Socio-Cultural Factors influencing Alcohol Consumption and Cigarette Smoking among Female Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study focused on the socio-cultural determinants of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The mixed methods research design was adopted in the study. The sample size of the study was 395. Quantitative and qualitative instruments were used to collect data in the study. The questionnaire was the quantitative instrument while the IDI Guide was the qualitative instrument for data collection in the study. The research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequency counts and graphic illustrations. Three hypotheses were tested in the study using the Chi square test statistic. Findings from the study show that peer pressure is the major socio-cultural factor responsible for the involvement of female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking. Health risks like endangering vital organs of the body and academic effects like truancy were found to be the major consequences of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking on female students at the University who engage in drinking and smoking. The study recommends that alcohol and cigarette sales should be banned within the University community.

Key Words: alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, female undergraduates, health

risks, socio-cultural factors.

Introduction

Alcohol and smoking are as old as human history and its consumption in different socio-cultural milieu extends beyond the last ten thousand years (Dumbili, 2013). Alcohol and tobacco are among the top causes of preventable deaths in the United States (NIAAA, 2007) and globally too. The harmful use of alcohol and tobacco results to approximately 2.5 million deaths each year with a net loss of life of 2.25 million (WHO, 2011) taking into account the estimated beneficial impact of low levels of alcohol use on some diseases in some population groups. Almost 4% of all deaths worldwide are attributed to alcohol and tobacco greater than deaths caused by HIV/AIDs, violence and tuberculosis (WHO, 2011).

Cigarette smoking is the commonest form of tobacco use in developed countries accounting for at least 80% of overall tobacco consumption. While several studies in developed countries had shown a decrease in cigarette among the older age groups, it is not the same in the younger populations (Brent, 2013). In the developing countries, the prevalence among the youths seems to be on the increase. Its consumption has been considered normal, especially when drunk without outright intoxication in Africa and other parts of the globe.

In Africa, wine and other alcoholic beverages such as palm wine, burukutu, etc. were consumed for pleasure soon after brewing or tapping (Odejide, 2006) and were rarely traded in the market (WHO, 2002). However, tobacco was rarely seen as it was mainly introduced during the colonial period around the African continent (Yenusai, 2014).

Though alcoholic beverages have been consumed for hundreds of years, the pattern and purpose of consumption vary considerably among societies and even within communities. Excess consumption was not widely tolerated in many societies while few communities permitted it (Willis, 2006). For example, abuse attracted negative sanctions as recorded in the biblical Old and New Testaments (Seller, 1985). Drinking of alcohol was culturally tolerated as part of ceremonial lives of many ethnic groups in what is now known as Nigeria, especially in communities where it was not forbidden by religion prior to the advent of colonialism (Heap, 1998; Obot, 2000).

A unique feature of this area that is now known as Nigeria was that different locally produced alcoholic beverages distinguished ethnic groups. In the north, *pito* and *burukutu* were commonly consumed. In the south, palm wine tapped from the palm tree (Obot, 2000)

was popular while the native gin locally called *ogogoro*, *kai-kai* (Demehin, 1984; Korieh, 2003), *akpuru-achia,* or *Sapele water*, distilled from the fermented palm wine was widely consumed, especially in the Niger-Delta area. Though there were no written rules prohibiting females and adolescents from drinking in this traditional era (Odejide, 2006), consumption was the reserve of men and played a crucial role in political, religious and socio-economic relationships (Oshodin, 1995). In this era, alcohol played complex roles in religious and communities' rituals and served as a conduit for social cohesion. Because of these ceremonial functions, adult males were expected to drink being served by the youth. Alcohol was a key requirement for a bridal price to be paid in order to consummate marriages in many villages. It was consumed at almost all ceremonies including cultural festivals, chieftaincy enthronements, child dedications and even funerals (Oshodin, 1995). Alcohol and tobacco did not just play the role of fostering social cohesion as people drank locally brewed beverages together in groups. According to Korieh (2003), they were also a tool for 'imperial control' and a revenue source for western traders. They were also used by 'traditional rulers to exert power over their subjects' (Willis, 2006). With colonisation and the influx of western cultures, alcoholic beverages and cigarette from western countries became readily available to old and young, males and females, on a commercial basis.

In recent decades, the pattern, quantity and reason for consumption are changing rapidly, especially among females (Chikere & Mayowa, 2011). This has resulted in an increased burden of alcohol/tobacco-related problems. Alcohol and tobacco misuse can result in death of the user (and non-users, due to drunk driving and other related accidents) and often disability in early years among young people (Jernigan, 2001).

Similarly, alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking in Nigerian universities were minimal during the 1990s. The bulk of consumption was done by male students while female students generally disregarded alcohol and tobacco due to the social and moral meanings attached to the consumption of the products. Due to increased globalization and liberalism, alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking began to appeal to female undergraduates. This explains the current trend of female undergraduates almost overtaking their male counterparts in the consumption of alcohol and cigarette (Toroyan, 2009).

Another new trend is the increasing consumption of alcohol and tobacco by females in Nigeria especially in the higher institutions (Adelekan, 1993). With the rising influence of globalization and the upsurge of feminism in the country, women have recently begun to challenge the status quo that relegated them in the society, and this seems to have been extended to alcohol and cigarette consumption. In traditional society, the women hardly drank alcohol because of cultural constraints (Obot, 2006). Additionally, they were not economically empowered. In this contemporary era, many women have acquired education and other skills that enabled them to gain access to paid work. The freedom the university environment gives to female students presents a comfortable and convenient avenue for them to consume alcohol and tobacco without being cautioned. Consequently, many can afford to purchase and consume alcohol and tobacco products. There is also a recent popular maxim among Nigerian women that ''anything a man can do a woman can do it better'' (including harmful alcohol consumption).

A major determinant of the changing patterns of alcohol and tobacco consumption is the absence of alcohol policy in Nigeria. Globally, alcohol producers often frown at strict measures to regulate the production and marketing of alcohol through legislation due to economic interest (Miller, 2010). They often claim that restriction will reduce sales which will result in job loss. They solicit for self-regulatory 'responsible drinking', but this has been revealed to be highly ineffective in controlling alcohol misuse (Bakke & Endal, 2010). In developed societies, policy makers always set the standard measurement of alcohol in volume and value. This helps to determine what responsible consumption is for adults who are legally qualified to drink. In UK for instance, the standard value of the unit of alcohol is 7.8 grams and women and men's maximum of drinks per week are 14 and 21 standard drinks respectively. Against this background, pregnant women or those who are likely to get pregnant are advised not to consume alcohol within the period of conception (Farke, 2011). Therefore, responsible drinking can be said to be consuming not more than four units for men and three units for women per day. In Australia, a standard drink contains 10g and males and females respectively are advised not to exceed four and two standard drinks daily (Jones & Gregory, 2009). In the USA, similar definition exists because the standard value of the unit of alcohol is 14 grams or 17.7ml and since 1989, the US government made it

compulsory for all alcoholic beverages produced or imported to carry a warning message on their labels (DeCarlo, 1997). In these countries, alcoholic containers carry Alcohol By Volume (ABV) and warnings on their labels as a means of informing consumers appropriately on what constitute responsible consumption. Though the effectiveness of warning labels on alcohol has generated debate for producing mixed results (Ringold, 2002), labels enhance awareness of the information they carry (Wilkinson & Room, 2009) because they help to reinforce 'already known hazards' (Kaskutas & Greenfield, 1992 p.12). Warnings encourage safe behaviour (Cox et al., 1997) while those that have coloured pictorial warnings enhance 'noticeability of warning information' (Laughery, Young, Vaubel, & Brelsford, 1993 p. 48) thus contributing to positive results. Many other countries such as Australia (Midford, 2005) and Sweden (Babor & Winstanley, 2008) have recorded success in alcohol policies and strategies. The success of Sweden comes from the increased alcohol tax, which led to the reduction of alcohol-related negative consequences.

Although Nigeria and many other African countries contribute to the global burden of alcohol and tobacco related problems due to increasing harmful use, only a few countries within Africa have policies to regulate alcohol use and misuse. Even those that have policies, the vested interest, which affects not just Africa, but the other part of the world (Babor, 2010; Bakke & Endal, 2010; Miller, et al., 2011) can render policy ineffective and subject to misuse. A global call to regulate alcohol through policy became paramount out of the recognition of the rising harm caused by misuse. Therefore, a World Health Assembly Resolution in 2005 had to call the World Health Organisation to work hand-in-hand with member countries to formulate policy aimed at checking alcohol misuse (WHO, 2005). Ten key policy strategies were, therefore, adopted in May 2008 (WHO, 2009). Nigeria has not formulated any policy to regulate alcohol and tobacco use and misuse (Babor & Winstanley, 2008). Nigeria has continued to rely on self-regulation, as championed by alcohol and tobacco producers who market their alcoholic beverages and cigarettes through sophisticated strategies while at the same time supplanting stringent policies from being pursued (Babor & Winstanley, 2008; Casswell, 2011). Alcohol policies do exist in South Africa, a move to ensure that alcoholic beverages carry warning labels did not come to fruition until 2009 (Parry, 2010). Since then, it has become mandatory for alcohol products

to carry at least "one of the seven health messages and be at least one-eighth of the total size of the container label" (Parry, 2010 p.1341).

Cigarette smoking and drinking commonly co-occur among female university undergraduates, a population that is at high risk for developing alcohol and nicotine use disorders (Witkiewitz et al., 2012). Cigarette smoking is strongly associated with alcohol use in young adults particularly those attending colleges and universities who are beginning to experiment with smoking. University undergraduates who smoke and drink frequently per occasion are more likely to have alcohol related problems than non-smoking student drinkers (Reed, Infantino, Tibelis & Patterson, 2007; Wetter, Lopez & Lucas, 2004). The implications of smoking and drinking could be fatal. On one occasion, a female student of Nnamdi Azikiwe was reported dead right inside the university community. It was established that the death was associated with excessive consumption of cigarette. This incidence further reawakened the debate on consumption of alcohol and smoking by students especially in an excessive manner. There are also instances where female students engaged in drinking competitions among themselves, and they ended up in the hospitals due to the negative effects the drinks had on them (Aduremi, 2014).

On a daily basis, the number of female undergraduates who engage in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking continues to rise. The female students engage in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking even in the university campus as there are no laws or taskforce teams to checkmate them (Ani, 2015). Alcohol intake and smoking with all the social and health risks coming with it, still prevails among college students and university undergraduates. This study is focused on examining the socio-cultural determinants responsible for the sustained prevalence of this practice by female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. How prevalent is alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking by female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

2. What are the socio-cultural determinants of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

Review of Related Literature

Prevalence of Alcohol Consumption and Cigarette Smoking in Female Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Denison and Oluwyemi (2019) conducted a survey in Lagos and Ogun States Nigeria to establish the factors and consequences of smoking and drinking among teenagers in Nigeria. The study selected 800 respondents through the simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was administered to them. The study found that there is a high prevalence of smoking and drinking among young people who indicated that they smoke or drink more than 3 times in a week.

Gilbert and Nacho (2013) conducted a study on the prevalence of alcohol consumption and tobacco smoking among undergraduate students. The study was carried out in the University of Accra, Ghana, where 30 respondents were interviewed. The findings from the study show that there is a high level of awareness and prevalence of alcohol and cigarette consumption among undergraduate students in the university. The study further found that more and more women are getting involved in cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption than their male counterparts. Factors like urbanization, decreasing influence of traditional norms and values and the social media were identified as being responsible for this trend.

In a study on the extent of female alcohol consumption and tobacco smoking conducted in Lagos State University with 400 respondents, Idris (2011) found that the involvement of female students in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking is on a steady increase. The study found that public smoking and drinking by female undergraduates is on the rise. This is likely going to be the case with female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. This finding will be further strengthened or refuted at the end of this research.

Socio-Cultural Determinants of Alcohol Consumption and Cigarette Smoking among Female Undergraduates

Alcohol consumption is primarily influenced by family background and economic challenges. People find alcohol as an escape route from the problems they encounter on a daily basis. They try to sedate themselves from realities on ground by drinking heavily and even smoking without considering if it has negative effects on them or not (Pearson & Henson, 2016). There is a major socio-economic challenge in most developing countries including Nigeria. This has the capacity of pushing the young people into alcohol consumption and drinking. Baus, Kupek and Pires (2002) observed that among the students of first and second grades, those from families with high socioeconomic class showed a risk two-times greater for alcohol use than those from lower socioeconomic class. Again, Soldera, et al., (2004) observed that the use of hard drugs (including alcohol and tobacco) was higher among high school students in the A and B socioeconomic classes, as well as those whose childhood religious education was not very intense. Tot et al., (2004) noted that there is high prevalence of cigarette smoking and drinking among students who had high monthly allowances, perhaps because financial advantages may increase access to these substances.

Also, students who smoke and drink have at least one close friend and a person within their family who smokes cigarettes and drinks alcohol excessively; parental smoking and drinking patterns and attitudes may affect smoking and drinking habits(Newman & Ward, 1989).The relationship between parental influence and substance use has been noted in most studies (Chassin, 1984; Tolone & Dermott, 1995).Majority of adolescents drink alcohol for the first time while with their parents (Braucht, Brakarsh, Follingstrad & Berry, 1973).

Tamim, Terro and Kasem (2003) posited that educated parents adopt more open attitudes towards adolescent smoking and do not actively oppose this habit. The greatest prevalence of cigarette smoking was among students whose mother or father had a higher educational background. Current alcohol use was associated with the educational levels of mothers but not fathers. Alcohol use in the present study was more prevalent among students whose mothers had a high education level (Tot, 2004).

An increasing trend is anticipated to occur among university students, and this could be related to alleviation of stress and depression (Eticha & Kidane, 2014). One of the factors

influencing alcohol consumption and smoking is depression. Depression can propel a person to try drugs and consume alcohol as a form of self-medicating, alcohol and drugs give feelings of euphoria and pleasure (Ikezue, Ezeah & Oli, 2015). Alcoholics and smokers rely on drugs as a means of coping with their condition and managing life.

Peer pressure or the direct or indirect encouragement from one's own age group to engage in activities that they may or may not want to engage in, is a major factor in the development of risk-taking behaviours (e.g., alcohol use, drug use and tobacco use) (Santor, Messervey & Kusumakar, 2000). Peers act as an influential model by introducing, providing or pressuring risky activities (i.e., alcohol use) to other peers. By modelling these behaviours to their peers, college students are viewing alcohol use as a positive and socially acceptable experience. However, what college students fail to take into consideration are the negative consequences that are related to alcohol use especially within a peer group context. For example, the leading cause of death for adolescents 17 to 20 years old is alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes (McGuire, 2011).

Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on social learning theory and the differential association theory.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory postulated by Bandura (1977) posits that learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and can occur purely through observation or direct reinforcement. Another important factor in social learning theory is the concept of reciprocal determinism. This notion states that just as an individual's behaviour is influenced by the environment, the environment is also influenced by the individual's behaviour. In other words, a person's behaviour, environment and personal qualities all reciprocally influence each other. The social learning theory is often applied to any social behaviouristic approach and states that alcohol dependency develops as a result of a negative social consequence (e.g. poverty and unemployment). Here, individuals adopt or learn by modelling the behaviour of those around them or by observing others who engage

in addictive behaviours (Akers, 2011; Horvath, 2014; Lindström, 1992). According to social learning theory, peer group pressure plays a role.

Most female undergraduates did not start smoking suddenly. They learnt it from their friends and also, they did so because of the pressures from their friends. The main forces driving the need for binge drinking are the influence of friends and submission to peer pressure, the lack of outside control over the student (lack of parental supervision), and denial that drinking leads to severe consequences and drinking related problems (Wechsler & Issac, 1992). The social learning theory was adopted for this study because it is adequate, relevant, suitable, appropriate and explains the problem of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates.

Differential Association Theory

Differential association theory was propounded by Edward Sutherland in 1939. He believes that one learns to become deviant just as someone learns a skill. Differential association theory looks at the role of peers in a person's decision to engage in deviant behaviour. Here, reference groups provide an individual with definitions that are either in favour or against deviant behaviour. When the definitions to engage in the behaviour become dominant, a person will likely conform to the definitions that her reference group has offered in order to remain part of that group. Differential association theory is based on the assumption that a person will engage in deviant behaviour when the situation is appropriate. Therefore, the desire to fulfil one's needs is not an adequate explanation for engaging in deviant behaviour because there are non-deviant behaviours that achieve the same thing (Sutherland 1947). This relationship did not apply to the perceived approval of a typical student and a person's own behaviour (Nelson, 2008). "Behaviours considered acceptable or unacceptable seem to be socially defined and enforced through one's interaction with others on campus" (Rabow & Duncan-Schill, 1995: 60).

Most times, female university undergraduates learn to indulge in deviant behaviours like smoking and drinking primarily because they see it as something that is acceptable in their group and also the idea that they could be evicted from the group or be sanctioned by other group members makes them to shape their own views about a particular issue to be in line

with the group's norms and values. Also, the view by some students that consuming alcohol and smoking cigarette can help them study and be bold during seminar or project presentations presents a fertile ground for smoking and drinking to flourish. When someone is surrounded by persons who smoke and drink regularly, the likelihood that the person will join is very high. New university intakes who eventually find themselves in the midst of people who engage in excessive smoking and drinking regularly would overtime join in the act. Social learning and differential association theories were adopted because they best explain the phenomenon at hand.

Materials/Methods

The study adopted a mixed methods research design. This method involved the combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection. This research design was considered appropriate for this study because it enabled the gathering of a wide range of relevant data from a sample of the population in order to apply same to the entire population. The research design was relatively economical compared to other research designs. The study area is Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka specifically dealing with female undergraduates of the institution.

The target population of this study comprised female undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. However, male undergraduates and middle aged persons interacting with female undergraduates were also part of the population from whom information was gathered. The sample size for this study was 395. This was calculated using the Yamane (1967) formula for sample size determination. The multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for this study. This involved the application of different sampling techniques (including cluster sampling technique, simple random sampling technique, convenience sampling technique and purposive sampling technique) at various stages of the research reaching a valid sample. Both quantitative and qualitative tools were used for data collection. Research questions, objectives of the study and study hypotheses were used to develop questions in the questionnaire. The   In-depth Interview (IDI) Guide was also structured in line with the specific objectives of the study and contained questions and probes associated with each question. Self-administration was

used to administer questionnaire to reduce attrition rate and ensure high return rate of the questionnaire. The researcher moderated the interviews while the research assistants recorded the responses with tape recorder and took down note. The quantitative data collected from the field study were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software Version 20. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and graphic illustrations were used to analyse the quantitative data and research questions. The qualitative data were analysed using thematic method of content analysis where the data were edited and organized in line with the objectives of the study. The qualitative data were used to complement the quantitative data in the study.

Findings /Results

A total of 395 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the sampled respondents out of which only 375 copies   were correctly filled and returned while 20 copies were lost in the field. The response rate was 94.9%. The findings are presented in the tables and figures below:

Table 1: *Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	170	45.3
Female	205	54.7
Total	375	100
Age		
16-20	185	49.3
21-25	127	33.9
26-30	40	10.7
31-35	18	4.8
36 and above	5	1.3
Total	375	100
Marital status		
Single	339	90.4
Married	21	5.6
Widowed	4	1.1
Separated	11	2.9
Total	375	100
Place of residence		

On campus	143	38.1
Off campus	232	61.9
Total	375	100
Level of study		
100	106	28.3
200	94	25.1
300	82	21.9
400	93	24.8
Department of study		
English	76	20.3
Applied Microbiology and Brewing	74	19.7
Public administration	76	20.3
Political science	77	20.5
Early Childhood education	72	19.2
Total	375	100
Faculty of study		
Arts	76	20.3
Biological sciences	74	19.7
Managements sciences	76	20.3
Social sciences	77	20.5
Education	72	19.2
Total	375	100
Religious affiliation		
Christianity	354	94.4
Islamic Religion	2	.5
African Traditional Religion (ATR)	19	5.1
Atheist	6	3.0
Total	375	100
Source of Income		
Yes	47	12.5
No	328	87.5
Total	375	100

Table 1 consists of the analysis of socio- demographic characteristics of the respondents. The sample for the study comprised regular students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State, Nigeria. Table 1 shows that 170 (45.3%) of the respondents are males while 205 (54.7%) are females, indicating that there are more females than male respondents in the study. The implication of this is that there is the possibility that the enrolment rate into

the university is higher for females. The age distribution of the respondents shows that 185 (49.3%) of the respondents, representing a majority of the respondents were between the ages of 16-20 years. The reason for this could be because the university admits majority of students who have just finished from secondary school as that is the most common age range for secondary school leavers in the country. The respondents between the ages of 36 years and above were found to be 5 (1.3%), representing the least category of respondents in terms of age. The mean age of the respondents is 24.521 with a standard deviation of 11.321. Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents 339 (90.4%) were single. This implies that there are more single people in the study. The reason for this could be because the respondents are mainly unemployed students who are unlikely to get married without a clear cut career path or a job. In terms of place of residence, table 1 shows that 143 (38.1%) of the respondents live on campus while 232 (61.9%) live off campus, indicating that majority of the respondents live off campus. This is expected as most students believe that they will have more freedom living in places that are not as regimented or regulated as on-campus hostels. On level of study, Table 1 shows that 106 (28.3%) representing a majority of the respondents were in 100 level while 82 (21.9%) representing a minority of the respondents were in 300 level. This means that majority of the respondents in the study were in their 100 level of study. The Departments and Faculties of the respondents can also be seen from Table 1. Findings of the study indicate that 76 (20.3%) of the respondents were in the Department of English and Faculty of Arts, 74 (19.7%) were in the Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing and Faculty of Biological Sciences, 76 (20.3%) were in the Department of Public Administration and Faculty of Management Sciences, 77 (20.5%) were in the Department of Political Science and Faculty of Social Sciences while 72 (19.2%) were in the Department of Early Childhood Education and Faculty of Education. This shows that majority of the respondents were in the Department of Political Science and Faculty of Social Sciences. The Table also shows that majority328 (87.5%) of the respondents did not have a source of income while 47 (12.5%) had a source of income. It is not surprising that majority of the respondents did not have a source of income as they are fulltime students who are still mainly being sponsored by their parents. This shows that majority of the respondents do not have a source of income. In terms of religious affiliation, Table 1 shows that 354 (94.4%) of the respondents are Christians, 2.5% are practitioners of Islamic

Religion, 19 (5.1%) are practitioners of African Traditional Religion (ATR) while 6 (3.0%) are Atheists. This shows that majority of the respondents are Christians because the institution is located in South-East geo-political zone dominated by Christians.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One: How prevalent is alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking by female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?
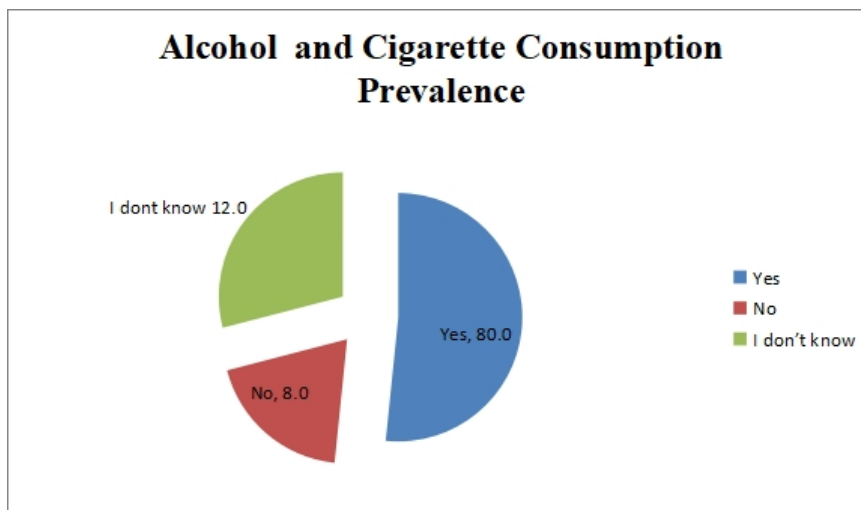

Fig. 1: **Respondents' views on their awareness of the consumption of alcohol and cigarette by female students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.**

Fig. 1 shows that majority (80.0%) of the respondents were aware of the consumption of alcohol and smoking of cigarette by female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka while 8.0 % were not aware. However, 12.0% did not know whether female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka indulge in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking. This finding is corroborated by data from the IDI.

One of the interviewees stated:

> It's nothing new. I know a lot of the female students that smoke and drink on campus. Even my course mates, whenever we go out on outings, they are always smoking and

drinking as if to say it is something they do every day. They do it in the open without looking at anybody's face (Female, 22 years, 300 level English Student, Single)

Another interviewee stated.

I am aware of the smoking and drinking habits of students. It just keeps increasing especially with the females. They are taking over from the guys. At least before now, they used to wait until a guy takes them out before they drink or smoke. But that is no longer the case. They go out of their way to purchase alcohol and cigarette and consume same freely (Male, 23 years, 400 level Political Science Student, Single)
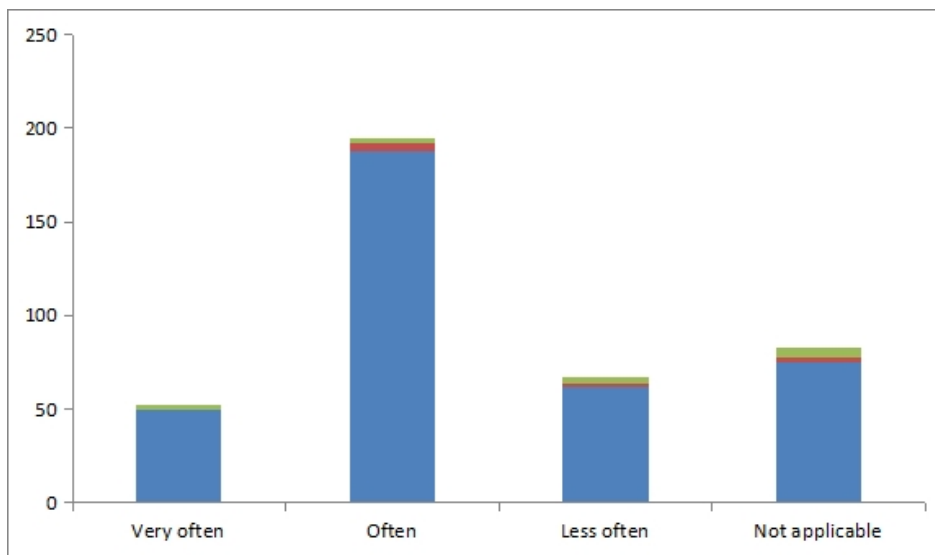
Fig 2: Respondents' views on the frequency of alcohol and cigarette consumption by female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Fig. 2 shows that majority 188 (50.1%) of the respondents were of the view that female students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka smoke cigarette and drink alcohol often. However, the question did not apply to 75 (20.0%) of the respondents. What this shows is that female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka often smoke cigarette and consume alcohol.

Table 2: Respondents views on alcohol and cigarette smoking by female students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Alcohol	279	74.4
Cigarette	96	25.6
Total	375	100

Table 2 shows that 279 (74.4%) of female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka consume alcohol more while 96 (25.6%) of them smoke cigarette. What this means is that majority of the female students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka prefer consuming alcohol to smoking cigarette. This finding aligns with data from the IDI. An interviewee was of the opinion that: *"Alcohol is more popular among females in the university. They drink alcohol more often than they smoke. I know they might be doing this because of peer pressure or something. But drinking is more rampant"* (Male, 23 years, 300 Level Political Science Student, Single).

Another interviewee stated:

Drinking is more popular. You know it looks like it is more socially acceptable to drink for women than it is to smoke. Women who smoke might be seen by the public as very loose. But drinking is not really giving this kind of perception (Female, 25 years, 400 Level Student of English Department, Single).

> **Research Question Two:** What are the socio-cultural determinants of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

Table 3: Respondents' views on whether there are socio-cultural determinants of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	298	79.5
No	46	12.3
I don't know	31	8.3
Total	375	100

Table 3 shows that majority (79.5%) of the respondents were of the opinion that there are socio-cultural determinants of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. However, 12.3%   answered No while 8.3% did not know whether there are socio-cultural determinants of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.. This means that the respondents agree that there are determinants of alcohol consumption among female students of the university.
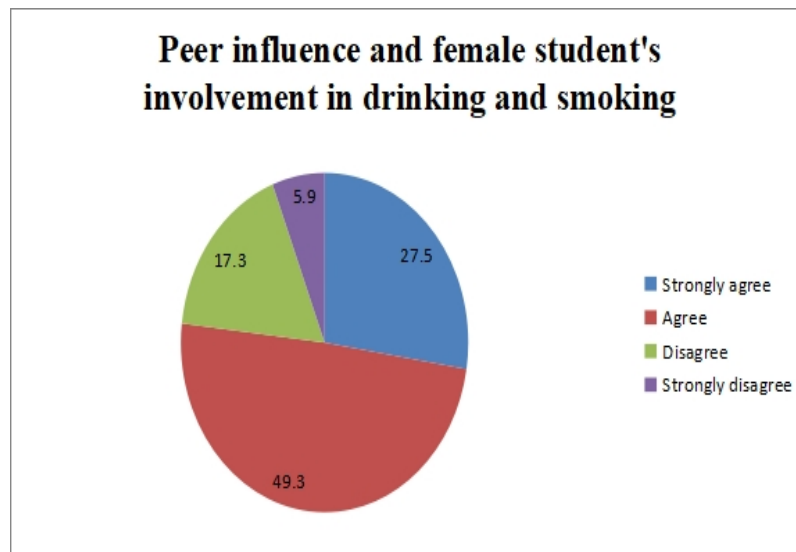

Fig 3: Respondents' views on whether peer influence predisposes female undergraduates to alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking

Fig. 3 shows that majority (49.3%) of the respondents agreed that peer influence predisposes female undergraduates to alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking while 27.5% strongly agree. Also, 17.3 % of the respondents disagree while 5.9 % of them strongly disagree. This implies that majority of the respondents were aware of the influence of peers on the decision of female students to either engage in alcohol consumption or cigarette smoking or both.
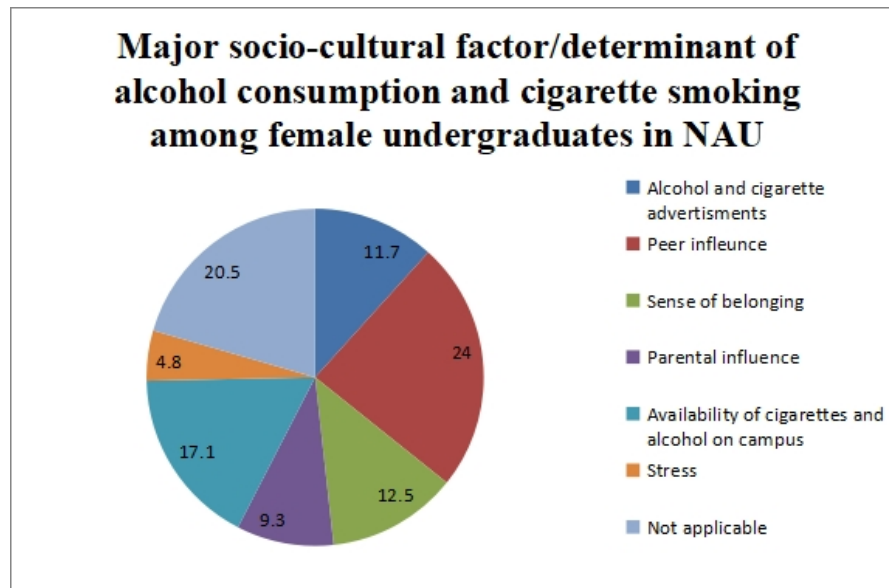

Fig 4: Respondents' views on the major socio-cultural determinant of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Fig. 4 shows that majority (24.0%) of the respondents were of the opinion that peer influence is the major socio-cultural factor/determinant of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. However, 11.7 % of the respondents said that it is alcohol and cigarette advertisements, 12.5% said that it is sense of belonging and 9.3% said that it is parental influence. Also, 17.1% of the respondents believed that it is the availability of cigarettes and alcohol on campus, 4.8% said that it is stress while the question was not applicable to 20.5% of the respondents. The implication of this is that peers are seen as having a strong control on female students who engage in smoking and drinking on campus. This finding aligns with data from the IDI.

One of the interviewees stated:

> There is the strong issue of peer pressure especially among young people. As students, they are able to mix with others from different parts of the country and different family backgrounds. So in trying to feel among or accepted by their friends and course mates, the students end up doing what their friends are doing or what their friends consider appropriate. Smoking and drinking remains one habit that the students pick up from their friends. They often do not come from home with such habits. The pressure is usually much from peers I must say (Male, 45 years, Married, Lecturer, Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing).

Another interviewee was of the opinion that:

> Peer pressure is a major factor and in fact the most important factor on issues like this among students. The female students that don't smoke from home often learn to do so in school as a result of consistent contact with friends who smoke and drink. There might be other factors like availability and cost but I actually believe that peer pressure is the major factor that indoctrinates the students into smoking and drinking on campus (Female, 20 years, Single, 400 Level Student, Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing).

Also, one of the dealers on cigarette and alcohol on campus had this to say:

> The students that patronize us most times come with their friends and roommates to hang out and relax. This is usually the time they introduce them to smoking and drinking. We get to see those who eventually get drunk from drinking probably because they have not drank alcohol before and the effect often becomes very strong on them. My observation from experience is that peers have strong influence on each other on what they do and learn to do on campus (Male, 39 years, Single, Cigarette and Alcohol Seller).
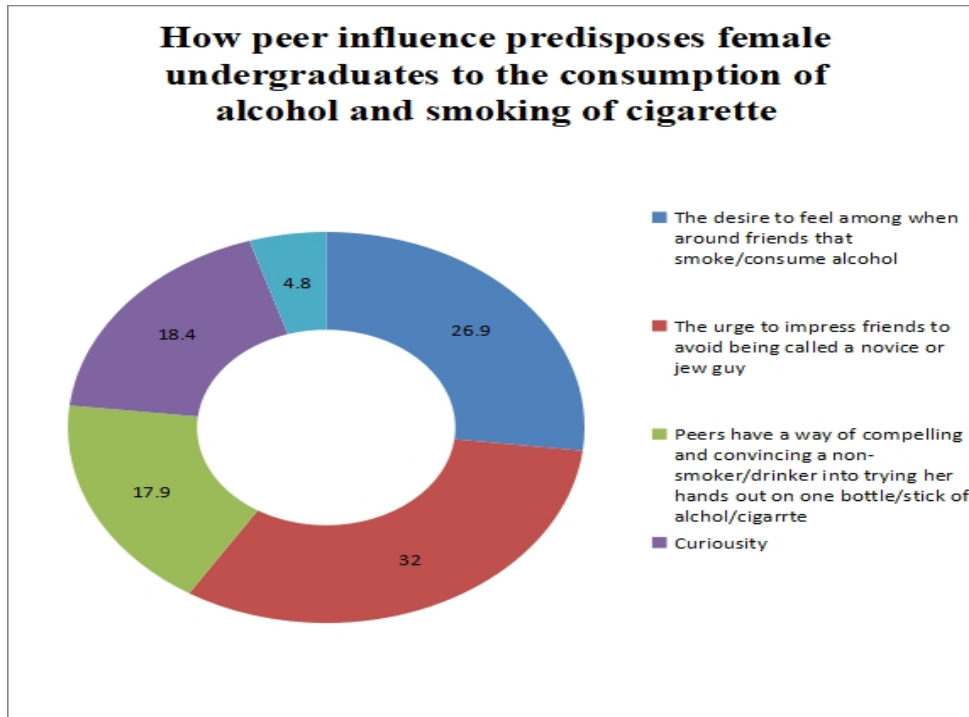
Fig 5: Respondents' views on how peer pressure predisposes female undergraduates to the consumption of alcohol and cigarette smoking.

Fig. 5 shows that majority (32.0%%) of the respondents indicated that it is the urge to impress friends to avoid being called a novice or jew guy that predisposes female students to the consumption of alcohol and cigarette smoking. There are other factors as the figure shows including greed (4.8%) and curiosity (18.4%). However, 26.9% of the respondents said that it is the desire to feel among when around friends that smoke/consume alcohol while17.9% said that peers have a way of compelling and convincing a non- smoker/drinker into trying her hands out on one bottle/stick of alcohol/cigarette. This aligns with data from the interviews conducted.

One of the interviewees stated:

> The thing with peer influence is that it manifests in different ways. One of such is that the student is made to feel the need or urge to impress friends. This makes the student to do what she doesn't want to do but is being done by the friends which the student associates herself with. The student just does things to impress the friends so

as to be accepted and not considered a misfit. I have been in such situation before. I felt I had to just align or tag along with what my friends wanted or considered ok. If you don't do so, you'll sometimes be seen as someone who doesn't know *whatsup* (Female, 21 years, Single, 200 Level Student, Political Science Department).

Another interviewee stated:

Well, peer influence works to predispose one to smoking and drinking. I know students who just do things because their friends are doing those things. They just want to be accepted and so they do everything their friends are doing because this breeds acceptance amongst peers. I have seen them, and I have interacted with them so I understand how it feels (Male, 41years, Married, Security Officer).
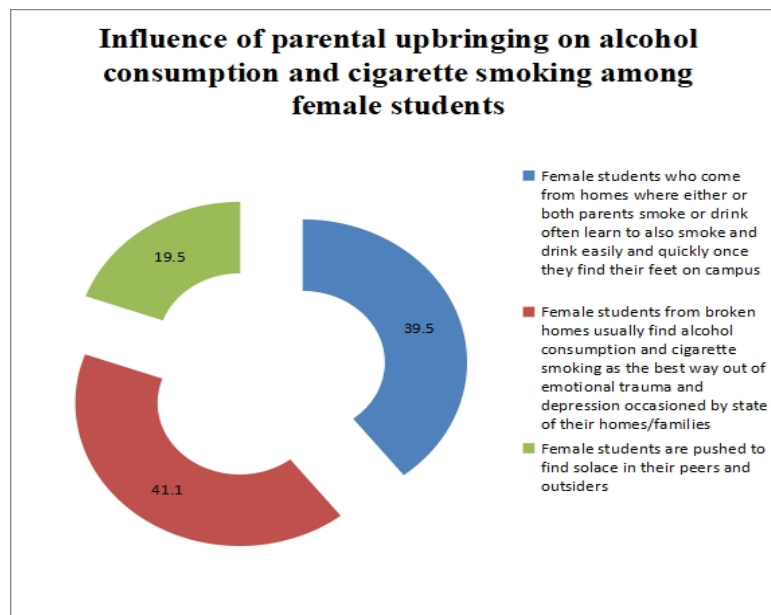

Fig 6: Respondents' views on the influence of parental upbringing on alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female students

Fig. 6 shows that majority (41.1%) of the respondents were of the opinion that female students from broken homes usually find alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking as the best way out of emotional trauma and depression occasioned by state of their homes/families. Also, 39.5% of the respondents said that female students who come from homes where either or both parents smoke or drink often learn to also smoke and drink easily and quickly once they find their feet on campus while 19.5% of the respondents were of the opinion that female students are pushed to find solace in their peers and outsiders. This finding is supported by data from the IDI.

> Parental upbringing plays an important role in the life and development of every child. The type of family one comes affects or influences the kind of things that person will be able or willing to engage in. so by that, I believe female students that come from families where parental care or attention is lacking are likely to engage in some behaviours like smoking and drinking to probably forget the troubles at home. It could be very demanding to deal with the thoughts of one's parents living as enemies. The way out is often, as some of the female students believe, to smoke and drink it away (Female, 37 years, Married, Lecturer, Political Science Department).

Another respondent stated:

> Yes parental upbringing plays a role. Those from families where their parents are smokers and drinkers will effectively learn those things and continue from where their parents stopped. It is normal for children to take after the attitudes or lifestyles their parents are engaged in (Male, 21, Single, 300 Level Student, Political Science Department).
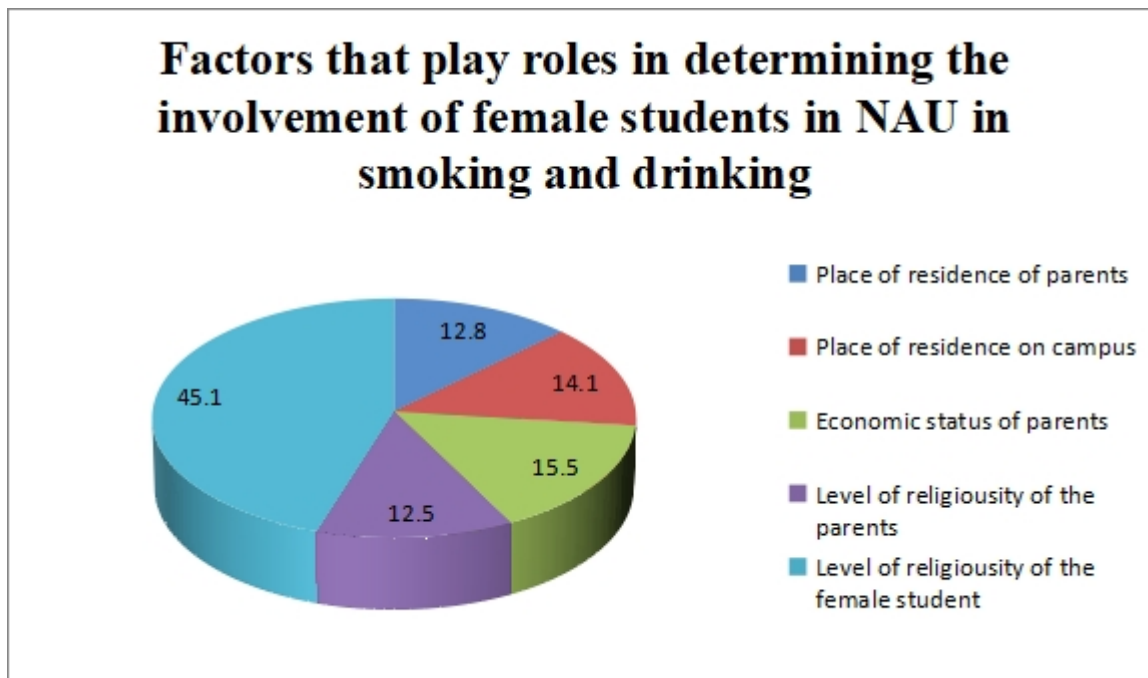
Fig 7: Respondents' views on factors that play major role in determining the involvement of female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka in smoking of cigarette and drinking of alcohol

Fig. 7 shows that majority (45.1%) of the respondents indicated that level of religiosity of the female students determines whether the female student will be involved in smoking of cigarette and drinking of alcohol. This means that the more religious a female student is, the less likely she is to engage in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking. The figure also shows that the economic status of parents (15.5%), place of residence on campus (14.1%), place of residence of parents (12.8%) and level of religiosity of parents (12.5%) determine whether the female student will be involved in smoking of cigarette and drinking of alcohol. This is supported by data from the interviewees.

An interviewee was of the opinion that:

> Commitment to religion is a factor. Female students who are committed to religious beliefs and are dedicated to attended churches and also doing what those churches teach often do not engage in alcohol consumption and smoking because it is against their faith. Most religions teach its adherents that smoking and drinking is bad and shouldn't be encouraged. So those who show commitment to religious teachings

hardly engage in smoking and drinking (Male, 24 years, Single, 400 Level Student, English Department)

Another respondent stated:

Well, we cannot discountenance the role of religion in shaping and molding the lifestyles of people. I believe that the level of religiosity of female students restrain them from smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol. It goes beyond their parents being around but now bothers on willingness to adhere to religious doctrines. But I also believe that place of residence on campus can play a role. For instance, those that live in the school hostel are banned from drinking or smoking in the hostel. This helps to check smoking and drinking rate. But there are no such rules in hostels or lodges outside the school hostel (Male, 45 years, Married, Lecturer, English Department).

Discussion

This study examined socio-cultural factors influencing alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The study found that there is a high prevalence of smoking of cigarette and consumption of alcohol among female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. This is analogous with a study on the extent of female alcohol consumption and tobacco smoking conducted in Lagos State University where Idris (2011) found that the involvement of female students in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking is on a steady increase. The study also found that peer pressure is the major socio-cultural determinant of involvement in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female students at the university. The above finding is in agreement with Adeboyega (2013) who in studying socioeconomic determinants and consequences of smoking among undergraduates in Akumgba Akoko University, Ondo State, identified peer pressure, family background and level of religiosity as the major determinants of smoking. Findings from the study also show that there are health and academic consequences associated with excessive smoking and drinking by female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka like organ failure, infertility and truancy. In the same vein, Okoro (2015) in a study on the

rate of involvement of female students in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking found that female students who engage in alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking perform poorly in their academics, drop out of school along the line and also stand the risk of losing their lives.   Iyeh (2014) study showed that creating awareness on the adverse effects of smoking and drinking especially for the health of female members of the society will lead to a significant drop in the level of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking. Findings of this present study also indicate that awareness campaigns and programs to enlighten the public on the consequences of smoking among other measures will control the involvement of female students in excessive smoking of cigarette and drinking of alcohol. The government should make policies aimed at prohibiting the sale of alcohol and cigarettes within the university community while the university administration should ensure that students are enlightened on the dangers associated with excessive smoking and drinking.

Conclusion

The high rate of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking among female undergraduates has become the order of the day in Nigerian universities. The problem is escalating in spite of several seminars, workshops and sensitization campaigns organized to curb this practice. Parents, school authorities, government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) should address this phenomenon because of the adverse effects it has on the academic, mental, health and social development of female students who engage in this practice. The ban on sale of these products on campus has been suggested as one of the ways to reduce the excessive consumption of alcohol and cigarette smoking among female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka in particular and female students in other universities in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Female students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka should abstain from the consumption of alcohol and smoking of cigarette in order to avoid the health and

academic risks that come with engaging in smoking and drinking excessively. There are several health consequences associated with excessive smoking and drinking. The female students should stay away from alcohol and cigarette entirely or consume them in moderation in order to avoid the health and academic risks associated with smoking and drinking excessively.

2. The consumption of alcohol and cigarette smoking within the university environment should be incriminated by government. The study established that availability of cigarette and alcohol influences consumption. Therefore, these products (alcohol and cigarettes) should be banned from the university environment. This will help the female students stay away from the products entirely or at least prevent excessive consumption.

3. Government should institute a Monitoring Unit within the university to monitor smoking and drinking of alcohol within the university. The Monitoring Units will be in charge of ensuring compliance to the regulations on banning smoking and drinking on campus and also the sale of alcohol and cigarette on campus. This has to be done to ensure the reduction in the rate of smoking and drinking among female students of the university.

4. The university should create courses that would enlighten the female students on the dangers of excessive consumption of alcohol and cigarette smoking. This will help give the students information on the negative consequences of excessive smoking and drinking and also enable them make informed decisions.

5. Counseling Centers should be set up by the university for the rehabilitation of victims of excessive consumption of alcohol and cigarette smoking. This will enable students get the necessary help they require as regards smoking and drinking related issues.

6. Policies aimed at banning or prohibiting the sale of alcohol, within the university should be implemented by the university administration. Implementation must be followed for the benefit of the female students.

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