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## Psychoactive Substance Consumption and Criminality among Commercial Drivers in Selected Motor Parks in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State

Adeoti A. B<sup>1</sup> Oladipo Oluwaseyi Mary<sup>2</sup> Oladoyinbo Lanre Olusola<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Social Work, University of Ibadan [abdullateefadeoti@gmail.com](mailto:abdullateefadeoti@gmail.com)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8059-9321>

1. Department of Social Work, University of Ibadan, Ibadan Nigeria  
[abdullateefadeoti@gmail.com](mailto:abdullateefadeoti@gmail.com)

2. Department of Social Work, University of Ibadan  
[oluwaseyimary@gmail.com](mailto:oluwaseyimary@gmail.com)

3. Medical Health Records, University Health Service, University of Ibadan,  
Ibadan Nigeria  
[lanreoladoyinbo@gmail.com](mailto:lanreoladoyinbo@gmail.com)

**Correspondence Address:** [abdullateefadeoti@gmail.com](mailto:abdullateefadeoti@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

Substance consumption is a major issue that has taken a deep root in our society. This study examined the effect of substance consumption among commercial drivers in selected parks in Ibadan metropolis. The study employed a descriptive survey design and a multistage sampling technique was also used to select two modern parks at *Ojoo* and *Challenge* in Ibadan while simple random sampling was used to select 188 commercial drivers at the two parks. A structured questionnaire was used to gather information from the respondents. The data collected were analysed using simple percentage and frequency counts while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical package was used to analyse the hypotheses. Findings revealed that the correlation between substance use and reasons for substance use was not significant but positive and low [0.068 (0.352)] which indicate that substances were taken on account of getting high and to remain awake while driving. Also, the correlation between substance use and implications for substance use was significant but negative and low [-0.228 (0.002)]. Findings also showed that the correlation between substance use and measures for eradicating substance use was not significant as well as negative and low [-0.101 (0.169)] which means measures were not enforced by the government agency, hence, rules were not adhered to. The study recommends that government agency should develop a device for testing drivers who test positive to any substances, also, the state and local governments should enact laws and sanction any commercial drivers caught abusing substances.

**Keywords** Substance Abuse, Commercial Drivers, Criminality, Motor Parks, Psychoactive Consumption.

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## **Introduction**

The significant role played by motorists have a great impact on the socio-economic tasks of any nation. This is on account of substantial number of the civil servants moving from one place to another on commercial buses daily. Undoubtedly, it is the most convenient means of movement across Nigeria. This justifies the significance of land movement usually deployed by the motorists in Nigeria as well as in many developing nations of the world. Apart from this positive contribution to national economies, there are some negative consequences of motorist engagement, for instance, having crashes on the road. A significant variable that accounted for this negative development, is the undesirable effect of chemical additive intake among motorists. The use of chemical substance is rampant among the motorists because of its availability in their terminal.

Previous research works by (Asante-Duah, 2002) and other scholars (Brinkel, Khan, and Kraemer 2009) posited that chemical additive intake poses a significant threat to the health, social and financial aspect of families, localities and countries at large. The global level of chemical additive usage is estimated at 2 billion alcohol users, 1.3 billion smokers and 185 million drug users. (WHO, 2014). Motorists plying our major roads engaged in long hours of full attention on the wheel in order to stay awake and prevent any possible occurrences or disasters. Most of the motorists are self-employed, while others are working for monetary deliveries to the owners (Adekoya, Adekoya, Adepoju, & Owoye, 2011). In an attempt to make extra gains, some motorists are inquisitive to make many trips daily and so rely on chemical additives to reduce fatigue and remain awake. Many motorists are of the opinion that the use of additives such as alcohol, cigarette, kola nut, 'wee wee', *gegemu* and many central nervous system (CNS) stimulants will significantly enhance their performance and keep sleep at bay for as long as possible (Adekoya et al., 2011).

The theoretical orientation for this work hinged on fatigue and coping theory which pays attention to how persons utilize the adverse consequences of fatigue (Lazarus & Folkman 1984). Stress refers to individual-environment transactions in which environmental requests overstress the individuals' resources, resulting in psychological and physiological problem. While coping refers to behavioural effort and cognitive strategies activated in response to actual or anticipated stressful situations that serve to regulate both the stressful context and its negative socio-emotional and physiological effects. People cope with stress in a different dimensions, relying on individual interest and environmental requests. Adjusting

with burnout is a changing process that may change overtime, demanding reappraisal as to probably the stressor stands for a threat, harm, or challenge, requiring reappraisal as to whether the stressor represents a threat, danger, or problem, and whether they are sufficient. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), the way a person appraises situations determines both stress reactions and coping efforts. Defense approaches differ from individuals and time. It is impossible for two to use the same approaches to resolve a problem. Even one person can use two totally different defense approaches to adjust to similar shocks at varying points in life.

The stress-coping theory posits that stress-coping and temptation-coping skills each make an independent contribution to the likelihood of substance consumption. It is possible, when faced with stressors, individuals with deficit of adaptive coping ways or problem-centred approaches are more likely to engage in drugs, to cope with negative emotion. Stress promotes substance consumption and reduces the motivation to quit drug use. It is believed that motorists use additives to adjust with fatigue on a daily basis because they do not see other alternatives.

Ajao (2022) asserted in his study that neurological consequences after a continuous exposure to the consumption of Gegemu plant by our adolescents in our environment disrupts the brain chemistry and physiological systems, thus affecting the thoughts, learning and memory processes. It is quite easy to infer that an unauthorized use of this plant adds up to the increasing moral malaise and growing cases of mental illnesses and criminal related offences among the youth and some adults these days. In Nigeria, it is common to find alcohol being sold in or around the motor parks. Some of the herbal concoctions are sold for the treatment of malaria and lower back aches popularly referred to as “Agbo jedi jedi” (Makanjuola, Aina & Onogbogi, 2014). Motorists need to maintain full cognitive balance and drive safely while on the wheel at all time. One of the commonest causes of road traffic accidents in Nigeria is sleeping on the wheel. (Alti-Muazu and Aliyu, 2008). It was reported that the vulnerability of road crashes was higher among motorists who indulged in the use of chemical additives in order to keep awake while driving for long hours. (Adekoya et al., 2011; Yunusa & Obembe, 2012). The common belief is that some motorists in Nigeria use assorted chemical additives in order to remain awake and confront burned out while driving, but inexplicably this dovetail into an accelerated risk of road crashes. However, there is a shortage of information on why varieties of chemical additives usage including ‘gegemu’ (plant) abuse is not only common among motorists but persisting and skyrocketing. Hence, this study examined how

psychoactive substance consumption influences criminality among commercial drivers in selected motor parks in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The study locations were the two main modern parks in Ibadan metropolis. The choice of Ibadan is motivated by the fact that it is the headquarters of National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Oyo State Chapter. The target population of the study were motorists and the park managers of each of the motorparks in the two selected locations. A multi-stage sampling technique was utilised. Firstly, a purposive sampling technique was used to select two motorparks in Ibadan metropolis, which were newly built by the current Governor. The study adopted a mixed method of data collection. That is, questionnaire, and a key informant interview (KII). The motorists operating at the selected motorparks were the respondents for the questionnaire, while the park managers were the participants in the KII. Two (2) participants were selected for the KII in each of the parks and a simple random technique was utilised to administer questionnaires to the motorists so as to provide everybody with equal opportunity of being chosen. A total number of one hundred and eighty eight (188) motorists were selected from the two terminals. A single questionnaire titled "Toxicants as a substance abuse and criminality among commercial drivers in selected motorparks in Ibadan Metropolis". KII were the major instruments used for the qualitative data collected for this study. The data were collated, coded and processed into the computer frequency distribution and simple percentages were used for the demographic characteristics of the respondents while the hypotheses were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). All the principles governing human research were observed, such as confidentiality, not harming the participants, voluntariness and beneficence. Informed consent was also gotten from the participants.

## Results

**Table 1: Socio-Demographic Variables of the Respondents**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	184	97.9
Female	4	2.1
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
16-20 years	14	7.4
21-25 years	20	10.6
26-30 years	54	28.7
31-35 years	46	24.5
36-40 years	30	16.0
40 years & above	24	12.8
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0
<b>Education</b>		
BSc	12	6.4
HND	18	9.6
OND	40	21.3
Diploma	26	13.8
O level	54	28.7
Primary Certificate	38	20.2
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	62	33.0
Married	106	56.4
Divorce	20	10.6
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0
<b>Religion</b>		
Christian	94	50.0
Muslim	82	43.6
African/Traditional Worshipper	12	6.4
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Yoruba	172	91.5
Igbo	16	8.5
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0

<b>Income</b>		
10,000-19,000	34	18.1
20,000-29,000	72	38.3
30,000-39,000	66	29.8
40,000-49,000	24	13.8
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0
<b>Motor Ownership</b>		
Rented Vehicle	72	38.3
Personal Vehicle	116	61.7
<b>Total</b>	188	100.0

### Field Survey, 2023

Majority of the respondents were males 184 (97.9%) because the profession is male dominated work across the country, while few 4 (2.1%) were females. Then, the respondents within the age range of 16 to 20 years were 14 (7.4%), the respondents within the age range of 21 to 25 years were 20 (10.6%), then the respondents within the age range of 26 to 30 years were 54 (28.7%), respondents within age range of 31 to 35 years were 46 (24.5%), the respondents within the age range of 36 to 40 years were 30 (16.0%), while the respondents within the age range of 40 years and above were 24 (12.8%). It simply means that the majority of the respondents were within this age group (26 to 30) years who are most active young person with strong energetic body system. On educational qualification, majority of the respondents who had school certificates were 54 (28.7%), and those with primary certificates were 38 (20.2%). On marital status, majority of the respondents 106 (53.4%) were married. On religion affiliation, half 94 (50.0%) of the respondents are Christians, while few 16 (8.5) practice African Traditional Religion. Majority 172 (91.5%) of the respondents are Yoruba. Finally, majority 116 (61.7%) of the respondents were the owners of their vehicles, while few 72 (38.3%) make deliveries to their owners on daily basis.

## Research Hypotheses

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between substance use and reasons for substance use.

**Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlations Substance Use and Reasons for Substance Use.**

Variables	Mean	SD	N	R	P-Value	Decision
Substance Use	16.1064	3.10414	188	0.068	0.352	Accepted
Reasons for Substance Use	16.7979	2.42350				

The results in Table 2 revealed that the relationship between substance use and reasons for substance use is not significant. The findings showed that the correlation between substance use and reasons for substance use was found to be insignificant but positive and low [0.068 (.352)]. This means that increase in reasons for substance use leads to increase in substance use.

### **Themes 1: Reasons for Substance Abuse**

The results in Table 2 was supported by the narratives from the field on the reasons for substance used by commercial drivers and the park official:

A Park manager opined that:

Commercial Drivers consumed substances in order to get high, in order to get a relief from stress, some take it in order to stay awake while driving on a long distance, some give reason of demonstration of feel among, while some explain that driving is a difficult task therefore they consumed substances in order for them to cope with difficult feelings”, **(KII, /Park Manager/ Challenge Garage)**

A Commercial driver said that:

Sometimes we take substances in order to overcome stress, driving is not an easy task, some take it in order to get a relief from stress, while some take it in order to remain alert while driving particularly those on a long journey such as a journey from Ibadan to Port Harcourt, Ibadan to Kano or

Maiduguri, while some explain that driving is a difficult work therefore they need something to energise them and it is only chemical substance that can do that in order for them to cope with difficult situation. (KII, /Motorist/ Ojoo Garage)

**H02:** There is no significant relationship between substance use and implications for substance use.

**Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlations Substance Use and Implications for Substance Use.**

Variables	Mean	SD	N	R	P-Value	Decision
Substance Use	16.1064	3.10414	188	-0.228	0.002	Rejected
Implications for Substance Use	16.4574	2.67156				

The results in Table 3 revealed that the relationship between substance use and implications for substance use is significant. The findings showed that the correlation between substance use and implications for substance use was found to be significant but negative and low [-0.228 (0.002)]. This means that once there is increase in substance use, it will lead to increase in health implications such as developing mental illness and sometimes untimely death.

### **Themes 2: Implications for Substance Used by Commercial Drivers**

A Park Manager at Ojoo Garrage Ibadan noted that:

Substance Consumption can impair commercial driver's ability to drive, Substance Consumption can also affect the health of commercial drivers sometimes some became dependency on this substance, Substance Consumption can cause an accidents for commercial drivers while driving on the highway leading to several crashes, Substance Consumption can impair commercial driver's ability to make decisions during a difficult moment, the consumption of these substance can ultimately lead to violent behaviour among the commercial drivers (KII, /Park Manager/ Ojoo Garage)

**H03:** There is no significant relationship between substance use and measures for eradicating substance use.

**Table 4: Pearson's Product Moment Correlations Substance Use and Measures for Eradicating Substance Use**

Variables	Mean	SD	N	R	P-Value	Decision
Substance Use	16.1064	3.10414	188	-0.101	0.169	Accepted
Measures for Eradicating Substance Use	15.4787	3.71938				

The results in Table 4 revealed that the relationship between substance use and measures for eradicating substance use is not significant. The findings showed that the correlation between substance use and measures for eradicating substance use was found not to be significant as well as negative and low [-0.101 (0.169)]. This means that the increase in measures for eradicating substance use leads to decrease in substance use. Substance users tend to lower the use of substance when there is sanction for violating those measures.

**Themes 3: Measures Taken in Eradicating Substance Used by Commercial Drivers**

The results in Table 4 was corroborated with narratives from the field by the informants.

An informant noted that:

An awareness programmes were organized by the Federal Road Safety Corps that can help prevent substance consumption among commercial drivers, strict regulations were put in pace for any offender who violated the rule of engagement, Counseling session were also organized by medical practitioners to sensitise the commercial drivers on the cost of care for themselves and their passenger during accident period. Additionally, Severe penalties can be implemented to curb substance

consumption among commercial drivers”, Manager of motor Parks also compel all commercial drivers within their park to undergo mandatory toxic test by taking sample of their blood before embarking on driving business. **(KII, /Park Manager/ Challenge Garage)**

Another informant opined:

We have collaborated with the law enforcement agencies, the police, Road safety corps, Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIO) that any of their member who engage in alcohol or other dangerous substance while driving should be arrested and prosecuted because many innocent passengers have been sent to untimely death due to their careless attitudes. We are also planning to liaise with medical team who will be stationed in the park, the modern park has facilities for medical care like mini clinic where minor accident cases can be handle, such medical person can be trained on how to detect commercial driver who taken alcohol or any other intoxicant. **(KII, /Park Manager/ Ojoo Garage)**

### **Discussion of Findings**

This paper is focused on the effects of chemical substance consumption among motorists in some selected parks in Ibadan. The study discovered that the most prevalent substances being used by the commercial drivers are cigarette, alcohol and marijuana. Although, the study equally documented that some of the commercial drivers engage in the use of heroin and cocaine, however, the use is very minimal which is attributed to the cost of substances and reasons for substance use by them. In addition, reported reasons for substance use were to get high (ecstasy level of feeling), to avoid sleeping while driving and to cope with stress and unbearable situation, and most importantly due to peer influence. Contrarily, Ajibade and Adefolaju (2017) asserted that motorists often hardly had time to rest, they therefore usually take chemical additives to increase their capacity while driving, such additives include: refine spirits, local alcoholic beverages and concoctions such as *ogogoro*, *burukutu*, palmwine, beer, marijuana, cocaine and heroin.

The study assessed the relationship between the reasons for substance use among commercial drivers and it was found to be not significant. It means that some of the identified reasons for substance abuse by the commercial drivers were more or less like apology for the substance use,. Although, some of them have other reasons for the substance use other than what they reported. However, in the research carried out by Okatachi (2003), it was revealed that young person having

single parents were most likely to engage in psychoactive substance use. Phares (2003) also revealed that family environment particularly in the area of financial constrains influence children and adolescent into psychoactive substance abuse. This conclusion was also supported by a study done by Faloye and Morakinyo in 2002.

In addition, the findings also noticed the connection between adverse effect of chemical additives usage and chemical additives usage among the motorists. It was also revealed that there is an important connection between substance use and implication for substance use. It is very evident that most substance users are susceptible to various implications of its use, unless, they desist from it at the early stage of its usage. Some of the identified implications of substance use for commercial drivers are health impairment, decision-making problem, accident and violent behaviours among others. The finding is corroborated by the study of Joel and Alice (2010) who asserted that unauthorized chemical additives usage have adverse social and academic consequences on the substance users. Therefore, there are various implications of substance use on individual who consume them uncontrollably.

Lastly, the present study revealed that there is no important connection between substance use and measures for eradicating chemical additive usage among commercial drivers. It was found out that some of the measures currently being put in place to eradicate substance are strict regulations against substance use, mandatory rehabilitation, awareness programmes, counselling sessions for substance users, and severe penalties. However, one of the desired reasons the relationship is not significant is because of the non-implementation of the and the measures put in place. Most of these measures are not rightly designed and deployed for substance use. In fact, most of them are not being carried out. So, it is not a surprise that there is no significant relationship between them. In the same vein, Abikoye (2012) discovered that, measures to eradicate substance abuse among motorists have failed to achieve the set goals and it seems the end is not in sight for the substance use among motorists.

### **Conclusion**

In line with the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that substance consumption is a social problem basically associated with commercial drivers. Motorists engage in hard drugs consumption excessively which may alter the body system or cause damage to the health. They take drugs to get high or to

relieve stress and also make them to feel among or fit into the environment, while some take substance through the influence of friends or other people around them.

### **Recommendations**

1. Involvement and support of parents, guardians and other caregivers are critical in preventing early substance consumption.
2. Commercial drivers should be mandated to undergo rehabilitation and also provided with enough counseling services to assist them run away from bad behavior so as to live a normal life.
3. The mass media should play a key role in emphasizing the implications of substance consumption to commercial drivers.
4. Government via its agencies such as the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), should focus attention on motorists for both proactive measures and normal educational training through joint efforts with the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and its affiliates within the road transport workers community.

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