

Assessment of Commonly Abused Substances among Youths in Secondary School of Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to assess the commonly abused substances among youths in secondary school of Sagamu local government area, Ogun state. One hundred (100) students were sampled. Frequency count and simple percentage was used to analyze the demographic data of the respondents. The major findings are alcohol is the most common substance abuse, the reason for abusing substance abuse among students is to feel high, substance abuse affect the body system, substance abuse cause psychological, psychosocial and physical damages, substance abuse can lead to poor academic performance, students get involved in substance use through friends, use of substance leads to absenteeism in school and students get access to drugs in multipurpose shop. Recommendation were made based on the findings of this study that the teacher should be very observant to his/her students in other to report any misbehaviour and government should health education to the public through public media such as television, radio, newspaper and government should charge the manufacturing companies of these substances heavily so that their production rate will reduce.

Keywords: Commonly Abused substances, youth, drug abuse,

Introduction

Substance abuse is a social problem that has spread and increased rapidly in our educational institutions especially among our secondary school students. In Nigeria, this social maladaptation is considered an issue of serious concern as it adversely affects the lives and academic performances of students involved as well as the harmonious functioning of the entire structure of the society. Drug abuse and other associated problems are inimical to the survival and effective functioning of human societies. A significant number of untimely deaths and accidents have been ascribed to the activities of persons under the influence of one drug or the other (Bawoke, 2007).

Fayombo (2015) defined substance abuse as the use of mood modifying substances illegally, excessively and in a socially unacceptable manner. The drugs range from those that should not even be taken without medical prescription such as cocaine, amphetamine, heroine, marijuana, Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD-25) to the socially acceptable beverages such as whisky, local gin, beer and other alcoholic drinks. Odejide (2011) viewed substance abuse as the improper use or application of drugs by a person without proper knowledge of the drugs and without due prescription from a qualified medical practitioner. These definitions focus on psychoactive drugs as all drugs can be abused to an extent such that it turns into addiction when the drug user is unable to stop the use of drugs despite the harmful effects on the user's social, personal and economic lives.

Drugs are substances which when introduced into the body will alter the normal biological and psychological functioning of the body, especially the central nervous system (Escandon, 2006). The term 'drug' in a general sense includes all substances that can alter brain functions and create dependence. WHO (2006) define drug abuse as the self-administration of any drug in a manner that diverts from approved medical or social patterns within a given culture. Illicit drugs and substances are socially accepted and their use does not constitute any criminal offence, in Nigeria, these include alcohol. Drug abuse among youth is dominated by the use of these legal drugs and substances. Among the illegal drugs commonly used by youths are cannabis (Marijuana), ecstasy, heroine, mandrax and lysergic acid diethylamide (NAFDAC, 2010). According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse (2000), Alcohol is the most abuse psychoactive substance in the United States with approximately 90% of students using it before they leave high school. 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. According to Kedir (2011), alcohol is a central nervous system depressant and dulls the brain making learning a difficult task. When students abuse alcohol, their reasoning becomes impaired and education becomes of less priority in their life.

Substance abuse is a global health and social problem. Majority of the Nigerian youths ignorantly depend on one form of drug or the other for their various daily activities – social, educational, political, moral. Such drugs include: Tobacco, Indian hemp, cocaine, morphine, heroine, alcohol, ephedrine, madras, caffeine, glue, barbiturates, amphetamines. The problem of substance abuse is so grave that though it was originally conceived as the problem of a ‘select few’, it has extended beyond the usual characteristics of abusers being male, adult and urban based people to now include female, youngsters and rural dwellers. These abusers erroneously believe that drugs enhance their performance and put them in good mood. The accompanying problems of this act constitute a major threat to the well-being of the society (Ajala, 2009).

Youths in Nigeria like many other countries of the world are developing addiction to psychoactive substances. In 1992, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) collected drugs use and abuse data from schools, records of patients admitted at mental health institutions for drug problems and interviews of persons arrested for drug offences. The result showed that youths constitute the high risk group for drug trafficking and abuse. Friends and school mates account for about 90% of the source of influence of the use and abuse of various psychoactive substances. In Nigeria, alcohol and cigarette are legal substances but, the two have been discovered to cause physical damage to human bodies. These substances have also said to be “gateway drugs” to other more potent drugs like heroin and cocaine (UN, 2014). In Nigeria, it has been reported that smoking (tobacco) causes 90.0% of lung cancer, 30.0% of all cancers, and 80.0% of other chronic lung diseases (Shokunbi, 1990). Due to all these problems, this study assesses the commonly abused substances among youths in secondary school in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Statement of the problem.

Substance abuse is one of the foremost problems affecting youths in Nigeria. Unpleasant youthful activities are widespread in Nigeria and all over Africa, to the extent that they have been giving a lot of concern to the government and general public. Despite the known risk factors associated with drug addiction, people continue to abuse drugs. Substance abuse causes a lot of hazards among the people, especially the youths, and the society. It results to gang formation, cultism, rape, armed robbery, mental illness. Studies have also revealed that most of the drug addicts started smoking from their adolescence. As they grow older they seek new thrills and gradually go into hard drugs.

According to Nofiu (2012), those who are maladjusted or who are unable to face the realities of life seek escape in drug use. The most widely accepted view by social scientist is that, various forms of drugs use are patterns of learned behaviours that are congenial to persons sharing common values and views of society and of themselves. Drug abuse is a risk factor for, academic problems, such as lower grades, absenteeism, and high dropout rates. Alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs can interfere with a student’s ability to think, making learning and concentration more difficult and impeding academic performance. The more a student uses alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, the lower his/her grade point average is likely to be and the more likely he/she is to drop out of school (Nofiu, 2012). The effects of such drugs abuse are advanced and have some implications on the social life of the users, to their family the management of the organization to belongs such as school and their places of work. This study also assessed the commonly abused substances among youths in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State in order to locate the starting point of drug use which subsequently leads to misuse and abuse.

Purpose of the study.

The general purpose of this study is to assessment of commonly abused substances among youths in secondary schools of Sagamu Local Government Area, Ogun while the specific are to;

1. Identify the risk factors associated with substances abuse among youths in secondary schools in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State?

2. Find out the commonly abused substances among the youths in secondary schools in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State?
3. Identify the youth's perception of drugs and substances abuse among youths in secondary schools in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State?

Research Questions.

1. What are the risk factors associated with drug abuse among youths in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State?
2. What are the commonly abused substances among the youths in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State?
3. What are youth's perception of drugs and substances abuse in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State?

Method

Ex post-facto research design was adopted in this study. Ex post facto design is a non-experimental research technique in which pre-existing groups are compared on some dependent variable, it is a type of study that can masquerade as a genuine experiment. Ex post facto research design does not include any form of manipulation or measurement before the fact occurs, as is the case in true experimental design (Lammers, and Badia, 2005).

The population of this study consists of all youths in secondary school between 12 – 20 years of age within the vicinity of Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State with a total population of 10,011. From the population, random sampling technique was used to pick out the samples based on the researcher's knowledge, since the population is very high. Therefore, simple random sampling would be used to select four (4) secondary schools. One hundred (100) respondents was selected randomly from the selected secondary schools. In order to capture the objectives in this research work, four (4) secondary schools are Remo Divisional High School, Sagamu, Remo Methodist, Sagamu, Muslim High School, Sagamu and Remo Secondary School, Sagamu.

The research instrument used in carrying out this research was a closed ended questionnaire that was divided into two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A contains four (4) items designed to obtain personal data of the respondents such as; name of school, sex, age and class of the respondents while section B contains ten (10) items that deals with the questions that answer the research questions.

The questions in Section B allow the respondents to choose from the available options by ticking the boxes corresponding to their appropriate choices. The instrument was validated by two lecturers in university of Ilorin and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

The research instrument was distributed and collected back from the respondents by the researchers. One hundred percent return rate was recorded. The filled copies of the questionnaire were thereafter collated for coding, sorting, analysis and interpretation. Simple percentage and frequency counts was used to analyze the items on the questionnaire.

Results

A total of one hundred (100) questionnaires were given out to obtain information on the assessment of the commonly abused substances among youths in secondary schools of Sagamu local government area, Ogun state. Data gathered were presented according to the order in which they were arranged in the questionnaire. The various responses were therefore grouped and tabulated towards ensuring an objective analysis and interpretation of the findings. Frequency count and simple percentage was used to analyze the respondents' section A (personal and general information) and section B (Issues raised).

Table 1 shows that 58 respondents representing 58% were males and 42 respondents representing 42% were females. Therefore, majority of the respondents were male. Table 1 shows the age of the respondents, 13 of the respondents representing 13.0% fell between the age range of 12 – 14 years, 48 of the respondents representing 48.0% fell between the age range of 15 – 17 years while 39 of the respondents representing 39.0% fell between the age 18 – 20 years and above. Therefore, the majority of the respondents fell between the age range of 15 – 17 years. Table 1 also shows the class

of the respondents, 30 of the respondents representing 30.0% were SS 1 students, 35 of the respondents representing 35.0% were SS 2 students while 30 of the respondents representing 30.0% were SS 3 students. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were SS 2 students.

Table 1
Demographic Information of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	58	57
Female	42	47
Total	100	100.0
Age		
12 – 14 years	13	13.0
15 – 17 years	48	48.0
18 – 20 years	39	47.0
Total	100	100.0
Class		
SS 1	30	30.0
SS 2	35	35.0
SS 3	30	30.0
	100	100.0

Table 2
Most Common Abused Substance by Students

	Frequency	Percentage
Cigarette	21	21.0
Alcohol	43	43.0
Valium	2	2.0
Indian hemp	24	24.0
Cocaine	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 2 above shows the responses of the respondents on the most common substance abuse, 21 of the respondents representing 21.0% choose that cigarette is the most common substance abuse, 43 of the respondents representing 43.0% choose alcohol, 2 of the respondents representing 2.0% choose valium, 24 of the respondents representing 24.0% choose Indian hemp while 1 of the respondent representing 1.0% choose cocaine. Therefore, majority of the respondents choose that alcohol is the most common substance abuse.

Table 3
Reason for substance abuse

	Frequency	Percentage
Frustration	18	18.0
To feel high	32	32.0
For pleasure	12	12.0
For treatment	2	2.0
For pleasure	12	12.0
Peer pressure	10	10.0
For calmness and sleep	3	3.0
To know how it feels	9	9.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 3 above shows the response of the respondents on the reason for substance abuse, 18 of the respondents representing 18.0% choose that the reason why students abuse substance is

frustration, 32 of the respondents representing 32.0% choose to feel high, 21 of the respondents representing 12.0% choose for pleasure, 2 of the respondents representing 2.0% choose for treatment, 12 of the respondents representing 12.0% choose for pleasure, 10 of the respondents representing 10.0% choose for calmness and sleep while 9 of the respondents representing 9.0% choose to know how it feels. Therefore, majority of the respondents choose that to feel high is the reason for abusing substance.

Table 4
Effect of substance abuse

Substance abuse affect the body system	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	89	89.0
No	11	11.0
Total	100	100.0
Can substances abuse cause psychological, psychosocial and physical damages	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	91	91.0
No	9	9.0
Total	100	100.0
Substances abuse can lead to poor academic performance	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	95	95.0
No	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0
How did you get involved in substance use	Frequency	Percentage
Through family	37	37.0
Through friends	38	38.0
Through self determination	25	25.0
Total	100	100.0
Use of substances leads to absenteeism in school	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	75	75.0
No	25	25.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 4 above shows the responses of the respondents on the effect to substance abuse on the body system, 89 of the respondents representing 89.0% agreed that substance abuse affect the body system while 11 of the respondents representing 11.0% disagreed that substance abuse affect the body system. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that substance abuse affect the body system. The Table above also shows the responses of the respondents whether substance abuse cause psychological, psychosocial and physical damages, 91 of the respondents representing 91.0% agreed that substance abuse cause psychological, psychosocial and physical damages while 9 of the respondents representing 9.0% disagreed that substance abuse affect the body system. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that substances abuse cause psychological, psychosocial and physical damages.

Table 4 above shows the responses of the respondents whether substances abuse can lead to poor academic performance, 95 of the respondents representing 95.0% agreed that substances abuse can lead to poor academic performance while 5 of the respondents representing 5.0% disagreed that substance abuse affect the body system. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that substances abuse can lead to poor academic performance. Table 4 above shows the responses of the respondents on how students get involved in substance use, 37 of the respondents representing 37.0% get involved in substance use through family, 38 of the respondents representing 38.0% choose through friends while 25 of the respondents representing 25.0% choose through self-determination. Therefore, majority of the respondents choose that students get involved in substance use through friends.

Table 4 above shows the responses of the respondents whether use of substances leads to absenteeism in school, 75 of the respondents representing 75.0% agreed that use of substances leads to absenteeism in school while 25 of the respondents representing 25.0% disagreed that substance abuse affect the body system. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that the use of substances leads to absenteeism in school.

Table 5

Access to drugs

	Frequency	Percentage
Pharmacy/drug store	17	17.0
Multipurpose shop	23	23.0
Drinking bar/restaurants	21	21.0
Illegal hideouts	18	18.0
Home	12	12.0
Stolen friends	9	9.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 5 above shows the responses of the respondents on how they get access to drugs, 17 of the respondents representing 17.0% choose that students get access to drugs in pharmacy/drug store, 23 (23.0%) choose multipurpose shop, 21 of the respondents representing 21.0% choose drinking bar/restaurants, 18 of the respondents representing 18.0% choose illegal hideouts, 12 of the respondents representing 12.0% choose home while 9 of the respondents representing 9.0% choose stolen friends. Therefore, majority of the respondents choose that they get access to drugs in multipurpose shop.

Discussion

The major findings revealed that the alcohol is the most common substance abuse, the reason for abusing substance abuse among students is to feel high, substance abuse affect the body system and substance abuse cause psychological, psychosocial and physical damages. This is inline with Nofiu(2012) alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs can interfere with a student's ability to think, making learning and concentration more difficult and impeding academic performance. The more a student uses alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, the lower his/her grade point average is likely to be and the more likely he/she is to drop out of school. NAFDAC (2008) found that alcohol is also the most commonly abused drug with about 61% of the population engaging in its use in Nigeria.

Conclusions

Based on this study, it can be concluded that alcohol is the most common substance abuse, the reason for abusing substance abuse among students is to feel high, substance abuse affect the body system, substance abuse cause psychological, psychosocial and physical damages, substance abuse can lead to poor academic performance, students get involved in substance use through friends, use of substance leads to absenteeism in school and students get access to drugs in multipurpose shop.

Recommendations

Considering this research findings, the following recommendations can be drawn;

1. The teacher should be very observant to his/her students in other to report any misbehaviour.
2. The school authority should provide adequate information on the effect and consequences of the substance abuse to students.
3. Parents should also monitor and advice their children to avoid the act of substance abuse.
4. Government should health education to the public through public media such as television, radio, newspaper etc.
5. Government should charge the manufacturing companies of these substances heavily so that their production rate will reduce etc.

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