

EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ZARIA METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find the effect of drug abuse on the academic performance of secondary school students in Zaria metropolis. Drug abuse is a problem that is causing serious concern to both individuals and governments all over the world. The study has three research objective research questions. The study adapted the survey research design which analyzed opinion of respondents which cut across the 10 schools sampled in Zaria metropolis. The population of teachers is 12,440 and a sample of the study is 100 which comprises both junior and senior secondary schools. It was found out that drug abuse enhances truancy; it makes students disobey school rules and regulations and sexually assault the opposite sex. Based on the outcome of the analysis, the following recommendation was made in other to ameliorate the incidence of drug abuse among secondary school students in Zaria metropolis students who are caught abusing drugs or found to be drug addict should be punished so as to serve as deterrent to other, parent should closely monitor and guard their children so as to give them proper training that will enhance their well-being, effective counseling program should be put in place for students so that those the who have not involve themselves should be regularly guided and those who are addicted can be rehabilitated.

Keywords: Drug abuse, Drug, Causes of drug abuse, Effects of drug abuse.

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INTRODUCTION

A drug refers to a substance that could bring about a change in the biological function through its chemical action (Okoye, 2001). It is also considered a substance that modifies perception, cognition, mood, behavior, and general body functions (Balogun, 2006). According to Fawa (2003), "Drug is defined as substance, which is used for the treatment or prevention of a disease in man and animals. Drugs alter the body function either positively or otherwise depending on the body composition of the users, the type of drug used, the amount used and whether used singly or with other drugs at the same time." They could thus be considered as chemical modifiers of the living tissues that could bring about physiological and behavioral change (Nnachi, 2007). Habit-forming stimulant or narcotic substance (such as derivatives of cocoa or poppy) which produces a state of arousal contentment of euphoria continued excessive use of such substance causes addition or dependence. Thereafter, any attempt to discontinue their use results in specific reactions called withdrawal symptoms such as sweating, vomiting, and tremors which lessen when the use is resumed.

Increase use and addiction to some drugs by students are probably related to its specific characteristics of producing an extremely pleasurable high oral that is very short lived. This encourages them into a more frequent or regular use to get the desired effects. Drug abuse is a major public health problem all over the world (UNODC, 2005). The use and abuse of drugs by adolescents have become one of the most disturbing health-related phenomena in Nigeria and other parts of the world (Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency [NDLEA], 1997). Several school-going adolescents experience mental health problems, either temporarily or for a long period of time. Some become insane, maladjusted to school situations, and eventually drop out of school. NAFDAC (2004) as cited by Haladu (2003) explained the term drug abuse as excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to the medically or culturally accepted patterns. It could also be viewed as the use of a drug to the extent that it interferes with the health and social function of an individual. Odejide (2000) warned that drug abusers who exhibit symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, behavior changes, fatigue, and loss or increase in appetite should be

treated by medical experts and counsellors to save them from deadly diseases.

The NDLEA has stated that substance abuse is a major problem in schools, colleges, and universities in Nigeria (NDLEA, 2013). Many of these students' behaviors are heavily tied to the peer culture, as students learn from and imitate the peers they like and admire. Wanting to be attractive to others becomes very important in adolescence, and this factor is significant in the development of eating disorders, alcohol consumption, tobacco and drug use, tanning, not practicing safe sex, and vulnerability to injury, among other behavior. These adolescents who get involved in such risky behavior often have high levels of conflict with their parents and poor self-control, suggesting that they engage in such behavior to manage a stressful life. Adolescents who abused substances typically do more poorly in academics. Parents and peers influence adolescent drinking by influencing attitudes about alcohol and by acting as role models (Taylor, 2003). On the other hand, parental deprivation due to deaths, divorces, separation, or discord has also been strongly associated with drug abuse (Odejide, 1997).

UNODC, 2005, reported that there were about 200 million people worldwide which is the same as 5% consumed drugs at least once in their final 12 months and these people were 15–64 years old. The report by UNDCP, 2012, also revealed that 1.3 people or 30% of the world population are said to have used some tobacco and 230 million people which is an equivalent of 5% of the world population aged between 15 and 16 years consumed drugs illegally. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration provided a report that 9.8 million adults aged 18 and above in the United States had undergone a serious mental illness, among which a 1.7 million of them aged 18–25. Meanwhile, 15.7 million of the adults aged 18 or above and 2.8 million youth aged 12–17 experienced a major depressive episode during their past years. Above all, in year 2014, there was an estimated 22.5 million Americans aged 12 and above who reported themselves to get alcohol or illicit drug use treatment, among them 11.8 million adults reported asking for a mental health treatment and counseling as well in the past years (Masibo, 2013). A report provided by (EMCDDA, 2012)

also estimated that 22 million people in Europe were using Marijuana whereas 70% of the global population who were using opium and their derivatives accounted for Africa and Asia (UNODC, 2012). Today, more Nigerian youths are becoming drug dependents, while Nigeria gradually transits from the status of a drug-consuming nation to that of a drug-producing one. Young ones who are mainly from well-to-do homes are increasingly identifying with the "big boys" that practice the use of substance like heroin and cocaine. Others substances like Indian hemp, which is frequently produced in Nigeria and other substances like Methamphetamine and tablet with codeine capable of intoxicating are mostly found in schools (Staff, 2012).

Drugs can affect a student's concentration and thus interest in school and extracurricular activities. This leads to increased absenteeism and dropouts. Most psychoactive drugs affect the decision-making process of students, their creative thinking, and the development of necessary life and social skills. Drugs also interfere with an individual's awareness of their unique potential and thus their interest in their career development (Louw, 2001). This gradually leads to social, emotional, and physical problems and new feelings of guilt, despair, and helplessness.

In Nigeria, the most common types of abused drugs according to NAFDAC (2000) as cited by Haladu (2003) are categorized as follows:

1. Stimulants: These are substances that directly act and stimulate the central nervous system. Users in the initial state experience pleasant effects such as energy increase. The major source of these is caffeine substances.
2. Hallucinogens: There are drugs that alter the sensory processing unit in the brain. Thus, producing distorted perception, teaching of anxiety and euphony, sadness, and inner joy. They normally come from Marijuana, etc.
3. Narcotics: These drugs relieve pains induce sleeping and they are addictive. They are found in heroin, codeine, opium, etc.
4. Sedatives: These are drugs that are the most widely abused. This is largely due to the believe that they relieve stress and anxiety and some of them induce sleep, ease tension causes relaxation or help users to forget their problems. They are sourced from valium, alcohol, promethazine, and chloroform.
5. Miscellaneous: This is a group of volatile or inhalants that provide euphoria, emotional disinhibition, and perpetual distortion of those to the user. The main sources are spot removers, tubes, perfume chemicals, etc.

Causes of drug abuse and addiction

Drug abuse and addiction have no single cause. However, the American Psychiatric Association (2000) observed that there are a number of causes such as

- I. Biological factor: most substance abuse professionals recognize a genetic to the risk of drug addiction.
- II. Psychological factor: this includes mood disorders, depression, anxiety, and personality disorders.
- III. Social factor: this includes gender, marital status, and lower socio-economic status

Moreso, Atah and Akus (2009) identified two primary causes of drug abuse and addiction such as peer pressure and depression.

- I. Pressure group: Youths associate with different types of people otherwise known as friends. Through the pressure from these friends, children tend to have a taste of these drugs and once this is done, they continue to take it and become addicted to it at the long run.
- II. Depression: Another primary cause of drug abuse and addiction is depression, when certain things happen to someone that are considered very sad and disheartening, the person starts thinking of the best way to become happy once more. Hence, the use of hard drugs will come in, which later on turns to an habit, hence drug abuse.

Another major cause of drug abuse is said to be the rate of unemployment among the youth. Furthermore, drugs can be said to be abused when

youths do not keep to the prescribed dosage and the continued use of particular drug for long time without a doctor's approval. This kind of abuse is associated with soft drugs. Other factors according to Ballas (2006) include the following curiosity, social rebellions, early initiation, poor control, low self-esteem, poor stress management, to escape reality, genetic predisposition, withdrawal effects and craving, sensation feeling.

Effects of drug abuse and addiction on the academic performance of students

The effects of drug abuse and addiction on the academic performance of students are viewed by Akers (1991), Ballas (2006) and Akus (2010) to include:

1. It deadens the nervous system
2. It increases the heartbeat
3. It causes the blood vessels to dilate
4. It causes bad digestion notably of vitamin B, especially when taken on an empty stomach.
5. It interferes with the power of judgment and poisons the higher brain and nerve center
6. Aggressiveness
7. Hopelessness
8. Selfishness
9. Impotence
10. Chest or lung pain
11. Frequent illness
12. Frequent hangovers.

More so, the hard drug makes the student hyperactive at the point of taking the drug which prompt abnormal behaviors therefore lead them to commit crime. The student spends much money on the purchase of these drugs at the detriment of purchase their academic books.

Finally, it makes that the student becomes unstable, the student tends to go mad and started behaving abnormally, hence infiltrate a lot of diseases into the system of the student and may eventually lead to death.

Problem statement

A drug is basically meant to be consumed by those who are sick or not good health and requires medication to put their health back on track. This is done through consultation with medical experts or physicians who give a prescription on what to take as drug for particular illness and the dosage required for consumption. However, it is quite disheartening that the normal thing has been dumped and abuse has been observed to be rampant among secondary school students in Zaria metropolis. The significant traces of mental disorder among young children could be a pointer to drug abuse among students. Poor academic performances, persistent absenteeism from school, rape among student, and other psycho-social problems among students could be responsible for abuse of drugs by students. It is on the basis of this that the researcher is motivated to study the effect of drug abuse by students in secondary schools in Zaria Local Government of Kaduna State.

Objectives of the study

The research aims at achieving the following objective:

1. To find the causes of drug abuse among secondary school students in Zaria Local Government of Kaduna State.
2. To trace the effects of drug abuse among secondary school students in Zaria local government of Kaduna State.
3. To find possible measures of eradicating drug abuse among secondary school students in Zaria local government of Kaduna state.

Research questions

1. Does poor academic performance in school lead students into drug abuse?
2. Does students that indulge in drug abuse backward academically in school.
3. Can punishment eradicate drug abuse among secondary school student?

Significance of the study

This study would help to identify the cause of drug abuse and how it affects individual personality in secondary school. It is also significant because it will be a point for further research, especially to students of higher learning who would want to research this topic. The result of the research will also assist planners of educational curriculum academicians, social analysis, social workers, religious group, and non-governmental organization who have interest in helping victims of drug abuse.

Scope of the study

This research work is restricted to the geographical area of the metropolis. In this study, the researcher will deal with the problem of drug abuses on our society to proffer solutions so that the menace of drug abuse in our society can be reduced to the barest minimum if not totally eradicated.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study is a survey, focusing on the effects of drug abuse on students, since the research is aimed at describing attitudes, behaviors, and characteristics of the population using a questionnaire, and to statistically analyze the data obtained to describe responses to the questions and to test hypotheses. The sampling technique adopted for this research is purposive random sampling technique which is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling which is a type of non-probability sampling. This technique is used because they are homogeneously selected having similar characteristic this type of sampling when using survey research design is recommended by Black (2010). The population of teachers is 12,440 and a sample of 100 teachers was used in the study. The instrument used to collect data was the questionnaire with options ranging from strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The questionnaire was in two sections. Section a contained personal information of the respondent and B section contained the information needed for this research close end. The researcher distributed 100 questionnaires to teachers from the selected schools and they were returned after completion. The responses were recorded as data. Frequency and simple percentage will be used in the analysis of data collected for the study. Bio-data components of the respondents and data collected through the administration of questionnaire were subjected to frequencies and simple percentage analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The distribution figure above shows that there are 60 male respondents representing 60% of the sampled population and 40 female respondents representing 40% of the sample population. In this case, the majority of the respondents were male.

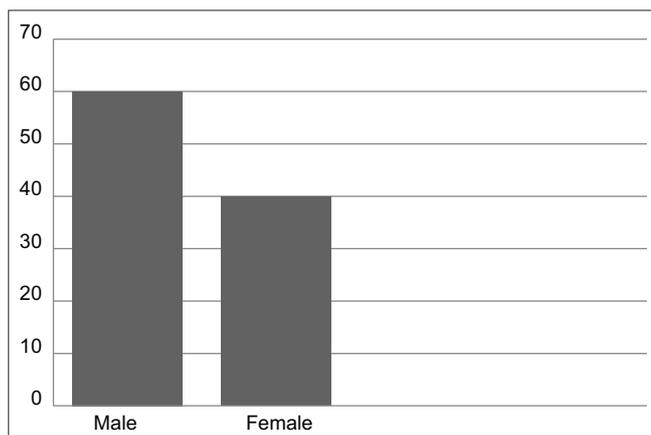


Fig. 1: Sex distribution of respondents

Fig. 2 above shows that the age distribution of the respondents 25% falls within the range of 26–30 years. 30% falls within the range of 31–35 years while 15% falls between the ages of 20 and 25 and another 15% fall within the age of 36–40 years and lastly 5% falls between the ages of 41 and 45 years.

Fig. 3 above shows the distribution of the respondents by academic qualification. The figure shows that 20% are NCE Holders, 32% Bsc, 35% Bsc. (Ed), 5% Msc, and 8% M.Ed holders, respectively.

Fig. 4 above shows the distribution of the respondents by their working experience 15% falls within the range of 0–5 years. 15% falls within the range of 6–10 years while 10% falls between the ages of 11 and 15 and another 35% fall within the age of 16–20 years and lastly 25% falls between the ages of 21 years and above.

Analysis of research questions

S. No	Item	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed
1	Does poor academic performance in school lead students into drug abuse?	63	7	30
2	Does students that indulge in drug abuse backward academically in school?	73	5	22
3	Can punishment eradicate drug abuse in secondary schools?	90	0	10
Total		226	12	62

From the above table, responses to question 1 show that:

- a. 63% agreed with the statement
- b. 7% were undecided
- c. 30% disagreed with the statement

This shows that poor academic performance in school leads to drug abuse.

Question 2 responses

- a. 90% agreed with the statement
- b. 0% were undecided
- c. 10% disagreed with the statement.

This clearly shows that punishment can eradicate drug abuse among secondary school students.

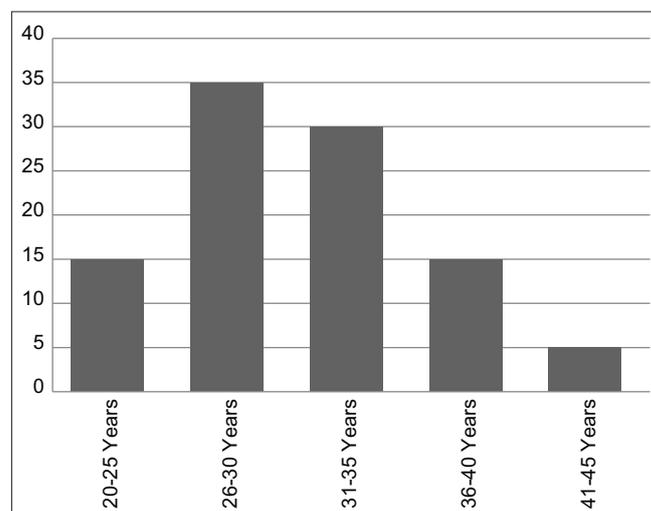


Fig. 2: Age distribution of respondents

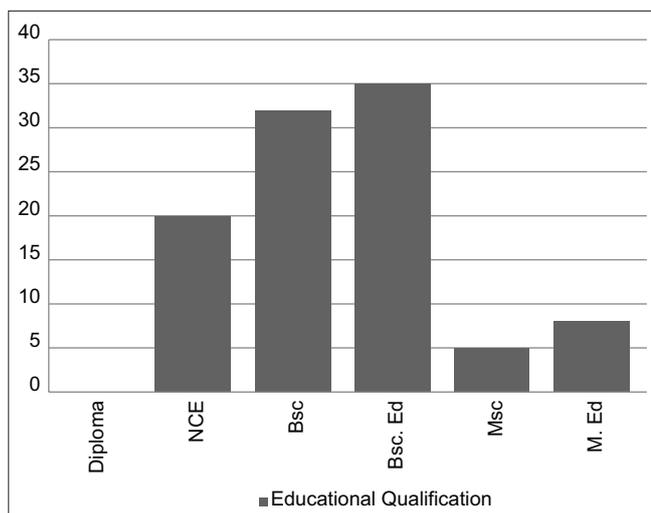


Fig. 3: Distribution of respondents by academic qualification

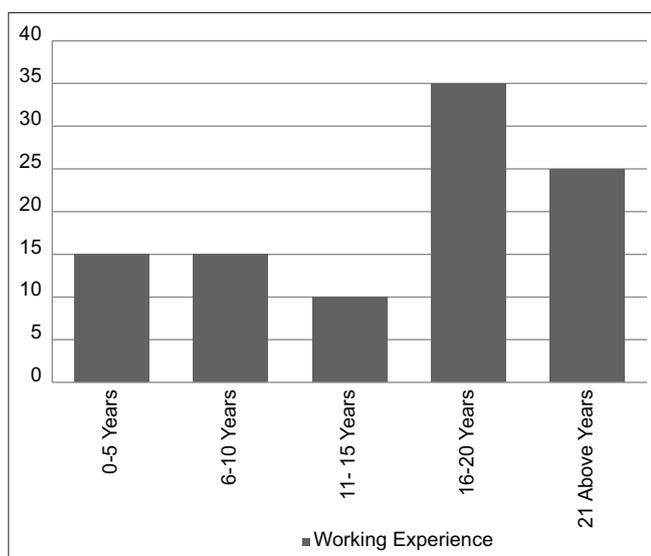


Fig. 4: Distribution of respondents by working experience

Research findings

- i. Drug addiction leads to poor academic performance in school.
- ii. Parental negligence in proper child rearing leads to drug abuse and addiction among students.
- iii. Drug abuse enhances students' truancy, such as absenteeism from school, lateness to school.
- iv. Those that abuse drug among students disobey school rules and regulations.
- v. They are found waiting in a variety of deviant behavior such as fighting insulting others.
- vi. They sexually assault the opposite sex.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to find the effects of drug abuse in secondary schools in Zaria Local Government Area. Drug abuses a problem that is causing serious concern to both individuals and governments all over the world. The problem is prevalent among adolescents who in most cases are ignorant about the dangers inherent in drug abuse. Many of them engage in drug abuse out of frustration. Poverty lack of parental supervision peer influence and pressure. However, with effective counseling program, the problems can be tackled. The abuse of drugs

by secondary school students needs to be discouraged. This is because the continued abuse of drugs among these students can likely have adverse effects on the academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of the data analysis, the following recommendations were given.

1. Students who are caught abusing drugs or found to be drug addicts should be punished so as to serve as a deterrent to others.
2. Parent should closely monitor and guard their children so as to give them proper training that will enhance their well-being.
3. Government should constantly indulge in an enlightenment campaign on the dangers of drug abuse.
4. Students of secondary schools in Zaria local government should not take drugs without the prescription of qualified doctor (s) in the clinic or people selling drugs in the chemist.
5. The NDLEA should arrest the people selling Indian hemp and other hard drugs in the society and the culprits should also be made to pay a fine that is commensurate with the offence committed.

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