The Role of Sensation Seeking and Self-Efficacy in Cannabis Use among Youths in Makurdi Metropolis

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Abstract: This study investigated cannabis use and the roles of sensation seeking and self-efficacy among the youths in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State Nigeria. Data were collected using standard questionnaires on a sample of 150 participants. Three hypotheses were tested usinghierarchical regression and the result for hypothesis one indicated that only disinhibition (β = .993, t= 50.659, p<.01) and thrill and adventure (β= .240, t= 2.503, p<.05) significantly predicted cannabis use. While, boredom (β-.075, t= -.119, p>.05) and experience seeking (β= .106, t= .168, p>.05) did not. Furthermore, result indicated that self-efficacy (β=-.171, t= -1.733, p>.05) did not predict cannabis use. Additionally, sensation seeking and self-efficacy had significant, joint predictive effect [R^2 = .001, F (5,142) = 3.003, p<.01], accounting for a significant change of 0.1% of the variance in cannabis use. Findings implies that youths who are disinhibited, thrill and adventurous stand a higher risk of indulging in cannabis use. Thus, the government and non-government organizations should give adequate attention to curbing the menace of cannabis use by creating awareness on the dangers of its use.
Keywords: Sensation seeking, self-efficacy, cannabis use

Introduction

Over the last decade, concerned organizations and governments have intensified awareness campaign on the dangers of cannabis use in youth population (Okedeji, 2009). But despite this intervention measures and the government paternalistic approach to drug regulation, it appears that cannabis remains one of the most-used illegal drug. The Global Burden of Disease Study 2010 estimated that there were an estimated 13.1 million cannabis dependent people globally in 2010 (Degenhardt, et al., 2103). This population is largely domiciled in South and North America and Africa, where the rate of cannabis use among young people have remained substantially high (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). The National Survey of drugs use among Nigerians identified cannabis as the most-used illicit drug, with 6.6% lifetime prevalence (Adamson et al., 2015). This prevalence got elevated to 10.8% in 2018 (UNODC, 2018), and even up to 14.4% in 2020 (Dumbili, 2020), with majority of the prevalence being in Northern Nigeria (UNODC, 2018). This has been largely attributed to socio-economic deprivation, poverty, and displacement (due to Boko Haram insurgency), attending social events and pressure from peers (Shehu & Idris, 2008).

In Benue state, cannabis use seemed so common among the youths. In the recent Vanguard report of 14th February, 2021, it was reported by The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) that several bags of cannabis were seized weighing 1,578 kilograms. The culprits were largely youths, whom according to the agency are involved in the distribution and consumption of the substance. Historically, youth indulgence in substance has deleterious consequences, and increased cannabis use in the state could lead to consequential increase in criminal acts such as violence, cultism, theft, armed robbery amongst others (Ibrahim et al, 2017). Undoubtedly, youths are an indispensable element in any society. They are one of the greatest assets any nation can have. Apart from being the leaders of tomorrow, they out-number the middle-aged and the aged. They constitute a population that is energetic, active and productive segment of the society. This means that anything capable of affecting productivity among the youths should be given serious attention.

Existing studies have associated several factors to cannabis use. Studies for example, factors such as performance enhancement (Ekendahl, Månsson, & Karlsson, 2020; Gould, Greene, & Donnelly, 2020), conformity and getting high (Comeau, Stewart, &Loba, 2001) and experimentation (Patrick, Bray, & Berglund, 2016) have been linked to increasing substance use, while attending social events and peer pressure (Shehu & Idris, 2008) and easy availability/access (UNODC, 2018) are documented risk factors in Nigerian population. However, little research attention has been given to the role that self-efficacy and sensation seeking play in cannabis use among Nigerian youth population. These variables are so crucial considering that youthful period

is characterised by experimentation period where such exuberance is demonstrated through sensation seeking behaviours, and for the fact that personal beliefs are common at this stage, which could in turn, influence cannabis use.

Sensation seeking (SS) is considered as a personality trait that is characterised by search for experiences and feelings that are "varied, novel, complex and intense", and which involves readiness to take physical, social, legal and financial risk for the sake of such experiences (Masson, Lamoureux & de-Guise, 2019). It involves the willingness to take risks for excitement and a preference for unpredictable situation. Risk is not an essential component of the trait, as many activities associated with it are not risky. However, risk may not be considered, tolerated or minimized and even be seen to add to the thrill of the activity (Zuckerman, 2009). Sensation seeking occur in varying forms such as; Disinhibition which is expressed in social drinking, partying, and variety in sexual activities, Boredom susceptibility which is an aversion to repetition, routine, and dull people, and restlessness when things are unchanging, Thrill and adventure seeking has to do with

expressing a desire to engage in sports or other activities involving speed or danger and experience seeking repr esents the seeking of experiences through the mind and senses, travel, and a nonconforming life-style. Youths who are relatively high in sensation seeking may be biologically inclined to seek for stimulation, therefore making them predisposed to substance abuse and more prone to the rewarding effects of pleasurable stimuli, or risk behaviours with drug use inclusive (Zuckerman, 2007). Empirical studies have shown that sensation seeking predicts drug use including cannabis (Aguiyi, Taiwo, Osinowo, Ineme & Ottu et al., 2010), individuals who are high on sensation seeking seems to gravitate more to use of drugs including cannabis (Stoops, Lile& Robbins, 2006).

Besides the effect of sensation seeking behaviour, research has also shown that self-efficacy which has to do with the belief of the young people in their ability to resist inappropriate behaviours is related to drug use including cannabis. In this regard, people who have low self-efficacy are more likely to use cannabis (Lozano, Stephens & Roffman, 2006). This implies that, youth who have low ability for self-control will indulge more in cannabis use. Thus, in a sample of young people in the US Denise, Clayton, Lindsey, Robert & Roger (2011) found that marijuana outcomes were negatively associated with self-efficacy. The youths who often indulge in drug use consist of varying traits, but not very much is known of this factor in cannabis use.

Cannabis use has become disturbingly prevalent and almost a norm among the youths who use it to achieve high effect and thereby indulging in all manner of unwholesome behaviours. The ugly consequences of this behaviour among youths according to Burke, O'Sullivan and Vaughan (2005), include health problems, social problems, morbidity, injuries, unprotected sex, rapes, violence, deaths, motor vehicle accidents, homicides, suicides, physical dependence or psychological addiction. With consideration to the indispensability of the youth population to any nation, this study is compelled to explore the possible factors that predict cannabis use among this population. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine the roles of sensation seeking and self-efficacy in cannabis use among youths in Makurdi metropolis

Hypotheses
The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study;
1. Sensation seeking will significantly predict cannabis use among youths in Makurdi metropolis Benue State.
2. Self-efficacy will significantly predict cannabis use among youths in Makurdi metropolis Benue State
3. Sensation seeking and self-efficacy will significantly and jointly predict cannabis use among youths in Makurdi metropolis Benue State

Method
Participants
A cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study. Eligible participants were selected from Makurdi metropolis using purposive and snowballing sampling techniques. Their age range was from 21-32 years and comprised majorly male youths. Demographic profile of the participants revealed that a total of 148 (98.7%) were males while 2 (1.3%) were females. On education, 26 (17.3%) had primary education, 45 (30.0%) secondary education while 79 (52.7%) had tertiary education.
Instruments

Socio-demographic characteristics
Demographic and contextual information such as age, education, location, sex and monthly income were gathered from the participants using simple questions that elicit relevant information on those items.

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Sensation Seeking Scale

The sensation seeking scale (SSS) is a 40-item scale that assesses the tendency to seek varying experience and feeling by the youths developed by Zuckerman, Kolin, Price and Zoob (1964). The items are rated using A and B option for the participants to choose the one that best describe their feelings. Respondents were asked to respond to all items with only one choice, A or B. The scale consist of four dimensions; Disinhibition (SSS-DIS), Boredom susceptibility (SSS-BOR), Thrill and adventure seeking (SSS-THR) and Experience seeking (SSS-EXP).

General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES).

This is a standardized psychological assessment tool developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) designed to assess a general sense of perceived self-efficacy. The instrument consists of 10 items. Some sample items on the scale include: "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough", "I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events", If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution." It is measured on a 4-point rating format ranging from 1= not at all true, to 4= exactly true. The instrument which is a one-dimensional scale has been proven to be psychometrically robust instrument (Okediji, Offiong, Umoh, Sanni, Ezeh, &Afolabi, 2008). Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) reported Cronbach's alphas in many nations which are ranged from .75 to .90, with the majority in the high .80s. Schwarzer, Babler, Kwiatek and Zhang, (1997) found a discriminant validity of -.52 and -.60 by correlating the scale with depression scale by Zerssen (1976) and Anxiety Scale by Spielgerger (1983) respectively. A score above the mean will be considered high self-efficacy and the one below the mean will be considered low self-efficacy in this study.

Cannabis Use Disorder Identification Test (CUDIT-R)

CUDIT-R is a self-report scale that measure problematic cannabis use among young people (Adamson, Kay-Lambkin, Baker & Lewin et al., 2010). The CUDIT-R is an 8 item self-report questionnaire. The scale is rated on a 5pointresponse style (0 = never, 1 = less than monthly, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = daily or almost daily). The CUDIT-R exhibits improved psychometric properties (Adamson, 2010) over the original scale (CUDIT, 2003) and appears well suited to the task of screening for problematic cannabis use within a clinical population. The scale is scored by adding each of the 8 items; items 1-8 is scored on a 0-4 scale while item 8 indicate hazardous cannabis use, while score of 12 or more indicate a possible cannabis use disorder for which further intervention may be required (Adamson, 2009). These CUDIT-R questions have been validated for their ability to produce DSM-IV diagnoses in the context of clinical samples and it is highly likely that the CUDIT-R would be appropriate in epidemiological work based on the AUDITs appropriateness in epidemiological work (Barbor, Higgins-Biddle, Saunders & Monteiro, 2001). A pilot study to determine the reliability of the for use in the present study was carried out on some selected youths in Makurdi and correlation coefficient of .71

Procedure

Upon obtaining necessary approval from the ministry of health, the researchers identified and recruited research participants using snowballing since it was difficult accessing them. The participants who were met by the researchers, were taught on how to administer the instruments and encourage other participants to complete the questionnaire correctly. After keeping to the necessary ethical standards, the researchers throughsnowballing administered a total of 175 standardized copies of questionnaires to participants. However, 25 copies of the questionnaires were discarded due to improper completion. Therefore, 150 sets of the inventories were used for analysis. The questionnaire is self-administered, so it was giving out to the youths who completed and returned) to the research assistant who eventually submitted to the researcher after retrieving all the filled copies.

Ethical Consideration

Permission to conduct the study was sought and granted by the Benue StateMinistry of Health. However, before participants took part in the study, their consent was duly sought to ensure that their participation was by free will and once. The consent was given by filling a written consent form, the researchers assured them of strict confidentiality of the information so provided. This promise was kept in earnest. The researchers also ensured that only relevant information pertaining the study were collected through the questionnaire in order to avoid unnecessary invasion of privacy.

More so, participation for the study required no cost and was voluntary as they were assured that they had the right to withdraw participation at any time they so desired.

Data Analysis

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS-version-23) was used to analyse the data to test for the study hypotheses. The three hypotheses were tested using multiple regression, which ensured establishment of relationships among sensation seeking, self-efficacy cannabis and use.

Results

Table 1: Summary of a zero-order correlation showing the relationship among boredom, disinhibition, thrill and adventure, experience seeking, self-efficacy and cannabis use

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	X	SD
CUDIT-R	-						24.69	4.86
Boredom	.236*	-					26.75	9.40
Disinhibition	.980**	.213*	-				30.24	6.37
Thrill & adventure	.475**	.187*	.512**	-			37.55	12.04
Experience seeking	.239*	.312*	.217*	.190*	-		26.73	9.41
Self-efficacy	.529*	.149*	.571**	.979**	.153*	-	52.41	13.12

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2tailed)
* Correlation is significant at 0.05 (2tailed)

The result in Table 1 indicated that boredom($p<.05$), disinhibition ($p<.01$), thrill and adventure ($p<.01$), experience seeking ($p<.05$) and self-efficacy ($p<.05$) are significantly related to cannabis use. Also, there is a significant relationship between boredom and disinhibition ($p<.05$), thrill and adventure ($p<.05$), experience ($p<.05$) and self-efficacy ($p<.05$). Additionally, disinhibition is significantly related with thrill and adventure ($p<.01$), experience seeking ($p<.05$) and self-efficacy ($p<.05$). Similarly, thrill and adventure is significantly related to experience ($p<.05$) and self-efficacy ($p<.01$). Lastly, experience seeking is significantly related to self-efficacy ($p<.05$)

Figure 1: Scatterplot with line of best fit showing relationship among sensation seeking, self-efficacy and cannabis use
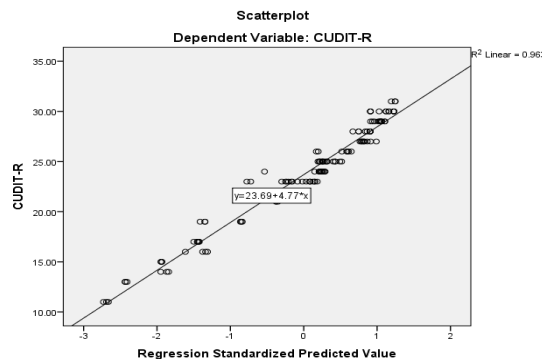
A scatterplot showing visual assessment of the variables (figure1) indicate significant relationship among the study variables.

Table 2: Hierarchical regression showing result for the predictive role of ssensation seeking and self-efficacy on cannabis use among youths in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State

Predictors Variables	Criterion Variable	
	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)
Boredom	-.075	
Disinhibition	.993	
Thrill & adventure	-.240	
Experience seeking	.106	
Self-efficacy		.963
R^2	.962	.961
Adj. R^2	.961	.961
F	870.736**	707.302**
$\Delta R2$	.962.001	
ΔF	870.736**	3.003

Table 2 presented result on the predictive influences of sensation seeking and self-efficacy on cannabis use among youths. The first model in the hierarchical regression indicated that only disinhibition (β = .993, t= 50.659, p<.01) and thrill and adventure (β= .240, t= 2.503, p<.05) predicted cannabis use, while boredom (β-.075, t= -.119, p>.05) and experience seeking (β= .106, t= .168, p>.05) did not. However, with the introduction of self-efficacy in the second model, the influence of thrill and adventure (β=.119, t= .270, p>.05) on cannabis use was no longer significant. Lastly, self-efficacy (β=-.171, t= -1.733, p>.05) did not make any significant contribution to the model. Altogether, sensation seeking and self-efficacy had significant, joint predictive effect [R^2 = .001, F (5,142) = 3.003, p<.01], accounting for a significant change of 0.1% of the variance in cannabis use.

Discussion

The study explored the roles of sensation seeking and self-efficacy on cannabis use amongsample of youths in Makurdi metropolis. In line with psychological theory of drug use, hypothesis one revealed a positive predictive effect of disinhibition and thrill and adventure seeking on cannabis use. The result of hypothesis one revealed that there was a statisticallysignificant prediction of cannabis by sensation seeking (disinhibition, thrill and adventure). This implies that the desire to socialize and engage in different activities can results to cannabis use. This result is in line with previous studies as seen in (Zuckerman, 2007; Stoops, Lile& Robbins, 2006) who in their separate studies found sensation seeking as positive predictor of drug use. This means, the more the youths feel the need to socialize and engage in different activities, the more they are likely to use cannabis.

Additionally, findings in Table 2 indicated that self-efficacy did not predict cannabis use among youths. This means that one's believe in the ability to self-control has no influence on cannabis use. The result fails to support Lozano, Stephens and Roffman, (2006) who found that people with low self-efficacy uses cannabis more. Jointly, sensation seeking and self-efficacy jointly accounted for significant change of 0.1% of the variance in cannabis use in the population. This indicates that youths who are high on sensation seeking and low on self-efficacy would tend to involve in cannabis use more than their counterpart.

Conclusion

In line with the finding on hypothesis one that sensation seeking have significant positive influence on cannabis use, the study draws its conclusion that youths with high sensation seeking behaviour are at high risk of initiating and maintaining use of cannabis.

Additionally, drawing from findings on hypothesis two, which has shown a no significant predictive impact of self-efficacy on cannabis use, the study concluded that self-efficacy is not a significant risk factor on cannabis use among youths.

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