

Attitude towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency among Senior In-School Adolescents in Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State

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Abstract

Illicit drug use and dependency continues to be the major risk behaviour among in-school adolescents and youth, with physical and mental health implications. Despite known risks associated with illicit drugs, in-school adolescents continue using these drugs. This study investigated attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency among senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka Education zone, Enugu State. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. The population for the study consisted of 12,040 in-school adolescents. The sample was 600 in-school adolescents drawn using a two-stage sampling procedure. A validated Attitude towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency Questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. Descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages and Pearson Chi-square statistic were used to analyse and answer the research questions and hypotheses respectively. Results showed that: overall, more than two-third (75.2%) of senior in-school adolescents had positive attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency. There were significant differences in responses on attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency among in-school adolescents based on gender and location ($p < .05$). The authors recommended among others that the Ministry of Education (Federal and State) should add to their curricular a Drug Education for both the primary and post-primary schools, along with lectures, seminars, rallies, and film shows for the youth's and adolescents on the adverse effects of illicit drug use on students' academic performance, health and personality.

Keyword: Attitude, Illicit Drug, Use, Dependency, In-school Adolescents

Introduction

Illicit drug use is a social public health problem that has spread and increased rapidly in educational institutions especially among secondary school students globally. The problem of illicit drug use and dependency places a significant threat to the social, health, economic fabrics of the families, society, and the entire nations (Giade, 2011). Globally, it is estimated that in 2012, between 162 and 324 million people, corresponding to between 3.5 per cent and 7 per cent of the world population aged 15-64 years, had used an illicit drug, mainly a substance belonging to the cannabis, opioid, cocaine or amphetamine-type stimulants group at least once in the previous year (United Nations Drug Control Programme [UNDCP], 2012). United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2011) estimates show that about 200 million people world over make illicit use of one type of illicit substance or another. In addition, Enugu State is among the States in Nigeria with the highest number of youths arrested by law enforcement agencies for cases of illicit drug use, drug trafficking and other drug-related offences. Today, there are estimated 1.5 million adolescent student drug users in Nigerian secondary schools and higher institutions (Akanbi, Augustina, Theophilus, Muritala, & Ajibode, 2015).

The use of illicit drugs by in-school adolescents in Nigerian secondary schools has become an embarrassing occurrence to parents, schools, government authorities, and the society at large. Nigerian schools for instance are characterized with drug abuse among students, giving rise to diverse anti-social ills, such as: rape, mass failure in examinations, indiscriminate sexual acts, unintended pregnancies, low self-concept, truancy, lying, stealing, and many other vices that may interfere with teaching and learning and peaceful atmosphere in the school settings. In-school adolescents are particularly at risk given that they are in their formative years of education,

career development, social skills and identity formation (Ekpenyong, 2012). In addition reports from Education Authority/Officials in Enugu State showed that illicit drug use appears to be a well-entrenched behaviour among secondary school students. In shopping malls and other public places, students who have dropped out of school because of drug abuse, are found loitering and participating in other forms of criminal activity.

Drug use has a negative impact on the education of secondary school students. The overall health of the user is affected negatively and behaviours associated with drug abuse predispose the abuser to crime and contagious disease, such as HIV and AIDS (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2000). All drugs can be abused to an extent that it turns into addiction when the drug user is unable to stop the use of the drugs despite the harmful effects on the user's social, personal and economic lives (Neeraja, 2011). The extent of problem of drug use by regular drug users and those with drug use disorders is called dependency (UNODC, 2011). Drug dependency involves compulsive drug seeking behaviour. Dependency is often accompanied by tolerance, or the need to take higher doses of a medication to get the same effect. When tolerance occurs, it can be difficult for a physician to evaluate whether a patient is developing a drug problem, or real medical need for higher doses to control their symptoms. Oshikoya and Alli (2006) reported dependence and addiction as some of the consequences of drug abuse, characterized by compulsive drug craving seeking behaviour. Physical dependence can manifest itself in the appearance of both physical and psychological symptoms, which are caused by physiological adaptations in the central nervous system and the brain due to chronic exposure to a substance. Gossop (2003) disclosed that physical effects of dependence on drugs include: body aches, hot or feverish feeling, perspiration, nausea, nasal discharge, muscle cramps, tremors, and irritability. Gossop further disclosed that all these effects produce anxiety, restlessness and insecurity, and that drug is sought to obtain relief from distress. Psychological dependence involves feelings of satisfaction and pleasure from taking illicit drugs.

The alarming evidence in the prevalence of drug abuse and the effects on students called for concern to discourage in-school adolescents from using illicit drugs. In Enugu State today, the effects of illicit drug use and dependence appears to be diverse, including various health problems, social, mental and psychological problems. There is disruption of interpersonal relationship particularly within the family marginalization, criminal behaviour, school failure, vocational problems and failure to achieve normal adolescent milestones. Illicit drug use may lead to organized crimes and disruption of normal academic programmes. It has led to increased secret cult activities in secondary schools and most Nigerian tertiary institutions, which has been a source of threat to lives and property. Majority of the Nigerian adolescents discourteously depend on one form of drug or the other for their various daily activities-social, educational, political, moral among others. Such drugs include: tobacco, cannabis, cocaine, morphine, heroine, alcohol, ephedrine, madras, caffeine, glue, barbiturates, hemp, marijuana, glue and amphetamines (Oshodi, Aina, & Onajole, 2010; Mamman, Othman, & Lian, 2014)

Drug use brings about a change in the biological function of the body. Drug is a substance that modifies perception, cognition, mood, behaviour and general body function (Balogun, 2006). Drugs that are often abused are referred to as illicit drugs. Illicit drug use is the illegal use of substance which interferes with the human behaviour, and includes the non-medical use of a variety of drugs that are prohibited by international law (World Health Organization [WHO], 2010). Contextually, illicit drugs refer to the drugs deemed harmful to the mental and physical wellbeing of in-school adolescents by the government and concerned bodies who seeks to control or discourage consumption by law.

Adolescence is a period of changeover from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence is a time of experimentation, exploration, curiosity and identity search. Cohorts in adolescence stage are called adolescents. Adolescents could be out-of-school or in-school, but this study focused on in-school adolescents. Therefore, in-school adolescents are those attending educational institutions. Most time, in-school adolescents' behaviours are heavily tied to the peer culture; as students learn from and imitate the peers they like and admire. Wanting to be attractive to others becomes very important in adolescence, and this factor is significant in the development of eating disorders, alcohol consumption, tobacco and drug use, tanning, not practising safe sex, and vulnerability to injury, among other behaviours. In-school adolescents who get involved in such risky behaviours, often have high levels of conflict with their parents and poor self control, suggesting that they engage in such behaviour to manage a stressful life. Adolescents who abused substances typically do more poorly in academic. Students who abuse drugs are seen as threats to the peace and security of their institutions.

The use of illicit drug and over the counter (OTC) drugs have been on the increase as people seek to reduce pressures around them by engaging in the act of drug abuse. Some including in-school adolescents seem to have resorted to the use of drugs to show open rebellion against constituted authority, while some use kola nuts, alcohol and equally drink coffee to keep awake and to enhance their reading and assimilation. Oshodi, Aina, and Onajole (2010) reported that curiosity, social pressure and peer group influence are noted to be primary reasons

for substance misuse. Equally, individuals who are bored, lacking in interpersonal relationship skills, sometimes use drugs to “pep” them up, help them cope with social situations, boost their confidence, make them likeable. Some parents equally share drugs with their children, viewing it as a way to “bond” (Obiamaka, 2004). Following from the above facts, one would like to find out whether these behaviours are outcome of negative attitude towards maladaptive behaviour caused by drug abuse. The findings of the study may aid in understanding and curbing the overall social, academic and drug problems of students and youth in Enugu State, and as well change their attitudes positively.

Attitude is a predisposition to act in a certain way towards some aspect of one’s environment including other people, object and events. Ademuwagun, Ajala, Oke, Moronkola, and Jegede (2002) defined attitude as a set of affective reactions towards an object that predisposes the individual to behave in a certain manner towards the object. Contextually, attitude refers to reactions of in-school adolescents towards illicit drug use and dependency. Attitude can be positive or negative, and can affect the behaviour of an individual. Positive attitude tends to express certain behaviour, while negative attitude, on the contrary, disengages such behaviour. However, attitude is changeable depending on learning and increased experience through a convincing or influencing or group changing. Measurement of attitude according to Nwachukwu (2007), is usually based on the subjective self reports, and the instrument used to measure attitudes is always referred to as attitude scale. The author further disclosed that the scale presents a number of positive and negative statements for each attitude being rated as follows: strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The higher values indicate more positive attitudes while for a negative item, the rating is reversed. Attitude of in-school adolescents towards illicit drug use and dependency is very important in their daily lives as it determines the direction of their activities or behaviour.

Various factors have been adduced to influence attitudes towards drug use and dependence. These include: gender, age, location, class among others. The problem of substance abuse has extended beyond the usual characteristics of abusers being males, adults, and urban-based people, to now include females, youngsters, and rural dwellers (Rocha, 2007). Akanbi, Augustina, Theophilus, Muritala, and Ajibode (2015) reported a significant difference between the adolescent drug abuser and non-drug abuser, and also there was a difference between the male abuser and female abuser. Oyita and Eniojukan (2015) reported more male alcohol and drug users than the females. Ndom and Adalakun (1996) argued that male children from an unstable families were associated with high risk of substance abuse, this argument is supported with clinical findings by Nyki (2015) which indicates that cannabis abusers are mostly young Nigerian men, including students, who have been deprived of parental supervision and warmth from infancy.

Majority of secondary school students are in the adolescent stage of life, and these students are very curious and likely to experiment with drugs without knowing the dangers. Observations have revealed that Nigerian schools are characterized with drug abuse among students. Illicit drug use appears to have been responsible for a lot of social problems ranging from lateness to class, family neglect, deviance behaviours, involvement in crime among others. The present day continuous arrest of offenders by police, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and the media reports in Nsukka zone of Enugu State revealed that illicit drug use is on the increase. In view of the above situation, the need arose to find out whether these behaviours are outcome of poor attitude regarding maladaptive behaviour caused by illicit drug use. It would also be of interest to find out if the attitude of senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka Education zone, Enugu State, Nigeria towards illicit drug use and dependency is associated with their gender and school location. This was the crux of the study. Following from the above, three research questions were posed, and two null hypotheses were postulated to guide the study.

Research Questions

Three research questions were posed to guide the study.

1. What is the attitude of senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka education zone towards illicit drug use and dependency?
2. What is the attitude of senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka education zone towards illicit drug use and dependency based on gender?
3. What is the attitude of senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka education zone towards illicit drug use and dependency based on school location?

Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were postulated and tested at .05 alpha level.

1. There is no significant difference on attitude of senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka education zone towards illicit drug use and dependency based on gender ($p < .05$).
2. There is no significant difference on attitude of senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka education zone towards illicit drug use and dependency based on school location ($p < .05$).

Methods

Research Design: The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. A cross-sectional survey is one that produces a snap shot of a population at a particular point in time. Instead of following a group of subjects over a period of time, cross-section of the subjects of varying ages and other socio-demographic factors are sampled and studied at the same time, and data are obtained at one time from groups or at different stages of development (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

Area of the Study: The study was conducted in Nsukka Education zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. There are three local government areas (LGAs) that make up the education zone: Igbo-Etiti, Uzo-Uwani, and Nsukka LGAs. The researchers observed that Nsukka education zone is popularly known as home for illicit drug use and dependency, with lots of social vices attributed to drug use effects. Often times, students in Nsukka are found loitering in the streets, going late to class, and involving in deviant behaviours and crimes predisposed by illicit drug use. Thus, the researchers deemed the area appropriate for the study.

Population for the Study: The population for the study comprised senior in-school adolescents from the secondary schools in the three LGAs that make up Nsukka Education Zone. The estimated population of senior in-school adolescents is 12,040 in 58 secondary schools in Nsukka Education zone (Post-Primary School Management Board [PPSMB], 2018).

Sample for the Study: The sample for the study consisted of 600 senior in-school adolescents in Nsukka Education zone. The sample was selected by the aid of Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) standardized table for sample size, confidence levels and confidence intervals for random samples. A two-stage sampling procedure was employed to draw the sample size for the study. In the first stage, 25 out of the 58 secondary schools in Nsukka education zone were drawn using simple random sampling technique of balloting without replacement. Secondly, purposive sampling technique was used to select 24 (that is, 12 male and 12 female) senior in-school adolescents only, who are more mature and better experienced to give accurate information needed in the study from each of the 25 selected secondary schools. This gave a total of 600 in-school adolescents drawn for the study.

Instrument for Data Collection: A structured Attitude Towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency Questionnaire (ATIDUDQ) was used for data collection. The ATIDUDQ consisted of two sections: A and B. Section A consisted of three items on the respondent's demographic variables of gender and school location. Section B consisted of 10 items on attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency. Five experts from the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka validated the instrument. The experts' suggestions were incorporated in the final draft of the questionnaire before use in the study. A split half method using the Spearman's Brown coefficient was used to correlate the data generated. The reliability index of .83 was obtained, and adjudged reliable for embarking on the study. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate each of the items on a four-point Likert-type scale as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) 4, Agree (A) 3, Disagree (D) 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1.

Data Collection Technique: Copies of the questionnaire were administered to 600 senior in-school adolescents, out of which 576 were returned, which gave a return rate of 96 per cent. The 576 copies of the questionnaire returned were properly filled out and were used for data analysis.

Data Analysis Technique: Data generated were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, and Chi-square statistic. For the purpose of determining proportion of responses, the 4-point Likert-type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), were dichotomized. However, responses indicating 'SA and A' were categorized as 'Agree' while responses indicating 'D and SD' were categorized as Disagree. The research questions were answered using percentages while the null hypotheses were tested using Chi-square (χ^2) at .05 level of significance. The criterion for deciding a positive or a negative attitude was based on WHO (1997) international cut off point of 50 per cent. Therefore, attitudinal responses that had less than 50 per cent were deemed negative while those that had 50 per cent and above were deemed positive attitude.

Results

Table 1: Attitude of Senior In-School Adolescents Towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency (n = 576)

S/N	Attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency	Agree f(%)	Disagree f (%)	Decision
1.	Illicit drug use is harmful to health	472(81.9)	104(18.1)	P
2.	Use of illicit drugs can affect students' progress at school	540(93.8)	36(6.25)	P
3.	Illicit drugs use is healthfully beneficial to students	57(9.9)	519(90.1)	N
4.	Illicit drug enhances academic performance	31(5.4)	545(94.6)	N
5.	Students know the places where illicit drugs can be found	556(96.5)	20(3.5)	P
6.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never reject offer of taking illicit drugs	567(98.4)	9(1.6)	P
7.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never perform well in academic work	540(93.8)	36(6.25)	P
8.	Student that depend on illicit drug advise friends to indulge in illicit drug use	454(78.8)	122(21.2)	P
9.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never get tired of abusing drug	556(96.5)	20(3.5)	P
10.	Students that depend on illicit drugs thought they are benefiting from using it.	560(97.2)	16(2.8)	P
	Overall	75.2	24.8	P

Key: N = Negative, P = Positive

Results in Table 1 showed that overall, more than two-third (75.2%) of senior in-school adolescent, indicated positive attitudes while 24.8 per cent indicated negative attitude toward illicit drug use and depending. The table also showed that majority of senior in-school adolescents disagreed that illicit drug use is healthfully beneficial to students (90.1%), and enhances academic performance (94.6%).

Table 2: Attitude of Senior In-School Adolescents Towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency Based on Gender (n = 576)

S/N	Attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency	Male F(%)	Dec.	Female F(%)	Dec.
1.	Illicit drug use is harmful to health	259(92.2)	P	256(86.8)	P
2.	Use of illicit drugs can affect students' progress at school	170(60.5)	P	267(90.5)	P
3.	Illicit drugs use is healthfully beneficial to students	79(28.1)	N	81(27.5)	N
4.	Illicit drug enhances academic performance	127(45.2)	N	136(46.1)	N
5.	Students know the places where illicit drugs can be found	240(85.4)	P	271(91.9)	P
5.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never reject offer of taking illicit drugs	263(93.6)	P	172(58.3)	P
7.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never perform well in academic work	241(85.8)	P	249(84.4)	P
3.	Student that depend on illicit drug advise friends to indulge in illicit drug use	213(75.8)	P	214(72.5)	P
9.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never get tired of abusing drug	198(70.5)	P	196(66.4)	P
10.	Students that depend on illicit drugs thought they are benefiting from using it.	206(73.3)	P	219(74.2)	P
	Overall	71.04	P	69.86	P

Key: Dec. = Decision, N = Negative, P = Positive

Results in Table 2 showed that overall, more than two-third (71.04%) of male senior in-school adolescents had more positive attitudes towards illicit drug use and dependency than female senior in-school adolescents (69.86%). The table also showed that both male and female senior in-school adolescents indicated negative attitudes toward illicit drugs use are healthfully beneficial to students (male = 28.1%; female = 27.5%), and illicit drug enhances academic performance (male = 45.2%; female = 46.1%).

Table 3: Attitude of Senior In-School Adolescents Towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency Based on Location (n = 576)

S/N	Attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency	Urban F(%)	Dec.	Rural F(%)	Decision
1.	Illicit drug use is harmful to health	201(69.1)	P	125(43.9)	N
2.	Use of illicit drugs can affect students' progress at school	263(90.3)	P	167(58.6)	P
3.	Illicit drugs use is healthfully beneficial to students	169(58.1)	P	101(35.4)	N
4.	Illicit drug enhances academic performance	220(75.6)	P	25(8.8)	N
5.	Students know the places where illicit drugs can be found	206(70.8)	P	149(52.3)	P
6.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never reject offer of taking illicit drugs	189(64.9)	P	183(64.2)	P
7.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never perform well in academic work	222(76.3)	P	271(95.1)	P
8.	Student that depend on illicit drug advice friends to indulge in illicit drug use	104(35.7)	N	224(78.6)	P
9.	Students that depend on illicit drugs never get tired of abusing drug	166(57.0)	P	184(64.6)	P
10.	Students that depend on illicit drugs thought they are benefiting from using it.	182(62.5)	P	249(87.4)	P
	Overall	66.03	P	58.9	P

Results in Table 3 showed that overall, more than half of senior in-school adolescents in urban setting (66.0%) had more positive attitudes towards illicit drug use and dependency than those in rural setting (58.9%).

Table 4: Chi-square Test of Attitude of In-School Adolescents Towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency Based on Gender

Gender	N	Agree O(E)	Disagree O(E)	χ^2	df	p-value
Male	281	200(197.4)	81(83.6)	5.294	1	.034*
Female	295	206(201.7)	83(93.3)			
Total	576					

*significant ($p < .05$)

Results in Table 4 showed the Pearson Chi-square value with the corresponding p-value for hypothesis of no significant difference on attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency among in-school adolescents based on gender ($\chi^2 = 5.294$, $df = 1$, $p = .034 < .05$). Since the p-value was below .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that attitude of male and female in-school adolescents towards illicit drug use and dependency differed significantly.

Table 5: Chi-square Test of Attitude of In-School Adolescents Towards Illicit Drug Use and Dependency Based on Location

Location	N	Agree O(E)	Disagree O(E)	χ^2	df	p-value
Urban	291	192(186.2)	99(104.8)	11.220	1	.040*
Rural	285	168(153.8)	117(131.2)			
Total	576					

*significant ($p < .05$)

Results in Table 5 showed the Pearson Chi-square value with the corresponding p-value for hypothesis of no significant difference on attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency among in-school adolescents based on location ($\chi^2 = 11.220$, $df = 1$, $p = .040 < .05$). Since the p-value was below .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that attitude of in-school adolescents residing in urban and rural setting towards illicit drug use and dependency differed significantly.

Discussion

The study established that more than two-third of senior in-school adolescents had positive attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency, and 24 per cent had negative attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency. Also, majority of in-school adolescents disagreed that illicit drug use is healthfully beneficial to students, and enhances academic performance. These suggest that majority of senior in-school adolescents expressed their good or bad disposition towards items that measured attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency. The findings were expected and therefore were not surprising because illicit drug use and dependency places a significant threat to the social, health, economic fabrics of the families, society, and the entire nations; and also have a negative impact on the education of secondary school students. The findings were in line with the findings of Oshodi, Aina, and Onajole (2010) who reported that curiosity, social pressure and peer group influence are noted to be primary reasons for substance misuse. The use of illicit drugs commonly starts at adolescence. There are significant changes that manifest in the behaviour of drug abusers, and such behaviour include: poor academic performance in school, increased absenteeism, chronic dishonesty and reduced self-esteem. Applying social learning theory by Bandura (1977), friends provide social reinforcement or punishment for abstinence or use, provide normative definitions of use and abstinence, and to a lesser extent, serve as admired models to imitate. This study suggests that in-school adolescents' use of illicit drugs and dependence may be modified by total withdrawal from the act. The findings may assist school administrators to be effective in implementation, co-ordination, supervision and evaluation of all those behavioural change programmes for the promotion of positive behavioural attitude of students in order to make them more productive academically and better leaders of tomorrow.

The findings also showed that more than two-third of male in-school adolescents and more than half of female in-school adolescents had positive attitudes towards illicit drug use and dependency, though; males had

more positive attitudes than the females. Both male and female in-school adolescents indicated negative attitudes toward illicit drugs use are healthfully beneficial to students, and illicit drug enhances academic performance. Also, the attitude of male and female in-school adolescents towards illicit drug use and dependency differed significantly. The findings were expected and therefore were not surprising because in the Nigerian society, illicit drug users are mostly males, especially those deprived of parental upbringing, neglected or abused due to the influence of drug use. The findings were in consonance with the finding of Akanbi, Augustina, Theophilus, Muritala, and Ajibode (2015) who reported a significant difference between the adolescence drug abuser and non-drug abuser, and also there was a difference between the male abuser and female abuser. Equally, the finding was in consonance with the findings of: Oyita and Eniojukan (2015) who reported more male alcohol and drug users than the females; and Fatoye and Morakinyo (2002) who reported that males used alcohol, kolanut and coffee more often than the females. The findings also conform to the findings of Simoni-Wastila, Yang, and Lawler (2008) who found that being female was positively associated with non-medical use of prescription drugs when it was the only substance abused. Ndom and Adelakun (1996) argued that male children from an unstable families were associated with high risk of substance abuse, this argument is supported with clinical findings by Nyki (2015) which indicates that cannabis abusers are mostly young Nigerian men, including students, who have been deprived of parental supervision and warmth from infancy. The findings were also in consonance with the findings of Rocha (2007) who reported that the problem of substance abuse has extended beyond the usual characteristics of abusers being males, adults, and urban-based people, to now include females, youngsters and rural dwellers. Variation in gender difference would also have been influenced by the environment. Use of these illicit drugs is still regarded as a male habit in the environment. This was affirmed by the findings of Fatoye and Morakinyo (2002) that the use of cigarette and cannabis was the exclusive preserve of the males, and the females abused the inhalants and tranquilizers more than the males. The findings could be due to the fact that the use of such drugs by male and female in-school adolescents tends to undermine moral restraints and so lead to violent behaviours and other criminal acts.

The study equally established that more than half of in-school adolescents in urban setting had more positive attitudes towards illicit drug use and dependency than those in rural setting. In-school adolescents in urban setting had positive attitudes while those in rural setting had negative attitudes on illicit drug use are: harmful to health; healthfully beneficial to students; and drug enhances academic performance. Those in urban setting disagree while those in rural setting agreed that students that depend on illicit drug advise friends to indulge in illicit drug use. Also, the attitude of in-school adolescents residing in urban and rural setting towards illicit drug use and dependency differed significantly. The findings were expected and therefore were not surprising because drug users are mostly found in the urban setting than rural in the Nigerian context due to population explosion caused by urbanization and other commercial activities going on therein. The findings were in consonance with the findings of Rocha (2007) who reported that the problem of substance abuse has extended beyond the usual characteristics of abusers being males, adults, and urban-based people, to now include females, youngsters and rural dwellers. The findings could be due to the fact that illicit drug use has gone a long way to create several health problems and dangers in our urban and rural settings. The government may be compelled to propose strict penalties for the abusers and make plans to rehabilitate both urban and rural dwellers.

Conclusion

The study was conducted in order to ascertain attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency among in-school adolescents. The findings have shown that most senior in-school adolescents had positive attitude towards drug use while some still have negative attitude. There were significant differences in responses on attitude of in-school adolescents towards illicit drug use and dependency based on gender and school location. However, a cognitive restructuring programme is necessary. Students' attitude towards illicit drug use and dependency had an impact on their behaviour. The illicit drugs which were commonly used include: cigarettes, marijuana, cannabis among others. The use of these drugs had detrimental effects on students' academic progress and their interpersonal relationships. Public health intervention aimed at preventing drug use among in-school adolescents should be designed with the understanding that illicit drug use may be associated with other behaviours, such as: teenage sexual molestation, cigarette smoking and alcohol use.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Health educators, institutions and other proponents of public health services should design better educational strategies to reduce the intake of illicit drugs among secondary school students.



2. National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) should intensify their anti drug campaign in order to have illicit drug use free society, with a special focus on in-school adolescents.
3. Preventive health education should be intensified in schools and media to modify students' attitudes towards illicit drug use and dependency. Also, media should be used to address illicit drug use because of its great influence on school children.
4. The Ministry of Education (Federal and State) must add to their curricular a Drug Education for both the primary and post-primary schools, along with lectures, seminars, rallies, and film shows for the youth's and adolescents on the adverse effects of illicit drug use on students' academic performance and personality.

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