

## Effects of drug abuse on youths' education in Nasarawa state Nigeria

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2022, 16(01), 605–612

Publication history: Received on 12 September 2022; revised on 16 October 2022; accepted on 19 October 2022

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2022.16.1.1058>

### Abstract

The extent to which illicit drug dealings is aggravating crimes in Nigeria is worrisome. Drugs even as youths are seen latching on the bandwagon with foray into this dangerous acts within and outside the educational institutions. Drug abuse is an emerging global public health issue, it is a situation when drug is taken more than it is prescribed. It is against this background that this study interrogated the euphoria nature of the use drugs on youth's education in Nasarawa states, Nigeria. Data were gathered using simple random sampling technic. The population of Nasarawa state is 2,523,400 approximately 2.5 million. The sample size is 399 based Taro Yamani formula for sample size. A total of 399 questionnaires were distributed amongst the students using the online questionnaire platform in four tertiary institutions while 210 was successfully retrieved & used as sample size Hypotheses were tested using chi square. The finding revealed that; there is a relationship between economic effect of drug abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state, there is a relationship between moral effect of drugs abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state and finally, there is a relationship between social effect of drugs abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state The study recommends among others that there should be intense media campaign aimed at enlightening the undergraduates such that Government should ensure that agencies like the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control and the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency are empowered or equipped. Finally, Educational Institutions at higher levels whether public or private should organize workshops and symposia to enlighten the students on the dangers of drugs abuse and illicit trafficking.

**Keywords:** Cultural Identification; Drug Abuse; Education; Youth Education

### 1. Introduction

Drug abuse is an emerging global public health issues, it is a situation when drug is taken more than it is prescribed. It could be seen as the use of illicit drugs, or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs. It could further be defined as the deliberate use of chemical substances for reasons other than intended medical purposes and which results in physical, mental, emotional or social impairment of the user. According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2022), a drug is a substance used for medical purposes that changes the state or function of the body. The abuse of licit drugs can happen when people use the drugs in a manner other than directed by the manufacturer or for purposes that are not legitimate. Fareo (2014), posited that abuse of illicit drug is the indiscriminate use of drugs by self- administration for non - medical purposes such that the physical, mental, emotional or social state of the user is adversely affected. When you take a chemical substance, which has a control influence out of your own volition it is a misuse, which is an abuse of drug.

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has expressed concern over the increasing level of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking among Nigerian youths. According to the NDLEA (2020), the situation had been worsened by

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the affordability of substance of abuse such as cough syrups, lizard wastes, gums and cannabis sativa popularly known as Indian hemp. Considering the delicate and sensitive position of the youth within the country, drug addiction among them remains a major threat to national growth and development. Environmental influence, especially during childhood, is a very important factor in drug addiction. Parents or older family members who abuse alcohol or drugs, or who engage in criminal behavior, illicit trafficking can increase children's risks of developing their own drug problems. Friends and acquaintances can also have an increasingly strong influence during adolescence (Bauman *et al*, 2016). Drug-using peers can sway even those without risk factors to try drugs for the first time. Academic failure or poor social skills can put a child at further risk for using or becoming addicted to drugs. High stress level, especially occasioned by dire economic strains, severe trauma, psychological trauma, including loss of a loved one or chronic loneliness are some of the factors that could lead to drug addiction (Adegboro, 2014).

As Nigeria goes through rapid speed of urbanization, majority of Nigerian undergraduates are unable to adjust to their changing environment coupled with bad governance and economic recession. Consequently, such students become victims of a disordered life and this might lead to drug abuse. According to NBS (2022), Youth unemployment rate in Nigeria is 68%, but realistically, 80% of Nigerian youths are unemployed with secondary school graduates mostly found among unemployed rural population accounting for about half of this figure, while universities and polytechnic graduates make up the figure. What seems to be more worrisome is the fact that the nation's universities and polytechnics continue to churn out more than 150,000 graduates both Bachelor's degrees and Higher National Diploma annually and job creation has been inadequate to keep pace with the expanding working age population. Thus, unemployment and idleness among youth could easily make drug addiction a fascinating option. Nigeria today has the highest illicit trafficking and drug abuse prevalence in the world. According to the recent world drug report 2019 of the United Nations office on drugs and crime (UNODC, 2019) estimated that 271 million (5.5%) of the global population (aged between 15 and 64 years) are into drugs while Nigeria alone with a population of over 218,601,314 million as estimated by the UN on the July 1, 2022 battles with 14.4% drug abuse prevalence. Roughly 27.7 per cent of the 14.4 per cent of those concerned were youths who should face their studies and called for change in the narrative to secure their future. The harmful effect of drug abuse can never be overemphasized, it is believed that abuse drugs hold back the economy, because control of the supply and reduction of demand are expensive undertaking (Ogunsola & Fatusi., 2016).

Illicit trafficking of drug among youths worldwide has been a hallmark of a morally bankrupt generation which has lost every sense of societal values and ideas. From public commentaries and media reports it appears as though cases of illicit drug abuse among Nigerian youths is on the rise. This is bound to be an issue of concerns in view of known negative consequences of drug abuse. Many Nigerian youths were into illicit trafficking and drug abuse as escape route from the harsh economic and political realities in the nation, many factors including love for money by peddlers, disobedience to the laws of the country, proliferation of the market with individuals who sell medicines, lack of control of prescription in the healthcare facilities and lack of control of dispensing among dispensers. Other reasons for illicit abuse of drugs include smuggling substances of abuse through our porous seaports and land borders, corruption and compromises at the point of entries, diversion of legitimate exports to illicit use, weakness in inspections and weak penalties for the sellers and traffickers (Agbiboa, 2014).

Illicit trafficking of drugs tends to be labour intensive, also the drug problems generate employment in the enforcement, health care and social services sectors. Such employment is however, basically unproductive in that it would not be necessary if the illicit trafficking of drug problem did not exist in the first place. The cost of this as type of employment have been borne by the general public. This raised the tax burden and reduces overall competitiveness, and thus cuts down on the number of "productive" jobs in the economy. Illicit drug abuse has been found to affect the labour market by reducing productivity thereby rendering the country's youth unproductive. It includes smoking and drinking alcohol (Oshikoya & Alli, 2016). International studies on smoking as a type of drug abuse shows that half of the long-term smokers will die prematurely, half of these in middle age (40-50 years of age) (Ajala, 2014). Furthermore, smoking are four times more likely than non-smokers to suffer from heart attack before age 40. The situation described above is true in developed countries that have been experimenting with such drugs for a long period.

The critical problems are that in spite of various measures adapted by Nigerian government agencies like NDLEA, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) as well as school authorities to prevent illicit trafficking and drug abuse among Nigerian students, the number of drug abusers is on the rise. This trend may have contributed to the numerous social problems that has bedeviled the Nigerian society and in particular the educational sector. Youths who abuse drugs stand the danger of risky sexual behavior that often results to teenage pregnancy and in most cases death of either or both parties, mental disorders. It may affect their performance in school due to personality disorder and impaired cognitive functioning as a result of regular fatigue, sleeping in class. truancy in school, the user is un-kept, violence, criminal tendencies (stealing to get money for the drugs) HIV/AIDs when needles are shared, lungs and heart disease, which may lead to death, uncoordinated behaviors mood change (happy, calm this

minute, aggressive next minute), loss of concentration, drastic weight loss, prolonged use of cannabis leads hallucination, madness, low and productivity. In addition, drug abusers often defy school rules, cheat and act in an unacceptable manner, may become dramatic, irresponsible and overly defensive (Adigun,2014). This study therefore, examined the effects of drug abuse on youths' education in Nasarawa state, Nigeria.

However, several broad prevention strategies can be applied to most substance use issues. Akanbi *et al.*, 2016), has identified six strategies that can help shape prevention plans and they include: information dissemination increases knowledge and changes attitudes through communications. This method of learning is mainly one-way, such as classroom speakers or media campaigns; Prevention education is a two-way approach to teaching participants important social skills. These skills can include resisting pressure to use drugs, looking at the intent behind advertising, or developing other skills used in making healthy choices; Positive alternatives provide fun, challenging, and structured activities with supervision so people have constructive and healthy ways to enjoy free time and learn skills. These alcohol- and drug-free activities help people particularly young people stay away from situations that encourage use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs; Environmental strategies are aimed at the settings and conditions in which people live, work, and socialize. These strategies call for change in policies to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors, for example, tighter zoning restrictions on alcohol outlets or stronger enforcement to prevent underage purchases of alcohol and tobacco products (Udo *et al.*, 2022). The Community has a big role to play in prevention of drug abuse. Some of the roles include; Creating of awareness in the community on the dangers of drug abuse. Provision of alternative to drug abuse like recreational activities. Provision of job opportunities. Organizing teachings, seminars, workshops, symposium and conference to educate the youths on the dangers of drug abuse and how to resist drug. As these changes are carried out at the community level, they can have a sweeping impact (Akanbi *et al.*, 2016).

To achieve the objective of this study, following null hypotheses are formulated and tested:

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between economic effect and youths' education in Nasarawa state.
- H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social effect and youths' education in Nasarawa state.
- H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant relationship between moral effect and youths' education in Nasarawa state.

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## 2. Literature Review

Education constitutes a pillar for any nation's meaningful sustainable economic development (Muhammed *et al.*, 2017). Education is defined as a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude. These definitions indicate that it is not just acquisition of knowledge in an organized setting but an encompassed development of an individual in character, skills, attitude and mental ability. Education also plays a pivotal role in emancipating and empowering people to achieve economic and social freedom. It helps in transforming human capital into the engine of economic revolution through resource mobilization from sectors of low utilization to economic productivity. Educated individuals have been identified as the indispensable catalyst for economic growth and technological transformation (Bauman *et al.*, 2016). The school system provides opportunity for individuals to enhance themselves and become better citizens. It is, therefore, expected that with more education, the youths should avoid the abuse of drugs.

Adegboro (2014) reported that, despite worldwide concern and education about psychoactive substances, many adolescents have limited awareness of the adverse effects of drugs. They further explained that curiosity, social pressure and peer group influence are noted to be primary reasons for substance abuse. In other words, the abuse of drugs has negative effect on personal and social economic development. They revealed, that student in the tertiary institutions is not spared of the dangerous effects of alcohol and drug abuse as all cult groups abuse drugs and alcohol regularly. If Education is regarded as a major tool in achieving national development institutions of higher learning and parents and the government have a very huge role to play if these objectives are to be met. When the educational standard is poor, there will be multiple problems. Education is not just schooling; it is an overall development of an individual which parents are stake –holder. The country is challenged with issues like incompetent graduates, corruption, poor standard of education, kidnapping, insecurity, internet fraud, insurgence, sexual immorality (Adegboyega, *et al.*, 2016).

If adequate measures were not put in place to arrest the ugly trend and combat the menace, the “leaders of tomorrow” would remain chained to substance abuse while the future of the country continues to dim. Accumulated leadership failure over the years in the country has continued to rob our youths of their bright future, thus deepening their addiction to substance abuse. Nasarawa State University Keffi and Nasarawa State Polytechnic, like many other institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, may be faced with the social problem of high rates of drugs abuse. The percentage of drug abusers in the population is on the raise over the years defying the efforts to eradicate the problem.

Failure to solve this problem not only threatens the life of individuals, but also the economic and social development of the state as a whole. Therefore, this study examined the effects of drug abuse among youth's student in Nasarawa state, Nigeria.

## 2.1 Empirical Literature

The Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has stated that substance abuse is a major problem in colleges and universities in Nigeria (NDLEA, 2018). Many of these students' behaviors are heavily tied to the peer culture, as students learn from and imitate the peers they like and admire. Wanting to be attractive to others becomes very important, and this factor is significant in the development of eating disorders, alcohol consumption, tobacco and drug use, tanning, not practicing safe sex, and vulnerability to injury, among other behavior. These students who get involved in such risky behavior often have high levels of conflict with their parents and poor self-control, suggesting that they engage in such behavior to manage a stressful life.

According to Adegboro, (2014), over 11 per cent of youth's population in Nigeria take hard drugs like tramadol, marijuana, Mkpulu mmiri, Diazepam, cocaine, Shisha mix, alcoholic beverages, central nervous system stimulant, sleep-inducing drugs such as barbiturate and the benzodiazepines such like (valium, laxotan, activan) Codeine – containing cough syrups without prescription across the country is, no doubt, a sad reflection of the alarming state of drug addiction in the country, especially among the undergraduate's youth. According to studies carried out by Udo *et al* (2022), their survey revealed that alcohols use is the most common abused drugs among students in Nasarawa state Keffi in Nigeria, with many drinking, students having their first drink in family setting, besides majority of the students affected were initiated into the use of alcohol at a tender age of 16-20 years. Ikoh *et al.* (2019), investigated factors that influenced the use of drugs by youths and the extent to which this involvement has affected the security of the state and how it can be curbed. The results revealed that drug abuse was significantly practiced in the metropolis due to lack of parental control, easy access to drugs, and emerging street culture of gangsterism.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

### 2.2.1 Theory of cultural identification

Some of the success within culture brings benefits which are defined in terms of cultural value, such as money, rank, property, control or admiration, other benefits may be fundamental such as greater opportunities to have and raise children or even the possibility of a longer lifespan. The consequences on the part of culture can be devastating (Ahuna, 1998). From this point of view that culture play an important role in the life of the children we rear from adolescent to adulthood age, virtually in all society cultural pattern varies which serve as a major determinant for the upbringing of our children's youths. In fact, no society -homogeneous or heterogeneous without one form of unique culture or the other which at the initial stage of one's life determines one's attitude or behavior in the society. Culturally, marginal individuals lack influence and interpersonal regards within their cultural contexts and their social environment usually presents few rewards. They must turn elsewhere to find an involvement in life or find satisfaction and enjoyment in living and more likely to engage in deviant and destructive behaviors. The use of psychoactive substances is found in essentially all culture and provides examples illustrating how cultural identification may be related to behavior. Cultural identification, a personality trait is a persistent, long -term. Understanding characteristics that organizes cognition and behavior. In fact, those with high identification with a culture perceive themselves as adapted or adjusted to that culture. Invariably they see themselves as involved in the culture and as capable and competent with it. Some with high cultural identification are more likely to see events from the perspective of that culture. They will make evaluation judgment about values, choose behaviors that are based culturally congruent and will be successful in cultural activities.

In essence, cultural identification, like other personality traits, develops and is maintained through interactions with the government. In other words, caffeine is a psycho-active substance and across the world, coffee and tea are perhaps the most commonly used drug; they exemplified cultural appropriate substance use. They are such an integral part of social intercourse; these substances also provide useful example of the power of cultural acceptance. The widespread use of coffee and tea as social lubricators shows that a higher level of cultural identification can virtually require involvement with psychoactive substance. Similarly, the level of cultural identification will be more likely to use tobacco. On the other note, the use of alcohol is also cultural appropriate within many groups and occurs in many contexts which has its own cultural requirement for using alcohol, and person who meets those requirements is reinforced for the behavior (Hall, 2017).

### 3. Methodology

The study engaged primary data sources through comprehensive survey of the students in relation to drug abuse in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The population of Nasarawa state is 2,523,400 approximately 2.5 million. The sample size is 399 based Taro Yamani formular for sample size. 4 tertiary institutions were chosen namely, Nasarawa State university keffi, Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa, College of Agriculture, Lafia, Federal University Lafia, using simple random sampling technic. 399 questionnaire was distributed were distributed amongst the students across the 4 tertiary institutions of higher learning while 210 was retrieved via the internet for convenience. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages.

**Table 1** Opinions of Respondents on economic effect of Drugs Abuse

options	Causes poverty	Low productivity	Kills creativity and innovation	Resources Wastage	Low savings	Total
Agreed	134 (64%)	151(72%)	107(51%)	151(72%)	111(53%)	654
Disagreed	76 (36%)	59(28%)	103(49%)	59(28%)	99(47%)	396
Total	210(100%)	210(100%)	210(100%)	210(100%)	210(100%)	1050

Source: Authors computation 2022

$$X^2 = 622.8 \text{ see Appendix i}$$

#### 3.1 Hypotheses testing

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant relationship between economic effect of drugs abuse and youths education in Nasarawa state.

From the calculated chi square value of 622.8, degree of freedom (df) = 1 and 0.05 level of significant, chi square table value 3.85. Hence the table value of 3.85 is less than 622.8 calculated value, the alternate hypotheses is accepted. Therefore, the hypotheses that there is a relationship between economic effect of drug abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state is accepted.

**Table 2** Opinions of Respondents on social Effects of Drugs abuse

Options	Aggravates relationship with friends and family	Individual becomes armed rubber or rapist	constitute menace in the society	Total
Agreed	118(56%)	57(27%)	143(68%)	318
Disagreed	92(44%)	151(73%)	67(32%)	310
Total	210(100%)	210(100%)	210(100%)	630

Source: author's computation 2022

$$X^2 = 3.31 \text{ see appendix ii}$$

#### 3.2 Hypotheses testing

$H_{02}$ : There is no significant relationship between social effect of drugs abuse and youths education in Nasarawa state.

From the calculated chi square value of 3.31, degree of freedom (df) = 1 and 0.05 level of significant, chi square table value 3.85. Hence the table value of 3.85 is greater than 3.31 calculated value, the null hypotheses is accepted. Therefore, the hypotheses that there is no a relationship between social effect of drug abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state is accepted.

**Table 3** Opinion on moral effect of drugs abuse

Options	Questionable character	Tarnish Family image	Disrespectful to authority	Total
Agreed	109(52%)	155(74%)	103(49%)	367
Disagreed	101(48%)	55(26%)	107(51%)	263
Total	210(100%)	210(100%)	210(100%)	630

Source: author's computation 2022

 $\chi^2 = 35.813$  see appendix i

### 3.3 Hypotheses testing

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant relationship between moral effect of drugs abuse and youths education in Nasarawa state.

From the calculated chi square value of 35.813, degree of freedom (df) = 1 and 0.05 level of significant, chi square table value 3.85. Hence the table value of 3.85 is less than 35.813 calculated value, the alternate hypotheses is accepted. Therefore the hypotheses that there is a relationship between moral effect of drug abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state is accepted.

## 4. Discussion

Findings reveals that there is a relationship between economic effect of drug abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state. this implies that drug abuse may cause to poverty, bring about low productivity, wastage of resource of the individual and finally low saving or no saving in the part of the individual which will affect the general economy.

More so, there is no relationship between moral effect of drug abuse and youth education in Nasarawa state. the findings demonstrated that drug abuse may not affect the relationship among family, more especially when family and friend are involved in it or when do not condemn the act. Most people find in drug abuse may not necessarily becomes armed rubber or even rapist or even constitute menace in the society.

Lastly, there is a relationship between social effect of drug abuse and youth education Nasarawa state. this implies that having questionable character as a result of drugs will affect youth education in the state, however, showing no respect for authorities as a result of drug abuse and even the image of the family will have effect on youth education in Nasarawa state.

This study therefore aligns with the previous works of Ikoh *et al.* (2019); Udo *et al.* (2022); Adegboro, (2014); NDLEA, (2018). (2019).

## 5. Conclusion

The youths of any nation are the leaders of tomorrow, they are the vehicles through which positive changes can be realized. This is why nations have to invest on the future development of its youths. Therefore, there is a need for governments, parents, and guardians to devote time and resources in order to explore and harness the potentialities of youths. The incidence of drug abuse is on the rise and call for urgent attention. this is the situation in which drugs are readily available as well as some sense of satisfaction that comes with consumption of drugs Most evil acts and crime committed by arm robbers, kidnappers, bandits, cultist, terrorist and even public looters are all cause by drug abuse, so government is spending a lot of funds in averting this crime instead of providing basic needs of its citizenry. The damages caused by drug abuse is unquantifiable. Thus, the findings revealed the habitual disposition and feelings of respondents in relation to drug use and its abuse. Therefore, urgent measures are required to address this menace.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are made

- There should be an intense media campaign aimed at enlightening the undergraduates and indeed Nigerians at large on the dangers and consequences of drug abuse. There should be largely involvements of communities,

individuals, families and the entire society should ensure that moral values are inculcated in the youths, by joining the government's fight against drug abuse.

- Government should ensure that agencies like the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) are empowered or equipped to confront and deal squarely with "Drug Barons" as well their traffickers, peddlers and conduits and better preventive strategies adopted.
- Educational Institutions at higher levels whether public or private should organize workshops and symposiums to enlighten the students on the dangers of drugs abuse and illicit trafficking, so that they in turn can pass it on to other levels.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Acknowledgments*

Sincerely appreciate concerted efforts of Dr Olaolu and Dr Ogidi both of Nasarawa State University , Keffi Nigeria.

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest.

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