Assessment of the Prevalence of Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students in Yola Metropolis, Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract: **This study assessed the prevalence of drug abuse among secondary school students in Yola Metropolis of Adamawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to; Identify causes of drug abuse; Examine effects of drug abuse; and also Identify factors influencing drug abuse; Primary data were collected from 389 randomly selected secondary school teachers using structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and Likert scale (mean analysis). Findings of the study revealed that family inadequacies and peer pressure are leading causes of drug abuse among students. Furthermore, the study revealed that drug abuse can adversely limit academic and social wellbeing of students leading to low performance, examination malpractice, and social vices among others.** *Therefore***, the study recommended that there is the need for the government agencies responsible for limiting drug abuse to be proactive in performing their responsibilities.**

Keywords: **Drug Abuse, Secondary School, Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria.**

I.   INTRODUCTION

The challenge of drug abuse is a global phenomenon, especially among the young members of the society. It is estimated about 275 million people abuse drug globally (World Drug Report, 2018). The magnitude of the world drug problem becomes more apparent when considering that more than 1 out of 10 drug users were suffering from drug use disorders or drug dependence (UNODC, 2018). However, the distribution of this problem varies with location across the globe. According to De Souza et al. (2018), adolescents or young people in recent years have been involved in the cultivation and consumption of illicit drugs. This trend is influenced by some factors like the physical environment, socio-economic status, personal or family challenges, and peer pressure among others (UNODC, 2018). In fact, many studies suggest that adolescents within school age range (between 12–14 years to late 15–17 years) are in a critical risk period for the initiation of substance use (TEDS Report, 2014).

Over the years, about 15% of the adult population in Nigeria (around 14.3 million people) reported a considerable level of use of psychoactive drug substances. This challenge is very much pronounced in the Northern parts of the country. In the North-East, it is estimated that persons engaged in drug abuse constitute about 13.6% of the population of the region (Gobir et al., 2017). Substances commonly abused include Cannabis (commonly referred to as *marijuana*, Indian hemp, weed, *we-we*, or *Igbo*), tramadol and codeine (Idowu et al., 2018). More concerning to policy makers is the high number of school-age children engaging in such menace. This is because such activity can destroy the future of such students if not addressed. In fact, it can hamper physical and psychological development of the students (Deidre, 2012; Lonnie, 2013; Backes and Bonnie, 2019).

To reduce the engagement of people in drug abuse, the Nigerian government made some initiatives by introducing programs and projects to reduce the prevalence. However, despite massive crackdown by authorities such as the police and officers of the National drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and also the creation of awareness/sensitization, non-medical use of prescription drugs has reached epidemic proportions all parts of the country (Gobir et al., 2017).

Therefore, this study was aimed at assessing the prevalence of drug abuse among secondary school students in Yola Metropolis, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to;

i.   Identify causes of drug abuse;

ii.   Examine effects of drug abuse;

iii.   Identify factors influencing drug abuse;

II.   MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to achieve the set objectives. The study was conducted in Yola south local government area of Adamawa State, Nigeria. Yola South Local Government Area lies between Latitude $9^o14'$ North of the Equator and Longitude $12^o\ 28'$ East of the Greenwich Meridian. The area has a land mass of 2,310.05km and a population of 196, 197, who are mostly farmers (National Population Commission Nigeria, (2006). The local government has a total of 11 wards. Prominent ethnic groups in Yola south LGA are; Verre, Batta, Fulani, Hausa, and Laka.

The population of the study comprised of all private and public secondary school teachers within the study area. Multi-stage, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were employed for the study. Yola south local government area is divided into eleven (11) wards. In the first stage, Yola South Local Government Area was purposively selected because of its predominance as one of the Local Governments having large population of secondary schools in Adamawa state, being the administrative headquarters of the State. The local government is composed of eleven (11) wards. In the second stage, five (5) wards within the metropolis were purposively selected for the study. In the last stage, 389 teachers were selected using simple random sampling technique. The study population is justified by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table.

Data for the study was collected from primary sources using structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to collect information from respondents on the research objectives. Responses were graded on a five-point Likert scale; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was validated and a reliability test was carried out after conducting the pilot test.

In analysing the data collected, descriptive statistics involving the use of frequencies and means was used. The mean for analysing the Liker scale responses was 3.0. The five-point Likert-scale model is shown as follows;

$$\overline{x} = \frac{\sum F}{Nr}$$

Where: $\overline{x}\ s$ = Mean Score

$\sum$ = Summation

F = Frequency of the Respondents

N = Mean Value

Nr = Number of respondents to the item

The decision rule is computed thus;

$$5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = \frac{15}{5} = 3.0$$

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Causes of Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students

The distribution of the respondents on the causes of drug abuse among students is presented in Table 1. Findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents attributed students' drug abuse to lack of adequate parental care (X=3.56), peer pressure (X=3.79), and poor societal moral standards (X=3.86). The implication of this findings is that the respondents believe that the family plays a significant role in moulding the character of students to avoid drug abuse.

Table 1. Causes of Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students (N=389)

S/N	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD	X	STD	R
1	Lack of adequate parental care	155 (39.8)	58(14.9)	51 (13.1)	101 (26.0)	24 (6.2)	3.56	1.36	A
2	Family crisis	51 (13.1)	21 (20.8)	33 (8.5)	119 (30.6)	105 (27.0)	2.62	1.40	D
3	Peer pressure	146 (37.5)	111 (28.5)	55 (14.1)	59 (15.2)	18 (4.6)	3.79	1.22	A
4	Poor school management	5 (1.3)	78 (20.1)	29 (7.5)	169 (43.4)	108 (27.8)	2.24	1.10	D
5	Poor societal moral standard	131 (33.7)	117 (30.1)	95 (24.4)	46 (11.8)	0 (0.0)	3.86	1.01	A

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Effects of Drug Abuse on Secondary School Students

Regarding the effects of drug abuse on the students, findings of this study indicated that drug abuse can lead to poor academic performance (X=3.41), promotes examination malpractice (X=3.96), withdrawal from school (X=3.56), and encourages thuggery/social vices (X=3.37). This implies that the overall academic and social wellbeing of the students can be gravely affected by drug abuse (WHO, 2018). As opined by Kimberly et al. (2015), psychological wellbeing of children is gravely endangered by substance abuse.

Table 2. Effects of Drug Abuse on Secondary School Students (N=389)

S/N	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD	X	STD	R
1	Poor academic performance	147 (37.8)	60 (15.4)	41 (10.5)	87 (22.4)	54 (13.9)	3.41	1.51	A
2	Low self esteem	62 (15.9)	55 (14.1)	67 (17.2)	138 (35.5)	67 (17.2)	2.76	1.33	D
3	Promotes examination malpractice	180 (46.3)	108 (27.8)	25 (6.4)	58(14.9)	18 (4.6)	3.96	1.24	A
4	Withdrawal from school	155 (39.8)	58(14.9)	51 (13.1)	101 (26.0)	24 (6.2)	3.56	1.39	A
5	Encourages thuggery/social vices	141 (36.2)	54 (13.9)	65 (16.7)	64(16.5)	65 (16.7)	3.37	1.51	A

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Factors Influencing Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students

Drug abuse is being facilitated by certain socio-economic factors as presented in Table 3. Based on the submission of the respondents, compromise by law enforcement agents (X= 3.84), cheapness of the commodity (X= 3.84), advertisements in movies and songs (X= 4.19), and the involving students in political activities (X= 3.39) are the factors that influence

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drug abuse in the study area. Therefore, to address the challenges of drug abuse among secondary school students, there is the need for concerted to create awareness on the effects of drug abuse on the society.

Table 3. Factors Influencing Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students (N=389)

S/N	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD	X	STD	R
1	Compromise by law enforcement agents	162 (41.6)	109 (28.0)	36 (9.3)	57 (14.7)	25 (6.4)	3.84	1.24	A
2	Cheapness of the commodity	162 (41.6)	109 (28.0)	36 (9.3)	57 (14.7)	25 (6.4)	3.84	1.28	A
3	Advertisements in movies and songs	189 (48.6)	133 (34.2)	17 (4.4)	50 (12.9)	0 (00.0)	4.19	1.00	A
4	Involving students in political activities.	121 (31.1)	69 (17.7)	74 (19.0)	89 (22.9)	36 (9.3)	3.39	1.37	A

Source: Field Survey, 2018

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study assessed the prevalence of drug abuse among secondary school students in Yola Metropolis of Adamawa State, Nigeria. Findings of the study revealed that family inadequacies and peer pressure are leading causes of drug abuse among students. Furthermore, the study revealed that drug abuse can adversely limit academic and social wellbeing of students leading to low performance, examination malpractice, and social vices among others. Based on these findings, it is therefore recommended that;

i. There is the need for the government agencies responsible for limiting drug abuse to be proactive in performing their responsibilities.

ii. Secondary school administrators should liaise with parents to monitor students in order to notice and curtail drug abuse tendencies early.

iii. Parents should take adequate care of their children and ensure that they are insulated from conflicts that will make their children to be emotionally instable.

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