



TikTok and Nitrous Oxide Abuse

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INTRODUCTION

Nitrous oxide abuse, especially among youth, has been increasing recently. This project aimed to analyze the following:

- *How TikTok may have contributed to the recent increase of nitrous oxide abuse*
- *How TikTok's effects regarding nitrous oxide misuse may disproportionately impact underprivileged communities*
- *The major risk factors associated with nitrous oxide abuse, and the prevalence of each factor in current research*
- *Steps that can be taken to mitigate increasing nitrous oxide abuse through combating the major risk factors*

CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

- 12 of the 16 sources found young age to be a risk factor
 - As TikTok is targeted towards a younger audience, its users are especially vulnerable to nitrous oxide related content.
- TikTok videos fail to convey the health impacts of nitrous oxide
 - This lowers users' risk perception, increasing their susceptibility to subsequent abuse
- 8 of the studies found that using social media increases the risk of drug abuse, and that the magnitudes of association are consistent across the type of substance
 - This points towards nitrous oxide related videos on TikTok causing nitrous oxide abuse
- Additionally, as underprivileged communities lack educational resources, they likely have a lower risk perception.
 - 8 sources cite a low risk perception as a risk factor, so these communities are especially vulnerable.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

- ❖ *A set of 16 research studies on nitrous oxide related content, drug use on social media, and drug risk factors was analyzed*
- ❖ *The different risk factors and the number of sources that mentioned each risk factor were noted and graphed in figure 1*
- ❖ *Additionally, in order to determine if underprivileged communities are disproportionately impacted, studies on how educational resources predict drug use were analyzed*

DATA AND FINDINGS

Figure 1: Number of Sources That Indicate Each Risk Factor

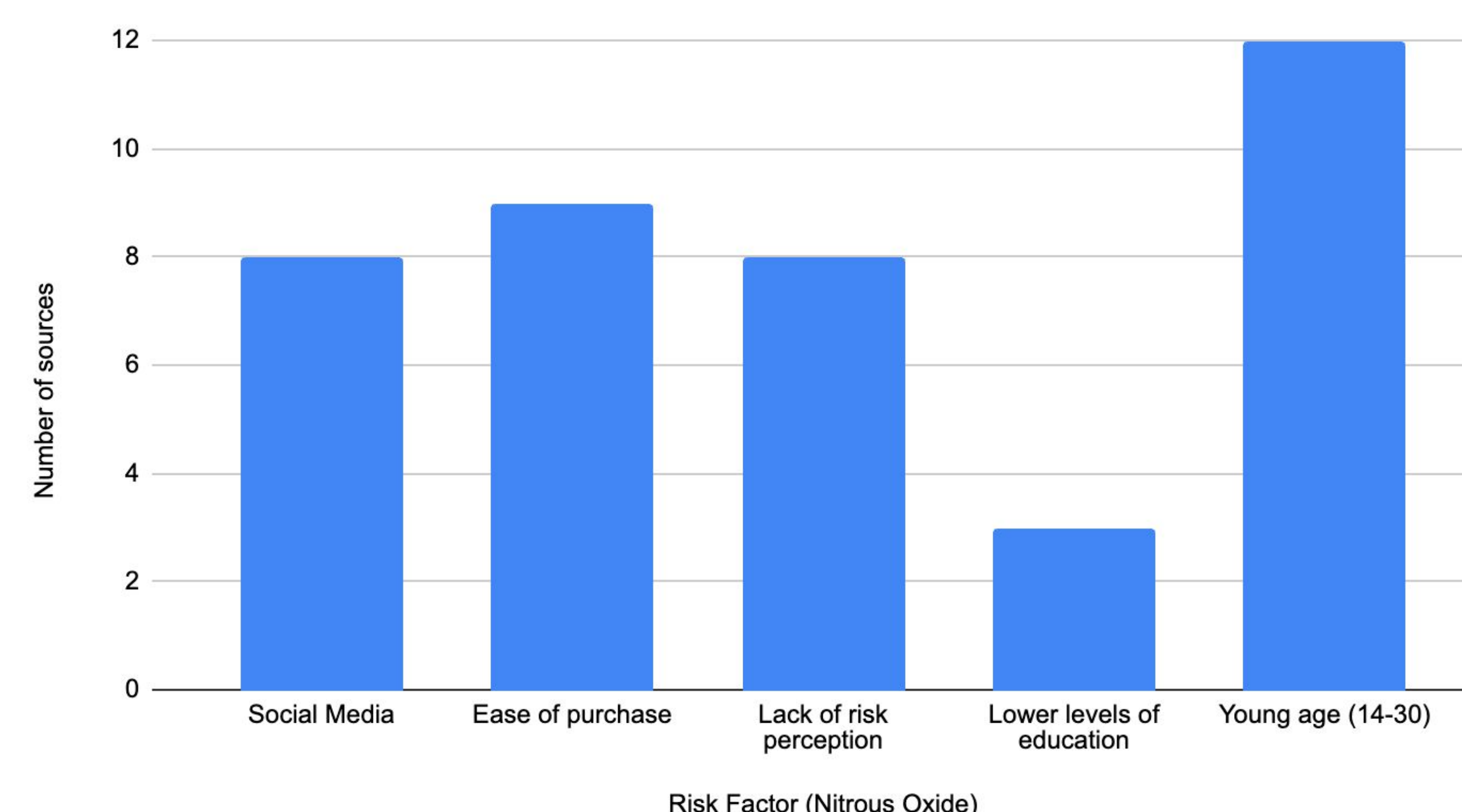


Figure 1: Depicts the number of sources that indicate each risk factor for nitrous oxide abuse

- A set of 16 studies on nitrous oxide, social media, and general drug abuse were analyzed
- Although not all of the studies mentioned each risk factor, none of the studies had conflicting findings regarding the validity of a factor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

Special thanks to my teacher, Mr. Lupoli, for helping make this project possible.

***Works Cited:

A set of 16 studies were used to create figure 1. Full citations are in the bibliography sections

IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

- 1. Social media can be used to spread awareness**
 - Studies have shown that the risk perceptions of youth who are exposed to content that spreads awareness of the harm of nitrous oxide abuse are positively impacted.
- 2. Addressing the ease of purchase factor**
 - Steps should be put in place that make acquiring products with nitrous oxide more difficult
- 3. Addressing the lack of risk perception factor**
 - Labels with warnings should be placed on products containing nitrous oxide
 - Funds should be allocated towards educating youth on the negative health effects of nitrous oxide abuse

