

**PREVALENCE, RISK FACTORS AND PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL USE AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN A RURAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA**

**Ajao Yinka<sup>1</sup>, Olajide Adetunmise<sup>2</sup>, Ajibade Bayo L<sup>3</sup>.**

1. Osun State University, Osogbo

2&3. LAUTECH Ogbomosho, Faculty of Nursing, Osogbo

Correspondence To; Prof. AJIBADE, Bayo Lawal (blajibade@lautech.edu.ng)

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**ABSTRACT:** *Alcohol is commonly abused and constitutes a major challenge to people's health. Its availability makes it a drug of choice for young people to abuse. This study was designed to examine the prevalence, risk factors and perceived effects of alcohol use among young people in Oyo state. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional design to study 384 young people, who were selected with a multi-stage sampling technique. Data was gathered with a structured questionnaire after its validity and reliability have been established and analysed with SPSS version 23. Findings revealed high prevalence of alcohol use both for the ever (74%) and current (66.6%) use. Alcohol intake in form of mixture with local herbs (81.2%) is the most common followed by gin and other hot drink (80.2%). The most important risk factors documented were peer influence (85.4%), easy access (63.5%) and parental influence (54.1%). Thinking less about problems (91.6%), sleep disturbance (80.2%), depression (70.8%) and euphoria (70.8%) were the common perceived psychological effects of alcohol identified by the respondents while getting into trouble (85.4%) and increased propensity to perpetuate rape (74.0%) were prominent social effects, perceived by the respondents. Therefore, preventive measures and strong public control policy is essential to curb this emerging menace*

**KEY WORDS:** alcohol use, rural area, perceived alcohol effects, Oyo state

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Consumption of alcohol is regarded as normal and usual in many places and cultures (Bentteja, 2014; Luecha, Peremans, Dilles, & Rompaey, 2019). In Africa, alcohol is at the centre of many cultural practices and is mostly used in many occasions (Luecha et al., 2019; Ajayi, Owolabi & Olajire, 2019). In addition, Nigerian culture is well known for festivals and all kinds of celebrations during which alcohol use is a common component. This has encouraged a rapid rise in the consumption of alcohol across all age groups in the country (Lasebikan & Ola, 2016). Furthermore, selling alcohol and other alcohol containing substances for the purpose of generating income for many people attracts little or no attention from government and the masses. Lack of good alcohol regulation and control policy coupled with unrestricted advertisement makes alcohol to be readily available in different forms, resulting in its massive consumption (Ajayi, et al, 2019). Studies have shown that alcohol is commonly abused and constitutes a major challenge to people's health. For instance, World Health Organization – WHO, (2018) established that availability of alcohol makes it a drug of choice for abuse particularly by young people.

Alcohol abuse is a condition, characterized by recurrent use of alcohol without minding its adverse consequences on work, law, health or family life, which is a pointer to a pathological way of living and devastating consequences on all spheres of the individual's life (Bentţea, 2014). This is particularly true with an early initiation in alcohol such as during younger age (Granville-Garcia, Gomes, Clementino, Firminio, Ribero, & Siqueira, 2014).

Regular use of alcohol and its abuse usually starts in adolescence between 12-16 years when they assume more independence and less parental supervision (WHO, 2018). This may be associated with other harmful practices such as use of cigarette and other psychoactive substances as well as high risk sexual behaviour (Marshall, 2014). It has also been documented that alcohol intake in adolescent continues and progress into adulthood (Marshall, 2014; Olsson et al., 2016).

Multiple reasons why young people engage in alcohol abuse have been advanced; such factors have been documented to have been influenced by exchange of forces between the individuals ecological system (WHO, 2018). Factors such as genetic makeup and socio-cultural environment play interactive roles in young people's alcohol abuse. Parental, peer and sibling alcohol use can have strong influence on young people's initiation and sustenance of alcohol use (Bentţea, 2014). Acceptance and tolerant attitudes of these agents of socialization towards alcohol use can also contribute to young peoples' alcohol abusive behaviour. Furthermore, the proliferation of alcohol marketing outlets, repetitive advertisement and promotions as well as sponsorship of social events in and outside school environment also predispose young people to drug abuse (Lasebikan & Ola, 2016). It is worthy of note that promotion of alcohol in entertainment industry especially by influential characters promote young peoples' intention to abuse alcohol (Dumbili & Williams, 2016). Culture has also been implicated to play a significant role in term of frequency and quantity of alcohol intake (WHO, 2018).

Abuse of alcohol among young ones raises concerns as it has been linked to immediate or later – onset negative consequences (Luecha et al., 2019). Taking alcohol at an early age can raise the potential alcohol – related biopsychosocial problems in adulthood (Granville-Garcia, et al., 2014; WHO, 2018). Problems such as perpetual absenteeism, aggressive and violent, antisocial behaviours as well as mental and emotional problems are common consequences (Granville-Garcia, et al., 2014; Bentţea, 2014). The resulting alcoholism – associated functional impairment can lead to poor academic performance and high level of drop-out among young people. In addition, the vulnerability of young adolescents' brain to impact of alcohol may lead to mental health issues in later life (Zucco, Montesano, Esposito, Bianco, & Nobile, 2017). Furthermore, a large number of deaths have been attributed to dangerous use of alcohol (Ajayi, et al, 2019).

It has been reported that students abuse alcohol globally and suffer varying degree of alcohol related problems (Dumbili & Williams, 2016). Timely recognition of alcohol abuse in young people may inform action towards preventing immediate and future negative consequences. The dearth of knowledge on the prevalence and perceived effects of alcohol abuse among young people especially in a rural setting informed this study which set out to determine the prevalence of alcohol use, identify the associated risk factors and determine the perceived

psychosocial effects of alcohol use among young people in selected secondary schools in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State

## METHODS

**Study Design:** The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional design to determine the prevalence, risk factors and perceived effects of alcohol abuse among Adolescents in Afijio Local Government Area in Oyo State, Nigeria.

**Study Area:** The study was conducted in Afijio Local Government Area in Oyo State Nigeria. The local government occupies a land area of 685,085 square kilometres with an estimated population size of 152,193 using a growth rate of 3.2% from 2006 census figures. It is a rural local government and has its administrative headquarter at Jobele. Its inhabitants are from diverse cultural background however, the Yorubas predominant.

**Target Population:** The target population are secondary school adolescents in Afijio local government of Oyo state.

**Sample size determination:** The sample size was determined using the Cochran's formula

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

Where n = sample size

Z= 95% confidence level = 1.96

p= prevalence/proportion = 51.9% (Atwoli, Mungala, Ndung'u, Kinoti, & Ogot, 2011)

q= (1-p) = 0.5

d= margin of error= 0.05

$$\text{Hence } n = \frac{(1.96)^2 0.52 \times 0.48}{(0.05)^2}$$

n= 384. The sample was adjusted to 422 to accommodate 10% non-response rate.

**Sampling procedure:** Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the participants. First stage involved a random selection of five communities from the nine communities that make up the local government. This was followed by random selection of one secondary school from each of the selected communities. The third stage involved a systematic sampling of adolescents from all the six classes in each school.

**Study Procedure:** Assent was obtained from students who were below 18 years while consent was obtained from those over 18 years of age as at the time of data collection. Each willing participant was given the questionnaire to complete and this was retrieved as soon as it was completed.

**Measures:** A structured questionnaire containing 26 items was used to gather data from the respondents. Four items deal with the respondents' socio-demographic status, six items were used to measure the prevalence of alcohol use and were measure with "yes" "not sure" and "no" responses. Five items asked question about risk factors for alcohol use and were also measure with "yes" "not sure" and "no" responses. Five items were used to gather data on the psychological effects of alcohol while the last six items deal with the social effects of alcohol

use and were scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

***Psychometric properties of the research instrument:*** The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by researchers in mental health nursing, statistics and demography. Reliability was ensured through a test – retest method and the instrument demonstrated satisfactory reliability (Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.73)

***Data Analysis:*** Data collected were coded and fed into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Following a thorough data cleaning, it was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and was presented using frequencies and percentage distributions.

## RESULTS

384 respondents returned completed questionnaire that was used to analyse the data. Findings from the study showed that majority (63.5%) of the respondents were within 15-19 age brackets, 55.2% are Muslims, 58.9% are females and 61.5% were from polygamous family setting.

Furthermore, majority (74%) of the respondents have used alcohol in their life time, while 66.6% were currently taking alcohol; 50% of the respondents often take alcohol in form of beer and 81.2% of the respondents use alcohol often as alcohol – based local herbs. Moreover, 54.1% of the respondents reported that their parents use alcohol and also, 85.4% of them reported that their friends take alcohol while 63.5 % claimed alcohol is sold everywhere around them.

On the perceived psychological effects of alcohol use, 70.8% of the respondents agreed that people taking alcohol often feel depressed, 80.2% agreed that it causes sleep disturbance while 70.8% agreed that it makes people feel emotionally high. Furthermore, 91.6% agreed that using alcohol makes people think less of their problems. For the perceived social effects 85.4%, agreed that alcohol abuse get people into trouble while 74% agreed that it increases the propensity to commit various sexual offences including rape.

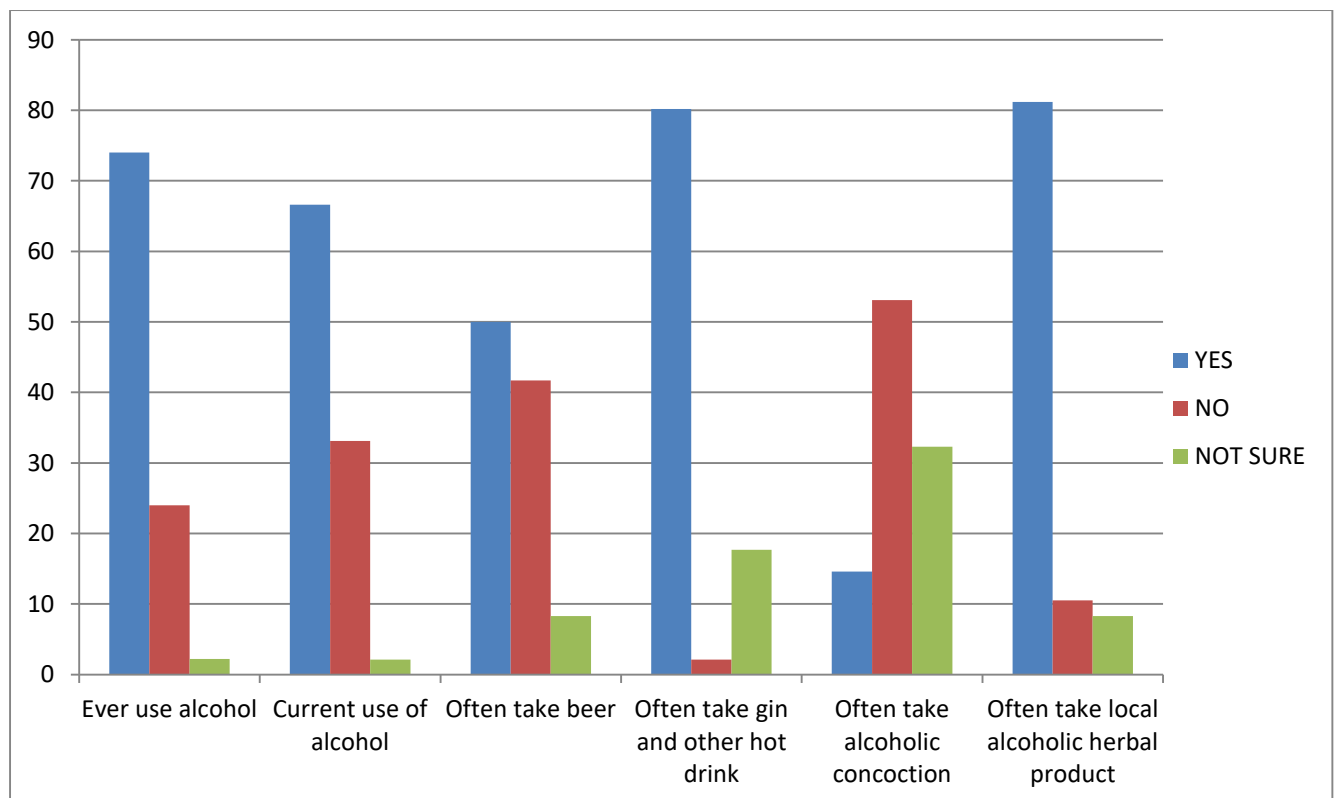
## DISCUSSION

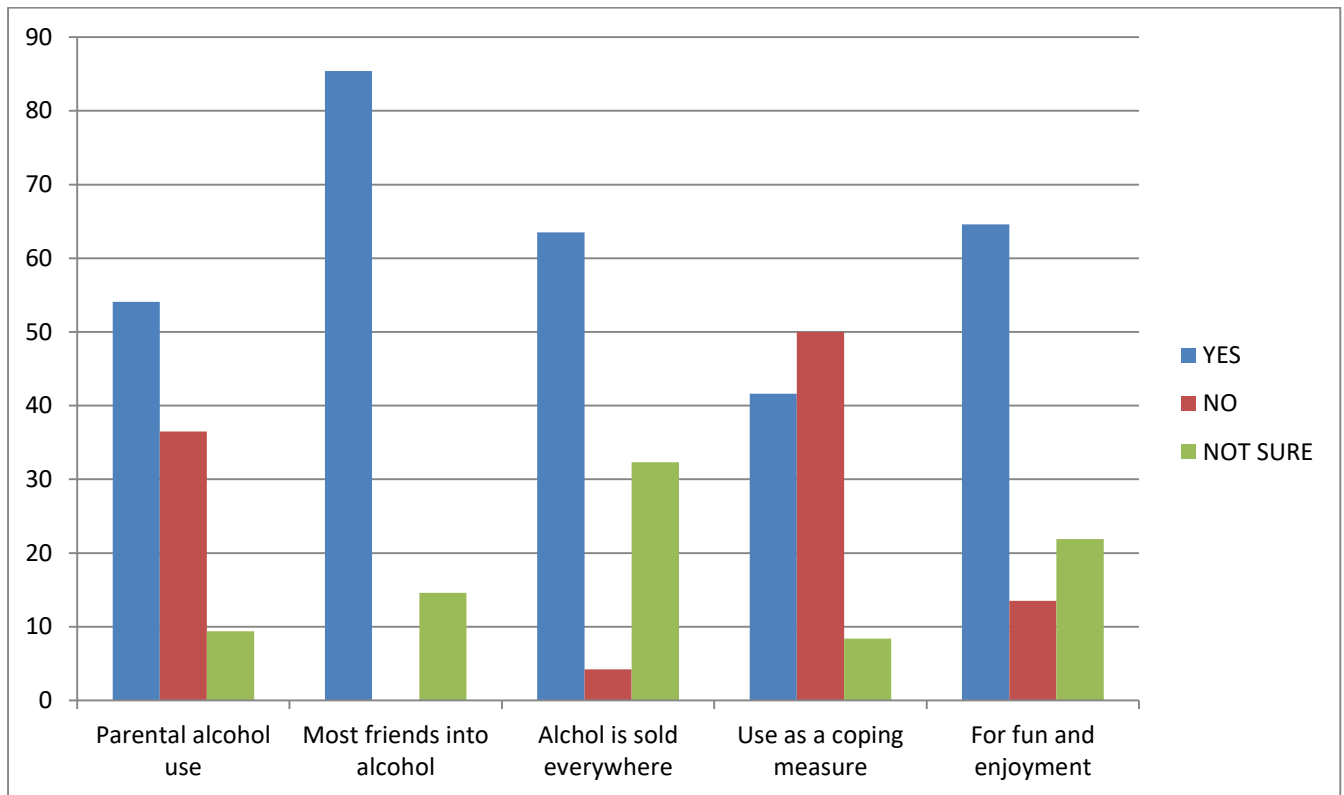
This study was conducted to determine the prevalence, risk factors and perceived effects of alcohol abuse among young people in a rural local government area in Oyo state, Nigeria. A total of 384 respondents participated in the study.

**Table 1: Socio-demographic Variables (n= 384)**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Age (years)</b>		
10-14	96	25.0
15-19	244	63.5
20 and above	44	11.5
<b>Religion</b>		
Christianity	172	44.8
Islam	212	55.2
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	158	41.1
Female	226	58.9
<b>Family Type</b>		
Monogamous	148	38.6
Polygamous	236	61.5

Most of the respondents (58.9%) were females. This is not surprising because of the region where the study was conducted which is located in the region of the country where the national female enrolment in secondary school is the highest (United Nation Girls Education Initiative, 2008). The finding that majority (61.5%) of the respondents in this study are from a polygamous family setting is also not far-fetched as polygamy is a common practice in Nigeria (Opeloye, 2011) especially among Muslims and rural dwellers in Nigeria.

**Fig 1. Prevalence of Alcohol Use**



**Fig 2. Risk Factors for Alcohol Abuse**

On the prevalence of alcohol use, about three-quarter of the respondents (74%) have used alcohol at least once in their lifetime. This is consistent with the finding of Bentţea (2014) who reported that 71% of young people in her study have consumed alcohol. This may be associated with the respondents' easy access to alcohol. This finding is however higher when compare to 43.5% reported by Ajayi et al. (2019) and 54.5% reported by Granville-Garcia, et al., (2014) who conducted their study among university students and adolescents respectively. The difference in prevalence may be due to the setting and cultural factor as the studies were conducted in an urban area in contrast to the present study that was conducted in a rural area. However, an Italian study by Zucco et al., in 2017 among early adolescents documented a high prevalence of almost 70% where almost half of the respondents were rural dwellers. Furthermore, it was observed that more than half (66.6%) of the respondents in this study are currently taking alcohol. This finding is also way too high compare with similar studies in the setting. For instance Lasebikan and Ola in 2016 and Ajayi et al., in 2019 found the prevalence of 23.7% and 31.1% respectively among current users of alcohol. Also, in this study, majority (81.2%) of the young people often take alcohol – based local herbs. Use of this local herbs mixture with alcohol is common in South – Western Nigeria especially in rural communities and motor parks. They are sold freely to people as medicinal products to address common ailments.



**Table 2. Perceived Psychological Effects of Alcohol Abuse (n= 384)**

S/N	Items	SA F (%)	A F (%)	U F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
1	Feeling Depress	116 (30.2)	156 (40.6)	24 (6.2)	48 (12.5)	40 (10.4)
2	Sleep Disturbance	152 (39.6)	156 (40.6)	68 (17.7)	8 (2.1)	0 (0.0)
3	Feeling High	116 (30.2)	156 (40.6)	24 (6.2)	48 (12.5)	40 (10.4)
4	Makes people to forget their problems	260 (67.7)	92 (23.9)	32 (8.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
5	Increases confidence and boldness	24 (6.2)	100 (26.0)	0 (0.0)	260 (67.7)	0 (0.0)
6	Feeling Topsy	96 (25.0)	152 (39.6)	72 (16.7)	72 (16.7)	8 (2.1)

**Key: SA-Strongly Agree; A- Agree; U- Undecided; D- Disagree; SD- Strongly Disagree**

Concerning the risk factors for alcohol use, more than half (54.1%) of the respondents' parents currently use alcohol. This prevalence is lower to compare to 83.8% prevalence obtained in a similar study (Zucco et al., 2017). Also, majority (85.4%) of the respondents reported that their friends are currently using alcohol. These are two strong socializing agents with strong influence on youths and adolescents. An individual whose parent(s) use alcohol has higher tendency to use alcohol, similarly friends who use alcohol can easily take on the habit due to strong peer pressure (Wang, Hipp, Butts, Jose, & Lakon, 2015). Furthermore, most of the respondents (63.5 %) have easy access to alcohol in different forms as they opined that alcohol is sold everywhere around them. This finding buttresses the submission of Dumbili & Williams in 2016, that multiple alcohol sales outlets may be responsible for high prevalence of alcohol use among young people.

**Table 2. Perceived Social Effects of Alcohol Abuse (n= 384)**

S/N	Items	SA F (%)	A F (%)	U F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
1	Gets people into trouble	152 (39.6)	176 (45.8)	4 (1.0)	16 (4.2)	36 (9.4)
2	Increases rape rate	24 (6.3)	260 (67.7)	0 (0.0)	100 (26.0)	0 (0.0)
3	Increases crime rate	40 (10.4)	32 (8.3)	8 (2.1)	164 (42.7)	140 (36.5)
4	Rejection by friends	32 (8.3)	44 (11.5)	0 (0.0)	120 (31.2)	188 (49.0)
5	Lack of self-control	16 (4.2)	76 (19.8)	24 (6.2)	116 (30.2)	152 (39.6)
6	Alcoholics can easily be robbed	20 (5.2)	68 (17.7)	8 (2.1)	164 (42.7)	124 (32.3)

**Key: SA-Strongly Agree; A- Agree; U- Undecided; D- Disagree; SD- Strongly Disagree**

Assessing the perceived psychological effects of alcohol abuse, majority (70.8%) of the respondents agreed that people taking alcohol often feel depressed. Literature evidence has linked alcoholism with depression particularly among adolescents and young adults (Pedrelli, Shapero, Archibald, & Dale, 2016). Majority of the respondents (80.2%) also agreed that alcohol abuse causes sleep disturbance. This is in line with the finding of Stein & Friedmann, (2005) which linked chronic alcohol use and disruption of sleep quality even among none dependent users. Also, most of the young people (70.8%) in this study, believed that alcohol can trigger euphoria. This is an erroneous thinking because alcohol is a central nervous system depressant (Mukherjee, 2013). In addition, majority (91.6%) agreed that using alcohol makes people think less of their problems. This supports the common disposition that alcohol use can take away negative emotion.

Studying the perceived social effects of alcohol use among these young people, majority (85.4%) agreed that alcohol abuse get people into trouble. This perception is consistent with what has been previously documented in literature. Brown & Tapert (2004) opined that youth are liable to get into trouble such as accident, due to alcohol – induced rational thinking distortions. Most of the respondents (74%) also agreed that alcohol use also increases the propensity of committing sexual offenses such as rape. This finding is also consistent with documented reports that alcohol use predispose to risky sexual behaviours, sexual assaults and rape due to impair judgment (Brown & Tapert, 2004; Nwagu, 2016; Scott, 2014; Young, Melissa-Grey, Abbey, Boyd, & McCabe, 2008). Surprisingly, only 18.7% of the respondents agreed that alcohol consumption increases crime rate despite the fact that the link has been well established in literature (Afolabi et al., 2012; Fuller et al., 2014; Fuller-Thomson, Scheridan, Sorichetti, & Mehta, 2013; Richardson & Budd, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

This study revealed high prevalence of both ever and current alcohol use among the respondents. Alcohol intake in form of mixture with local herbs is the most common followed by gin and other hot drink. The greatest risk factor is from friends, easy access and family influence. Thinking less about problems, sleep disturbance, depression and euphoria were the common perceived psychological effects of alcohol identified by the respondents while getting into trouble and increase chance of committing rape was the perceived social effects identified by the respondents. The study revealed the need to attend to alcohol use among young people especially in the rural areas by instituting measures to stem the growing tide of potential adverse consequences of alcohol intake through an effective public policy.

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