

AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE RISK OF CONSUMING ALCOHOL AMONGST STUDENTS OF RIVERS STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol is a substance that is well known to people living in both urban and rural areas across the globe. This substance is mostly use in different occasions such as welcoming guests and in celebrations. The aim of this study is to investigate the level of awareness and attitude towards the risk of consuming alcohol amongst students of Rivers State University. The study was a cross-sectional study involving 52 students (14 male and 36 female) with ages less than 18 years and greater than 18 years. Each questionnaire was distributed to each student to filed and return and the study lasted for 4 weeks. The study shows that 67.3% of the students took alcohol and 32.7% of the students do not take alcohol and 85.1% have taking alcohol for a

period less than 5 years while 14.9% of the students have taken alcohol for a period greater than 5 years. Also, the study revealed that the reasons for which students consumed alcohol are: boosting moral confidence -1, peer group – 11, stress – 6, family – 7 and psychological – 2. The study revealed that 37.1% of the students bought alcohol and 62.9% do not buy it

themselves. 91.8% of the students have been enlightened and 8.2% of the students have not been enlighten and 22 of the students were enlightened by the school management, 13 by the family, 2 by peers and 13 by NGO.

KEYWORDS: Awareness, attitude, risk, students, alcohol.

INTRODUCTION

Alcohol is a substance that is well known to people living in both urban and rural areas across the globe. Alcohol is popular and more available in our immediate environment. Availability of alcohol without regulations by the authority in place has made it possible or exposes students to engage the consumption of alcohol (Gbaranor et al, 2018). This substance is mostly use in different occasions such as welcoming guests and in celebrations. In most communities in Nigeria alcohol is taken first in the morning as breakfast and it is mostly mixed with either fresh leaves, roots or dried leaves, roots and bark of a tree as medicinal. However, taken this alcohol in excess has influenced the lifestyle of the individual. Some of the individual who took alcohol in excess may lost his or her properties, some fell down and slept off along the roadside, some suddenly becomes loquacious and some developed psychological problems. It has been noted that depression, anxiety and alcohol misuse frequently occur together (Teesson et al, 2009). Alcohol may be used to help cope with depression and anxiety disorders and may worsen these disorders (Fergusson et al, 2009; Hides et al, 2008). Brenner et al., 1999 noted that students who had considered suicide were at increased odds of using tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs. The links between psychological distress and risky drinking and negative consequences of alcohol consumption in students need interventions for alcohol misuse that aim to improve overall mental health literacy and promote more effective means of coping with psychological distress (Morgan and Jorm, 2009). A recent US three-year multi-site study found that social norms marketing campaigns can be an effective component of campus efforts to reduce heavy drinking among first-year students, especially if implemented when students arrive on campus (DeLong et al, 2006). Evidence suggests that focusing on events mostly associated with high alcohol consumption, like the 21st birthday parties and holidays, could also be beneficial (Lewis et al, 2008; Neighbors et al, 2007; Neighbors et al, 2009).

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study was a cross-sectional involving 52 students (male and female) of Rivers State University, Port Harcourt and the study lasted for a period of four weeks. The questionnaires

were well structured and given to each student who filled it independently and thereafter return the filled questionnaire to the researchers. Statistical data collected and analysed, using Microsoft Excel. P value < 0.05 was significant.

RESULTS

Table 1: Showing number of Students.

52
100%

Table 2: Students who have taken alcohol.

YES	NO
33	16
67.3%	32.7%

Table 3: Students who bought alcohol.

YES	NO
13	22
37.1%	62.9%

Table 4: Level of awareness of on the effects of alcohol.

YES	NO
45	4
91.8%	8.2%

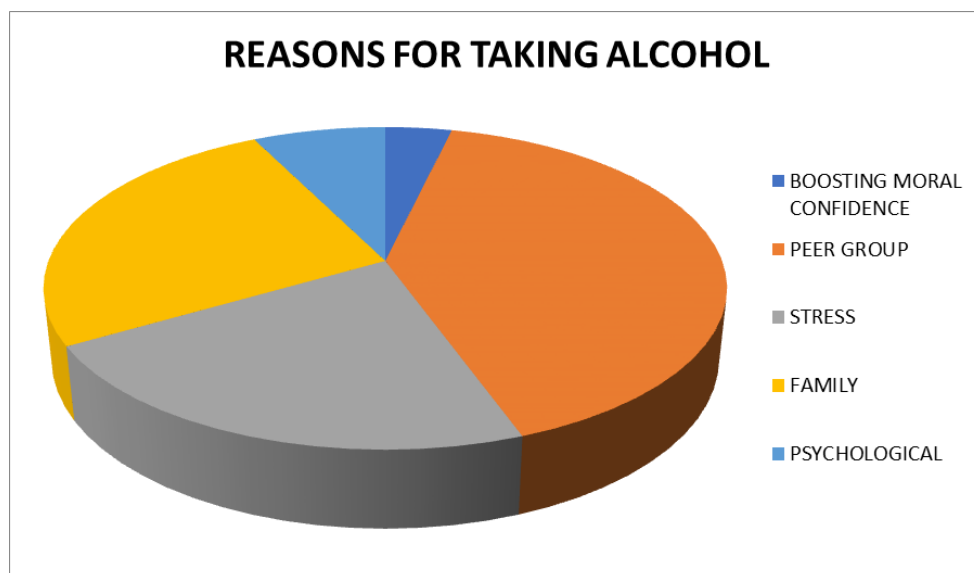


Figure 1: Reasons for taking alcohol.

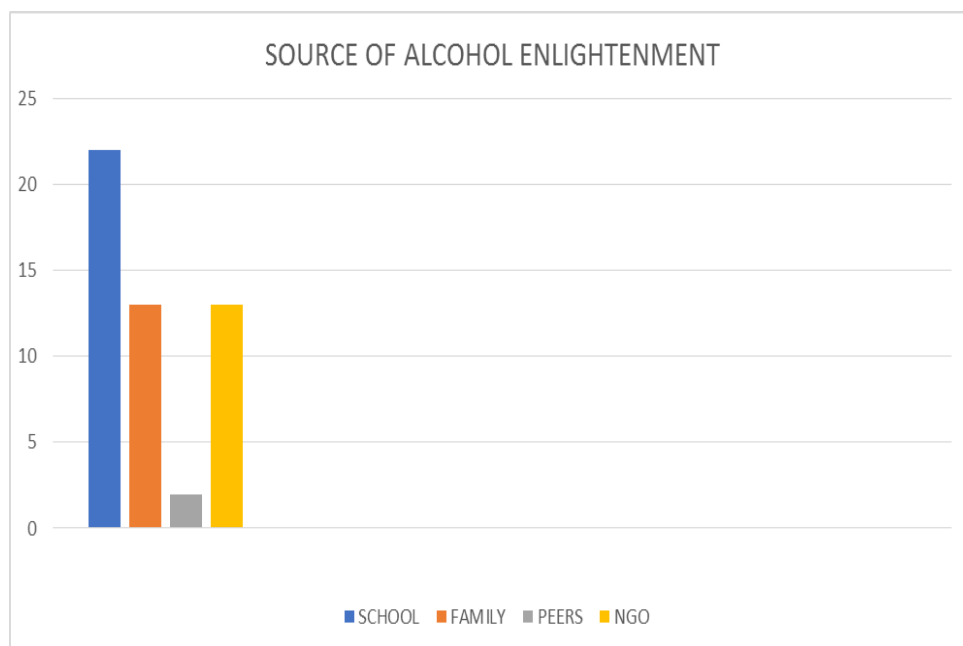


Figure 2: Source of Awareness.

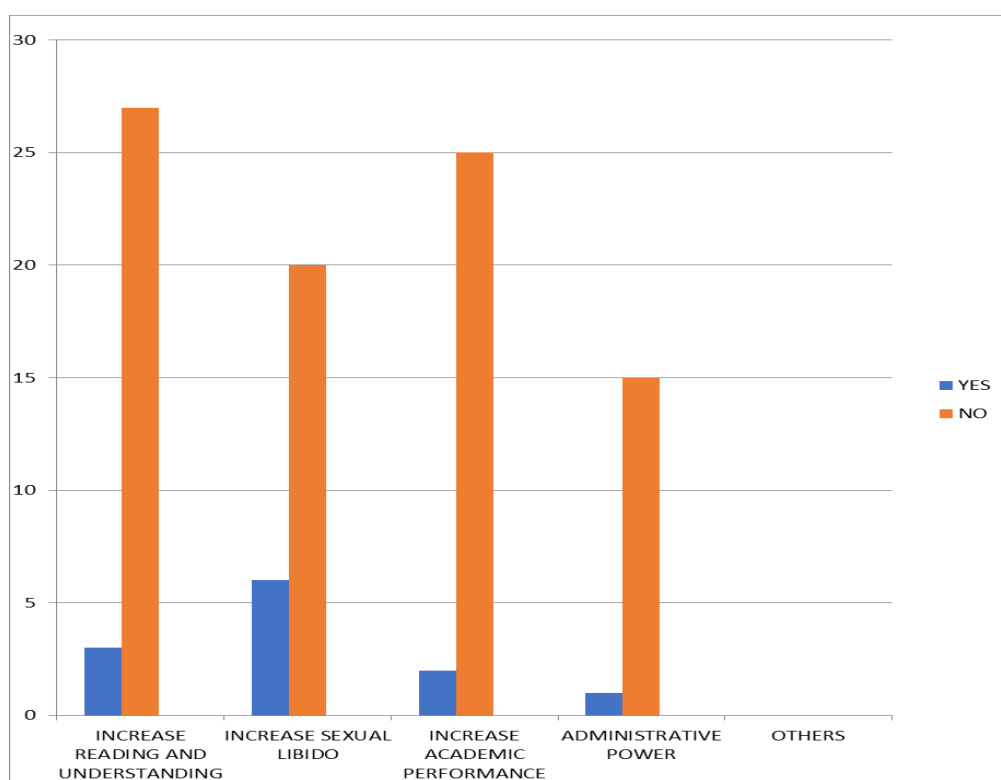


Figure 3: Risk of alcohol consumption.

DISCUSSION

Alcohol is a substance that is well known to people living in both urban and rural areas across the globe. Alcohol is popular and more available in our immediate environment. Availability of alcohol without regulations by the authority in place has made it possible or exposes

students to engage the consumption of alcohol (Gbaranor et al, 2018). This substance is mostly use in different occasions such as welcoming guests and in celebrations. In most communities in Nigeria alcohol is taken first in the morning as breakfast and it is mostly mixed with either fresh leaves, roots or dried leaves, roots and bark of a tree as medicinal. However, taken this alcohol in excess has influenced the lifestyle of the individual. Some of the individual who took alcohol in excess may lost his or her properties, some fell down and slept off along the roadside, some suddenly becomes loquacious and some developed psychological problems. Students are not left out in taken alcohol. In fact, alcohol consumption now among students has become hobby. Virtually every nook and craning students are busy taking alcohol in different forms.

The study revealed that 67.3% of the students have taken alcohol and 33.7% of students have not taken alcohol (Table 2). Though, the school management did not legalize alcohol consumption on campus, but alcohol is easily accessible on the campus and around the neighbourhood. Also, the study revealed that 37.1% of the students bought alcohol themselves and 62.9% (Table 3) of the students did not buy directly, probably this may be due to peers.

Our study shows that 1 student took alcohol to boost moral confidence, 11 students – peer group, stress – 6 students, family – 7 students and 2 students due to psychological problem (Figure 1). These are reasons why students involved in alcohol consumption. This shows that some families are the architect of students consuming alcohol because it runs through the family. Peer group is also another reason why most students consumed alcohol following our study. Probably because when students are not under the watch of their parent or guidance, they join bad company who bought and initiated them into drinking alcohol.

Also, the study revealed that the risk of taken alcohol was noted among the students in that the desired in which alcohol was consumed were not met (Figure 3). This may be due to ignorance about the effects of alcohol consumption.

However, the study revealed that greater percentage of the students have been given awareness on the risk of consuming alcohol by the school management (Table 4). Our study revealed that the school management is the greater source of creating awareness about the risk of consuming alcohol to students (Figure 2). This study shows that the peer group is the least probably because they play a major role in luring students into alcohol consumption

without taken into consideration the aftermaths of alcohol consumption. This study agreed with Gbaranor et al, (2018) that socialization is one of the gateway students involved in alcohol consumption and in course of socializing, students become addicted to alcohol consumption. The family as the first agent of socialization should improve the level of awareness to their subjects before gaining admission into tertiary institutions. Again, the NGO should also step-up awareness campaign among students to curb the menace associated to alcohol consumption.

The awareness created by the school management on the risk of alcohol consumption has led to the greater number of students (79.3%) to quit alcohol consumption. The school management should increase the awareness campaign to ensure that the remaining percentage of students quit alcohol consumption thereby put an end to social vices among students.

CONCLUSION

Alcohol is a substance that is easily access by students and greater percentage of the students have taken alcohol and this access are due to peer group who lured some of the students. Desired to which alcohol was consumed was defeated. However, the school management has done well by caring out awareness campaign which has led to greater percentage of students to quite alcohol consumption.

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