



PARENTING STYLES AND SELF-ESTEEM AS PREDICTORS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

There has been an increasing database indicating that substance use and abuse among in-school adolescents in Nigeria is on the increase. Studies investigating psychological factors predicting substance abuse have given varying results. Therefore, this study examined parenting styles and self-esteem as predictors of substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey design was used while data were collected using validated scales from 306 in-school adolescents from five randomly selected secondary schools. Data collected were analyzed using t-test of independent sample and multiple regressions to test three hypotheses. The result revealed that parenting styles and self-esteem jointly predicted substance abuse among study participants. The implication of this study is that there is high prevalence of substance abuse among in-school adolescents which need to be addressed immediately.

Keywords: Parenting styles, self-esteem, substance abuse, in-school adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

The American Psychological Association (APA, 2023) defines substance abuse as a pattern of compulsive substance use marked by recurrent significant social, occupational, legal, or interpersonal adverse consequences. It is also the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances that include alcohol and illicit drugs (WHO, 2023). Substance abuse is a major public health issue affecting over 155 million people across the globe and has been implicated in the death of over 2.6 million young people from ages 10-24 yearly globally (UNODC, 2023). The Nigerian Drug and Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA, 2023) reported that 40% of Nigerian youths between 18 and 35 are deeply involved in substance abuse. This is a disturbing issue as many in-school adolescents are equally involved. Substance abuse among in-school adolescents has been reported to cause academic difficulties, health-related problems including mental health, poor peer relationships and involvement in juvenile criminal justice problems (Adeloye et al., 2019; Aroh et al., 2021; Idowu et al., 2018; Obadeji et al., 2020).

Some factors have been investigated as predictors of substance abuse among in-school adolescents with varying results. One factor considered in this study is parenting styles which refer to the pattern of behaviors, attitudes, and approaches that a parent uses when interacting with and raising their children (Sanvictores & Mendez, 2023). In her seminal work, Burinbaum (1995) identified four types of



parenting styles: Authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful styles. Authoritative parenting style has high level of parental control (demandingness) and high level of responsiveness (Baumrind, 1995). Demandingness is the extent parents control their children's behavior or demand maturity. Responsiveness is the degree to which parents accept their children, and how they are sensitive to their children's emotional and developmental needs (Sarwar, 2016). Authoritarian (disciplinarian) parenting style is high in parental control (demandingness) but low in responsiveness (Baumrind, 1995; Moitra et al., 2017). Permissive (indulgent) parenting style has low demandingness but high responsiveness. Finally, the neglectful (uninvolved) parenting style is both low in demandingness and responsiveness (Sarwar, 2016).

Studies on parenting styles and substance abuse among different samples and populations are mixed. For example, Yang et al. (2014) found that lack of parental encouragement contributed to a high level of substance use among in-school adolescents. Also, there was a high correlation between parental substance use and uninvolved parenting. Other studies have reported higher levels of substance abuse among uninvolved parents because there was lack of child expectation and punishment (Berge et al., 2016; Adalbjarnardottir & Hafsteinsson, 2001; Aunola et al., 2000). Conclusively, studies have found authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles to reduce substance use while permissive and uninvolved parenting styles to increase the likelihood of substance use among various study participants (Sawai & Yusof, 2019).

The second factor considered in this study is self-esteem which refers to the way individuals characteristically feel about themselves (Rosenberg, 1986). Self-esteem, global self-esteem or trait self-esteem has been interchangeably used as a relatively enduring trait across both time and situation. Individual high in self-esteem is characterized by a general love for oneself while individual low in self-esteem is characterized by uncertain (ambivalent) feelings toward oneself (Tao et al., 2012). Studies on self-esteem and substance abuse have produced mixed results. For example, Farzad et al. (2014) found self-esteem as a consistent predictor of substance abuse among adolescents and adult populations. Other studies have also found self-esteem as the most consistent predictor of the likelihood and extent of substance abuse among adolescents (Zamboanga et al. 2009; Kumpulainen & Roine, 2002; Wang & Veugelers, 2008). However, some studies have found self-esteem to have no influence on substance abuse among adolescents (James, 2003; Liem et al., 2010).

Although there have been studies on parenting styles and self-esteem on substance abuse in developed and other developing countries, specific studies that addressed parenting styles and self-esteem in developing countries such as Nigeria are sketches, hence the need to fill this gap in knowledge..

Purpose of the Study

Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to investigate parenting styles and self-esteem as predictors of substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido Local Government Area (LGA) in Oyo State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. to determine whether parenting styles will influence substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido Local Government Area in Oyo State, Nigeria.
2. to establish whether self-esteem will influence substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido Local Government Area in Oyo State, Nigeria.
3. to test whether parenting styles and self-esteem will jointly and independently predict substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido Local Government Area in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Background of the Research

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory: This theory posits that a child is influenced by a web of relationships due to the interactions of the parent (microsystem), the treatment centre when there is problem with addiction (mesosystem), the law/judiciary breaking the laws that would lead to punishment (exosystem), the societal beliefs and culture, breaking of societal norms (macrosystem) and



finally, the constantly changing external environment (chronosystem). The theory explains a framework for understanding how different relationships and environmental factors interact to influence individuals and families and by extension in-school adolescents' substance use and abuse behavior. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1994) has been applied to substance abuse mothers and their children demonstrate the bi-directional influence between the mother's substance use and the multiple systems in the family's environment.

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were tested:

H1. In-school adolescents with parents high in permissive and uninvolved parenting styles would report higher in substance abuse compared to parents high in authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles.

H2. In-school adolescents with low self-esteem would report significantly higher in substance abuse than in-school adolescents with high self-esteem.

H3. Parenting styles and self-esteem would jointly and independently predict substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido LGA.

METHOD

Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design where data were collected using validated questionnaires. The independent variables were parenting styles and self-esteem while the dependent variable was substance abuse. The study was carried out in Ido Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria.

The Participants

The participants for the study were 306 senior in-school adolescents where 184(60%) were males and 121(40%) were females. The in-school adolescents age ranging from 14 to 16 years ($M = 15.24$, $SD = 3.19$). In terms of their religious faiths, 113 (37%) were Christians, while 193 (63%) were Muslims. Finally, in terms of their ethnicity, 246(80%) were Yoruba while 60(20%) were classified as from other ethnic groups. A preliminary analysis of the prevalence of substance abuse among in-school adolescents was 17% which warranted this study.

Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling technique was used to select five public secondary schools: Apete Ayegun Community Grammar School, Community High School Arola, Community Secondary School Awotan, Community High School, Ologuneru and Community High School Eleni, Sonso, while convenience sampling was used to select in-school adolescents from the senior secondary school (SSS3) from each of the five schools for data collection.

Procedure for Data Collection

A formal Letter of Introduction was collected from the Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan to identify the researchers by the respective school principals. After the researchers have introduced themselves to the respective school principal, a teacher was assigned to them who took them to the classrooms to meet the students in their respective classrooms. The researchers introduced themselves to them and briefly explained the purpose of the study and sought and obtained oral consent from them. Specifically, they were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that they can decline to complete the questionnaires at any point they feel uncomfortable. A total of 310 were administered to students across the five schools which were collected on the spot. However, when the questionnaires were screened, four questionnaires were filled wrongly and were subsequently removed then left with 306 used for the analysis.



Research Instruments

Three instruments were used for data collection.

Substance and Choices Scale (SACS) was developed by Christie et al. (2007) to assess and monitor the use of alcohol and drug taking behavior, symptoms and impacts/consequences over the last month. The scale consists of 10-item presented on 3-point Likert's format ranges from Not true = 0, Somewhat true =1, Definitely true=2. Example of the item is: "I took alcohol or drugs when I was alone". It took between 5 and 10 minutes to complete. The developers calculated Conbach's alpha of 0.91 while in this study, it was 0.70.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) is a 10-item scale that determines an individual's overall sense of self value. The scale is presented in a 4-point Likert's format that ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Examples of items include: "I feel that I have a number of good qualities" and "I take a positive attitude toward myself". The RSE scale has a robust psychometric property. Rosenberg (1986) reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.93 which has been replicated by many studies. The Cronbach's alpha for the present study was 0.85.

Parental Demandingness and Responsive Scale (Paulson, 1995) was used to assess parenting styles. The scale consists of 7-item with two subscales: Demandingness and Responsiveness. The scale is presented on a 5-point Likert's format ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree scale. Sample items are: "My parent encourage me to talk with them about things" and "My parents praise me if I do things well". Higher scores indicate higher levels of demandingness or responsiveness (Paulson, 1994). The authors reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.75 while in this study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.83.

Data Analysis

IBM SPSS version 23 was used for data analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse data collected. Hypothesis one and two were tested using t-test of independent samples while hypothesis three was tested using multiple regression analysis. All hypotheses were accepted at a $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

RESULTS

H1: In-school adolescents with high parenting styles would report significantly higher on substance abuse than in-school adolescents with low parenting styles. This was tested using t- test for independent samples and the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. T-test for Independent Samples Showing Mean Difference between High and Low Parenting Styles on Substance Abuse among In-School Adolescents in Ido LGA

Parenting style	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
High	42	25.62			2.97	
Low	195	24.89			2.83	
					288	1.50 >.05

Dependent Variable: Substance abuse *Significant at $p < .05$*

Table 1 shows t-test of independent samples showing influence of parenting styles on substance abuse among in-school adolescents. The result indicated that parenting styles had no significant influence on substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido Local Government Area [$t(288) = 1.50, p > 0.05$]. Hence, the hypothesis was not accepted.

H2: In-school adolescents with low self- esteem would report significantly higher on substance abuse than in-school adolescents with high self- esteem. This was tested using t-test for independent samples and the result is presented in Table 2.



Table 2. T-test for Independent Samples Showing Mean Difference between High and Low Self-esteem on Substance Abuse among In-School Adolescents in Ido LGA

Self- esteem	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	p
High	137	26.34	3.07	288	4.52	<.05
Low	153	24.82	2.77			

Dependent Variable: Substance abuse *Significant at p <.05*

Table 2 shows t-test of independent samples showing influence of self-esteem on substance abuse among in-school adolescents. The results revealed that self- esteem had a significant influence on substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ibadan [$t(288) = 4.52, p < 0.05$]. Furthermore, the result indicated that adolescents with high self-esteem ($M = 26.34, SD = 3.07$) scored significantly higher on substance abuse compared to those with low self- esteem ($M = 24.82, SD = 2.77$). This confirmed the hypothesis.

H3: Parenting styles and self-esteem would jointly and independently predict substance abuse among in- school adolescents in Ido LGA. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis Showing on Predictive Influence of Parenting styles and Self Esteem on Substance Abuse among In-School Adolescents in Ido LGA

Predictor	β	t-value	p	R	R ²	F	p
Parenting styles	-.021	-.32	>.05	.65	.42	4.48	<.05.
Self-esteem	.061	3.92	<.05				

Dependent variable: Substance abuse. *Significant at p <.05*

Table 3 depicts multiple regression analysis of joint and independent predictors of substance abuse among in-school adolescents in the study area. The result showed that parenting styles and self-esteem jointly predicted substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido LGA [$R^2 = 0.42, F_{(2,224)} = 4.48, p < 0.05$]. This suggested that all predictors' variables accounted for 42% of the proportion of variance in substance abuse while the remaining 58% could be attributed to unexplained variables not considered in the study. Further analysis showed that only self- esteem independently predicted substance among in-school adolescents in Ido LGA ($\beta = 0.061, p < 0.05$). However, parenting styles did not independently predict substance abuse among study participants ($\beta = -0.021, p > 0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

The hypothesis that in-school adolescents with high parenting styles (authoritative and authoritarian) would report higher on substance abuse than in-school adolescents with low parenting styles (permissiveness and neglectful) was not supported. This implies that there was no significant difference in substance abuse among in-school adolescents as a result of the types of parenting styles. This finding contradicted Baumrind's (1991) finding that substance abuse was higher in children from homes where parents were supportive, lax, and unconventional. By extension, permissive parents were more likely to use illicit substances compared to authoritative parents. This finding also contradicted Sarvar's (2016) finding that children of permissive parents were at the risk of engaging in substance use. It is further argued that parenting styles among the in-school adolescents may not influence substance abuse because children from permissive homes lack parental intervention, rule setting, and discipline. As



confirmed by Asimvwe (2018) and Sawai and Yusof (2019), uninvolved parents do not supervise or monitor their children's activities, further increasing their risk for substance use.

The hypothesis that in-school adolescents with low self-esteem would report significantly higher substance abuse than in-school adolescents with high self-esteem among in-school adolescents in Ido LGA was supported. This means that in-school adolescents with high self-esteem were less likely to engage in substance abuse compared to in-school adolescents with low scores in self-esteem. This finding lent credence to previous results that self-esteem plays an important role in the engagement of adolescents in self-experimentation with substances such as alcohol, marijuana, and other dangerous substances that would affect their mental health (Mann et al., 2004). Specifically, this finding supported Kim and Davis' (2009) result that many in-school adolescents on referral to the treatment centres mentioned low-esteem as their reason for substance abuse. However, some studies (James, 2003; Liem et al., 2010; Withya et al., 2007) have found significant negative correlations between self-esteem and substance abuse among adolescents. This means that self-esteem was not the cause of substance abuse among in-school adolescents.

Finally, the hypothesis that parenting styles and self-esteem would jointly predict substance abuse among in-school adolescents in Ido LGA was confirmed which explained 42% of the variance in substance abuse among study participants. Also, self-esteem was found to independently predict substance abuse among study participants. This means that the more balanced the parenting styles and the higher the level of self-esteem demonstrated by in-school adolescents, the less likely they would engage in substance abuse. This result supported Bassey (2012) finding that parenting styles and self-esteem tend to predict substance abuse among students. Also, self-esteem was found to be a strong predictor of substance abuse among the study participants which corroborated with Zamboanga et al (2009) result that self-esteem consistently predicts the likelihood and the extent in-school adolescents engaged in substance abuse. Finally, the present study supported Radin et al. (2006) and Kumpulainen and Roine (2002) findings that low self-esteem significantly predicted substance use and abuse among youths including in-school adolescents.

This study has established that parenting styles and self-esteem jointly predicted substance abuse among in-school adolescents. However, self-esteem was the most significant predictor of substance abuse among study participants.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are put forward: The school authority should engage the services of trained clinical psychologists and other mental health professionals to monitor and evaluate in-school adolescents' early tendency to be involved in substance abuse. Also, both the government and other stakeholders in the educational sector should organize seminars, training and other educational programmes for the in-school adolescents to help them stay away from substance use and abuse.

Limitations and suggestions for further studies

Some features of the present study limited the conclusions that were drawn in this study. First, the study used self-reported instruments for data collection which was not free of response bias. Further study should incorporate observational and focus group interview methods to triangulate data collected from self-reported questionnaires. Second, five secondary schools from one LGA with a sample size of 306 in-school adolescents were used in the study.

Further study should include more secondary schools with more LGAs and increase sample size to allow for generalization of the findings to other LGAs. Finally, three variables were investigated in this study, further studies should incorporate coping strategies, cultural differences, home environment, self-efficacy, and locus of control.



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Ethics and Conflict of Interest

We conducted this study in accordance with the prescribed ethical rules and regulations governing research in Social Sciences. We ensure that that participation was voluntary. Also, we declare that there was no conflict of interest among the authors.

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