

Investigating the Effectiveness of Health Counselling in Curbing Drug Abuse Menace among Secondary School Students in AMAC, Abuja. Nigeria

AGNES ANIKE KOLAWOLE
National Open University of Nigeria

Abstract. The study focused on the topic “Investigating the Effectiveness of Health Counselling in curbing Drug Abuse Menace Among Secondary School Students in AMAC” Two theories formed the framework for the research- the person centered and social learning/behaviourist theories. This helped to proffer ways by which counselling sessions between the clients (the students) and the counselor can be made efficient. It further looked at the need for counseling, types and reasons for counseling. Through counseling, the clients and counselor can mirror the causal factors of the various social vices in schools; it also helps to nip the problems which schools encounter in the bud. Furthermore, the roles of the school management in counselling was also looked at, it helped to establish what the senior leadership team of schools should consider when it comes to critical issues such as this. In the same vein the study looked at the problem of drug abuse vis-à-vis the need for proper counselling in school. Four research questions guided the study, with the adoption of simple percentage for analysis. The study recommended that counseling should be given adequate attention, and that staff teachers involved in counselling should be trained- this means that apart from the very fact that schools should have the guidance and counselling office, all teachers should see themselves as counselors, they must see the students they teach as theirs hence, there is the need to counsel the students every time they meet with them in their classes. And to do this effectively, they need to be properly trained.

Keywords: Counselling, Health Counselling, Drug Abuse

1. Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Drug abuse in secondary schools is a cancer that has eaten deep into the system, it has wrecked a lot of havoc to an extent that if it is not tamed, our schools might end up becoming centers for wild teenagers and adolescents. It is no longer news that some students as young 11 to 12 years of age in secondary schools have been introduced to drug abuse. This is worrisome because this wrong decision would have a ripple effect on the school, their future and the society in general.

It is also a rude shock that most schools have not given counselling the right attention it deserves, while some government schools lack the effective services of guidance and counselors, most private schools do not even have counsellors at all. This reveals the very reason why drug abuse has taken a higher dimension in secondary schools and other levels of education.

Also, it is an unpleasant reality that students have access to these drugs at will which is indicative of the very fact that they can easily walk into any pharmaceutical store and purchase these drug. Meaning the drugs are sold without doctors' prescription, which is a pointer to the fact that a good number of the drug stores

around are uncertified, even the few ones that are certified have been compromised.

Against this backdrop, the research aims to investigate the “Effectiveness of Health Counselling in Curbing the Menace of Drug Abuse in Secondary Schools I FCT.

1.2 Objectives of the study.

- To identify common types of drugs abused by students in secondary schools in AMAC.
- To explore the causes and effect of drug abuse among students in secondary schools in AMAC.
- To assess the availability of counsellors in secondary schools in AMAC.
- Proffer solutions to the menace of drug abuse in secondary schools in AMAC.

1.3 Research Questions.

- What kinds of drugs are commonly abused by secondary school students in AMAC?
- What are the major causes and effect of drug abuse among secondary school students in AMAC?
- How functional is the office of the schools’ counsellor?
- What are the solutions to the menace of drug abuse?

1.4 Significance of the study.

This research investigated the effectiveness of health counselling in curbing drug abuse menace among secondary school students in FCT. The research would be useful to parents, schools and the society in general.

It would be useful to parents in the area of raising well-mannered and highly obedient children who would become useful to the society and the world in general. Also it would serve as guide on better ways for parents to counsel their children.

Furthermore, the piece would be useful to schools with regards to prioritizing the need for effective counselling in secondary schools. It

would help schools to realize the urgency to place proper attention to counselling so that erring students can be called to order and effectively redirected to the right path.

Finally, it would be of great help to the society in general in the sense that, counselling would help to nip in the bud, the excesses of the students, and further help them in the right direction particularly helping them to achieve their career goals and target, which ultimately would culminate into a saner and more productive society.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

For effective delivery of justice on this topic of focus, two theories are considered as guidelines to how counselling in the school structure particularly in secondary schools should be carried out. They are; the person-centered theory and the social learning (behaviourist) theory.

1.5.1 Person-Centered Theory

Propounded by Rogers in 1980, it looks at counselling beyond the counsellor-client meet. To him counselling even takes into consideration the wellbeing of the client even after the counseling session. Odhiambo (2014) opined that the counselor should possess some key attributes such as empathy, respect and warmth towards clients. Empathy helps counsellor have full understanding of what the client is passing through, and this would help position him to proffer solutions to the problem of his clients. Respect on the part of the counsellor shows reception towards the clients. Therefore it is expected that teachers, principals or trained counsellors adopt a person-centered approach of counselling for effectiveness in the fight against drug abuse in secondary schools.

1.5.2 Social-Learning Theory

This theory was propounded by Albert Bandura (1986). According to him human beings pick up or learn behaviors from external factors surrounding them. Furthermore, the theory views behavior as a reflection of what happens in the environment. Therefore this theory can be of help to counsellors, school administrators and

policy makers in diverse ways. Firstly, it would help them realize that most behaviors displayed or exhibited by students particularly drug abuse are acquired or learnt from the environment, hence it would help counsellors to solve this problem from a standpoint of well-furnished understanding. Finally, this theory helps counsellors to be well positioned in such a way that they do not address situations involving a client who is addicted to drugs from a preconceived perspective.

2. The Need for Counselling

Counselling is a necessary requirement in all schools because it helps position students well enough and fit for the society. With counselling students are better prepared for the society, without it the school system risks being troubled and this would in the long run have a negative impact on the society.

Audu (2015) averred that counselling is a term which focuses on assisting individuals attain self-understanding and direction. In other words, counselling helps students to reflect and come to a point where a self-examination is conducted. Afterwards, they (students) decide on a transformational change which is evident in their character and learning. In addition to that it would be foolhardy to conclude that secondary schools students understand everything that pertains to life hence there is no need for counselling which guides them towards the right direction. This is the costly assumptions made in secondary schools today, in the sense that the role of counselling has been largely downplayed and the very reason for students' high level of misbehavior.

Further to that Dabone, Graham et al (2015) posited that "counseling is seen as a psychological process of helping an individual to be equipped with self-understanding and skills of problem solving of everyday life in the society, home and school". Therefore counselling helps to prepare and fully fortify students with skills and relevant understanding of distractions which can take them further away from their focus. With counselling in place in secondary schools, students can have a solid

knowledge of society problems and the possible solutions to these problems.

Okobiah and Okorodudu in Dabone, Graham et al (2015) posited that "guidance and counselling are sets of activities which has provided us with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in our present age of complex scientific and technological development". It can be deduced from this that counselling is a panacea to different societal problems. Without counselling, there would be a high level of raging societal problems, the very reason for high level of moral decadence in some secondary schools and in the society in general. A society with secondary schools that pay great credence to counselling would have little problems to deal with. Societies with high prevalence of drug abuse are typical societies that have neglected counselling in secondary schools because it is a crucial stage or phase of life that calls for total attention.

In addition to that, Collins in Mikaye (2012) posited that "guidance and counselling is important because it provides an insight on working knowledge, skills and attitudes" With counselling, teachers can have a full comprehension on the knowledge, skills and attitudes of students which serves as a guide to an effective way of managing them within and outside the classroom.

Denga in Audeu (2015), sees "counselling as as a cluster of formalised educational services designed by the school to assist students to achieve self-knowledge or self-understanding which is necessary for them to attain full self-development and self- realization of their potential" the extraction from this assertion is that counselling if given appropriate concentration in secondary schools, could help students a great deal by helping them to know and further understand the prerequisites for the attainment of their full potential in life. Therefore with proper counselling I secondary schools, students who take to drug abuse and eventually get addicted to it to an extent that it degenerated into cultism and finally possible expulsion from schools, would have a rethink

about the course of action that is about to be taken.

2.1 Types and Reasons for Counselling

Guidance and counselling programs in Nigeria were established to assist students develop competencies needed to overcome academic, career and personal challenges, (Federal Government of Nigeria; NPE, 2004). With the help of counselling career challenges particularly uncertainty of students about the career path they would follow or personal challenge in the form of pre-marital sex, drug abuse hooliganism, cultism can be solved.

Counselling guarantees safety because a well counselled student is set on the right path in readiness for the achievement of his/her goals. The sad reality however is that counselling is taken with levity in secondary schools today. There is little or no attention on counseling, the more reason why students engage in so many dastardly acts such as drug abuse, sex, hooliganism to mention a few. It is shocking to realize that students take drugs like tramadol and codeine without doctor's prescription. Further to that it is no news that students engage in unlawful sex, this alone forms a major distraction to their academic performance.

According to Mikaye (2012), there are two major types of counselling, they are: individual and group counselling. The former refers to one-on-one counselling, in other words, it takes place between the counsellor and his/her client. The later takes place between a professional counsellor and a group of people. According to Mikaye, the maximum number of this group should not be more than ten in order to have an effective session of counselling. Also in his remarks, he affirmed that government has not made sufficient efforts in ensuring that counselling is given the due attention it deserves particularly in public secondary schools.

2.2 Counselling and Members of Schools' Leadership Team

It is also worthy of note that for the fight against drug abuse to be effective, heads of school

should drive the campaign for necessary counselling that is needed. Nyaegah, (2011) averred that the school principals are key players in initiating and organizing good guidance and counselling services in secondary schools. If principals really feel the need for effective counselling in school, he would understand that his role transcends overseeing teachers and students in the school premises, but also, individualized needs which could be expressed in various forms should be given due consideration. This can only see the light of the day only if principals take counselling in its totality as a tool to achieving a conducive learning environment laced with academic and moral success and devoid of misdemeanors. Also, to achieve this senior leadership teams of schools should be trained or take courses on counselling, as opined by Auni, Songok, Odhiambo & Lyanda (2014) that majority of the heads of department do not have adequate training that would help them to handle the varied issues affecting students in schools since the short term workshops and seminars that the majority of them had attended were not sufficient in empowering them to effectively guide and counsel students.

3. Drug Abuse and the Need for Counselling.

Drug abuse is the use of illegal *drugs* or the use of prescription or over-the-counter *drugs* for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used, or in large amounts.

Since students are pre-occupied with the thoughts of drug abuse and unhealthy relationships, it hampers on their success in academics. This is in tandem with the assertion of Muritala, Godwin, Anyio, Muhammed, Ajiboye (2015) who maintained that "illicit drug use is injurious to adolescent students in their academic performance"

One major factor that can be linked to drug abuse in schools is peer pressure; the pressure to belong to the caucus of happening guys in schools for the purpose of defense against injustice.

The use of drugs in itself is not bad, but wrong usage if it calls for concern. In a situation whereby an individual who is not sick takes drugs for other reasons is purely an abuse of drug. Drug abuse is rampant across all age groups particularly adolescent to the aged. One of such, is its prevalence in secondary schools, where students take drugs for reasons that can best be adduced to:

Peer-Pressure: this is the pressure that an individual unduly mounts on himself/herself to be friends with someone who takes drugs. United Nations (2013) affirmed that drug users seek approval for their behavior from their friends. This is also in line with the view of Gantoye in Muoti (2014) who maintained that peer pressure is key reason that can be adduced to drug abuse.

Family Background: Some students come from homes that see drug abuse the norm. They have fathers, mothers and even siblings who abuse drugs, and they invite them over to take part. In the assertion of Muchemi (2013), a child forms his/her behavior from the teachings and attitude of the parents and grown-ups around.

Mass Media: this is yet another cause of drug abuse in secondary schools. What students see on television, social media or what they hear on radio really influences their choice to decide on drug abuse. For example music video makers are major culprits, in an attempt to attract traffic to their songs, they engage in terrible things chief of which is drug abuse. Limo (2012) also shares this assertion.

Maithya (2009) opined that in the early days precisely 19th and early 20th century, “herbs, roots, bark leaves have been used to relieve pain and help control diseases”

Muotti (2014) averred that drug abuse is prevalent among young people. We realize that the need to really boost ones ego necessitated

the need for the abuse drugs in secondary schools.

The use of tobacco and alcohol is more prevalent in secondary schools. Although those who have become veterans in it have graduated to the usage of tramadol, codeine (cough mixtures, Indian hemp tranquilizers to mention a few. In cases where students are under close monitoring, they could decide to buy spirit, and mix it with fruit juice, by this no one would ever know. The prevalence of drug abuse among secondary school students leads to fatigue, stress, anxiety, bullying even murder Maithya (2009).

Finally, some prominent effects of drug abuse include: health challenges- drug addicts battle health challenges such as shortness of breath, persistent cough and ultimately cancer. This also leads to emotional health breakdown, this means that, drug addicts witness what is called health relapse. Ultimately, drug abuse negatively affects academic performance of students in schools because it is difficult for students to combine the mental demands of drugs with academic demands.

4. Research Design.

The descriptive method was adopted for this study as it helps assessing attitude and opinions of people towards a particular phenomenon. It looks at peoples’ view or perception of a scenario and considers its possibilities. Strategies adopted include: case-studies, theories and narratives. Survey was basically carried out with the use of questionnaire.

4.1 Method of data analysis

This data was analysed using simple percentage. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages was used to answer the research questions.

5. Results

Research Question One: What kinds of drugs are commonly abused by secondary school students in AMAC?

S/N	STATEMENT.	YES	NO	Total
1	Have you ever abused drug?	89	61	150
2	Do you know of any of your friends who abuse drugs?	65	85	150

From the responses gathered, it can be extrapolated that of 150 respondents. 89 (59 %) claimed to have abused drugs in one way or the other, while 61 (41 %) chose otherwise. Furthermore 65 respondents representing (43 %) agreed to having friends who engage in drug abuse, however, the remaining 85 (57%) claimed otherwise.

Commonly abused drugs by Secondary School Students in AMAC.

S/N	TYPE OF DRUG	VERY FREQUENT	FREQUENT	FAIRLY FREQUENT	NOT USED
1	Alcohol	20	15	90	25
2	Tobacco	5	9	26	110
3	Indian hemp	0	0	2	148
4	Tramadol	15	23	33	64
5	Codeine	12	29	24	85

Concerning drugs that are commonly abused, for alcohol, 20 respondents representing (13%) agreed to taking it very frequently, while 15 (10%) only take it frequently. On the other hand, 90 (60%) take it fairly frequently, while 25 (17%) posited that they do not drink alcohol.

Also, on the consumption of tobacco, 5 students opened up on smoking it very frequently, 9 others do it frequently, while 26 smoke on rare occasions, meanwhile, 110 respondents do not smoke.

In the same vein, no students smoke Indian hemp very frequently, also, none are frequent smokers.

However, two of the correspondents smoke occasionally, while the remaining 148 respondents don not smoke at all. On the consumption of tramadol, 15 are very frequent smokers, while 23 are frequent smokers, 33 are casual smokers. However, 64 respondents, do not consume tramadol.

Finally, on the consumption of codeine, 12 consume it very frequently, while 29 drink frequently, 24 do it occasionally, and finally, 85 do not take it.

Research Question Two: What are the major causes/effect of drug abuse among secondary school students in AMAC?

Causes of drug abuse.

S/N	FACTORS	VERY INFLUENTIAL	INFLUENTIAL	FAIRLY INFLUENTIAL	NOT INFLUENTIAL
1	Peer pressure.	105	35	5	5
2	Family background	73	32	15	30
3	Indiscriminate/unauthorized sales of drugs.	119	20	9	2
4	Social/mass media influence.	87	53	6	4

It can be deduced from the statement above that, peer pressure is a very influential cause of drug abuse as 105 respondents alluded to this fact, 35 also affirmed that it is influential. Meanwhile, 5 were of the opinion that it is fairly influential, however, 5 differed in the opinion as they believed that it is not an influential factor.

Furthermore, family background as a cause of drug abuse also generated a divided attention as 73 respondents believe that it is a very influential factor, meanwhile 32 affirmed that it is influential. 15 maintained that it is fairly influential while 30 were totally in total disagreement.

Concerning unauthorized sales of drugs, 119 agreed that it is a very influential factor, while 20 maintained that it only influential but not very influential. Meanwhile 9 believed that it is fairly influential but 2 completely differed from that perspective.

Finally, 87 claimed that social media is a very influential cause of drug abuse, 53 however believe it is just influential, while 6claimed it is fairly influential and finally, 4 maintained their stand that it is not influential.

Effect of drug abuse.

S/N	FACTORS	YES	NO
1	Poor academic performance	79	71
2	Truancy	114	36
3	Bullying.	126	24
4	Cultism	105	45

It can be extrapolated from the figures above that, 79 respondents agreed that drug abuse leads to poor academic performance, while the remaining 36 respondents vehemently objected this assertion. On truancy as an effect of drug abuse, 114 students posited that it is an effect, while 36 claimed otherwise. Moving forward, 126 respondents believed that bullying is an effect of drug abuse while the remaining 24 differed from this assertion. Also, 105 respondents believe that cultism is prevalent among students that abuse drugs, meanwhile 45 respondents do not share that opinion. Finally,

Research Question Three: How functional is the office of the schools' counsellor?

Do you have counsellors in your school? **Yes** [143] **No** [7]

Do you have counselling sessions on drugs in your school? **Yes** [49] **No** [101]

How frequent do you have such sessions? **Frequently** [11] **not frequently** [38]

How effective is counselling in curbing drug abuse amongst students of your school? **Very effective** [30] **slightly effective** [13] **not effective** [105]

From the responses gathered from the third research question, it is obvious that 143 respondents alluded to the fact that counselling services are offered in their schools, while the remaining 7 claimed otherwise. Concerning the existence of counselling services on drugs in their school, 49 respondents admitted that it is available; meanwhile 101 respondents opined that counselling sessions are not considered important in their school.

Further to that, on the frequency of counselling sessions on drugs, 11 respondents claimed that they have it frequently but 38 respondents admitted otherwise.

Finally, on the effectiveness of drug counselling in curbing the menace of drug abuse, 30 respondents agreed that it is very effective, 13 claimed it is slightly effective while 105 claimed it is not effective.

Research Question Four: What are the solutions to the menace of drug abuse?

S/N	SOLUTIONS	YES	NO
1	Address the problems posed by peer pressure.	112	38
2	Encourage parents to set good examples for their children.	129	21
3	Campaign against indiscriminate/unauthorized sales of drug.	145	5
4	There should be social proper awareness about media discipline.	113	37

It can be deduced from the table above that in addressing the menace of drug abuse, peer pressure should be addressed 112 respondents affirmed this, although 38 did not share that view.

Meanwhile 129 respondents believe that parents should set good examples to their children while at home, however 21 differed from that view. Also, 145 respondents alluded that there should be a strong campaign against indiscriminate sales of drug, while 5 did not share that view. Finally, 113 respondents alluded the solution to the problem of drug abuse to proper awareness about media discipline, while 37 believed otherwise.

6. Discussion on the findings

Results from the findings reveal that:

Students heavily engage in drug abuse. And commonly abused substances include; alcohol, codeine, tramadol. This is in tandem with the research of Muotti (2014) who affirmed that there is a prevalence of the abuse of substance in schools.

Drug abuse is caused by several factors, chief amongst them are peer pressure, family background, unauthorized sales of drugs, social media influence. And its effects include: poor academic performance, truancy, bullying. This agrees with the assertions of Gantoye in Muoti (2014) and Muchemi (2013).

Counselling department is actually functional in most schools however they are not well structured and the services delivered are not ones that deserve commendations. This is in line with the assertion of Auni, Songok, Odhiambo & Lyanda (2014).

To solve the menace of drug abuse, peer pressure should be addressed, parents should lead by examples, and ensure that their children are well disciplined, also, the proliferation of illicit drugs should be checked and there should be stiffer social media regulations.

7. Conclusion

This study focused on the effectiveness of counselling in curbing the menace of drug abuse in secondary schools in AMAC, FCT. It expounded the various causes of drug abuse, expounded its effects and proffered solutions to the problem, chief of which was proper focus on counselling in secondary schools, so that students would not feel neglected.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Students should desist from the act of abusing drugs, they should ensure that all forms of addictions are cut away.
- In tackling the problems of peer pressure and family background, proper sensitization should be done on the danger which peer pressure, faulty family background and unauthorized sale of drugs pose to the society in general. Thus the ripple effect of drug abuse being bullying, truancy, poor academic performance would be solved.
- Counseling department in schools should function at full capacity. And efforts should be made to ensure that all spheres of life is captured particularly critical ones bordering on students' future. Therefore, various stakeholders such as government, ministries, principals, teachers should ensure that counselling is given utmost attention in schools. In essence, governments should prioritize counselling in secondary schools, meanwhile, principals and teachers should also put in their efforts in ensuring counseling in secondary schools is not trivialized.
- In conclusion to effectively solve the problem of drug abuse, issues such as peer pressure, wrong family background, social media influence, indiscriminate drug sales should be dealt with decisively.

References

- Auni, R. T., Songok, R. J., Odhiambo, O. R. & Lyanda, J. L. (2014). Determinants of Guidance and Counselling Programme in Addressing Students' Social Adjustment in Secondary Schools in Siaya District, Kenya. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4 (4), 69-76.
- Dabone, KyeremehTawiah; Graham, Yaa Alberta and Fabea, Ineke Bossman (2015) Impact of Guidance and Counseling on Academic Performance. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* www.iiste.org ISSN

- (Paper)2224-5766 ISSN (Online)2225-0484 (Online) Vol.5, No.8
- Essuman, J. K. (2007). Guidance and Counselling in Basic and Secondary Schools in Ghana. *Journal of Counselling, Education and Psychology*, 1(2), 142-143.
- Limo, L (2012) Kenya is a Nation of Drug Abusers. www.standarddigital.net.
- Maithya, R. (2009). Drug Abuse in Secondary Schools in Kenya: Development a Programme for Prevention and Intervention. Kenya: University of South Africa.
- Muchemi R (2013). Drug and substance abuse among youth in the informal settlements within Nairobi: A paper presented at NACADA Conference, Kenya, 2013.
- Muritala Ishola Akanbi, Godwin Augustina, Anyio Bahago Theophilus, Muhammad Muritala, Ajiboye Stephen Ajiboye (2015). Impact of Substance Abuse on Academic Performance among Adolescent Students of Colleges of Education in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice* www.iiste.org ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online), Vol.6, No.28, 2015
- Myathia A (2009). Drug Abuse in Secondary Schools in Kenya. Developing a program for prevention and intervention. University of South Africa. UNISA.
- Nyaegah, J. O. (2011). Principals' and Students' Attitudes Towards Guidance and Counselling Services in the Management of Secondary Schools of Kisii County-Kenya. *International Journal of Business and Management Tomorrow*
- Okita Dan Odhiambo (2014) Influence of Guidance and Counselling on Academic Performance of Students in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Nakuru County, Kenya. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)* ISSN (Online): 2319-7064 Impact Factor (2012): 3.358
- Oyieyo Dickson Mikaye (2012) Influence of Guidance and Counselling on Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Kabondo Division. Kenya.
- Stella Maris Kanini Muoti (2014) Effects of Drug and Substance Abuse on Academic Performance Among Secondary School Students, Kathonzweni District, Makueni County, Kenya.