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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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## DRUG ABUSE AND RISK BEHAVIOUR AMONG STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

The study investigated drug abuse and risk behavior among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State Nigeria. The study adopts descriptive research design. The population of the study consists of 42,055 students of tertiary institution in Kogi State. Simple random sampling procedure was used to select 500 respondents. A research instrument titled "Drug abuse and Risk Behaviour Questionnaire" (DARBQ) was used for the data collection. Four research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment correlation. The hypotheses raised were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study reveals that Drug abuse has a significant relationship with violence, cultism and prostitution among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State. The study recommends that Symposia, rallies, seminars and workshops should be periodically organized to sensitize the students of tertiary institutions on the dangers inherent in the illicit consumption of drugs, also there is need for parents to educate their wards on negative effect of drug abuse on their academic performance in school. Counseling psychologists should adopt appropriate therapy on drug abusers in order to produce expected positive behavioural changes in them.

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## INTRODUCTION

It is observed that a common feature of social vices especially in Kogi State of Nigeria is drug abuse and expression of risk behavior that often lead to prostitution, cultism and general violence that expresses as destruction of public property and other social amenities in the state. In the last decade, the reported growing rate of drug abuse among youths especially has been causing a lot of concern in schools, government circles and the society at large (Idris 2014). Drug abuse, that is, involvement in hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine is not limited to any social and economic group neither is it limited to a particular gender or religion, so also is the issue of prostitution, cultism and violence or terrorist acts. Odebunmi, (1994) linked the problem of indiscipline in schools to drug use when he claimed that the current trend of indiscipline among students in school and Nigerian youths in general has become so rampant that successive governments have sought for ways of combating its problems. As a result of this unwholesome trend, school Boards, University Communities and Non-governmental Organization (NGOS) such as Youth

Clubs, Philanthropic Organizations, Federal and State Government and their parastatals, particularly the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have been instituted and have among other activities organized programmes to create awareness of the dangers of drugs and drug abuse, and the attendant violence and terrorists acts involving the youth in recent times. Okoye, (2001) explained the term drug as a substance that could bring about a change in the biological function through its chemical actions. It is also considered as a substance that modifies perceptions, cognition, mood, behavior and general body functions (Balogun, 2006). This could thus be considered as chemical modifiers of the living tissues that could bring about psychological and behavioural changes (Nnachi, 2007). The alarming evidence in the prevalence of drug use and abuse, the effects and consequences among students has called for concern and challenge before all helping professions demanding that they mount strategies of equipping youths with skills of living devoid of drug use and abuse as well as disengaging in violent act often associated with them. The studies carried out among the institution students in Benin City by (Omage and Oshiloya, 2006), found out that students and youths in the community

are involved in cannabis abuse and stimulants such as amphetamines and cannabis. The consensus of opinion therefore seems to be that these youths involve in violence acts are also seriously involved in substance abuse. Drug abuse and attendant instrument in violence, cultism and prostitution have become a problem of great concern to all well meaning Nigerians and particularly the Federal Government to the extent that an Agency has been established to combat the social disease with a view to reduce the spread of drug abuse and the attendant involvement in violence and act of terrorism to the barest minimum or total eradication. The Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA 1997) has stated that drug abuse and uncomely behavior is a major problem in schools. For instance, about 20% of the school population in Kogi state has taken a psychoactive drug once in their lives (Alemika, 1998). Many of these social disruptive behavior are variously tied to the peer group influence, culture of the parents, as children learn from their immediate environments, be attractive to others becomes very important to the youths, and this factor is significant in the development of alcohol consumption, tobacco and drug use, not practicing safe sex, among other behavior (Ahmadu, 2014).

Oshikoya and Alli (2006) in their studies on perception of Drug Abuse amongst Nigerian undergraduates identified dependence and addiction as major consequences of drug abuse, characterized by compulsive drug craving seeking behavior, are use that persists even in the face of negative consequences. These changes are maladaptive and inappropriate to the social or environmental setting therefore may place the individual at risk of harm. In one of the WHO's and the world heart foundation's data, the editors posit that in Nigeria, 22.1% of school youth age between 12 to 17 years use tobacco, in South Africa, it is 19.4%, 15.1% in Ghana and 16.2% in Kenya. However the government of Nigeria seems to have lost sight of her responsibilities as though she claims that tobacco should be regulated in a market oriented framework, which strikes an optimal balance and the need to ensure healthy work force, it is observed that some teens will experiment and stop, or continue to use tobacco occasionally with significant problems. Others will develop addiction, moving on to more dangerous drugs and causing significant harm to themselves and the society at large. It is worthy of note that in 2013, 225 suspects were arrested for drug related offences and 6,499.809kg of drug were seized. Of the 225 suspect arrested in 2013, 36 of them have been successfully prosecuted and 170 of the rehabilitated through the drug Demand Reduction Programme of the Agency. Just few months into 2014, the command also arrested 24 suspects and a quantity of 1,215.848kg of drugs seized. 8 suspects have been successfully prosecuted and 16 drug dependent persons counseled and rehabilitated in Kogi State. In November 2014, the Kogi State Command of NDLEA headed by Alhaji Idris Bello carried out a public destruction of 13,372.2kg drugs and it was attended by the researcher hence the need to ask the question "what is the source of these drugs", it was revealed from the record that most of the drugs were seized from youths who are mainly students and some of them prosecuted and serving jail term at the moment yet people consider the youths as "the leaders of tomorrow". When students of tertiary institutions are into drugs, they sometimes seek membership of secret societies which are rampant in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Researchers have shown that many cult members are into drugs (Atere, 2003). Participation of students in cultism often affects learning in a negative way. It is generally

believed that it is an antisocial or deviant behavior as a result of drug use and abuse. It appears that drug abuse gives students a false sense of security and self-confidence. Most students who use drug can be violent. They can be involved in all forms of violence act, from burglary to destruction of school properties; they can kill under drug influence. They could be a political thug to politicians and commit all sorts of deadly crimes. Thus, the implication of drug abuse is devastating and deadly. The findings from the National Survey in Nigeria on Drug Use and health (Substance Abuse and mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2005)), highlight a link between youth violence and drug use by showing that youths aged (12-17) who reported violent behaviours in the past year also reported higher rates of past-year illicit drug use compared with youths who did not report behavior. According to Ellickson and Maguigan (2000) research examining possible links between violence and drug use has consistently found a strong relationship among adolescents and young adults.

It is observed that Students of tertiary institutions that use and abuse drugs, may also take to prostitution as a means of making easy money to live above their economic means. Male students who are on drugs are also known as to be engaged in gay relationships with older wealthy men while the female may have multiple sexual partners with whom they engage in lesbianism and unprotected sex. Prostitution and other high risk sexual behaviours therefore, provide the avenue for cheap money. Drug abuse and other associated problems constitute a major threat to the survival and effective functioning of human society (Haruna, 2005). Reports show that lives are daily lost through drug dependency and activities of addicts. A significant number of deaths from accidents, violent crimes and cultism can be traced to activities of persons under the influence of drugs. Drug abuse is associated with a broad range of high risk behavior which has a profound health, economic and social consequences. For instance, some adolescents participate in deviant peer groups, unprotected sexual intercourse, inter-personal violence, destruction of property and of course perform poorly in their studies. Many youths seem to think of experimentation with hard drugs as an acceptable part of transition into adulthood. It is thus worsened by complex socio-economic challenges such as unemployment, poverty and crime in general (United Nations, 2008). Drug abuse is a major problem that has characterized the enormous crises facing Nigeria today. The critical problem is that in spite of the various measures adapted to prevent drug abuse on Nigerian youths, we continue to have increasing number of drug abusers or addicts. The menace with its psychosocial disorder is becoming alarming in the recent times. As an anti-social behavior, it has wrecked and destroyed a lot of youths in the society. The former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan once said "Drugs are tearing apart our societies, spawning crime, spreading diseases such as AIDS, and killing our youths and our future". In the light of the above, the questions that come to mind is how does drug abuse relates with risk behavior among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

**Purpose of the study:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship that exists between drug abuse and variables such as prostitution, violence and cultism, among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State. In addition, the study examined the risk behavior that drug abuse influence most among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

## Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between drug abuse and violence among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State?
2. There is no significant relationship between drug abuse and prostitution among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State?
3. There is no significant between drug abuse and cultism among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State?
4. Which of the deviant behavior will drug abuse predict most among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State?

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive research design of survey type. The population of this study consists of all students of the seven tertiary institutions in Kogi State, Nigeria. The sample for the study consists of 500 students. The sample was selected using Stratified Sampling Technique. The research instrument for the data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researcher, titled "Drug Abuse and Risk Behaviour Questionnaire (DARBQ)". The instrument has both face and content validities. The instrument was subjected to proper scrutiny by experts in guidance and counseling, corrections were made and bad items were discarded. To determine the reliability of the instrument, split-half reliability method was used. The questionnaire was administered on 30 students outside the sample area but part of the population. Data collected were analyzed using Split-Half Formula with a reliability coefficient of 0.72, which was considered suitable for this study. The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to the respondents. Pearson Product Moment correlation and Regression analysis was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

**Hypotheses 1:** There is no significant relationship between drug abuse and violence among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

**Table 1. Correlation of drug abuse and violence among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State**

| Variables  | N   | Mean  | SD   | $r_{cal}$ | $r_{table}$ |
|------------|-----|-------|------|-----------|-------------|
| Drug Abuse | 500 | 31.02 | 4.07 |           |             |
| Violence   | 500 | 11.32 | 2.46 | 0.437*    | 0.088       |

\*p<0.05

Table 1 shows that  $r_{cal}$  (0.437) is greater than  $r_{table}$ (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significance relationship between drug abuse and violence among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

**Hypotheses 2:** There is no significant relationship between drug abuse and prostitution among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

**Table 2. Correlation of drug abuse and prostitution among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State**

| Variables    | N   | Mean  | SD   | $r_{cal}$ | $r_{table}$ |
|--------------|-----|-------|------|-----------|-------------|
| Drug Abuse   | 500 | 15.50 | 1.25 |           |             |
| Prostitution | 500 | 11.88 | 2.54 | 0.250*    | 0.088       |

\*p<0.05

Table 2 shows that  $r_{cal}$  (0.250) is greater than  $r_{table}$ (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between drug abuse and prostitution among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant relationship between drug abuse and cultism among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

**Table 3: Correlation of drug abuse and cultism among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State**

| Variables  | N   | Mean  | SD   | $r_{cal}$ | $r_{table}$ |
|------------|-----|-------|------|-----------|-------------|
| Drug Abuse | 500 | 15.50 | 1.25 |           |             |
| Cultism    | 500 | 10.70 | 2.58 | 0.470*    | 0.088       |

\*p<0.05

Table 3 shows that  $r_{cal}$  (0.470) is greater than  $r_{table}$ (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between drug abuse and cultism among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State. The regression model for the relationship between drug abuse and risk behavior is presented below:

$$Y = a + bX$$

Where

$$X = \text{Drug abuse}$$

$$Y = \text{risk behavior}$$

The regression equations for the relationship between drug abuse and risk behaviours are presented below:

$$Y_{\text{cultism}} = 1.439 + 0.299X$$

$$Y_{\text{prostitution}} = 8.980 + 0.093X$$

$$Y_{\text{violence}} = 3.097 + 0.265X$$

Table 4 shows that cultism is the risk behavior that is most predicted by drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State with a beta weight of (0.470; 47.0%). This is closely followed by violence (beta weight = 0.437; 43.7%), then prostitution (Beta weight = 0.150; 15.0%).

## DISCUSSION

It was found that there was significant relationship between drug abuse and violence among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State. This implies that students who use and abused drug are more likely to be violent. The finding is consistent with the submission of Temple and Freeman (2011) who reports a relationship between experiencing violence and using alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana and so forth. These studies establish a link between drug abuse and violence. The result shows that there was significant relationship drug abuse and prostitution among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State. The outcomes for this result indicate that drugs and prostitution have a direct correlation because use of drugs by prostitutes appeared to be an adaptation and commitment to a deviant social role. The finding is consistent with submission of World Health Organization (2005) who found a relationship between alcohol use and early sexual experience. DeRiviere, (2005); Pedersen & Hegna, (2003) posit that there was relationship between alcohol use and initiation of sex trade involvement. The study reveals that there was significant relationship between drug abuse and cultism among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State. The reason for this result could be that drug abuse influence students' joining the secret cult in order to seek power for protection from attack from rival cults, and intimidation from fellow students, command

Table 10. Regression analysis showing the prediction of drug abuse on risk behavior among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State

| Deviant behaviours | Model      | Unstandardized Coefficients | Standardized Coefficients | T      | Sig. T | R     | R <sup>2</sup> |
|--------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------|
| Violence           | Constant   | 3.097                       | 0.764                     | 0.437  | 4.055  | 0.000 | 0.437          |
|                    | Drug Abuse | 0.265                       | 0.024                     | 10.857 | 0.000  | 0.000 |                |
| Cultism            | Constant   | 1.439                       | 0.785                     | 0.470  | 1.832  | 0.068 | 0.470          |
|                    | Drug Abuse | 0.299                       | 0.025                     | 11.891 | 0.000  | 0.000 |                |
| Prostitution       | Constant   | 8.980                       | 0.865                     | 0.150  | 10.382 | 0.000 | 0.150          |
|                    | Drug Abuse | 0.093                       | 0.028                     | 3.381  | 0.001  | 0.001 |                |

respect from fellow students and way of getting rid of their timidity. The finding is in line with the assertion of Sambo, (1999) that cultists take any drug that will make them commit mistake during their operations but they take excessive alcohol and other drugs before or after operations. Oyegoke (2003) also reports that there is a strong relationship between drug abuse and cultism. The result further shows that cultism was risk behavior that was most influenced by drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions. This was closely followed violence, and then prostitution. King, Saulsbury Blakemore, (2007) view drug abuse and substance use disorder, as a patterned use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods which are harmful to themselves or others, and is a form of substance-related disorder. Adeyemi and Adediran (2009) also confirm that the sale and consumption of these drugs has caused a lot of problems in Nigeria society and in international communities.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the study concludes that Drug abuse had a significant relationship with risk behavior among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

## Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Symposia, rallies, seminars and workshops should be periodically organized to sensitize the students of tertiary institutions in Kogi State on the dangers inherent in the illicit consumptions of drugs.
- ii. There is need for parents to educate their wards on negative effect of drug abuse on their academic performance in school.
- iii. Counseling psychologists should adopt appropriate therapy on drug abusers in order to produce expected positive behavioural changes in them.

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