
THE ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM, SELF-EFFICACY AND PEER RELATION ON PERCEIVED TRAMADOL ABUSE AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF UNIVERSITIES IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the role of self-esteem and self-efficacy on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria. This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. It was carried out in Benue state, Nigeria. The setting for this study comprised of three Universities. They are Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University formally known as Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State University, Makurdi and University of Mkar, Mkar, Gboko. The target population was 34235 university students. This study selected the sample size of 380 using the Krejcie and Morgan formula. A multi stage sampling technique was used to obtain participants for the study. The instrument used for the study was questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into section A to D. Section “A” contained the letter of consent and demographic information of the undergraduate students, Section “B” measured Self-esteem, Section “C” measured Self-efficacy and Section “D” measured Perceived tramadol abuse respectively. The pilot study results therefore, showed that the 10-items Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE) Scale yielded a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .95. This indicated that the scale was highly reliable for use on the population of undergraduate students. Therefore, 10- items were reliable and thus included in the main study. However, in the main study the 10-items Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE) Scale yielded a reliability Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .70, which was also highly reliable and accordingly adopted for the study. The result also indicated that the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) consisting of 10-items yielded a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of .94 with no item been deleted or modified for not being reliable. This indicated that the scale was highly

reliable for use on the population of undergraduate students. Therefore all the 10- items were included in the main study. In the main study however, the result showed that the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) yielded a reliability Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .61 which was reliable. In the main study, the Perceived Tramadol Abuse Screening Test (PTAST) yielded a reliability Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .76 which was highly reliable for use on the population of the university undergraduate students. The researcher employed descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages and the inferential statistics such as correlation was used to test the research hypotheses. Correlation is a statistic that describes the relationship between two variables. Simple Linear Regression Analysis to examine the influence of self-esteem and self-efficacy on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of the three selected Universities in Benue State. The result showed that self-esteem and self-efficacy has a significant influence on tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state. Therefore recommended that the regulators and management of universities in Benue state should put in place psychological intervention measures aimed at enhancing and boosting the self-esteem and efficacy among undergraduates. This can be practically achieved by adopting psychological techniques with the potency of reducing excesses in low self-esteem and improving upon them among the undergraduates.

KEYWORDS: Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy and Perceived Tramadol Abuse.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Tramadol is a group of drugs known as opioid analgesics narcotics. It is a centrally-acting analgesic with weak opioid agonist properties as well as inhibitory effects on the reuptake of noradrenalin and serotonin; it is a strong pain killer that works in the brain to change how the body feels and respond to pain and is used to treat moderate to severe pain as prescribed by the doctor; for instance after surgery or a serious injury (Ebie, 2005)

In as much as tramadol helps in reducing pains, it is expected to be taken according to doctor's prescription or recommendation; if taken without doctor's prescription, it is called tramadol abuse. Due to the relaxing and euphoric effects of tramadol, it is perceived to be abused. Perceived tramadol abuse remains one of the most significant public health problems in modern times and the impact of tramadol epidemic cannot be denied.

Globally, the rate of opioids consumption, particularly among young people is alarming; there are about 35 million users globally (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime 2022).

In Africa, it has been observed that the major drugs abused by the youths are tramadol, cannabis, nicotine and alcohol (World Health Organization in Ugwuoke & Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). Industrialization, urbanization and increased exposure to western lifestyle have been noted to contribute to this increasing trend of substance abuse like tramadol in Africa (Ugwuoke & Ifeanyichukwu, 2016).

The high levels of misuse of tramadol are as a result of its unregulated prescription and availability in pharmacies and on the illicit market; therefore, UNDOC (2017) warned the international community about the implications of non-medical use of tramadol on the economies and security of West Africa, notably in the Sahel region as well as the Middle East, and the risks posed with its broader linkages in the global fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime. There are indications that tramadol, which is mainly produced in South Asia, is smuggled through the Gulf of Guinea by transnational organized crime networks, towards areas of the Sahel partially controlled by armed groups and terrorist organizations.

In Nigeria, the use and abuse of tramadol have become a problem of National mental health and psychiatric significance and concern (Ahmed, 2012). 21st-century Nigeria has witnessed changing trends in the patterns of psychoactive substance use with Tramadol emerging as a candidate drug particularly in the Northern region of the country (Ibrahim, Yerima, Pindar, Onyencho, Ahmed, Machina, Shehe, Rabbebe & Wakil, 2017).

The North-Central zone comprises Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Plateau, Niger states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. The estimated annual prevalence of drug use is 10% in this zone, equivalent to 1.5 million past-year drug users and the extent of drug use in the North-Central zone is 30% lower than the overall national past-year prevalence of drug use; cannabis, cough syrups (containing codeine or dextromethorphan) and pharmaceutical opioids (tramadol, codeine, morphine) are the three groups of substances with high prevalence in the North-Central zone (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018).

Undoubtedly, young people are indispensable elements in any society; they are one of the greatest assets any nation can have. Apart from being the leaders of tomorrow, they outnumber the middle-aged and the aged. Young people are a particular segment of the national population that is sensitive, energetic, and active and the most productive phase of life as citizens. However, most Nigerian youths abuse drugs and are the most vulnerable population to a host of socio-economic problems like illicit drug use including tramadol (Ajufo, 2013; Aliyu, 2014).

Nigerian News Agency (2017) reported that there is an alarming increasing abuse of Tramadol, a pain reliever, among the youths and called for a concerted effort by stakeholders to curb the trend. The proliferation of this higher-strength tramadol (100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 800, 900, 1000 and 1500 MGs that has become popular among the youth in the North Central region calls for concern and coordinated efforts by all stakeholders to rid our markets of this unregistered and unapproved product which tends to truncate the future of a good number of undergraduate students.

Accordingly, Law Enforcement Agencies, Social and Mental Health Institutions have regularly organized sensitizations and educational programmes to counsel and enlighten the youths and young adults on the consequences of drug abuse, especially perceived tramadol abuse and the need to abstain from its use without proper recommendation or prescription by a Health expert, but this has not proved to yield a positive turn around and the number of patients admitted to psychiatric hospitals have increased considerably in recent years (Okoye, 2013).

However, perceived tramadol abuse among youths does not occur in a vacuum. Some factors propel perceived tramadol abuse among this indispensable but vulnerable population. Previous studies have found that low self-esteem, low self-efficacy. Unemployment, availability and affordability of drugs, family upbringing or background as well as demographic factors such as age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and marital status, play a significant role in drugs abuse among young people (Ahmed, 2012).

The construct of self-esteem is one significant component that has been considered to influence perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduate students, but has gotten less academic attention in Nigeria. This is a reference to how individuals evaluate themselves, including their sense of "self," the type of person they think they are, their capacities, their skills, and their outlook on the future. It specifically refers to how people feel about themselves and their opinions about themselves. Self-esteem is a reflection of a man's overall, passionate, subjective evaluation of his or her worth. It is a verdict about oneself as well as behaviour towards oneself. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (such as "I am talented" and "I am admirable") and emotions (such as happiness, sadness, pride, and disgrace) (Adewumi, 2017).

This research anchored by the social leaning theory proposed by Albert Bandural in the year (1977) to explain human behavioural influence in situations including that of perceived tramadol abuse. The social learning theory postulated by Bandura (1977) holds that people learn by observing others. The ability to learn is central to individual personality, as

behaviour observed can change the way a person thinks; also, the behaviour of individuals may be influenced by environmental factors (Bandura, 1977). Previous studies have found that low self-esteem (Chen, Dufour & Yi, 2005), youths' perception of peer group influence (Gaidhane, Zahiruddin, Waghmare, Shanbhag, Zodpey, & Joharapurkar, 2008; Dankani, 2012; Jibril, Olayinka, Omeiza, & Babantunde, 2008; Okwaraji, Ebigbo, & Akpala, 2009; Mohammad, 2014) and dissatisfaction with pair relationship (Ledoux, Miller, Choquet & Plant, 2002) are perceived factors that influence drug abuse among undergraduate students and young people across the world. However, there are still studies revealing a weak association between self-esteem and illicit drug abuse (Mohamadpourasl, Fakhari, Rostami & Tabatabaei, 2006). Also, available research evidence shows that the influence of peers is another factor in youth substance abuse.

Self-efficacy is considered one's belief in a personal capacity to do something. Self-efficacy is conceptualized within the framework of Bandura (1977) as one's capacity to mobilize the motivation, cognitive responses and courses of action needed to meet given situational demands. Also, peer relation is another factor that has been linked to youth substance abuse. A plethora of studies has consistently associated drug abuse among young people with the social environment in which they live. For example, Thakore, Ismail, Keetbaas, Payne and Rothenburg (2009) found that the majority of the university students who indulged in alcohol drinking attributed it to peer relations. As young people advance in age, they tend to detach from their parental control into the world of peers. Joining social groups, attending parties and other social events become very common and may provide a veritable change for involvement in illicit drugs. The influence of peers on drug abuse becomes even more serious when the abuser comes from a weak family setting, such as permissive parents where he enjoys unlimited rights and freedom. As they try to depend less on their parents, they show more dependency on their friends. In Nigeria, as in other parts of the world, many parents have no time to supervise their sons and daughters. They have little or no interaction with family members. Such a situation may give room for unhindered social interaction that propels perceived tramadol abuse among the youths.

Peer relations have also been found to influence drug abuse among youths in Nigeria. Ahmed, (2012) established that more than half of youths (57%) in North East region were initiated into substance abuse including tramadol through peer influence. In the same vein, one-third undergraduate students in North West region particularly Usman Danfodiyo University Sokoto, affirmed the influence of peer relations in drug abuse.

Ekpenyong and Aakpege, (2014); Abdulahi (2009) in Johnson, Akpanekpo, Okonna, Adeboye and Udoh, (2017) explained that peer relations have been observed to be one of the contributory factors to perceived tramadol abuse among youths. Youths' behaviours seem to be heavily tied to peer culture. If some members of a peer group use substances, there is a high probability that an individual in that group will experiment and ultimately become a user. Curiosity and desire for adventure may also contribute to experimentation with drugs; because these substances give a feeling of excitement that such youths find it difficult to do without them. The precise criteria that foretell perceived tramadol usage among undergraduate students at universities in Benue State, Nigeria, are still poorly understood because little is known about the precise origins of this occurrence. Furthermore, there hasn't been much research done on how undergraduate students can proactively try to diminish the negative effects of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and peer relationships to lower the likelihood of tramadol addiction

Statement of the Problem

Education is a key to human and national development. At the tertiary level especially in the universities, the undergraduate students are expected to focus on their academic pursuits. They have to be in school promptly and attend lectures regularly in order to succeed and become very useful members of the society who at any point in time should be willing, ready and able to contribute meaningfully towards the attainment of overall social goals. However, recent developments have shown a worrisome trend in the availability and perceived abuse of substances like tramadol among the university undergraduates around the globe, including developing countries like Nigeria.

The case of Benue State is not exceptional; the rate and sophistication in the perceived abuse of tramadol among undergraduates of universities in the State is so alarming and mental health specialists like psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and social workers have been saddled with the task of treatment and rehabilitation of a considerable number of these students. This menace has led to the student's deliberate absenteeism in school, low academic performance, rioting and fights, cultism, school dropout, mental illness and even death of some students. It is disheartening that despite the intervention of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and other government agencies to prevent and control this social problem, it has continued to escalate to almost every nook and cranny of Benue State.

In light of the above mentioned, therefore, the researcher was stimulated with the burning desire to add to knowledge and contribute to the existing literature by investigating self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations as perceived determinants of tramadol abuse among undergraduate students of universities in Benue State, Nigeria, and to proffer useful suggestions that would draw the urgent attention of government, university management, security agencies, policymakers as well as parents to this ugly trend. It is hoped that the proffered suggestions and solutions will mitigate the effect of this hydra-headed monster that is hell-bent on destroying our future leaders before it gets out of hand.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the role of self-esteem, self-efficacy, peer relations and perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria. Specifically, this study is aimed to:

- i. Examine the joint influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria.
- ii. Explore the main and interaction effects of sex, income and place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria?

Research Questions

- i. What is the joint influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the main and interaction effects of sex, income and place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

- i. There will be no significant joint influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria.
- ii. There will be no main and interaction effect of sex, income and place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

METHOD

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. It was carried out in Benue state, Nigeria. The setting for this study comprised of three Universities. The target population was 34235 university students. This study selected the sample size of 380 using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. A multi stage sampling technique was used to obtain participants for the

study. The instrument used for the study was questionnaire. In the main study, the Perceived Tramadol Abuse Screening Test (PTAST) yielded a reliability Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .76 which was highly reliable for use on the population of the university undergraduate students. The researcher employed descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages and the inferential statistics such as correlation was used to test the research hypotheses. Correlation is a statistic that describes the relationship between two variables. Simple Linear Regression Analysis to examine the influence of self-esteem and self-efficacy on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of the three selected Universities in Benue State.

RESULTS

Table 1. Inter-Correlations among the Study Variables.

		$\bar{X}$	S D	N	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	8	9	10	11	1	2
1	Age	30.63	6.271	380	L												
2	Sex	-	-	380	- .201**	L											
3	Marital S	-	-	380	- .291**	.477**	L										
4	Religion	-	-	380	- .284**	.274**	.178**	L									
5	Tribe	-	-	380	- .219**	.077	.229**	.332**	L								
6	Income	-	-	380	- .108*	.000	.151**	.142**	.221**	L							
7	Name of In	-	-	380	.061	.044	.024	.392**	.490**	.026	L						
8	Pla	-	-	3	-	-		-				L					

	ce of R			8 0	.18 7**	.0 38	.274 **	.061	.2 7 1 *	.1 47 **	.16 6* **					
9 1 0	Sel f- Est Sel f- Efi	51. 17 46. 30	1 9. 5 8 2 0 0 6	3 8 0 3 8 0	.42 0** - .34 3**	.1 26 * .0 86	.301 ** .231 **	.139 ** .103 *	.0 5 8 .0 4 5	.0 81 5 .0 32	- .03 5 - .03 5	- .09 1 - .22 0**	L .88 2**	L		
1 1	Pe er Rel	11 7.8	4 3. 9 0 0	3 8 0	- .36 0**	.1 31 *	.212 **	.124	.0 3 8	.0 71	-.02 9	-.21 1**	.95 1**	.935 **	L	
1 2	Tra ma dol	10 4.7	3 7. 1 5	3 8 0	- .06 3	.1 47 **	-.217 **	-.013	-.0 9 4	.0 28	-.00 1	-.33 5**	.72 3	.681 *	.7 7 2 * *	L

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Hypothesis One: This hypothesis stated that there will be no significant joint influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria. This hypothesis was tested using Standard Multiple Regression Analysis and the result is presented in Table 5.

Table 2: Summary of Standard Multiple Regression Analysis showing the joint influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

DV	Predictors	R	R ²	df	F	β	t	p
Perceived tramadol abuse (overall)	Constant	.782	.611	3,376	196.465		7.301	.000
	Self-Esteem					-.139	-	.185
	Self-Efficacy					-.334	1.327	.000
	Peer relations					1.216	-	.000
							3.660	
							8.736	

The result presented in Table 2 revealed that self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations jointly influenced overall perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in

Benue State Nigeria [$R=.782$, $R^2=.611$, $F(3,376)=196.465$, $p<.01$]. Self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations contributed 61.1% of the total variance observed in overall perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue State Nigeria. This result revealed that, self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations are significant joint predictors of perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates. Based on the above results, hypothesis four was confirmed.

Hypothesis 3: This hypothesis stated that, there will be no main and interaction effect of sex, income and place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Univariate analysis of variance summary table showing the main and interaction effect of sex, income and place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

Source	Type III SSq	df	MSq	F	Sig	D
Corrected Model	1000359.936	11	10035.994	8.763	.000	.192
Intercept	2082697.800	1	2082697.80	1818.58	.000	.831
Sex	3654.879	1	3654.879	3.191	.075	.009
Income	1415.815	2	707.908	.618	.540	.003
Place of Residence	19527.195	1	19527.105	17.051	.000	.044
Sex * Income	1122.258	2	561.129	.490	.613	.003
Sex * Place of Residence	7.761	1	7.761	.007	.934	.000
Income * Place of Resid	15821.869	2	7910.934	6.908	.001	.036
Sex * Income* Place of Res	425.489	1	425.489	.372	.543	.001
Error	422590.169	369	1145.231			
Total	4687288.000	380				
Corrected Total	522950.105	379				

$R^2 = .192$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .170$

Result in table 3 showed that there was a significant effect of place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue State Nigeria [$F(1, 379) = 17.051$; $p<.01$]. Observation of eta coefficient [$\eta = .044$] indicated that place of resident was the only factor that significantly had main effect on perceived tramadol abuse accounting for 4.4% of the total variance observed place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue State Nigeria whereas sex [$F(1, 379) = 3.191$; $p>.05$] and income [$F(1, 379) = .618$; $p>.05$] did not show a significant effect on undergraduates perceived tramadol abuse.

The result further revealed that sex, income and place of residence interacted together but did not have effect on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduate students of universities in

Benue State, Nigeria [$F(3, 377) = .372; p > .05$]. Observation of eta coefficient [$\eta = .001$] indicated that despite the interaction of these three factors they insignificantly accounted for .001% of the total variance observed in perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduate students of universities in Benue State, Nigeria. This result implies that sex, income and place where an undergraduate student resides do not interactionally affect their perceived tramadol abuse.

Incidentally, the result further revealed that, an interaction between income and place of residence significantly exacted a significant amount of effect on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduate students of universities in Benue State, Nigeria [$F(2, 378) = 6.908; p < .01$]. Observation of eta coefficient [$\eta = .036$] indicated that the undergraduates' income and place of residence significantly accounted for 3.6% of the total variance observed in perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduate students of universities in Benue State, Nigeria. This finding implies that the income and place where an undergraduate is residing when interacted together, they exact an affect significantly on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduate students of universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In this section, various hypotheses in relationship to the study were discussed: Hypothesis one sought to establish the significant joint influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state Nigeria. This hypothesis was confirmed as self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations significantly and jointly influenced perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state Nigeria. This finding is in line with Mase, Obekpa, Hyambe, Agbo and Obekpa (2021) who found that, self-esteem ($\beta = -.412, t = -3.011, P < .05$), peer influence ($\beta = .341, t = 2.752, P < .05$) and family relationship ($\beta = -.477, t = -3.904, P < .05$) significantly and independently predicted perceived tramadol abuse, with self-esteem and family relationship further demonstrating an inverse relationship with perceived tramadol abuse. In their study they also found that, there was also a significant joint influence of the predictors on tramadol use [$R = .641, R^2 = .591, [F(3, 39) = 4.311, P < .01]$]. self-esteem, peer influence and family relationship jointly accounted for 59.1% of the variance in perceived tramadol abuse symptoms among studied population. Lab, Mokadem, Shokr, Salama and Amer (2021) found that, there were statistically significant differences between study and control group in the total mean score of knowledge about drug abuse post intervention (12.39 [+ or -] 1.72 & 6.88 [+ or -] 1.35; P value .000) compared to pre-intervention (6.95 [+ or -] 2.14 & 6.72 [+ or

-] 2.19; P 0 .535). There was a statistically significant difference between study and control group regarding students' attitudes toward drug abuse post intervention (160.98 [+ or -] 11.72 & 75.55 [+ or -] 13.35; P 0.000) compared to pre-intervention (77.53 [+ or -] 12.14 & 75.89 [+ or -] 11.19; P 0.735). Finally, there was a statistically significant difference between study and control group regarding students' self-efficacy about drug abuse prevention post intervention (11.84 [+ or -] 1.92 & 8.18 [+ or -] 1.55; P 0.000) compared to pre-intervention (8.89 [+ or -] 3.14 & 7.99 [+ or -] 1.92; P 0.598). The findings of the current study suggest that peer education intervention has a positive effect and significantly enhances knowledge, self-efficacy and attitudes of secondary school students toward drug abuse.

Hypothesis two sought to establish main and interaction effects of sex, income and place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state Nigeria. This hypothesis was confirmed as there was a main and interaction effects of sex, income and place of residence on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state Nigeria. This finding is in line with Lab, Mokadem, Shokr, Salama and Amer (2021) found that, the mean age of the studied students in both study and control groups were (16.14 [+ or -] 1.08 & 15.96 [+ or -] 1.01) respectively. There were statistically significant differences between study and control group in the total mean score of knowledge about drug abuse post intervention (12.39 [+ or -] 1.72 & 6.88 [+ or -] 1.35; P value .000) compared to pre-intervention (6.95 [+ or -] 2.14 & 6.72 [+ or -] 2.19; P 0 .535). There was a statistically significant difference between study and control group regarding students' attitudes toward drug abuse post intervention (160.98 [+ or -] 11.72 & 75.55 [+ or -] 13.35; P 0.000) compared to pre-intervention (77.53 [+ or -] 12.14 & 75.89 [+ or -] 11.19; P 0.735). Finally, there was a statistically significant difference between study and control group regarding students' self-efficacy about drug abuse prevention post intervention (11.84 [+ or -] 1.92 & 8.18 [+ or -] 1.55; P 0.000) compared to pre-intervention (8.89 [+ or -] 3.14 & 7.99 [+ or -] 1.92; P 0.598).

Danso and Anto (2021) in addition found that, the 458 study participants, 114 (24.9%) indicated that they abused tramadol. The mean ($\pm$ standard deviation) age of those who abused tramadol (25.14 ± 5.87 years) was significantly lower than that of non-abusers (28.23 ± 9.6 years), $t(456) = -3.60$; $p = 0.001$.

Uwaibi, Omozuwa & Agbonrofo-Eboigbe (2022) found that, among drug abusers, male subjects (10.8%) had a higher rate of substance use compared to females (6.2%). In all, 29(8.3%) of the respondents satisfied the criteria for defining substance abuse. Cannabis was the most named substance abused accounting for 86 (20.9%) followed by alcohol and

tramadol respectively (19.7% and 11.2%). Alcohol was the most commonly abused substance accounting for 17(58.6%). This was closely followed by Tramadol 41.4%. 52.4% of the respondents had no knowledge about the definition of substance abuse. About 32.3% of the subjects got information about Substance abuse from friends. The commonest reason for illegal drug use was peer influence which accounted for 50% of the respondents. Majority of the substance abusers (62.5%) who continued to abuse drugs did so because of the euphoric feeling they got from its use.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that:

- i. Self-esteem, self-efficacy and peer relations are significant joint influencers of perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria.
- ii. The interaction of sex, income and place of residence has a significant effect on perceived tramadol abuse among undergraduates of universities in Benue state, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were stated:

1. The regulators and management of universities in Benue state should put in place psychological intervention measures aimed at enhancing and boosting the self-esteem among undergraduates. This can be practically achieved by adopting psychological techniques with the potency of reducing excesses in low self-esteem and improving upon them among the undergraduates.
2. Government should put in place policies that will guide against the excesses of drug abuse due to peer relations among undergraduates of universities in Benue State in particular, and Nigeria at large.

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