

The Critical Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Prevalence of Drug Abuse among Adults and Teenagers in Surulere Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State, Nigeria; a Case Study of Tramadol

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**Tecana American University**

**Post-Doctorate Program in Public Health with an Emphasis in Epidemiology and Research**



**The Critical Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Prevalence of Drug Abuse among Adults and Teenagers in Surulere Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State, Nigeria; a Case Study of Tramadol**

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**“I hereby swear and bear witness that I am the sole author of this Preliminary Draft and that its content is the fruit of my work, experience and academic research”**

**Signature** .....

**Lagos, Nigeria**

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**General Index**

Tramadol: It is the drug being studied in this thesis and is an opioid analgesic indicated for the treatment of moderate and severe pains

Prevalence: Defined as the proportion of a population which is found to have a disease or risk factor

Drugs or substance: The word drug and substance are used interchangeably to refer to the same thing and, in this case, it refers to Tramadol

A drug user: in this case, study, this refer to a teenager or an adult involved in the use of tramadol

## **Summary of The Proposal**

### **Background**

Tramadol is an opioid analgesic indicated for the treatment of moderate and severe pains. When it is administered in the body for a long time, it has the potential to cause dependency, tolerance and drug abuse.

### **Objectives**

This proposal aims at carrying out a critical Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude, and Prevalence of Drug Abuse among Adults and Teenagers in Surulere Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State, Nigeria; a case study of tramadol.

### **Study design**

The study design which will be applied in this research will be a descriptive cross-sectional study among teenagers and adult in Surulere Local Government Area (LGA), Lagos State, Nigeria.

Keywords include; Cognition; teenagers, adults, substance abuse, Substance-Related Disorders; Tramadol

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## **Introduction**

There is no doubt that the strength of any form of society derives its powers from the sons who happens to work as the first line defense against any breach of the social fabric through maintenance of values and morals, religion and heritage. Based on this assumption, if the spread phenomenon of drug and substance abuse among the society members, especially the young people are high, this threatens catastrophe will occur in the community. Substance abuse and the addictive behavior happen to be universal phenomena and they are currently regarded as the major public health problem (Oshodi et al, 2010). Research indicates that since ancient times if one lived with psychoactive substance, it seemed to be part of the fabric of their lives. The desire to have an experience of some altered state of unconsciousness seemed to be an intrinsic part of the human condition.

The health and social cost of abuse of any psychoactive substance in most cases reflect the most disturbing mortality and morbidity. The squealer of the physical, social, and economic and psychological harm derived from the abuse of the psychoactive substance tends to affect not only the individual user but also the family in general. Most of the reports indicate increment in risk-taking behavior which is inclusive of a significant rise in the cases of drug addiction. One of the drugs which have been associated with this typical trend is Tramadol, a drug first developed in Germany in the 1970s and then introduced in the 90s as a centrally acting analgesic properties which are similar to those of codeine and morphine and which are widely prescribed as pain killer; although this drug is considered illegal without prescription in most of the Nigerian regions, it also easily accessible especially with the use of fake prescriptions from pharmacies or even from the black market (Olsson et al, 2017).

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Tramadol is a synthetic pain reliever. Currently, doctors and other researchers have not yet understood the exact mechanism of action of tramadol though it is considered like morphine. Just like morphine, tramadol tends to bind to the receptors in the brain that are deemed important for transmitting the sensation of pain in the whole body to the brain. Tramadol is of different forms, brands and strengths. Some happen to be immediate release formulations while there are others which are sustained or delayed the release; thus, they release the active moiety more slowly for several hours, thus providing a constant and more even pain control. In several countries, it is considered as a prescription-only medicine, but for Nigeria, it is a quite different story. In a statement offered by the pharmaceuticals from Nigeria, the approved use of tramadol is 50 mg and 100 mg, or capsules and it is not 200mg/250mg as it has found to be circulating in most of the markets in the country (Oluremi, 2012). Reports indicate that there is an increased abuse of tramadol among the teenagers and adults where they are using it as a pain reliever. In this regard, the relevant authorities have called for concerted efforts to help curb the trend. The proliferation of this higher strength tramadol which happens to become more popular among the teenagers and adults in Nigeria calls for concern and coordinated efforts by various stakeholders to help get rid of this substance which is unregistered and unapproved.

## **Problem Statement**

### **Statement**

There is a growing concern from various stakeholders in the health sector who are concerned that both adults and teenagers from in Surulere Local Government (LGA) of Lagos State, Nigeria have been misusing and abusing Tramadol where they take them with an aim of increasing their sexual performance, ecstasy, boost their energy among others (Abdel-Hamid et al, 2016). There are various researches which indicate that there are some of these teenagers and adults who put high doses of tramadol in energy drinks to achieve quicker results. It is important to note that Tramadol ought to be taken under the monitoring and supervision of the doctor. However, any form of an attempt to subject the drug to constant use precariously leads to addictions which in some case may lead to death (Umukoro et al, 2016).

### **Formulation Of The Problem**

Drug abuse and addiction are currently one of the most important health problems. Information which pertains the role of lay theories is being considered undeniable in the rehabilitative and preventive works. There are various studies which have assessed the lay beliefs and attitudes which are related to various kinds of drugs where others indicate that there are particular variables which tend to increase the risk of drug abuse. The abuse of tramadol among the people of Surulere local government, reports indicate that 30% both male and female aged between 14 and 30 years have abused tramadol at least one time, and there are many people who are increasingly dependent on the drug with some becoming seriously addicted (Ibrahim et al, 2017).

Based on the observed spread of tramadol abuse and lack of information pertaining to its effect and preventive measures, the incidence has encouraged the researchers to study this phenomenon. It is a study which will assess the extent of the phenomena of abuse of the tramadol on the person who has tramadol abuse in Surulere.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

This study aims at assessing the abuse of tramadol in Surulere Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State, Nigeria by examining the level of knowledge, attitude, and prevalence of the drug.

### **Specific Objective**

- To identify the knowledge, attitude, and prevalence of tramadol among the people abusing Tramadol
- To assess the side effects of tramadol among the people abusing it
- To suggest the side effects of tramadol among the users

## **Justification**

The prevalence of drug and substance abuse in Nigeria is wide and an increasingly growing problem. Studies carried in some places such as Adebayo indicate that 46.6% of the sample respondent had taken medicine for non-medical purposes at least once which are an indication that drug and substance abuse is a real problem in the country. Another study which was conducted by Onofa shows that the lifetime prevalence rate of any drug abuse among the respondent happened to be 69.2% which is low compared to that which had been reported by

Makanjuola et al. In this study, alcohol was the most prevalent lifetime drug with 34.4% (Abdel-Hamid et al, 2016). alcohol and cigarette are the commonly abused drugs but currently, the abuse is taking a new direction. There are increasing concerns which have been evoked for the risk of developing tramadol dependence and the risk of adverse reactions which include epileptic seizures and fatal intoxications. Research done recently in Nigeria indicated that 54.4% of the total sampled population abused Tramadol and, in that population, 91% were male. Despite that these cases are being experienced and their effects studied, to understand the root cause of the behavior which is considered wrong, it is important to examine the understanding, attitude, and prevalence of the abuse. It has been noted that most people use the drug without being aware of the side effects. In this regard, it is important to examine the issue into details if proper and effective strategies will be initiated to curb the behavior.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Based on a systematic approach, substance use happens to be a social complex phenomenon which can only be meaningfully understood by carrying out an analysis on the complex relations for the users instead of having a linear casual deterministic perspective. The systematic approach basically result to a broader reading of the factors which contribute to substance use behavior including the physical effects of the abused drug to the body, the users knowledge and attitude towards the drug, the users belief towards the power of the drug and the network of favors that consumption imposes mainly the avenue through which he or she access the drug (Ibrahim et al, 2017). If any of the scholars will fail to consider some of these aspects, then the understanding of the whole problem of drug addiction becomes incomplete, and it becomes difficult to understand the prevalence of the drug among the community, and the knowledge and attitude which the abusers tend to entail.

There are various theories and frameworks which have been developed with the aim of trying to describe or predict drug use in the community. For many years, health professionals, policymakers and researchers have carried out researches which mainly focus on the effects of drug abuse on the user. However, the phenomenon happens to be multivariate and most of these theories tend to focus on a single aspect of the problem thus failing to answer the core question about the phenomenon.

This study is guided by the differential reinforcement theory which maintains that drug and substance abuse stems from the effects of the drug which outweigh the negative ones. Whenever a drug produces an undesirable result such as panic and other problems, they tend to deliver negative reinforcement. More so, they can always return to positively reinforcing effects such as euphoria which in most cases outweighs the negative effects. People tend to learn how to take a particular drug and also what to expect from it, they learn the rules of taking these drugs despite that they do not always apply what they have learned. Scholars indicate that people tend to be shaped by the consequences of consuming various products and they will always continue to be involved in their behavior whenever someone else complements their behaviors. Whenever an individual gets a reward from taking a drug such as being able to cope with a particular pain, any positive consequence despite how small it is tending to be more emotionally powerful when compared to the negative one. The differential reinforcement theory happens to be relevant because it takes into account the factors contributing to drug abuse and captures the complexities and intricacy of the prevalence of drug abuse in that excessive taking of the drug happens to be a learned behavior which tends to be reinforced and it is subject to change via relearning and various patterns being incorporated in reinforcing it.

### **Social Cognitive Theory**

This is a theory which on the reason why people tend to acquire and maintain behavioral patterns which also indicating the basis which can be used during interventions. While assessing the behavioral changes, both the environmental factors, people and behaviors are examined. The environment is defined as a factor which can affect the behavior of a person (Mamman et al, 2014).

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These include the social, economic and environmental factors. The environment tends to provide models for behavior via observational learning which occurs when a particular individual watches the actions of another person and the reinforcement which this person receives. This theory happens to be important because it analyzes the social context on which taking of most drugs occurs and factors contributing to drug abuse.

## **Methodology To Be Used**

### **Study Design**

The study design which will be applied in this research will be a descriptive cross-sectional study among teenagers and adult in Surulere Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State, Nigeria.

### **Variables**

The dependent variable will be those related to practice about tramadol use and abuse and the independent variable will be those which are related to knowledge attitude and prevalence characteristics which will be inclusive of class, age, religion, sex, and hobbies.

Surulere Local Government Area is a commercial and residential local government area which is located on the Lagos Mainland in Lagos State, Nigeria. The state has an area of 23 km squared and based on a census which was conducted in 2006; it had a population of 503,975 inhabitants and a population density of 21, 864 inhabitants in every square kilometer. The neighboring communities include Yaba, Apapa, Ebute-Metta and Mushin.

### **Reason For Choice Of The Study Area**

Surulere being one of the Local Government Area within Lagos State indicates increased use and abuse of drugs among both the adults and teenagers. Research indicates that the predominant dwellers in the area tend to indulge in drug consumption terming it as social culture and sense of belonging. More so, in the youthful birthday parties, there is a tendency of drugs being distributed is one type of refreshment (Ekpenyong, 2012). People from this region have grown to become drug users seeing no harm.

There are several seizures of the tramadol which have been carried in the area and culprits arrested after they are found having the drugs. This makes Surulere an ideal place to have a research analysis conducted.

### **Study Population**

The people targeted in this study include both teenagers and adults. The problem of tramadol abuse is not only with the youths but also the elderly and in this regard, everyone will be incorporated in the study while considering all genders. A total of 360 respondents will be included in the study.

### **Sampling**

#### **Selection Of The Study Subjects**

The whole area of Surulere will be covered in the study though it is only 360 respondents who will be required. To have the 360 respondents, a multistage sampling method will be conducted, and this will be as follows;

The area will be first subdivided into the inherited traditional towns which are within the local government area and which include; Iresa-Adu, Iresa-Apa, and Igbon. After this division, the total number respondent will be divided among the towns and indication that only 120 people will be required from each. This population ought to include teenagers and adults which is an indication that 60 people from each group will be required. In the population of the 60 people, both genders are required which is an indication that there must be a representation by 30 people from each gender.

Thereafter, the random selection of the required number of each stratum will be carried out. It is important to note that teens will be classified under the group of 10 – 19 years and adults are people above 19 years.

### **Inclusion Criteria Of Study Subjects**

Any person who will be included in the study as a respondent has to prove that he or she is a resident from the area being covered. More so, he or she must be consenting to participate in the study

### **Exclusion Criteria Of Study Subjects**

Any person who does not consent to included in the study will exclude

### **Data Collection**

Data required will be collected in a minimum of three months where all the selected respondents will be issued with a standard self-administered questionnaire written in proper English. There will be a designed questionnaire with an average of 40 questions which will be presented to 360 respondents from Surulere Local Government Area. Before the actual data is collected, necessary changes on the questionnaire will be carried out after a pre-test it has been performed. The respondent will answer the questions in whichever place they will be because the study will be conducted in any setting. The investigator is required to explain to the respondent the purpose of the survey and strongly emphasize the anonymous nature of the questionnaire.

While the questionnaires are being filled, it is upon the investigator to ensure that individual response though there will be focus group discussions and in-depth interviews which will be facilitated following well-prepared guidelines. These discussions will be moderated by the investigator while a research assistant records the discussion.

### **Minimizing Errors And Barriers**

While selecting the study subject, errors and bias must be minimized through random selection of the subjects from the specific strata. While in the process of preparing to collect data, training will be facilitated to the research assistant on the study objectives and methodology. There will be a standard questionnaire written in proper English and this will be used on all respondents. The questionnaire will be pre-tested first before it is used in the field.

### **Data Processing And Analysis**

After collecting the data, it will be edited before it is entered into the computer. The analysis will be undertaken using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) package on a personal computer. Any form of descriptive statistic will be determined while carrying out the analysis while applying appropriate tests of significance, namely chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) and logistic regression with an aim of identifying the factors that tend to be related to the practice towards drug use and abuse (Yunusa et al, 2017). Any data that will be collected from the in-depth interviews and group discussions will be first transcribed before being synthesis and categorized in the relevant themes.

### **Ethical Considerations**

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Clearance will be carried out for all the respectful offices and any other relevant body and this will be done while explaining all the objectives of the study to all those stakeholders. Similar explanation will also be done to the people whom data will be collected from. Informed verbal consent will be sought from all those people data will be conducted from before they fill in the questionnaire and they will all be assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Any of the interviewees who will require any help concerning drug use and abuse will be advised accordingly by offering timely repose to their concerns and providing them with information as to where any victim can get help.

## Appendix

### Schedule Of Activities

Number	Activity	Duration in Days
1	Obtaining a sampling frame/drawing the sample from the population	10
2	Presentation/discussion schedules of interview schedules to the advisor	2
3	Pretesting of interview schedules	5
4	Analyzing the pre-test results	3
5	Presentation or discussion of pretest results to the advisor	2
6	Revision and production of interview schedules	2
7	Planning the data collection	2
8	Actual data gathering	14
9	Editing of completed interview schedules or questionnaires	5
10	Coding of answers to open-ended questions	5
11	Preparation of dummy tables and data entry	7
12	Analyses and interpretation of data	10
13	Completing the whole thesis	20

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	Total	87

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