



Prevalence and Pattern of Drug Abuse among Public tertiary Institutions Students in Osun State

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Abstract

Drug abuse in Nigeria's higher education institutions was the subject of this study. The study specifically aimed to identify the drugs that Nigerian tertiary students commonly abuse, assess the prevalence of drug abuse among students at tertiary institutions as reported by WHO and UNDOC for the 2018–2022 period, and identify the most drug-abusing institutions. The collection of data for the study was sourced from both primary and secondary to investigate the objectives. A stratified and purposive sampling technique was used to select 360 respondents (students) from higher institutions in Osun State. The validity and reliability of the instrument were confirmed by giving the test instrument to experts in the field of testing and measurement. Data were analyzed using F-test inferential statistics, mean, and standard deviation in descriptive statistics. The study concluded that the incidence of drug abuse was rampant among Nigerian higher education students, especially in the University and Polytechnic of the study area. Drugs such as cocaine, steroids, tramadol, and weed used illegally have turned many students into drug addicts and this affects their academic performance which makes the growth of the nation and human capital development beclouded. Therefore the study recommends that the management of higher institutions particularly universities and polytechnics should set up high-power committees on how to reduce drug abuse among students, functioning drug abuse units and medical laboratory centers should be set up to conduct drug tests for the students immediately after they resume for their academic session this will help in identifying students that usually abuse drug on time with appropriate remedy put in place for them.

Keywords: Drug, Abused, Higher Institutions, Students, substance, Illegal.



Introduction

Substances introduced into the body for particular medicinal purposes are called drugs. The users' entire body systems can be affected by its biological influence due to its unique chemical composition. The use and type of drug determine the specific purposes for which it is taken. The types, purposes, and constituents of drugs vary. When medical professionals recommend the use of a drug based on the patient's medical history and current state of health, it is generally accepted as appropriate. Recall that some people use different kinds of drugs, also referred to as psychoactive substances, which are deemed detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the user. On the other hand, what was once thought to have a positive effect is now harmful to the body when prescribed medications are abused, often for reasons that the abusers themselves are aware of. All the same, as we see in the modern world, certain drugs are meant to assist rather than cause problems for the user or society.

Numerous stories about the use and abuse of psychoactive drugs by various groups of people worldwide have appeared in local, national, and international press outlets. The issue of how to stop the rising rates of substance abuse among their citizens is one that developed and developing nations alike must contend with. According to UNDOC (2015), 246 million people between the ages of 15 and 64 abused drugs in 2013. The World Health Organisation estimated that 35 million people worldwide suffered from a drug use disorder in 2019. According to additional reports, 284 million people worldwide used drugs in 2020, a 26% increase over the previous ten years (UNDOC, 2020). According to the reports, teenagers were found to be taking more medications, with

recent use levels higher than in years past in many different countries. In Africa and Latin America, for instance, the majority of patients receiving treatment for drug abuse problems were under 35 years old. Globally, the report stated that 11.2 million people were injecting drugs; nearly half of these individuals had hepatitis C, 1.4 million had HIV, and 1.2 million had both conditions. The worlds industrialised and developing countries are experiencing a health pandemic; that much is clear. Adolescents in post-secondary institutions are among those who use drugs beyond the age ranges specified by UNDOC. Based on reports, it seems that almost every country experiences an annual rise in drug use and abuse. Stakeholders in Nigeria are extremely concerned about the recent trend of drug abuse among teenagers attending the nation's postsecondary institutions. There hardly seems to be a student left who has not boarded the train, such is the severity of the threat. For some of the students, drug use has become a way of life (Adeyemo, Ohaeri, Okpala, & Ogodo, 2016). Pupils are observed misusing various substances without thinking about the repercussions (Aguocha & Nwefoh, 2021). National newspapers in Nigeria have reported on drug abuse among students. For instance, in 2021, a female undergraduate student from UNILAG was arrested and is currently under investigation for attempting to kill a television personality. She claimed that the crime was committed while under the influence of drugs.

Another student in Calabar committed suicide by jumping from a two-story building, having taken the drug Colorado. The increase in the level of the substance being taken by the students of



tertiary institutions which was reported by various agencies such as WHO, UNDO, and NDLEA calls for another major concern, especially in the study. The study aimed to determine the prevalence and pattern of drug abuse among public tertiary institution students in Osun State. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) highlighted the prevalence of drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria during the 2018–2022 periods.

Consequences of drug abuse to students as highlighted by Olusola and Adegboyega (2012) include; poor peer relationships, difficulties in academics, health-related problems, abnormal behaviors leading to the committing of crimes, selfishness and hopelessness, and drug trafficking. The student can lose interest in school work including extracurricular activities. Lastly, drug abuse affects the decision-making process of the students whereby the level of creative thinking and the development of the necessary life and social skills are scrubby

Adekeye, Adeusi, Chenube, Amadu, & Sholarin (2015) studied alcohol and substance use among undergraduates in a selected private school in southwest Nigeria; Okoro & Lahai (2021) reported substance abuse in northeast Nigeria. Researchers have also documented drug abuse among tertiary institution students in the nation at different geographical locations and different institutions. Lawal & Aliyu (2020) looked into, among other things, the causes and consequences of drug and substance abuse among young people in Katsina State, Northwest Nigeria.

In their study on the use of psychoactive substances by University of Port Harcourt undergraduates, Okechukwu, Abolo, Ogo, and Okorie (2021) found that alcohol was the most commonly used substance (74.9%), followed by heroin (1.3%). Cocaine, tobacco, and cannabis were the most frequently used substances (66.7%, 63.6%, and 55.3%, respectively).

The study also showed that, at 57.7%, male students were the majority of substance users and abusers. Another study on alcohol abuse among undergraduate students found that alcohol was consumed by 33.7% of the sample, with two-thirds not drinking. However, there was a significant correlation between alcohol use and sex, with males abusing alcohol at a higher rate than females (Okafor, Bimba, Adekeye, Obateru, & Idoko, 2022). Sambo and Bakari's (2023) research on the effects of substance abuse on Bali Polytechnic students' academic performance lends additional support to this, as it explains why the institution is finding it so difficult to contain the drug abuse problem.

According to Attah, Baba, and Audu's (2021) investigation on drug use among polytechnic students, some students' drug abuse was caused by their family size, poverty, and parental training styles, which were deemed inadequate due to poverty and neglect. Students still misuse various drugs as if their lives depended on them, in spite of these repercussions. In an effort to learn more about the topic of drug abuse among students, researchers have also examined factors that contribute to drug abuse. Peer influence, curiosity, gender, academic stress, the environment, and the impact of social media were all highlighted in the majority of the studies, to name a few.



Methodology

The study was carried out among students of four tertiary institutions (Osun State University, College of Education, Ila Orangun, Osun State Polytechnic, Ire and Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke). For this study, stratified and purposive sampling technique was used to select 360 respondents (students) of higher institutions in Osun State. Both primary and secondary data were adopted for the study. The primary data used for the study was collected directly from the respondents by the researcher through goggle form questionnaire. The validity and reliability of the instrument were confirmed by giving the test instrument to experts in the field of testing and measurement. All comments made were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument. The secondary data were collected for the period 2018–2022, and they were sourced from the WHO and UNDCO reports on drug abuse in Nigerian higher institutions. Both descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics of F-test statistics were used to investigate the objectives of the study. Meanwhile, of the 360 copies of the questionnaire sent to the respondents online, only 350 were filled and returned and used for the study. Some of the questions that were asked from the respondents that profound answers to the research questions are: which of the

following drugs and substances are commonly used in this institution? How easy is it to obtain the following drugs and substances within the institution? Where do students in this institution obtain drugs and substances of abuse? When are students from this institution most likely to use drugs and substances? Are you aware of students in this institution who are selling drugs within the institution? Do you know any students who have been found in possession of drugs and substances in this institution? What usually happens to students found in possession of drugs and substances? Do you have a friend who uses drugs and substances? Are there adequate efforts by management in your institution to control access to and use of drugs and substances by students? Which of the following programs are offered in this institution to address the problems of drugs and substance abuse? What would you recommend the university/ polytechnic/colleges/management/ parents/ Guardians/ Lecturers and neighboring communities to do in the prevention of drug and substance abuse?

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What drugs are commonly abused by tertiary institution students in Osun State Nigeria?

Objective One: To determine the substances commonly abused by tertiary institution students in Osun State Nigeria.



Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation computed for the perception of Respondent on Drugs commonly abused by Tertiary Institutions Students in Osun State Nigeria

	Variable	N	Mean	STD	Rank	Remark
1	Cocaine	350	4.47	0.65	1 st	Most Commonly abused
2	Tramadol	350	4.23	0.72	2 nd	Commonly Abused
3	Weed	350	4.29	0.73	3 rd	Commonly Abused
4	Cigarettes	350	4.11	0.90	4 th	Commonly Abused
5	Steroid	350	4.08	1.04	5 th	Abused
6	Excessive use of Medical Drugs without a Doctor's Recommendation	350	3.78	1.11	7 th	Rarely abuse
7	Other Illegal Substances	350	3.88	1.08	6 th	Abused

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2023

Table 1 presents the result of the mean and standard deviation computed for the perception of respondents on commonly abused drugs among students of higher institutions in Osun State Nigeria. Looking at the result of the mean and standard deviation computed, it was found that the most commonly abused drug among students of higher institutions in Osun State Nigeria was cocaine. This assertion was premised on the fact that the mean value computed for the test variable Cocaine of 4.47 was higher than the acceptable mean of 3.00 with a standard deviation of 0.65, indicating a relatively slight dispersion from the mean. The implication of this was that cocaine had been regularly abused by students of higher institutions in Osun State Nigeria who engaged in excessive intake of illegal drugs. This unwholesome consumption of

cocaine, according to the respondents with whom the researcher interacted, had caused serious health challenges for the students using it. It resulted in many of the drug abusers not being able to complete their studies. More so, some of the students using the substance ended up in a mental hospital, according to the respondents the researcher interacted with. Many of the students who were eventually discharged had not been able to find their academic bearings up until today, according to a substantial number of respondents. The result further indicated that the usage of other drugs among the students was high, thus indicating that drug abuse was rampant among students of higher institutions in Osun State Nigeria, but the most prominent of the drugs was cocaine.

Table 2 World Health and UNDO report on the frequency of Drug abuse among students in Nigeria

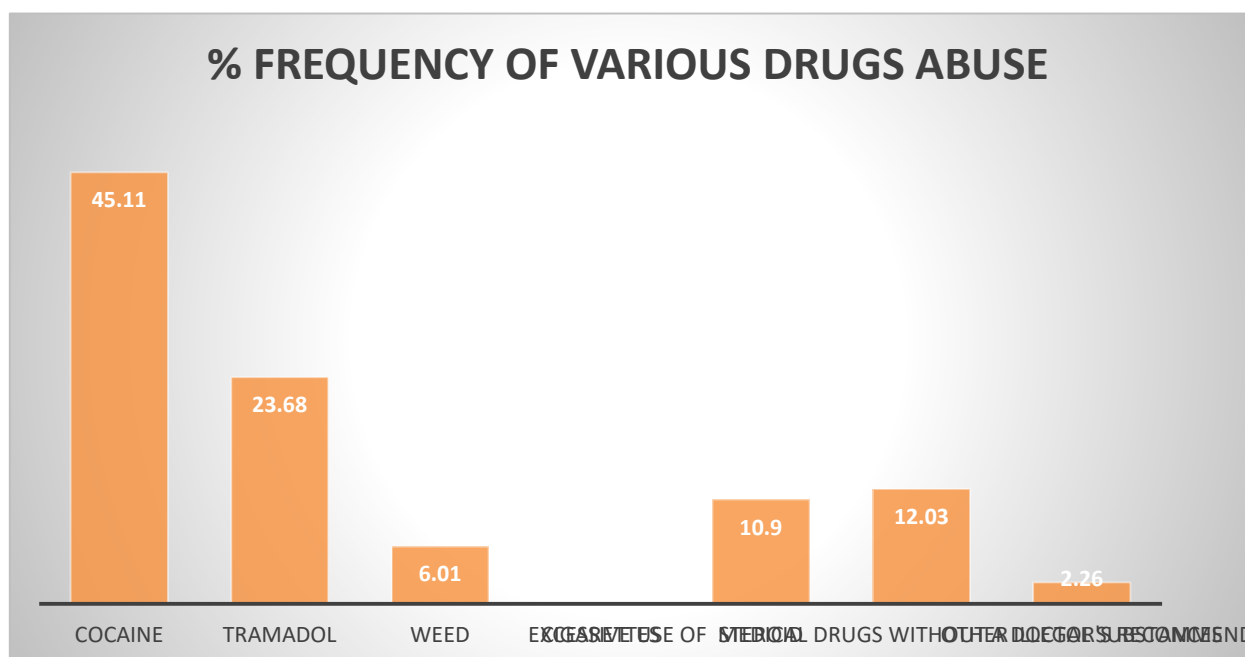
S/N	Variable	No Reported Cases of Drug	% number of Reported Cases	Remark
1	Cocaine	24000	-	Highly abused
2	Tramadol	12, 600	23.68	Abused
3	Weed	3200	6.01	Fairly Abused
4	Cigarettes	Nil	Nil	
5	Steroid	5800	10.90	Fairly Abused
6	Excessive use of Medical Drugs without a Doctor's Recommendation	6400	12.03	Abused
7	Other Illegal Substances	1200	2.26	Mot really Abused
	Total	53200	100.00	

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2023 based on Data Obtained from World Health Organization on Drugs Abuse various Report

The result of the data collected from the web site of the World Health Organization and UNDO on various reports of drug abuse among higher education students in Nigeria pointed to the fact that cocaine was the most commonly abused drug in Nigeria. This assertion was based on the fact that out of the total number of 53200 reported cases in the period 2018–2022, 45.11% of the cases showed that cocaine was the most abused drug among students of higher institutions in Nigeria, while 23.68% of the cases showed that tramadol was second. In addition, 6.01%, 10.90%, 12.03%, and 2.26% of the cases were recorded for weed, steroids, and other illegal substances. The implication of this was that the report of the international organisations reaffirmed the fact that respondents' perception that cocaine was the most commonly abused drug among

students of higher institutions in Nigeria was true. The report further revealed that health challenges had been rampant among students of higher institutions in Nigeria due to the use of cocaine and other hard drugs. This had created a serious gap between drug usage, the physical health of the student, and their academic achievement. Thus, to the research question that stated that, what drugs were commonly abused by tertiary institution students in Nigeria? It might be reasonable to assert that cocaine, tramadol, weed, steroids, excessive use of medical drugs without doctor recommendation, and other illegal substances were commonly abused by students in higher institutions in Nigeria. The frequency of drug abuse based on percentage usage obtained from the WHO and UNDO is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1



Source: Researcher's Computation, 2023

Objective Two: To examine the level of tertiary institution students drug abuse as highlighted by WHO and UNDOC for the period 2018-2022.

Research Question Two: What is the level of students' drug abuse between 2018- 2022?



Table 3 F-calculated for the Level of students Drug Abuse as reported by WHO and UNDOC for the Period 2018-2022

WHO									UNDOC							
S/N	Variable	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	F-cal	P-value	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	F-cal	P-value	Remark
1	Cocaine	1200	6000	2400	6200	200	23.46	0.0045	600	1200	800	3200	3400	64.89	0.0000	High
2	Tramadol	200	1200	800	400	800	17.67	0.0342	280	400	600	20	1300	37.67	0.0004	High
3	Weed	400	800	680	20	300	56.56	0.0000	400	40	60	200	300	28.34	0.0023	High
4	Cigarettes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
5	Steroid	800	200	600	200	1400	67.01	0.0000	200	200	500	700	1000	47.86	0.0000	High
6	Excessive use of Medical Drugs without a Doctor's Recommendation	1500	600	230	1730	1340	56.92	0.0000	70	200	30	700				
7	Other Illegal Substances	20	300	40	40	200	16.78	0.0234	60	40	180	20	300	66.54	0.0000	High

Source: Researcher's computation, 2023 ** Year by year figure indicated the number of reported cases of various drug abuse among students of higher institutions in Nigeria ** A test item was significant if its p-value was less than the critical value of 5%

Table 3 presents the result of the F-statistics computed to investigate the second objective of the study in order to provide a meaningful answer to research question two. Looking critically at the table, it was found that the level of drug abuse among students of higher institutions based on the reports of WHO & UNDOC, and F-statistics calculated was high. For instance, it was found from the results in the table that the level of consumption and usage of cocaine among students of higher institutions in Nigeria was high. This inference was premised on the fact that the p-value of the F-calculated for the variable Cocaine of 0.0045 and 0.0000 based on WHO and UNDOC data were less than the critical value of 5%. Thus, it shows that the level of usage and consumption of the drug was high among students of higher institutions in Nigeria. More so, the usage of tramadol, weed, steroid, excessive use of medical drugs

without a doctor's prescription, and other illegal substance usage were found to be used by students to a large extent. This inference was based on the fact that the F-statistics computed for the variable based on data obtained from the WHO and UNDOC were less than the critical value of 5% with significant F-statistics values. The implication of this was that drug abuse among students of higher institutions in Nigeria was high. In fact, the respondents used for the study recognised the menace of drug abuse among students by agreeing that drug usage not recommended by doctors had turned many students into drug addicts, thus negatively affecting their academic performance and also creating a bad future for many of the drug addict students. The respondents further pointed out that addressing the issue of drug abuse among students must be the concern of a growing nation whose future human capital resources have been beclouded.

Table 4 Mean and Standard Deviation computed for the perception of Respondents on the most Institutions involved in Drug Abused over the Past Five Year in Higher Institutions in Nigeria

S/N	Variable	N	Mean	STD	F-cal	P-value	Remark
1	College of Education /Technology	350	2.68	1.34	0.987	0.6345	Not Significantly Involved
2	College of Agriculture	350	2.34	1.64	1.456	0.2340	Not Significant Involved
3	Polytechnics	350	4.54	0.23	45.678	0.0000	Significantly Involved
4	Universities	350	4.34	0.36	33.678	0.0000	Significantly Involved
5	others	350	2.67	1.32	0.998	0.6235	Not Significantly Involved

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2023 ** A test institution was significantly involved if p-value of the F-statistics < 0.05 (5%) or otherwise

Table 4 presents the result of the F-statistics computed to investigate the most institutions involved in drug abuse over

the past five years in Nigeria. Looking at the results in the table, it was found that both colleges of education technology and agriculture were not significantly involved in drug abuse. This inference was



premised on the fact that the p-values of the F-statistics computed for the test variables of 0.6345 and 0.2340, respectively, were greater than the critical value of 5% with insignificant F-statistics values of 0.987 and 1.456. The implication of this was that the extent of student involvement in the colleges for drug abuse was not as high as that of the polytechnic and university. Thus, to some extent, one could say that the attention of the attention of the students of the colleges was adequately paid to their students, thus enhancing their academic performance. This further minimises the incidence of students experiencing unrest, cultism, and other vices that might impede students' academic calendars.

More so, the result in Table 4 revealed that universities and polytechnics were the most affected higher institutions in Nigeria by the incidence of students' drug abuse. This assertion was premised on the fact that the p-values computed for the test institutions of 0.0000 and 0.0000 were less than the critical value of 5% with significant F-statistics values of 33.68 and 45.68, respectively. The values implied that the incidence of drug abuse among students of higher institutions was rampant in universities and polytechnics in Nigeria. This had been a serious impediment to the academic calendar as a result of the activities of drug abusers, cultism, and other vices that forced these higher institutions to close= down academic activities. Furthermore, the result obtained indicated that other institutions, such as the College of Arabic Studies, the Pastoral College, the School of Nursing, and Midwives, had no incidence of drug abuse in Nigeria, since the p-value of the F-calculated for the institutions of 0.6235 was greater than the critical value of 5%.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the incidence of drug abuse was rampant among Nigerian higher education students especially in the University and Polytechnic of the study area. According to the findings, it was discovered that most commonly abused drug among students of higher institutions in Osun State Nigeria was cocaine. The excessive of this had caused a serious health challenge resulting to increase in number of drop out. On the other hand, the report of WHO and UNDO between 2018-2022 discovered that cocaine was the most commonly abused drug by the students in Nigeria with 45.11%. Drugs such as cocaine, steroids, tramadol and weed used in an illegal way had turned many students into drug addicts and this affect their academic performance which make the growing of nation and human capital development beclouded.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- There is a need for the management of higher institutions, particularly polytechnics and universities, to set up high-power committees on how to reduce drug usage among students. This the institutions may achieve by setting up effective guidance and counselling. A drug test must also be conducted for students suspected of drug abuse in order to determine the level of usage.
- More so, the management of the institutions can also stem the tide of drug abuse among students by encouraging the various religion organs in the institutions to continue to advice the students on



the danger of drug and preach against it.

- Furthermore, Universities and Polytechnics which are the main institutions where drug are being abused must set-up functioning drug test unit and medical laboratory centre which main duty are to conduct drug test as the student resume. This may help in identifying students that usually abuse drug in time and appropriate remedy put in place for them.

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FUOYE Journal of Criminology and Security Studies (IJCSS)
Department of Criminology and Security Studies
Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria
Vol-3, Issue-1, June 2024
ISSN: 2786-9636 (Print); 2790-3246 (Online)



Scholarly Journal of Social Sciences
Research, 2(8), 32-46. www.ijaar.org/sjssr

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