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The Effects of Substance Abuse and Youth Involvement in Property Crime in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa area of Bauchi Metropolis, Nigeria. The objectives of this research is to examine the nature of substance abuse among youths, identify the causes leading to their involvement in property crime, assess the effects of substance abuse, explore factors influencing drug use, and provide solutions to combat the problem. The study provides insights in to the socio-economic factors driving substance abuse and its contribution to property crimes such as theft and burglary. The research adopts a quantitative approach, using a survey design. The population consists of 800 youths aged 18 to 35 in Yelwa, and a sample size of 334 was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires, containing both demographic information and targeted questions to assess the relationship between substance abuse and crime. The

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findings revealed that substance abuse, particularly involving marijuana, alcohol, and inhalants, is prevalent among youths and closely linked to property crimes. The key contributing factors include peer pressure, unemployment, and socio-economic hardship. The study highlights the detrimental impact of substance abuse on both individuals and the community, with increased property crimes and insecurity in Yelwa. The study concludes that comprehensive interventions are needed, including community awareness programs, stronger law enforcement, and youth rehabilitation initiatives. The study recommended that implementation of family-based interventions, youth engagement programs, and greater policy focus on substance abuse prevention at local and national levels.

Keywords: Involvement, Poverty, Property Crime, Substance Abuse, Youth

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of drug and substance abuse has become a contemporary global social problem that is found among youth (males and females) in many countries. In 2014, it was estimated by the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population division that between 165m and 350m people aged 15 – 64 had used an illicit substance at least once. In the developing countries like Nigeria, the use of drugs/substances has been increasing dramatically over the years. Very disturbingly, large number of youth in Nigeria is engaged in drug/substance and other related abuses (Ojo, Osadolor, &Lawani, 2022).

Drug abuse is the use of an illicit drug such as heroin, or a licit substance, such as barbiturates, outside of medical supervision (Borgatta and Borgatta, 2016). The substance is taken to modify or maintain a mood and may be potentially harmful to the person or society. Thousands of years ago, people were using natural substances such as plants and herbs for purposes as diverse as pain relief, healing or to create feelings of wellbeing, energy or relaxation. Many of these substances are now considered to be illegal drugs (EOjo, Osadolor, &Lawani, 2022). The history of opium (heroin) use goes back thousands of years. As long ago as 5000 BC, the Sumerians were using opium and it even had its own ideogram, Hul Gil, meaning "joy plant". By the early 1990s, heroin was available worldwide. The drug lords of Colombia and Burma had begun to behave more like

independent entrepreneurs and considered possible marketing opportunities for their drugs. They also started to take bold initiatives to expand the markets for their drugs. Importantly, they were able to both produce and export vast amounts of heroin, due to their immense wealth and power and they could make use of established criminal organizations such as the Mafia, who were able to act as brokers for these transactions (Omotayo&Akinsulore, 2020).

The Yelwa area of Bauchi Metropolis, akin to many urban centers in Nigeria, confronts profound socio-economic challenges exacerbated by widespread substance misuse among its youth demographic (Omotayo&Akinsulore, 2020). Substance abuse not only imperils individual health and well-being but also acts as a potent catalyst for various forms of criminal activity, prominently property crime (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2021). Youth involvement in property crime not only imperils community safety but also imposes significant burdens on law enforcement and judicial systems. The stimulating effect of the drug increases breathing and this enabled laborers to work harder, with increased stamina in the thin air at high altitude. It also reduced feelings of hunger, fatigue and promoted a sense of well-being. It was even used as local anesthetics. In America, the Pure Food and Drug Act became law in 1906 and it then became illegal to buy either in stores or by mail order, products containing cocaine (including morphine and heroin) unless they were clearly labeled. Drug abuse is currently a universal problem; it is no longer isolated within cultural groups and geographical regions, but has permeated various national and continental boundaries. The problem is so worrisome that efforts to curb its spread and possibly eradicate it have assumed a diplomatic dimension, resulting in multilateral and bilateral treaties (Agwubike, 2023).

In Nigeria, for example, the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) was established to regulate drug and other related activities. With the return of Nigeria to democracy, the phenomena of drug/substance use, misuse, abuse, and dependence have become very pronounced among youth, especially during political rallies, campaigns and elections. The continuous intake of drugs and substances lead to undesirable consequences. Substance/drug abuse plays a major part in illness, premature death and traffic accidents (Agwubike, 2023).

Recent research reveals a disquieting trend where substance abuse, encompassing the consumption of illicit drugs and alcohol, correlates markedly with escalated incidents of

property crime among young Nigerians. Studies indicate that the use of substances such as marijuana and codeine among youths in urban settings like Yelwa increases their susceptibility to engage in criminal behavior, driven by factors including economic disenfranchisement, peer pressure, and deficient familial and societal support structures (Nkire, Ibekwe, &Agwubike, 2023).

In other studies, family and peer influence, individual characteristics including behavior and personality can be considered as factors that influence children and adolescents to engage in drug/substance abuse (Brook, Whiteman, Gordon, & Cohen, 2014). There are several ways for youth to be at-risk of drug/substance abuse. Fatoye & Morakinyo (2022) cited that researchers have identified a number of demographic and behavioral characteristics of youth that contribute to their risk of involvement with drug/substance abuse. These include ethnic minority status; aggressive, antisocial behavior; difficulties in school and school failure (including educational disabilities). These risk factors are common denominators in the backgrounds of youth today.

Moreover, the cyclical nature of substance abuse and criminal recidivism among youths underscores the urgency for targeted interventions that not only address immediate law enforcement concerns but also prioritize long-term rehabilitation and social reintegration (Nkire, Ibekwe, &Agwubike, 2023). The lack of coordinated efforts between health, education, and law enforcement sectors exacerbates these challenges, hindering the development of holistic approaches to substance abuse prevention and crime reduction in urban communities. In light of these problems, this study seeks to examine substance abuse and youth involvement in property crimes in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Many of today's youth face conflicts that they can barely handle in a very young age. Factors such as modernization have brought many social changes in the society. Children are being taken for granted, usually by parents who both work and have no time for their children. The issue of broken family, peer pressure, other pressing issues that would make a youth feel inferior of him/her an addendum. The search for self–expression among the youth has often led to deviant practices such as joining gangs, engaging in pre-marital sex and engaging in drug/substance abuse. Spooner (2005) stress that growing numbers of children are being neglected, abused, and ignored; and that without some positive steps, the dark spectra of generational trouble could become real. It is against the above background

that this paper focuses on understanding the issue of drug/substance abuse among youth, the types, factors and the implications on the socioeconomic and political development of the country. Despite heightened awareness of the detrimental effects of substance abuse on youth behavior, a critical gap persists in comprehending the intricate dynamics and causal pathways that link substance abuse to property crime in local contexts such as Yelwa, Bauchi Metropolis (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2000).

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between substance abuse and youth involvement in property in Nigeria. The specific objective of the study includes;

i. To examine the nature of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria.
ii. To find out the causes of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria.
iii. To find out the effect of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria.
iv. To know the factors that influence individuals in substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria.
v. To provide solution to the problems of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria.

Research Questions

i. What is the nature of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria?
ii. What are the causes of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria?
iii. What are the effect of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria?
iv. What are the factors that influence individuals in substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria?
v. What are the solution to the problems of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria?

Research Gap

The research gap identified is the insufficient exploration of the interplay between substance abuse and youth involvement in property crimes within the specific socio-economic and cultural context of Nigeria. While existing studies broadly address the general relationship between substance abuse and criminal behavior, they often lack a detailed examination of how unique local factors such as economic conditions, cultural practices and family dynamics influence this relationship. Additionally, there is a notable scarcity of research focusing on the specific substances most abused by youths in Nigeria and their direct link to property crimes. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing targeted interventions and policies that are culturally and contextually relevant, enhancing the effectiveness of crime prevention and substance abuse treatment programs in the region.

Literature Review

Concept of Substance Abuse

Substances are any material other than food which due to their chemical nature affects the structure or functioning of the living organisms especially psychologically (Szasz, 1975). Examples of substances are heroin, cocaine, inhalants, solvents, glues, tube repair solution, petrol, gasoline, spot removers, nail polish, nail polish remover (dissolver), spirit (mentholated spirit). Others are amphatemines (ajigarau), syrups like benylyn, cleaning fluids, bula (robin blue), kashinkadangare, burkutu, pito, zakami, kolanut, hankufa, dankamaru, angur, gagai, etc.

Research studies on drug abuse and criminal behavior among youth carried out in Kano and Sokoto states identified some of the causes of drug abuse and criminal behavior among youth in the two states; Abasiubong et al 2014 in their study on pattern of psychoactive substances use in Kano, identified parental neglect, and traditional attachment to some social drugs during ceremonies such as kola nut, alcohol and palm wine. Garba 2003 added other factors such as; to relieve stress, and enhance performance and man-hour jobs; Siro 2014 cited other factors as peer influence, poverty and unemployment. This was supported by Mahfuz 2015 and Rugayya 2002 in their studies of drug abuse among adolescents and youth in Kano state.

Substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs, characterized by a compulsive pattern of consumption.

This abuse often leads to significant adverse consequences for individuals and society, such as impaired functioning, deteriorated health, and strained social relationships (Volkow et al., 2023). It encompasses a range of behaviors from occasional misuse to chronic addiction, and it can result from various factors including genetic predisposition, psychological issues, and socio-environmental influences (Meyer et al., 2022).

In trying to get an overall picture of drug/substance abuse in the society today, reference is made to knowing and investigating the types of drugs/substances in use. Some of the drugs/substances put users to sleep while some wake them up. Several methods have been used in classifying drugs. Some methods are based on compliance with laws where drugs are classified as legal or illegal, example; alcohol, tobacco, coffee, hypnotics, sedatives, inhalants, etc.; and opiates cannabis, cocaine, synthetic drugs, hallucinogens, etc. respectively. There has also been a differentiation between soft and hard drugs, noting that the soft-hard distinction is rarely used because of the rise to erroneous interpretations.

Causes of or Reasons for Drug/Substance Abuse: The causes are complex involving many issues some of which are situated or revolve around the individual, some of which are external to the individual and are situated within the society or the environment where the individual resides. As such, the factors associated with drug/substance abuse can be explained in terms of the various social, economic, political, legal and cultural forces existing within the society.

Most of these factors determine the types and patterns of drugs/substances that are being abused. In Nigeria, getting precise statistical data of the number of drug abuse cases, misuse or addicts routinely proves difficult. However, findings have shown that there is no single factor that is solely considered to be responsible for drug/substance abuse; rather the combination of two or more factors is scientifically considered as responsible for the behavior. The contributing factors could be social-cultural, biological, psychological, technological and environmental in nature (Siegel, 2004).

The Consequences and Implications of Drug/Substance Abuse

Drug/substance abuse poses a very big problem in the world today; it is ruining the lives of millions of people both in adolescent and general population. The problem has spread at a high rate and has penetrated every part of the world. In effect, it could be said that no society has been spared from the devastating havoc caused by drug and substance abuse. While drug/substance abuse has implications on the socio-economic and political

development of a society or a nation like Nigeria, it is notable that there are many adverse consequences, which affect the user, immediate family and the entire society. The adverse consequences can be divided into broad categories, namely, social, economic, political, physical, psychological, medical and physiological. Socially, the consequences on the user, family and the society or nation are devastating. The preponderance of youth addicts roaming the streets negatively affects the economy as a result of low productivity and shortage of efficient manpower in Nigeria's institutions.

Concept of Youth Involvement in Property Crime

Youth involvement in property crime refers to the engagement of young individuals in illegal activities that involve the theft, damage, or destruction of property. This phenomenon is influenced by various factors including socio-economic conditions, family dynamics, and peer influences. Research indicates that youths involved in property crimes often come from backgrounds marked by poverty, family instability, and lack of supervision (Johnson et al., 2024). Such involvement can manifest in different forms, including burglary, vandalism, and larceny, and is frequently driven by a combination of economic necessity and psychological factors (Williams & Andrews, 2023).

Relationship between Substance Abuse and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

The relationship between substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime is well-documented in criminological research. Substance abuse can significantly heighten the likelihood of engaging in criminal activities, including property crimes; due to the psychological and behavioral changes it induces (Klein et al., 2023). The need for financial resources to sustain substance use often drives youths to commit property crimes, making it a direct consequence of addiction-related financial pressures (Brown & Williams, 2024). Additionally, substance abuse can impair judgment and reduce impulse control, leading to an increased propensity for engaging in illegal activities (Carter et al., 2023).

In Nigeria, this relationship is particularly pronounced due to the socio-economic challenges and limited access to mental health and addiction services. The interplay between substance abuse and property crime among Nigerian youths is a critical area of concern for policymakers and social workers, who must address both issues concurrently to effectively mitigate their impact (Olaniyan et al., 2023). Strategies such as integrated intervention programs that address both substance abuse and criminal behavior can be more effective in reducing youth involvement in property crimes (Okoro et al., 2024).

Efforts to break the cycle of substance abuse and property crime require a holistic approach that includes education, community engagement, and supportive interventions. By focusing on prevention and rehabilitation, and addressing the broader socio-economic factors that contribute to both substance abuse and criminal behavior, it is possible to reduce the prevalence of property crimes among youths and improve their overall well-being (Afolabi et al., 2024).

METHODS

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design, employ survey research as the primary method for data collection. The survey method is particularly appropriate for this study as it enables the collection of data from a large number of respondents, facilitating the examination of trends and patterns in the perceptions of the target population regarding sports journalism and athlete image.

Population and Sample technique

The population of this study encompasses youths aged 18 to 35 years residing in Yelwa Area of Bauchi metropolis, Nigeria. Hence 800 youths in Yelwa area of Bauchi State cover the population. Sample size can be regarded as the subset of the population that can be used to represent the entire population while the method or techniques adopted in choosing the sample size from the population is the sampling techniques. Therefore, a convenient sampling technique was used in choosing the youths aged 18 to 35 years residing in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria while the sample size for this study is 334 and the sample size was obtained using the formula of Taro Yamene as show below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n=Sample size

N=Population Size

e=Significant level of error (0.05) or 5%

Where; N=and e = 0.05 or 5%

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)2} \qquad n = \frac{800}{1+800(0.05)} \qquad n = \frac{800}{1+800(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{800}{1 + 1.95} \qquad \frac{800}{+ \ 2.95}$$

n = 334

Data Collection

Data is collected through primary source using self-administered questionnaires which distributed to the participants. The use of questionnaires is justified as efficiently collect data from a large number of respondents, ensuring consistency in the questions asked. The questionnaires were designed to capture participants' perceptions of the topic under study and include Likert-scale items, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended prompts. In this case only close ended questions is used as it divided into **A** and **B** section. Section **A** consist of the demographic information of the respondent such as sex, age, marital status, educational level etc. section **B** contained critical items that elicited responses.

Data Analysis

Data is analyzed using statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics and inferential analysis. Descriptive statistics summarize participants' responses, providing an overview of the data through measures such as frequency, and percentage distribution.

RESULTS

Table 1 Response Rate

Questionnaire	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Distributed	384	100%
Returned	340	88.5%
Not Returned	44	14.5%
Total	**384**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table above shows that out of the 384 questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents, only 340 that were filled and returned representing 88.5% while 44 representing 14.5% respondents did not return their questionnaires.

Table 2 Demographic Information

Category	Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Gender	(a) Male	210	61.8%
	(b) Female	130	38.2%
2. Marital status	(a) Single	180	52.9%
	(b) Married	130	38.2%
	(c) Divorce	30	8.8%
3. Age	(a) 21 – 30	120	35.3%
	(b) 31 – 40	100	29.4%
	(c) 41 – 50	80	23.5%
	(d) 50 and above	40	11.8%
4. Qualification	(a) ND/NCE	80	23.5%
	(b) HND/BSC/MSC	260	76.5%
5. Experience	(a) 1-5	100	29.4%
	(b) 6-10	90	26.5%
	(c) 11-15	70	20.6%
	(d) 16 and above	80	23.5%

Source: Researcher Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 provides a snapshot of the demographic profile of the respondents in the study. The gender distribution shows that majority of male respondents (61.8%) compared to females (38.2%). This skew towards a higher male representation may reflect broader trends in the specific sample or the nature of the population surveyed. The marital status data reveals that more than half of the respondents are single (52.9%), while 38.2% are married, and a smaller segment (8.8%) is divorced. This distribution suggests a youthful and potentially less settled population, which could influence their perspectives and engagement in political activities.

The age profile indicates that a majority of respondents are between 21 and 30 years old (35.3%), followed by those aged 31 to 40 years (29.4%). This age distribution suggests that

the sample is predominantly composed of younger individuals, who are often more active in political and social movements. In terms of educational qualifications, 76.5% of the respondents hold higher degrees (HND/BSC/MSC), which signifies a well-educated sample. Work experience varies, with a notable portion having 1-5 years of experience (29.4%), suggesting that many respondents are relatively new to the workforce.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 Nature of Crime of substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Very frequently	85	25%
Frequently	102	30%
Occasionally	119	35%
Rarely	34	10%
Total	**340**	**100%**

Source: Researcher Field Survey, 2024

This table reveals that substance abuse is a significant issue among youths in Yelwa, with 25% of respondents indicating they observe it very frequently and 30% observing it frequently. This suggests that more than half of the respondents (55%) regularly witness substance abuse, highlighting the pervasiveness of the problem in the community. Occasional observation of substance abuse was reported by 35% of the respondents, which is the highest among the four categories. This indicates that while substance abuse is widespread, it may not be a constant daily occurrence for everyone, but still frequent enough to be a concern. Only 10% of respondents reported rarely observing substance abuse among youths, suggesting that the problem is visible and recognized by the majority of the community members. This low percentage of rare observations further underscores the visibility of substance abuse issues in Yelwa.

Table 4 Causes of Substance and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Peer pressure	85	25%
Unemployment	136	40%
Family problems	68	20%
Curiosity and experimentation	51	15%
Total	340	100%

Source: Researcher Field Survey, 2024

The table shows that unemployment is the leading cause of substance abuse among youths in Yelwa, with 40% of respondents identifying it as the primary reason. This highlights the economic challenges facing the youth in Yelwa, where lack of employment opportunities may drive them towards substance abuse as a coping mechanism. Peer pressure is another significant factor, with 25% of respondents citing it as a cause of substance abuse. This suggests that social influences and the desire to fit in with peers play a critical role in the initiation and continuation of substance abuse among youths. Family problems were identified by 20% of respondents, indicating that dysfunctional family environments contribute to substance abuse. This could involve issues such as domestic violence, lack of parental guidance, or economic hardship within the family, all of which may push youths towards substance abuse. Curiosity and experimentation were cited by 15% of respondents, suggesting that some youths engage in substance abuse out of a desire to explore and experience new things. This highlights the need for educational programs that address the risks of substance abuse and promote healthier alternatives for youth exploration.

Table 5 Effect of Substance Abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Significant increase in crime rates	153	45%
Moderate increase in crime rates	102	30%
Minimal increase in crime rates	68	20%
No impact	17	5%
Total	340	100%

The table reveals that substance abuse significantly impacts the safety of the Yelwa community, with 45% of respondents reporting a significant increase in crime rates as a result. This suggests that substance abuse is a major driver of criminal activities in the area, contributing to a sense of insecurity. 30% of respondents indicated a moderate increase in crime rates, further underscoring the link between substance abuse and crime. This suggests that even if the impact is not always severe, substance abuse still contributes to a noticeable rise in criminal activities in Yelwa.

20% of respondents reported a minimal increase in crime rates due to substance abuse, indicating that while the issue is recognized, its impact on crime may vary across different parts of the community. This points to the need for localized interventions that address the specific dynamics of substance abuse and crime in various areas.Only 5% of respondents believe that substance abuse has no impact on community safety, which suggests that the vast majority of the community recognizes the dangers posed by substance abuse. Yelwa.

Table 6 Factors Influencing Substance Abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Peer influence	136	40%
Social media exposure	102	30%
Cultural acceptance	68	20%
Availability of drugs	34	10%
Total	340	100%

Source: Researcher Field Survey, 2024

Substance abuse is seen as a significant barrier to youth employment in Yelwa, with 40% of respondents indicating that it leads to high unemployment rates among affected youths. This finding suggests that substance abuse impairs the ability of youths to secure and maintain employment, limiting their economic opportunities. 30% of respondents indicated that substance abuse leads to moderate employment challenges, further emphasizing the negative impact it has on job prospects. This finding suggests that substance abuse not only affects employability but also limits career advancement opportunities for those who are employed. 20% of respondents reported minor employment challenges related to substance abuse, indicating that while the impact is not always severe, it still poses a barrier to

economic stability. This suggests that addressing substance abuse could have a positive impact on youth employment rates in Yelwa.

Only 10% of respondents believe that substance abuse has no impact on employment, indicating that the majority of the community recognizes the employment challenges faced by substance-abusing youths. This widespread acknowledgment underscores the need for job training and rehabilitation programs that help youths overcome substance abuse and secure stable employment.

Table 7 Solutions to the Problems of Substance Abuse and youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa Area of Bauchi State Nigeria

Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Increased law enforcement and punishment	119	35%
Community-based awareness programs	85	25%
Rehabilitation centers and counseling	102	30%
Employment opportunities for youths	34	10%
Total	340	100%

Source: Researcher Field Survey, 2024

Increased law enforcement and punishment is seen as the most effective measure to reduce substance abuse in Yelwa, with 35% of respondents supporting this approach. This reflects a belief in the power of stricter laws and harsher penalties as deterrents against substance abuse. The emphasis on legal measures might indicate a community preference for authoritative control over behavior. Rehabilitation centers and counseling are also regarded as critical, with 30% of respondents favoring this solution. This suggests an understanding of substance abuse as a health issue that requires medical and psychological intervention, rather than just legal action. The support for rehabilitation indicates a community awareness of the need for supportive environments to help individuals recover from addiction. Community-based awareness programs received 25% support, highlighting the importance of education and collective action in tackling substance abuse. The relatively lower preference for employment opportunities for youths (10%) indicates that while economic empowerment is important, it may be viewed as a longer-term solution compared to immediate interventions like law enforcement and rehabilitation.

DISCUSSION

The study examined the relationship between substance abuse and youth involvement in property crime in the Yelwa area of Bauchi, with a focus on understanding the nature of substance abuse, its causes, effects, and possible solutions. The findings revealed that substance abuse is prevalent among youths in Yelwa, with marijuana, alcohol, and inhalants being the most commonly abused substances. The study also found that substance abuse is closely linked to property crimes such as theft and burglary, as many youths engage in these crimes to support their drug habits.

The causes of substance abuse identified in the study include peer pressure, unemployment, and lack of parental guidance. The study highlights the significant influence of socio-economic factors on youth behavior, with many youths turning to substance abuse as a means of coping with economic hardship and social challenges. Furthermore, the study found that substance abuse has severe consequences, not only for the individuals involved but also for the broader community. The rise in property crimes and the general sense of insecurity in Yelwa were attributed to the widespread abuse of substances by youths.

The study also identified several factors that contribute to the persistence of substance abuse in Yelwa, including family background, early exposure to drugs, and the normalization of drug use within certain social circles. These factors highlight the complexity of the issue, indicating that substance abuse is influenced by a combination of personal, social, and economic factors. The study's findings emphasize the need for comprehensive interventions that address these various dimensions. In terms of solutions, the study proposes a multi-faceted approach that includes community awareness programs, stronger law enforcement, and the implementation of youth engagement and rehabilitation initiatives. The findings suggest that these measures, if effectively implemented, could significantly reduce the incidence of substance abuse and related crimes in Yelwa. The study underscores the importance of addressing both the root causes and the symptoms of substance abuse to achieve lasting change.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that substance abuse is a significant problem among youths in the Yelwa area of Bauchi, with far-reaching implications for both the individuals involved and the community as a whole. The relationship between substance abuse and property crime is

evident, as many youths engage in criminal activities to sustain their drug habits. The study highlights the role of socio-economic factors, peer pressure, and family dynamics in driving substance abuse, pointing to the need for targeted interventions that address these underlying causes.

The impact of substance abuse on the Yelwa community is profound, contributing to an increase in property crimes and creating an atmosphere of insecurity. The study concludes that addressing substance abuse requires a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation. Community-based programs, combined with stronger law enforcement and support for affected youths, are essential to reducing the prevalence of substance abuse and its associated criminal activities.

The study also concludes that early intervention is crucial in preventing substance abuse among youths. By addressing the factors that contribute to drug use, such as economic hardship and lack of parental guidance, it is possible to reduce the likelihood of youths turning to substances as a coping mechanism. The study emphasizes the importance of involving families, schools, and community organizations in these efforts to create a supportive environment for youths.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations are proposed to address the issue of substance abuse and its relationship with youth involvement in property crime in Yelwa. First, it is recommended that community awareness programs be implemented to educate youths and their families about the dangers of substance abuse. These programs should be tailored to the specific needs of the Yelwa community and should involve local leaders, religious organizations, and schools to ensure broad participation and support.

Second, the study recommends strengthening law enforcement efforts to combat drug trafficking and reduce the availability of substances in Yelwa. This could involve increased police presence, more stringent penalties for drug-related offenses, and collaboration with local communities to identify and report drug dealers. Law enforcement should also focus on rehabilitation rather than punishment for youths caught in the cycle of substance abuse and crime.

Third, the study suggests the implementation of youth engagement and rehabilitation programs that provide alternative activities and support for at-risk youths. These programs

should focus on skill development, education, and employment opportunities, helping youths to build a future free from substance abuse.

Fourth, it is recommended that family-based interventions be developed to address the role of family dynamics in substance abuse. This could include parenting workshops, family counseling, and support groups for families dealing with substance abuse.

Finally, the study recommends that policymakers at the local and national levels prioritize substance abuse prevention and treatment in their agendas. This could involve increased funding for prevention programs, the establishment of rehabilitation centers in areas like Yelwa, and the development of policies that address the socio-economic factors contributing to substance abuse.

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