

Psychological Variables Influencing Smoking among Adolescent Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oyo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the psychological factors influencing smoking among adolescent students in secondary schools in Oyo State. The major aim of this study was to proffer better ways of helping smokers especially adolescents in quitting the habit of smoking. Two hundred respondents were randomly selected from four secondary schools in Oyo State. Questionnaire was used to obtain data from the participants. The data obtained were analyzed using t-test and Pearson product moment correlation statistical tools. Three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant. It is recommended among others that parents, teachers, counselors and significant others should place more attention on the management of the adolescents. Parents should mend walls or strain relationship between them and their children. They should provide psychological support and guidance that will make the adolescents culturally accepted in the society and jettison western civilization adequately.

Keywords: *psychological factors, smoking habit, adolescent students*

INTRODUCTION

Given what is known today about the effects of smoking, it is hard to understand why people smoke. Lifelong users are understandably addicted; quitting is hard. But, why would anyone start smoking? The most disturbing is that while smoking is on the decline in adults, first user of cigarettes rose to 30% among teenagers between 1988 and 1996. Each day, more than 3000 young people become regular smokers (Shultes, 2001). Adolescence is a time for trying new things. Teens smoke for many reasons, curiosity, because it makes up or fit in. Teenagers often do not see the link between their actions to deny and the consequences tomorrow. They also have a tendency to feel indestructible and immune to the problems that others experience.

Cigarette smoking kills nearly about 430,000 people a year making it more lethal than automobile accidents, homicide and suicide and doing over doses and fires combined (USDHHS, 1994). It reduces smokers' life expectancy by 15 to 25 years and is the single most preventable cause of death. If smoking is preventable, then, everything should be done to help smokers quit (USDHHS, 1994). Since tobacco has long been a legally authorized doing for adults, one that has been widely used and tolerated, many people are surprised to learn how harmful its effects can be. Many tobacco users are reluctant to

admit how addictive the doing is. Even though many people have become not only physically addicted yet socially and economically they depend on the continued use of the dangerous substance. Smoking is a major public health problem around the world today. Among young people especially young boys and girls, the use of tobacco is on the increase. Youthful smokers often start a lifelong dependence that is very difficult to overcome. In most developed countries, many young people smoke. According to a survey in 11 countries more than 30 percent of male and female adolescents smoke and in six countries, more than 40 percent (NIDA, 1990). Once a pre-dominantly male habit, smoking recently has been increasing rapidly among females. The pleasure derived from smoking may be due as much to the social rituals that are associated with it as to the psychological effects.

Many of the young people who begin to smoke do so because they regard it as a symbol of adulthood. One therefore, begins to ask whether smoking is psychologically and socially determined. The researcher discussed the Psychological variables influencing smoking which includes self concept as the set of belief people have about themselves, family and parental influence which as environment can have significant impact on the up bringing of an individual. (Clayton, 1991). Peer group cannot be left out, as an influencing factor related to adolescent behaviour as supported by Brown (1996). Consequently, this study aimed at investigating the psychosocial variables influencing smoking among adolescents with the aim of suggesting a better way of helping smokers especially adolescents in quitting smoking.

However, teenagers often do not see the link between their actions today and the consequences tomorrow. The most import influences in starting to smoke are many, but most importantly family and friends. In family, where one or both parents smoke, children are twice as likely to be smokers more than are children of parents who are non-smokers. Many of the young people who begin to smoke do so because they regard it as a symbol of maturity. Therefore, this study will be useful to adolescents that are ready to quit smoking because of the effects of smoking on their mental and physical health. It will also be of help to professionals like teachers, counselors, nurses among others who are interested in treatment of addicts or dependent smokers. To achieve the aims of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant difference between adolescents' self concept/esteem and their smoking habit.
2. There is no significant difference between Adolescents' attitude from broken homes and intact homes, and their smoking habit
3. There is no significant difference between Adolescents' peer influence and their smoking habit

METHOD

The research design used in this study was the casual comparative or ex-post factor design. The researcher chose this because there is the need to find out the relationship between adolescents psychosocial factors and their smoking habit in Oyo State. The target population was all Students in Senior Secondary two (adolescent students) in Oyo State which was

classified into five zones namely Ibadan, Oyo Town, Ogbomoso, Oke-Ogun and Ibarapa. Since, it was strenuous to collect data from all targeted population, multi-stage sampling technique was adopted which allows the selection of samples through stages. The researcher adopted stratified random selection of one school from each zone having considered their proximity to one another. The researcher now randomly selected 200 adolescent students within the age range of 12-20 years and their age mean was 16-20 years comprising 114 boys and 86 girls from the five schools. The Smoking Behaviour Inventory is divided into 2 sections: 1 and 2. In section 1, there is a short introduction of the purpose of the inventory to the respondents. They are to supply personal information about sex, age, locality and family background. Section 2, seeks information on the influence of family, peer influence, self-concept/esteem, attitude and influence of the advertisement. It contains a 4-likert scale with which the respondents are to rate themselves on the terms in section 2 ranging from highly incorrect to highly correct.

The APDI consists of 30 items with scale "Least Like are" 12345 60 "most like me" and more of them was wording. To establish the reliability of the instrument, Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI) was originally propounded by Akinboye O. Julius in the year 1985 to cater for African Adolescents Problems and it is a Nigerian designed made Inventory that really suits the African context. APDI is highly recognized in Nigeria and in Africa since, it is reliable and consistent. APDI is valid having measured what is called content validity and it has been in use for years in Nigeria and African countries as a whole. T-test was used to test the differences in the factors of home type, sex and parents smoking behaviour. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test the home socio-economic status and Pearson Product moment correlation (PPMC) used to test relationship between self-concept and peer influence and smoking behaviour at 0.05 significant level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that there is significant difference between Adolescents self-concept and their smoking behaviour. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Adolescents' self concept and their smoking habits is rejected. Table 2 shows that there is significant difference between the smoking behaviour of adolescents from broken home and intact homes since the critical value is less than the calculated t-value. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Adolescents from broken homes and intact homes is therefore rejected. Table 3 shows that there is significant relationship between peer influence and smoking behaviour of adolescents. The adolescents prefer friends' discussions to parental instructions hence; peer groups provide opportunities for practicing new behaviours. The hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between adolescents peer influence and their smoking habit is therefore rejected. The finding of this study shows a significant relationship between self-concept and smoking behaviour of adolescent students. Franken (1994) states that there is a great deal of research which shows that self concept is the basis of all motivated behaviour. Debra (1993) presents that adolescents who are more depressed anxious or have a lower self-esteem may smoke

to feel better or fit with peers. In another study cited by Debra (1993), the initiation of smoking behaviour starts among seventh graders and discovered that youths who had experienced a major negative life event during the previous years were more likely to take up smoking. It is important to note that home is the first socializing agent for children and it is the behaviour of parents that can have impact on the upbringing of their children most especially when the father or mother is not present to give instructions and mould the behaviour of their children, when necessary. A study showed that stricter parents are more successful in preventing their children from starting to smoke than parents who relax rules. Neglected children or children with absentee parents were four times as likely to abuse drugs, drink and smoking more than children living with parents who are regularly present and who mandate a structured life style. Goddard (1990) confirms this when he asserted that clear links have been found between family structural adolescent smoking behaviour, that young people from lone parent families are more likely to smoke. Clayton (1991) also affirmed that parental smoking is an important factor that can influence smoking in adolescents. Further findings of this study indicated a significant relationship between peer influence and smoking behaviour of adolescents. This agreed with the findings of Ziner, Klwosterman and William (1994) which state that adolescents begin to smoke due to the influence of peers. Brown (1991) found that adolescents spend twice as much time with their peers as compared to their parents.

Table 1: t-test comparison of Adolescents self-concept and their smoking behaviour

| Variable | N | X | SD | R | P |
|--------------------|--------|---------|---------|------|-------|
| Self-concept | 202000 | 35.5250 | 15.4240 | | |
| Smoking Behaviours | 200 | 72.0600 | 19.4731 | 7276 | <0.05 |

Table 2: t- test Comparison of smoking behaviour of adolescents from broken and intact homes.

| Variable | N | X | SD | Cal - t | Crit - t | F | P |
|-------------|-----|---------|--------|---------|----------|-----|-------|
| Broken home | 126 | 62.9206 | 16.790 | | | | |
| Intact home | 74 | 87.6216 | 12.702 | 10.94 | 1.94 | 198 | <0.05 |

Table 3: Comparison of the relationship between smoking behavior and peer influence of adolescents

| Variable | N | X | SD | R | P |
|-------------------|-----|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| Smoking behaviour | 200 | 72.0600 | 19.4731 | | |
| Peer Influence | 200 | 36.0950 | 12.2530 | 0.73884 | <0.05 |

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Adolescent is believed to be a period of trying new things and factors that can aid or initiate bad and risky behaviour. Adolescent need the dynamic leadership which indoctrination alone cannot give. Adult should be prepared to show love, understanding and be able to guide the impressionable lines of our young ones for them to stay from bad influence such as smoking, pre-mental sex, examination malpractice and so on. It is therefore recommended that parents, teachers, counselors and significant others should place more attention on the management of the adolescents. Parents should mend walls or strain relationship between

them and their children. They should provide psychological support and guidance that will make the adolescents culturally accepted in the society and jettison western civilization adequately. Government should encourage the adolescents to know that they are leaders of tomorrow by providing them with security and jobs as at when due to reduce stress and frustration. Teachers should encourage the adolescent through exemplary life style to good behaviours. The teachers should correct the adolescents with love and not condemn them as if they cannot change for good. Counselors should be alive to their responsibilities with some show of care, love and understanding. They should be aware of their (counsellor) ethics and code of conduct most importantly confidentiality. Counselors should deal with the adolescents the way they will have confidence in them (counselors) and make referral when necessary.

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