

FAMILY-BASED INTERVENTION IN UNDERAGE INVOLVEMENT IN ALCOHOLISM IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES.

Ushie, Doris Emmanuel

dorisor@gmail.com

Department of Social Science Education University of Calabar Calabar, Nigeria

Ukam, Joy

ukamjoy@gmail.com

Department of Social Science Education University of Calabar Calabar, Nigeria

Nkanu, Elege

elegenkanu@gmail.com

Department of Social Science Education University of Calabar Calabar, Nigeria

Aikpo, Mary

aikpomary@gmail.com

Edinyang, Sunday David (corresponding Author)

edinyangs@gmail.com +2348064676750

Department of Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, University of Calabar, PMB 1115
Calabar, Nigeria

Abstract

The integrity of Nigeria's universities depends in part on the type of activities that students participate in while there. One such behavior is that of indiscriminate use of alcohol, which as revealed in this work has metamorphosed into various trends. Parents no longer have a better view of the responsibilities of their children in and out of the home. The most difficult thing is that, if not apprehended early enough, this activity moves to the campuses of the University where such children affect some of the ills that exist inside those campuses. Therefore it is incumbent on the family to consider its role as the first port of call in these children's socialization process.

Introduction

The world's young and old alike have been the most commonly used and abused drug and Nigeria is no exception. The World Health Organization (2018) submission is related to this, where it states that;

Myths and stereotypes often cloud the true image of alcohol use. A statistical analysis and visualization of world, states and country alcohol drinking levels and patterns by matured people aged 15 years and older provides a good reason for investigating alcohol-related problems. In the world population over 15 years of age, total alcohol consumption per capita increased from 5.5 liters of pure alcohol in 2005 to 6.4 liters in 2010, and remained at 6.

The planet as a whole is facing the case of a rise in alcohol consumption among the underage. Currently children involvement in drinking is a danger to public health in countries around the world. The use of alcoholism by minors found in campuses at Nigerian University has been an age-long occurrence that is significantly metamorphosing into something very dangerous for the safety of the campus. This behavior remains one of the main reasons why students are found wanting in many dissatisfied activities both inside and outside campuses of the University. The normal consequence is cases of students being arrested, mutilated or killed in their association with alcohol-inflamed activities.

The consequence of this activity is devastating to the members of their family, the schools, the youth and the whole community. Environmental incidences strongly suggest that a good number of young people may establish a propensity to engage in alcohol abuse if aggressive prevention processes are not enforced by the relevant authorities of which the family is one. Parents remain very influential in their children's lives particularly when the correct process of socialization is implemented early enough. Highlighting the role of parents in their children's upbringing, Public Broadcasting Service-PBS Parents (2017) notes that "While the role of a parent in the learning of their children changes as children mature, one thing remains paramount: we are models of learning for our children. Our educational attitudes will inspire theirs and show them to take responsibility for their own journey of education "(p.1).

The Concept of Alcohol

An extract from World History (as quoted in the English language American Heritage Dictionary, 1992) notes that the al- in alcohol is an Arabic word. Al here, according to this application, reflects the English word- the. Cohol, which is the other part of the word, 'alcohol,' is equally of Arabic extraction- kuhl, meaning a 'fine powder.' In his words, 'the Arabic term al-kuh, 'the kohl' was borrowed as one letter from Medieval Latin, 'alcohol,' 'kohl.' It was borrowed from Medieval Latin in English in the 16th century. In English, 'alcohol' has come to refer to any fine powder that is produced in a variety of ways, such as heating up a substance to a gaseous state and then recooling it' [p.42].

The English language American Heritage Dictionary (1992; 2019), further describes alcohol as 'Any of a series of hydroxyl compounds, the simplest of which are derived from saturated hydrocarbons, has the general formula $C_nH_{2n+1}OH$, including ethanol and methanol' (p.42). Alcohol is simply called grain ethanol and it's a depressant that can create the feelings of drunkenness, lightheadedness, slurred speech, unconsciousness and even death when taken in excess but when consumed in less quantity it can help to reduce the feelings of anxiety, frustration and anger and generate a feeling of excitement and satisfaction at the moment.

These feelings, which also reflect the effects of alcohol use, are typically short-lived, as opposed to those generated under excessive alcohol consumption. The Drug-Free World Foundation (2019), in the same way, describes alcohol as a drug. According to the agency;

It is known as a depressant, meaning that, in slurred expression, erratic movement, confused thinking, and failure to respond rapidly, it slows down vital functions — containing fermented beverages, such as beer and wine, contain 25 percent alcohol to 20 percent. Distilled drinks, or liquor, contain between 40 percent and 50% or more alcohol. Brew 2-6% alcohol, beer 4-8%, wine 8-20%, tequila 40% alcohol, rum 40% or more, brandy 40% more, gin 40-47% more, whisky 40-50% alcohol, vodka 40-50% alcohol, liqueur 15-60% alcohol (p.1).

In another instance it states that it also contains methyl alcohol in alcoholic beverages and is known as methanol. 'Methanol acquired the name 'wood alcohol' because it was once obtained through the harmful distillation of wood or the incomplete oxidation of natural gas, or synthetically generated from carbon monoxide and hydrogen.' Webster's College Dictionary (2005) describes it as 'a colorless, volatile, poisonous liquid, CH_4O , mainly used as a solvent, fuel, and anti-freeze and in formaldehyde synthesis. It also acts as sources of food energy and according to available reports; 'many alcoholic drinks contain both alcohol and carbohydrates, from which excess consumption, particularly the stomach, can contribute to weight gain' (USDA, 2013).

Often recognized as alcohol dependence, alcohol abuse, alcohol addiction, or alcohol abuse (Association, America Psychiatric, 2013). The English Language American Heritage Dictionary, (1992) describes alcoholism as 'the compulsive intake of alcoholic beverages and psychophysiological dependence.

The above clearly gives a detailed description of the nature of alcohol and of every indication; the effects are not toothsome particularly when the statistics given also include the minor. Records from the World Health Organization- WHO (2018) indicate that in 2015 currently only 2.3 billion people are users of this commodity. Statistics documenting the level of alcohol consumption continue to fluctuate, but the point remains that the epidemic has not stopped as it continues to pose a whole threat to society.

In a study by Heap; Obot; (as cited in Dumbili, 2013), 'alcohol in a traditional Nigerian setting has been 'cultural tolerated ... in societies where it was prohibited by religion before the advent of colonialism.' It is also important to note that its use and brand chosen serve various purposes of which the World Health Organization-WHO (2011) clearly indicates as 'geographical differences' Similarly, accessing a given brand (to some extent) depends on one's financial capacity. In times of marking any social event in a typical Nigerian setting, the use of alcohol has served different purposes, and historically, the absence of alcohol at any of these events means that there is a void in that occasion and it should be filled up. With regard to the nature of drinking alcohol in the Nigerian environment, Dumbili (2013) rightly posits the following:

It was used for rituals , ceremonies of marriage, enthronements of chieftaincy, etc. It was drunk primarily for male adults to recreate, while women and young people were religiously prohibited from drinking. Excess consumption was not a practice, and there were negative sanctions against intoxication ... Consumption patterns are rapidly changing in the new contemporary Nigerian society. (p.1).

In Nigeria, the use of alcoholic drinks is an age-long activity, especially among men-folk, as Dumbili (2013) rightly suggested, and embraces various reasons for its consumption. In the past, the Nigeria setting's indiscriminate use of alcohol prompted severe punishments such as rejection, disowned by family members, ridicule, contempt, shame and others. The situation described here is not entirely different from what is currently obtained where there is a huge advance in the life pattern of man-technologically, socially, economically and politically. This is further attested by Dumbili [cited in Odutola, Jedy-Agba, & Adebamowo, 2017] who notes that 'other factors including

religious and cultural norms affect alcohol consumption' [p.11]. This statement rightly fits into what happens in a typical Nigerian environment, where alcohol is used before and after a particular event to conduct libations and other rituals. These activities typify how important alcohol consumption can be in observing some traditional events in Nigeria.

The Nigerian underage and the use of alcohol

Alcohol intake becomes a concern to society as a whole when consumers are underage and become wholly dependent upon it. Underage alcohol consumption accounts, to some extent, for a large percentage of alcohol currently taken in Nigeria and for these young users, 'the advertising world has over the years succeeded in making the use of alcohol and tobacco look fun and seem sophisticated' (Olson & DeFrain, 2006, p.22).

Botvin and Griffin (2018) note in a similar illustration as seen in the Western world that, 'young people often begin experimenting with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs during middle school years, with a smaller number starting at elementary school. Substance use rates are remarkably high when students are in secondary school '(p.). Recognizing this, is the statement made by the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) on the United States alcohol consumption rate. Organization Related;

Approximately 33 per cent of adolescents had at least 1 drink by age 15. About 60 percent of teens at the age of 18 had at least 1 drink ... In 2015, 7.7 million young people between the ages of 12 and 20 had more than a few months of drinking ... Young people aged 12-20 in the United States consume 11 per cent of all alcohol. While young people drink less frequently than adults, they drink more when they drink and young people consume more than 90% of their alcohol by drinking binge ... Drinking alcohol and binge drinking is becoming increasingly common as young people age.

This submission is not unique to America as the underage found anywhere in the world shows the same characteristics when indulging in alcohol consumption. Underage drinkers indulge when:

- with drunken friends;
- driving;
- School attendance;
- Get-together at campus;
- To be able to reach their thresholds for insult, physical / sexual abuse, they need a boost;
- Engage in betting (in part because of binge drinking).

There are signs indicating participation of young people in alcoholism. Some of them come in the forms of academic challenges, low self-esteem, low energy levels, non-coordination, lack of concentration, incoherent speech, indifference in many tasks, restlessness, isolation / withdrawal syndrome and others.

Alcoholism Phases

Pre-alcoholic stage: drinking is done minimally (in sips) by the young consumer in this case, and may not yet show signs of drinking. The taste of the beverage is being measured at this point. Equally discussed is the decision to continue in the newly acquired act. Drinking alcohol at this point is also done primarily for recreational purposes although the amount is slowly increasing.

Early alcoholic stage: At this stage, the taste of the alcoholic beverage is getting better for the consumer. Here the resistance level is low. At this point one's mind is enveloped by taking a glass of drink every now and then and trying to hide the reality from those around.

Middle-alcoholic point: at this stage of drinking any sign of taking alcoholic beverages becomes clearer. At this point reckless and irresponsible lifestyles are set in. The symptoms of indulging start to become evident here (swollen face, bloated stomach, isolation, stubbornness, truancy, sluggishness and others).

Advanced alcoholic level: the frequency of drinking rises at an unprecedented height, and at this point the long-term effect sets in. The results are blown to the full and the state of health is worsening and being challenged by the authorities concerned.

Styles of Alcoholism

All those involved in it have different reasons, consequences and types of drinking alcohol. According to WHO; McAllister; and Lancet's; (as cited in WHO, 2011) study, 'All in all, risky and unhealthy drinking habits, such as poison drinking and binge drinking, appear to be on the increase among adolescents and young adults' (p.23). For certain people, this is done to help them alleviate anxiety when dealing with life's uncertainties; another trend that comes in the form of a test is that, the height of intoxication shows what amount a person has taken. And this, most of the time, is intentional as they tend to drink to the point where they are intoxicated.

Drinking in public places is also another drinking trend that comes when consumers imbibe in style. This pattern gives the group of users a sense of belonging. Drinking at festivals is also a style that alcohol users follow. A trend that recklessly takes up a larger space in the act of drinking is that of unhealthy alcohol use being high among those in rural areas and whereas here alcohol is consumed at a very high quantity per sitting (binge drink). There is also the eagerness of attending and drinking at any function (burial, reception, naming ceremony, thanksgiving and others) regardless of the circumstances surrounding the gathering.

The introduction of a new alcohol consumption standard can be inferred from the use of water packs (mostly made by adolescents) to put alcoholic beverage of various make. Some follow the use of bottles or cans for soft drinks and every other available receptacle that would mask the originality of what is consumed.

Alcohol groups

There are various types of alcoholic beverage namely:

- **Fermented drink:** made from sorghum, maize, wheat, millet, rice and more. Here ethanol is produced by fermenting these grains. The atmosphere is typical of Nigerian. A good example is the Nigerian local drink, called 'burukutu,' which is generally embraced by Northern Nigerians. Another example of fermented drink is the palm wine often taken by people from all of Nigeria's geo-political zones. Others are beer (mostly consumed around the world and produced from barley and other grains).
- **Distilled drink:** another kind of alcoholic drink created by distillation, as the name suggests. Using this kind of alcoholic drink is called spirit, and common of Nigerians. In Nigeria it is named ogogoro, baba remember, akpeteshe, kai-kai, bottle craze guy, push-me-i- push-you, sapele water, kparaga, sun gbalaja, push-me-push-you, akpuru achia, agbakara and others. The creation of these names depends on which part of the country this beverage is consumed. Even so, all parts of the country follow the titles, overtime now. The distilling ethanol is produced here through grain, fruit or vegetable fermentation.

- **Wine:** is also a fermented form of beverage derived from grapes, plum, apple peaches and other berries. The wine goes through a process of fermentation longer than the beer.

Causes of alcohol abuse

The explanations why underage people engage in substance abuse are as follows.

Socio-factors:

- Geographical location of residence: residing in an area susceptible to inhabiting drug users is capable of attracting an underage to a drinking operation. More troubling, these underage kids are serving the abusers as errand boys or girls. The kids are buying and watching them take alcohol from before them.
- Peer pressure: friends tend to imitate each other as they travel and talk openly without interference from outside. To some people, alcohol drinking 'is an occurrence that strengthens and deepens social relations and opens up opportunities for people to drink' (Gire & Shaahu, 2015, p.65).
- Mass media: different media ads, interfering with the use of drugs, can give young people a sense of curiosity and interest, particularly if they are advertised by one of the admirers. In this sense, the 'Learning by Association' principle applies. These youngsters often misunderstand and abuse the messages.
- Compliance with physiological needs: the use of alcohol acts as an enhancer to some. The feeling of intoxication produced in these addicts enables some of them to express themselves better to the opposite sex, who are already sexually active and those who are not yet involved. To this point, they refer to it as sexually improving, daring to seek help from people, erasing sorrow in a short time, avoiding lonely lifestyle and others (Gire & shaahu, 2015).
- Dysfunctional family background: family dysfunction may occur because of various reasons for which inadequate parenting is one. The dysfunctional family will raise children with dysfunctions. Every parenting style has a price tag and when it comes to grooming children, the type of parenting embraced by parents matters a great deal. A family that adopts the permissive, insensitive or indifferent style of parenting (where there is a high degree of relaxation on punishment when children do wrong) is bound to raise troubled children if not remedied quickly.
- Genetics: A risk factor, too. 'Genetics represent 50 per cent of the underlying cause of alcohol use disorder' (Crane, 2018, p.2). Referring to this, is the National Institute on Substance Dependence and Alcoholism (NIAAA) submission (as cited in Crane, 2018) that, 'genetic factors account for 40-60 percent of the disparity between people dealing with alcohol use disorder. Since then, several unique genes have been identified that lead to alcohol use disorder, and they correlate with the formation of reward centers within the brain' (p.1). In the furtherance of this, is its revelation concerning the relationship between genes and alcoholism where it states that smaller amygdala is a part of the brain which regulates the feeling (emotions) of craving for something. There is a suggestion that, 'in some research it has been shown that people with a family history of alcoholism have smaller than normal amygdala.'
- Another aspect of a human system that can influence a person's state of intoxication is elevated serotonin levels. Serotonin is a mood regulation and a neurotransmitter. It is related similarly to depression. Further reference to the

research on alcohol users by the National Institute on Substance Dependence and Alcoholism- NIAAA (as cited in Crane, 2018) is the finding that, 'unusual levels of serotonin were correlated with people genetically predisposed to alcohol use disorder' (p.2).

Economic factor:

- Cheap alcohol price tags: this is also a problem, and one of the causes of drug addiction. Alcoholic drinks come at a very cheap rate, which makes access to them very convenient for the underage. Drug use and abuse are related to their affordable prices and easy availability.
- Alcohol availability: Almost every corner of the streets is sold and very open to the underage.
- Unemployment: is similarly responsible for alcohol consumption by underage age groups. A lack of work is a major contributing factor to alcohol use. The work of Lasebikan and Ola (2016) rightly states this. In their view, 'policies that resolve poverty and boost socio-economic indices such as employment growth and job development and social network expansion are likely to have an effect on the level of alcohol consumption among rural residents in addition to those in urban settings' (p.1).

Political Factor:

- Non-enforcement of laws that govern such intake and the showing of unlawful behavior in the streets: there have been (and still are) cases of such underage being caught in the act, but sooner or later they have regained their liberty without any serious punishment. Not being disciplined can in no way act as a dissuasive, rather they go back to manipulating more people.
- Participation in political thuggery: rewards and financial gains derived from engaging in political thuggery often serve as reasons for their alcohol consumption. The intoxication they feel from alcohol use helps them achieve their objectives with every possible weapon within reach.

Psychological Factor:

- Some youngsters, particularly students, use drugs to break down psychological barriers. They use alcohol as a tool for coping. These students are taking medications so they can do what they can not do under normal conditions.
- Young people from dysfunctional homes whose parents show little or no interest in them and always use harsh physical punishment are more likely to participate in this act. They find consolation in the influence of alcohol.

Alcohol Effects on Addicts:

Most physical and psychological attacks on humans show instances of alcohol use by the perpetrators. This is as Ghebreyesus (2018) specifically points out that 'through violence, injuries, mental health problems and diseases such as cancer and stroke, far too many people, their families and societies suffer the effects of alcohol adverse use' (p.1). In its 2018 global status report on alcohol-related issues, the World Health Organization (WHO) is publishing a comprehensive report on the number of illnesses, diseases and deaths attributable to alcohol use. According to the organization, in 2016, "worldwide alcohol accounted for 7.2 per cent of all premature mortality (69-year-old and younger people). Younger people have been disproportionately affected by alcohol compared to older people, and alcohol is associated with 13.5% of all deaths among those aged 20-39 (WHO, 2018, p.17-18).

In the same way, Oguntola (2018) has it that, in Nigeria, 4.9 percent of cases of cancer among men (oral cavity and pharynx cancers) and 3.9 percent among women (breast cancer) are due to alcohol use. Also the study reveals that;

By avoiding alcohol consumption, 4.3% of incident cancers in Nigeria can be avoided ...

Over the last 15 years, there has been a substantial steep increase in alcohol consumption in Nigeria with an increase in wine consumption, a slight increase in beer consumption, although spirit consumption remains the same. These could contribute to increased colorectal cancer incidence in this population (p.1).

A thorough analysis of the cause of death is mostly overlooked in the setting of some societies, thereby making the community more dependent on the assumption that a person must have died as a result of some kind of supernatural attacks. There is the presumption that all cancer cases are hereditary or spiritual, and there is no record of the reported symptoms of advanced alcoholic consumption.

Socially: socially reported consequences-development of criminal behavior, participation in delinquent acts, strained relationships with family members and friends, aggressive behaviour, loss of self-confidence / image, truancy in school, burglary, anemia, sexually transmitted diseases, risky behaviour, alcohol dependence, depression, brain damage, incapacity to make and take decisions, cardiovascular behaviour,

Politically: the consequences here vary from participation in all kinds of political thuggery / violent activities / cultism and assassination, to mistrust of those around, lawlessness, abduction, and others.

Economically: there are cases of loss of property, destructive propensity, unemployment, laziness, incapacity to save and make a living, total dependence on family members and people around it thus becoming a burden on them.

Psychologically: the ability to think rationally is diminished, expression is slurred, vision is disrupted, inability to respond constructively, thinking is skewed and others.

The above shows that part of the alcoholism tracks the rising number of health issues in society at the moment. The consequences are many, and endangering life. Many families struggle with young alcohol-related cases affecting the proper functioning of the family structure and the pains reported from the act of alcoholism have rippling effects on the still unborn family, institutions, culture, youths and kids.

Family-based intervention

The family's role in proper socializing its members can not be overemphasised. Being the initial point of the socialization process of an individual, it demands a great deal from the family since the person in question is dependent on the family for that initial guidance. In the life of its members, it is what the family deposits that they make use of and also bring out to affect the larger society. Referring to this, is the Mezieobi & Wali statement (as quoted in Mezieobi, 2017). According to these authors, 'primary socialization role to the socializees, ... will have a spillover effect on the socializees' secondary socialization such that they (the socializees) will be soundly equipped cognitively, attitudinally and with skills to meaningfully contribute to national development' (p.150).

The process of socialization involves a lot particularly in the area of how man communicates with his immediate social environment. According to (Olson and DeFrain, 2006) many behaviors are provided with the social environment, which are constantly updated by technology. The force generated by advancing technology has a positive and negative effect on man's ways. The social environment has become one 'dominated by publicity and a consumer-oriented approach to living' (Olson and DeFrain, 2006, p.22). These acts, if not properly managed (though advantageous to some extent), affect relationships between family members who now see each other as strangers. Parents no longer understand their kids and why they are acting the way they are doing and vice versa. What men take out of their social world is important to their well-being. The contents may serve as growth enhancers and wreckers.

Similarly, the family can take the following measures to protect against underage participation in the alcohol act.

- Awareness of the cause of the child's involvement in alcoholism; this is of paramount importance since some young people face cases of harassment, bullying and fear from their friends and family. They may not be able to express these emotions to those around them, and may find comfort in the use of alcohol.
- Testing parents' indulgence; parents' indulgence in the use of alcohol is likewise a risk factor in why some young alcohol users take it. The earlier reference to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) explains precisely how this is possible by genetics. These young users get introduced to the environment (parents' activities) to help change the underlying genes. As well as the genetics question, children watch and mimic what they see their parents doing. Parents under socialization process circumstances are role models and during this process children appear to imitate a lot from them.
- Parents should make the home appealing to increase a sense of belonging; a home is different from a house. This is a comfort place for anyone and needs asking others to do so. A home, to lean on, is like a back. Attractive home helps reduce stress and gives its occupants a sense of safety, security, insurance and well-being. The American Addiction Centers (2017) notes in a similar contribution that 'a safe and healthy home atmosphere will go a long way towards preventing youth drinking and alcohol related issues' (p.1).
- Creating a zero tolerance rule on alcohol use at home; it should be tested for the temptation to take alcohol at home; If not for some excuse but for the sake of the young people seeing what their parents are doing.
- Respect their views; young people, every now and then, believe their parents are eager to learn their own side of the story. 'They are persuaded that we care less how they feel only because they're young' (Templar, 2008, p.44). Refusal to listen to their thoughts and feelings about their problems ends up creating a feeling of frustration and dejection and may turn to indulgence.
- Emphasis on the importance of alcohol education; education on the nature of alcohol use is important starting from early childhood.
- Increase and enhance the level of contact with their children; good communication is important in parents' and children's lives. Always let communications lines remain available. Practicing this will help parents maintain close watch over the activities of their children. They rest assured that this way they know you are watching and willing to listen to them at all times.
- Make them feel special; feeling loved creates a sense of security inside. 'Tenants who feel supported and accepted at home are less likely to start drinking, and when they do, they are also less at risk of developing alcohol abuse and dependence-related issues' NIAAA National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (cited in American Addiction Centers, 2017, p.1).
- Insisting on knowing children's friends; knowing one's child's kind of friends will give parents some insight into who their child really is. Although this may not be evidence of being accurate at all times, parents need to know the friends of their children. In Everett's view (2019) 'just because a person is buddies with terrorists, or racists, or whatever, it does not provide clear evidence that the person is a terrorist or racist. Maybe they genuinely respect a

diversity of opinion, or feel that approaching them as equals is the best way to persuade others from morally objectionable positions (p.1).

It has been ascertained from the above that some of the underage alcohol users begin to indulge in life quite early and extend the same to university campuses. Adherence to these above-mentioned management measures will help to promote campus stability because whatever is known as the consequence of indulging in alcoholism would certainly affect the child and some of his University campus contacts.

Currently, the rise in the non-conformism rate at Nigerian Universities is partly due to underage participation in substance abuse, of which alcoholism is one. The level of intoxication created by alcohol intake is highly destructive and contributes to some instances of disruption in higher-learning campuses. The presence of one person on campus could have a rippling effect on many others around such students. 'Peer group socialization in Nigeria is largely negative, germinating into youth resistance, high-end social disruptive behaviour, vulnerability to all types of crime recruitment, i.e., armed robbery, abduction, militancy, all detrimental to national growth' Mezieobi & Wali, (as cited in Mezieobi, 2017, p.150).

Incidences on campuses at Nigerian Universities at one point or the other made reference to the activities of the cultists, campus robbery, abuse, intimidation of lecturers and fellow students that occurred after the culprits had engaged in binge drinking in and off campus at a specific drinking parlour.

Conclusion

In general, some parents are filled with the sense of uncertainty about their children's physical, social, and psychological well-being. Nevertheless, it is important for parents to accept the responsibility of being part of nation-building, and this begins by making the learning institutions a safe place to meet educational goals and goals. In a chaotic and unfriendly climate, no construction prospers. A university campus which wears the appearance of fear and uncertainty as a result of the unrest of the students will disturb its calendar and coexistence. This state of campus living can not guarantee satisfactory fulfillment of educational objectives and goals.

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