



Drug abuse and science students' academic achievement in Nigerian secondary schools

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between drug abuse and science students' academic achievement in Nigerian secondary schools. Descriptive research design of the survey type and an ex post facto were used for the study. The population for the study consisted of all public secondary school students in Benue and Nasarawa States of Nigeria. The sample was made up of 300 students who abuse drugs from 30 secondary schools in Benue and Nasarawa States. Simple random sampling was used to select five schools from each of the three senatorial districts each in Benue and Nasarawa State. Purposive sampling was used to select ten students from each school. A self-designed questionnaire called Drug Abuse Questionnaire (DAQ) was used as instrument for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a test/re-test method and reliability Coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. The data were analysed using Pearson Correlation Analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that drug abuse leads to poor student academic achievement in secondary schools in Benue and Nasarawa States. Based on the findings, it is recommended that: Science teachers should familiarize themselves with their students so they are able to discover any anti-social behaviour and provide immediate solutions to it. Guidance counselors should give necessary counseling to the drug abusers, as well as to their parents or guardians.

Keywords: academic achievement, drug abuse, science, secondary schools

Introduction

Science education has become one of the best avenues to meet the global challenges facing the Nigerian nation. Despite the importance of Basic Science and Technology in the country's quest for technological advancement, there has been seeming ineffectiveness in the teaching and learning of the subject which in turn is strongly affecting the attainment of the country's laudable objectives and goals of developing a scientific and technologically literate citizenry. Researchers such as Osokoya (2013)^[9], Alabi (2014)^[3], Oni (2014)^[7] and Eriba (2013)^[5] attested that students' behaviours contribute to their under achievement in Science subjects.

Drug abuse is a major public health problem all over the world. The use and abuse of drugs by male and female adolescents have become one of the most disturbing health related phenomena in Nigeria and other parts of the world (Ekpenyong, 2012)^[4]. Several adolescents who persistently abuse substances often experience an array of problems, including academic difficulties in the likes of declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, and increased potential for dropping out of school; health-related problems (including mental health); poor peer relationships, and involvement with the juvenile justice system (Abdurahem, 2013)^[1]. Additionally, there are consequences for family members, the community, and the entire society (Oshodi, Aina & Onajole, 2010)^[8].

Oshodi, Aina and Onajole (2010)^[8] reported that, despite worldwide concern and education about psychoactive

substances, many adolescents have limited awareness of their adverse consequences. They further explained that curiosity, social pressure and peer group influence are noted to be primary reasons for substance misuse. In an attempt to control sleep or energise themselves, most adolescents and young ones' start experimenting with tobacco, alcohol, ephedrine and other caffeinated substances such as nescafé and red bull. Some of the reasons for the drug abuse, as identified by Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010)^[2], are to reduce pain, anxiety and tension, ignorance and misinformation, parental background, urge to commit crimes, peer group influence, isolation and loneliness.

Furthermore, Chikere and Mayowa (2011)^[6] found that in a number of school and college surveys in Nigeria, alcohol use is the most common among students, with many drinking students having had their first drink in family settings. They also discovered that the majority of students affected were initiated into the use of alcohol at a tender age of 16-20 years. Stimulant use and abuse appears with increasing frequency in the nation. The reasons individuals, including students, often give as a reason for stimulant usage include the need to belong, expectancy, mental set, sex, certain drives, integrative use, ceremonial use, hedonistic use, utilitarian use and disintegrative use.

In conclusion, drug abuse has become a threat to the lives and success of the youth. This is evidently a source of sorrow to the parents, guardians and relatives. It is also a big challenge to the whole nation. Stakeholders and members of the public,

generally, should devote urgent and adequate attention to the alarming rate of drug abuse, especially among the youth who will be our future leaders.

Statement of the problem

It has been observed that drug abuse is a common phenomenon among secondary school students' in Nigeria. It has also been noted that parents, peer groups, and society at large contribute to the alarming rate of drug abuse among the secondary school students. This study, therefore, attempts to investigate the relationship between drug abuse and science students' academic achievement in Nigerian Secondary School.

Hypotheses

In view of the foregoing, the following research hypothesis was formulated:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between drug abuse and science students' academic achievement of secondary school students in Benue and Nasarawa States.

Methodology

Descriptive research design of the survey type and an ex post facto were used for the study. A self-designed questionnaire called Drug Abuse Questionnaire (DAQ) was used as instrument for data collection. DAQ contained three sections; The first (Section A) has to do with the bio data of the respondents. The second (Section B) contains the information about drug abuse and academic achievement. Inventory was also used to collect information about academic achievement of the students involved for three academic sessions. The population for the study consisted of all public secondary school science students in Benue and Nasarawa States of Nigeria. The sample was made up of 300 students who abuse drugs from 30 secondary schools in Benue and Nasarawa States. Simple random sampling was used to select five school from each of the three senatorial districts each in Benue and Nasarawa State. Purposive sampling was used to select ten science students from each school. The instruments were presented to, counselors, and science education experts to assess the suitability of the items in the instruments. The face and content validities of the instrument were ensured by the experts. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a test/re-test method. The instrument was first administered to 30 students who were not used for the study. After six weeks, the instrument was re-administered to the same set of students. The scores of the two tests were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis and the Reliability Coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. This indicates that the instrument was reliable. Administration of the instrument was done through the class teachers and school counselors. Students' results were collected from the school principals. The data were analysed using Pearson Correlation Analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between drug abuse and

science students' academic achievement among secondary school students.

Data representing this hypothesis is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Pearson correlation of drug abuse and academic achievement among secondary school students

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-table
Student Academic Achievement	300	42.91	0.29	0.735	0.195
Drug Abuse	300	154.46	10.34		

Table 1 shows that r-cal (0.735) is greater than r-table (0.195) at 95% confidence level. The null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between drug abuse and science students' academic achievement among secondary school students, is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between drug abuse and students' academic achievement.

Discussion

The study determined that there is a significant relationship between academic achievement and drug abuse among secondary school science students in Benue and Nasarawa States. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Chikere and Mayowa (2011) ^[6]; Oshodi, Aina and Onajole (2010) ^[8]; Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) ^[2] who found out that the inability of most adolescents to resolve emotional or psychological problems results in failure, which eventually leads to unhappiness, disapproval, non-recognition, frustration, stress, substance abuse, crime, truancy, delinquency, and many other bad lifestyles and behaviours.

Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that drug abuse leads to poor student academic achievement in secondary schools in Benue and Nasarawa States.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that

1. Science teachers should familiarize themselves with their students so they are able to discover any anti-social behaviour and provide immediate solutions to it. Guidance counselors should give necessary counseling to the drug abusers, as well as to their parents or guardians.
2. Government should provide all necessary materials and equipment to make teaching and learning interesting so as to reduce anti-social behaviours in school.

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