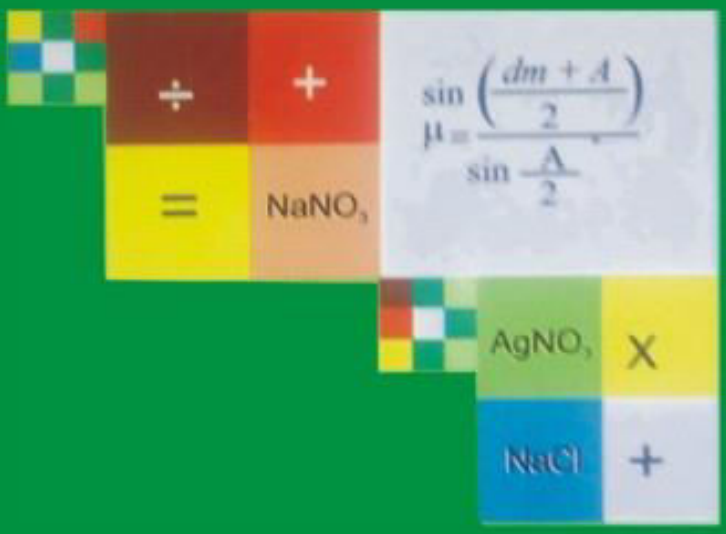
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Strategies for Curbing Drug Abuse as Perceived by In-School Adolescents in Kwara State

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Abstract

The study examined strategies for curbing drug abuse as perceived by in-school adolescents, Kwara State. Influence of age, gender, religion and level of education on respondents' perception was examined. Descriptive survey was adopted. 403 respondents were selected through multistage sampling procedure. A validated questionnaire with reliability coefficient of 0.68 was used to collect data. Mean, rank order, t-test and ANOVA were used for data analysis. Findings showed that strategies for curbing drug abuse were: school counselling, banning the sale of hard drugs, among other strategies. Gender, age, religion and level of education made no difference in the respondents' perception. Recommendations were that counselling should be intensified in school and at home, among other recommendations.

Keywords: Strategies, Curbing, Drug Abuse, In-School Adolescents.

Introduction

Drug abuse is a global problem capable of setting economic development backwards. Drug abuse is the use of unprescribed drug, or use of drugs not for medical reasons or use of prohibited drugs. National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (2004) described drug abuse as an excessive and persistent self-administration of drugs without regard to the medical or cultural pattern of the use of the drugs. Drug itself is a medicine or substance when taken has a physiological impact in the body. Generally, drugs are meant to cure physical, mental, and psychological illnesses. Drugs are made to benefit man, but sometimes people abuse them. Drugs abused have negative consequences both to the abuser and the people around him. It can lead to mental illness, death, social outcast, loss of sense of reality, poor academic performance, dropping out of school just to mention few of the negative consequences. Adegun and Jiboku (2019) stated that drug abuse can affect other people adversely because drug abusers behave irrationally under the influence of the drugs. Given to the problems associated with drug abuse, strategies need to be adopted to curb the menace. Drug abuse among in-school adolescents is caused by certain factors such as peer influence, poor parenting, depression, poor academic performance and academic failure, availability of the drugs among others. Schuster etal (2001) submitted that drug abuse among students is caused by availability of the drugs. Some of these drugs and herbs for example Indian hemp and marijuana are cultivated illegally locally and therefore are easily accessed by the abusers. In the school setting, managing learners' behavior is one of the paramount duties of the teachers and school authorities if all round development of the learners will be achieved. The all-round development involves the affective development of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects of the learners. Adolescents consist of the majority of learners in the school and managing their behavior is not an easy task because they are at the turbulent stage of life. Adolescent life is a life of storm and stress (Osarenren, 2021) which they may like to overcome by indulging in drug abuse. Peer influence also leads adolescents to drug abuse, since they are vulnerable at this stage. Worthy to talk about is the influence of adults in the lives of the in-school adolescents. Parents sometimes aid and abate drug abuse among their children. Fathers do send their children to buy un-prescribed hard drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and the like. Constant exposure of these adolescents to sources of these drugs spells doom to them if care is not taken. Hard drugs like Indian hemp and marijuana are being cultivated illegally and it cannot be ruled out that these adolescents can be sent to work in those farms which further teach them how to cultivate the illegal drugs.

Adolescents are individuals who are in their transitional stage of child hood to adulthood. These are the individuals who are maturing into adulthood that need to be well guided in this transition period. Adolescents have as one of their characteristics, of experimenting on issues like taking drugs, sex, among others. The problem emanating from drug abuse among in-school adolescents cannot be over emphasized. Students who abuse drugs are distracted from their academic pursuits, some engage in robbery, violence, rape, murder among other crimes.

This study examined the strategies for curbing drug abuse among in-school adolescents in Kwara State.

Research question

In line with the problem of the study one research question was raised for the study.

What are the strategies for curbing drug abuse in school as perceived by In-school adolescents in Kwara State?

Research hypotheses

Based on the problem of the study four null hypotheses were postulated to guide the study.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the perception of in-school adolescents on strategies for curbing drug abuse on the basis of age.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perception of in-school adolescents on strategies for curbing drug abuse on the basis of gender.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the perception of in-school adolescents on strategies for curbing drug abuse on the basis of religion.

Ho4: There is no significant difference in the perception of in-school adolescents on strategies for curbing drug abuse in school on the basis of level of education.

Method

Descriptive survey study was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of the In-school adolescents in Kwara State. A sample of four hundred and three (403) in-school adolescents were selected through multistage sampling procedure to participate in the study. At stage 1 purposive sampling technique was used to select in- school adolescents in senior secondary school and university in Kwara State to participate in the study. Students in the university and senior secondary school were selected because they are very active, highly influenced by peers and are more prone to drug abuse. At stage 2 simple random sampling was used to select in-school adolescents in secondary school and university in Ilorin Metropolis to participate. At stage 3 purposive sampling technique was used to select students who are in SS2 and SS3 in secondary school and undergraduates who are in year 1 and year 2.

Data was collected via the researchers' self-designed questionnaire tagged "Strategies for Curbing Drug Abuse (SCDA)". The instrument was validated by experts in test and measurement and Split-half method was used to ascertain the reliability. Thirty copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents that were not part of the sample for the study so that there will be no duplication. The collected responses from the respondents were subjected to Cronback Alpha which yielded the reliability coefficient of 0.68 which adjudged the instrument reliable for the study. The questionnaire was patterned after four point Likert type of scale of SA= Strongly agree (4 points), A= Agree (3 points), D= Disagree (2points) and SD= Strongly disagree (1 point). The instrument was administered to the respondents personally by researchers and were collected. Scoring was done by finding the mean score of the points thus: 4+3+2+1=10/4=2.50. So the bench mark was 2.50. Any item in the questionnaire that did not score 2.50 and above was not considered as strategy for curbing drug abuse in school. Data was analyzed with mean, standard deviation, t-test and analysis of variance. SPSS version 21 was the software used in the data analysis.

Results

The results are presented in tables numbering from 1 to 5

Table 1: Mean and rank order on the strategies for curbing drug abuse in schools.

S/N	Items	Mean	Remark
1	Counsellng students against drug abuse	3.58	Attested
2	Banning the sale of hard drugs	3.41	Attested
3	Punishing drug abusers severely	3.39	Attested
4	Mounting serious public campaign against drug abuse	3.34	Attested
5	Ensuring that schools take good care of the students	3.29	Attested
6	Proper screening of students before admitting them in school	3.23	Attested
7	Parents monitoring the activities of their children in school	3.09	Attested
8	Expelling drug abusers from school	3.04	Attested
9	Planning academic activities to be learner centered	3.03	Attested
10	Recruiting well qualified teachers	3.02	Attested
11	Planning examination time table that suits the students	3.00	Attested
12	Making hard drugs very scarce	2.99	Attested
13	Students to submit letter of undertaking not to abuse drug	2.98	Attested
4	Exposing drug abusers to the public	2.60	Attested

15	Students to live in the school hostel	2.27	Not Attested

In table 1, all the items are perceived as strategies for curbing drug abuse in school by the respondents because their mean scores are within and above the bench mark of 2.50 except number 15 which has 2.27 which is below the bench mark. Therefore, making students to live in school hostel was not perceived as strategy for curbing drug abuse in school.

Table 2: One-way analysis of variance on the strategies for curbing drug abuse based on the basis of age

Source	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	Cal. F	Crit. F	p-value
Between groups	76.506	2	38.253	0.99	3.00	.370
Within groups	15340.551	400	38.351			
Total	15417.057	402				

Table 2 showed that the calculated F. of 0.99 is less than the critical F. of 3.00 and p-value of .370 is greater than o.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis 1 that states that there is no significant difference in the perception of in-school adolescents on strategies for curbing drug abuse in schools is not rejected, which means ages of the respondents did not make them differ in their perception on strategies for curbing drug abuse in school.

Table 3: Mean, standard deviation and t-test on the strategies for curbing drug abuse in school on the basis of gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t	p-val
Male	192	46.406	5.55	401	.85	-1.049	1.65
Female	211	46.2422	6.74				

Table 3 showed that the calculated t. of -1.049 is less than the critical t. of 1.65 and the p-value of .85 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the cal.t is less than the crit.t and p-value greater than level of significance, the hypothesis is not rejected

Table 4: One-way analysis of variance on the strategies for curbing drug abuse in school on the basis of religion

Source of variance	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	Cal. F	Crit. F	p-value
Between groups	52.970	2	26.485	0.69	3.00	.502
Within groups	15364.087	400				
Total	15417.057	402				

Table 4 showed that calculated F. value of 0.69 is less than critical F.value of 3.00 and p-value of .502 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the cal.F value is less than crit.F value and p-value greater than 0.05 significant level, the hypothesis is not rejected. This means that religion of the respondents did not make them differ in their perception.

Table 5: Mean, Std. and t-test on the perception of in-school adolescents on strategies for curbing drug abuse in school on the basis of level of education

Level of edu.	N	Mean	Std	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t	p-val
Secondary	222	45.631	6.260	401	-1.42	1.65	0.22
University	181	47.049	6.034				

In table 5, the calculated t. of -1.42 is less than the critical t. of 1.65 and the p-value of 0.22 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis is not rejected because cal.t is less than crit.t and p-value is greater than the significant level. This means that level of education of the respondents did not make them differ in their perception.

Discussion

Findings in the research question showed that the strategies for curbing drug abuse in school as perceived by the respondents include: counselling students against drug abuse, banning the sale of hard drugs, punishing drug abusers severely, among other strategies. This finding was corroborated by (Adegun and Jiboku, 2019) who reported that Nigerian government banned some drugs because of the prevalent rate at which the drugs are being abused. In tandem with this finding is (Isiaka and Issah, 2015) who stated that parents have important roles to play in the prevention of drug abuse. Corroborating this finding (Alabi and Oladele,2018)

opined that government should prohibit cultivation and sale of drugs such as Indian hemp and dangerous herbs around school neighbor -hood of schools.

The finding in hypothesis one showed that there is no significant difference in the perception of the respondents on the strategies for curbing drug abuse on the basis of age. The finding turned to be so probably because they are in the same stage of life and also being in school the situation they face as adolescents and students are very similar. They know what can lead them to drug abuse and how to prevent such occurrence. This finding was corroborated by (Association for Medical Educational Research in Substance Abuse,2013) who reported that progression in hard drugs increases with age and sex and progression in the knowledge of the strategies for the control of drug abuse increases with age and sex.

Finding in hypothesis two showed that there is no significant difference in the perception of the respondents on the strategies for curbing drug abuse on the basis of gender. The finding was so probably due to the fact that, although they are not of the same gender, they live in the same society where drug is abused and also being in school they would have been taught how to solve problems of drug abuse. This finding was not supported by (The Prevention Coalition,2020) who stated that males have more problems with drug abuse.

Finding in hypothesis revealed no significant difference in the perception of students bases on religion. They didn't differ in their perception probably because they live in same society where people abuse drugs and also they are students with similar characteristics.

Further finding in hypothesis four showed that level of education did not make the respondents differ in their perception. The finding might be so because, although they are in school at different levels of learning, they still have similar characteristics and share similar academic problems. This finding is not supported by (Thompson,2015) who discovered in a research on substance use that substance use is not uniform across post- secondary students. This might also mean that students at different levels of education might not have same knowledge about substance use and how to curb it. Well, it can be argued that although they are in school they have different family background, hence might have different knowledge on issues relating to drug abuse.

Conclusion

The study examined strategies for curbing drug abuse in school. The respondents perceived that counseling students against drug abuse, banning hard drugs, punishing drug abusers among others are strategies for curbing drug abuse. Age, gender, religion and level of education did not make the respondents have different perception on strategies for curbing drug abuse in school.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, it is recommended that:

1.Schools should have functional school counselling programme and counselling on drug abuse should be intensified.

2.Government should ban the sale of hard drugs and other substance abused drugs.

3.Parents should monitor the activities of their children in the school.

4.School should plan academic activities to suit the students.

5.School environment should be rid of cultivated hard drugs and joints where students can hide to take the drugs.

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