

# Knowledge of Hard Drugs and Attitudinal Disposition of Youths in Curbing Hard Drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria

Immaculata Etim Bassey<sup>1</sup>, Idode Mercy<sup>1</sup>, Elizabeth Edem Okon<sup>1</sup>,  
Bassey Emmanuel Etim<sup>2</sup>, Gift Mbah<sup>3</sup>, Effiom John Edwin<sup>4,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Nursing science, Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, Igbinedion University, Okada

<sup>2</sup>Department of Emergency Medicine, Faculty of Emergency Medicine, Whiston Hospital, Prescot, United Kingdom

<sup>3</sup>Memorial University of Newfoundland

<sup>4</sup>Department of Social Science Education, Faculty of Arts and Social Science Education, University of Calabar, Calabar-Nigeria

\*Corresponding author: [effiomjohn2233@gmail.com](mailto:effiomjohn2233@gmail.com)

Received October 18, 2023; Revised November 20, 2023; Accepted November 26, 2023

**Abstract** Herbs, leaves, and other plants have been used to treat and prevent ailments since ancient times. Since medications can be used to cure illnesses and diseases when properly delivered, using them does not present any threat in and of itself. Most individuals today, especially young people, abuse drugs by taking them illegally, and they don't just use them to treat illnesses; they also use them for other purposes. The purpose of this study was to assess youths' attitudes towards hard drugs and their knowledge of them in Calabar South Local Government Area in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study had two explicit goals: to accomplish its goal and to do so. One statement of hypothesis was created from a pair of research questions. Based on the variable under investigation, a literature review was conducted. The descriptive survey research design was deemed to be the most appropriate for the investigation. According to the National Population Commission's predicted population for 2022, 124,204 people made up the study's population. The study employed an accidental sampling technique, and the 399 respondents who participated in the sample were chosen using Taro Yamen's 1975 formula. Data were gathered using a validated 10-item, 4-point modified Likert scale questionnaire. Test and measurement specialists determined the instrument's face and content validity. After applying spearman-Brown correlation, the reliability estimates of 0.82 for the instruments were established using the split-half approach. The research questions were tested using a descriptive analysis of frequency, percentages, mean, and standard deviation, and the study's hypotheses were tested using Pearson's product moment correlation. The hypothesis was investigated at a significance level of 0.05. Results: The data analysis showed a substantial correlation between youths' attitudes towards hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, and their awareness of these substances. According to the study's findings, there is a substantial correlation between adolescents' attitudes towards hard drugs and their awareness of them in the Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. As a result, it was suggested that policymakers, among other things, develop and coordinate resources for young people and individuals who experience behavioural issues.

**Keywords:** knowledge, attitude, youths, drugs

**Cite This Article:** Immaculata Etim Bassey, Elizabeth Edem Okon, Idode Mercy Irodi Chijike Canis, Irodi Nonye Celestina, and Effiom, John Edwin, "Knowledge of Hard Drugs and Attitudinal Disposition of Youths in Curbing Hard Drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria." *American Journal of Nursing Research*, vol. 11, no. 3 (2023): 118-125. doi: 10.12691/ajnr-11-3-3.

## 1. Introduction

Drug usage is an issue in society that is escalating to epidemic proportions. Drug use has grown during the past few years on a global scale [1]. In Calabar South Local Government Area, there has been an increase in the usage of cocaine, skunk, marijuana, and other drugs. Hard drug use has affected all facets of our society and is one of the scourges of contemporary life. Hard drug use is prevalent

in both rural and urban settings, among the rich and the poor, men and women, young and elderly. However, young boys and girls are most likely to engage in it, particularly at hostels and virtually all educational and technical institutions. Hard drug use is therefore prevalent in practically every nation on earth. Alcohol is used worldwide and is getting more and more readily available. Addiction has turned into a serious curse for people. Hard drug use has an impact on others as well as drug addicts, either directly or indirectly.

It is a character flaw in the eyes of the average person.

Sociologists view it as a social issue, but moral theologians might see it as a matter of vice. Hard drug use is viewed as a sin by religious individuals and as a criminal offence by law enforcement organisations [2]. According to the World Health Organisation, there are two (2) billion drinkers, 1.3 billion smokers, and 185 million other drug users worldwide [3]. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime predicts that between 15.5 and 38.6 million persons used drugs problematically in the world in 2010.

According to the World Health Organisation, 320,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 29 pass away from alcohol-related causes each year, while 200,000 people worldwide die from drug-related overdoses. According to Burns [4], excessive alcohol use causes 2.5 million accidental and intentional deaths per year. Unsafe drug use has a tremendous influence on people, families, and communities. Numerous poor habits frequently begin throughout adolescence and offer considerable problems to public health because their effects are cumulative and can result in severe socioeconomic, physical, and mental health issues.

Hard drug use can result in issues with your health, behaviour, family, career, finances, and the law. According to scientific studies, drug users experience illness more frequently than non-users. Due to their poor diet, they are more susceptible to infections. Some of the health issues include digestive issues, smoking-related inflammation of the throat and lungs, nasal cavity enlargement from sniffing, blood vessel damage from injections, and widespread infection. According to Jalilian Karami, Ahmadpanah, Ataee, Ahmadi, Eslami, and Mirzaei [5], drug usage is also associated with emotional and mental problems that lead to conflicts and arguments in families, at work, and among friends. An individual with opioid dependence could require assistance to prevent or lessen the effects of withdrawal during the first phase of sobriety. The process is known as detoxification. In order to have medication used to treat withdrawal symptoms and regular medical monitoring, this sort of care is often provided in a hospital or other hospital setting [6].

Community health nurses actively participate in programmes that promote mental wellness, screen for mental illness, provide early intervention, and manage people's ongoing treatment for mental illness and dangerous substance use. Community health nurses are crucial in raising public awareness of the dangers of substance abuse and how to prevent it [4]. Over 400 different ethnic groups, as well as numerous religious communities, can be found throughout Nigeria, including Calabar Metropolis [7]. As a result of the research area's multicultural makeup, use of hard drugs is seen in a larger context. For instance, most societies do not view the use of some narcotics as the usage of hard drugs since they do not result in overt behavioural changes. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Nigerians are a diverse population, there is a persistent outcry about the rising problem of hard drug abuse (abuse of drugs that alter behaviour) in the study area from the general public, police, preachers, health professionals, teachers, regulatory agencies, and parents. The Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria's President made the most current call

[8]. The Nigeria Drug and Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) was founded in an effort to combat the rising problem of hard drug use in Nigeria and the city of Calabar. About 84 kids were found using drugs in 2009, according to a report from Osun State NDLEA (2010), however many more have not yet been identified. Studies have revealed that young people are a high-risk category for drug addiction and dependence [9]. It makes sense to assume that the problem of drug abuse among students may remain and that it may be challenging to assist the abuser and to put a stop to the act if no attempt is made to ascertain the level of awareness and attitude of secondary school students towards drug misuse.

Cocaine and heroin are transported through Nigeria before being sold in markets in Europe, East Asia, and North America. Nigeria is one of the West African nations that drug traffickers have been using more frequently since 2004 to smuggle big quantities of cocaine from South America into Europe and North America. Due to the ongoing availability of pharmaceutical items that have been diverted from legitimate manufacturing and that contain narcotic medicines and psychotropic chemicals, the country has a relatively high rate of hard drug usage. Cannabis, mostly in its herbal form, is the substance that is most frequently abused in West Africa. Cannabis is inexpensive because it is made locally around the area. In an effort to stop the use of hard drugs in Nigeria and the Calabar Slum, the World Health Organisation (WHO) collaborates with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), The Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), Federal Ministry of Justice (FMOJ), The Judiciary, and Civil society organisations (CSOs). In spite of all these government efforts, the use of hard drugs is increasing every day. It is based on this problem that the researchers examined whether knowledge of hard drugs has any impact on attitudinal disposition among youths in curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between knowledge of hard drugs and attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine knowledge of hard drugs among youths in Calabar South Local Government Area
2. Assess the attitudinal disposition among youths in curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area

### **Research question**

1. What is the extent of knowledge of hard drugs among youths in Calabar South Local Government Area?
2. What is the attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area?

### **Statement of hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between knowledge of hard drugs and attitudinal disposition of youths in

curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

## 2. Theoretical Underpinning

The functionalist Theory of Attitudes by Daniel Katz [10].

The functionalist theory of attitude served as the theoretical cornerstone for this investigation. When researchers came up with the idea that attitudes serviced various psychological requirements and consequently had various motivational underpinnings, this theory made its way into the literature in the 1950s. Daniel Katz came up with the functionalist theory of attitudes [10]. This idea raises a fundamental query about attitudes, namely, what purposes do attitudes serve? Katz claims that our views are shaped by the purposes they fulfil for us. People adopt certain attitudes because they support them in achieving their fundamental objectives. Katz's functionalist theory provides an additional justification for why opinions shift.

Katz says that a person's attitude changes when it is no longer effective and they experience blockage or frustration. In other words, according to Katz, changing someone's attitude is more effectively done by altering their underlying motivational and personality demands than by altering their knowledge or perception of an object. One's opinions about one's manner of purchasing, for instance, may alter as one's social standing rises or as one becomes more knowledgeable about online shopping; in this case, one would need items that more accurately reflect their increased status [11]. The current study examined the impact of hard drug knowledge on youth attitudes towards reducing hard drug use in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, while also attempting to demonstrate that these attitudes are a result of certain benefits sought by youths or disappointments they have encountered while using hard drugs.

## 3. Literature Review

The present study is based on public perceptions of a range of drug-related issues. The idea that attitudes are psychological states or feelings that predispose a person to react or behave in a good or negative way to the item, situation, or person under examination is central to most definitions of the term "attitude." Eagly and Chaiken's (2013) definition of attitudes, which defines attitudes as "tendencies to evaluate an entity with some degree of favour or disfavour [which are] ordinarily expressed in cognitive, affective and behavioural responses," is one of the more recent definitions to appear in the attitudinal literature (p. 155). These types of definitions imply a connection between attitudes towards an attitude object and behavioural reactions to it.

A prime example of social deviation is the usage of illicit drugs [12]. The majority of people refrain from participating in it, making it a socially taboo practise. Therefore, it is not surprising that a major portion of the literature in circulation contends that those who engage in this specific type of social deviance are seen negatively by society as a whole. According to certain studies on drug

abuse, anti-drug media campaigns that stereotype drug users as weak, dysfunctional junkies who commit immoral activities may have some influence on how the public feels about drug users.

'Soft' and 'hard' drug decriminalisation, drug education, and harm reduction education were all the subjects of a 2013 study by Leitner, Shapland, and Wiles. Drugs were generally considered to be a serious problem, although a sizable minority of respondents, especially younger people, supported legalising or decriminalising drugs in some way. Nearly everyone voted in favour of drug education, which was especially liked among those between the ages of 12 and 18. Education about harm reduction was not as well received as more conventional preventive education methods.

Communities are actively battling methamphetamine. Currently, some communities have begun to track down the drug dealers in their areas and are expelling them, while their young people who were found to be using it were publicly shamed by being publicly flogged in village squares. For instance, in Dunukofia Local Government Area of Anambra State, the Umudioka Improvement Union has outlawed the sale and consumption of all illegal drugs and substances in the community and has issued warnings to those who continue to engage in such activities, warning them that they run the risk of being detained and banned with the assistance of the appropriate security agencies. Early in November 2021, adolescents from Okija, Ihiala Local Government Area, marched along the town's main thoroughfares to demonstrate their unwavering dedication to eliminate the threat of cultism, which is associated with drug misuse, notably methamphetamine hydrochloride. A few town stakeholders participated in the campaign, warning that anyone found guilty would face severe punishment. Similar actions have been done by numerous towns, although it is unclear if they will be successful. Eze Philip Ajomiwe, the traditional chief of Oriendu autonomous community in Umuahia North Local Government Area of Abia State, has denounced the harmful consequences of marijuana and other heavy narcotics on young people [13]. The kids mix and ingest additional drugs like tramadol, opium, and cannabis that severely harm their organs. They believe the beverages they drink give them energy, yet they are slowly being consumed by them. It is because of this that young people now have kidney stones, heart illness, and even strokes [13]. To protect the future of our young, Dr. Okwuonu promoted a vigorous campaign and increased public awareness of the negative consequences of drugs like methamphetamine and other hazardous substances. Additionally, he asked state legislatures to pass laws prohibiting the hazardous drug so that distributors and users may be held accountable as a deterrence to others [14].

Adogu, Njelita, Egenti, and Ubajaka [15] conducted a study on prescription drug misuse awareness, knowledge, perception, and attitude among doctors and chemists in Nnewi, Nigeria. This study's goal was to evaluate the attitudes, perceptions, and levels of knowledge that Nigerian doctors and chemists have towards the abuse of prescription drugs (PM). A self-completed questionnaire was used to collect the data, and 375 participants in total were chosen for the study. Data analysis was carried out using Windows version 17 of the Statistical Package for

the Social Sciences (SPSS). To assess differences and associations depending on chosen variables, bivariate and multivariate analyses were performed. Results: Respondents had a strong tendency to believe that PM misuse was a widespread issue in the neighbourhood. The respondents' attitudes regarding early diagnosis of PM misuse among their patients or clients were discouraging, despite the fact that knowledge of the health issues related to PM abuse was also high. However, the study came to the depressing and unsatisfactory attitude of the respondents towards the early detection of PM misuse among their patients/clients. Obstacles to PM misuse counselling include doctors' lack of time, clients' refusal to follow health workers' advice, a lack of continuous education, and a lack of the essential abilities. According to the study, early intervention is intended to give medical professionals the tools they need to recognise PM addiction in its early phases.

According to an empirical study by Yusuf and Okanlawon [16] youngsters take drugs at a high rate because they are unaware of the harmful effects of the behaviour. The descriptive study evaluated secondary school students' knowledge, attitudes, and counselling implications on drug usage. Six hundred secondary school pupils from Ilesa Metropolitan in Osun State were selected using random selection approaches. To direct the investigation, four research questions were posed. Data for the study were gathered using the Knowledge and Attitude Towards Drug Abuse Questionnaire (KATDAQ). The t-test, mean scores, and mean ranking of the items were used to analyse the data. The study's findings show that (a) college students lack understanding regarding drug usage, (b) they have a favourable attitude towards drug use, and (c) their friends, neighbours, and social networks are their most frequent sources of information. However, it was discovered that male and female students' attitudes regarding drug addiction differed significantly. Based on the study's findings, the researcher suggested that counselling departments be established in schools, and that other places of worship including churches and mosques as well as the media work diligently to prevent drug misuse. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and the school counsellors should collaborate to plan workshops and lectures about the risks of drug addiction for kids.

According to Fayombo and Aremu [17], substance addiction might result in poor academic performance and that marijuana consumption has reached alarming proportions. Nowadays, drug misuse among teenagers occurs regardless of gender. According to past studies' findings, men drank alcohol, kolanut, and coffee more frequently than women [18]. In a similar vein, Oshodi, Aina, and Onajole [19] noted that although there are more men than women who consume drugs, the gender disparities were negligible and statistically unimportant. Street boys continue to use inhalants despite having a modest level of understanding of the harmful health effects associated with drug addiction, according to earlier studies [20]. Researchers' findings also showed that while the majority of respondents claimed that media and personal contacts are their primary sources of information about substance abuse, a small percentage of respondents claimed that they learned about it in school and from family members. Television is the main source of

information for all medications, according to Weiss and Moore [6] [21].

## 4. Methodology

### Research design

The study was a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate for this study because the data for the study were collected from a sample of youths in order to document their knowledge and attitudes towards use of hard drug.

### Area of the study

Study region is Calabar South Local Government of Cross River State. The study area has a projected population of 124,204 young people as of the National Population Commission of Nigeria (web) and National Bureau of Statistics (web) population projection for 2022. It is composed of 12 council wards. It has an area of 142 km<sup>2</sup> and lies between latitude 04 ° 15 'and 5 ° N and longitude 8 ° 25' E.

### Population of the study

The population of the study was made up of 124,204 according to 2022 projected population by National Population Commission. The population of the studies is made up of boys and girls. Some are students in Secondary schools and some in tertiary institutions while some are business owners and entrepreneurs.

#### Sample and Sampling technique

The researcher utilized the Taro Yamen's formula to get the sample for the study. The sample size was derived statistically by using Taro Yemene as follow:

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

Were,

$$n = \text{sample size}$$

$$N = \text{Population}$$

$$e = \text{Margin of error (0.05)}$$

$$n = \frac{124,204}{1 + 124,204(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{124,204}{1 + 124,204(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{124,204}{1 + 310.51}$$

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{124,204}{311.51} \\ &= 398.7 \\ &= 399 \end{aligned}$$

A sample size of 399 youths was used for the study. Accidental sampling technique was used to administer the instrument on every youth seen on the date of administration of questionnaire.



### Instrument for data collection

To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher used survey questionnaire tagged a “Knowledge and Attitude Towards use of hard drug Questionnaire” (KATUOHQ) to capture data for the study. This instrument was developed by the researcher. The survey questionnaire has three sections: demographic variables (Section A), knowledge of hard drugs (Section B), and attitude toward use of hard drugs (Section C). Information sought in Section A were gender, age, educational level and marital status. Research Question one assessed the extent of knowledge acquisition on hard drugs while research question two evaluated the attitude toward use of hard drugs among youths. To obtain data for this research question, respondents were asked to use a scale of 1 to 4 to respond to where they got accurate information about use of hard drugs. The scale used is interpreted as 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree. i.e this instrument consists of 10 items (statements) which were attached to a four-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to strongly disagree” as pivotal point of the scale. Moving from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, positive items were scored from 1 to 4, respectively, while negative items were scored in the reverse order.

### Validity and reliability of the instrument

Following the development of the research instrument, a group of experts comprising two university lecturers specializing in measurement and evaluation, and an NDLEA officer were tasked to carefully scrutinize and assess the instrument for their relevance, content, face and construct validity. The experts recommended that some of the items in sections B and C should be removed, whereas others were to be included in the instrument. In the end, five items (in Section B and C) were removed and modified. They were further subjected to reliability test indicating a very good sign of data consistency. Following that, a pilot study involving 30 youths in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area that were not part of the participants for the study provided data for further validation and reliability determination of the instrument. The pilot test was also aimed to see whether the instrument was feasible to obtain the relevant data needed. The results of the pilot study revealed that the instrument was readable; and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82 through the split-half method after the application of spearman-Brown correlation.

### Data Collection

Data for the study were collected with the aid of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the youths in Calabar South Local Government Area who were between the ages of 18 to 40 years. The services of two research assistants were requested to facilitate in the distribution of the questionnaires. The distributed questionnaires were collected from the respondents as soon as they finished with their responses.

### Ethical Consideration

The respondents were made aware that taking part in the study was fully optional and that declining to do so would not have any negative effects. To be a study subject, oral agreement was obtained from the participant. The

respondents were given an explanation of the study, including its purpose and any potential advantages. Confidentiality of data, privacy, identity, voluntary participation, and the right to refuse to participate in the study were stressed to subjects. The participant was informed about the withdrawal procedures if they decided to leave the study at any time before or during the completion of data collection.

### Statistical tool for data analysis

To answer the research topics addressed in this study, mean and standard deviation analyses as well as item-by-item analyses were used. To answer research questions 1 and 2, mean and ranking were used to analyse each respondent's replies to each item in sections B and C of the questionnaire. The association between awareness of hard drugs and attitudinal propensity to curtail hard substances was examined using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistical technique.

## 5. Results

Out of the 399 respondents included in the study, 327 (82.0) are male and 75 (18.0) are female, according to the results in [Table 1](#). These findings demonstrated that males are more likely than females to take heavy drugs. Further examination of the results in terms of age revealed that, of the 399 respondents, 56 (14.0) are 20 years of age or younger, 203 (50.9) are between the ages of 21 and 30, and 140 (35.1) are 35 years of age or older. These findings suggested that younger youths outnumber older youths in the research area. Out of 399 adolescents for the study, 76 (19.0) have no formal education, 104 (26.1) have completed their FSLC, 198 (49.6) have completed their SSCE, and just 21 (5.3) have attended tertiary education in the form of colleges, polytechnics, or universities. Finally, the results showed that 145 (36.3) people are divorced, 156 (39.1) people are single, and 98 (24.6) people are married. It may be inferred from the study that a significant portion of respondents are divorced, possibly as a result of their engagement in drug usage.

**Table 1. Demographic variables of respondents**

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	327	82.0
	Females	75	18.0
	Total	399	100
Age	20 years below	56	14.0
	21-30 years	203	50.9
	31 years above	140	35.1
	Total	399	100
-Educational level	No formal education	76	19.0
	First School Leaving certificate	104	26.1
	Senior Secondary Certificate Examination	198	49.6
	Tertiary education	21	5.3
	Total	399	100
Marital status	Single	156	39.1
	Married	98	24.6
	Divorced	145	36.3
	Total	399	100

Source: Field work (2023)

**Table 2. Descriptive analysis of knowledge of hard drugs among youths (N=399)**

Questions	Responses				Total	Mean	SD
	Strongly agree	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed			
I have heard of the term hard drug	198 49.6%	45 11.3%	36 9.0%	120 30.1%	399 100	3.56	1.01
When people smoke cigarette, it is hard drug	134 33.6%	196 49.1%	45 11.3%	24 6.0%	399 100	2.67	.98
Indian hemp is hard drug	189 47.4%	58 14.5%	102 25.6%	50 12.5%	399 100	2.81	.87
Cocaine is hard drug	148 37.1%	133 33.3%	52 13.0%	66 16.5%	399 100	3.87	1.23
Smoking of ice is involvement in hard drugs	167 41.9%	111 27.8%	98 24.6%	23 5.8%	399 100	2.13	1.02
Grand mean						3.00	

Source: Field work (2023)

**Table 3. Descriptive analysis of the attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs (N=399)**

Questions	Responses				Total	Mean	SD
	Strongly agree	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed			
I take Indian hemp every day to make me feel happy and high	165 41.4%	102 25.6%	58 14.5%	74 18.5%	300 100	2.49	.89
I engage in ice (mgbiri mmiri) intake to boost my confidence	176 44.1%	123 30.8%	43 10.8%	57 14.3%	399 100	3.01	1.00
I engage in taking cocaine only once in a month to make me feel relaxed	68 17.0%	155 38.8%	89 22.3%	87 21.8%	399 100	2.59	1.01
It is a must that I will take alcohol everyday	204 51.1%	156 39.1%	43 10.8%	4 1.0%	399 100	2.67	.90
I cannot do anything for myself in a day if I do not smoke cigarette	276 69.2%	58 14.5%	67 16.8%	2 0.5%	399 100	2.55	1.03
Grand mean						2.67	

Source: Field work (2023)

**Research question one**

What is the extent of knowledge of hard drugs among youths in Calabar South Local Government Area?

The result in [Table 2](#) showed the rating on knowledge of hard drugs among youths. Items 1,2,3,4 and 5 had a mean rating of 3.56, 2.67, 2.81 and 3.87 respectively which are greater than the benchmark of 2.50. The grand mean of 3.00 indicates that youths in the study area have very high knowledge of hard drugs.

**Research question two**

What is the attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area?

The result in [Table 3](#) showed the rating on attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs among youths. Items 2,3,4 and 5 had a mean rating of 3.01, 2.59, 2.67 and 2.55 respectively which are greater than the benchmark of 2.50. The grand mean of 2.67 indicates that youths in the study area have positive attitude toward curbing hard drugs in the study area.

**Hypothesis and discussion of finding**

There is no significant relationship between knowledge of hard drugs and attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. The result of the analysis in [Table 4](#) revealed that knowledge of hard drugs produced a mean score of 8.27 with a standard deviation of 2.63 while attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs produced a mean score of 8.10 with a standard deviation of 5.82. The result further revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .073 obtained with a p-value of .001 at 397 degrees of freedom met the condition required for significance at .05 level. Based on this, the null hypothesis which stated there is no significant relationship between knowledge of hard drugs and attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs was rejected indicating that there is a significant relationship between knowledge of hard drugs and attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs. The study's findings corroborate those of

Fayombo and Aremu [17], who claimed that marijuana addiction had reached alarming proportions and could affect students' academic performance. Nowadays, drug misuse among teenagers occurs regardless of gender. According to past studies' findings, men drank alcohol, kolanut, and coffee more frequently than women [18]. In a similar vein, Oshodi, Aina, and Onajole [19] noted that although there are more men than women who consume drugs, the gender disparities were negligible and statistically unimportant. Street boys continue to use inhalants despite having a modest level of understanding of the harmful health effects associated with drug addiction, according to earlier studies [20]. Researchers' findings also showed that while the majority of respondents claimed that media and personal contacts are their primary sources of information about substance abuse, a small percentage of respondents claimed that they learned about it in school and from family members. Television is the main source of information for all medications, according to Weiss and Moore [6] [21].

**Table 4. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of the relationship between knowledge of hard drugs and attitudinal disposition of youths in curbing hard drugs in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. (N= 399)**

Variables	$\bar{x}$	SD	R	p-value
Knowledge of hard drugs	8.27	2.63	.073	.001
Attitude toward curbing of hard drugs	18.10	5.82		

\*Significant at 0.05 level;  $df=397$   
Source; Field work (2023)

## 6. Conclusion

The young people in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State were reportedly knowledgeable about using hard drugs, and it appeared that their attitude towards reducing hard drug usage was related to their knowledge, according to the study's findings. Since the youth represent the country's future, the negative attitude is concerning. Because of this attitude, it is possible to assume that their knowledge is only generic. As a result, a remedy needs to be proposed through suitable counselling and health education of the youth, with a focus on the health hazards of substance abuse and its effects. This is extremely important because they face higher risks when using hard drugs, such as the development of alcohol-related disorders, such as liver cirrhosis, and a higher propensity to experience cocaine's toxic effects, which could cause health issues to manifest earlier or put them at greater risk, especially cardiovascular disease and HIV/AIDS.

## 7. Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended that;

1. Resources for young people and individuals with behavioural issues should be made available and organised by policymakers.

2. They should give parents information on drug addiction.
3. As a result, next research will focus on educating young people about the negative health implications of substance usage and how to avoid it or stop using it. The focus will be on elements that can help with programme development, design, and implementation that emphasise spreading knowledge about the dangers of substance use. As a result, multifaceted prevention strategies that take into account gender roles, social norms, drug policy, religion, family, and education may be more effective and produce stronger protective effects.

## References

- [1] Gebreslassie, M., Feleke, A., & Melese, T. (2019). Psychoactive substances use and associated factors among Axum university students, Axum Town, North Ethiopia. *BMC Public Health*, 13(1).
- [2] Possi, M. K. (2018). Effects of use of hard drugs on cognitive and social behaviors: A potential problem among youth in Tanzania. *Utafiti Journal*, 3(1), 2-9.
- [3] Kingsbury, P., Andrews, G. J., & Kearns, R. (Eds.). (2016). Soundscapes of wellbeing in popular music. (17-36): Routledge
- [4] Burns, L. (2014). World Drug Report 2013 By United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime New York: United Nations, 2013 ISBN: 978 - 92 1 056168 6, 151. Grey literature. Drug and alcohol review, 33(2), 216-216.
- [5] Jalilian, F., Karami, M. B., Ahmadpanah, M., Atae, M., Ahmadi, J. T., Eslami, A. A., & MIRZAEI, A. M. (2015). Socio-demographic characteristics associated with cigarettes smoking, use of hard drugs and alcohol drinking among male medical university students in Iran.
- [6] Weiss, N. & Moore, D. (2015). Alcohol in the European Region - consumption, harm and policies. Copenhagen: WHO - Regional Office for Europe.
- [7] Jess, T. (2020). The AACODS checklist. Available at: [https://dSPACE.flinders.edu.au/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2328/3326/AACODS\\_Checklist.pdf?sequence=4](https://dSPACE.flinders.edu.au/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2328/3326/AACODS_Checklist.pdf?sequence=4).
- [8] Oluabunwa S. I. (2019). Tackling the menace of use of hard drugs: a disruptive innovative approach. Available at: <https://psnational.org/index.php/2019/08/01/association-of-community-pharmacists-of-nigeria-acpn-bational-conference-holding-in-kano-state-june-1-4-2019/>.
- [9] Obot, I. S. (2019). The Linkage between licit drugs and HIV/AIDS. Conflict and their impact on Socio-economic development in Africa. Background paper commissioned by the Drug Control Focal Point, ESCAS Department. Addis Ababa Ethiopia: Organisation of Africa Unity.
- [10] Williams, R. (2014). *Attitudes*. Lecture notes Adapted from Liska; Handbook of Social Psychology [The cognitive perspective]; Michener et al; Myers; Social Psychology, edited by Arnold Kahn; "A new look at dissonance theory;" Ajzen and Fishbein piece in Contemporary Issues in Social Psychology; Rich Williams's dissertation. Retrieved from <https://www3.nd.edu/~rwilliam/xsoc530/attitudes.htm/>.
- [11] Simonson, S. & Maushak, D. (2011). A Vygotskian sociocultural perspective on immersion education. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, 1(1), 101-129.
- [12] Young, J. (2017). Deviance. In P. Worsley (Ed.), *The new introducing sociology* (407-450). (3rd ed.). Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.
- [13] The Guardian Newspaper (2021, November 25). Mkpuru mmiri destroying the Southeast youths in Nigeria. P. 11.
- [14] Vanguard Newspaper. (2021, November 29). Methamphetamine hydrochloride (Mkpuru Mmiri) killing the future of youths in the Southeast. P.8.
- [15] Adogu, P., Njelita, I., Egenti, B. N. & Ubajaka, C. P. (2015). Awareness, knowledge, perception and attitude towards prescription medicines abuse among medicines prescribers and dispensers in Nnewi Nigeria. *Pharmacology and Pharmacy*, 6(5), 254-266.

- [16] Yusuf, F. A. & Okanlawon, E. A. (2019). Assessment of secondary school students' knowledge and attitude towards drug abuse: implications for counselling. *Educational Journal of the University of Patras UNESCO Chair*, 6(2), 156-167.
- [17] Fayombo, G. A., & Aremu, S. (2020) Drug education and its effects on the educational Performance of some adolescents' drug abusers in Ibadan. The Counsellor, drug abusers in Ibadan. *The Counsellor*, 18(5), 378-387.
- [18] Fatoye, F. O., & Morakinyo, O. (2012). Substance use among secondary school students in rural and urban communities in South Western Nigeria. *East African Medical Journal*, 79, 299-305.
- [19] Oshodi, O. Y., Aina, O., F., & Onajole. A. T. (2020). Substance use among secondary school Students in urban setting in Nigeria: Prevalence and associated factors. *African Journal of Psychiatry*, 13, 52-57.
- [20] Kaime-Atterhog, W., & Ahlberg B. M. (2018). Are street children beyond rehabilitation? Understanding the life situation of street boys through ethnographic methods in Nakuru, Kenya. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 30(12), 1345-1354.
- [21] Gajalakshmi, V., Asma, S., & Warren, C. W. (2014). Tobacco survey among youth in South India. *Asian Pacific Journal of Cancer Prevention*, 5, 273-278.



© The Author(s) 2023. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).