0676 | **TAKING ALCOHOL BY DECEPTION: AN ANALYSIS OF ETHANOL CONCENTRATION OF PARAGA, AN ALCOHOLIC HERBAL MIXTURE AND FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ITS USE AMONG COMMERCIAL DRIVERS IN AN URBAN CENTRE IN NIGERIA**

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Background Paraga is a herbal mixture in alcoholic base that is widely consumed in Nigeria. Because of its perceived

medicinal values, it is freely available to commercial drivers in motor parks and on the streets. This study purposes to evaluate the alcoholic concentration of paraga and to describe its use among commercial drivers. Insights from the study will be useful in developing evidence based policies to control its use.

Method Samples of paraga were obtained for analysis. The WHO students drug survey questionnaire was used to evaluate paraga use among 332 commercial drivers in Osogbo, Nigeria.

Results The alcohol by volume (ABV) content of the paraga samples ranged between 1.20% and 20.84%. 10 (35.7%) were comparable to beer in strength, 9 (32.1%) were weaker than beers, 6 (21.4%) were equivalent to wines while the last three were stronger than wine but weaker than distilled spirits. The prevalence of lifetime use for paraga was 56.6%; with current (1 month) use and past (1 year) use of 53.6% and 48.2% respectively. 184 (54.5%) had driven shortly after consuming alcohol in the past while 122 (36.7%) had actually seen people behaved drunkenly after consuming paraga. Only 44.7% of those currently taking paraga are willing to stop taking it.

Conclusion Paraga's ABV is comparable to the ABV of common alcoholic beverages. Like these beverages, access to paraga at motor parks should be restricted and drivers educated on its potentials for harmful effects.