



ABSTRACT

Drug use and abuse in Nigeria in the contemporary time had become an issue that casts a gloomy shadow to the entire society especially among university undergraduates. The study investigated influence of availability of drugs on use and abuse among Undergraduates in states and federal universities in Northern State of Nigeria. The study was

AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS ON USE AND ABUSE AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN STATES AND FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN NORTHERN STATES OF NIGERIA.

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INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse according to Laver (1978), simply means the improper use of drugs to the degree that the consequences became detrimental to the user and or the society. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2006), defined drug abuse as a state of periodic or chronic intoxication, detrimental to the individuals and to the society, produced by the repeated consumption of a drug (natural or synthetic). Furthermore, Nigerian societies have defined some drugs as acceptable while others as not acceptable without reference to their effects on mental and physical wellbeing of the users, for example, society considers the use of alcohol and nicotine as acceptable, and hence those of them who take these drugs do so freely in public without fear of arrest or society stigma. We live in a society where excessive consumption of substances is the order of the day. Study has



shown that substances like alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana became commonly abused by youths (Idowu and Abolarin, 1996). Research findings also indicated that these substances negatively affect the health and behaviors of the users. It is also worthy of mentioning that substance abuse cut across ages, socio economic status, race, religion and gender, though recent findings indicate that the use of substance is higher among the males. Study has also shown that under the influence of substance abuse, many youths embark on criminal behaviors and bad activities.

guided by an objective and hypothesis. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. 420 students were selected through a stratified random sampling technique from three federal universities and three state universities and subsequently used as respondents. A structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the reliability coefficient and reliability of 0.96 was obtained. Data collected were analyzed with frequencies, table to answer the research question while the null hypothesis was tested with inferential statistics of chi-square (X^2) at 0.05 alpha level of significance. In conclusion, the findings revealed that the incidence of drug use and abuse among Nigerian undergraduate was real and persuasive. Furthermore, availability influenced the used and abuse of drug among the students. Based on the findings from the study, it was recommended that students should minimized the rate at which they use drugs without prescription from medical personnel, and finally the university authority should continue to update students on knowledge about effect of drug use and abuse by introducing drug education in the curricular and improve the already existing once in other to reduce drug use and abuse by Undergraduates from both Federal and State Universities in Northern State of Nigeria.

Keywords: Availability, Drugs, Undergraduates and Nigeria



No wonder, Annan (2003), noted that “drugs are tearing apart our societies, spawning crime, spreading disease such as HIV and killing our youth and their future.” This was probably the reason why 26th June of every year was declared as United Nations International Day against Drug Abuse and illicit trafficking while 31st May of every year is declared as “No Tobacco Smoking Day worldwide”. This probably informed the warning by the Federal Ministry of Health Nigeria that tobacco smokers are liable to die young (Nigerian Tribune, 2007).

Passive smokers that is non-smokers living with smokers are not free, they experience what the real smokers experience. Because the adolescents were more vulnerable to substance abuse, and the fact that adolescents who were not involved in substance abuse are more likely to be involved in one or more act of indiscipline like forgery, truancy and stealing in schools, and no responsible parents, authorities or society should watch these leaders and workforce of the future Nigerians waste away through substance abuse.

Nevertheless, the usage of drug by University undergraduates and in all its ramifications appears to be a social problem. This problem was widely spread and it affects all and sundry. In other words, the wide spread use and abuse of drugs among student could entice people from all walks of life. This could go beyond the human destruction caused by drug dependence down to the damage of traditional values and lifestyles. Studies had also shown that drug abuse wrecks individual, shatter families and weakens entire society with its burden of economic loses, health cost and increased lawlessness and crime (Hoffman, 1990; Earl, 2000).

Also, drugs seem to undermine the ability of University undergraduates to learn. Drug also appears to contradict the values of physical wellbeing. People experiment with drugs because they seem to hold the promise of fulfillment. But the fulfillment is generally elusive, greater and greater quantities are consumed and ultimately the person suffers both physical and psychological deterioration. The drug abuser also experiences problems of interaction and this interactional problem is encountered both inside his immediate family and stress invariably is created in the family situation of drug abuse (Hoffman, 1990).



To add to this, drug abuse may entail a lot of social problems ranging from lateness to lectures, family neglect, deviant behaviours, involvement in crimes etc. (Earl, 2000). In terms of economic cost, it includes the more money required to deal with undesirable effects of the drug abuse, the less money for services and programmes that enhances the quality of life (Earl and Weiberg, 2000). Drug abuse in Nigeria in the contemporary time had become one issue that casts a gloomy shadow to the entire Nigerian society especially among University undergraduates. The height of drug trafficking in Nigeria was witnessed in 1985 under the military regime. During this period, it was mostly the University undergraduates that were caught and the first to be executed for drug offences under the “special tribunal (Miscellaneous Offences) Degree No. 20 of 1984. Therefore, the study is geared towards investigation the influence of availability of drugs on use and abuse among undergraduate students in Federal and State Universities in Northern State of Nigeria as the outcome would be a guide to public Health manager and policy makers.

Availability of drugs is a predisposing factor to drug abuse. This is viewed from the context that availability creates awareness, which in turn leads to curiosity. Prevalence of drug abuse differs markedly for various drugs: drugs that are legal - alcohol and tobacco cigarettes are used much more frequently than illegal drugs. This is because they are available and have no legal prohibition. In the same vein, cannabis is the most abused illegal drug in Nigeria. Incidentally it is cultivated in Nigeria and as such available (Martin, 2011).

Availability of drugs or accessibility of drugs is one of the factors contributing to the increasing drug abuse during recent decades. Easy accessibility of drugs has been one of the current situations among the youth. Rationally, when accessibility of drugs is easy, changes of people trying out and consequently being addicted to drugs is increased. Hence, accessibility of drugs is an issue requiring immediate attention so that actions could be carried out to minimize or eliminate possible negative effects. In order to obtain better income, drug syndicates are becoming more creative in tempting people to be involved in drug abuse and consequently be



addicted. Once a great number of people become a drug addict, drug syndicates would not need to worry about source of business as in order to cope with the addiction or to avoid the pain of withdrawal syndrome, drug addicts would try ways including illegal ones to obtain the drugs (Cai-Lian and Yie-Chu, 2012).

It was reported that nowadays, students do not only misuse drugs outside of school compound but also in class while the teacher is teaching. Which means, today, young people especially students need not wait till after school hours to gather at a point for drug abuse activity. They do it in school, where every young individual in the nation is mandated to attend. In addition, students were also found to sell drugs. As students go to school every weekday as mandated, a student drug pusher would not face problem in introducing and selling drugs to classmates and schoolmates. Therefore, with the increase of student drug pushers in the school compound, the accessibility of drugs among the young generations is further increased (Aliyu, 2014). Other than the ease of access to drugs in school compound, another scenario that adds to the accessibility of drug these days is the young generations' financial capability. For instance, a substantial number of students aged 13 to 17 years from several national and private schools in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, and Negeri Sembilan admitted that they are drug abusers. Among this number of students, many come from middle- and upper-class families and hence given generous amount of pocket money per month. This generous amount of money, which is not necessary for a secondary or high school student, further increases the ease of teenagers in obtaining illegal drugs. Therefore, inappropriate amount of money on hand has become one of the factors contributing to the increase of accessibility of illicit drugs. A special concern in recent years would be the increase in the use of 'club drug' at night clubs and dance parties (Martin, 2011).

To the society as a whole, crime, promiscuity, armed robbery and other vices are all linked to drug abuse, and this study is aimed at assessing the influence of availability of drug on use and abuse among Undergraduates in Federal and State Universities in Northern States of Nigeria



Hypotheses

H₀: Availability of drugs do not determine its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and State Universities in Northern States, Nigeria.

H₁: Availability of drugs determines its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and State Universities in Northern States, Nigeria

Assumption of the Study

On the basis of research evidence, an assumption was made for the purpose of this study:

It is believed that availability of drugs influences its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and State Universities in Northern States, Nigeria

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Ex-post facto research design was used in this study because the information required by the researcher was in existence with the respondent. Carrol (2013) also suggested that this type of research design is the best tool to be used in descriptive research on the assessment of drug use and abuse among undergraduates in Federal and State Universities in Northern states, Nigeria.

Historical Background of the Study Area

Northern Nigeria is located between Longitudes 3° and 15° East and Latitudes 9° and 14° North. Northern Nigeria is a political definition used to describe all states that are fully located or partially located (middle belt) in the northern portion of the country. The states located in this zone are Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara, Kastina, Kano, Jigawa, Yobe, Borno, Gombe, Bauchi, Kwara, Plateau, Adamawa, Niger, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nassarawa, Taraba, Kogi and Benue.

The climate is characterized by alternate wet and dry seasons in response to the changes in pressure patterns, the rainy season in this region is associated with late onset and earlier cessation, the onset and cessation



are also characterized by destructive storms which destroy life and property. The seasonal and latitudinal variations affect diurnal and seasonal temperature ranges, the highest maximum air temperature is recorded in the northern part usually areas north of lat 9° and occur in March/April and minimum temperatures are recorded in December/January North of lat 9°N.

The general relief of this belt is between 300 to 900 m, except the Niger-Benue trough, Sokoto and Chad Basins that are below 300 m. Northern Nigeria is dominated by savanna vegetation types; Guinea, Sudan and Sahel savanna, the density of trees and grasses decrease northwards responding to climatic conditions. Agriculture is the most dominant economic activity in the region.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised of undergraduates in Federal and State Universities in Northern states, Nigeria at 2012/2013 student's academic enrolment across Nigerian universities was 1,252,913

Table 1: Summary of the three (3) Geo-political Zones in Northern states, Nigeria

Zones	States
North	Kaduna, Kano, Kastina, Jigawa, Sokoto and Zamfara.
North Central	Benue, Federal Capital Territory, Kogi, Nasarawa, Kwara, Niger and Plateau.
North East	Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe

Sample Size of the Study

A sample of 420 undergraduates from Federal and states Universities in the Northern states, Nigeria was used for the study. Since its enrolment across Nigeria University is 1,252,913 The number used for the study is adequate according Morgan and Kreycie (1970) table for determining sample size from a given population, sample size of 384 was adequate in a given one million and above population.



Sampling Technique

The sample used for the study was taken using stratified sampling Technique, random sampling technique, purposive sampling technique and systematic sampling technique.

RESULTS

Demographic variables in this analysis include; age of respondents, gender of the respondents, ownership of the university and universities sample. The summary is presented in table 2

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents (Students)

Age in Years	Frequency	Percent
15-18	99	23.6
19-22	181	43.1
23-26	79	18.8
27 years and above	61	14.5
Total	420	100.0
Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	260	61.9
Female	160	38.1
Total	420	100.0
Ownership of university	Frequency	Percent
Federal	210	50.0
State	210	50.0
Total	420	100.0
Universities	Frequency	Percent
ABU Zaria	70	16.7
FUT Minna	70	16.7
Tafawa Balewa University	70	16.7
Kaduna State University Kaduna	70	16.7
Ibrahim Badamasi University	70	16.7
Bauchi State University Gadau	70	16.7
Total	420	100.0

The table 2 showed that 99 or 23.6% of the students were between 15-18 years while 181 or 43.1% were between 19-22 years as against 70 or 18.8% that were between 23 - 26 years and the rest 61 representing 14.5% were from 27 years and above.



On the basis of gender, 260 of the respondents representing 61.9% of the students were male students and the rest 160 representing 38.1% were female students.

On the basis of ownership of the universities, 210 of the students were from Federal universities while another 210 were from State universities. All were from the Northern part of the country.

Research Question: Does availability of drug influences its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and state universities in Northern Nigeria?

Table 3: Available of drug influences on its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and State Universities in Northern Nigeria

USE AND ABUSE OF DRUGS		AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS		
		Yes	No	Total
Yes	Count	164	37	201
	% within USE AND ABUSE OF DRUGS	81.6%	18.4%	100.0%
	% within AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS	88.6%	15.7%	47.9%
No	Count	21	198	219
	% within USE AND ABUSE OF DRUGS	9.6%	90.4%	100.0%
	% within AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS	11.4%	84.3%	52.1%
Total	Count	185	235	420
	% within USE AND ABUSE OF DRUGS	44.0%	56.0%	100.0%
	% within AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2016



The outcome in table 3 revealed that, availability of drug influences its use and abuse among Undergraduates in Federal and state universities in Northern Nigeria. It further showed that 81.8% of students who use drugs said it was due to its availability, while only 18.4% said it was not due to its availability. This showed that availability of drug influences its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and state universities in Northern Nigeria.

Hypothesis (H₀): Availability of drugs do not significantly determine its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and State universities in Northern states Nigeria..

H₁: Availability of drugs determines its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and State Universities in Northern States, Nigeria.

Table 4: Chi-square analysis showing the influence of availability of drug on its use and abuse among Undergraduates in Federal and State Universities in Northern States, Nigeria

USE AND ABUSE OF DRUGS		AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS			P
		Yes	No	Total	
Yes	Count	164	37	201	0.012
	% within USE/ABUSE OF DRUGS	81.6%	18.4%	100.0%	
	% within AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS	88.6%	15.7%	47.9%	
No	Count	21	198	219	
	% within USE AND ABUSE	9.6%	90.4%	100.0%	
	% within AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS	11.4%	84.3%	52.1%	
Total	Count	185	235	420	
	% within USE OF DRUGS	44.0%	56.0%	100.0%	
	% within AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

P = 012 spear man r = 0.862 (Source: Field Survey, 2016)



The chi square statistics in table 4 showed that, level of availability of drugs had significant influence on drug use and abuse among Undergraduates of Northern Universities. Reason being that the calculated Ordinal; by ordinal spearman correlation p value of 0.012 was lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. The level of correlation $r = 0.862$. This implies that the relationship between availability of drugs and drug use and abuse was directly proportional. That is the higher the availability of drugs, the higher the use and abuse of drugs by the Undergraduates. Therefore, the null hypothesis which state that availability of drugs does not significantly determine its use and abuse of drugs among Undergraduates in Federal and state universities in Northern states, Nigeria, was hereby rejected.

DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS

Table 2 showed that 99 or 23.6% of the students were between 15 – 18 years while 181 or 43.1% were between 19-22 years as against 70 or 18.8% that were between 23 – 26 years and the rest 61 representing 14.5% were from 27 years and above. On the basis of gender, 260 of the respondents representing 61.9% of the students were male students and the rest 160 representing 38.1% were female students. On the basis of ownership of the universities, 210 of the students were from Federal universities while another 210 were from State universities. All are from the Northern part of the country. Furthermore, the table also revealed that six universities were used for the study. The universities were ABU Zaria, FUT Minna, Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, Kaduna State University Kaduna, Ibrahim Badamasi University Lapai, Niger state and Bauchi State University Gadau. Each of the six selected universities had 70 respondents each making a total of 420 respondents in the study.

The findings of the study showed that level of availability of drugs had significant influence on drug use and abuse among Undergraduates of Northern Universities. Therefore, the null hypothesis which state that availability of drugs does not significantly determine its use and abuse of drugs among Undergraduates in Federal and state universities in Northern states, Nigeria, was hereby rejected. This is in line with the study carried out by Ayabiogbe (2016) which found that public school students have a significantly higher tendency of being influenced into



drug use and abuse by its availability. This study is also similar to the findings of Cassie (2013), which stated that parent permissiveness and lax attitudes towards abuse and misuse of Rx medicines (Latin word for “recipe” meaning “to take”, it is medical prescription).

CONCLUSION

Availabilities of drugs influenced its use and abuse among Undergraduates in selected Federal and State Universities in Northern State, Nigeria

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings from the study, it was recommended that; The availability of drugs to Undergraduates in Federal and State Universities in Northern State, Nigeria should be discouraged by laying emphases on the risk of getting drugs on the counters without being prescribed by medical personnel

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