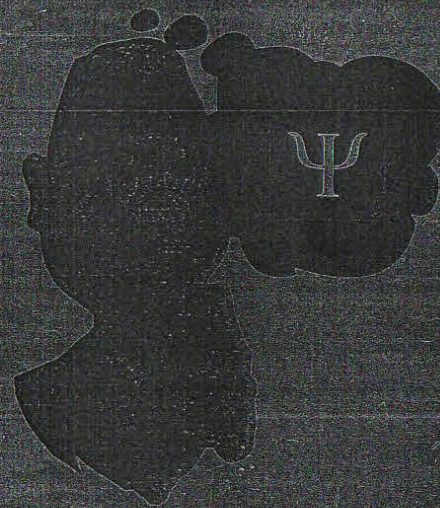


International Journal
of
**EMOTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
AND SPORTS ETHICS
(IJEPE)**



VOL. 16, (2014)
ISSN: 1119-7048

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ISSN: 1119-7048

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Vol. 16, June, (2014) ISSN: 1119-7048

Factors Influencing Substance Abuse Among Commercial Motor Drivers in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The impact of substance abuse among Nigerian Commercial drivers has been a hallmark of moral bankruptcy, economic waste and social degeneration. The phenomenon is submerging the worthwhile values of the society, spawning crime, spreading diseases killing commuters and destroying properties. This study therefore investigated the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State. The descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. A total of 207 respondents were purposively selected at different commercial motor parks in Lagos State across the variables of level of education and category of vehicle operating. The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire tagged "Factors Influencing Substance Abuse Questionnaire (FISAQ)". The instrument possessed reliability coefficient of 0.89. A research question and two null hypotheses were generated for the study. The measure of central tendency (mean) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics were used to analyze the data collected. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level. The findings revealed that respondents involve in substance abuse helps them to avoid some painful thoughts, helps them to cope with frustration, helped them to suppress anxiety and because they see others doing it. Respondents were different the factors that influence their involvement in substance abused based on educational level and category of vehicle operating. It was recommended that professional counsellors should educate commercial motor drivers on the likely dangers inherent in substance abuse. Counsellors should cultivate social skills such as assertiveness and decision making in commercial motor drivers to prevent peer influence.

Keywords: Factors, Substance Abuse, Commercial motor drivers, Over-The-Counter drugs, Illicit drugs

Introduction

The use of illicit substances and its consequences particularly on commercial drivers has become a phenomenon calling for attention in the society. The problems arising from the practice are numerous, leading to crackdown in many spheres of the society and in most cases claiming lives and maiming persons. Substance abuse can simply be defined as a pattern of harmful use of any substance for mood-altering purposes. In medical perspective, it could be described as the use of illicit drugs or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs for purposes other than those for which they are indicated or in a manner in quantities other than directed, (Buddy, 2014). One may define substance as a drug, chemical, or material which affects the thinking ability, and making one do things irrationally. Thus, any chemical, drug or material which when taken or introduced to a living organism can modify the state of equilibrium of that organism or one of its functions, is regarded as substance (World Health Organisation, 2000). It could be inferred from the various definitions that substance is any solid, liquid or gas properties that causes a change in a person's body, interest, emotions or perception. Abuse on the other hand, is the misuse; excessive use of illegal substances or misuse of prescribed substances.

According to Ojubanire (2013), the use of substances in manners that deviate from medical norms or socially acceptable pattern within a given society and culture is referred to as substance abuse. According to Adegoke (2013), there are three major categories of substance abusers; the experimenters, the floaters and the compulsive users. The experimenters are those abusing substance for the first time, the floaters are those that occasionally abuse substance while the compulsive users are the persons whose life depends on substances. As there are different categories of illicit drugs/substance so also are numerous reasons advanced by the abusers. An explanation of different categories and types of substance as well as their effects will provide adequate understanding on the discourse. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (2014) identified the following categories of substances: commonly abused Cannabinoids, Depressants, Dissociative Anesthetics, Hallucinogens, Opioids and Morphine Derivatives, Stimulants and other compounds.

In the category of Cannabinoids are hashish and marijuana. The hashish has its commercial street names as boom, chronic, gangster, hash oil or hemp and it is administered by swallowing or smoking. Its intoxication effects and potential health consequences include euphoria, slowed thinking and reaction time confusion, impaired balance and coordination, anxiety, panic attacks and addiction. The commercial/street name for marijuana include blunt, dope, ganja, grass, Mary Jane, Reefer, and Skunk. Its administration and effects are the same as in hashish. The specific substances in the

category of depressants include barbiturates, benodiazepines, methaqualone (Quaaludes), flunitrazepam (Rohypnol). The common features of these substances are mode of administration (swallowing and snorting) and intoxication effects (poor concentration, sedation, confusion, dizziness, impaired coordination, drowsiness and fatigue). Dissociative anesthetics include ketamine and PCP. The street names of Ketamine are Ketalar SV, special K and Vitamin K while PCP is called angel dust, boat, peace pill or love boat. These substances are either swallowed, snorted, injected or smoked. Some of the intoxication effects are numbness, impaired motor function, delirium, aggression, violence and panic. Hallucinogens include mescaline (buttons, cactus or mesc) and psilocybin (magic mushroom, shrooms or purple passion) with common intoxication features that include altered states of perception and feeling, persisting perception disorder (flashbacks), nervousness, chronic mental disorders and numbness. Opioids and morphine derivatives include codeine, fentanyl, heroin, opium and morphine. Codein may be called robitussin A-C, captain, body, schoolboy; heroin is referred as brown sugar, dope, skag, white horse or junk, and opium may be called paregoric, big O, gum or black stuff. Their intoxication effects include euphoria, sedation, unconsciousness, time drowsiness and coma. The category of stimulants includes substances such as amphetamine, ecstasy (MDMA), nicotine, and methamphetamine.

The use of illicit substance and Over-The-Counter (OCT) drugs have been on the increase as people seek to bar their minds from pressures around them by engaging in the act of substance abuse (Omaga, 2003). In most cases the resultant effects include exhibition of violent behaviour against individuals and constituted authority. Some individuals indulge in substance abuse to "pep" themselves up, boost their confidence and make them likeable. Others indulge in the act in order to bring them into a world of mind expansion and respond to peer pressure. According to a nationwide survey study of high school students by Sand (2000), 65% used substances to have good time with friends, 54% wanted to experiment to see what it is like, 20% to 40% used it to alter their moods: to feel good, relaxed, relieve tension and overcome boredom. It could be inferred from various studies that factors responsible for substance abuse include: defective personality, such as chronic inadequacy and geocentricism; preference for self-medication; disillusionment; enjoyment of induced euphoria; pathological family background, such as broken home; prevalence of substances in the community; ignorance of the dangers of illicit substance; and alienation to mention a few (Basso & Bornstein, 2000; Quimette & Brown, 2003; Ojubanire, 2013).

The trend of substance abuse among commercial drivers has become a serious concern to individuals in the society because of its dire

consequences. The intake of the various types of illicit substance has much debilitating effects particularly on commercial drivers. These effects range from physical to psychological. A commercial driver, under the influence of hard drugs could become intoxicated and fail in his motor dexterity (movement of the body). Since the major activity of the commercial driver is to transport goods and human beings, inability to adequately manipulate his body could significantly lead to accident and lost of lives and properties. The psychological effects of substance abuse on commercial drivers include wild mood swings, depression, anxiety and violence. Others could be hallucinations, confusion, desire to engage in risky (driving) behaviour, euphoria, inadequate body manipulation to mention a few.

Despite the consequences of substance abuse, many abusers usually advance reasons to justify their involvement in the practice. According to Okeowo (2003) some of the factors responsible for substance abuse among students are need to meet parents' expectation on academic performance, need to complete favourably with others and desire to gain popularity. However, the nature of commercial motor drivers is peculiar because of much demand on them especially from the passengers, family members, law enforcement agents, professional colleagues and union and desire to meet personal needs. These factors may predispose commercial drivers to substance abuse as coping strategy. This study considered Lagos State because of its records of substance abuse among commercial drivers in the city. An instance of such was a pandemonium that broke out in the Mosafejo, Oshodi-Isale Area of Lagos State on February 24, 2015 when members of Transport Workers (Commercial drivers) clashed because of an order to stop the smoking of hemp in the motor parks (Folarin, 2015). Such reaction to the order and the violence that ensued depict the disposition of commercial motor drivers in Lagos to substance abuse.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of substance abuse has reached an alarming rate that government was prompted to establish the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency NDLEA to stem the trend. Despite this effort, the problem of substance abuse, according to Ojubanire (2013), has considerably escalated. The study found that the trend has significantly shifted from educational institutions to public places particularly the motor parks. This practice put great fear in the minds of individuals who purpose to patronize commercial drivers because of the risk attached: they are sometime under the influence of hard drug and vulnerable to road mishaps and serious accidents. Sand (2000) found that one of the most important factors that influence drinking pattern of teenagers is the social environment.

Okeowo (2003) accounted for rapid socio-economic development and urbanization as being the causes of substances abuse among secondary school students in Alimosho Local Government Area of Lagos state. In another study, Omege (2003) found that the desire to experiment is the major driving force that influenced adolescents to engage in substance abuse. Ojubamire (2013) did not find differences in the causes of substance abuse among commercial drivers as perceived by law enforcement agents in Ilorin metropolis based on age, religion and marital status. The present study therefore investigated factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State.

Research Questions

Q1: What are the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State?

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State based on level of education.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State based on category of vehicle operating.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey method. Since it was not possible to obtain accurate population of the respondents because of fluctuating nature of members of the profession, a total of 207 respondents were purposively selected to participate in the study. They were sampled in different motor parks in Lagos State. The respondents were stratified based on the variables of the study (level of education and category of vehicles operating). A questionnaire type of instrument was used titled "Factors Influencing Substance Abuse Questionnaire (FISAQ)". The instrument has two sections: A and B, which sought demographic data and factors influencing substance abuse respectively. It was subjected to the test-retest method of reliability. The reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained which qualified it to be used. The questionnaire forms were distributed to the respondents while the researchers explained the content for adequate understanding. The measure of central tendency (mean score) and Analysis of Variance Statistics were used to analyse the data. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education and Category of Vehicle Operating

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Level of Education		
Primary Education	32	15.45
Secondary Education	157	75.85
Post Secondary Education	18	8.70
Total	207	100.00
Category of Vehicle Operating		
Car	61	29.47
Bus	98	47.34
Truck	29	14.01
Trailer	19	9.18
Total	207	100.00

The results in Table 1 shows that respondents who have secondary education constituted the largest proportion (75.85%) while those with education at post secondary school constituted the least (8.70%). Respondents operating buses constituted the largest proportion (47.34%) while those operating trailers constituted the least (9.18%).

Research Question: What factors influences substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State?

Table 2: Mean Scores of Factors Influencing Substance Abuse among Commercial Motor Drivers

Factors: I involve in using substance	Means
because it helps to avoid some painful thoughts	3.03
because it helps to cope with frustration	3.01
it helps to suppress anxiety	2.97
because I see others doing it	2.93
because they serve as stimulant	2.89
because it makes men feel important always	2.83
because of the pressure from friends	2.77
because it helps to create fear in other people	2.69
in order to protect ego	2.55
because it makes people to respect me	2.52
because it makes me work for many hours	2.49
because they do not portend dangers	2.46
because they are always available	2.41
because they are cheap to purchase	2.38
because they make me distort unpleasant memory	2.37
because they protect me against unpleasant weather (cold)	2.32
because it suppresses fatigue	2.27
because it make me cope with isolation	2.23

The results in Table 2 provides answer to the main research question which sought to establish the factors that influence substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State. Ten out of the 18 items depict the factors influencing substance abuse among the respondents because the mean scores of the items are above the cut-off (2.50) which was used to identify items that are significantly added to. Nevertheless, "I involve in using substance because it helps to avoid some painful thought" has the highest means score while "because it helps to cope with frustration" and "because it to suppress anxiety" followed with mean scores of 3.01 and 2.97 respectively. On the other hand "it helps to suppress anxiety has the least mean score of 2.23, which fell below the cut-off print.

H₀₁: *There is no significant difference in the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers in Lagos State based on level of education.*

Table 3: ANOVA Result on Factors Influencing Substance Abuse among Commercial Motor Drivers based on Level of Education

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Squares	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Groups	402.366	2	201.183		
Within Groups	3072.444	204	15.061	8.37	3.00
Total	3474.810	206			

* = Significant, $p < 0.05$

The result of the ANOVA in Table 3 reveals that the hypothesis was rejected since the calculated F-ratio is (8.37) greater than the critical F-ratio (3.00) at 0.05 level of significance $F(df = 220 (204) = 8.37, p < 0.05$. There is therefore significant difference in the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers based on level of education.

Table 4: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) used as the Post-hoc test to Determine the Direction of the Difference

Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Group	Level of Education
A	26.71	32	1	Primary
B	22.97	157	2	Secondary
C	16.04	18	3	Post-Secondary

The results of the DMRT indicate that all the groups are different from each other in the factors influencing substance abuse. However, respondents having primary education, with the highest mean score of 26.71 are more influenced followed by secondary education and post-secondary education (22.97 and 16.04) respectively.

H₀₂: *There is no significant difference in the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers based on category of vehicle operating.*

Table 5: ANOVA Results on Factors Influencing Substance Abuse among Commercial Drivers based on Category of Vehicle Operating

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Squares	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Groups	37.095	3	12.365		
Within Groups	1071.818	203	5.206	4.46*	2.60
Total	1108.913	206			

* = Significant, $p < 0.05$

The result of ANOVA in Table 5 indicates that the hypothesis was rejected since the calculated F-ratio (4.46) is greater than the critical F-ratio (2.60) at 0.05 level of significance $F(df = 230) = 4.46, p < 0.05$. Thus, there is significant difference in factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers based on category of vehicle operating.

Table 6: DMRT used as post hoc test to Determine the Direction of the Difference

Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Group	Level of Education
A	21.09	98	2	Bus
B	19.81	19	4	Trailer
C	16.40	61	1	Car
D	16.06	29	3	Truck

The results reveal that groups 2 and 4 are different from 1 and 3 which are similar to each other. Thus group 4, (the commercial motor drivers operating buses has the highest mean (21.09), which depicts that the group is most influenced by the factors contained in the instrument.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that the respondents are influenced to engage in substance abuse in order to avoid some painful thoughts, as a means of coping with frustration, in order to suppress anxiety and because they see others doing it (a form of bad modeling). Other factors

are that substance serves as stimulant, makes respondents feel important always, pressure from friends, creating fear in others (for personal protection) and protecting ego. These factors alluded to by respondents are basically psycho-social in nature. Sand (2000) has earlier established a similar finding that social environment is the major factor influencing patterns of drinking among teenagers. However, Okeowo (2003) found rapid socio-economic factor as being the major cause of substance abuse among in-school adolescents. The commercial motor drivers, unlike adolescents, are likely to be battling with psychological and social problems resorting from the pressure from passengers and thereby be influenced to use substance in order to alter their brain and mind functioning as a coping strategy.

There was significant difference in factors influencing substance abuse among commercial drivers in Lagos State based on their level of education. The findings revealed that respondents with primary education level are most influenced by the factors identified, followed by secondary education. Ojubanire (2013) did not find significant difference in the perception of law enforcement agents on causes of substance abuse among commercial drivers in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of educational qualification. The dissimilarity between the findings of the previous and present studies could be as a result of difference in term of the nature of respondents. The finding also revealed that significant difference in the factors influencing substance abuse among commercial motor drivers was based on the category of vehicle operating. However, commercial bus drivers are most disposed to the factors identified in this study while trailer drivers came next. By implication, the category of vehicle operating determined how much the factors contained in the questionnaire influenced respondents' involvement in substance abuse. Omege (2003) have earlier established a contrary view that adolescents irrespective of any variable are driven to involve in substance abuse by the desire to experiment. This would not be applicable to commercial motor drivers because the category of vehicle operating suggests the task involved and factors that could set in to influence substance abuse among them.

Implications for Counselling

The findings revealed that commercial motor drivers whose job involves transporting people and goods are influenced to engage in substance abuse by some factors that are both psychological and social. This implies that the responds for this study required skills to cope with frustration, anxiety, painful thoughts and bad modeling. It requires the intervention of professional counsellors in order to develop such skills in the commercial motor drivers. Also, the findings reveals that level of

education is a determinant of how much the respondents are influenced into engaging in substance abuse, which points to a gap yet to be filled by counselling professionals. There could be educational programmes for commercial motor drivers to upgrade their knowledge and acquisition of higher education. Counsellors can assist to organize private study for commercial motor drivers and equally enlighten them on dangers inherent in substance abuse.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that professional counselors should endeavour to organize enlightenment programmes for commercial drivers in motor parks on dangers of substance abuse in order to discourage the practice. Also, counsellors should teach the commercial motor drivers assertiveness skill so that they could politely reject been influenced by colleagues. There should be synergy among Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON), Transport Workers Unions and National Drug Law Enforcement Agents (NDLEA) to come to terms and organize constant talks in the motor parks on how to prevent being influenced to engage in substance abuse. Attention should be particularly focused on commercial motor drivers who have primary education and those operating buses and trailers since they are most influenced by the factors mentioned in this study.

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