



Influence of Parental Alcohol Consumption on Children's Drinking Behaviour: A Psychoanalytic Assessment

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of parental alcohol consumption on children's drinking behavior. Using survey sampling technique, 120 undergraduate students from Faculty of Social Sciences, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) in Agbani metropolis were drawn to participate in the study voluntarily. The Ewing (1982) cage questionnaire was designed to access alcoholism. The cage alcoholism questionnaire was adapted for Nigeria use by Abumiyi (1984) with reliability coefficient of 0.72, hence the instrument was considered valid and reliable. A survey design was used in this study, and chi-square (χ^2 2x2) contingency table was used for data analysis. The result showed that there was no statistically significant influence of father's alcohol consumption on children drinking behavior. The result equally indicated that there was no statistically significant influence of mother's alcohol consumption on children drinking behaviour. These results may be as a result of the children of the alcohol addict or drunkard suffering from social stigma due to their parents' psychomotor impairment. They may perceive their parents' behaviour as a disgrace as such their integrity and personality reduced to nothing and would not like to be influenced by such attitudes, rather may decide to drink responsibly. The results were discussed in relation to relevant literatures.

Keywords: *Parents, Alcohol Consumption, Children, Drinking Behaviour*

INTRODUCTION

Over the years human beings have used various substances in reducing physical and psychological pains or altering propensity as such many use alcohol to alleviate distress, worries, anger, anxiety, problems and depression which tend to be universal characteristic of human being. The unmonitored and excessive use of such substances is symptomatic of combined effect of physical, psychological and mental vulnerability and environmental pressure. Health experts have discovered some intoxicant that affects the central nervous system, relieving physical and mental anguish or producing euphoria (Mgbenkemdi, 1999). In Nigeria today, alcohol use is problematic because of its physiological, psychological, anthropological and psychosocial effect on the addicts and the society for example, there is evidence that prolong use of alcohol causes serious damages to the endocrine gland, and pancreas lead to heart failure, hypertension, stroke and capillary hemorrhage and also destroy brain cell. It also reduces the effectiveness of the immune system resulting in increased susceptibility to infection and cancer (Eze and Omeje, 1999). Davison and Neale (2007) found that alcohol dependence, causes an occupational difficulties, quarrels with family and friends sometimes violence and intoxicate, frequent absences from work or school possibly loss of job or failure in academic work, failure in family responsibilities, abnormal behaviours, not obeying traffic, bad driving and accidents eventually leading to untimely death.

Ihezue (2008) pointed out that many of the problems encountered by human service and health care professionals are either caused by or at least complicated by alcohol or drug abuse in one form or the other. He further pointed out that once an individual is engaged in



an alcohol use, that he/she grip of compulsion which leaves him little room for initiative. He contends that the society is also affected by the manifestation of the substance effect on the individual, which includes psychopathology, aggressive behavior and psychomotor impairment. Survey findings suggest that heavy use of alcohol during teenage years may well contribute to psychological problems in adulthood (Davison and Neale, 2007). Research finding has it that alcohol use causes high blood pressure, major convulsive seizure and suicide due to depression assault, impaired vision, hearing and motor skills also occurred. The alcohol user may also experience numbness and tingling in the arms and legs caused by nerve damage. These results, in the staggering walk often seen coming out from bars. Long term use can cause brain damage (Korsakoff's syndrome) (Davison and Neale, 2007). Heavy intake of alcohol also has damaging effect on the stomach and intestinal system. Irritation of the stomach lining causes peptic ulcers, bleeding lesions and cancer. Even though many people have done research in this area in Nigeria like Obot and Olaniyi (1991), etc. they have not been able to establish all the factors which predisposes people to alcohol use even when the damaging effect are clear to them.

A research conducted by Owie (1999) found a positive correlation between alleviation (not well integrated with the family) and the tendency for Nigeria adolescents to alcohol/abuse drug. Again establishing causes effect relationship is not easy. Personal factors may not be ruled out entirely in accounting for alcohol/drug abuse in some individuals. But their role in alcohol abuse may not be significant when other factors as learning and socio-cultural variables are controlled as noted by Burns (1988), Costing and Dragurs (1989). In a related finding by Nathian and O'Brien (2017) who studied the stage of alcohol use on students personality measures, parent's measure, peer measure and measure drug use to four hundred and three (403) blacks and five hundred and twenty-nine (529) whites, 1st and 2nd year high school students. Result indicated that (a) domains of personality, peer and parents are important in differentiating among stages of alcohol use. (b) Alcohol use by parents and peer interact with socialization techniques of parents and peer and with personality attitudes of the students, and (c) Parents and peer positions and negative reinforcement are differentially effective depending on the student's personality attributes. Again, Williams (2015) carried out a study titled parent-peer influence as a predictor of alcohol use. The result of the study showed the influence of the most parent-peer on the individual management in alcohol use.

Similarly, Morey (2010), carried out a study on the processes of parental influence on adolescent alcohol use, a development perspective. He reviewed data from a longitudinal study conducted with high school students to examine the nature of families and processes of parental influence on adolescents' alcohol involvement within a general development perspective. Subjects were 4,033 adolescent-parents dyads, 879 adolescent best friends' dyad, and 1,112 adolescent best friend parents' friends. the result of the study showed that socio-chemo graphic characteristic, were the strongest determinant of friendship formation with participation in illicit drugs following the next in importance for initiation in Marijuana use, while parental factors gained importance in transition from Marijuana use to the use of other illicit drugs. Interpersonal influence of peer's on-going Marijuana and



alcohol use resulted from modeling and transmission more than from social reinforcement and transmission of values.

In a related study by Laban, Carolyn and Smart (1982) on drinking and drug use among Ontario Indian students of native North American percentages who were matched with 64 non-native students of five demographic variables. Comparisons of alcohol and drug use between parents suggested that the native participants used alcohol and drugs in a manner similar to that of their peers of the same geographical local and socio-economic background. According to O'Donnell and Clayton (2012) studied interpersonal influence on male drug and drug use intentions. They examined the relationship between 11, 2, 5, and 10, 20-30 year old male perceptions of the drug behaviour of their fathers, mothers, siblings, current friends and wives/female partners and past drug use and future drug use intentions, stimulants. For each drug, current friends and wives/parents drug behavior were most strongly associated with participants past and future drug use intentions. Parental drug behavior was only minimally associated with drug use future intentions. Similarly, Enrich and Connel, (1986) studied the relationship of personality on alcohol and marijuana use among students, using interview method. The analysis of variance showed that male students use alcohol and marijuana with greater frequency than their female counterparts ($P < 0.05$) chi-square analysis were significant ($P < 0.0$) for male participants of all age and for female participants of the ages 18.21years. They concluded that the relationship of personality to drugs appears to be stronger for male than female at least between the ages of 12 and 18. They however reported that the sex different differ after the age of 18 years. The findings portray drug abuse as a major problem of males. But the fact remains that interviews and questionnaires are not good methods of studying drug abuse and cultural stereotypes might have influenced their findings.

Theoretical framework

Alcohol dependence is a profoundly damaging disorder whose impact spreads far beyond the one who suffers from it. But understanding the causes of drug use and dependence is complex; because of this many theories would be needed to explain the onset, maintenance and dependency on alcohol use. The theories that strive to answer these questions shall be reviewed as following

Personality Theory

The personality theory attempts to explain drug by positioning that there are personality traits common to all addicts. Such characteristics have been identified as inability to delay gratification, low tolerance for frustration or noxious stimuli: poor impulses control, high emotional dependency on other people, poor coping ability, and low self esteem (Enekwechi, 1984). Family background was proposed as the breeding ground for these personality inadequacies. Such factors in the family have been identified as absence of maternal warmth, passive or hostile made parent, a parent who may serve as a model for criminal behaviour and the father, and family instability (Enekwechi, 1984). It was hypothesized that such individual vacillate on the resolution of difficult realities and once an appropriate drug is available, it provides an antidote to all those inadequacies, anaesthetizing emotional



turmoil, providing a world devoid of street, inflating an esteem of self and relieving of the individual of cognizing the need to deal with the hitherto worrying realities (Eze and Omeje, 1999). Enekeuchi (1984) notes that some individuals find it difficult to handle reality and hence drug (alcohol) are made available. It provides those "needs". He believes that some drug relieves emotional pains, produce euphoria, inflate the ego and modify realism so that the addict does not worry about dealing with reality anymore.

Psychoanalytical Theory

The psychoanalytical theory explains alcohol (drug) abuse as the disturbance in the development of personality in infancy and early childhood. It assures that a child is unable to make successful transition from one psychosexual stage to next. His personality becomes fixed there and the rest of his life, he will manifest the immature personality characteristics of that state. So excessive drinking at a later life is a means of obtaining oral gratification which was not satisfied during the oral stage of psychosexual development or a regression to that stage as a resort to coping with overwhelming problems of life. This theory considers the use of drugs as an escape from reality. Another explanation is that drinking is a manifestation of the basic force that is inherent in human being and pushes them towards annihilation, as such; it is a defense mechanism adapted to produced motional conflicts or dominate guilt which the superego component of personality bore. Personality theorists believe that the superego is the aspect of personality that is soluble in alcohol. Another explanation of excessive drinking is that it is a primary process (unrealistic fantasy-laden strategy) adopted by such persons to allow for expression of repressed conflicts, such as being very powerful and important (MC-cleland, 2002). According to Gibbin (1995) alcohol abuse is as a result of an abnormal relationship with parents and over abundance of love on the child, it could also be with rejection or over protection of child. According to him, alcohol/drug is chosen to ease and escape the psychological pains of social maladjustment like other postulations of psychoanalytical theories. It is very difficult to test the assertions due to the methodological problems arising from the nature of the postulations.

Learning Theory

Learning theorist Bandura, Ross & Ross (1963) explains that alcohol abuse and dependence is a response tendency built and maintained through the same basic principles that underlies any other forms of learning. The four principles of learning used in explaining alcohol abuse includes classical conditioning perspective, the instrumental learning, the cognitive and social learning perspectives.

The instrumental learning approach sees drug as abuse like alcohol, cannabis or cigarette as what result from a learning experience in which the individual who used any of them found that the particular substance produced a feeding of well being earned him or her some reward from his/her group and to escape from on aversive stimuli such as anxiety, emotional distress, or conflicts arising from perception of deprivation, or social inequalities and perceived subjugation etc. consequently the behaviour is repeated until a high degree of habit strength is built. Jessor (2007) point out that the most basic factor behind drug is that, it is functional purposive and instrumental towards the attainment of goals. Persons who have difficulty resolving Erickson's existential challenges such as basic trust, anatomy,



initiative, and especially identity are likely to have low self esteem (Erickson's, 1980) and may use drugs as instrument to manage these seemingly challenges (Jones, 1992). Cognitive expectation can also head to drug curiosity anticipated effects of substances and cognition of drug use as a necessity for acceptance by a group (eg. peers). For instance, feature prominently in drug abuse. The classical conditioning principle underlies the shining of particular drug of abuse by individual who wish to avoid the negative effects produced by the drugs upon initial experiences with them like (coughing and nausea in smoking). Bandura, Ross & Ross (1963) observed that people abuse drug by initiating or observing others who abuse it just like modeling in learning. These initiation processes have been excellently demonstrated under highly controlled experimental manipulations.

Socio-cultural Theory

It has been noted (Marcella and Dash-scheurs, 2008) that culture overwhelming determines a people's cognitive style, coping strategies and general life pattern. The socio-cultural theory assures that harsh social and economic condition which some people find themselves could be a major factor in alcohol/drug abuse. It assumes that the deprivation, frustration, unemployment and other related dehumanizing psychological conditions imposed on the individual by the wider society all help to build pervasive feeling of insecurity, inadequacy, rejection, hopelessness consequently drug becomes an antecedent to escape from them. Cultural attitudes, social norms and expectances of behaviour imposed on the individual certain patterns of perception and interaction with his or her physical and social environment including the use and abuse of substance. Some sociological theorists such as Wilson (1994) agreed that attitudinal drinking and drinking practices in a culture could play a major role in predisposing a person to excessive drinking of an alcohol. These theorists believe that social variable such as occupation, legal availability, societal instability, affective illness attribution and expectancy effect could play a major role in translating that predisposition to actual addiction.

General acceptance of substance abuse within a society will inevitably lead to higher abuse rates. Marijuana use in the 1960's is a prime example of this. It was widely used simply because it was acceptable in the society. Another example of this is the use of Marijuana in colleges, campuses. Among college students about 1 in 2 have smoked Marijuana at least once (Burns, 1988). These campuses also encounter some of the highest rates of alcohol abuse in such a confined community, simply due to the fact that it is society accepted by the peer group living in that environment. The urban subculture has been found to be associated with prevalence of drug among secondary school students in Nigeria (Abiode and Bankole, 1989). Another socio-cultural factor that plays a crucial role in drug abuse is some role and privileged provided by a culture, because there is a wide spread of acceptance of males drinking in public places in many culture, no doubt, to assert an image of male potency and dominion over women are inhibited from engaging in such acts.

The socio-cultural theory has mostly been applied in the prevention of drug abuse. For example, the National Drug Law Enforcement agency has sponsored the establishment and functioning of Anti-drug clubs by students in many Nigerian Universities and



Colleges (Jagaba, 1997). But the theory is not comprehensive enough in explaining all intricacies in drug abuse. For instance, it does not provided the reason why all the people subjected to the same harsh social and economic conditions do not take drugs to escape their hardship or why all the members of a cultural group are not addicts. Drug free clubs on stream drugs salvation force magazine. Although there have been various research publications and studies on the consequences of parental alcohol consumption on mental and social health of the children because they see their parents as role models and paradigmatic individuals in the society, the use of these alcohol substance by parents seems to be steadily on increase. Parents are found patronizing these joints drinking to stupor not minding the economic condition of the country while many of them shy away from their responsibilities. As such, their children watch them not leaving up to their responsibilities as parents. Akin to this therefore, the researcher would want to found out whether the fathers alcohol consumption has any significant influence on children drinking behaviour. Or the mothers' alcohol consumption has any significant influence on children drinking behaviour. Would the children like to take after their parents or not since many of them look up to their parents as role models.

In relation to influence of parental alcohol consumption on children's' drinking behaviour studies have revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between the parental alcohol consumption life experience and children's drinking behaviour. Since in the extent literature, these studies carried out in non-Igbo culture, revealed that parental alcohol consumption influences children's drinking behaviour negatively, the present study is not in tandem or did not explore this relationship in Igbo cultural environment. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the parental alcohol use will influence children's drinking behaviour. It was hypothesized as follows:

1. That parental alcohol consumption would not significantly influence children's drinking behaviour.

METHOD

Participants

A total of 120 undergraduate students comprised ninety-three (93) males and twenty-seven (27) females from Faculty of Social Sciences in Enugu State University of Science and Technology in Agbani metropolis using criterion sampling technique. Their ages ranged between 17 and 27 years. They were all Christians and from second years to final years, have Igbo cultural background. They were all living in hostels or within Agbani town. They were volunteers, selected from drinking joints, precisely Dinners Caffé, Frayo, Chika Best and Omor bar Agbani.

Instrument

The Ewing (1982) cage questionnaire was designed to access alcoholism. It has 5 response options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The cage alcoholism questionnaire



was adapted for Nigeria use by Abumiya (1984) with reliability coefficient of 0.72, hence the instrument was considered valid and reliable.

Procedure

The permission and cooperation of the undergraduate students were solicited and obtained voluntarily. 200 copies of cage alcoholism questionnaire was produced and distributed to the participants in the four drinking joints; Dinners Caffé, Frayo, Chika Best and Omor bar Agbani. Out of these, only 120 were completed correctly, 50 were poorly completed and 30 copies were not recovered maybe because some of them opted to go home with the questionnaire. 4 research assistants 1 from each department helped the researcher to collect the data. Participants were told that participating in the study was voluntary and they received no financial or monetary reward for their participation in the study. The participants were equally assured that their response would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Design/Statistic

A survey design was used in this study, and chi-square (χ^2 2x2) contingency table was used for data analysis.

RESULTS

Table 1: Summary table of chi-squares for father's drinking behaviour

Alcohol Use

	Alcoholic students	Non-alcoholic students	Total
Non-alcohol father's	17	12	29
Alcohol father's	56	35	91
Total	73	47	120

From table 1 above, the result showed that calculated χ^2 (0.07) for father's alcohol consumption is less than the critical value = 3.84, at $p > 0.5$. This indicates that father's alcohol use has no significant influence on children drinking behaviour.

Table 2: Summary table of chi-squares for mother's drinking behaviour

	Alcoholic students	Non-alcoholic students	Total
Non-alcohol mother's	51	33	84
Alcohol mother's	12	14	26
Total	73	47	120

From table 2, the result also showed that the calculated value χ^2 (2.33) for mother's alcohol consumption less than the critical value = 3.84, at $P > 0.5$. This indicates that mother's alcohol use has no significant influence on children drinking behaviour.

DISCUSSION

The study focused on the influence of parental consumption of alcohol on children's drinking behaviour. Two hypotheses were postulated and tested. The result obtained supported the



first null hypothesis, which stated that father's alcohol consumption will not significantly influence children's drinking behavior. There was no statistically significant influence of father's alcohol use on the children's drinking behavior, $\chi^2 (0.07) = 3.84$, $df = 1$, at $p > 0.5$. The null hypothesis was accepted. In other words, father's alcohol consumption or use may not be a factor on children's drinking behaviour. This finding is not in line with Enrich and Connel, (1986). The finding is not also in tandem with the earlier study by McClelland (2002) who studied the parent-peer group appeared to be more important predictor than parental influence as a predictor of alcohol use. The present finding is also not in support of Kandel (2000) finding, which stated that parental influence functional in transition from marijuana use to the use of alcohol. Peer drinking may be a stronger predictor of alcohol use among parents. This is because, according to social learning theory postulated by Bandura, Ross & Ross (1963), for a model's behavior to be effectively initiated by the model must be someone similar to the client; perhaps, young people identify more with peers for example follow undergraduate students than with parents hence, parents drinking did not significantly influence children's drinking behavior. The second hypothesis held that mother's alcohol consumption will not significantly influence children's drinking behaviour. The finding on this regard supported the hypothesis. The result showed that there is no significant influence of mother's alcohol consumption or use on children's drinking behaviour. This finding is not in tandem with Bandura (1963) and Jessor (2007). This finding showed that chorus of mother's who drink alcohol influence their children also. There was no statistically significant influence of mother's alcohol use on the children's drinking behaviour $\chi^2 (2.33)$ $df = 1$, at $p > 0.5$. Thus, in university environment there may be other factors outside parental influence such as academic stress, cultism, peer-group influence, social gathering or club, belongingness, identity crisis, ego assertiveness self-esteem even either low or high self- efficacy etc which could as well influence children's drinking behavior.

Implication of the Finding

Based on this study, children's alcohol usage in some extent has some devastating effects on the academic life of the children. Since the participants in the study were undergraduate students who eventually will become leaders of tomorrow, soaking themselves in alcoholic drinking often will retard their production capacities and industrious capability which would benefit the nation immensely. In other words, high alcoholism among parents would rob our society its gross domestic product because the parents would not be productive due to deterioration of their nerves as a result of alcoholism. In other words, those parental roles/responsibilities would not be played. Alcoholism by the parents can lead to the rapid deteriorate of the health which to some extent could lead to high blood pressure, cirrhosis of the liver, stomach ulcer, gastritis and pancreatic problems leading to the increase of death number of fathers etc. Hence, if alcohol consumption are not check mated among the parents, the possibility that there will be an increase in number of those who will be suffering from the mentioned diseases.

Limitation of the Study

One of the limitations of this study is that using questionnaire in data collection the respondents might not be all sincere in their responses. That is, may fake answer to hide



their real self. Another limitation of this study is that the sample used may not be true representation of the population needed in the study, hence they volunteered. This will lead to difficulty in generalization of the findings. Finally, the future researchers should involved sample size that is true representative of the population of study as such the generalization of the findings would be controlled.

CONCLUSION

The result of the present study has shown that parental alcohol consumption has no influence on children's drinking behaviour thus, there was no significant influence of father's drinking behaviour, $\chi^2 (0.07) = 3.84$, $df = 1$, at $P > .05$. And there was also no significant influence of mother's alcohol use on children's drinking behaviour $\chi^2 (2.33) = 3.84$, $df = 1$, at $P > .05$. However, the economic demands of the family may make it imperative on parents to engage on alcohol consumption to have a psychological relieve and otherwise. But that does not mean that those parents should not drink responsibly so that it would not be noticeable in their daily activities and life. These results supported the notion that alcohol addict or drunkard is bad as such the integrity of the personality is questioned with the attendant social stigma attached and was suggested that parents should drink responsibly and remain a model to their children.

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