PSYCHOSOCIAL CORRELATES OF SUBSTANCE USE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

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OBJECTIVES:

1. To determine the socio-demographic factors associated with substance use among secondary school students in Ilorin.
2. To determine the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity among the students and its association with substance use.

BACKGROUND AND AIMS:

Substance use is a global phenomenon and a major public health concern across the nations of the world, particularly among adolescents. Identifying the various factors associated with adolescent substance use will help in preparing preventive programmes.

The present study was aimed to determine the psychosocial factors associated with substance use among secondary school students in Ilorin, as well as the association between substance use and psychiatric morbidity in this population.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Instruments used were a sociodemographic questionnaire, a modified WHO Students' Drug Use Survey Questionnaire, and the

General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) was used to determine psychiatric morbidity, using a cut-off score of 3.

RESULTS

Substance use was associated with older age groups, male gender, an unfriendly relationship with parents, being in the Commercial class (for senior secondary school students), and urban location of school. Reported religiosity did not confer protection against substance use. The overall prevalence of psychiatric morbidity was 22.1% (n= 442). Psychiatric morbidity was commoner among users of opioids, organic solvents, cocaine and hallucinogens, with current opioid users having ten times the odds of psychiatric morbidity.

CONCLUSIONS:

There is a need for collaboration among stakeholders, namely parents, government, health professionals, educational and religious institutions in curbing substance use.

Role models in regular and social media can be involved in talking to youths especially in urban areas where substance use appears to be more prevalent.

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