Drug Abuse and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
This study examined drug abuse and academic performance of secondary school students in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. It is a survey study. A sample of 300 respondents from five public secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area participated in the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the work. The findings of the study revealed that: students commonly abused drugs such as alcohol and hot drinks, tobacco, Indian hemp, marijuana; peer group influence contributed to abuse of drugs by students and students who abused drugs recorded poor academic performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that students should be educated and enlightened about the dangers of drug abuse.

Keywords: Drug abuse, illegal drugs, students, academic performance

INTRODUCTION
Drug abuse and intake of hard drugs are capable of affecting the state of the body and mind by either depressing or stimulating the central nervous system or producing other biochemical harm to the society at large. The dependence or addiction is psychologically characterized by the compulsion to take drugs on a continuous or periodic basis in order to experience its mental effect. Drugs stimulate the nervous system of an individual to behave in abnormal and extra ordinary manner, leading such individual to loose his sense of being. The health implication is that the individual is acting on the influence of a cultivating factor such as tobacco, cocaine etc. Common incidence that happens around us today is on the influence of these stimulants and if care is not taken, could lead to mental disorder. The society of doctors and pharmacists frowned at the uncontrollable ways and manners in which the drugs are sold to the public in our markets and medical stores which are contributory factors to drug abuse.

The future of any nation or society depends largely on the quality of her youths. It is therefore highly regrettable that our youths are exposed to the dangers inherent in drug abuse in their formative years. Drug abuse is a matter of grave consideration or attention to educational stakeholders and other professionals in various disciplines. Drug abuse is a local, national and international sensitive challenge that needs urgent attention due to the alarming rate of involvement of youth.

It is imperative now, that the war against crime in society should start with fighting the use of drugs by our youths as people were likely to be law abiding and avoid crime if they were prevented from abusing drugs. Thus, it is a thing of importance to examine the effects of the scourge called ‘drug abuse’ among secondary school students in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.
METHODS
This research adopted the descriptive survey research design. A sample of 300 respondents from five public secondary schools in Emohua Local Government Area participated in the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the work.

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS
Research Question 1: How does peer group influence contribute to drug abuse among secondary school students in Emohua Local Government Area?

Table 1: Responses on the contribution of peer group influence to abuse of drug by students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Question Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students have drug abusers as their friends.</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students are coerced or forced to engage in drug abuse by their close allies in school.</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students are cajoled by school friends to abuse drugs.</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students abuse drugs to be accepted by their friends in school.</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the arithmetic in Table 1 and the analysis, the entire four mean were accepted with the mean value 3.22, 3.05, 3.10 and 3.05 in line with the research question. A total mean value of 12.42 was arrived at and a grand mean value of 3.11 was arrived at from the analysis. The indication is that peer group influence contributes to abuse of drugs by students as all the sub-questions were accepted with the total mean value of 12.42 and grand mean agreeing with the rating with a mean value of 3.11 which is above 2.50.

Research Question 2: What are the effects of drug abuse on the academic performance of secondary school students in Emohua Local Government Area?

Table 2: Responses on the effects of drug abuse on academic performance of secondary school students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Question Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Drug abuse has negative effect on the memory and cognitive capacity of the students.</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Drug abuse makes students less serious in their academic work.</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Drug abuse gives room for poor scores and results.</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students stay away from lessons and classes due to drug abuse.</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 2 and the analysis, all the four mean were accepted with the mean value 3.29, 3.30, 3.10 and 3.04 in line with the research question. A total mean value of 12.73 was arrived at and a grand mean value of 3.18 was arrived at from the analysis. The indication is that drug abuse has effects on the academic performance of the students as all the sub-questions were accepted with the total mean value of 12.73 and grand mean agreeing with the rating with a mean value of 3.18 which is above 2.50.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the reasons given for abusing drugs and academic performance of secondary school students.
Table 3: Chi-square Computation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Fo</th>
<th>Fe</th>
<th>fo-fe</th>
<th>(fo-fe)^2</th>
<th>(fo-fe)^2/fe=x^2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>81.75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>45.56</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>56.25</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-13.5</td>
<td>182.25</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>74.25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore the calculated Chi-square (x^2) value= 4.91

To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value.
Degree of freedom for chi-square is df = (r-1)(c-1).
Where r is the number of rows and c is the number of columns in the table of frequencies.
Df = (4-1)(4-1) = (3)(3) = 9

The result of the chi-square (x^2) table of critical value. At 0.05 significant level and under 9 degree of freedom, the value of x^2 = 16.92

The decision rule states that where the computed x^2 value is less than x^2 critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Analysis**

From the above computation, the calculated chi-square (x^2) value 4.91 is less than the chi-square tabulated 16.92, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. The conclusion is that there is significant difference between the reasons given for abusing drugs and academic performance of secondary school students.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between the effects of drug abuse and academic performance of secondary school students.

Table 4 Chi-square Computation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Fo</th>
<th>Fe</th>
<th>fo-fe</th>
<th>(fo-fe)^2</th>
<th>(fo-fe)^2/fe=x^2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>139.5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>4160.25</td>
<td>55.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>96.75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>21.75</td>
<td>473.06</td>
<td>6.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>42.75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-32.25</td>
<td>1040.62</td>
<td>13.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-54</td>
<td>2916</td>
<td>38.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>114.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore the calculated Chi-square value= 114.54

To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value.
Degree of freedom for chi-square is df = (r-1)(c-1).
Where r is the number of rows and c is the number of columns in the table of frequencies.
Df = (4-1)(4-1) = (3)(3) = 9

The result of chi-square (x^2) table of critical value, at 0.05 significant level and under 9 degree of freedom, the value of x^2 = 16.92

The decision rule states that when the computed chi-square(x^2) is greater than the tabulated chi-square (x^2) or critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Analysis**

From the above computation, the calculated chi-square(x^2) value 114.54 is greater than the chi-square tabulated 16.92, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. The conclusion is that there is significant relationship between the effects of drug abuse and academic performance of secondary school students.
DISCUSSION
The findings of research question 1 revealed that peer group influence contributes to drug abuse by students. Students who associate with other students who abused drugs succumbed to the pressure or influence of taking drugs. Students were cajoled or coerced to indulge in drug abuse by their school friends; they were taken to isolated areas and overpowered to partake in drug abuse. Any student who associates with drug abusers is made or persuaded to take drugs. The senior students recruit junior students into drug abuse in order to make them feel among.
The findings lend credence to the assertions of Edward (2003) who stated that peer group influence is one of the strongest motives, which drive students into drug abuse. Most students with low will power always want to associate with other strong ones. Fuhrman (1986), Oshodi, Aina and Onajole (2010), and Ajayi and Ekundayo(2010) also confirmed that peer group influence contributes to drug abuse by students.
The findings of research question 2 revealed that drug abuse has effect on the academic performance of the secondary school students. Drug abuse alters the brain chemistry and interferes with the students’ ability to make decisions and concentrate in their academic work. It results in impairment of mental activities or capacity of the students and destabilizes their body function and emotion for academic proficiency. Due to various bodily and mental diseases and problems associated with drug abuse, many students find it difficult to face their academic work. Drug abuse has made students less serious and concern about their academics as they stay away from classes and lessons. Drug abuse debilitates the strength and will power of the students to study their books and engage in other academic activities, which has led to their poor academic performance. The findings agreed with the assertions of Alan (2003) who stated that drug abuse has adverse effect on brain perception. McCrystal, Higgins and Percy (2007) confirmed that drug abuse has contributed to academic failure. Ojikutu (2010) stressed that drug abuse adversely affect performance in examination contrary to the expectation of students and Oshodi, Aina and Onajole (2010) asserted that drug abuse causes brain fatigued syndrome which presents poor study assimilation and other mental problems.
The study was statistically analyzed with the use of mean and chi-square statistics ($X^2$). The result of the analysis of the research questions were accepted with the mean scores above 2.5 in all the questions except in research question 3 where one sub-question was rejected with mean value below the average of 2.5. The hypothesis 1 was accepted to show that there is no relationship between reasons given for abusing drug and academic performance of students. This shows that the reasons advanced are not sufficient as regards the academic performance of the students. Since the reasons do not relate to academic success, this indicated a difference between reasons for abusing drug and academic performance because the calculated chi-square ($X^2$) value is less than tabulated chi-square ($X^2$) or critical value at 16.92.
The second hypothesis was rejected when tested with chi-square ($X^2$) statistical tool to confirm that there is relationship between the effects of drug abuse and academic performance of students. The reasons why students abuse drugs are merely to perpetuate in the practice because they are of no help as far as their academic performance is concerned. The reasons given are purely personal and environmental or associational and have nothing to do with academics. The effects of drug abuse may not be quantified even as it’s negative consequences have descended on the students, causing academic failure and under performance.

CONCLUSION
The students who engage in drug abuse swerve to calamitous lane as the purpose for attending school may never be accomplished. It is an aberration for the beneficiaries of education to be on the frolic of their own, with an unmet target. It is pertinent now to be more concerned than before on this issue of drug abuse after taking cognizance of what the victims are passing through in life so as to avert its pernicious captivity, especially among the students. The awareness of the complex nature of the effects of drug abuse should invoke unrelenting effort of everyone and the government to curbing this scourge.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Appropriate sanctions or penalty must be meted out to any student caught in drug abuse so as to serve as deterrent to other students.
1. There should be heartfelt publicity through lectures, campaigns, rallies, symposiums, seminars etc to educate and enlighten the students the effects of drug abuse.
2. Serious war should be declared against those making the drugs available and drastic measures should be taken against the sellers of prohibited drugs so as to clamp down their activities across the country.
3. There should be a routine appraisal on the academic performance of each student apart from examinations.
4. There should be quick and appropriate response to the victims of drug abuse in school so as to reduce the harmful effect in their body and reform them.
5. The school environment should be properly fenced to forestall unwarranted hideout for the students.
6. The government agencies, especially National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and other concerned organizations should intervene and engage in sensitization programmes and establish links with schools.

Educational implications: The concerned students withdraw from their lessons and classes to a hideout and other isolated areas to take drugs at the expense of their education. As long as students indulge in drug abuse, they are bound to under-perform and fail the subjects, and knowledge already gained may be wasted in the course of time.

Drug abuse breeds misbehavior and criminality in the school environment such as disrespect to teachers, rape, extortion and stealing, cultism, brutality and other social vices. All these are aimed at disrupting school activities. Students who abused drugs to gain academic success never realized this target, and the end result is that they become drug addicts or barons instead of academicians, defeating the goals of education.

REFERENCES


