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Determinants of knowledge and use of psychoactive substance among commercial motorcyclist in Sokoto metropolis, Northwest Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Background

Substance abuse, also known as drug abuse, is a patterned use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods which are harmful to themselves or others, and is a form of substance related disorder. Riding commercial motorcycle entails lot of risk, compounded by abuse of drugs, the scenario can only be worse. This study aimed to assess the determinants of knowledge and use of psychoactive substances among commercial motorcyclist in Sokoto metropolis.

Methods

The study was a cross sectional descriptive study conducted in Sokoto metropolis, among Commercial motorcyclist, 253 respondents were recruited using multi stage sampling technique. Data was obtained using interviewer administered structured questionnaire containing 47-item structured questions. Data was analysed using IBM statistical software package version 21, 5% was set as level of significance

Result

Majority of respondent believed that use of alcohol 214 (84.6), cannabis 147 (58.1) and codeine 171 (67.6) can lead to mental problems. Thirty percent of the respondents reported ever use of psychoactive substances. Most of the respondents (49.3%) initiated use of Psychoactive substances between 16-20 years of age. Respondents who had some formal education had less odds of ever using psychoactive substances (p=0.001, OR= 0.337). Respondents who had ever encouraged fellow commercial motorcyclist to use psychoactive substances had 22 times odds of ever having used psychoactive substances (p=0.000)

Conclusion

Substance abuse is prevalent among commercial motorcyclist. Despite good knowledge of psychoactive substances and the consequences associated with it, the use was still relatively high. The main predictor of ever use of psychoactive substances was willingness to be friends with someone who use psychoactive substance. There is need for continuous counselling and education of commercial motorcyclist, by road safety workers, on the dangers associated with use of psychoactive substances.

Keywords: Knowledge, Use, Psychoactive Substances, Commercial Motorcyclists

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INTRODUCTION

Drug and substance abuse have been described as a global problem causing both social and public health havoc in many countries.[1-3] Substance abuse, also known as drug abuse, is a patterned use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods which are harmful to themselves or others, and is a form of substance related disorder.[4]

There are different ways of taking drugs, including eating, drinking, smoking, sniffing or nasal insufflations as well as injection into the skin (subcutaneous), muscle (intramuscular), or veins (intravenous).[5] Commonly abused substances include alcohol, cigarette, Kolanut, valium, codeine, cannabis, cocaine, heroin etc. Before the beginning of human history and even now, people have found ways to alter their bodies and their consciousness by taking some of these substances.[5]

The use of motorcycle for passenger transport gained acceptance and recognition in Nigeria after the economic recession of the early 1980's. The lack of adequate and sustainable public transport cum poor urban planning in most cities created a transport gap for the motorcyclist to fill in passenger transport needs. Motorcycle use as a means of transportation in Nigeria heightened due to its convenience, affordability, easy manoeuvrability and ability to navigate through poor road networks and traffic congestions found in large and commercial cities, compared to four wheeled vehicles.[6] Commercial motorcyclist contribute significantly to social life and poverty reduction in communities where they operate, the relative low costs of purchase and operation/ maintenance keeps attracting numerous job seekers, thus helping to reduce unemployment rate.[7] The use of motorcycles for public transportation in Nigeria also brought with it an increase in the number of road traffic accident involving motorcycles with the riders as well as the passengers sustaining various degrees of injuries ranging from head injury, limb injuries, blunt abdominal and chest injuries.[8, 9] These injuries come with associated huge socio-economic consequences to the injured, their families and the society at large.[8, 9] In the accidents and emergency units of most health facilities, significant cases of road traffic accidents victims (motor cars and motor cycles) are seen.[10] Motorcycles have a 7-fold increase in the accident rate for vehicle person per mile and a 17-fold fatality rate compared with motor vehicles.[10]

Commercial motorcyclist has a parent association called Amalgamated Commercial Motorcycle Riders Association of Nigeria (ACOMORAN). This association is headed by a state chairman and has different unit heads. There are about 60,000 commercial motorcycle riders (registered and unregistered) in sokoto state as a whole. In sokoto metropolis, there are 15,000 commercial motorcyclists registered with the ACOMORAN, they operate a daily register to monitor who operates and/or does not operate. The units in the metropolis are Sokoto north 12 units with 2556 registered riders; Sokoto south 24 units with 3048 registered riders; Dange Shuni 18 units with 2548 registered riders; Wammako 36 units with 4233 registered riders and Kware with 1200 registered riders. Like in many urban areas, motorcycles in Sokoto are manned by youth. Riding the two-wheeled machine which is exposed to the open entails lot of risk, but the fact that it is risky, makes it more popular with the youths. When this youthful exuberance is compounded by abuse of drugs, the scenario can only be worse.

Worldwide efforts are still being made to reduce accidents and deaths in the various means of transport, this is aimed at saving lives which ultimately reduces waste of human and material resources.[10] This study aimed at determining the knowledge and use of psychoactive substance among commercial motorcyclist in sokoto metropolis.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Sokoto metropolis which comprises of Sokoto north, Sokoto South, Parts of wammako, Kware LGAs. The study population comprised of all commercial motorcyclist registered with ACOMORAN operating within sokoto metropolis; having worked as a commercial motorcyclist for 6 months was in inclusion criteria; not having plate numbers on their motorcycles was an exclusion criteria.

The study was cross sectional in nature, 253 respondents were recruited using multi stage sampling technique. Stage one; two out of the four metropolitan LGAs were selected using simple random sampling technique (balloting); (Sokoto north, 12 units with 2556 registered riders and Wammako, 36 units with 4233 registered riders were selected). Stage two; One third of the total units in each local government was selected using simple random sampling technique. Stage three; in each unit, proportional allocation with respect to size of commercial motorcyclist in each unit was used to determine the number of motorcyclist to be recruited, thereafter, consecutive commercial motorcyclist present at the units were recruited into the study until the required sample size for each unit was achieved. The instrument of data collection was a 47-item structured questionnaire containing sections which sought to obtain information on socio-demographic characteristics; respondents knowledge, attitude and use of psychoactive substances. The instrument was pre-tested among commercial motorcyclist in Gwadabawa LGA (an area not in the study site). Data obtained was analysed using IBM statistical software package version 21. Quantitative data was summarized using means and standard deviation, while qualitative variables were summarized using frequency and percentages; chi square test was used to determine factors associated with knowledge and ever use of Psychoactive substances; logistic regression was used to determine predictor of ever use of psychoactive substances. Level of significance was set at 5%.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital Research and Ethics Committee. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from ACOMORAN, in addition, individual consent was obtained from the respondents.

RESULTS

Majority (51.4%) of the respondent were within the age group 25-34years, with a mean age of 29.34 ±7.03 years. Most of the respondents (49%) were married and all the respondent were Muslims, with majority (73.1%) perceiving themselves as being been moderately religious. Majority of the respondent had some formal education. (Table 1)

Table 1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	N	Percent
Age		
15-24	64	25.3
25-34	130	51.4
35-44	49	19.4
45-54	4	4.0
Marital status		
Single	121	47.8
Married	124	49.0
Separated	6	2.4
Widowed	2	0.4
Religion		
Islam	253	100.0
How religious are you		
Very religious	65	25.7
Moderately religious	185	73.1
Not religious	3	1.2
Tribe		
Hausa	233	92.1

Fulani	11	4.3
Others	9	3.6
Educational status		
None	5	2.0
Quranic	80	31.6
Primary	52	20.6
Secondary	81	32.0
Tertiary	35	13.8

Slightly more than half of the respondents (51.8%) own their motorcycle, most (67.7%) were full time operator, with about half earning between 1000-1999 naira per day. They work an average of 10hours/day with an average working experience of 6 years. (Table 2)

Table 2 Occupational Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	N	Percent
Motorcycle Ownership Status		
Own the Motorcycle	131	51.8
Do not own the motorcycle	122	48.2
Type of Operator		
Full Time	170	67.2
Part Time	83	32.8
Working Days/Week		
1-3	14	5.5
4-5	32	12.6
6-7	207	81.8
Working Hours/Day		
2-5	13	5.1
6-9	85	33.6
10-13	131	51.8
14-17	24	9.5
Mean	9.86±0.186	
Daily Income		
<1000	27	10.7
1000-1900	137	54.2
2000-2999	69	27.3
≥3000	20	7.9
Commercial Motorcycling Experience (Years)		
1-5	136	53.8
6-10	85	33.6
11-15	20	7.9
16-20	10	4.0
21-25	1	0.4
26-30	1	0.4
Mean	6.19±0.295	

Majority of the respondents knew that tobacco (79.1), alcohol 229 (90.5), cannabis 214 (84.6) and codeine 200 (79.1) are psycho-active substances. Majority also believed that use of alcohol 214 (84.6), cannabis 147 (58.1) and codeine 171 (67.6) can lead to mental problems. Most of them knew that use of alcohol 206 (81.4), cannabis 129 (51.0) and codeine 159 (60.5) can prevent one from being able to drive motorcycle properly. (Table 3)

Table 3 Respondent Knowledge of Psychoactive Substances

Variables	Correct		Incorrect	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Which of these are psychoactive substances				
Tobacco	200	79.1	53	20.9
Alcohol	229	90.5	24	9.5
Cannabis (Indian)	214	84.6	39	15.4
Codeine (Cough Syrup)	200	79.1	53	20.9
Cocaine	130	51.4	123	48.6
Use of which of these leads to mental problem				
Tobacco	90	35.6	163	64.4
Alcohol	214	84.6	39	15.4
Cannabis (Indian)	147	58.1	106	41.9
Codeine (Cough Syrup)	171	67.6	82	32.4
Cocaine	133	52.6	120	47.4
Which of these substances will prevent you from being able to drive your motorcycle properly				
Tobacco	23	9.1	230	90.9
Alcohol	206	81.4	47	18.6
Cannabis (Indian)	129	51.0	124	49.0
Codeine (Cough Syrup)	153	60.5	100	35.9
Cocaine	85	33.6	168	66.4

Table 4 Respondent Knowledge of Effects of Psychoactive Substances

Variables	Correct Responses		Incorrect Responses	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Can use of psychoactive substances while driving commercial motorcyclist lead to road traffic accidents?	233	92.1	20	7.9
Is it proper to use psychoactive substance to reduce stress and fatigue while driving commercial motorcyclists?	202	79.8	51	20.2
Psychoactive substances do not damage ones health if used in small amount?	140	55.3	113	44.7
Harmful effect of psychoactive substances are only temporary	149	58.9	104	51.1
Is it easy to stop the use of psychoactive substance when one starts using it?	152	60.1	101	39.9
There is no treatment for addiction to psychoactive substance?	84	33.2	169	66.8

Majority of the respondent (92.1%) knew that use of psychoactive substance while driving commercial motorcyclist could lead to road traffic accident. Most of them (79.8%) also knew that it is not proper to use psychoactive substance to reduce stress/ fatigue while driving motorcycle. More than half of the respondents (55.3%) knew that use of small amount of psychoactive substance could damage one's health and most of them (58.9%) disagree that harmful effect of psychoactive substances are only temporary. Majority of the respondents (60.1%) believed that it is not easy to stop using psychoactive when one start using it and (33.2%) knew that there is treatment for substance addiction. (Table 4)

Thirty percent of the respondents reported ever use of psychoactive substances. (Figure 1) Among the 30% of respondents that had ever used psychoactive substances, 89.1% of them were currently using psychoactive substances. (Figure 2) Most of the respondents (49.3%) initiated use of Psychoactive substances between 16-20 years of age. (Figure 3)

Reasons respondents gave for using psychoactive substances included; it assists me to work more (31.8%), it improves my mood (19.6%), relaxes me (18.7%), it helps me forget my problems (14.9%).

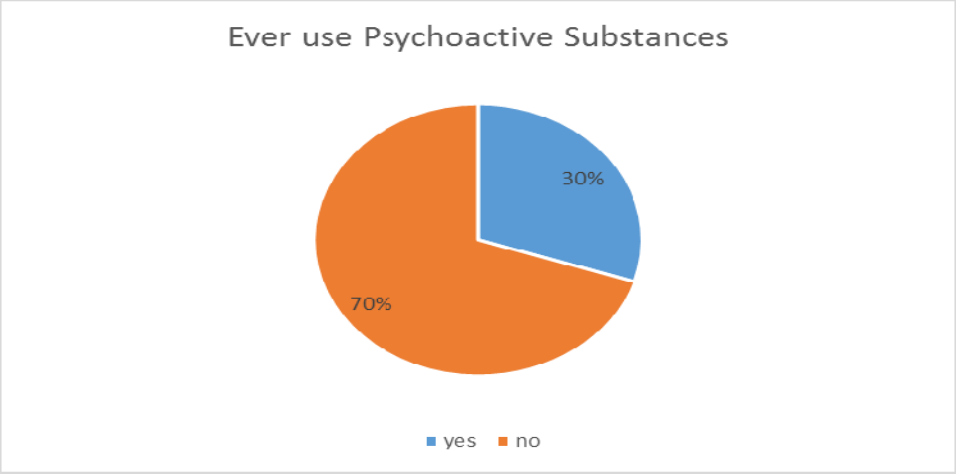

Fig 1 Prevalence of Psychoactive Substance Use

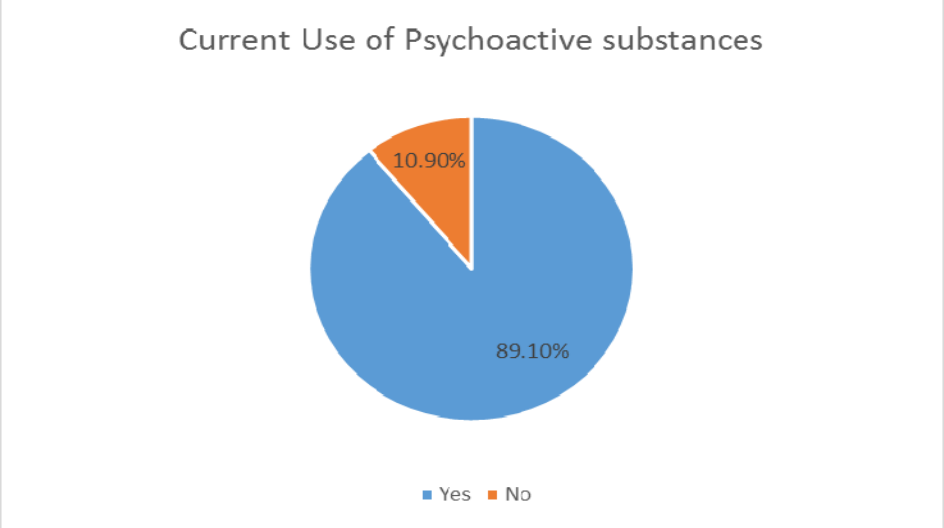

Fig 2 Current Use of Psychoactive Substances

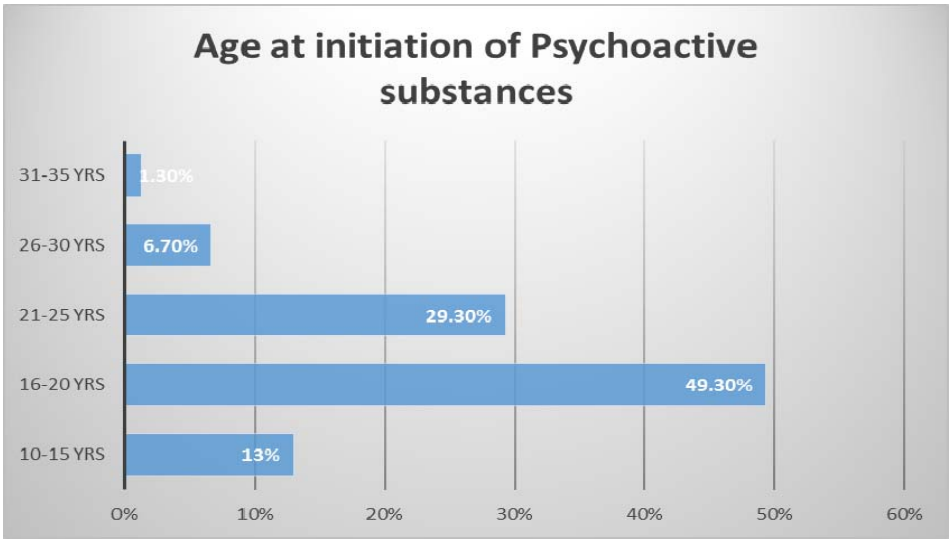

Fig 3 Age at Initiation of Psychoactive Substances

Most (73.9%) of the respondents using psychoactive substances were introduced to it by friends. (Table 5) Most (52.1%) of the respondent having good knowledge of psychoactive substances were between the ages of 25-34 years (X2=9.808, p=0.20). Respondents who had no formal education had 1.31 odds of having poor knowledge of psychoactive substances (p=0.320).

Table 5 Reasons for Use of Psychoactive Substances*

Variables	N	Percent
Which of the following reason makes you use psychoactive substance?		
My colleagues use substances	16	14.9
It improves my mood	21	19.6
Makes me relax	20	18.7
It helps me to work more	334	31.8
It helps me forget my problems	16	14.9
Who introduced you to the use of psychoactive substances?		
Brother/Sister	3	4.5
Parents	5	6.8
Uncles	2	2.7
Parent's Friend	4	5.5
Friends	54	73.9
Others	5	6.8

*Multiple Responses Allowed

Respondents who believed it is proper to use psychoactive substances had 5.30 odds of having poor knowledge of psychoactive substances (p=0.000). Respondents who had ever asked colleagues psychoactive substances had 3.32 odds of having poor knowledge of psychoactive substances (p=0.022). Respondents who had the perception that Government should punish people who use psychoactive substances had 11.19 odds of having poor knowledge of psychoactive substances (p=0.001). Respondents who reported that they are likely to use psychoactive substances in the future had 2.31 odds of having poor knowledge of psychoactive substances (p=0.04). (Table 6)

Table 6 Factors Associated with Knowledge of Psychoactive Substances

Variables		Knowledge of Psychoactive Substances		Test Statistics and p-value
		Poor Knowledge	Good Knowledge	
Age Category	15-24	32(28.8)	32 (22.5)	X2=9.808, p=0.20
	25-34	56(50.5)	74 (52.1)	
	35-44	15(13.5)	34(23.9)	
	45-54	8(7.2)	2(1.4)	
Education Category	No formal	41 (36.9)	44 (31.0)	X2=0.989, p=0.320, OR=1.305
	Formal	70 (63.1)	98 (69.0)	
Do you own your motorcycle	No	54(48.6)	68(47.9)	X2=0.014, p=0.904, OR=1.03
	Yes	57(51.4)	74(52.1)	
Type of commercial motorcyclist	Full time	79 (71.2)	91(64.1)	X2=1.419,p=0.234, OR=1.384
	Part time	32(28.8)	51(35.9)	
Is it proper to use psychoactive substances	Yes	18 (16.2)	5(3.5)	X2=12.15, p=0.000, OR=5.30
	No	93(83.8)	137(96.5)	
Ever recommended use of psychoactive substances to colleagues	Yes	12 (10.8)	5 (3.5)	X2=5.282,p=0.022, OR=3.321
	No	99 (89.2)	137 (96.5)	
Government should punish people who use psychoactive substances	Yes	91(82.0)	135 (95.1)	X2= 11.195, p=0.001, OR= 0.236
	No	20(18)	7 (4.9)	
Do you support campaigns against use of psychoactive substances	Yes	98 (88.3)	135 (95.1)	X2=3.936,p=0.047, OR=0.391
	No	13 (11.7)	7 (4.9)	
Are you likely to use psychoactive substances in the future	Yes	18 (16.2)	11 (7.7)	X2=4.404, p=0.036,OR=2.305
	No	93 (83.8)	131 (92.3)	

Respondents who had some formal education had less odds of ever using psychoactive substances (p=0.001, OR= 0.337). Respondents who could be friends with users of psychoactive substances had 12 times odds of having used psychoactive substances themselves (p=0.000). Respondents who had ever encouraged fellow commercial motorcyclist to use psychoactive substances had 22 times odds of ever having used psychoactive substances (p=0.000).

Respondents who felt government should punish people who use psychoactive substances had less odds of having ever used psychoactive substances (p=0.000, OR= 0.142). Respondents having friends who use psychoactive substances had 7.65 odds of having ever used psychoactive substances themselves (p=0.000). Respondents who perceived that it is ok to use psychoactive substances had 10.68 odds of having ever used psychoactive substances (p=0.000). (Table 7)

Table 7 Factors Associated with Ever Use of Psychoactive Substances

Variables		Ever Used Psychoactive Substances		Test Statistics and p-value
		Yes	No	
Knowledge Category	Poor	38 (50)	73 (41.2)	X2=1.656, p=0.198, OR=1.425
	Good	38 (50)	104(58.8)	
Owns Motorcycle	Yes	36 (47.4)	95 (53.7)	X2=0.846,p=0.358, OR=

Type of Operator	No	40 (52.6)	82 (46.3)	0.777
	Full Time	54(48.6)	68(47.9)	X2=0.014, p=0.904,
	Part Time	50(65.8)	120(67.8)	OR=1.03
Educational Status	Some Formal Education	14 (18.4)	71 (40.1)	X2=11.214,p=0.001,
	No Formal Education	62 (81.6)	106 (59.9)	OR= 0.337
Can you be friends with someone that uses psychoactive substances	Yes	70 (92.1)	86 (48.6)	X2=42.593,p=0.000,
	No	6 (7.9)	91 (51.4)	OR= 12.345
Ever encouraged fellow commercial motorcyclists to use psychoactive substances	Yes	15 (19.7)	2 (1.1)	X2=29.369,p=0.000,
	No	61 (80.3)	175 (98.9)	OR= 21.516
Government should punish people who use psychoactive substances	Yes	57 (75)	169 (95.5)	X2=23.394,p=0.000,
	No	19 (25)	8 (4.5)	OR= 0.142
Support campaigns against use of psychoactive substances	Yes	65 (85.5)	168 (94.9)	X2=6.438,p=0.011, OR=
	No	11 (14.5)	9 (5.1)	0.317
Do you have friends who use psychoactive substances	Yes	66 (86.8)	82 (46.3)	X2=35.948,p=0.000,
	No	10 (13.2)	95 (53.7)	OR= 7.646
Do any of family members use psychoactive drugs	Yes	41 (53.9)	54 (30.5)	X2=12.457,p=0.000,
	No	35 (46.1)	123 (69.5)	OR= 2.668
Is it alright to use psychoactive substances	Yes	18 (23.7)	5 (2.8)	X2=27.993,p=0.000,
	No	58 (76.3)	172 (97.2)	OR= 10.676

The main predictor of ever use of psychoactive substances was willingness to be friends with someone who use psychoactive substances (OR=6.9, p=0.009, CI=0.54-0.64). (Table 8)

Table 8 Predictors of Ever Use of Psychoactive Substances

Variables	B	S.E	OR	Df	p-value	95% C.I	
						Lower	Upper
Educational status	-1.018	.402	6.420	1	.011	.164	.794
Friends uses psychoactive substances	-.621	.566	1.202	1	.273	.177	1.63
Family members use psychoactive substances	-.551	.347	2.521	1	.112	.292	1.14
Perception that it is nice to use psychoactive substances	-1.524	.731	4.348	1	.037	.052	.913
Can be friends with someone who use psychoactive substances	-1.673	.637	6.900	1	.009	.054	.064
Perception that people using psychoactive substances should be punished	1.063	.633	2.822	1	.093	.838	10.02
Support campaign against psychoactive substances	-.477	.905	.277	1	.598	.105	3.661
Encouraged fellow cyclist to use psychoactive substances	-2.02	0.905	4.978	1	0.026	0.22	0.782

DISCUSSION

This study examined the determinants of knowledge and use of psychoactive substance among commercial motorcyclist in Sokoto metropolis, Northwest Nigeria. The mean age of the motorcyclists in our study was 29.3±7.0 years. This is

similar to what was reported in previous studies.[1, 11, 12] This is slightly lower than the mean age of 33 years reported in a study in Uyo, Southeast, Nigeria.[13] Majority (49%) of the motorcyclists were married and more than one-third had secondary education. A study in Abeokuta, Southwest, Nigeria, also reported that majority (68.3%) of the motorcyclists in their study were married, most (84.6%) had at most secondary education, and 5.5% had tertiary education.[13] More than half were the owner of the motorcycle and were full time operator, having no additional job. This contradicts what was reported by a study in Ibadan, Southwest, Nigeria in which 42.5% of the motorcyclists also engaged in trading to support their job.[6]

Tobacco, Alcohol, Cannabis and Codeine were generally accepted to be among psychoactive substances by majority of the participants. This may result from availability and easy accessibility to these group of drugs in their environment. Regarding knowledge on effects of substance use, majority believed that alcohol, cannabis, codeine can lead to mental illness, road traffic accident and can also prevent someone from being able to drive motorcycle properly. In contrast to the finding in our study, a study in Nigeria reported that large proportion of the respondents (70.0%) do not believe that substance use can affect one's health negatively while over half (57.5%) believe that anyone under the influence of alcohol can cause accident.[6] The existence of some level of ignorance about the negative consequences of psychoactive substances consumption reflects motorcyclists' access to inaccurate information regarding the consequences and outcomes of consuming psychoactive substances.

Although lifetime prevalence of substance use was low in our study, majority of those that reported ever used psychoactive substance are current users. This is similar to what was reported in Iran, in which the prevalence of motorcyclists who currently used alcohol, opium, and cannabis was 150 (36.2%), 29 (7.0%) and 15 (3.6%) respectively.[14] In contrast, this is higher to that reported in another study in Nigeria with prevalence of lifetime use (41.9%) compare to current users' rates of 27%.[13] The prevalence of substance use is remarkably higher in motorcycle drivers compared to the other population. Research has shown that result from school surveys often indicate lower level of prevalence, especially regarding illicit drug use.[15, 16] A survey in the United States showed that 37% of the population reported using one or more illicit substances in their lifetime. In the United States survey, 13% had used psychoactive substances in the past 12 months and 6% had used them in the month before the survey.[17] In a nationwide study of psychoactive substance use among adults in five of the six geopolitical regions of Nigeria, it was reported that the prevalence of alcohol was 58%, tobacco 17%, sedatives 14%, stimulants 2.4% and cannabis 3% among the population studied.[18] Since studies from different countries often use various methods for estimating the prevalence of substance use, comparison of results between countries could be misleading.

More than half of the participants initiated the use of psychoactive substance between 16-20 years. This is the age at which peer pressure is at its peak. Most people who abuse drugs often attribute the cause to the influence of their friends (peers). Members of the peer group are deceived into believing that drugs are used to solve emotional problems hence they take it initially, to enjoy, to relax, and to be more sociable until they become drug oriented.

Among the reasons for using psychoactive substances by the participants were that it assists them to work, makes them to feel happy, relax and also make them to forget their problems. A previous study also reported that motorcyclists take local gin to see clearly.[6] In Benin city, Nigeria, motorcyclists reported that they take psychoactive substances as energy booster.[19] Other previous studies also reported using substances to suppress fatigue and sleep,[20] work hard and make more income and to relieve stress after a long day work,[21] keeping awake and suppression of fatigue.[1]

This study showed that lower age groups; having negative attitude towards substance use; never recommended substance use to colleagues and not likely to use substance in the future were associated with having good knowledge of psychoactive

substances. Our results are consonant with reports elsewhere showing that motorcyclists with lower age group and having negative attitude towards substance use were associated with having good knowledge of psychoactive substance.[22]

In the current study, factors that were more likely associated with lifetime use of substances were lack of formal education, being friend to people that use substances and ever encouraged fellow commercial motorcyclists to use substance. In addition, the main determinants of substance use were willingness to be friends with someone who use psychoactive substance. Like our study, lifetime psychoactive substance use among motorcycle drivers is associated with many factors which were reported in a previous study.[23] Considering the damaging psychological effects of psychoactive substance use and increased risk of accidents after usage,[24] determining risk factors of abuse among motorcycle drivers is an important stage for implementing preventive strategies.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that substance abuse is prevalent among commercial motorcyclist. Despite good knowledge of psychoactive substances and the consequences associated with it, the use was still relatively high. The main predictor of ever use of psychoactive substances was willingness to be friends with someone who use psychoactive substance. There is need for continuous counselling and education of commercial motorcyclist, by road safety workers, on the dangers associated with use of psychoactive substances.

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