

## **Effect of Drug Abuse on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Nigeria**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper examines the effect of drug abuse on academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria. However, drug abuse is rampant among the teenagers because of their ignorance they do not understand the effect and repercussion of drug addicts. Moreover, many students acquired it through their friend's influence, experimental curiosity, personal problems due to socio background conditions while many need it for energy to work for long hours. Similarly, some need drugs to prevent the occurrence of withdrawal symptoms e.t.c In addition, students lure to abuse the following drugs such Alcohol, cocaine, Nicotine and Phencyclidine e.t.c but all these drugs have negative effect in the body. For instance, many students find it cumbersome to read and even it kills their moral of reading culture. Consequence, after they have taken the drugs many students behave abnormally while other fall sick bases on their body system even it affects their ability of reasoning all these problems contributed to their reading culture and many students failed honorably in public examination such WAEC, NECO and other external examinations yearly in Nigeria. Therefore, parents, teachers and Ministry education neither federal and state must contribute positively to reduce uses of the drugs among of teenagers in private and public secondary schools in Nigeria.*

**KEYWORDS;** drug abuse, academic, performance, teenagers, abnormally, external. examination, symptoms, cocaine, student, public, culture, cumbersome

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Drugs are commonly used by both young and old in any society. However, drugs are not just useful for human beings alone, but are also useful to animals for good and healthy living. Human beings administer drugs to their pets when they discovered that they are sick. Drug is an effective substance that can be used to cure sickness and to make life healthy. It is pertinent to note that drugs are used for beneficent therapeutic purposes, and is effective for good health; but abused by young people most especially the students. They use it illegally and unlawfully, thus it becomes harmful to their bodies.(Adeniyi 2020).

Drug abuse is the wrong use of drugs for purposes other than medical reasons, thus affecting the individual in a negative way socially, cognitively or physically. Social effects may be reflected in an individual's enhanced tendency to engage in conflicts with friends, teachers, and school authorities. Cognitive effects of drugs relate to the individual's lack of concentration on academic work and memory loss. While Lewinso (2007) defines a drug as any product other than food or water that affects the way people feel, think, see, and behave. It is a substance that due to its chemical nature affects physical, mental and emotional functioning. It can enter the body through chewing, inhaling, smoking, drinking, rubbing on the skin or injection.

Drug abuse has become a global problem affecting everyone. Addiction leads many young people into downhill of hopelessness that in some cases ends fatal. They range from teenage bliss users, to hard core heroin and cocaine addicts. Drug abuse is responsible for lost gross, destruction of property, bad health and broken homes. It is a dilemma which affects all parents, teachers, government officials, workers and the entire society (Nacada, 2005).

The National African seminar on held problems of drug in Lagos, Nigeria declared that "Drug abuse are broadly prevalent in African countries have continue to increase. These problems affect the individual, the family and the society in general. Substance abuse, which was originally conceived as the problem of a selected few is today becoming a problem of a sizeable proportion of the world population. The predicament is so grave that it has extended beyond the usual characteristic of abusers being male, adult, and urban-based to now include females, youngsters and those who live mostly in the northern part of Nigeria. Its economic effect is so upsetting that it is estimated that the annual retail cost of psychotropic drug by prescription is over two billion naira while the alcoholic company which produces over five billion gallons of alcoholic beverages annually generate more than four billion naira from sales to a consumer population of about 30-35 million people (Folawiyo, 2008).

Unlawful Drug traffic generates huge profit and that is the major reason why it has been very difficult to fight against drug traffic in spite of several laws that have been promulgated. Drug abuse constitute a serious threat to the survival and effective functioning of human societies, lives are lost daily through addiction and activities of addicts. A significant number of deaths from accidents and violent crimes have been traced to the activities of persons under the influence of drugs. Excessive abuse of drug can cause physically or psychological dependence on individual. Also, it can bring conflict between the user and the society. It may lead to social problem and equally generate conflict within user and his social environment (Ejikeme 2011).

According to World Health Organisation (2015), drugs like alcohol, tobacco and cocaine are the root cause of road accident which have claimed lives and the high rate of sickness suffered by our societies today. The issue of drug abuse has become the main theme of discussion in our societies today. Drug abuse does not only destroy the affected person or individual but also have a negative effect on those that are connected to the individual.

Drug abuse plays a vital role in everyday interpersonal affairs though there is no data shown, but many students in Nigeria are also user of drugs, and this condition appears to be based on an underlined psychological aberration. Drug abuse gravely affect the individuals health and social function, it also damage the users name, friends, family and the society as whole. The need to prevent drug abuse among students in Nigerian have becomes imperative.

Conclusively, drug abuse had become a challenging problem to the lives and success of the youth as it can be evidently not only as a source of sorrow to the parents, guardians and relatives but it is also a big challenge to the nation wholly. Therefore, stakeholders and members of the public together should act urgently and adequate attention to the growing rate of drug abuse especially among the youth who will be our tomorrow' leaders

### **Types of Drugs Abused by Students**

Practically any substance whose ingestion can result in an exhilarated feeling can be abused. While some are aware of the abuse of legal substances like alcohol or illegal drugs like marijuana and cocaine. Well, it is known fact household cleaners most commonly abused drugs. Other form of drugs like Indian hemp, which is usually produced in Nigeria and others like methamphetamine, syrups and tablets with codeine capable of intoxicating are mostly found in schools, motor parks, and even with local traders that sell provisions in kiosks. It is noted that some of the drugs and types of drugs that are commonly abused result in dependence by students. These are:

- i) **Alcohol:** Alcohol is a toxic substance, mainly to a developing fetus when a mother consumes this drug during pregnancy. One of the most common addictions, alcoholism can have distressing effects on the alcoholic individual's physical health, as well as his or her ability to function interpersonally and at work. Example of alcohol, beer, *ogogoro*, *burukutu*, *aspetesi*, *pito*, *palmwine*, *sapelewater*, *kaikai*. They all contain alcohol.
- ii) **Cocaine:** This is a drug that stimulates the nervous system; cocaine can be snorted in powder form, smoked when in the form of rocks, or injected when made into a liquid.
- iii) **Nicotine:** The addictive substance found in cigarettes, nicotine is actually one of the most addictive substances that exist. In fact, nicotine addiction is often compared to the intense addictiveness associated with opiates like heroin.
- iv) **Phencyclidine:** is referred to as PCP, this drug can cause the user to feel extremely obsessed, quite aggressive and have an unusual amount of physical strength. This can make the individual somewhat dangerous to others.
- v) **Sedative, hypnotic, or ant anxiety drugs:** As these substances quash the nervous system, they can cause death by respiratory arrest of the person who either uses these drugs in overdose or who mixes one or more of these drugs with another nervous system depressant drug.

### **Reasons for Students Abuse Drug**

Haladu (2003) gave some contributory factors to the influence of drug abuse among the Nigerian youth includes the following:

- i. **Lack of parental supervision:** Most parents have no time to supervise their children. 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.
- ii. **Experimental Curiosity:** Curiosity to experiment the unknown facts about drugs thus motivates adolescents into drug use. The first experience in drug abuse produces a state of awakening such as happiness and pleasure which in turn motivate them to continue.
- iii. **Peer Group Influence:** Peer pressure plays a major role in influencing many adolescents 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.
- iv. **Personality Problems due to socio-Economic Conditions:** Adolescents with personality problems arising from social conditions have been found to abuse drugs. The social and economic status of most Nigerians is below average. Other causes of students involvement in drug abuse is attributed to high rate of poverty in the country, broken homes and unemployment is on the increase, therefore our students roam the streets looking for employment. 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 lead to recourse in drug abuse for temporarily removing the tension and problems arising from it.
- v). **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 bus conducting, hawking, 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.
- vi. **Availability of the Drugs:** In many countries, drugs have dropped in prices as supplies have increased.
- vii. **The Need to prevent the Occurrence of Withdrawal symptoms:** If drug is stopped, the user experiences what is termed “withdrawal symptoms”. The inability of the drug user to tolerate the symptoms motivates him to continue (Ige, 2000).
- viii. **Advertisement:** The social medical has posed a devastating problem on the students. Students are sensitive to advertisement and copy quickly. The glamour in advertising alcohol and cigarette smoking make the youth want to be the way the advert depicts.  
**Social pathologies** such as unemployment and parental deprivation.
- x. **Emotional and psychological stresses,** includes: anxiety, frustration, and economic depression people always take drug or drink alcohol in order to forget their problem when they are provoked.

### **Consequences of Drug Abuse on the Youth**

Young people who tirelessly abuse drugs often experience some problems, like: academic difficulties, health-related problems (including mental health), poor peer relationships, and

involvement with the juvenile justice system. In addition, there are consequences for family members, the community, and the entire society.

### **Academic effects of drug abuse**

Declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, and increased potential for dropping out of school are problems associated with adolescent substance abuse. Low level of commitment to education and higher truancy rates appear to be related to substance use among adolescents. Cognitive and behavioural problems experienced by alcohol- and drug-using youth may interfere with their academic performance and also present obstacles to learning for their classmates.

### **Medical effects of drug abuse**

Drug abuse not only weakens the immune system but linked to risky behaviours like needle sharing and unsafe sex. The combination greatly increases the likelihood of acquiring HIV-AIDS, hepatitis and many other infectious diseases. Transmission of HIV/AIDS primarily occurs through exposure to body fluids of an infected person during sexual contact or through sharing of unsterile drug-injection equipment. Many substance-abusing youth engage in behaviour that places them at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. This may include the actual use of psychoactive substances (particularly those that are injected) or behaviour resulting from poor judgment and impulse control while experiencing the effects of mood-altering substances.

Drug abuse can as well lead to a various respiratory problems. Smoking cigarettes, for example, has been shown to cause bronchitis, emphysema and lung cancer. Marijuana smoke may also cause respiratory problems. The use of some drugs may also cause breathing to slow, block air from entering the lungs or exacerbate asthma symptoms. Cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and lung disease can all be affected by drug abuse. Some of these effects occur when drugs are used at high doses or after prolonged use; however, some may occur after just one use.

### **Physical Health**

Corresponding numbers of youth involved with alcohol and other drugs face an increased risk of death through homicide, accident, suicide, and illness (The Drug Abuse Warning Network DAWN 2011).

### **Mental Health**

Mental health problems like depression, psychosocial dysfunctions frequently developmental lags, apathy, withdrawal, and other are linked to substance abuse among adolescents. Substance-abusing students are at higher risk than nonusers for mental health problems, including gloominess; conduct problems, personality disorders, suicidal thoughts and attempted suicide. Marijuana use, which is prevalent among youth, has been shown to interfere with short-term memory, learning, and psychomotor skills. Motivation and psychosexual/emotional development also may be influenced (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2004).

### **Peers**

Students are alienated from and stigmatized by their peers. Adolescents using alcohol and other drugs also often separate from school and community activities, depriving their peers and communities of the positive contributions they might otherwise have made.. Such people are usually influenced by their peers.

Psychologically, if they don't take part in what their peers are doing, they feel unfulfilled.”

### **Families**

In addition to personal adversities, the abuse of alcohol and other drugs by youth result in family crises and expose them to risk in life, sometimes resulting in family dysfunction. Both siblings and parents are greatly affected by alcohol and drug-involved youth. Substance abuse can drain a family's financial and emotional resources (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002).

### **Social and Economic Consequences**

The social and economic costs related to drug abuse among youth are at a high rate. They result from the financial losses and distress suffered by alcohol and drug related crime victims, increased burdens for the support of adolescents and young adults who are not able to become self-supporting, and greater demands for medical and other treatment services for these youth. NDLEA operatives towards fighting the menace of illicit drugs production, circulation, marketing and consumption, more people are being recruited daily by drug barons to serve as couriers just as many more, especially students are increasingly becoming addicted to assorted drugs.

### **Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Measures**

Most people do not have the knowledge about the effects of drug abuse especially on the students. It is very important that drug abuse should be prevented or controlled. Drug abuse is a growing problem and drug abuse prevention should also be a growing measure and stronger in order to over-power the cankerworm at the same time need supervision, love, counseling and spiritual backup that is, prayer.

**Family:** The prevention of drug abuse should start first from the family. A family, whether nuclear or extended has a role to play in preventing drug abuse. Family is the smallest unit of the society and it is the first to control this drug abuse. These are the major strategies of preventing or controlling drug abuse from the family. Therefore, children needs close relationship

**Religious Commitment:** Early Godly upbringing is paramount in any family. Parents should be committed in their service to God. Parents should be devoted and dedicated religious people. They should lead their children to God and make sure that they are committed in the service of God.

**Care and Supervising or Monitoring:** Parents should care for their children, meet their physical needs etc and also monitor the kind of friends they keep. They parent should monitor their movement to keep close watch and make sure that they keep good company. If they are keeping bad company, they should be corrected immediately. They should not be over-pampered. Parents

should not only educate their children on the dangers of drug abuse but they should establish and enforce family rules. They should also create an effective system of monitoring their children's activities.

**Family Discussion:** Most parents are harsh to their children. They tend to scale them away from them. Parents should not neglect family discussion and it should be done from time to time. It is important for all the members of the family. It helps to understand each other and to solve each other's problem in the family. Problems or burdens and ideas are shared together in family discussion. Problem which one may decide to seek for the solution from drug abuse especially from alcohol are solved at family discussion.

**Warm Communication:** This is another important way of preventing or controlling drug abuse in the family. The manner of approach in any situation is important. There is a way parents can talk to their child who is engaging in drug and he will stop but there is a way he can be approached it will worsen the situation. There should be humility and love in communication and correction in the family.

## CONCLUSION

Apparently, parents, teachers and government have lot do in order to reduce drugs addiction drastically among secondary school students. For instance, parents need to monitor their children at home and also they need to educate them the harmful effect of drug abuse. Similarly, teachers as educators must educate the students the harmful effect of using the drugs and repercussion of drug abuse while the government needs to make promulgate penalty for anyone of the secondary students caught involve using drugs within and outside the school premises.

Conclusively, Ministry of education federal and state all thirty six states and includes Abuja must inspecting and monitoring secondary schools, similarly they need to supervise and educate the students and teachers and organize seminar for the students and their teachers too on effect of drugs abuse on their academic achievement.

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