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Drug Abuse Practices, Effects and Possible Ways of Eradication Among Secondary School Students In Kano State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to determine the drug abuse practices, effects and possible ways of eradication among secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria. It sought answers to the following research question (1) what are the types of drugs commonly abused by secondary school students in Kano State? (2) What are the factors that lead secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria to drug abuse practices? (3) What are the effects of drug abuse practices on secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria? (4) What are the possible ways of eradicating drug abuse practices among secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria? Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population of the study was made up of about 28,000 secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria. The sample was made up of 1,036 JSS III and SS III secondary school students in the study area. Questionnaire was used to collect relevant data. The data collected was analyzed using simple percentages. The study among others revealed eighteen (18) drugs commonly abuse by the subjects, twelve (12) factors that lead to drug abuse practices, eighteen (18) effects of drug abuse practices, and thirteen (13) possible ways of eradicating drug abuse practices among secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria. Conclusions were made and recommendations were given to include: Drug education should be made an integral part of the school curriculum from senior primary school upwards; parents should give more attention to their children upbringing practices as well as know who their children's friends are; professional bodies should write articles in the newspaper, magazines as well as through radio, television, posters etc on the ills of drug abuse practices.

KEYWORDS: Drugs, abuse, Adolescents, practices

Introduction

Adolescence is the transition period between childhood and adulthood from 12 – 18 years [6]. This is the period during which the young persons attend the secondary school. The beginning although it may vary greatly from person to person, is determined by the biological and social components of the adolescents.

However, some attitudes and behavioral patterns seem to be generalized at this age, they include: idealism; questioning authority; suspicion of the adult world; creativity and joy; energy; conformity to the group; self – eastern, sensitivity; insecurity and need for support [7]. The adolescent years may be hard for many young people.

According to[1] after puberty young people face series of obstacles which they must overcome if they are to successfully continue progressing in life to include: Adapting to his new image, adjusting to his new mental capacity, Facing the growing academic demands, Increasing verbal ability, Acquiring a personal identity, Establishing vocational goals, Confirming independence with respect to parents, Establishing healthy friendships, Learning to control sexuality, Adapting a correct lifestyle, Controlling his impulses and exercising a mature behavior. These challenges faced by adolescents vary from one culture to another. Some adolescents resolve the challenges easily; others take years to do so and a good number miss out entirely taking to drug use and abuse [10].

Drugs are substances which alter the organic functions and behavior of those who take them. Drugs may be liquid, solid, vapour or semi-solid given to human beings or animals for treatment, prevention or diagnosis of illness [10].

The principle of drug use is that the drug should be medically prescribed. However, it is known that some adolescent drug users do not comply with the instructions [8]. These constitute either drug misuse or drug abuse. When the law does not permit the recreational use of drugs (eg. Cocaine), any use constitutes an abuse. Drug abuse means the non – medical use of mind – altering or additive substances in socially inappropriate or harmful ways [2]. Drugs commonly abused by adolescents among others according to [5], are illegal drugs like:- cannabis, stimulants, depressants, narcotics, etc and the legal ones like the tranquilizers which the doctors prescribe, if properly used there are benefits. Other drugs are those open to public consumption, such as tobacco or alcohol; hashish or the designer drugs. The abused drugs have the following in common:

- They affect the brain and its functions,
- They leave harmful chemical remains in the body and
- They create a habit

A considerable number of adolescents are regular drug abusers [5]. However, this habit often goes unnoticed by the family and school. This prevents the adolescent from receiving the guidance and help from their emotional support system. The signs of initial stage of drug abuse are much more subtle and generally exclude the drug itself such as: Aluminum foil cut into pieces or screwed up, A home made pipe, The remain of a hashish or cigarette rolling papers , Strange stains or smells on the clothes. Behavior patterns that can be related to drug taking are:

(i) Loss of appetite
(ii) Unexpected changes in the state of mind
(iii) Loss of interest in studies, sports and hobbies
(iv) Sleepiness and laziness,
(v) lies
(vi) Need for money without reasonable explanation
(vii) Stealing at home (money, valuables)
(viii) A lot of time spent outside the home.

When these signs or effects are observed on the adolescent, it is important to determine the circumstances which encouraged drug abuse. This will contribute to better prevention or eradication of drug abuse practices.[3] identified the family, friends, social-cultural environment, genetic predisposition and the person himself/herself to be significantly influential to adolescent's drug abuse practices. When these factors are addressed properly, the drug abuse practices of adolescents would be tackled, rehabilitated on prevented which is an interest of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to determine the Drug Abuse practices, effects and possible ways of eradicating among secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria. Specifically the study will find out:

- The types of drugs commonly abused by secondary school students in Kano State Nigeria.
- Factors that lead secondary school students in Kano State Nigeria to drug abuse practices
- The effects of drug abuse practices on the secondary school students
- The possible ways of eradicating drug abuse practices among secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria.

Research questions

The study will answer the following research questions.

- What are the types of drugs commonly abused by secondary

school students in Kano State, Nigeria?
- What are the factors that lead secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria to drug abuse practices?
- What are the effects of drug abuse on secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria?
- What are the possible ways of eradicating drug abuse practices among secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria?

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in Kano State, Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of about twenty eight thousand (28,000) secondary school students in government boys and girls secondary schools in Kano State, Nigeria.

The schools were zoned into ten (10) educational zones. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed. The first sampling stage was the selection of one educational zone (Bichi educational zone).

In the second stage, the three government girls secondary school in the zone were purposively selected and four government boys secondary schools were randomly selected for the study making a total of seven (7) government secondary schools. A total of 1,036 JSS III and SSIII students were randomly selected for the study.

The instrument for data collection was a well structured and face validated questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages (%).

Result and Discussions

Research question 1: what are the drugs commonly abused by secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria?

Table 1: percentage responses on the types of drugs commonly abused by the respondents.

		Secondary schools students			
S/N	Commonly abused drugs	JSS III Boys	JSSIII Girls	SS III Boys	SSIII Girl
1	Sleeping pills (Librium, diazepam, valium	12.1	8.6	52.1	15.8
2	Sleepless pills (Kwaya)	4.3	4.5	60.7	36,8
3	Alcohol (bear, stout, brandy brukutu, pito etc	9.1	9.1	25.0	26.3
4	Tobacco (cigarettes, cigar, snuff)	36.4	36.4	85.7	78.9
5	Hallucinogens (Indian hemp, wee-wee, marijuana)	13.9	-	50.0	3.2
6	Narcotic analgesic (morphine, heroine)	18.2	0.9	67.9	2.6
7	Anti-pyretic analgesic (aspirm, paracetamol	54.5	72.7	53.6	57.9
8	Laxatives and purgatives	16.1	45.5	57.1	63.2
9	Worm expellers	24.2	50.0	35.4	59.5
10	Blood tonics	12.1	50.5	33.2	63.2
11	Nerve tonic	26.7	-	12.5	5.3
12	Anti-malarial (Nivaquine, chloroquine etc)	40.3	68.2	40.0	89.5
13	Antibiotics (penicillin, ampicillin, etc	54.5	86.4	26.8	60.5
14	Beverages, coffee, kolanut, tea	93.9	27.3	71.8	62.6
15	Pawpaw leaves (dry)	-	-	-	-
16	Burankasi (chewing stick)	87.9	31.8	89.3	57.9
17	Cassava leaves (dry)	-	-	-	-
18	Laundry blue	54.5	38.5	71.4	46.3
19	Zallawi (wild rose)	18.2	4.5	63.2	14.2
20	Salution (vulcanizing fluid)	36.1	-	71.8	-

Table 1 shows that majority of the out listed drugs were commonly abused by the respondents. This is in line with the work of [5] who broadly grouped the drugs abused by youths into principal substances of abuse/dependence.

Among the JSS III girls antibiotics antipyretic analgesic, and anti-malaria with 86.4%, 72.7% and 68.2% respectively were the most commonly abused drugs among other. Among SSIII girls, anti-malaria, tobacco and laxatives and purgative with 89.5%, 78.9% and 62.2% respectively ranked highest among the commonly abused drugs.

Responses of JSS III boys showed that Beverages, Burankashi, Zallawi with 93.9%, 87.9% and 54.5% respectively were the most commonly abused drugs. Among the SSIII boys commonly abused substances include Burankasi, tobacco, beverage, and laundry blue with 89.3%, 85.7%, 71.9% and 71.8% respectively.

The table also revealed that dry pawpaw leaves and dry cassava leaves were not abused by the respondent. This is against the findings of who reported that addicts of marijuana used them to derive similar sensation. The non use of them could be because of the level of exposure of the respondents.

The high prevalence of drug abuse practices among the respondents could be because they were adolescents faced with numerous development challenges, and were not properly guided and they took to drug use and abuse thinking it was a short cut of the challenges.

Solution (vulcanizing fluid) was abused by older boys. The table proved that drug abuse rate increases with age and that sex is a factor in drug abuse practices because the percentages were higher among males, and SS III students.

Research question 2: What are the factors that lead secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria to drug abuse practices?

Table 2: Percentage response on the factors/ reason for drug abuse practice

S/No	Reasons for drug abuse practices	% responses
1	Peer group pressure	70.2
2	To overcame stress	58.3
3	To treat ill – health	75.8
4	It is used in my family	47.2
5	Parental deprivation	39.4
6	To enhance academic performance	35.4
7	Boldness to face school authorities	45.4
8	Boldness to talk to opposite sex	43.1
9	Avoid meeting doctors because the waste peoples time	19.9
10	Find out how new drugs acts in the body	41.5
11	I hear and see than advertised in television and radio	45.7
12	Curiosity	63.8
13	To celebrate life	0.00

Table 2 shows that twelve reasons listed were accepted by the respondents as reasons for engaging in drug abuse. None of the respondents practiced drug abuse as a celebration of life.

The responses are in agreement with the findings of the study conducted by [2] where he categorized the reasons for engaging in drug abuse into five.[11] also identified similar factors as the explanations for which youths abuse drugs.

Research Question 3: What are the effects of drug abuse practical on secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria

Table 3: Percentage responses on the effects of drug abuse practices on the respondents

S/No	Effects of drug abuse	% responses
1	Living in a world of your own	11.9
2	Move only with drug taking groups	0.9
3	Persistently absent from class	45.5
4	Less careful, loss of interest	48.6
5	Make you talk more	32.3
6	Spend most of your money on drugs	66.2
7	Makes you aggressive	18.9
8	Makes you attack others	23.2
9	Drugs look like the most important thing in your life	40.7
10	Steal peoples money and property	12.8

11	You lost weight	11.1
12	Loss interest in physical appearance	38.2
13	Chronic running nose	3.3
14	Frequent upper respiratory tract infection	9.2
15	Feel depressed	11.1
16	Odor of substance on your clothes and breath	41.5
17	Muscular weakness, drowsy, sleepy	33.1
18	Scars on the body from injecting drugs	1.8

Table 3 shows that the listed effects are experienced by students in Kano State, Nigeria. Among the effects, persistently absent from class, less careful, loss of interest, spend most of their money on drugs and drug look like the most important thing in their lives with 45.5%, 48.6%, 66.2% and 40.7% respectively were the most common effects among the respondents. These are in line with the findings of the study carried out by [12] though he classified the effects into three groups namely; social effects, economic effects, and physiological effects based on the type of drugs abused.[4], said that the effects of drug abuse depends on the types of drug of dependence. The findings of his study also agreed with the findings of the present study.

Research Questions 4: what are the possible ways of eradicating drug abuse practices among secondary school students in Kano State, Nigeria?

Table 4: percentage responses on the ways of eradicating drug abuse practices among secondary school in Kano State, Nigeria.

S/N	Possible ways of eradicating drug abuse	Percentage rsresponses
1	Going to psychiatric hospitals	73.0
2	Going to rehabilitation centers	67.7
3	Native therapy	67.7
4	Religious houses	64.6
5	Preventive education in schools, mass media and using many organizations	95.4
6	Good family upbringing for children	76.3
7	Checking drug supplies in the society by the custom department	66.8
8	Banning cultivation of drugs	82.1
9	Priority given to drug control activities	80.7
10	Professionals should write articles in the newspapers on the evils of drug abuse from time to time	76.7
11	pharmacy board to regulate those to sale drugs	81.0
12	Police sweep on patent medicine stores and hideouts of abusers	78.6
13	Broken homes prevented in the society	84.3

Table 4 shows that all the listed possible ways of eradicating drug abuse were accepted by the respondents. Among the possible ways of eradicating drug abuse practices; use of preventive education in schools, mass-media and using many organizations, Banning cultivation of drugs, priority given to drug control activities, the pharmacy board of Nigeria to regulate those to sale drugs and prevention of broken homes with percentages 95.4%, 82.1%, 80.7%, 81.0% and 84.3% respectively ranked the highest on the list. The suggestions of the present study are in line with the findings of [12], in his study on the global crisis of drug abuse, he came up with about fourteen steps used in eradicating drug abuse problem. [4] recommended strongly in his work drug education as a preventive measure to drug abuse practice which is also recommended by this study.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

The prevalence of drug abuse practices among the youths is on the increase and its effects enormous. However, efforts should be made at family, school and society level to address the issue of drug abuse practices among adolescents. Drug education and proper adolescent transition should be made known and practiced by the parents, school guidance and counselors, classroom teachers, adolescents and the public to help in the eradication and prevention of the ills of drug abuse practices to ensure a peaceful youthful generation and society.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study the following recommendations were made:

- Drug education should be made an integral part of the school curriculum from senior primary school upwards.
- Parents should give more attention to their children upbringing practices as well as know who their children's friends are.
- Professional bodies should write articles in the newspapers, magazines as well as through radio, television, posters etc on the ills of drug abuse practices.
- The police and the organizations concerned should sweep on patent medicine stores and hideouts of abusers and those caught should not have their licenses renewed.

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