

MOTIVATIONS FOR DRUG ABUSE AMONG STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study also examined the influence of variable such as gender and age on motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Simple and stratified (based on gender and age) random sampling techniques were adopted to draw a total of 450 participants for the study from the three senatorial districts of Kwara State. The motivation for drug abuse questionnaire (MDAQ) was used to collect relevant data with a test re-test reliability a co-efficient of 0.65. A t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics were used to test the two null hypotheses postulated at 0.05 alpha level while frequency count and percentages were used to compute the demographic data. The study revealed that tertiary institution students are motivated towards drugs in order to conform with peer pressure, to experiment how drug works and to work better. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that peer counselling be organized among the students, counsellors be employed in schools to guide students on the danger in drug use and media advert on drugs be regulated.

Keywords: Motivation, Drug Abuse, Counselling Implications.

Introduction

Cases of students' involvement in drug abuse have been reported severally by Nigeria media and this requires an urgent attention. More often than not, Idowu (1987) and Richard (2002) observed that cases of robbery and indiscipline are on the high increase among students of tertiary institutions. For instance, Olatunde (2001) associated drug abuse with delinquency violent and antisocial behaviours such as suicidal tendency, acute psychosis and youth wastages.

A drug is a substance used for medical purposes that change the state or function of the body (Coleman, 2010). They are substances which alter the organic functions and the behaviour of those who take them (Melgosa, 2005). On the other hand, drug abuse has been described as the deliberate use of chemical substances for reasons other than intended medical purposes and which results in physical, mental, emotional, or social impairment of the user (Carroll, 1989). The abuse of legal drugs can happen when people use the drugs in manner other than directed by the manufacturers or purpose that are not legitimate (Coleman, 2010).

Basically, drugs are of two groups i.e legally approved drugs and illegal or legally disapproved drugs. Legally approved drugs are drugs which have through the ages become a part of the society and had remained so (Ballas, 2006). These are drugs that are open to public consumption such as tobacco and alcohol. In some cultures, these drugs are not only tolerated, but their consumption is explicitly encouraged (Melgosa, 2005). Illegal drugs on the other hand, are drugs whose production or use is strictly prohibited or controlled through prescription. Limitations are placed on ownership or use of such drugs by a government and are not permitted in certain situations. Commonly abused illegal drugs include cocaine, marijuana, heroin, amphetamines, methamphetamine and meth among others (Narconon, 2015).

Further, the American Psychiatrist Association (2010) referred to substance abuse as maladaptive patterns of substance use leading to clinical significant impairment or distress, as manifested by one (or more) of the following, occurring within a 12 month period: recurrent substance use resulting in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home;

recurrent substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous; recurrent substance related legal problems; continued substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the substance. Merki (1996) stated that the term "abuse" applies to any use of an illegal drug or any use of legal drug when it is detrimental to health and wellbeing.

Drug abuse among youngsters affects their academic performance as they do not have time to study which consequently may lead to drop out in school. Robbery, prostitutions, absence in school and other delinquent behaviours have been noted. Drug abusers place a burden on the family members as they expend on him financial and emotional support. Abusers may be involved in crimes such as stealing, pilfering, assassination, armed robbery, prostitution. According to Olatunde (2001), youths who abuse drugs develop mental disorders such as anxiety, neurosis, inability to concentrate and uncomfortable sensations within the medulla oblongata which preserved the central part of the brain.

Drug abuse among youths confers disrespect on the Nigeria image in the international world. According to Akindelly (2009), drug abuse undermines the image of the nation. Nations that are dealing in drugs are usually castigated among the comity of nations. Citizen and leaders of such nations are thus treated as 'pariah' among their colleagues. The nation economy also suffers as government spends huge resources which supposed to be spent on infrastructural facilities for the citizens, in curbing this menace.

Curiosity has been identified as one of the major reasons why youths use/abuse drugs (Nicholsin, 2013). Youngsters are eager to experiment how drug works as a result of what they hear from their peers and other adults in the society that drugs make one feels good, alerted and functioning therefore, they become abusers. Another reason why youths abuse drugs is lack of knowledge about what drugs encompass. This makes youngsters engage in drinking alcohol as most people do not count it as a drug. Pollock, Candace and Charles (1979) stated that legal substances not usually considered as drugs include caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, aspirin and other over-the-counter drugs.

Nigerian youths have access to drugs probably because of its escalation in the society and no or lighter punishment conferred on the offenders. Okeowo (2003) stated that high rate of drug trafficking has transformed many youths into drug addicts which in turn has led youths into crime, hooliganism, vandalism, reckless driving, lunatics and auto-accident (Olateru, 1998). From experience, it appears that youths take

drugs in order to improve their self-esteem and self-confidence, to deal with loneliness, cope with life frustration, to comply with peer pressure and to pass examinations. It thus seems that youths are surrounded with insidious influences that encourage or condone substance abuse. In view of this, the researchers deem it necessary to examine the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institution in Kwara State.

Youths are known to be involved in drug abuse for one reason or the other. Some start using drugs early in life while others start later, having been influenced by their peers and environmental factors (such as media, parent and public figures that use drugs). This may be an impediment to the physical, psychological and social development of young ones who are prospective leaders of tomorrow. Global studies on drug use and abuse revealed that initiation of drug use is one of the best predictor of future drug abuse and dependence (Coleman, 2001). That is, youths who start using drug before the age of 14 are more susceptible to drug problems later in life than those whose drug use started at the age of 21 and above.

Majority of Nigerian youths (many of which are in tertiary institutions) ignorantly depend on one form of drug or the other for their various daily activities (social, educational, political and moral) (Garwood, 2012) without considering its aftermath. Majority of them are usually found in hotels, relaxation centers and uncompleted hidden buildings, drinking and smoking different drug substances. They source for finance by exploiting their parents and involving in maladaptive behaviour such as lying to parents, stealing, gambling, robbery, hooliganism so as to satisfy their need. Most of them after using drugs also engage in risky sexual behaviour such as rape, unprotected sex, oral and anal sex among others.

Several studies have taken positions on drug use and abuse among Nigerian youths. Omigbodun and Babalola (2004) worked on psychosocial dynamics of psychoactive substance misuse among Nigeria adolescents in Ibadan. The result of the study showed that in both in and out of school adolescents, the socially acceptable drugs like alcohol and cigarettes are commonly used. Psychodynamic factors identified include peer pressure, experimentation and conduct problems. Coleman (2010) examined drug use and abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Federal University of Technology. The study found that certain pre-disposing factors such as peer pressure, sex, age, family background and occupation of parents contribute immensely to drug abuse by the students.

To the best knowledge of the researchers, specific study into the motivation for drug abuse among students of

tertiary institutions in Kwara State has not received adequate attention. Thus, making it imperative to investigate the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State.

1. What are the motivations for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria?

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the motivations for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria on the basis of gender.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the motivations for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria on the basis of age.

Methodology

The target population for this study consists of youths in tertiary institutions in Kwara State. There are 15 tertiary institutions in Kwara State, out of which, 3 tertiary institutions were chosen i.e 1 from each senatorial districts (University of Ilorin from Kwara Central, College Education, Oro from Kwara South and College of Education, Lafiagi, from Kwara North). For the purpose of this study, stratified and purposive random sampling methods were used to draw 450 respondents from tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Stratification is a process in which variable is classified into groups based on desired characteristics of the variables such as age, sex, institution, faculty, department etc. Students in year 1, 2 and 3 were purposively considered to ensure equilibrium among the selected institutions since colleges of education have 3 levels. Thus, convenience sampling method was used to select one hundred and fifty (150) respondents per institution. The respondents were reached during GNS

classes which combined different faculties.

The instrument used for the study is a researcher designed questionnaire titled "Motivation for Drug Abuse Questionnaire (MDAQ)". The instrument was validated by eight seasoned lecturers in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. A test-retest reliability method was adopted to determine the reliability of the instrument by administering it on 30 tertiary institutions students who were not part of the study within four week intervals. The two sets of score were correlated using Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) which yields a co-efficient of 0.65, thus, adjudging the instrument reliable for the study. Each item in the structured questionnaire lead to four options of "Strongly agree", "Agree", "Disagree", and "Strongly disagree with scores as 4, 3, 2 1 respectively. The items were scored using percentages. Therefore, any item with score of 50% and above were considered most prevalent motivating factors for drug abuse while items below 50% were regarded as the least motivating factors.

Frequency counts, means, standard deviation, t-test and ANOVA were used to analyze the data collected. All these methods sought to find the difference between the means of two or more variables. All hypotheses were thus, tested at 0.05 significance level.

Results

Research Question: What are the motivations for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria?

To answer this research question, the responses of the students were analyzed descriptively and the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Motivation for Drug Abuse among Students of Tertiary Institutions in Kwara State

Item No	Tertiary institution students take drugs to:	SA%	A%	D%	SD%
2.	conform with peer pressure	56.0	37.8	4.7	1.6
1.	experiment how they work	52.2	38.9	4.4	4.4
3.	work better	51.1	42.0	4.7	2.2
6.	have a good time	49.6	43.0	6.7	0.7
7.	make them stay alert	49.3	38.2	10.9	1.6
13.	study hard	48.0	47.1	4.4	0.4
5.	calm their nerve	47.6	45.1	5.1	2.2
14.	hurt themselves and hurt someone else	45.3	38.9	11.8	4.0
12.	be rebellious	44.7	40.9	10.4	4.0
15.	conform with the media advert of cigarette and alcohol especially	43.3	48.9	6.2	1.6
9.	escape from pressure of the society	43.1	46.9	8.2	1.8
10.	cope with parental in-difference to their concerns	42.0	42.0	12.2	3.8
4.	make them cope with family problems	38.7	41.1	14.9	5.3
8.	commit suicide	37.1	49.6	10.7	2.7
11.	emulate their parents	36.2	47.8	12.9	3.1

Table 1 presents the percentages of opinions on motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions. The table revealed that items 2, 1 and 3 are the top three items that their level of responses exceeds 50%. 56.0%, 52.2% and 51.1% of the respondents strongly agreed on

items 2, 1 and 3 respectively. The items stated that "students use drugs to conform with peer pressure, to experiment how they work and to work better". It can therefore be concluded that the motivation for drug

abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State are to conform with peer pressure, to experiment how drugs work and in order to work better.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the motivation for drug abuse among students' of tertiary institutions on the basis of gender.

To test the hypothesis the respondents' scores on the motivation for drug abuse were subjected to a test of difference using t-test statistics and the students' gender as the differentiating variable. The result is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of Respondents Motivation for Drug Abuse on the Basis of Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Male	235	36.66	7.65	448	0.32	1.96
Female	215	36.90	7.72			

Table 2 shows the calculated t-value of 0.32 is less than the critical value of 1.96. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted. This means there is no significant difference in the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions on the basis of gender.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in

the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions on the basis of age.

To test the hypothesis the respondents' scores on the motivation for drug abuse were subjected to a test of difference using t-test statistics and the students' age grades as the differentiating variable. The result is presented in Table 3

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of Respondents Motivation for Drug Abuse on the Basis of Age

Age	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
13-16	417	36.76	7.59	448	0.10	1.96
17-21	33	36.91	8.82			

Table 3 revealed that the calculated t-value of 0.10 is less than the critical value of 1.96. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. This means there is no significant difference in the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions on the basis of age.

Discussion

Basically, the result shows that tertiary institution students are motivated into drug abuse in order to make them conform with peer pressure, experiment how it works and to work better.

Adolescence is a time of storm and stress when adolescents are in the process of developing their attitudes, beliefs and values. There are many influences such as the media and negative experiences with adults and peers, which compromise their values and beliefs (Bishop, Downes & Smith, 1995). The findings however, corroborate with the study of Oriahi, Ajekwench and Oriahi (2012) where they found that majority of adolescent students were influenced by peer group on the use of drugs and by the parents. It can therefore, be deduced that substance abuse among students is highly influenced by peers. Youths are lured in to drug

use/abuse through subtle means because of their curiosity to be accepted among peers, to fulfill a desire and to accomplish a specific task.

Hypothesis one revealed no significant difference in the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions on the basis of gender. This implies that both male and female participants believed that peer pressure, to experiment how it works and to work better significantly motivate the students of tertiary institutions towards drug abuse. The finding is in line with the finding of Raji (2012) when he found no significant difference in the knowledge and attitude of tertiary institution students towards drug abuse based on gender. It therefore, follows that both male and female respondents were influenced by their peers towards drug abuse in order to work better and to experiment how drugs work.

The second hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions on the basis of age was accepted as no significant difference was found. Irrespective of their different age brackets, tertiary institutions students tend to be motivated towards drug abuse by peer pressure, in order to work better and experiment how it works. The finding thus supports that of Igwe and Ojinnaka (2010) "mental health of adolescents who abuse psycho-active substances in Enugu, Nigeria: A cross sectional study". They found the prevalence of psychosocial dysfunction is higher in adolescents abusing substance compare to those who do not and that the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity was not related to the age.

Conclusion

The study investigated the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kwarar State, Nigeria. The study revealed that peer pressure, to work better and to experiment how drug works are the motivating factors for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions. It was also discovered that there was no significant difference in the motivation for drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions on the bases of gender and age.

Recommendations

Peer counselling should be organized among the students since they cannot do without peers. This should be focused on support programme/services through structured in-school and outreach activities which address a multitude of social, individual, school and family concerns and has a focus on violence and substance abuse prevention issues. The responsibility of a counsellor is to train and coordinate a cross section of students who act as helpers and active listeners for their fellow students.

Counsellors should be employed to Nigeria schools at all levels (primary to tertiary) and allowed to perform their duties. They should be equipped and supported with necessary facilities that will aid their effort in the organization of seminars, workshops, conferences etc to educate students as regards drug issue. Also, in providing a Commercial advertising of alcohol beverages and cigarette using the youth as targets need to be critically examined. It is obvious that government generates income from those drugs. However, it is possible for them to restrict the mode of advertising through the enactment and enforcement of appropriate laws.

Parents and guidance must effectively play their roles in advising their wards and teaching them the benefits of good habits and positive relationships. Parents need to be available to affect their positive influence on their children.

Youth related programme should be targeted at especially the age group of 13-21 so that they are confident to deal with the pressure associated with peer relationships. The age 18 being the age recognized internationally as that of an adult seems to propel the youth who get to that age to be defiant. They develop a sense of being old enough to do whatever they want. This is therefore, a crucial year to be addressed by intervention programmes.

Implications for Counselling Practices

The study has revealed some motivations for drug abuse. Therefore, drug abuse among youth should be prevented or controlled if the nation must produce disciplined and responsible leaders. This is a greater task

in which professional counsellors have a larger role to play. The school counsellors should at every educational level orientates and educates young people on the debilitating effects of drugs and benefits they will accrued should they abstain from it.

Counselling as intra and interpersonal communication has a goal of improving individual's personal growth and maturity through personal values clarification and insight. Therefore, the counsellor has a role of assisting both the young ones and their parents on drugs abuse prevention by clarifying the misconception about the use of drugs so that they may make informed choices about it.

Counselling is also an intervention strategy to provide remediation for individuals that have found themselves in a crisis situation (i.e condition an individual is unable to help him/herself). Thus, the

counsellor as a skilled helper through empathic understanding and genuiness can assist such person to explore the various options concerning drug use and abuse and encourage him to make wise decisions based on the awareness of self and the issue.

In a school as a socializing agent of children, the school counsellor and other staff have the function of helping the students to become integrated citizenries and well-adjusted that will be useful for themselves and the society at large. Therefore, the school counsellor should seek the support of the school authority (headed by the Vice-Chancellor, School principal/headmaster) and other staff (teaching and non-teaching) in the organizing of programmes for drug abuse prevention among the students.

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