

# Assessment of the Impact of Alcohol Use Among Youths in Emevor, Niger Delta, Nigeria

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**Abstract:- Alcohol is the most widely utilized and abused psychoactive substance among youths in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. This study investigated the attitude of youths towards alcoholism in Emevor community, Niger Delta, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was used in the study. The survey involved the application of a well structured questionnaire which was administered to one thousand two hundred (1,200) participants. The frequency distribution tables/percentages and descriptive statistical method was used for data analysis. The findings show that peer group influence, marital disorder, unemployment, loss of job and parental background are the predisposing factors to alcoholism. The study revealed that reduced libido, impotence, cancer of the bronchus, loss of memory and still births are major effects of alcoholism. It was also discovered that there is a significant difference in the attitude of male and female youths towards alcoholism. It was noticed that greater percentage of the youths have positive attitude towards alcoholism in the community. Since alcoholism is a public health and social problem, the researcher recommend that government should support the formation of an alcoholic anonymous groups in the various Communities and Local Government Areas of the State, to help drinkers who are addicts to come out of it, and people who had left alcohol should be encouraged to join such groups.**

**Keywords:- Impact of Alcohol, Alcohol Use, Niger Delta, Youths.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Alcohol use and abuse is a serious problem in the Niger Delta, Nigeria as in most other parts of the world. Alcohol is one of the substances with an elevated level of social acceptance and consumption among Nigerian youths<sup>1</sup>. Although the level of alcohol consumption differs widely around the world, the burden of disease and death remains tremendous in most regions, with America and Europe having the highest alcohol attributable fractions at 5.6% and 6.5%, respectively<sup>2</sup>.

According to Katikireddi et al.<sup>3</sup>, 320,000 youth between the ages of 15-29 die from alcohol-related causes each year. Harmful alcohol use results in overall 2.5 million deaths each year that emanates from unintentional and intentional injuries<sup>3</sup>. Harmful alcohol use, also known as

alcohol abuse, refers to a pattern of alcohol use that gives rise to physical or mental damage to health. Not only does alcohol abuse impair the psychological and physical health of the drinker, it also harms the well-being and health of the people exposed to the drinkers by placing them at risk of accidents or violence.

In the 2016 Global Burden of Disease Study, alcohol use was reported to be the seventh foremost risk factor for disability and premature death and the leading risk factor for risk-attributable disease burden among people aged 15 to 49 years<sup>4</sup>. Worldwide, an estimated 2.8 million deaths (which represent 320 deaths every hour) were recorded as a result of harmful alcohol use. Current evidence also shows that alcohol consumption is now the world's third largest risk factor for disease and disability; nearly 4% of all mortality globally are attributed to alcohol<sup>5</sup>. However, alcohol is the most commonly utilized psychoactive drug in both young people and adults in Niger Delta, Nigeria<sup>6 & 4</sup>. Some of the factors contributing to alcohol use among Nigerians include easy access to alcoholic drinks, lack of alcohol policies, and lack of implementation of a minimum drinking age by both the government and the brewers<sup>7</sup>.

There are numerous drivers of this social behavior among students. In addition to socio-demographic factors such as age, gender and socio-economic status of students<sup>6 & 8</sup>), some scholars have stated that the change in lifestyle behaviour that accompanies tertiary education, as well as the perceived liberty from parental control further compound this risky behavior<sup>9</sup>. Other scholars have found a relationship between harmful alcohol use among students and dysfunctional family settings, as well as the influence of media advertisement<sup>8</sup>. Another author listed the protective effect of religion on alcohol use. Several other reasons contribute to harmful alcohol use among this age group, and these include peer pressure, academic-related stress and workload and unhealthy competitions among peers<sup>10</sup>. Relating to the frequency of alcohol use, gender play an important role and males are more likely to engage in binge drinking more frequently than their female colleagues<sup>11</sup>.

It is reported that over 2000 youths in Emevor Community, Niger Delta, Nigeria, are involved in Alcohol addiction each year. As a result, so many of them get involved in serious antisocial behavior like crime, bunkering, rape, early teenage pregnancies, criminal acts, abortion, gross disobedience to parents and the elderly.

Some even get involved in cultism, militant acts, hooliganism, family instability, mental illness, self-injury etc.

A survey of the literature showed that limited data are currently available on the use and abuse of alcohol by youths in the Niger Delta. The objectives of this study were: to determine the effects and inducing factors to the use of alcohol by youths, and to identify the attitudes of male and female youths and youths generally towards the use of alcohol with a view to making recommendations on the ways of reducing alcohol use and abuse by youths.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### ➤ *Study Area*

The study was carried out at Emevor community in the Niger Delta, Nigeria, from July-December, 2019. The area for the study is Emevor Community, Niger Delta, Nigeria. The community has a large concentration of all categories of people. A population from which the sample was drawn because it possess all the characteristics.

### ➤ *Sampling Technique*

The study used 1,200 respondents from the population. The researcher adopted the accidental sampling technique to select the 1,200 respondents who were used in the study. The study adopted multi stage sampling procedure comprising the purposive and accidental sampling techniques respectively, because the researcher had no particular set of respondent from the community; hence, anybody who is found in the community formed part of the sample.

### ➤ *Instrument for Data Collection*

Two major instruments were used for data collection. These were: questionnaires and oral interviews. The questionnaires were developed by the researcher to gather information from host communities and health officials in the community. Also, the instrument was designed based on four Likert Scale of strongly agreed (SA) = 4, agreed (A) = 3, disagreed (D) = 2, and strongly disagreed (SD) = 1.

### ➤ *Validity of the Instrument*

The copies of the instrument were given to experts in the field of community education, community health workers and environmental health workers, for critical appraisal. Through this process, the face validity, content and construct validity of the instrument was enhanced. Their

suggestions were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument, before the administration of the questionnaires on the respondents and this helped to enhance the quality of the instrument.

### ➤ *Reliability of the Instrument*

To ensure that the instrument that was developed will be reliable, a smaller sample of the same respondents was selected using the test retest method to obtain data not used for this study. The questionnaire was administered on the respondents and after two weeks, the same sample shall be re-administered and the outcomes of the two administrations were calculated using simple percentage.

### ➤ *Procedure for Data Collection*

The questionnaire used for the study were made anonymous to retain respondent's confidentiality.

### ➤ *Data Analysis*

The data collected were carefully tallied and converted to frequency distribution tables/percentages. Descriptive statistical method was used. The percentages were calculated using the formula below:

$$\frac{M}{P} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Where:

M	=	The part of main group
P	=	The total group
100	=	Constant
1	=	Constant

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### ➤ *Inducing Factors to Alcoholism*

The analysis from Table 1 revealed that youths in Emevor community, Niger Delta, Nigeria, agreed that environmental factors, peer group influence, material disorder, unemployment, loss of Job and parental background, are the inducing factors to alcoholism. The findings of the study is in line with that concluded by Ajayi et al.<sup>12</sup>, who reported that an environment where alcohol is accepted and made available, is the most influential factor in producing harmful personal consumption. Sancho-Esper et al.<sup>13</sup>, also conducted a study and found out that consumption intention among adolescents and young adults is affected by parents, peers and advertising.

S/N	ITEMS	A	%	D	%	SA	%	TOTAL
1	Parental background	720	60	120	10	360	30	100
2	Constitutional factor	420	35	60	5	720	60	100
3	Environmental factor	840	70	40	4	320	26	100
4	Religious belief	400	33	50	4	750	63	100
5	Peer group influence	900	75	20	2	280	23	100
6	Culture belief	730	61	50	4	420	35	100
7	Marital factor	700	58	20	2	480	40	100
8	Unemployment	920	77	40	3	240	20	100
9	Loss of job	960	80	20	2	220	18	100

**Table 1:-** Percentage response on the inducing factors to alcoholism.

**Source:** Researcher’s Computation, 2019.SA=Srongly Agreed, A=Agreed, D=Disagreed.

➤ *Effects of Alcoholism on Youths*

Table 2 below shows that out of 8 (eight) effects presented to respondents, 5 factors were ticked as major effects of alcoholism and 3 as minor effects of alcoholism. It was observed that the major effects of alcoholism are; reduced libido, still birth, impotence, cancer of the bronchus and loss of memory while the minor effects are growth

retardation, infantile death and weakness of the muscle. This is in line with the findings of Marshall<sup>14</sup>, who discovered that heavy alcohol consumption in late adolescence appears to persist into adulthood and is connected with alcohol problems, including, dependence, premature death, and diminished work capacity.

S/N	Items	Minor	Effect	Major	Effects	Result
		No	%	No	%	
10	Growth retardation	800	67	400	33	Minor effect
11	Reduced libido	480	40	720	60	Major effect
12	Still birth	350	29	850	71	Major effect
13	Importance	420	35	780	65	Major effect
14	Cancer of the bronchus	300	25	900	75	Major effect
15	Weakness of muscle	760	63	440	37	Minor effect
16	Infantile death	700	58	500	42	Minor effect
17	Loss of memory	350	29	850	71	Major effect

**Table 2:-** Percentage effects of alcoholism, both minor and major effects.

**Source:** Researcher’s Computation, 2019.

➤ *Attitudes (Positive and Negative) of Youths Towards the Use of Alcohol*

Table 3 below revealed that out of 120 respondents, 110 is positive which is 91.7%, while 10 respondents which is 8.3% is negative. This means that greater percentage of

the youths have positive attitude towards alcoholism in the community. This finding is in line with Janssen et al.<sup>15</sup>, who found out that youth indulge in alcohol without feeling bad about it.

Attitude	No of Response	Percentage (%)
Negative	100	8.3
Positive	1100	91.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3:** Summary of Youth Attitudes Towards the Use of Alcohol

Sources: Researcher’s Computation, 2019.

➤ *Difference in the Attitude of Male and Female Youths Towards Alcoholism*

From Table 4, the percentage attitude of male youth towards alcoholism is 67.5 %, while that of their female counterpart is 32.5 %. Since there is a difference in the values which is 35%, the hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is difference in the attitude of male and female youth towards alcoholism in the Local Government Area. This finding is in line with the work of Dada et al.<sup>16</sup>, who

discovered that males were more likely to be current drinkers and to have experienced episodes of alcohol intoxication. The results of this study are also in concord with the works of Eze et al.<sup>17</sup>, who found out that male secondary school students moderately consumed beer (55.2 %) and local cocktails (51.5 %), whereas, their female colleagues reported rare consumption of these 2 alcoholic drinks (44.8 % and 48.5 % respectively).

Variable Sex	No of Response	Percentage (%)	Difference	Remark
Male	810	67.5	67.5-32.5	
Female	390	32.5		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>Rejected</b>

Table 4 Percentage analysis of male and female attitude toward alcoholism.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that peer group influence, marital disorder, unemployment, loss of job and parental background are the predisposing factors to alcoholism. The study revealed that reduced libido, impotence, cancer of the bronchus, loss of memory and still births are some of the major effects of alcoholism. The result also revealed that 70% of the youths have positive attitude toward alcoholism with the view that alcohol is necessary to maintain their status in the society, promote relaxation, and necessary in validating agreement. The result has found that 30% of the youths have negative attitude with the view that it makes them indulge in criminal acts.

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#### SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

The study will reveal the attitude of youths towards alcoholism and its effects. The findings of this research will contribute to the knowledge of environmental science. It will also be of great benefit to social workers, Environmental Health Workers and others. It will also identify the effects of alcoholism on education.

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