

# Self-Efficacy, Emotional Intelligence, and Locus of Control as Predictors of Substance Abuse amount Undergraduates in Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The study investigated self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and locus of control as predictors of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. The general objective of the study was to determine composite and relative contributions of self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and locus of control to the prediction of substance abuse. A descriptive survey of a correlational type was adopted. A multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to select 1,654 respondents from a population of 1,961,000. A questionnaire consisting of four sub-scales, three of them namely: 'Self-Efficacy Scale' (SES), 'Emotional Intelligence Scale' (EIS) and 'Substance Abuse Scale' (SAS) were adapted while 'Locus of Control Scale' (LOCS) was adopted. Test-retest reliability method yielded correlation coefficients of 0.71, 0.76 and 0.73 respectively while the adopted scale had 0.69. Four research questions were answered, and one research hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data were analyzed using Multiple Regression.

The findings of the study were:

(i) higher percentage of undergraduates had low self-efficacy (77.21%) while others had high (22.79%); majority had low emotional intelligence (53.51%) while others had high (46.49%); higher percentage of undergraduates exhibited internal locus of control (80.83%) while others exhibited external (19.17%) and majority had low level of substance abuse (82.53%) while others had high (17.47%).

(ii) self-efficacy and emotional intelligence were joint predictors of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. The result of Multiple

R was 0.47;  $F(3, 1650) = 157.44, p < 0.05$ ). The results showed that emotional intelligence was the highest predictor ( $\beta = -0.37, t = -16.03, p < 0.05$ ), followed by self-efficacy ( $\beta = -0.20, t = -8.88, p < 0.05$ ) while locus of control did not contribute significantly.

This study concluded that self-efficacy and emotional intelligence jointly predicted substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. The implication is that the enhancement of self-efficacy and emotional intelligence could be used to control substance abuse. The study, therefore, recommended that counsellors should employ self-efficacy and emotional intelligence enhancement strategies in solving substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria.

(Keywords: self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, locus of control, substance abuse, university students)

## INTRODUCTION

There is no gainsaying the fact that youths are veritable tools for national development. In support of this, Anasi (2010) acknowledged that young people all over the world are a vital and important segment of the society in which they live. A disciplined, focused, and law-abiding youth can create a bright future for any nation. Conversely, a lawless, indulgent, and violent youth is a great threat to a nation's peace and security.

Substance abuse is a complex problem that could prevent youths from realizing their future ambitions. It has negative consequences on the abusers, parents, and society at large. Governments at various levels had used different

strategies to ameliorate the scourge of the menace but little has been achieved. According to the World Health Organization (2017), substance abuse is the harmful use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs.

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. In other words, self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Hagman (2004) found that self-efficacy is related to the avoidance of alcohol use and smoking and that high self-efficacy ratings exhibited during follow-up are associated with less substance use. This implies that there is a strong relationship between substance abuse and self-efficacy. Omrod (2006) opined that there is a possibility that anyone who is highly self-efficacious may not abuse a drug, if already abusing it, he/she may develop the capacity to quit. Self-efficacy is the measure of one's competences to complete tasks and reach goals.

Relatedly, emotional intelligence is another variable of interest that could predict substance abuse. According to Coleman (2008), emotional intelligence (EI) is the capability of individuals to recognize their own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different feelings and label them appropriately, to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior and to manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt environments or achieve one's goal(s). Corroborating this, Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2008) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to engage in sophisticated information processing about one's own and others' emotions and the ability to use this information as a guide to thinking and behavior. That is, individuals who are high in emotional intelligence pay attention to, use, understand and manage emotions and these skills serve adaptive functions that potentially benefit themselves and others.

Another variable of interest that may predict substance abuse is Locus of Control. According to Rotter (1966), Locus of Control (LOC) is a personality or dispositional variable reflecting the tendency to perceive events as being either a consequence of one's own actions (thus, internal control) or a function of outside factors such as luck, fate or powers beyond one's personal control (thus, external control). Locus of Control (LOC) has been reported over the years as a major construct in individual's life that plays a major role

in many aspects of human behavior such as self-control, social adjustment, independence, expectancy, achievement motivation and success-orientation (Rotter, 1966).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Among social challenges bedeviling the nation is the consumption of drugs in amounts and methods not authorized by medical professionals. A lot of monies are lost by different countries due to substance abuse and addiction (Utomi, 2019). University undergraduates are not immune from the problem of substance abuse since youthful age is a special phase which could make undergraduates to be vulnerable to risky behaviors like substance abuse.

UNODC (2018) estimated over a quarter of a billion (275 million) people between the ages of 15 and 64 years had used an illicit drug in 2016. This corresponds to a global prevalence of 5.6 per cent, suggesting that drug use has remained stable in the past three or more years, although the estimated number of drug users has actually risen from 6 million to 275 million owing to the increase in the global population (UNODC, 2018). It is disturbing to find that the past year prevalence of drug abuse in Nigeria is estimated at 14.4 per cent or 14.3 million people aged between 15 and 64 years. The extent of drug abuse in Nigeria is comparatively high when compared with the 2016 global annual prevalence of drug abuse of 5.6 per cent among the adult population (UNODC, 2018).

The Minister of Health, Prof. Isaac Adewole (2015-2019) declared that over 20 billion sticks of cigarettes are consumed in Nigeria despite the warning that smokers are liable to die young (Onyedika-Ugoeze, 2018). There is an increasing rate of psychoactive substance use and abuse in many African countries. There is an array of possible consequences on undergraduates who abuse substance(s) such as absenteeism, poor grades, increased potential for dropping out, fights, accidents, damage to vital organs and mental derangement.

### **Objectives**

The aim of this study was to investigate self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and locus of

control as predictors of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to examine the composite and relative contribution of the independent variables (self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and locus of control) to the prediction of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised and answered in this study:

1. What is the level of self-efficacy of undergraduates in Nigeria?
2. What is the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduates in Nigeria?
3. What type of locus of control (internal vs external) is exhibited by undergraduates in Nigeria?
4. What is the level of substance abuse of undergraduates in Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

This research hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant composite and relative contribution of independent variables (self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and locus of control) in predicting substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey of correlational type.

### **Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure**

The population for this study comprised all undergraduates in Nigeria which is estimated at 1,961,000 (National Universities Commission, 2017).

The target population for this study was made up of all undergraduates drawn from selected Universities in the six Geo-Political zones of Nigeria.

### **Instrumentation**

For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire which has four different scales was used. The four scales are:

(a) Substance Abuse Scale (SAS) is an adapted version of Drug Abuse Screening Test developed by Skinner (1982). The scale was first used in Nigeria by Uba, Yacoob, Abu Talib, Abdullah and Mofrad (2014). The scale was adapted for use by the researcher.

(b) Self-Efficacy Scale (SES) was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1992; 1995). The scale was used in Nigeria by Adeyemo and Ogunyemi (2005). The scale was adapted by the researcher.

(c) Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) was developed by Schutte, Malouf, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998). The scale was used in Nigeria by Adeyemo and Ogunyemi (2005) and Williams (2012). This researcher adapted Williams' (2012) version.

(d) Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale, 1966). The scale was used in Nigeria by Ogwokhademhe (2010). The researcher adopted Ogwokhademhe's (2010) version.

### **Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

The scales were given to experts in Educational Guidance and Counselling and their corrections were affected before it was administered. Also, the reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest reliability method. The result of the adapted scales yielded:

- i. Substance Abuse Scale 0.73
- ii. Self-efficacy Scale 0.71
- iii. Emotional Intelligence Scale 0.76 while the adopted scale (Locus of Control) had 0.69

### **Procedure for Administration of Instrument and Data Collection**

Training sessions were held for six research assistants to familiarize them with the purpose of the research, the content of the questionnaire as well as their duties during administration of the questionnaires. The administration took place at lecture theatres of the selected universities. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and their consent was sought before the administration of the instrument. A total of 1690 questionnaire forms were distributed while 1654 copies of the questionnaire were filled correctly.

### **Procedure for Scoring the Instrument**

In scoring, the Substance Abuse Scale, a four-point Likert-type scale format was used with the highest score for each item being four (4) and the lowest being one (1) thus: Very Much Like Me (4 points), Like Me (3 points), Not Like Me (2 points), Not At All Like Me (1 point). Since there are fifteen (15) items altogether in the scale, the lowest total score obtainable is fifteen (15) and the highest obtainable score is sixty (60). Therefore, the respondents who obtained forty (40) and above were considered as having high level of substance abuse while those who obtained scores below forty (40) were considered as having low level of substance abuse.

In scoring the Self-efficacy scale, a four-point Likert-type format was used with the highest score for each item is four (4) and the lowest being one (1) thus: Exactly True (4 points), Moderately True (3 points), Hardly True (2 points) and Not At All True (1 point). Since there are fifteen (15) items altogether in the instrument, the lowest total score obtainable is fifteen (15) and the highest obtainable score is sixty (60). Therefore, the respondents who obtained forty (40) and above were considered as having high self-efficacy while those who obtained score below forty (40) were considered as having low self-efficacy.

Emotional intelligence scale was scored using a four point Likert-type rating scale format with the highest score for any item being four (4) and the lowest score being one (1) thus; Strongly Agree (4points), Agree (3points), Disagree (2points) and Strongly Disagree (1point). Since the instrument contains fifteen (15) items altogether, the lowest total score obtainable is fifteen (15) and the highest obtainable score is sixty (60). Therefore,

the respondents who obtained forty (40) and above were considered as having high level of emotional intelligence while those who scored below forty (40) were considered as having low level of emotional intelligence.

Locus of Control Scale contains items with two alternatives A and B. One of the statements depicts external locus of control and is scored two (2). The second statement depicts internal locus of control and is scored one (1). Therefore, each of the following options was scored two (2) (1b, 2b, 3a, 4a, 5b, 6b, 7b, 8b, 9b, 10b, 11b, 12b, 13b, 14a, 15b) While each of the following options was scored one (1) (1a, 2a, 3b, 4b, 5a, 6a, 7a, 8a, 9a, 10a, 11a, 12a, 13a, 14b, 15a). The scale consisted of fifteen (15) items. Since the instrument contained fifteen (15) items altogether, the lowest total score obtainable is fifteen (15) and the highest obtainable score is thirty (30). Therefore, the respondents who obtained twenty-two (22) and above were considered as having external locus of control while those who scored below twenty-two were considered as having internal locus of control.

## **RESULTS**

The results are presented two sections. The first section contains the results of the research questions and the hypothesis tested while the second section gives the summary of the findings.

### **Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of self-efficacy of undergraduates in Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Level of Self Efficacy of Undergraduates in Nigeria.

Score	N	Percentage %	Remarks
Below 40	1277	77.21	Low Self Efficacy
40 and Above	377	22.79	High Self Efficacy
Total	1654	100.0	

Table 1 shows that 1277 (77.21%) of the respondents had low level of self-efficacy while 377 (22.79%) had high level of self-efficacy. This means that majority of undergraduates in Nigeria had low level of self-efficacy.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduates in Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Level of Emotional Intelligence of Undergraduates in Nigeria.

Score	N	Percentage %	Remark
Below 40	885	53.51	Low Emotional Intelligence
40 and Above	769	46.49	High Emotional Intelligence
Total	1654	100.0	

Table 2 shows that 885 (53.51%) of the respondents had low level of emotional intelligence while 769 (46.49%) had high level of emotional intelligence. This means that more than half of the undergraduates in Nigeria had low level of emotional intelligence.

**Research Question 3:** What type of locus of control is exhibited by undergraduates in Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Type of Locus of Control of Undergraduates in Nigeria.

Score	N	Percentage %	Remark
Below 22	1337	80.83	Internal Locus of Control
22 and Above	317	19.17	External Locus of Control I
Total	1654	100.0	

Table 3 shows that 1337 (80.83%) of the respondents had internal locus of control, while 317 (19.17%) had external locus of control. This means that majority of the undergraduates in Nigeria had internal locus of control.

**Table 4:** Level of Substance Abuse of Undergraduates in Nigeria.

Score	N	Percentage %	Remark
Below 40	1365	82.53	Low Level of Substance Abuse
40 and Above	289	17.47	High Level of Substance Abuse
Total	1654	100.0	

Table 4 shows that 1365 (82.53%) of the respondents had low level of substance abuse, while 289 (17.47%) had high level of substance abuse. This means that majority of undergraduates had low level of substance abuse.

### Hypotheses Testing

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant joint contribution of independent variables (self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and locus of control) in predicting substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria.

**Table 5 (i):** Summary Table of Multiple Regression Showing Composite Contribution of Independent Variables to the Prediction of Substance Abuse Among Undergraduates in Nigeria.

Multiple R =0.47						
Multiple R <sup>2</sup> =0.22						
Multiple R <sup>2</sup> (Adjusted)=0.22						
Standard Error =5.69						
Model	SS	Df	Mean Squares	Cal. F. Value	p Value	Decision
Regression	15273.66	3	5091.22	157.44	0.00	Sig
Residual	53357.70	1650	32.34			
Total	68631.36	1653				

Table 5 (i) shows that the Multiple Regression (R) indicating relationship between predictor variables (self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and locus of control) and dependent variable (substance abuse) is 0.47, the R<sup>2</sup> is 0.22, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is 0.22. and the Standard Error is 5.69.



**Table 5 (ii):** Summary Table of Multiple Regression Showing Relative Contribution of Independent Variables to the Prediction of Substance Abuse Among Undergraduates in Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	Cal T	p Value	Decision
	B	Std Error	Beta			
(Constant)	61.46	1.43		42.89	0.00	
Emotional Intelligence	-0.33	0.02	-0.37	-16.03	0.00	Sig
Self-Efficacy	-0.30	0.03	-0.20	-8.88	0.00	Sig
Locus of Control	-0.03	0.05	-0.01	-0.07	0.95	NS

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) produced ( $F(3, 1650) = 157.44; p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that the independent variables are joint predictors of substance abuse.

Table 5 (ii) shows the individual contribution of independent variables to prediction of substance abuse. The result shows that the three independent variables contributed differentially to the prediction of substance abuse with emotional intelligence being highest predictor ( $\beta = -0.37, t = -16.03; p < 0.05$ ), followed by self-efficacy with ( $\beta = -0.20, t = -8.88; p < 0.05$ ) while locus of control with ( $\beta = 0.01, t = -0.07; p > 0.05$ ) did not contribute significantly to the prediction of substance abuse.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research question one was analyzed to determine the level of self-efficacy of undergraduates in Nigeria. The results showed that majority of the undergraduates had low level of self-efficacy (77.21%) while others had high level of self-efficacy (22.79%). This means that many undergraduates had low level of self-efficacy. This finding is in line with the submission of Omrod (2006) who found that most students had low self-efficacy.

In the same manner, Hatami, Ghahremani, Kaveh and Keshavarzi (2016) stated that low level of self-efficacy among students serve as one of the variables that is associated with substance abuse. This researcher believes that self-efficacy played an important role in human behavior and could be useful in helping to understand problem of substance abuse.

Research question two investigated the level of emotional intelligence of undergraduates in Nigeria. The results revealed that more than half of the undergraduates had low level of emotional intelligence (53.51%) while others had high level of emotional intelligence (46.49%). This meant that high number of undergraduates had low level of emotional intelligence. This finding supports the submission of Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) who found high number of low emotional intelligence among students which involves the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions in order to assist thoughts, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions in order to promote emotional and intellectual growth. This is consistent with the submission of Adegboyega, Idowu and Mowaiye-Fagbemi (2017) who found low level of emotional intelligence among university undergraduates of University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Research question three was to determine the type of locus of control exhibited by undergraduates in Nigeria. The results showed that majority of the undergraduates in Nigeria exhibited internal locus of control (80.83%) while others exhibited external locus of control (19.17%). This means that high number of undergraduates had internal locus of control. This finding opposes the submission of Araromi (2010) who claimed that high number of undergraduates had external locus of control.

Research question four investigated the level of substance abuse of undergraduates in Nigeria. The results revealed that more undergraduates had low level of substance abuse (82.53%) while others had high level of substance abuse (17.47%). According to UNODC (2018), past-

year prevalence of drug abuse in Nigeria is estimated at 14.4% or 14.3 million people aged between 15 and 64 years. The extent of drug abuse in Nigeria is comparatively high when compared with the global prevalence of any drug abuse of 5.6%.

Hypothesis one stated that there is no significant composite contribution of independent variables (self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and locus of control) in predicting substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. The result of the finding reveals that the independent variables have significant composite contribution on the prediction of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

The result reveals that the independent variables were significant predictors of substance abuse,  $F(3, 1650) = 157.44, p < 0.05$ . This suggests that the independent variables jointly contributed significantly to the prediction of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. In considering relative contribution of the independent variables to the prediction, findings showed that emotional intelligence was a potent predictor with ( $\beta = -0.37, t = -16.03; p < 0.05$ ), followed by self-efficacy with ( $\beta = -0.20, t = -8.88; p < 0.05$ ) while locus of control was not a significant predictor with ( $\beta = -0.01, t = -0.07; p > 0.05$ ).

Although, no research has all these variables combined; however, research such as that of Claros and Sharma (2012) confirmed that emotional intelligence was a strong predictor of alcohol and marijuana use. This was supported by Riley and Schutte (2003) who discovered low emotional intelligence was a significant predictor of both alcohol-related problems and drug-related problems.

## CONCLUSION

There is low level of self-efficacy among undergraduates in Nigeria. There is low level of emotional intelligence among undergraduates in Nigeria. Undergraduates in Nigeria exhibited internal locus of control. Also, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence are joint predictors of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria. Emotional intelligence was the most potent predictor of substance abuse among undergraduates in Nigeria.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

1. Counsellors and other helping professionals should organize self-efficacy skills programs aimed at improving self-efficacy of undergraduates in Nigeria.
2. Emotional intelligence is an important psychological construct that could assist undergraduates in Nigeria in their day-to-day activity. Therefore, professionals in the field of applied psychology, most especially, counsellors should organize emotional intelligence skills training that could improve the emotional intelligence of undergraduates.
3. There is need for collaboration between University Management, Counsellor Education Department, and officers of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in order to stem the tide of substance abuse through the establishment of drug-free clubs in university campuses.

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