compulsive need to use despite adverse effects (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Several factors that contribute to substance misuse include genetic factors, psychological challenges, environmental conditions and socioeconomic status (Kandel & Edwards, 1999). Substance misuse among young individuals poses a major public health issue worldwide. The World Health Organisation (WHO) reports that substance use disorders are among the top contributors to illness and death in adolescents and young adults (WHO, 2020).

Youth substance abuse poses a significant threat to any society, especially in a developing nation like Nigeria, with particular reference to Obudu L.G.A, which has a large population of young people. Nigeria is witnessing a troubling rise in substance abuse cases. According to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), around 14.3 million Nigerians are involved in the illegal use of drugs. The menace has infiltrated secondary schools across the nation, largely due to the rise in drug trafficking that has made these substances easily obtainable. A 2019 study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) found that 10.6% of Nigerians have tried cannabis at least once in their lives. In Obudu L.G.A of Cross River State, the issue of substance misuse is prevalent and necessitates a comprehensive examination for resolution. By investigating the extent and impact of this issue, researchers can gain valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by the

youths. The findings of this study will be highly beneficial for schools, governmental organisations, healthcare professionals and the community. They will provide a solid foundation for developing prevention, treatment and policy initiatives aimed at effectively addressing substance misuse and promoting the well-being of the youth in Obudu.

Statement of the Problem

Substance misuse has been a part of human history for centuries. In a broad sense, almost every culture has its own local intoxicating drinks, especially concerning alcoholic beverages in Nigeria, particularly in Obudu; the use of psychoactive substances is linked to a high rate of psychiatric disorders. The extent of substance misuse in Nigeria is not well-documented, and in Obudu Local Government Area, it is particularly prevalent among the youths due to a lack of effective measures to combat or significantly reduce the menace.

Over the years, substance misuse among young people in Obudu L.G.A has become increasingly problematic, posing serious risks to their health, social relationships and economic stability. Observations also indicate that there is insufficient campaigning, education and punitive action against those engaged in substance misuse, which could help mitigate the menace in society, with particular reference to Obudu. Despite some attempts to tackle substance misuse, its prevalence remains significant, and the specific factors contributing to the problem in Obudu L.G.A are not fully understood.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions;

1. Are there factors contributing to substance misuse among young people in Obudu L.G.A?
2. Do young people in Obudu L.G.A experience the effects of substance misuse?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the factors and effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu Local Government Area, while the specific objectives are as follows;

1. To identify the factors of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A.
2. To determine the effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A.

Statements of Hypotheses

1. There are no factors contributing to substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A.
2. Young people in Obudu L.G.A do not experience the effects of substance misuse.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Substance Misuse

Substance misuse is a widespread public health concern impacting individuals, families and communities around the globe. The World Health Organisation (WHO) reports that substance use disorders are among the primary contributors to illness and death worldwide (WHO, 2020).

Substance misuse involves the dangerous or harmful consumption of psychoactive substances, including illicit drugs and alcohol, in ways that negatively impact a person's physical, mental, or social health. This phenomenon covers various behaviours, from infrequent binge drinking to long-term addiction (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020). The harmful effects on our health can result from excessive drinking, improper use of prescription drugs, or the consumption of illicit substances.

The detrimental effects of alcohol lead to 3.3 million fatalities annually. Globally, individuals aged 15 years and above consume an average of 6.2 litres of pure alcohol each year. However, only 38.3% of the population

consumes alcohol, indicating that those who do drink average 17 litres of pure alcohol yearly. Additionally, approximately 15.3 million people are affected by drug use disorders, with injecting drug use reported in 148 countries, 120 of which also report HIV infections among that group (WHO, 2018).

The prevalence of substance misuse in Nigeria is rapidly increasing and leading to serious adverse effects. In Obudu Local Government Area, many young people engage in various forms of substance misuse, viewing it as a lifestyle choice without acknowledging the harmful consequences and long-term repercussions it would have on their lives.

Factors Contributing to Substance Misuse among Young People of Obudu L.G.A

The issue of substance misuse in Obudu L.G.A is a major problem, especially among young people (the youth), which is attributed to several factors.

Peer Influence: Peer influence plays a crucial role in the prevalence of substance misuse among young people in Nigeria especially in Obudu in Nigeria, especially in Obudu. Young people's peers affect both the initiation and ongoing use of substances through different means (Hawkins, Catalano & Miller 1992). Peer pressure, whether direct or indirect, can lead to increased substance misuse.

Peer influence plays a significant role in predicting substance use in young individuals. A study conducted by Maxwell (2002) indicated that peer pressure was a crucial element in both the onset and persistence of substance use among people.

Family dynamic/lack of parental supervision and guidance:

Family dynamics, along with insufficient parental supervision and guidance, greatly influence substance misuse among young people. These family-related factors are essential in determining an individual's likelihood of engaging in substance use. A lack of parental oversight coupled with troubled parent-child relationships marked by conflict, neglect or minimal emotional support are important elements of family dynamics that contribute to substance misuse (Brook, Brook, Gordon, Whiteman & Cohen 2011).

Family dynamics and parental oversight play a crucial role in predicting substance use in young people. For instance, research by Chilcoat & Anthony (1996) indicates that inadequate parental supervision is linked to a higher likelihood of substance use among teenagers.

Socioeconomic Factors: Socioeconomic factors play a crucial role in substance misuse among young people in Obudu L.G.A. Factors such as socioeconomic disadvantage, poverty and limited opportunities tend to increase the risk of substance misuse. Living in poverty heightens stress, restricts access to resources and diminishes opportunities, all of which can lead to increased substance use (Galea & Vlahov, 2002). Unemployment can foster feelings of hopelessness, frustration and despair, further raising the likelihood of substance use (Henkel, 2011). Additionally, income inequality often results in social and economic disparities that contribute to substance use (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009).

A lack of access to education restricts opportunities and increases the risk of substance use (Humensky, 2010). Consistently, socioeconomic factors are reliable indicators of substance use. For instance, research carried out by Luthar & Sexton (2007) indicated that adolescents from low-income families are at a higher risk of engaging in substance use.

Substances Commonly Misused

Tobacco: The improper use of tobacco among young people globally and in Obudu particularly poses a serious public health challenge, particularly due to the problem of nicotine addiction. A large number of adult smokers began their habit before turning 20, and starting young is associated with a higher rate of smoking and addiction, decreased likelihood of cessation and increased mortality rate (Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health, 2024).

Alcohol: Alcohol is a commonly abused substance around the world, resulting in serious health, social and economic consequences. Drinking large quantities of alcohol in a short time frame raises the likelihood of accidents, injuries and health complications. Moreso, persistent heavy drinking can lead to dependence and various health issues (WHO, 2018).

Cocaine: Cocaine is a powerful stimulant known for its addictive properties, which can be consumed through snorting, smoking or injecting. While it's often abused for the feelings of euphoria it produces, it can lead to severe health issues. There are numerous dangers associated with cocaine use, with the most significant being the risk of fatal overdose (WHO, 2018).

Morphine: Substances such as morphine influence the brain's reward system by triggering feelings of euphoria through increased dopamine levels. This surge in dopamine strengthens enjoyable behaviours, promoting their repetition, even when those actions may be harmful. Although morphine is illegally produced and sold, it is also a regulated prescription medication which is often misused by young people (WHO, 2019).

Cannabis: Cannabis is the most commonly grown, trafficked and misused illegal drug. It accounts for half of all drug seizures globally, which occur in virtually every country.

Approximately 147 million people, or 2.5% of the global population, use cannabis annually, while only 0.2% use cocaine and another 0.2% use opiates (WHO 1997). In this decade, cannabis abuse has increased more quickly than that of cocaine and opiates. The most significant rise in cannabis misuse since the 1960s has been increasingly associated with youth culture, with users typically starting at a younger age compared to other substances (WHO, 2016).

Classification of Substances

Below is a table that outlines frequently misused substances, their categories, examples and effects;

TABLE 1

Classification	Examples	Substances	effects
Opioids	Narcotics	Heroin, morphine, oxycodone, fentanyl	Pain relief, feelings of euphoria, relaxation, respiratory depression, addiction.
Stimulants	Uppers	Cocaine, Amphetamines, methamphetamine, Ritalin	Increased energy, alertness, improved mood, elevated heart rate, anxiety addiction
Depressants	Downers	Alcohol, Benzodiazepines (Xanax, Valium), Barbiturates	Relaxation, anxiety reduction, sleep induction, impaired coordination, addiction
Hallucinogens	Psychedelics	LSD, Psilocybin, (mushrooms), DMT	Altered perception, hallucinations, mood fluctuation, anxiety paranoia
Canabinoids	Marijuana, Hashish	THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol)	Relaxation altered perception, mood enhancement, memory, memory and coordination impairment
Inhalants	Volatile substance	Glue, paint thinners, Nitrous oxide	Euphoria, disorientation, hallucinations, potential brain damage addiction
Anabolic Steroids	Performance enhancing drugs	Testosterone, stanozolol, Nandrolone	Muscle growth, increased strength, aggression, acne, cardiovascular issues
Synthetic substances	Designer drugs	Spice (K2), Bath salts (synthetic cathinones)	Unpredictable effects, anxiety, paranoia, hallucinations, increased heart rate

Source: Field Work 2026

Effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A

Young people of Obudu L.G.A who consistently misuse substances typically face a variety of issues, such as challenges in school, health problems (both physical and mental), strained relationships with peers and

interaction with the juvenile justice system. Moreover, some repercussions extend to their families, the entire Obudu as a L.G.A, and the society as a whole (Fareo, 2016). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders categorised the effects of substance misuse into two main types: short-term effects and long-term effects.

Substance misuse among young people in Obudu L.G.A poses serious physical health risks. Consequences include injuries from accidents (such as accidents), chronic disabilities, illnesses and the potential for overdose. Youths who misuse alcohol and substances are at a heightened risk of death due to suicide, homicide, road accidents and health-related issues (Aigbe, Diyeli & Segun, Helen & Agan & Egidi, Stephen & Achuen; 2021). HIV/AIDS transmission mainly occurs through contact with infected bodily fluids during sexual activities or by sharing non-sterile drug injection tools. It can also be transmitted from mother to their babies during pregnancy or childbirth. Many young people who misuse substances in Obudu L.G.A engage in risky behaviours that increase their likelihood of contracting HIV/ AIDS or other sexually transmitted infections. This includes using psychoactive substances, especially injectable ones, or making poor decisions and acting on impulse under the influence of mood-altering substances (Elemile, Bello & Akinwale, 2023).

In Obudu L.G.A, alcohol-related traffic fatalities among young people have risen sharply over the years as a result of high substance misuse rates. Between 2022 and 2024, over 2,000 youths aged 15 to 20 died in alcohol-related motorcycle and car accidents (Elemile, Bello & Akinwale, 2023). Other physical health effects include damage to vital organs (such as the liver, kidneys and heart), respiratory issues (like lung damage and bronchitis), cardiovascular problems (heart attack and stroke) and neurological impairments (Seizures and tremors). These examples highlight the devastating health consequences of substance abuse among adolescents.

Academically, young people's substance misuse in Obudu L.G.A is linked to several issues, including falling grades, frequent school absence and a greater likelihood of dropping out. According to Hawkins, Catalano & Miller (1992), studies show that a lack of commitment to education and increased truancy rates are associated with substance use in young people. The cognitive and behavioural changes faced by young people who use alcohol and substances usually hinder their academic success and also create difficulties for their peers in the learning environment (Elemile, Bello & Akinwale, 2023).

In the aspect of mental health, young people who struggle with mental health issues like depression, developmental delays, apathy, social withdrawal and other psychosocial challenges often have a connection to substance misuse. Young people in Obudu L.G.A who use substances are more likely to experience mental health problems compared to those who do not, including depression, conduct issues, personality disorders, suicidal thoughts, attempts and completed suicides. The widespread use of marijuana among young people has been found to negatively affect short-term memory, bearing and motor skills. Additionally, it also impacts motivation and emotional or psychosexual development (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023).

Young people struggling with substance misuse in Obudu L.G.A frequently experience isolation and stigma from their peers. Adolescents who consume alcohol and other substances often withdraw from school and community engagements, thereby denying their peers and community the beneficial contributions they could provide. Besides the personal challenges faced by these young people, substance misuse also leads to family crises and threatens various facets of family life, occasionally resulting in dysfunction within the family. Parents and siblings are significantly impacted by the substance misuse of the youths. Moreso, this kind of misuse can deplete a family's emotional and financial resources (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023).

How substance misuse can be remedied among young people of Obudu Local Government Area

The most effective way to remedy substance misuse is by utilising interactive techniques that promote engagement in learning about substance misuse while strengthening skills through activities like parent role-playing and peer discussion groups (Elemile, Bello & Akinwale, 2023). Interactive methods are effective in tackling substance misuse, especially among youths. These approaches actively involve individuals in the educational process, leading to improved comprehension and information retention. Some of these interactive methods include: group discussions that promote open communication and experience sharing; role-playing to practice refusal skills and assertive communication; educational games that highlight substance misuse and its

effects; peer-led workshops and activities that cultivate critical thinking skills to resist substance use (Adewumi, 2017). These techniques have been proven to enhance knowledge and attitudes regarding substance misuse, boost refusal skills and assertive communication, increase self-esteem and confidence, nurture positive relationships and social skills and decrease substance misuse and its associated issues (Adewumi, 2017).

To also help remedy substance misuse among the youths of Obudu L.G.A, the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, along with the ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) of health as well as health education, and religious institutions need to tackle the public health and social challenges caused by substance misuse with urgency and thoroughness. Key regulatory bodies such as the Nigeria Customs Service, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency and National Agency for Food and Drug Administration, which oversee the importation and regulation of banned substances and their distribution and use, must collaborate effectively. NAFDAC must enhance its oversight and control over the importation of food and substances (Elemile, Bellow & Akinwale, 2023).

Additionally, the Federal Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Cross River State Ministry of Health and the Directorate of Health Services, Obudu L.G.A should formulate and enforce a National Prescription Policy. Public awareness campaigns and advocacy must be conducted through print, social and electronic media, involving the dissemination of information at all levels to properly disseminate information about the overwhelming effects of substance misuse.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory, also called social cognitive theory, was propounded by Canadian-born American Psychologist, Albert Bandura in 1977. He suggested that it would be very challenging for individuals to learn solely from the consequences of their own actions. Thankfully, a significant portion of human behaviour is learned through observation and imitation (i.e. copying what other people around you do). This theory asserts that people learn by watching others and emulating their actions (Ushie & Jonah, 2022). The person carefully observes the action and commits it to memory. Next, they need to engage in a situation where this behaviour can be practised and must feel motivated to carry it out again. This theory highlights the significance of watching, modelling, and mimicking the behaviours, attitudes and emotions of others, as well as how environmental and cognitive factors work together to shape human learning and behaviour (Ushie & Jonah, 2022).

In the social learning theory, there are four mediational processes that influence the adoption of new behaviours. The first;

Attention: Attention is essential because simply encouraging a model does not guarantee that observers will engage with it (Bandura, 1972). The individual must focus on the behaviour and its outcomes and create a mental image of the behaviour. To imitate, it must capture our attention. We witness numerous behaviours every day, but most are unremarkable. Therefore, attention plays a vital role in determining whether a behaviour will inspire others to replicate it.

Retention: Bandura emphasised the importance of the retention process in imitation, where individuals mentally store a model's behaviour in a symbolic way. For effective imitation observers need to encode these behaviours as symbols, organising them into memorable templates (Saul, 2025). The ability to recall the behaviour is crucial – while it may be observed, failure to remember it can hinder imitation.

Motor Reproduction: This refers to the capacity to carry out the action that the model has just displayed. Every day we encounter various behaviours we wish to mimic, but often we are unable to do so due to physical limitations. While we may desire to replicate certain actions, our physical abilities may hinder us from doing so. Motor reproduction processes rely on internal symbolic representations of observed behaviour to inform our actions. An observer recreates a behaviour internally by using these symbols as a guide, regardless of whether it is demonstrated overtly (Saul, 2025).

Motivation: Finally, motivational and reinforcement processes pertain to the perceived positive or negative outcomes of imitating a model's behaviour, which can influence the likelihood of imitation. The desire to engage in the behaviour involves the observer weighing the potential rewards and punishments associated with it. When the perceived benefits surpass any perceived drawbacks, the observer is more inclined to imitate the behaviour. Conversely, if the observer does not find the vicarious rewards significant, they are unlikely to imitate the behaviour (Saul, 2025).

Since its introduction in the 1960s, social learning theory has been employed to understand substance misuse in young people. This theory posits that young people often turn to substance use as a result of various social influences, including peer pressure, strong social rewards and lack of appropriate social penalties (Winfree & Bernat, 1998). Social learning theory serves as a foundation for comprehending the elements contributing to and arising from substance misuse among young people. Social learning theory asserts that behaviours related to substance use are acquired through observation, imitation and reinforcement (Theodoras & Olga, 2014).

Substance misuse and abuse among young people, particularly students, continues to be a significant public health concern, frequently linked to serious academic, psychological and health issues. Theoretical frameworks of social behaviour highlight the role of peer behaviour as a modelling or normative influence. Various models, based on social learning theory, outline how social influences contribute to substance misuse, considering factors like social modelling, perceived norms, coping skills and cognitive variables such as self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

Although social learning theory is strong, it often faces criticism for being overly focused on nurturing and neglecting the individual's inherent traits. Critics argue that SLT overlooks the role of genetics in addiction. Some teenagers may naturally have a higher tendency to seek out dopamine, no matter what they see around them. Social learning theory assumes that young people are rational enough to understand "expectations" and "reinforcement". However, since the adolescent brain, especially the prefrontal cortex, is still maturing, impulsive behaviour like substance use often occurs without the careful thought that SLI suggests (Theodoras & Olga, 2014). Finally, critics say that social learning theory pays too much attention to a person's immediate social environment and overlooks larger issues such as poverty, systemic trauma and drug availability in their community. Even with the criticism, the social learning theory interventions focus on social skills training. Rather than simply telling kids, "Do not do drugs", counsellors help boost their "refusal self-efficacy". They provide young people with specific phrases and the confidence to say no while still fitting in socially.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a social survey research method, which means it gathered data in an organised way about people's opinions, feelings, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours regarding the "factors and effects of substance misuse among young people in Obudu L.G.A". This approach allows the researcher to make conclusions about the larger population based on a smaller sample without needing to ask everyone for their opinions. The population of the study consist of 250 youths, health workers and leaders of thought of Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Sample Techniques and Size

The study's sample include two hundred and fifty (250) participants who were randomly chosen from the Obudu Local Government Area. A breakdown of the sample size shows that one hundred and fifty (150), representing 60%, were youths, while fifty (50), mirroring 20%, were drawn from the health workforce, and fifty (50) respondents, representing 20%, were selected leaders of thought. This established the respective sample sizes.

The simple random sampling method was employed, along with balloting to ensure that each individual in the sample had an equal opportunity to be chosen for participation in the study. Based on the information provided above, the study was conducted using simple random sampling, which involved examining three hundred (300) youths, one hundred (100) health workers and one hundred (100) leaders of thought. For the youths, 150 slips indicated "Yes" and 150 indicated "No". Similarly, the health workers and leaders of thought had 50 "Yes" and

50 “No” slips each. Only those who selected “Yes” were adopted for the sample, while those who chose “No” were discarded.

The study utilised a questionnaire comprising 21 questions as its research instrument. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. SECTION ‘A’ included 5 demographic questions, while SECTION ‘B’ encompassed 16 questions focusing on the “Factors and Effects of Substance Misuse Among Young People of Obudu L.G.A”. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed among the selected population, including youths, health workers and leaders of thought. Additionally, interviews and documentary evidence were also used as research tools. The questionnaire's validity was established through expert consultation, while its reliability was assessed by examining the consistency of responses obtained from repeated pilot tests.

During data collection, 150 questionnaires were given to youths, while 50 each were administered to health workers and leaders of thought, resulting in a total of 250 questionnaires distributed. The data collected was initially presented in a table to display the different questionnaires from which the information was gathered. The analysis was primarily descriptive and includes statistical presentations in percentages and chi-square tests to highlight the respondents’ perspectives in each question.

RESULT

Results of the analysis of demographic data of respondents revealed that out of 250 respondents, 92 representing 36.80% were males, while 158 representing 63.2% were females. For age demographic characteristics of respondents representing 59 (23.60%) fall in the age of 18-25 years. Those between the age bracket of 26-35 years were 66 (26.40%). The table also mirrors that 52 (20.80%) were between the ages of 36-45 years. Respondents within the age of 46-55 years were 49, characterising 19.60%. While 24 (9.60%) respondents were in the age range of 56-65 years. In relation to the marital status of the participants, 96(38.40%) respondents were single, while 84(33.60%) were married. Moreover, 42 respondent mirrowing (16.80%) were divorced, and widowed respondents depicting 28(11.20%). Concerning the academic credentials of the 250 participants in the study, 24(9.60%) were FSLC holders, 72(28.80%) respondents were SSCE holders, 101(40.40%) respondents were holders of OND/NCE, and 6=53(21.20%) were HND/First degree holders.

Regarding occupation, 61 respondents representing 24.40% are civil servants, 45 respondents representing 18.00% are farmers, and 41 participants representing 16.40% are traders. Moreso, 40(16.00%) respondents are students, 38(15.20%) participants are unemployed and 25(10.00%) respondents had community roles. With respect to the religious affiliation of the 250 participants, 171 respondents characterizing 68.40%, are Christians, 6(2.40%) respondents are Muslims, while 73(29.20%) respondents were traditionalists.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

TABLE 2

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	92	36.8
Female	158	63.2
Total	250	
Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 25 years	59	23.6
26 – 35 years	66	26.4
36 – 45 years	52	20.8
46 – 55 years	49	19.6
56 – 65 years	24	9.6
Total	250	100.0
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	96	38.4
Married	84	33.6

Divorced	42	16.8
Widowed	28	11.2
Total	250	100.0
Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	24	9.6
SSCE	72	28.8
OND/NCE	101	40.4
HND/First Degree	53	21.2
Total	250	100.00
Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Civil servants	61	24.4
Farmers	45	18.0
Trading	41	16.4
Students	40	16.0
Unemployed	38	15.2
Community role	25	10.0
Total	250	100.0
Religious Affiliation	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	171	68.4
Islam	6	2.4
Traditionalist	73	29.2
Total	250	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2026

Data Presentation and Analysis

In this study, the gathered data was initially organised into a tabular format. Subsequently, it was analysed employing a percentage technique to accurately reflect the respondents' perspectives on the topics, as illustrated in Table 3 below;

TABLE 3

Question No	Questions	Yes	No	Total
7	Are then factors of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A	162	38	200
11	Does substance misuse have any effects on the young people of Obudu L.G.A	151	49	200

Source: Fieldwork, 2026

The analysis of the aforementioned data revealed that in response to question '1', a significant majority of 162 respondents, accounting for 81%, concurred that factors contributing to substance misuse among the young people in Obudu Local Government Area exist.

Conversely, 38 respondents representing 19% expressed disagreement with this assertion. Furthermore, regarding question '2', 151 respondents representing 76% confirmed that substance misuse has adverse effects on young people in Obudu L.G.A, while 49 respondents comprising 24% disagreed with the perspective.

Testing of Hypotheses

In this study, the proposed hypotheses are evaluated based on the data gathered from the previously mentioned 2000 respondents in order to elucidate the current state of the analysis.

Hypothesis One

H_0 : There are no factors contributing to substance misuse among the young people of Obudu L.G.A.

Question 1, which states that “Are there factors of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A? Was used for the analysis, and the result show in Table 4.

TABLE 4 Observed (o) and expected (e) frequency in respect of question 1

Variables	Yes(o)	(E)	NO(o)	(E)	Total
Youths	74	81	26	19	100
Health worker	46	41	4	9	50
Leaders of thought	42	70	8	10	50
Σ	162	162	38	38	200

Source: Questionnaire

To get the expected frequency = $CTxRT/GT = 162 \times 100/200 = 81$

Therefore, to test the 1st hypothesis at the 5% level of significance

$$= (C-1)(3-1)$$

$$(2-1)(3-1)$$

$$(1)(2) = 2df \text{ at } 0.005 = 5.99$$

$$X^2 = \sum (oi-Ei)^2/Ei$$

$$X^2 = (74-81)^2/81+(26-19)^2/19+(46-41)^2/41+(4-9)^2/9+(42-40)^2/40+(8-10)^2/10$$

$$X^2 \text{ Cal} = 0.60 = 2.58 = 0.61 = 2.78 = 0.1 = 0.4 = 7.07$$

$$X^2 \text{ Cal} = 7.07$$

Decision:- If $X^2 \text{ Cal}$ is greater than X^2 tabulated reject H_0 :

But if $X^2 \text{ Cal}$ is less than X^2 tabulated, accept H_0 : Therefore, since $X^2 \text{ Cal}$ 7.07 is greater than X^2 tabulated, 5.99, reject H_0 : thereby accepting the H_i : meaning that there are factors contributing to substance misuse among young people in Obudu L.G.A.

Hypothesis Two

H_0 :That there are no effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A.

H_i : That there are effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A

Question 2:Which states that there are effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A?Was used for the analysis, and the result is shown in Table 5 below;

TABLE 5

Observed (O) and Expressed (E) Frequency in respect of Question 2

Variables	Yes(o)	(E)	NO(o)	(E)	Total
Youths	68	75	32	25	100
Health worker	44	38	6	12	50
Leaders of thought	39	38	11	1	50
Σ	151	151	49	49	200

Source: Questionnaire

E.g To get the expected frequency = $CTxRT/GT = 151 \times 100 / 200 = 75$.

Therefore, to test the second hypothesis at the 5% level of significance = (C-1) (3-1)

(2-1)(3-1)

(1)(2) = 2df at 0.0005 = 5.99

$X^2 \sum = (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$

$X^2 \text{ Cal} = (68-75)^2/75 + (33-25)^2/25 + 44-38)^2/38 + (6-12)^2/12 + (39-38)^2$

$/38 + (11-12)^2/12$

$X^2 \text{ Cal} = 6.90$

Decision

If $X^2 \text{ cal}$ is greater than X^2 tabulated, reject H_0 ; but if $X^2 \text{ Cal}$ is less than X^2 tabulated, accept H_0 . Therefore, since cal 6.90 is greater than X^2 tabulated (5.99), reject H_0 ; therefore, accepting the H_i , meaning that there are effects of substance misuse among young people of Obudu L.G.A.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Following a thorough examination of the aforementioned data, it was identified that several factors contribute to substance misuse among the young people in Obudu Local Government Area. These factors include poverty, lack of awareness, unemployment, accessibility of locally produced alcoholic beverages, peer influence and family dynamics (Kamal, Shatie, Oltman, Mokhtar & Wahab, 2024).

Factors like poverty and limited access to resources make substance misuse among young people wretched especially in less privileged areas like Obudu. According to Keyes (2015), when there is economic hardship, young people are more likely to misuse substances and other drugs. A recent study by Karriker. Jaffe (2017) finds that young people from low-income families are more likely to misuse substances and other drugs compared to those from wealthier families. Moreso, _____ a research carried out by Kelly * White (2022) shows social factors, like peer pressure, greatly affect how young people try substance abuse when they are around their friends. Steigbarg & Monahan (2017) explained that social learning theory suggests that young people learn behaviour by watching others, copying them and receiving feedback from their surroundings. Therefore, when teenagers see their friends using substances, it can make such behaviour seem normal and encourage them to do the same. A survey study by Akers & Lee (2022) looked into how peer groups impact substance misuse among young people. The findings indicate that friends have a strong influence on substance misuse behaviour, which aligns well with the ideas of social learning theory.

Family dynamics and behaviour also play a big role in young people's substance misuse. Mogahed (2021) explained that negative childhood experiences, troubled family relationships and parents who misuse substances make young people more likely to get addicted to drugs. When families have problems, fighting often or struggle to communicate well, young people may be more at risk of misusing substances and getting involved in related activities (Bar, 2015). He also mentioned that when substance use is present in a family, whether it comes from parents or siblings it significantly _____ how young people think and act about substance use.

It was also identified that effects of substance misuse in young people of Obudu L.G.A include health, social and economic effects. As noted by Abdullah, Abdullah, & Ali (2020), the misuse of substances can lead to significant harm to essential organs, including the liver, lungs, heart and brain, while also heightening the likelihood of developing chronic illnesses and life-threatening conditions. For instance, prolonged alcohol consumption may result in liver cirrhosis, cardiovascular diseases and neurological disorders.

Certain substances such as cannabis and hallucinogens can cause psychotic symptoms and worsen existing psychiatric disorders in susceptible individuals. Psychosis and delusion may occur as a result of substance-induced changes in brain function and neurotransmitter systems (George & Koob, 2020). Furthermore, chronic substance abuse impairs cognitive functioning and decision-making capabilities, leading to deficits in attention, memory and problem-solving abilities. Young people who partake in excessive alcohol or substance consumption suffer from long-lasting cognitive impairments that adversely impact their academic performance and future opportunities (Volkow & Boyle, 2018).

As regards the effects of substance misuse on young people. Galex (2020) points out that abusing substances can harm relationships with others, break trust and cause conflicts among families and friends. People who are dealing with addiction often focus more on getting and using substances than on meeting their social responsibilities, which can result in them feeling lonely and pulling away from those they care about. Recent studies by Mogahed (2021) highlight that low substance misuse negatively affects family life, leading to higher levels of domestic violence, child neglect and disagreements at home. Abdullah, Abdullah & Ali (2020) also agree, noting that substance addiction disrupts personal relationships and social interactions, pushing young people away from their families, friends and communities.

Economically, the effects of substance misuse on young people, as highlighted by French (2017), are that the primary economic consequences of substance misuse among young people are the decline in productivity and human capital. Similarly, Galea (2021) articulated that such misuse results in substantial financial burdens on the criminal justice system encompassing costs associated with law enforcement, incarceration, and rehabilitation efforts. Substance misuse related offense constitute a significant portion of arrests, prosecutions and incarcerations within this demographic, contributing to overcrowded correctional facilities and sharing criminal justice resources. Furthermore, a study conducted by Bouchery (2020) delineates the economic impact of crimes related to substance abuse, which includes expens _____ to police, investigations and judicial processes.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions drawn from the study's findings indicate that there are several factors and consequences associated with substance misuse among the youth in Obudu Local Government Area. Substance misuse is a global issue that predominantly affects the young population. It serves as an indicator of deeper problems that require intervention, as it poses significant harm to the communities that depend on the quality of their human resources for development. The factors contributing to substance misuse pose distinct characteristics that can often be readily recognised. Furthermore, substance misuse has been observed to have detrimental effects on individuals' physical, psychological, and emotional well-being, both in the short term and over the long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After thoroughly investigation and analyzing the gathered data, it became imperative that the following recommendations be made;

The local government should hold town hall meetings, broadcast information on the radio in local languages and organise youth summits to inform people about the long-term risks and legal problems related to substance misuse. They can also work with community leaders and religious figures, who have a strong moral presence in areas like Obudu, to speak out against substance misuse.

The government should set up places where young people can learn skills such as tailoring, carpentry or digital technology. They need to partner with organisations like NAFDAC and NDLEA to keep an eye on pharmacies and shops that might be selling controlled substances without proper regulations. Furthermore, establishing counselling centres within primary healthcare facilities in Obudu will help provide mental health support for those already dealing with addiction. It is also important to include substance use education in the secondary school curriculum within the Local Government Area to reach students early.

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