

Do We Abuse Drugs? Reports of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education Student-Teachers in two Nigerian Colleges of Education

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the incidence of drug abuse among student-teachers in two Nigerian colleges of education. The study's population comprised all NCE II and III Social Studies and Early Childhood Education student-teachers in two colleges located in Oyo State, Nigeria. Data was analysed using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Of the 400 student-teachers, 213(53.3%) were male while 187(46.8%) were female. Only 148(37%) were from Early Childhood Education while 252(63%) were from Social Studies. The student-teachers may exert negative influence on young children when they eventually take up appointment as teachers in pre-primary and primary schools. Departments of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education together with the colleges counseling centers should organize regular counseling activities and services to educate the pre-service teachers about the danger and implications that could result from their involvement in abuse of drugs.

Keywords:

Drug Abuse; Student-Teachers; Social Studies; Early Childhood Education.

ABSTRAK

Studi tersebut menyelidiki kejadian penyalahgunaan narkoba di kalangan siswa-guru di dua perguruan tinggi pendidikan Nigeria. Populasi penelitian terdiri dari semua guru-siswa Ilmu Sosial NCE II dan III dan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini di dua perguruan tinggi yang berlokasi di Negara Bagian Oyo, Nigeria. Data dianalisis menggunakan perhitungan frekuensi, persentase, rata-rata dan standar deviasi. Dari 400 siswa-guru, 213 (53,3%) adalah laki-laki sedangkan 187 (46,8%) adalah perempuan. Hanya

148(37%) dari Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini sedangkan 252(63%) dari IPS. Siswa-guru dapat memberikan pengaruh negatif pada anak-anak kecil ketika mereka akhirnya diangkat sebagai guru di pra-sekolah dasar dan sekolah dasar. Departemen Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini bersama dengan pusat konseling perguruan tinggi harus menyelenggarakan kegiatan dan layanan konseling secara teratur untuk mendidik calon guru tentang bahaya dan implikasi yang dapat diakibatkan dari keterlibatan mereka dalam penyalahgunaan narkoba.

Kata Kunci:

Penyalahgunaan Narkoba; Murid-Guru; Penelitian sosial; Pendidikan Usia Dini.

1. Introduction

Drug abuse is described as self-administration of drugs for non-medical reasons in quantities and frequencies which may impart inability to function effectively and which may result in physical, social and/or emotional harm (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2010). According to Lakhanpal and Agnihotri (2007), United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2007) and Hamisu et al. (2014), it is a rapidly growing global problem. It has been noted that the problem of drug abuse poses a significant threat to the social, health, economic fabrics of the families, society and the entire nations (Giade, 2011; Hamisu et al., 2014; Oluwole et al., 2018).

In Nigeria, drug abuse has become a problematic issue among youth. Several literature have established the fact that most Nigerian youth are in one way or the other involved in drug at some point (Abudu, 2008; Odo, 2009; Hamisu et al., 2014; Oluwole et al., 2018; Ogunsola et al., 2020). The alarming rate at which the Nigerian youth of today are getting involved in drug abuse is on the rise and this has caused a lot of damage to them and the nation as well. This has been giving a lot of concern to the society, government and stakeholders in Nigeria. In fact, the rate of drug abuse among the youths of today could be the reason for the enormous social problems being experienced by Nigeria nation e.g. hooliganisms, thuggery, rape, terrorism, kidnapping, cultism and gangsterism among others.

Meanwhile, it is a known fact teachers play important roles in the business of education (Olowe & Oduolowu, 2019); this is why provisions are made through several avenues including colleges of education to prepare teachers for various levels of education in Nigeria. As stated in the nation's national policy on education, prospective teachers would be trained to fit into social life of the community and the society at large (Federal Government of Nigeria, FGN, 2013). Fitting into social life of the community underscores the fact that teachers shall be examples of good moral behaviours and values which are cherished by the society. Unfortunately, few study reports have indicated that the youth who are student-teachers are also being found with cases of drugs abuse (Trammel et al., 1998; Fisher et al., 1991; Eman & Kholoud, 2017; Olowo, 2020). This is rather too

disheartening as this could spell doom for the educational system of the nation and for the learners who would find themselves under the tutelage of such teachers.

Owing to the growing concern about drug use among youths in Nigeria, several past researchers focused on the issue of drug abuse among different categories of youths. For instance, Dimas et al. (2021) examined the prevalence of substance abuse among youths in Jigwada Area of Keffi, Nasarawa State. Lawal and Aliyu (2020) assessed the causes of drugs and substances abuse among youth in Katsina Metropolis. Similarly, Alabi et al. (2020) investigated the perception of substance abuse amongst adolescents and young adults in Ikenne Local Government, Ogun State. Yahaya (2019) investigated the effect of drug abuse among youth in Nasarawa Local Government, Kano State. In her study, Okafor (2020) examined the causes and consequences of drug abuse among undergraduates at the University of Ilorin, Kwara State. Sarkingobir et al. (2020) focused on evaluation of substance abuse among in-school and out-of-school youths in Sokoto State while Oluwole et al. (2018) investigated adolescent drug use in Lagos.

A look through the studies above justifies that much research efforts have been directed at the issue of drug abuse among youths generally. However, most of the past studies revealed a research vacuum as they did not focus specifically on student-teachers who would be taking up teaching appointment to work with young children after their training. Student-teachers in this study are those who enroll in Nigerian colleges of education for the purpose of being professionally trained to become practicing teacher in future. Colleges of education in Nigeria are established as higher institutions of learning where would-be teachers (student-teachers) are professionally prepared and certified with the award of Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE). Pre-service teachers in colleges of education are expected to imbibe good morals and behaviours to be able to live up to the expectation of fitting into social life of the community and the society at large (FGN, 2013; Olowe, 2019). Since studies have established however that the issue of drug abuse has been found among some categories of pre-service teachers (Trammel et al., 1998; Fisher et al., 1991; Olowo, 2020; Eman & Kholoud, 2017), it was considered a rewarding exercise to also focus research attention on the would-be teachers in colleges of education who are going to be exposed to children in their formative years. Thus, this study focused on student-teachers of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education.

Social studies is a subject that has the objective of inculcating necessary skills, knowledge, acceptable norms and values into the Nigerian child (Amosun et al., 2015) and it has the purpose of producing effective citizens (Ajiboye et al., 2018). In Nigeria, it is a subject that is taught to children between the age of 6 and 15 years in primary and junior secondary schools. On the other hand, Early Childhood Education refers to a programme of learning and activities that is designed to foster children's intellectual, social, emotional, language and physical development from birth to age 8 (Kostelnik et al., 2011; Olowe & Ayoola, 2016; Olowe & Omotuyole, 2019). Both Social Studies and Early Childhood Education are subjects and programmes designed for children who are still forming habits and characters based on what they see around them. It would be unhealthy to find that future teachers of these two important fields of education are engaging in abuse of drugs.

This is why a study of this kind was considered imperative to reveal the actual situation among student-teachers of the two fields.

Studies have revealed various degree or extent of involvement of the youth in drug abuse (Dimas et al., 2021; Alabi, et al., 2020; Ogunsola, et al., 2020; Sarkingobir, et al., 2020; Oshodi et al., 2010; Fatoye & Morakinyo, 2002; Atwoli et al., 2011; Eman & Kholoud, 2017). Also, previous studies have reported several reasons given by youth for getting involved in abuse of drugs. Some of these reasons include peer pressure (Lawal & Aliyu, 2020; Alabi, et al., 2020; Sarkingobir et al., 2020; Alimi et al., 2020; Olowo, 2020), desire for enjoyment (Lawal & Aliyu, 2020), frustration, poverty, lack of proper enacted laws to empower the youth (Yahaya, 2019; Alimi, et al., 2020), the need to cope with academic challenges (Okafor, 2020; Olowo, 2020), broken home, poor socialization, access to the drugs (Alimi, et al., 2020), rebellion, overwork/learning, shyness, fear, parental influence, fun and lack of role model (Sarkingobir et al., 2020; Amosun et al., 2010), relaxation, relieving stress (Atwoli, et al., 2011), desire to run away from reality of failure (Olowo, 2020; Amosun et al., 2010), stimulation of brains and the need to talk to opposite sex (Amosun et al., 2010).

As noted earlier, most of the available past studies revealed evidences of much research activities in terms of abuse of drugs among the youth but with only little attention to student-teachers of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education in colleges of education in Nigeria. In an attempt to bridge this research gap therefore, this study was conducted to specifically assess the extent of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education student-teachers' involvement in abuse of drugs and reasons for their involvement.

1.1 Research Questions

- (1) To what extent are student-teachers of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education in colleges of education involved in drug abuse?
- (2) What are reasons for student-teachers' involvement in drug abuse?

2. Methods

The study employed cross-sectional survey design using the descriptive approach. According to Creswell (2012), a study that uses cross-sectional design examines current attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or practices. The design was used in this study to examine opinions of respondents on student-teachers involvement in abuse of drugs. The population of the study comprised all NCE II and NCE III Social Studies and Early Childhood Education student-teachers in two Nigeria colleges of education located in Oyo State. Two sampling techniques were used. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one state college of education out of the two in Oyo state through the ballot system. A federal college of education was purposively selected being the only federal college of education in Oyo state. In each of the two colleges, permission was obtained from Heads of Departments. In selecting the student-teachers from Social Studies Department, the purposive sampling technique was used based on the criteria that they indicated interest to participate in the

study and they were either involved in abuse of drugs, had mates or friends who were involved. Total population sampling technique (Leard Dissertation, 2012) was used in selecting all the student-teachers in Early Childhood Education Department because they were few in each level. In the State college of education, thirty five (35) NCE II and thirty four (34) NCE III student-teachers of Early Childhood Education were selected while forty (40) NCE II and thirty nine (39) NCE III student-teachers were selected from the same Department in the federal college of education. Sixty three (63) students-teachers of Social Studies were selected from both NCE II and NCE III in both the state and federal colleges of education. In all, a total of 400 student-teachers constituted the study sample.

A questionnaire was used to collect data. Relevant literature on drug and abuse of drug were consulted to design the questionnaire. The questionnaire was titled “College Student-teachers Questionnaire on Drug Abuse, CSTQDA”. The questionnaire contains three sections which are A, B, and C. Section A contains demographic information of the respondents which are gender, course of study, level of course of study and institution name. Section B contains 20 items on extent of involvement of the student-teachers in abuse of drugs. In section C, there are 11 items which examined the reason for involvement in drug abuse among the student-teachers. Sections B and C used the Likert scale type of response format of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly disagree. The questionnaire was subjected to scrutiny of experts in the field of Social Studies and in research endeavours. 40 copies of the questionnaire was administered on student-teachers in a federal college of education that was not used for the study. The data collected was subjected to reliability test using Cronbach’s Alpha technique and a reliability value of 0.81 was obtained for section B and 0.80 for section C. The researchers with two research assistants administered the questionnaire on the students. In almost all the cases, the questionnaires were retrieved immediately. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Data were coded accordingly and analysed with version 23 of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

Table 1 shows the extent to which Social Studies and Early Childhood Education student-teachers in the two colleges of education were involved in drug abuse. The table indicated the students-teachers agreement to all the items that: some of their level mates are involved in drug abuse (\bar{x} = 3.01), students in their department are involved in drug abuse (\bar{x} = 2.95), some of their colleagues smoke cigarettes (\bar{x} = 2.85), there are hidden places where students take hard drugs within the campus (\bar{x} = 2.53), students patronize hot drinks at the pub (\bar{x} = 2.70), their course mates take tramadol to gain more energy (\bar{x} = 2.88), some mates smoke marijuana within the campus at night (\bar{x} = 2.79), some mates are seen sniffing hard drugs within campus (\bar{x} = 2.67), male and female students take alcohol within the campus (\bar{x} = 2.77), drug abuse is rampant among male students (\bar{x} = 3.18), students hangout to smoke hard drug in lecture rooms at night (\bar{x} = 2.66), opioids are used by

their course mate for non-medical purposes (\bar{x} = 2.85), abuse drugs is common among both male and female students (\bar{x} = 3.01), drugs are abused by students even when they are not prescribed by medical experts. (\bar{x} = 2.96), students attend nights club to take drugs (\bar{x} = 2.95), students are seen engaging in drug abuse to look tough during examinations (\bar{x} = 2.91), students occasionally use inhalants to get high (\bar{x} = 2.86), colleagues take drugs in form of herbal mixture (\bar{x} = 2.84), students drink excessively (\bar{x} = 2.85) and that students come examination halls with hard drugs (\bar{x} = 2.71). Meanwhile, based on the value of the weighted average (2.85 out of the 4.00 maximum value that can be obtained), which falls within the decision value for high, it can be inferred that the extent to which student-teachers of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education in the two colleges of education are involved in drug abuse is high.

Table 1. Extent to which Student-teachers are Involved in Drug Abuse

Items	SD	D	A	SA	\bar{x}	Std. D
Some of my level mates are involved in drug abuse.	25(6.3)	86(21.5)	148(37.0)	141(35.3)	3.01	.90
Students in my department are involved in drug abuse.	28(7.0)	66(16.5)	203(50.8)	103(25.8)	2.95	.83
Some of my colleagues smoke cigarettes.	27(6.8)	117(29.3)	142(35.5)	114(28.5)	2.85	.91
There are hidden places where students in my department take hard drugs within the campus.	67(16.8)	127(31.8)	131(32.8)	75(18.8)	2.53	.98
Students in my department patronize hot drinks at the pub.	38(9.5)	117(29.3)	169(42.3)	76(19.0)	2.70	.88
Some of my course mates take tramadol to gain more energy.	32(8.0)	80(20.0)	191(47.8)	97(24.3)	2.88	.86
Some of my mates smoke marijuana within the campus at night.	30(7.5)	131(32.8)	131(32.8)	108(27.0)	2.79	.92
I have seen some of my mates students sniffing hard drugs within campus.	52(13.0)	121(30.3)	131(32.8)	96(24.0)	2.67	.98
I have seen male and female students in my department taking alcohol within the campus.	43(10.8)	114(28.5)	135(33.8)	108(27.0)	2.77	.96
Drug abuse is rampant among male students in my department.	19(4.8)	47(11.8)	174(43.5)	160(40.0)	3.18	.82
Some students in my department hangout to smoke hard drug in lecture rooms at night.	50(12.5)	110(27.5)	163(40.8)	77(19.3)	2.66	.92
Opioids such as codeine and tramadol are used by my course mate for non-medical purposes.	25(6.3)	94(23.5)	195(48.8)	86(21.5)	2.85	.82
Abuse of drugs is common among both male and female students.	25(6.3)	67(16.8)	186(46.5)	122(30.5)	3.01	.85
Drugs are used by students even when they are not prescribed by medical experts.	38(9.5)	65(16.3)	172(43.0)	125(31.3)	2.96	.92
Some students in my department attend night clubs to take drugs.	28(7.0)	92(23.0)	149(37.3)	131(32.8)	2.95	.91
Students in my department engage in drug abuse to look tough during examinations.	34(8.5)	81(20.3)	169(42.3)	116(29.0)	2.91	.90
Some students occasionally use inhalants to get high.	38(9.5)	97(24.3)	148(37.0)	117(29.3)	2.86	.94
Some of my colleagues take drugs in form of herbal mixture.	38(9.5)	84(21.0)	180(45.0)	98(24.5)	2.84	.90
Some students in my department drink excessively.	40(10.0)	91(22.8)	157(39.3)	112(28.0)	2.85	.94
Some students in my department come to examination halls with drugs.	32(8.0)	147(36.8)	124(31.0)	97(24.3)	2.71	.92
Weighted Average			2.85			

Cut-off point: Low =0.00-2.34, **High** = 2.35-4.00

Note on Cut-off point: Mean values of all the items in the table were added and divided by the number of items in the table. This gave the mean weighted average of which 4.00 is the highest value that can be obtained. Any value of the weighted average that is between 0.00 and 2.34 was taken to stand for **Low** while the one between 2.35 and 4.00 was taken to stand **High**

Table 2 shows the reasons for the student-teachers' involvement in drug abuse. The table shows that the respondents agreed to all the items in the table that students take drugs: to get intoxicated ($\bar{x}=3.06$), to combat stress ($\bar{x}=2.76$), to secure confidence ($\bar{x}=2.70$), to enhance assimilation ($\bar{x}=2.65$), for sexual pleasure ($\bar{x}=2.75$), for relaxation ($\bar{x}=2.67$), to foster better performance in sports ($\bar{x}=2.68$), to enhance good sleep ($\bar{x}=2.72$), to do overnight reading ($\bar{x}=2.58$), to increase energy for work ($\bar{x}=2.81$) and to increase intelligence ($\bar{x}=2.52$). Meanwhile, based on the results from the table, it can be inferred that the reasons for the student-teachers' involvement in drug abuse in the two colleges of education were: to get intoxicated, to combat stress, to secure confidence, to enhance assimilation, for sexual pleasure, for relaxation, to foster better performance in sports, to induce sleep, to do overnight reading, to increase energy for work and to increase brain performance.

Table 2. Reasons for Involvement of Student-teachers in Drug Abuse

Items	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Std. D	Remarks
Students take drugs:							
to get intoxicated	26 (6.5)	54 (7.6)	187 (46.8)	133 (33.3)	3.06	.85	Accepted
to combat stress	82 (20.5)	177 (44.3)	107 (26.8)	34 (8.5)	2.76	.87	Accepted
to secure confidence	83 (20.8)	149 (37.3)	133 (33.3)	35 (8.8)	2.70	.89	Accepted
to enhance assimilation	87 (21.8)	126 (31.5)	149 (37.3)	38 (9.5)	2.65	.92	Accepted
for sexual pleasure	34 (8.5)	123 (30.8)	151 (37.8)	92 (23.0)	2.75	.90	Accepted
for relaxation	97 (24.3)	124 (31.1)	128 (32.1)	50 (12.5)	2.67	.97	Accepted
to foster better performance in sports	70 (17.5)	158 (39.0)	150 (37.5)	24 (6.0)	2.68	.83	Accepted
to induce sleep	87 (21.8)	155 (38.8)	119 (29.8)	39 (9.8)	2.72	.91	Accepted
do overnight reading	69 (17.3)	144 (36.0)	140 (35.0)	47 (11.8)	2.58	.90	Accepted
to increase energy to work	84 (21.0)	197 (49.3)	79 (19.8)	40 (10.0)	2.81	.87	Accepted
to increase brain performance.	70 (17.5)	119 (29.8)	160 (40.0)	51 (12.8)	2.52	.92	Accepted

Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree

Remark: Not Accepted =0.00-2.44, Accepted= 2.45-4.00

3.2 Discussion

The extent to which student-teachers of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education in colleges of education are involved in drug abuse was found to be high. This can be connected to the

fact that there was lack of adequate information on negative effects that abuse of drugs can have on the pre-service teachers and their future endeavours as practicing teachers. Having easy access to the drugs could also be the reason for their high level of involvement in the abuse. Alimi, et al (2020) had found that youth in Maiduguri, Borno State were involved in abuse of drugs because they had access to it. Another possible reason is peer pressure which the youth today find a way to enforce on their friends to join them in illicit acts such as abuse of drugs. This was confirmed through some past findings of the studies conducted by Lawal & Aliyu (2020), Alabi, et al (2020), Sarkingobir et al (2020), Alimi, et al (2020) and Olowo (2020) in which participants confirmed being involved in abuse of drugs as a result of peer pressure.

Also, this finding may be linked to the fact that the abusers among the student-teachers have been into the act before they gained admission into the college. Of course, several findings from previous studies have reported various degree or extent of involvement of youth in drug abuse (Dimas et al., 2021; Ogunsola, et al., 2020; Oshodi, et al, 2010; Fatoye & Morakinyo, 2002; Eman & Kholoud, 2017). Similarly, the finding supports Awoyinfa's (2012) finding which revealed that there was high rates of drugs use and other harmful substances among students in secondary and tertiary institutions. The finding lends credence to the submission of Noreen (2017) that substance use tends to peak between the age of 18 and 25 years being the age of university students who are particular at risk. The finding also corroborates the report by Akinyemi (2008) that despite the efforts of Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and other governmental agencies to stem the tide of substance abuse in Nigeria, there has been a consistent rapid rise in the number of cases of drug abuse among young people (ages 10-24). Olley (2004) had also found in his survey conducted at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria on the involvement of tertiary education students in drugs and alcohol that roughly 54% of freshmen (newly admitted students) were into drug abuse.

The reasons for the student-teachers' involvement in drug abuse are: to get intoxicated, to combat stress, to secure confidence, to enhance assimilation, for sexual pleasure, for relaxation, to foster better performance in sports, to induce sleep, to do overnight reading, to increase energy for work and to increase brain performance. This finding may not be unconnected to the fact that the pre-service teachers have not had opportunity to be educated about the dangers of getting involved in drug abuse especially noting the flimsy reasons accepted for involvement in abuse of drugs. It is also possible that the pre-service teachers had been wrongly exposed to the use of drugs before they were admitted into the colleges of education. There is also the possibility that the pre-service teachers did not have the required home upbringing. This finding upholds previous findings that youth engage in drugs to combat academic stress and to relax (Okafor, 2020; Olowo, 2020; Atwoli, et al., 2011). The finding is also in tandem with the finding of Berning et al. (2004) who stated that student-athletes use performance enhancing drugs (e.g. ephedrine, steroids) to increase their sport performance. Likewise, Amosun et al. (2010) had found that youth engage in abuse of drugs for stimulation of brain.

4. Conclusion

Findings from this study have showcased the fact that student-teachers of Social Studies and Early Childhood Education in the two colleges of education are involved in drug abuse. It is therefore concluded that majority of the student-teachers involved in drug abuse would not be able to serve as role models to their students when they eventually take up appointment as teachers in various levels of education and schools. Also, the study concludes that the student-teachers teachers would not be able to live up to the expectation of one of the stated objectives of teacher education in the nation's National Policy on Education which is about being able to fit into the lives of the society where they are to operate after their training. Again, the study concludes that the two colleges of education have not been doing much in terms of introducing a measure that could help to identify the student-teachers who are involved in drug abuse.

4.1 Recommendations

The colleges of education, through college counseling centre, should organize regular counseling activities and services which are geared towards educating student-teachers about the danger that could result from their involvement in abuse of drugs. Such counseling activities should also be centered on educating them about the effect that drug abuse could have on them as future teachers who would work mostly with young children.

Again, the colleges of education, through their counseling centres, should organize a of rally in the form of awareness campaign within the colleges to further sensitize the student-teachers about the danger of being involved in drug abuse especially being prospective teachers to be.

The colleges of education, through their managements, should also come up with some medical processes of identifying traces of drugs in the student-teachers using their blood samples. Doing this would help the colleges to identify the student-teachers who are already involved in drug abuse and it would help to re-orientate them.

The colleges of education should device a means through which they can identify candidates who are already involved in drug abuse at the point of seeking admission or entry. Doing this would help greatly to reduce the chances of admitting student-teachers who are already involved in abuse of drugs before coming into the colleges.

The two Departments concerned should endeavour to identify the student-teachers who are involved in the act so that they can be referred to appropriate quarters for counseling and re-orientation programmes. Student association in the two Departments should adopt programme of counseling and orientation about drug abuse as one of their permanent yearly agenda to ensure that students in the Department, through the association, also have access to right education about drug abuse.

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