

CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS AS EXPRESSED BY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS IN OKE-OGUN AREA, OYO STATE

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Abstract

Drug abuse is one of the health related problems generally among youths and polytechnic students are perceived to be particularly at greater risk of this problem. In the light of this, the study thus investigated the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State. This study also examined the influence of moderating variables of age and gender on respondents' views on causes of drug abuse. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of certified counsellors was 458 and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select the respondents. One hundred and fifty school counsellors participated in the study and the selection was based on their work experience. The samples were administered with self-developed instrument namely: "Questionnaire on Causes of Drug Abuse (CDAQ)". The findings of the study revealed that the significant causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students were_ignorance about dangers inherent in drug abuse, lack of parental supervision and emulation of bad role models. It was also revealed that there was no significant difference on the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State on the basis of gender and age. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that school guidance counsellors are needed in all tertiary institutions of learning most especially polytechnics in Oke-Ogun in order to help educate students on the dangers inherent in drugs, the possible influence of peers to drug abuse and equip them with appropriate social skills they can employ and activities they can engage-in to navigate peer pressure.

Keywords: Causes, Drug, Drug abuse and School counsellors

Introduction

There is growing concern by education stakeholders, parents, teachers, professional counsellors, healthcare workers and society at large over the prevalence and impact of drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria. Several studies have revealed that drug abuse is rampant among students in tertiary institutions of learning between the ages of 18 and 35 years. Santrock (2001) concluded that there are different behaviours exhibited

by students who abuse drugs; they developed watering eyes and nose, become abnormally talkative or unusual quietness, unpredicted temper, concentration lapse, and loss of interest in education.

Apparently, the term drug means "any substance that, when taken into a living organism, may modify one or more of its functions", while abuse implies "a particular application of a drug more destructive than constructive for society, or the individual". A drug refers to a substance that could bring

about a change in the biological function through its chemical actions (Okoye, 2001). World Health Organization (2012) defined drug abuse as a maladaptive pattern of substance used leading to clinically significant impairment or distress to the body system. Okeowo (2003) defined drug as substance that by its chemical nature is capable of affecting the structure or function of a living organism. A drug is said to be any substance other than food, which by its chemical nature affects the function and structure of a living organism. It is any substance or product that is used or intended to be used to modify or explore physiological system or pathological state for the benefits of the recipient (Kobiowu, 2006).

In Nigeria, the most common types of abused drugs according to NAFDAC (2000) as cited by Haladu (2003) are categorised as (a) Stimulants: These are substances that directly act and stimulate the central nervous system. Users at the initial stage experience pleasant effects such as energy increase. The major source of these comes from caffeine substance. (b) Hallucinogens: These are drugs that alter the sensory processing unit in the brain, thus, producing distorted perception, feeling of anxiety and euphoria, sadness and inner joy, they normally come from marijuana, LSD etc. (c) Narcotics: These drugs relieve pains, induce sleeping and they are addictive. They are found in heroin, codeine, opium etc. (d) Sedatives: These drugs are among the most widely used and abused. This is largely due to the belief that they relieve stress and anxiety, and some of them induce sleep, ease tension, cause relaxation or help users to forget their problems. They are sourced from valium, alcohol, promotazine, chloroform. (e) Miscellaneous: This is a group of volatile solvents or inhalants that provide euphoria, emotional disinhibition and perpetual distortion of thought to the user. The main sources are glues, spot removers, tube repair, perfumes, chemicals etc. Tranquilizers (They are believed to produce calmness without bringing drowsiness; they are chiefly derived from Librium, Valium etc.).

According to Adigun (2014), drugs are integral parts of a chosen lifestyle. Drug abuse by young people is rooted in personal attitudes and values are noticed in their

relationship with people and their peers. According to Bukoye (2004), drug abuse is the misuse of drugs. That is, the use of drugs not prescribed by medical experts. Okafor (2020) sees drug abuse as the indiscriminate use of drugs. The self-administration of any drug in a manner that deviate from the approved medical or social pattern within a given culture is seen as abuse of drug.(e)

Drug abuse is the misuse of medication, self-medication and the use of illegal substances. Some medications make the user feel good, since they target certain nerve tracks in the brain, known as reward pathways (formerly called pleasurable pathways). The person may enjoy the high and wish to experience it again and again. Drugs such as cocaine and crystal meth stimulate the path of the brain that releases dopamine, which gives the person a feeling of wellbeing and happiness (Ashaolu, 2018). However, the most commonly abused drugs by students are alcohol, tobacco or marijuana, khat and cocaine (Ashaolu, 2018). A report by NAFDAC (2008) noted that the abuse of licit and illicit drugs is prevalent and rampant among students in the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in Nigeria. NAFDAC (2008) found that about 61% of students' population engage in drug misuse and abuse. This development is a significant concern for all professional counsellors, psychologists and immediate attention is required.

Ekpenyong (2012) mentioned several factors that could predispose students to drug abuse which are: excessive unsupervised free time, peer pressure, accessibility to different drugs, severe stress in school, social acceptance, low self-esteem, misinformation, and self-medication. Haladu (2003) revealed several factors that may lead to drug abuse. They include:

- (1) Lack of parental supervision: Many parents have no time to supervise their sons and daughters either at school or home. Some parents have little or no interaction with family members, while others put pressure on their children to pass exams or perform better in their studies. These phenomena initialize and increases drug abuse.

- (2) **Peer Group Influence:** Peer pressure plays a significant role in influencing many students into drug abuse. This is because peer pressure is a fact of teenage and youth life. As they try to depend less on parents, they show more dependency on their friends. In Nigeria, as other parts of the world, one may not enjoy the company of others unless he conforms to their norms.
- (3) **Personality Problems due to Socio-Economic Conditions:** Students with personality problems arising from social conditions have been found to abuse drugs. The social and economic status of most Nigerians is below average. Poverty is widespread, broken homes and unemployment is on the increase, therefore youths roam the streets looking for employment or resort to begging. These situations have been aggravated by lack of skills, opportunities for training and re-training and lack of committed action to promote job creation by private and community entrepreneurs. Frustration arising from these problems leads to recourse in drug abuse for temporarily removing the tension and problems arising from it.
- (4) **(4)The Need for Energy to Work for Long Hours:** The increasing economic deterioration that leads to poverty and disempowerment of the people has driven many parents to send their children out in search of a means of earning something for contribution to family income. These children engage in hawking, bus conducting, head loading, scavenging, serving in food canteens etc. and are prone to drug taking so as to gain more energy to work for long hours.
- (5) **Availability of the Drugs:** In many countries, drugs have dropped in prices as supplies have increased.

Also, Bukoye (2017) gave several causes of drug abuse to include; too much of stress on the body, academic activities, personality disorder, poor school records, truancy, inability to cope with challenges of life,

depression and anxiety, among others. Some drugs that are commonly abused by students include; alcohol, narcotics, cocaine, Indian helm, among others. All these have adverse effects on students' psychological well-being. Lang (2011), Oluremi (2012) and Kings and Chassin (2014) in their research works indicated that the problem of drug abuse know no boundaries or social class. It impedes the development of any society as it is a threat to life, health, dignity and prosperity of all individuals. Fayombo and Aremu (2000) in their research on the effect of drug abuse on educational performance of some adolescent drug abusers in Ibadan found that the misuse of marijuana had reached an epidemic level in the present Nigerian society, and that drug abuse could lead to reduce academic achievement or even halt one's entire academic process. Obiamaka (2004), Manbe (2008) and Oluremi (2012) in their studies dwelled extensively on reasons students use drugs to include success in examination, social acceptance and initiation of peers. Oluremi (2012) stated that Nigerian students take drugs such as amphetamines and pro-plus as aid for success in examination. Oluremi therefore postulated that those who take drugs as aid for studies toward examinations are those with poor academic records, a history of instability and family/social problems, while others, he continued; used rugs to increase their self-confidence, heighten pleasure, cope with feelings of depression and inadequacy, and to facilitate communication.

Nevertheless, drug abuse by students has hampered education and management in Nigerian institutions. Some adverse effects include insomnia, prolonged loss of appetite, increase body temperature, greater risk of hepatitis and HIV/AIDS infection, ulcer, brain damage and various forms of cancers (Ashaolu, 2018). A study by White and Hayman (2006) identified accelerated heartbeat, speeding in the peripheral circulation of the blood, alteration of blood pressure, breathing rate and other body functions as potential effects. Odejide (2000) warned that drug abusers who exhibit symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, behaviour changes, fatigue and loss or increase in appetite should be treated by medical experts and mental health

counsellors to save them from deadly diseases.

Statement of the Problem

Drug abuse is a problem that is of serious concern to both individuals and governments all over the world. The problem is very prevalent among students of Oke-Ogun Polytechnic who in most cases are ignorant about the dangers inherent in drug abuse. Many of them engaged in drug abuse out of frustration, poverty, lack of parental supervision, peer influence and pleasure. Students that are supposed to be the major agents of development, many of whom have been destroyed by drug abuse, thus, become useless to themselves and to the society at large. The overall health of the users is affected negatively and behaviours associated with drug abuse predispose the abusers to crime and contagious diseases including HIV/AIDS (Atoyebi & Atoyebi, 2013). Students who persistently abuse drugs often experience an array of problems, including academic difficulties, health-related problems (including mental health), poor peer relationships, and involvement with the juvenile justice system. Some become insane, maladjusted to school situations and eventually drop out of school.

Several studies have examined drug use among secondary school students, not many have focused on the causes of drug abuse among Polytechnic students in Oke-Ogun Area of Oyo State. For instance, Ajibade, Uvomata, Akinpelu, Adeleke, Fabiyi, Akinlabi (2016) worked on factors influencing substance abuse among selected commercial motorcyclists in Ogbomoso metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study showed that peer influence is the major factor influencing substance abuse among the respondents, followed by recreational purposes and affordable respectively. Delroy, Ifeanyichukwu and Asagba (2020) investigated attitudes towards Cough Syrup Abuse among Adolescents in two Southwest States of Nigeria. The findings from the study concluded that, adolescents' age and family marital structure were the variables that significantly accounted for their attitudes towards cough syrup abuse. Bukoye (2012) worked on academic stress and drug abuse as factors inhibiting psychological well-being

among undergraduates. It was vividly seen that academic stress and drug abuse are significant factors that inhibit psychological well-being of students. Therefore, the present study focuses on the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo state.

Research Questions

- (1) What are the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area?
- (2) Is there any significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun on the basis of gender?
- (3) Is there any significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun on the basis of age?

Research Hypotheses

- (1) There is no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun on the basis of gender.
- (2) There is no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun on the basis of age.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would benefit school counsellors by serving as a source of information on the causes of drug abuse, thereby, enable them to design relevant counselling intervention that can help prevent students from drug abuse and be able to remediate those who are already victims of abuse. The counsellors under training would benefit from the findings of this study as the knowledge of drug abuse counselling is rarely provided during undergraduate training.

The school authority would find the findings of this study useful in organizing programmes that can sensitize students from taking drugs and making appropriate policies

that can discourage the abuse of drugs in the school environment. This will go a long way in helping schools fulfill aims and objectives of producing students who will be useful for themselves and the society at large.

Brief Review of the Related Literature

In Nigeria, statistics suggest that one in every ten secondary school student consumes alcohol. Another 8.3% smoke cigarettes while almost one in every ten (9.1%) chew Miraa. About 3% smoke bhang and use hard drugs like heroin, cocaine, mandrax and tranquilizers (Ashaolu, 2018). In Nigeria, a report by NAFDAC (2008) found that alcohol is also the most commonly abused drug with about 61% of the population engaging in its use. The same report indicated 40.9% of students were abusing alcohol in Nairobi Province and 26.3% in Central Province. According to Oluremi (2012), alcohol is a central nervous system depressant and dulls the brain making learning a difficult task. When students abuse drugs their reasoning becomes impaired and education becomes of less priority in their life. In Ethiopia, alcohol, khat, and tobacco are the most widely abused drugs. Reports show that these drugs are widely used among students (both college and high school) in Ethiopia (Ashaolu, 2018). Khat can be described as an herbal product consisting of the leaves and shoots of the shrub *Catha edulis* forest (celastraceal). Khat contains the alkaloid stimulants cathinone (alpha amino propiophenone) in addition to more than 40 alkaloids, glycosides, tannins and terpenoids.

One of the most noticeable symptoms of drug abuse is that it affects the body and mind. For example, tolerance can occur if a drug is abused for a certain amount of time. Tolerance is an expected side effect of regular drug use and means that higher quantities of the drug are required to achieve the same effect. In drug culture, especially heroin, this phenomenon is called "chasing the dragon". The diminishing effects set in after the first time, and the user constantly tries to replicate the first high he or she gets from the drug. In addition, changes in appearance can be clues to possible drug use; bloodshot or glazed eyes, dilated pupils and abrupt changes in weight are common signs (Eskiner & Gedif, 2006).

Drug abuse negatively affects a person's behaviour and habits as he or she becomes more dependent on the drug. The drug itself can alter the brain's ability to focus and form coherent thoughts, depending on the drug. Changes in behaviour, such as increased aggression, lethargy, depression or sudden changes in a social network can indicate a problem with drug abuse. UNODC made 30,922 drug-related arrests in 2012, according to the UNODC (2012). Alcohol, for example, can make a person more aggressive and prone to getting into fights or making impulsive decisions (Perkison, 2002).

As the compulsion for using drugs overtakes a person's life, performance at school or work will suffer because of a lack of focus and shifting priorities. He or she may decide to skip class to smoke marijuana or call out of work due to a severe hangover. Financial matters are also a concern, for example, addiction causes irresponsible spending in order to get next fix of a drug. This can extend to selling valuable personal effects and mugging. Drug abuse also can lead to criminal behaviour, such as home robbery and mugging. Learning to recognise the physical or behavioural signs of drug abuse can help prevent the problem from progressing further.

Methodology

A study design is a plan or blue print which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analysed. The research design being a quantitative type, therefore the researcher will adopt descriptive survey method to gather relevant information. Smith and Osborn (2008) defined descriptive method as preliminary step to be followed by researcher employing more vigorous control and more objective methods. The researcher therefore, considers the descriptive survey method most appropriate because it entails the use of direct observation in the collection of data used in finding out the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by School Counsellors in Oke-Ogun Area of Oyo State.

Oyo State has five zones, namely: Oyo zone, Ibadan zone, Ibarapa zone, Ogbomoshos zone and Oke-Ogun zone. Oke-Ogun comprises ten (10) local governments, and

the zone has two polytechnics (Salawudeen Akande Folorunsho Polytechnic and Oke-Ogun Polytechnic). Salawudeen Akande Folorunsho Polytechnic is the only private polytechnic and Oke-Ogun Polytechnic is government owned. There is a total population of 458 certified counsellors in all the zones. The target population for this study is 150 counsellors. Purposive sampling technique was used to select them based on the years of experience in service (fifteen counsellors were selected from each local government and which makes a total number of one hundred and fifty. A purposive sampling is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study (Smith and Osborn, 2008).

The instrument for data collection was designed by the researchers adopting if

from the literature review. The instrument was tagged: "Causes of Drug Abuse Questionnaire (CDAQ)". The instrument has two parts i.e. Sections A and B. Section A contains personal information while Section B contains causes of drug abuse respectively. Section B was patterned in line with four-point Likert type rating scale format of: Strongly Agree; Agree; Disagree; and Strongly Disagree.

Results

This deals with the data collected. It represents the results of the study with relevant interpretation. One hundred and fifty school counsellors participated in the study through simple random sampling technique. The study would also reveal the causes of drug abuse as ranked in the table.

Table 1: Mean and Rank Order of Causes of Drug Abuse Among Polytechnic Students in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State.

N	Drug Abuse among polytechnic students can be caused by:	Mean	Rank
9	Ignorance about dangers inherent in drug abuse	3.58	1 st
1	Lack of parental supervision	3.72	2 nd
8	Emulation of bad role model	3.61	3 rd
3	Need for energy to work for long hours	3.52	4 th
5	High rate of poverty in the society	3.24	5 th
10	Accessibility of drugs	3.11	6 th
7	Experimental curiosity	3.00	7 th
2	Inability to Cope with the feeling of depression and inadequacy	2.98	8 th
13	Inability to Cope with loneliness	2.88	9 th
11	Media influence (i.e. social media)	2.82	10 th
15	Ineffective of government policy on drugs	2.84	11 th
6	Need to increase one's self-confidence	2.79	12 th
4	Inability to cope with academic stress in school	2.76	13 th
12	Peer group influence	2.66	14 th
14	Low self-esteem	2.56	15 th

Table 1 presents the mean and rank order of causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State, Nigeria. The table shows all items that were identified as the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State, because the items have mean values that are above the average (benchmark) mean values of 2.5 for determining the major causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students in Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria.

However, items with mean values of 3.58, 3.72 and 3.51 respectively preceded others and were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd. The items included ignorance about dangers inherent in drug abuse, lack of parental supervision and emulation of bad role model. On the other hand, items 4, 12 and 14 with mean values of 2.76, 2.66 and 2.56 were the least ranked items, that is, 18th, 19th and 20th. They indicated inability to cope with academic stress, peer group influence and low self-esteem.

Hypotheses Testing

Having considered the demographic data of the respondents and answering the research questions, the researcher proceeded to test the null hypothesis postulated for the study.

Hypothesis One:

There is no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun on the basis of gender.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test showing differences in the Respondents' Expression of Causes of Drug Abuse among Polytechnic Students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun on the basis of gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Male	80	66.03	12.88	370	0.21	1.96
Female	70	66.27	12.29			

Table 2 shows that for a degree of freedom (df) of 3.70, the calculated value of 0.21 is less than the critical value of 1.96. This indicates that no significant difference exists. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two *There is no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun on the basis of age.*

Table 3: ANOVA Summary of Showing the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun areas of Oyo State on the basis of age

Source	df	SS	MS	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio
Between Groups	220.70	10.35	1.81*	3.00	
Within Groups	20711819.11	57.09			
Total	20911839.81				

* Significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 3 shows that calculated F-ratio of 1.81 is less than the critical F-ratio of 3.00. This implies that there is no significant difference. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that ignorance about dangers inherent in drug abuse, lack of parental supervision and emulation of bad role model are the major causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students in Oke-Ogun. The study is in line with the findings of Oluremi (2012) which revealed that ignorance about the inherent dangers in drug abuse, lack of parental supervision and emulation of bad models are

among the causes of drug abuse mentioned in her study.

Besides, experimental curiosity, peer group influence, inability to cope with academic stress in school and low self-esteem were among the causes of drug abuse among the polytechnic students in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo state. The finding corresponds with the findings of Oketche (2008) who stated that peer group influence, inability to cope with academic challenges, low self-esteem and experimental curiosity are also factors contributing to drug abuse among students. Oketche revealed that students are drawn into consuming drugs by being enticed and introduced to it by their friends. They are convinced that they will feel high or would gain a sense of belonging. Consequently, they become curious to an extent of tasting such drugs. This finally graduates them into abusing drugs. Okorodudu & Okorodudu (2004) and Enakpoya (2009) in their studies showed that students were very susceptible to the influence of their peers.

Hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant difference in the cause of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State. This implies that respondents were not different on the cause of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo-State. The findings are not in line with studies by Celen (2008) and Lang (2011) which found that age did determine whether a person would indulge in drugs or not. Therefore, their findings revealed that age determines whether students would get involved in the abuse of drugs or not.

Hypothesis two revealed that there was no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo-State. This implies that the respondents' age did not influence their expression on the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo-State, Nigeria. This finding contradicts the findings of Oriahi, Ajekwenh and Oriahi (2010) which revealed that gender's influence on factors contributing to drug abuse among students.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The findings of the study revealed that ignorance about dangers inherent in drug abuse, lack of parental supervision and emulation of bad role model are the major causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students in Oke-Ogun. The study also revealed that there was no significant difference on the causes of drug abuse among polytechnic students as expressed by school counsellors in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State on the basis of age and gender. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school guidance counsellors are needed in all tertiary institutions of learning most especially polytechnics in Oke-Ogun in order to help and educate students on the dangers inherent in drugs, the possible influence of peers to drug abuse and equip them with appropriate social skills they can employ and activities they can engage-in to navigate peer pressure. Also, school counsellors should encourage the parents to provide for the essential needs (such as food, cloth, shelter, safety and security), emotional, educational and psychological needs that can protect their children from various influences that can lead to drug abuse.

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