

Public College Students' Perception of Underage Drinking In Nigeria: Analysis of Current Issues

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Abstract

Background: Alcohol is the most widely used substance of abuse among youths in Nigerian. Currently, underage drinking has become a serious public health problem in most colleges and despite the health and safety risk, consumption of alcohol is rising. Having recourse to the public health objective on alcohol by the World Health organization, which is to reduce the health burden caused by the harmful use of alcohol, thereby saving lives and reducing injuries, this study explored the nature of alcohol use among college students, binge drinking and the consequences of alcohol consumption. Secondary school students are in a transition developmentally and this comes with its debilitating effects such as risky alcohol use which affects their health and educational attainment (Loukas, Cance, & Batanova, 2016; Adekeye, 2012).

Methods: This is a cross-sectional study of 809 college students (ages 14–20 years) using the research survey method. For data collection, an adapted and validated version of the youth questionnaire on underage drinking was employed.

Results: Bivariate analysis found that more male students consume beer and spirits while wine was the reported preference of female students. Heavy episodic drinking (HED) was discovered among few male students while 50.2% of the sample had their first drink between ages 14 and 17. 81% of the sample had ever drunk alcohol while more than half (65%) of the sample consume alcohol once in a month. Further analyses show prevalence of alcohol consumption, strategies to reducing alcohol use, reasons for underage drinking and effects of alcohol consumption.

Conclusions: A majority of underage students supported increasing efforts to control underage drinking. The students reported that an effective approach to decreasing alcohol use could be public presentations by people who have been seriously hurt or impaired by alcohol use. This will be a veritable public health intervention.

Keywords: Alcohol, college, underage drinking, youths, perception

1. Introduction

Alcohol use and abuse among underage is a growing public health problem in Nigeria and the consequences of underage drinking affects everyone regardless of gender, age or drinking status (Adekeye, Amoo, Adeusi, Chenube, Ahmadu, & Idoko, 2019). These effects could manifest in acts of aggressive behaviour, arson, property damage, injuries, risky sexual behaviour, violence, and deaths. Underage drinking is now pervasive that its influence goes beyond family setting. It is a nationwide cum global issue. Alcohol can be misused because it is available in different forms and easily accessible; in some countries and society, its consumption is legal as it is perceived as a social drink. However, Keller and Vaillant (2011) noted that if consumed moderately, alcohol could have positive health outcomes.

Some underage drinking statistics in the United States show that young people consume alcohol. Report from SAMHSA (2016a) revealed that at 15years, a third of teens (33%) have had at least 1 drink. This increased to 60% by age 18. In 2015, SAMHSA (2016b) reported that 7.7 million young people (12–20 years) reported that they

drank alcohol beyond “just a few sips” in the past month. In the United States, young people (12–20 years) drink 11% of all alcohol consumed yearly. The report further stated that adults consume more alcohol than youths; but when youths drink, they consume more at once, through binge drinking (CDC, 2016). There is almost the same level of prevalence of drinking between young boys and girls, but often among older teenagers, more boys than girls engage in binge drinking.

As noted by Grant and Dawson (1997), the lifetime prevalence of alcohol dependence is more than 40% among those who initiated drinking at the age of 14 years or earlier. However, the percentage decreases with older age of initiation. Young adults above 20 years have about 10 percent probability to misuse and abuse alcohol or to turn an alcoholic in their lifetime. To corroborate this, Jernigan (2001) noted that there is more empirical evidence to suggest that those who are initiated too early into the drinking culture end up abusing and misusing alcohol and they experience more alcohol-related injury during lifetime than those who start drinking in later life. Adolescence period is a developmental stage of life normally characterized by experimentation, risk-taking, sexual exploration, drug use and consequently drug abuse (Adekeye, 2005). During this stage of life, there may be poor attitude to life, behavioural issues that may affect educational attainment and health may develop (Loukas, Cance, & Batanova, 2016; Morgan & Todd, 2009). Results from the Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey for “ever drank alcohol” show a prevalence of 20.5% for seventh graders and 30.5% for eighth graders (CDC, 2015).

Alcohol consumption has been a source concern in many societies however; underage drinking is a huge source of concern globally due to the impact on the under-aged individual which adversely affects the future of any nation (Adekeye, Adeusi, Chenube, Ahmadu, & Sholarin, 2015). Recently, Guinness Nigeria rolled out campaign against under-age drinking in Lagos Schools’ using drama and interactive educational tools to enable pupils to appreciate the dangers of alcohol consumption, dangers, and the effects of alcohol use, misuse and abuse (Okeh, 2018).

In Nigeria, a wide variety of substances have been and are still in use despite the growing body of evidence of serious health risks associated with unauthorized administration of psychoactive substances (Adekeye, Odokoya, Chenube, Igbokwe, Igbino, & Olowookere, 2017). According to Guardian Newspapers (2018), availability and easy access (at bars and liquor stores) to alcohol resulted to increased alcohol consumption. Availability and easy access is fueled by the production of locally brewed alcoholic beverages. This is often done in the hinterland, far from the sight of regulating authorities. Information Services Division, Scotland (2014) revealed prevalence of 32% for 13-year-olds and 70% for 15-year-olds while in England, underage drinking remains fairly prevalent. 38% of teens (11–15-years) have consumed alcohol though the rate is higher among older teens (16 and 17-years) (Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC, 2015).

Apart from age, the prevalence of alcohol drinking can also be appreciated by looking into gender and socio-economic groups. HSCIC (2015) revealed that young teen males and females drink at the same level till about age 16. At age 16, males are much more likely to drink. It was reported that about 64% of 17-year-old boys and about 48% of girls drink weekly. The relationship between socioeconomic status and underage drinking is less clear. In Nigeria, children from both deprived and privileged homes consume alcohol, the difference being the type and quality of the drink. Children from local communities and less privileged homes consume more of locally brewed drinks or inferior quality beers and other distilled products which are readily available and relatively cheap. However, children from privileged and affluent homes consume more of wines, spirits and good quality beers. In England for example, teens from low socio-economic families drink less compared to teens from high socio-economic families while in Scotland, there is no distinct difference in underage alcohol consumption based on socio-economic status. It was further revealed that there are substantial differences in the rate of underage drinking across different ethnicities. Of the 11–15-years sampled, 42% were white children, black children (21%) and 10% were Asians.

The most recent European School Survey project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD survey) carried out in 2011 show that young people’s drinking in the United Kingdom is well above the European average on a number of metrics (Hibell, Guttormsson, Ahlström, Balakireva, Bjarnason, Kokkevi et al., 2012). In the United Kingdom, a sample of 15–16 year-olds show that 85% had drunk alcohol in the past 12 months with the European average being 79%. Among the same sample in the UK, 65% had drunk alcohol in the past 30 days with the European average being 57%. Also in the UK, 55% reported ever having been drunk with the European average being 47% (Hibell et al., 2012).

Underage drinking has become a recurrent issue in the world today and the sources where the underage get their drinks from remain worrisome. The 2009 Victorian Youth Alcohol and Drug Survey indicate that 58 percent of 16 and 17 year olds tend to drink alcohol at private parties, 53 percent at friend's houses, and 36 percent in their own homes. It was also revealed that less than 7 percent of the survey respondents said they drank alcohol in licensed

premises, and only 4 percent said they usually drank in public places. Furthermore, it was said that most young people (62%) got their alcohol from friends or acquaintances, 44 percent said their parents bought it for them, and around one in ten said they bought it themselves, or it was bought for them by a brother or sister.

The inquisitiveness of youths to copy or model after some adult drinking style can sometimes be excused but the danger of underage drinking cannot be over emphasized. It was revealed that when a child begins drinking before age 15, they are much more likely to become long-term drinker, or problem drinker which means they get drunk, have accidents related to drinking, get into trouble with the law, their families, friends, schools, or the people they date (Vorvick, 2016). Ipsos MORI (2016) revealed that 43% of young people who drink alcohol, have reported that they are drinking to cope in some way, such as to cheer themselves up or to forget about problems, how possible, if not the lies or make believe from their models. Cooper and Orcutt (1997) and Cooper, Pierce, and Huselid (1994) opine that underage drinking plays a significant role in risky sexual behaviour, including unwanted, unintended, and unprotected sexual activity and sex with multiple partners which increases the risk for unplanned pregnancy and promotes contracting of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study was designed to bring to the fore the understanding underage drinkers have of alcohol use including perceived consequences of unregulated alcohol use. It is also to explore factors contributing to the problem of alcohol use by the under aged. To achieve the aims of this study, some specific objectives were set such as:

- 1) To explore the strategies to reducing underage alcohol consumption
- 2) To evaluate how often underage consume alcohol
- 3) To examine why underage students drink and the effects of alcohol on underage drinkers
- 4) To determine among the ever drinkers, the frequency of drinks, and whether alcohol consumption among underage drinkers have increased

1.2 Research Questions

- 1) What are the strategies to reducing underage alcohol consumption
- 2) How often do underage consume alcohol?
- 3) Why do underage students drink and what are the effects of alcohol on underage drinkers
- 4) Among the ever drinkers, what is the frequency of drinks, and has alcohol consumption increased

2. Methods

2.1 Design/Population/Sample and Sampling Techniques

The design used for this study is the cross-sectional survey design. This study involved participants from some selected secondary schools in Ota, a sub-urban location in Southwest, Nigeria. Participants were selected from across all core areas such as sciences, arts and humanities and business classes through stratified and simple random sampling, to cater for variables such as gender, age, living location, subject area and ethnicity. Characteristics of the participants included a gender mix of 553 males (68.4%) and 256 females (31.6%), age ranges from 14 and 20 years (mean age = 16.3years, +/- 1.49years).

2.2 Ethical Consideration

The department of Psychology internal review board (IRB) certified the study fit as not constituting harm to the respondents. Furthermore, parents of the selected participants signed an informed consent form to indicate their approval. School principals of the selected students provided informed consent and conveyed their approval to the researchers in writing. Participants were informed that they were free to participate or to decline participation in the study. Anonymity was assured by asking participants not to write their names on the questionnaire forms.

2.3 Instruments

A questionnaire form with items on use of alcohol and perception to underage drinking was used to elicit information from the respondents. The first part of the questionnaire dealt with participants socio-demographic details. In order to ensure the psychometric requirements of the scale as advocated by Odukoya, Adekeye, Igbinoba, & Afolabi (2018), the reliability of the instrument was established using a test-retest reliability method. It was administered to 30 secondary school students and a second administration after a three-week interval with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.83. The research trajectory was therefore considered adequate for data gathering purposes.

2.4 Procedure for Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire forms were administered to the participants with the aid of research assistants. The questionnaires were administered and some were collected on the spot while others were retrieved later. Eight hundred and nine of the nine hundred forms were fit for statistical analyses, representing 90% response rate. The data were expressed as both descriptive and inferential statistics, such as frequency counts, percentages and chi-square analysis to answer the research questions. A p-value of ≤ 0.05 was considered significant. All statistical analyses were performed using IBM statistical software.

2.5 Study Participants and Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

The respondents comprised 809 senior secondary school students who were selected to participate in the study. The inclusion criteria included that the school principal must provide informed consent in writing; the respondent (student) must be in senior secondary school class, agree to participate freely, inform their parents/guardians about the study, and provide a letter of consent from them. A participant must also be at least 14 years of age and not more than 20 years. Those who did not meet these criteria were excluded from the study.

3. Results

3.1 Demographic Data

This section shows the data obtained from the study in frequency counts and percentages

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

Variables	Frequency/Percent
Sex	
Male	553 (68%)
Female	256 (32%)
Age	
14yrs	104 (13%)
15–17yrs	568 (70%)
18–20yrs	137 (17%)
Preferred Drink	
Beer	Male (401 [92%]), Female (89 [41%])
Spirits	Male (353 [81%]), Female (41 [19%])
Wine	Male (318 [73%]), Female (212 [97%])
Ethnicity	
Yoruba	618 (76.4%)
Igbo	142 (17.6%)
Hausa	16 (2.0%)
Others	33 (4.0%)
Age at first drink	
Less than 10 years	56 (8.5%)
10–13 years	253 (38.5%)
14–17 years	330 (50.2%)
18 years and above	18 (2.8%)

Among the respondents in Table 1, 68% were males. Age ranged from 14 to 20 years. Because the setting was in the Southwestern part of Nigeria, underage from the Yoruba ethnic group made up the majority (76.4%) while about half of the sample had their first drink between ages 14 and 17. More male students consume beer (92%) and spirits (81%) while wine (97%) was the reported preference of female students. About 39% had their first drink

between ages 10 and 13 years while 50.2% of the sample had their first drink between ages 14 and 17.

3.2 Responses to Research Questions

Research Question 1: Strategies to Reducing Underage Alcohol Consumption

Table 2. Strategies to reducing underage alcohol consumption

Which of the following approaches would you support to decrease alcohol use by youth?	Frequency/(%)	Rank
New and/or stiffer penalties	247 (30.5%)	6th
More law enforcement	402 (49.7%)	4th
More alcohol education in schools	588 (72.7%)	1st
More alcohol education in the mass media (TV, radio, magazines)	541 (66.9%)	2nd
Alcohol-free teen night clubs	200 (24.7%)	8th
Public presentations by people who have been seriously hurt or impaired by alcohol abuse	384 (47.5%)	5th
Driver's license suspension for youth who drink alcohol	235 (29.0%)	7th
Ban on alcohol advertising	490 (60.6%)	3rd

Respondents were given some strategies and thereafter asked to pick which of the strategies or approaches they would support in the quest to decreasing alcohol use by the underage (Table 2). Their responses were ranked ordered and about 73% agreed that there should be more alcohol education in schools while about 67% felt there should be more alcohol education in the mass media. Others advocated for ban on alcohol advertising (60.6%) and about half of the respondents were of the view that more law enforcement (50%) will reduce alcohol consumption by the underage.

Research Question 2: How often do underage consume alcohol?

Table 3. Frequency of Alcohol consumption

How often do you drink alcohol? (n = 657)	Frequency/(%)
Once a Week	154 (23.4%)
Once a Month	427 (65.0%)
More than once a Month	76 (11.6%)

On the frequency of alcohol consumption, 427 (65%) drink once in a month while 154 (23.4%) drink once in a week. Only 76 (11.6%) drink more than once in a month. There was little evidence of binge drinking among those who drink as only 54 (8%) of the 657 have had five or more drinks at a time and of the 54, 34 (63%) have had five or more drinks in the last month.

Research Question 3: Why do underage students drink and what are the effects of alcohol on underage drinkers

Table 4. Reasons for underage drinking and effects of alcohol on underage drinkers

Why do underage students drink and what are the effects of alcohol on underage drinkers	Frequency/(%)
Underage drink because -----	
They want to have a good time at a party	525 (26.0%)
They are sad or depressed and want to feel better about themselves	478 (23.8%)
They wish to rebel and defy their parents, teachers and other adult authorities	197 (10.0%)
They wish to fit in or be accepted by their friends or peers	485 (24.2%)
They are bored	318 (16.0%)
Effects of Alcohol	
Been absent from school	97 (22.7%)
Been drunk at school	28 (6.6%)
Performing poorly in school	21 (5.0%)
Having family problems	21 (5.0%)
Been arrested	17 (4.0%)
Driving under the influence of alcohol	27 (6.3%)
Been driven by a drunk driver (passenger)	104 (24.4%)
Been drunk at a party	86 (20.0%)
Had an injury	26 (6.0%)

As depicted in table 4, the respondents advanced varied reasons for drinking such as having a good time at a party 525 (26%), wishing to fit in or be accepted by their friends or peers (24.2%) and because they are sad or depressed and want to feel better about themselves (23.8%). Respondents were asked if they had experienced some situations due to alcohol consumption. Responses ranged from been a passenger in a vehicle in which the driver was under the influence of alcohol (24.4%), been absent from school because of alcohol (22.7%) and been drunk at a party (20.0%).

Research Question 4: Among the ever drinkers, what is the frequency of drinks, and has alcohol consumption increased by sex and age

A majority of male (66.7%) students and respondents between ages 15 and 17 (75.6%) reported being ever drinkers. Only 33.3% of female respondents indicate being ever drinkers. In Table 5, there is an association between gender and being ever drinkers. The p-value indicates that these variables are not independent of each other and that there is a statistically significant relationship between the categorical variables. Majority of the ever drank alcohol drink once in a month.

Table 5. Bivariate Analysis on ever drinkers, frequency of drinks, drinking and driving and whether alcohol consumption has increased

		Have you ever had alcoholic beverages like beer, wine, or spirit?		X ²	
		Yes	No		
Sex	Male	438 (66.7%)	115 (75.7%)	.019	
	Female	219 (33.3%)	37 (24.3%)		
Age	14yrs	73 (11.1%)	31 (20.4%)	.000	
	15-17yrs	497 (75.6%)	71 (46.7%)		
	18-20yrs	87 (13.2%)	50 (32.9%)		
		How often do you drink alcohol? (Frequency of Consumption)			X ²
		Once a Week	Once a Month	More than once a Month	
Sex	Male	99 (22.6%)	287 (65.5%)	52 (11.9%)	.755
	Female	55 (25.1%)	140 (63.9%)	24 (11.0%)	
Age	14yrs	36 (49.3%)	34 (46.6%)	3 (4.1%)	.000
	15-17yrs	93 (18.7%)	348 (70.0%)	56 (11.3%)	
	18-20yrs	25 (28.7%)	45 (51.7%)	17 (19.5%)	
		Do you think alcohol consumption by underage is a -----			X ²
		Serious problem	Not at all a problem	Minor problem	
Sex	Male	447 (87.7%)	34 (5.3%)	29 (7.0%)	.001
	Female	192 (82.2%)	20 (6.6%)	32 (11.2%)	
Age	14yrs	72 (80.0%)	10 (11.1%)	8 (8.9%)	.000
	15-17yrs	491 (91.6%)	21 (3.9%)	24 (4.5%)	
	18-20yrs	76 (59.4%)	23 (18.0%)	29 (22.7%)	
		Do you think drinking and driving among underage is a -----			X ²
		Serious problem	Not at all a problem	Minor problem	
Sex	Male	450 (87.7%)	27 (5.3%)	36 (7.0%)	.107
	Female	199 (82.2%)	16 (6.6%)	27 (11.2%)	
Age	14yrs	72 (79.1%)	7 (7.7%)	12 (13.2%)	.000
	15-17yrs	485 (89.8%)	24 (4.4%)	31 (5.7%)	
	18-20yrs	92 (86.0%)	12 (9.7%)	20 (16.1%)	
		Within the past year, do you think alcohol consumption among people your age has -----			X ²
		Increased	Decreased	Stayed the same	
Sex	Male	341 (69.0%)	119 (24.1%)	34 (6.9%)	.016
	Female	180 (76.6%)	35 (14.9%)	20 (8.5%)	
Age	14yrs	53 (58.9%)	23 (25.6%)	14 (15.6%)	.000
	15-17yrs	402 (76.4%)	101 (19.2%)	23 (4.4%)	
	18-20yrs	66 (58.4%)	30 (26.5%)	17 (15.0%)	

65.5% of male and respondents between ages 15 and 17 (70%) drink once a month. More females (25.1%) than males (22.6%) drink once a week. Only few respondents across gender and age drink more than once a month. Alcohol was seen as a major problem by the respondents with 87.7% of male and 82.2% of females respectively.

All the age categories (14 years – 80%; 15–17 years – 91.6%; 18-20 years – 59.4%) perceive alcohol consumption among underage as a serious problem. The respondents displayed good knowledge of the negative influence of alcohol consumption on driving. When asked “do you think drinking and driving constitute a serious, minor or no problem at all, 89.8% of 15–17 year olds, 87.7% of male and 82.8% of female respondents agreed it was a serious problem. The same trend was observed among the 14 year olds (79.1%) and 18–20 year olds (86%). On the question of heavy use of alcohol within the past year, females (76.6%), males (69%), and 15–17 year olds (76.4%) reported that there is increased while 24% of male respondents 25.6 of the 14 years olds and about 27% of the 18–20 year olds reported that it is decreasing.

Table 6. Description of other Variables

Have you ever had alcoholic beverages like beer, wine, or spirit?		Have you ever purchased alcohol without being asked for your age? (n = 756)	
Yes	657 (81.2%)	Yes	165 (21.8%)
No	152 (18.8%)	No	591 (78.2%)
Gender Distribution of Ever Drank Alcohol		Do you think alcohol use by underage youth is a.....	
Male	438 (66.7%)	Serious problem	639 (%)
Female	219 (33.3%)	Not at all a problem	54 (%)
Gender Distribution of Ever Drank Alcohol		Minor problem	61 (%)
14years	73 (11%)	Who/What Contributes to the problem of alcohol use by the underage?	
15-17years	497 (76%)	Parents	314 (%)
18-20years	87 (13%)	Public agencies	180 (%)
Do you ever have five or more drinks of alcohol at a time?		Alcohol outlets, such as liquor stores, bars and restaurants	456 (%)
Yes	54 (8.0%)	Advertising	253 (%)
No	603 (92.0%)	Youth themselves	454 (%)
If “Yes,” have you done this in the last month?		Government	96 (%)
Yes	34 (63.0%)	Peer group	36 (%)
No	20 (37.0%)	Do you think drinking and driving among youth is a	
Do your parents permit you to drink alcohol in your home? (n = 316)		Serious problem	649 (%)
Never	217 (68.7%)	Not at all a problem	43 (%)
On special occasions only	53 (16.7%)	Minor problem	63 (%)
Under parental supervision	24 (7.6%)	Do you know someone with an alcohol problem?	
Anytime I want to	22 (7.0%)	Yes	482 (%)
If response was “Yes,” what was their relationship to you?		No	302 (%)
		Relative	100 (%)
		Non-relative (e.g., friend or acquaintance)	382 (%)

Do you discuss alcohol use with your parent(s)? (n = 354)		Sources where underage obtain alcohol?	
Yes	116 (33.0%)	Parent's home	107 (13.2%)
No	238 (67.0%)	Liquor store	175 (21.6%)
		Bar/restaurant	320 (39.6%)
		Supermarket/convenience store	16 (2.0%)
Do your parents know how much you drink? (n = 335)		Friends/relatives	169 (20.9%)
Yes	77 (23.0%)	Other	20 (2.5%)
No	258 (77.0%)		
		Have you successfully used a fake age to obtain alcohol? (n =)	
Have your parents ever seen you drunk? (n = 351)		Yes	21 (%)
Yes	47 (13.4%)	No	325 (%)
No	304 (86.6%)		
		Do you know of parents or adults who permit non-family members under the age of 21 to consume alcohol in their homes? (n =)	
How many times in the last two months has someone offered to give you, buy for you, or sell you alcohol?)		Yes	173 (%)
None	196 (%)	No	161 (%)
Once	84 (%)		
2-3 times	38 (%)		
4 or more times	25 (%)		

In Table 6, of the 809 respondents, 657 (81.2%) had ever drunk alcohol and of this are 438 (66.7%) males and 219 (33.3%) females. For the age distribution of the ever drunk, 497 (76%) are in the 15–17 years age bracket while 73 (11%) and 87 (13%) are in the 14 years and 18–20 years age category. Respondents report on whether parents permit them to drink at home show that parents never permitted alcohol consumption [217 (68.7%)] while 53 (16.7%) reported that they are allowed to drink on special occasions only. 24 (7.6%) and 22 (7.0%) reported that they drink under parental supervision and anytime they want to drink respectively. 116 (33%) of the respondents engage with their parents in discussing alcohol use while 238 (67%) do not. Of the 335 that responded to this item, 77% reported that their parents do not know how much they drink while 13.4% reported that parents have seen them drunk. 21.8% have bought alcohol without being asked of their age. This is similar to report from Yoon, Lam, Sham and Lam (2017). They reported that Chinese teen drinkers often convince vendors that they were of legal drinking age to source alcohol.

4. Discussion

On the frequency of alcohol use, report revealed that 154 (23.4%) drink at least once in a week while 76 (11.6%) drink more than once in a month. Majority of those who drink reported drinking at least once in a month (65%). This shows a relatively low rate of alcohol consumption when compared to data from other sources. For example, in a Finnish sample, 78% of boys and 79% of girls aged 18 years said they drink alcohol at least once a month. In the same year, 18% of girls and 22% of boys aged 16 years reported drinking once a month or more (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2006). In this study, the respondents reported that their peers drink because they want to have a good time at a party (26%), to deal with sadness or depression (24%) and they wish to fit in or be accepted by their friends or peers (24%). However, in a study by Adekeye (2012), it was found that the main reasons for student's drinking were because friends (peers) drink (77%), curiosity (63%), because drinks are readily available (27%), and to get away from worries (23%).

A review of 22 studies examining parental monitoring and alcohol use showed that increased parental monitoring is significantly associated with later alcohol initiation and decreased alcohol use (Ryan, Jorm, & Lubman, 2010). In the US, studies indicated that increased parental monitoring is associated with reduced alcohol use and the possible negative consequences of use among adolescents (Bourdeau et al., 2011; Stone, Becker, Huber, & Catalano, 2012; Walls, Fairlie, & Wood, 2009).

On the effects of alcohol, underage drinkers (24%) reported been a passenger in a vehicle in which the driver was under the influence of alcohol, 22.7% went on to report being absent from school because of alcohol use while others reported been drunk at parties (20%). There are several contributing factors to alcohol use by students. Correia, Murphy and Barnett (2012) listed among other factors cultural norms, expectations on benefits of drinking, parent's attitude towards drinking and affordability of alcohol. All these result to a culture of drinking (Obot, 2000) that can be harmful to the students. Various researches have shown that drinking among youths is done excessively and this lowers their ability to make decisions, control their impulse, or drive a car and fades their memories.

According to Vorvick (2016), Newbury-Birch, Walker, Avery, Beyer, Brown, Jackson, Lock, McGovern, & Kaner, (2008), Sincelar, Barnett and Spirito, (2004), the havoc of underage drinking include falls, car crashes, weight loss, disturbed sleep, headaches, drowning, various accidents, suicide, violence, homicide, increase in addiction, sexual assault or rape, engage in unprotected sex or have multiple sex partners, unwanted pregnancy, damage of brain cells which can lead to lasting damage to memory, thinking and judgment or decision making, poor academic performance, depression, low self-esteem, serious injury and ultimately death. Office for National Statistics (2017) corroborates the above findings that in Britain, significant number of people are now dying with alcoholic liver disease in their twenties, what a pity.

On the approach and strategies to reduce consumption of alcohol, 73% of the under aged agreed that there should be more alcohol education in schools while about 67% felt there should be more alcohol education in the mass media. A qualitative study by Coleman and Cater (2009) argued the case for the compulsory inclusion of alcohol education in schools, and structural reforms to encourage a change in the binge-drinking culture. In measuring binge drinking, which is the consumption of excessive alcohol in a single drinking episode, it was phrased as do you ever have five or more drinks of alcohol at a time? It is dangerous because in most cases it becomes more and more frequent which leads to addiction. In a more accurate perspective, binge drinking is taking more alcohol than is recommended by doctors and taking the UK as an example, it is taking more than 64 grams or 4 beer cans for a man and more than 48grams or three beer cans for a woman (Coomber, Mcelrath, Measham, & Moore, 2013). A qualitative study by Coleman and Cater (2009) examined young people's perceived motivations for 'binge' drinking, and the associated harmful outcomes among 14 to 17 year olds in southern England who had experience of binge drinking. Given the underage sample, most of this drinking occurred in unsupervised, outdoor locations. It seems that making the transition to drinking in pubs/bars, offers a protective factor for a number of risky outcomes. For example, Hingson, Heeren, Zakocs, Kopstein and Wechsler (2002) estimated that approximately 42%, or over 3 million of the 8 million students attending colleges in the U.S. have consumed five or more drinks during a single drinking occasion within the past 30 days.

5. Conclusion

To salvage the destiny of the underage, parents and significant care givers should discourage the act of drinking, create great awareness on the dangers of drinking let alone underage participation, serve as positive models, prevent the availability of alcohols to underage at parties, school, homes, or supervise all parties to ensure there is no alcohol, promote healthy activities or gathering that will not involve alcohol.

Competing Interests Statement

The authors declare that there are no competing or potential conflicts of interest.

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