

ILLICIT DRUG USE AND EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOUR OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

Mrs. Eno Emmanuel Israel and Mrs. Ekaete Nyoho

Department of Curriculum Studies, University of Uyo
Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *This study investigated the illicit drug use and its effect on the emotional behaviour of senior secondary students in public schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study was designed to ascertain the relationship between illicit drug use and truancy, study habit and school violence in senior secondary schools in Uyo metropolis, a capital city of Akwa Ibom State. Three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated for the study. The study adopted the correlational research design. The population used for the study was 10,520 senior secondary school students from 13 public secondary schools in Uyo metropolis. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 1,300 senior secondary school students to form the sample. The researchers developed instrument titled “Illicit Drug Use and Emotional Behaviour of Senior Secondary Students in Public Schools (IDEBSSSPS) to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by three research experts in the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The reliability index of 0.82 was determined using Crombach’s Alpha. Mean was used to answer the research questions while simple regression was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 alpha level. The findings revealed that illicit drug use has a serious influence on the emotional behaviour of senior secondary students in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended among others that public enlightenment campaigns should be organized at the secondary school level to educate students on the dangers of drug use.*

KEYWORDS: Illicit Drug Use, Emotional Behaviour, Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom State

INTRODUCTION

Today, an increasing number of people in the country are becoming exposed to the dangers of illicit drugs. It is indeed a common trend among the affluent, professionals, musicians, sportsmen and women, adolescents especially students in secondary schools. Although, these abusers erroneously believe that drugs enhance their performance and put them in good mood, the accompanying problems of this dangerous act constitute a major threat to people all over the world (UNODC, 2005).

Illicit drug use/addiction has gone a long way to create several health problems and dangers in our society, such health problems include mental illness, cancer of the lungs, and emotional problems which include; school drop out, juvenile delinquency and malicious behaviours among others. Okoye, (2001) referred to drugs as a substance that could bring about a change in biological function through its chemical actions.

According to Umo and Iferi (2007), illicit drug is defined as any situation in which a chemical substance is used when it is not medically necessary or when it is not recommended by a health worker or medical practitioner. National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and

Control (NAFDAC, 2004) as cited by Halaku (2003), explained the term drug abuse or illicit drug use as excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to the medically or cultural accepted patterns. It could also be referred to as the use of a drug to the extent that it interferes with the health and social function of an individual. The Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has stated that substance abuse is a major problem in Schools, Colleges and Universities in Nigeria (NDLEA, 2005).

The major problem plaguing at least 9.5 million students across the U.S (60%) is the availability and prevalence of illicit substances on high school campuses. Recent findings from the National Survey in Nigeria on Drug Use and health (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2003), highlight a link between youth violence and substance use by showing that youths aged 12-17 who reported violence behaviours in the past-year also reported higher rates of past-year illicit drug use compared with youths who did not report behaviours. In Mexico, a study was conducted by the National Addiction Research and the results show that more than 200,000 teenagers between 12 and 17 years old use drugs (Garcia de Jesus and Farriani, 2008). In many cases drugs are linked to violence in schools, which has also increased rapidly in recent years. According to Ellickson and Maguigan (2000) research examining possible links between violence and drug use has consistently found a strong relationship among adolescents and young adults.

The students are the leaders of tomorrow and they deserve good education in the right direction. Alcohol and drug consumption may have some detrimental effect on the student's cognitive abilities by decreasing their ability to concentrate and it affects their study habit. It makes the students less likely to attend classes or keep up with their studies. Truancy among adolescents jeopardizes chances of achieving their educational goals (Siziya, Muula and Rudatiskira, 2007). Baker and Jansen (2000) believe that truancy leads to lower academic achievements. A 1990 study by Obondo and Dhadphale reported that about 10% of school non-attendance by children in Kenya was due to truancy (Obundo & Dhadphale 1990). Truancy breeds educational wastage and poor human power development. Globally, it has been regarded as a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the educational programmes and has caused a lot of setbacks for secondary school students in their educational pursuits (Gesinde, 2004; Adeyemi, 2006; Animasahum 2007b). Iheanyi and Nkechi (2012), opined that students who commit truancy, commit deviant acts like theft, burglary, robbery, drug use and sale, murder and carious sex related crimes. Many of the students' behaviours are tied to the peer culture, they imitate, admire and learn from the peers they like.

Although, parental deprivation due to deaths, divorce, separation or discord has also been strongly associated with drug abuse (Odejide, 2000). The effects and consequences of illicit drug use among students has called for concern and it is a challenge to all, because it has become an embarrassing phenomenon, to parents, schools, government authorities and the society at large. It is time for helping professionals to bring out strategies of equipping our youths with diverse skills of living devoid of substance, abuse.

In Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria, there is disruption of interpersonal relationship, especially within the family, criminal behaviour, school failure, acute and chronic health problems, social and psychological problems, bad study habits by students and failure to achieve normal adolescents milestones. It is hoped that this practice and associated problems would not lead to the breeding of deranged generation of youths. The effects and consequences of illicit drug use especially alcohol and nicotine by students is cause for concern. Drugs are chemical substances that destroys the body cell, depending on how it is used. According to Orija (2008), drug

dependent person unknowingly damages his/herself and the society. He goes further to say that people who depend on drugs become more absent minded, drop in academic performance, more irritable and moody. Ogunsakin (2007) opined that drugs like Indian hemp has the power to impair mental activities. It decreases the male sex hormone and affect the menstrual cycle in women. Cocaine damages the heart and causes heart attack. Illicit drug use appears to be a well-entrenched behaviour among secondary school students, despite National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and other organization based interventions.

The National Drugs Law Agency (NDLEA) is doing a lot, but is beyond it. Parents, communities, schools and the Nigerian government should all be more vigilant to fight the menace of drugs. Our youths should be productive and not those that become useless and a liability to the society.

The secondary school students are particularly at risk of illicit drug use because they are in their formative years of education, social skills, identity formation and career development. It is against this background that this study was undertaken to assess the level of illicit drug use and its impact on the emotional behaviour of senior secondary students in public schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria and to critically analyze strategies used to address the problem.

Objectives of the Study

The overall purpose of this study is to assess illicit drug use and its effect on the emotional behaviour of senior secondary school students in Akwa Ibom State it aspires to contribute to the knowledge and understanding needed to ultimately help decrease illicit drug use among students in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:-

- (a) Examine the influence of illicit drug use on students study habit.
- (b) Investigate the influence of illicit drug use on school violence among students
- (c) Access the influence of illicit drug use on the level of truancy among students in senior secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

The alarming rate of school riots, violence, immorality, irrational act and other forms of unwholesome behavioural tendencies among our school children prompted this research to be carried out much of the violence can be linked to illicit drug use. Most students tend to indulge in unbridled drug use as a result of peer group influence. This affects their psychological vis-à-vis their emotional behaviour as well as posing a significant threat upon their academic achievement and performance.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What is the influence of illicit drug use on students study habit?
2. What is the influence of illicit drug use on school violence?

3. What is the influence of illicit drug use on truancy in schools?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant influence of illicit drug use on students study habit in senior secondary schools.
2. There is no significant influence of illicit drug use on school violence in senior secondary school.
3. There is no significant influence of illicit drug use on truancy in senior secondary schools.

Research Methods

The study adopted the survey research design. The population of this study was 10, 520 senior secondary students drawn from 13 public secondary schools in Uyo metropolis. 1,300 senior secondary school students were randomly selected. A research instrument was constructed and validated by three research experts in the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Reliability was tested using the cronbach Alpha method, and was established at alpha 0.82. The instrument was administered to the respondents with the help of research assistants. The data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test to test the null hypotheses at .05 alpha level.

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**Research Question 1****Table 1: Item Analysis of the influence of illicit Drug use on study habit**

S/N	illicit drug use and study habit	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1.	Students who take drugs do not concentrate in class	1300	2.81	0.93	Agreed
2.	Students who take drugs do not copy their notes in class	1300	2.73	0.87	Agreed
3.	Drug abuse children are always passive and indolent in class	1300	2.7	1	Agreed
4.	Influence of drugs discourages punctuality to schools	1300	2.63	0.89	Agreed
5.	Poor reading culture is a function of drug abuse	1300	3.53	0.76	Agreed
	Overall		2.88	0.89	Agreed

Table 1 shows the influence of illicit drug use on study habit. The result reveals that all items have mean response scores above 2.50 the cut-off-mean. This shows that illicit drug use has a negative influence on students' study habit in secondary schools.

Research Question 2**Table 2: Item Analysis of the influence of illicit drug use on school violence**

S/N	illicit drug use and School Violence	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1.	School crimes and other adolescent vices are associated with students who engage in drugs	1300	2.83	0.91	Agreed
2.	Those who take drugs always associate with secret cult in school	1300	2.75	0.86	Agreed
3.	Drug abuse encourages school violence	1300	2.73	0.97	Agreed
4.	Students who take drugs are full of immoral conduct	1300	2.65	0.89	Agreed
5.	Students who take drugs are fun of disrupting academic activities	1300	3.53	0.77	Agreed
	Overall		2.89	0.88	Agreed

Table 2 shows the summary of the result for the influence of illicit drug use on school violence. The result reveals that all items have mean response scores above 2.50 the cut-off mean. This shows that illicit drug influences violence in secondary schools.

Research Question 3**Table 3: Item Analysis of the Influence of Illicit Drug Use on Truancy in Secondary Schools**

S/N	illicit drug use and Truancy	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1.	Drug abuse students prefer to stay outside the school	1300	2.88	0.92	Agreed
2.	Students who take drugs are full of immoral conduct	1300	2.79	0.89	Agreed
3.	Students who take drugs are always looking for opportunity to leave the class	1300	2.76	0.99	Agreed
4.	Lack of interest in school activities is a result of drug abuse	1300	2.72	0.92	Agreed
5.	drug abuse students are fun of leaving the class before the closing hours.	1300	3.55	0.73	Agreed
	Overall		2.94	0.89	Agreed

Table 3 shows the summary of the result for the influence of illicit drug use on truancy amongst secondary school students. The result reveals that all items have mean response scores above 2.50 the cut-off mean. This shows that illicit drug influences truancy amongst secondary schools.

Hypothesis 1**Table 4: Test for significant influence of illicit drug use on study habit**

Variable	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	Tcal	Tcrit	Decision
Illicit drug use	1300	2.99	.90	1298	2.913	1.96	*
Study habit	1300	2.77	.9				

*=significant

Table 4 shows the summary of the t-test analysis of the influence of drug abuse on students' student habit in secondary schools. The findings reveal that the calculated t-value is 2.913. At .05 level of significance and 1298 degree of freedom, the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the tcal value is greater than the tcrit value, the null hypothesis is rejected thus, there is a significant influence of illicit drug use on students' study habit in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 2**Table 5: Test for Significant Influence of illicit Drug use on School Violence**

Variable	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	Tcal	Tcrit	Decision
Illicit drug use	1300	2.99	.90	1298	3.45	1.96	*
School violence	1300	2.72	.92				

*=significant

Table 5 shows the summary of the t-test analysis of the influence of drug abuse on school violence in secondary schools. The findings reveal that the calculated t-value is 3.45. At .05 level of significance and 1298 degree of freedom, the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the tcal is greater than the tcrit, the null hypothesis is rejected thus, there is a significant influence of illicit drug use on school violence in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 3**Table 6: Test for Significant Influence of illicit Drug use on Truancy**

Variable	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	Tcal	Tcrit	Decision
Illicit drug use	1300	2.99	.90	1298	2.89	1.96	*
Truancy	1300	2.76	.92				

*=significant

Table 6 shows the summary of the t-test analysis of the influence of drug abuse on truancy among secondary schools. The findings reveal that the calculated t-value is 2.89. At .05 level of significance and 1298 degree of freedom, the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the tcal is greater

than the tcrit, the null hypothesis is rejected thus, there is a significant influence of illicit drug use on truancy among secondary schools.

DISCUSSION

The major aim of this study was to establish the influence of illicit drug use and emotional behaviour of senior secondary students in public schools in Akwa Ibom State. The generated data were carefully processed and analyzed, consequently, the results revealed that there is a significant influence of illicit drug use on school violence in secondary schools. In other words, students are prone to various degree of violence in schools as a result of the influence of drugs. The research findings are in line with that of Ellickson and MaGuigan (2000) who posited that drugs are in many cases linked to violence among adolescents and young adults.

It was also found out that there occurs a significant influence of illicit drug use on students study habit. The result is in favour of those of earlier researchers such as (Okoye, 2001) in his studies identified cases of drug abuse among adolescents as viable parameter towards reading culture, degree of concentration and overall academic performance of students.

The findings of this study as regards illicit drug use and truancy shows that negative vices such as school truancy are linked with the level of drug consumption by adolescents. This is linked up with the findings of Uwaifor, (2003) who observed that drug abuse correlates with level of truancy and also cases low cognitive ability among students. The result is also in favour of those of Baker and Jansen (2000) who believe that truancy leads to lower academic achievements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- (1) Public enlightenment campaigns should be organized at the senior secondary level to educate the students on the bad effect and consequences of illicit drug use, using the radio, television, churches, mosques, schools, entertainment centres etc.
- (2) Parents, guardians and school counsellor should orientated their children on the menace of illicit drug use.
- (3) Students should be encouraged to join various drug free clubs in the schools.
- (4) Teachers should very vigilant in identifying students that engage in illicit drug use in a bid to averting misconducts. Parents should act as role models, discouraging their words from intake of alcohol and other drugs at home.
- (5) Agencies and government all levels should endeavour to enact appropriate legislation to check incidence of illicit drug use and check importation of drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, Indian hemp etc.
- (6) Provision of stimulating psychological environment for these secondary school students so that their energy can be spent on productive things.

CONCLUSION

Illicit drug use has a detrimental effect to the human brain which can cause brain damages to the person involved. It endangers the academic pursuit of the students increasing their tendency to embark upon truancy violence also affect their study habit. It has gone a long way to create several health problems. There occur a negative correlation between illicit drug use and emotional behaviour of students in schools.

Our students are the leaders of tomorrow and they deserve good education as the right direction.

REFERENCES

- Animasahun, R. A. (2007b). *Effect of the creativity, training technique in the reduction of rebellion behavior among members of the NDRTW, Ibadan Metropolis*. Africa Journal of Psychological study Society 10, 102-113
- Baker, D. & Jansen, J. (2000). Using groups to reduce Elementary School Absenteeism. Social work in Education 22(1) 46-53.
- Cravcia de Jesus MC, Ferriam MGC 2008s School as a “Protective factor” against drugs: Perceptions of adolescents and teachers. Revlatino am Enfermagen 2008 mail-junho, 16 (especial): 590-594.
- Ellickson, PL., McGuigan, KA 2000. *Early predictors of adolescents violence*, American Journal of Public Health 90(4): 566-572.
- Gesinde, A. M. (2004). *Psycho-Social Determinants of Truant Behaviour among students Ife Psychologia: An International Journal*, 13(1): 188-199.
- NAFDAC (2004). A Handbook on Prevention of Drugs and Substance Abuse in Nigeria.
- NDLEA (2005) Pattern of Drug Consumption (between 2000 – 2005) Lagos Non Educational Publishers.
- Obando, A. & Dhadphale, M. (1990). *Family study of Kenyan children with school refusal*. East Africa medical Journal 67, 100 – 108.
- Odejide, A. O. (2000). Observation on drug abuse in Western Nigeria, Africa. Psychol, 15 (80); 113-128.
- Ogunsakin, E. A. (2007). The Psychological Basis for Drugs use among School Athletics. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Okoye, N. N. (2001). The adolescents and hard drugs: A Psychological concern in R. U. N. Okonkwo and Okoye, R. O. (eds), *The Nigerian Adolescent in perspective*. A Publication of the Nigerian Society for Education.
- Orija, S. (2008). Dimensions of Mental Health, University of Ibadan Inaugural Lecture.
- Siziya S., Muula, S., & Rudatsikura E. (2007). Prevalence and correlates of Truancy among adolescent in Swaziland: Findings from the Global School – Based health Survey. Child and Adolescent Psychiar and Mental Health 1, 1-15.
- Umoh, D. W. and Ifei, I. I. (2007). Citizenship Education. First Edition, MacGrace Academic Resource Publisher 70 Nwaniba, Uyo.
- UNODC (2005). “World Health Organisation Expert Committee on Dependence Producing Drugs Fourteenth Report Urban Adolescent” Child Development, 61, 2032 – 2046.
- Uwaifor, A. N. (2003). Influence of Drug on Absorption of facts in infants. Unpublished B.Sc Project of University of Calabar. Nigeria.