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Drug Abuse And Academic Performance Of Students In Public Tertiary Institutions In Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
The abuse of drugs among students is becoming an increasing phenomenon. The phenomenon of drug abuse has implications on the academic performance of students who abuse drugs. This study therefore, assesses drug abuse among Students of public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State. The specific objectives include; to find out the effect of drug abuse on academic grade point of students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State, to ascertain the effect of drug abuse on lecture attendance of students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State, to determine the effect of drug abuse on reading culture of students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State, to explore ways that could curb the problem of drug abuse among students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State. The study was guided by the General Strain theory. The study used the survey research design. Snowball sampling technique was used to sample 385 respondents who were given copies of questionnaire to fill. However, only 376 were retrieved for analysis. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Data were analyzed using percentages, mean and standard deviation. Findings on the effect of drug abuse on academic performance indicated a high percentage of agreement by respondents to the fact that drug use has great negative academic consequences. Findings on lecture attendance shows a strong agreement that drug abuse affects students' participation in lectures. Based on these findings, it was recommended that tertiary institutions should enforce strict rules and penalties against drug possession and use on campus. It was further recommended that schools should organize periodic seminars, workshops, and campaigns highlighting the dangers of drug abuse and the importance of healthy habits.
Keywords: Drug, Abuse, Academic Performance, Students, Institutions

INTRODUCTION

The use of drugs in itself does not constitute any danger, because drugs correctly administered have been a blessing. Falco (1988) as cited by Sambo (2008) feels chronic use of substances can cause serious, sometimes irreversible damage to adolescent's physical and psychological development. The use of drugs could be beneficial or harmful depending on the mode of use.

A drug refers to a substance that could bring about a change in the biological function through its chemical actions (Okoye, 2001). It is also considered as a substance that modified perceptions, cognition, mood, behavior and general body functions (Balogun, 2006). Thus, drug can be considered as chemical modifiers of the living tissues that could bring about physiological and behavioral changes (Nnachi, 2007). According to Fawa (2003), drug is defined as any substance, which is used for treatment or prevention of a disease in man and animals. Drug alters the body functions either positively or otherwise depending on the body composition of the user, the type of drug used, the amount used and whether used singly or with other drugs at the same time.

Drug abuse is a major public health problem all over the world (UNODC) (2005). The use and abuse of drugs by adolescents have become one of the most disturbing health related phenomena in Nigeria and other parts of the world (NDLEA, 1997). Several schools students during adolescents experience mental health problems, either temporarily or for a long period of time. Some become insane, maladjusted to school situations and eventually drop out of school.

NAFDAC (2000) as cited by Haladu (2003) explained the term drug abuse as excessive and persistent self – administration of a drug without regard to the medically or culturally accepted patterns. It could also be viewed as the use of a drug to the extent that it interferes with the health and social function of an individual.

The practice of drug abuse has spread through universities, colleges, high school and even elementary schools. The illicit use of drugs is corrupt, dangerous, weakening and eating deep into the fabric of the polity and at the same time claiming hundreds of lives each year and those mostly affected are young people.

Drug abuse is a global phenomenon and not peculiar to Nigeria, Nasarawa State and public tertiary institutions alone. It is a social problem that distract the youths from focusing on their self-development especially academic pursuit. The phenomenon of drug abuse is now rampant and spreading like wild fire especially among youths of school age.

Problem Statement/Justification:

Following the fact that drug abuse has contributed in the set back of the society and distracted a lot of youths from focusing on meaningful ventures and academic, many youths still indulge in drug abuse. In many psychiatric hospitals in Nigeria, youths are undergoing different forms of rehabilitations due to the devastating effects of non-prescribed drugs by experts (Oloyede, 2016). However, it is not yet clear whether or not the above alarming evidence of Oloyede (2016) in the prevalence of drug abuse is connected to the types, factors responsible and effects or consequences of such abuse is also prevalent among youths who are higher education students in Nasarawa State.

In addition, several publications including the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) stated that drug abuse is a major problem in schools, colleges and universities in Nigeria (NDLEA,2013). Students who abused drugs typically do more poorly in academics as one of the major dangers or consequences (Akanbi, 2015). Deas (2000) also pointed out that psychologists argue that hard drug intake lowers individuals' academic performance. According to WHO's and the World Heart Foundation's data, it is stated that in Nigeria, 22.1% of school youth age between 17 and 30 years use Indian helm and cocaine. This study will test the validity and reliability of above assertions of Akanbi (2015), Deas (2000), NDLEA and WHO in Nasarawa State.

Various challenges are linked to off-campus accommodation. Scholars have, among others, argued that problems, such as cost, distance, transportation and social isolation of students from recreational facilities provided by the institutions are linked to off-campus accommodation. The aforementioned problems, are however, considered as peripheral. The major problems of off-campus accommodation, according to Abayomi and Youdeowei (2017), are the ones that tend to threaten the lives and the academic performance of students. In a similar light, Aluede and Oniyama (2009) concluded that off-campus students often appear to be associated with social vices, such as stealing, armed robbery, drug abuse, cultism, prostitution and formation of gang groups.

Several factors affect the academic performance of students, especially undergraduate in Nigerian institutions. Notable among them is the challenge of drug abuse (Akingbohugbe & Akinluyi, 2012).

Arising from these challenges, the study intends to examine drug abuse and academic performance of students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State.

Objectives of the Study:

i. To find out the effect of drug abuse on academic grade point of students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State.

ii. To ascertain the effect of drug abuse on lecture attendance of students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State.

iii. To determine the effect of drug abuse on reading culture of students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State.

iv. To explore ways that could curb the problem of drug abuse among students in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification: Drug Abuse

The disturbing menace of drug abuse is not only a global disaster, but also a national calamity here at home because of the involvement of youths in this destructive enterprise. Adebayo (2019) stated that the common drugs of addiction include Opiate (heroin, morphine, pethidine, etc.), Stimulants (cocaine, dugs of the amphetamine family, etc.), Tranquilizers (lagatil), Sedatives (valium, Librium, etc.) and Alcohol: all these are capable of reducing youths to the level of beast if addicted.

According to Amuda (2004), drug abuse is any form of intake of either non-prescribed or illicit or hard drug that is not within the context of law of nation. In other words, it is the form of addiction to such drugs that can be detrimental to physical and mental health of an individual; while anticipating the act to also be detrimental to another individual after the effect must have manifested negatively on the addicted victim. The abuse can equally mean a situation of any kind of intake that has not been medically certified by a professional physician or pharmacists (American Psychiatric Association-APA, 1987).

From the Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia Britannica (1998: 276), the term "drug abuse" refers to the user of a drug with such frequency that it causes physical or mental harm to the user or impairs social functioning. Although studies have equally shown that traditionally, the term refers to the use of any drug prohibited by customs, norms and values of the society, regardless of whether it was actually harmful or not. The UN Commission of Drug Abuse stated that in 1920 it has no functional ability and has become no more than a code word drug presently considered wrong and illegal (Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia Britannica (1998: 306).

Academic Performance

School performance is an issue that deeply concerns students, parents, teachers and authorities not only in our country, but also in many other countries and continents. The complexity of the academic performance starts from its conceptualization. Sometimes it is known as school readiness, academic achievement and school performance, but generally the difference in concepts are only explained by semantics as they are used as synonyms. Conventionally, it has been agreed that academic performance should be used in university populations and school performance in regular and alternative basic education populations.

Several authors agree that academic performance is the result of learning, prompted by the teaching activity by the teacher and produced by the student. From a humanistic approach, Martinez (2007) states that academic performance is the product given by the students and it is usually expressed through school grades. Pizarro (1985) referred to academic performance as a measure of the indicative and responsive abilities that express, in an estimated way, what a person has learned as a result of a process of education or training. For Caballero (2007), academic performance involves meeting goals, achievements and objectives set in the program or course that a student attends. These are expressed through grades which are the result of an assessment that involves passing or not certain tests, subjects or courses. On their part, Torres and Rodríguez (2006 quoted by Willcox, 2011) define academic performance as the level of knowledge shown in an area or subject compared to the norm, and it is generally measured using the grade point average.

The purpose of the school or academic performance is to achieve an educational goal, learning. In this regard there are several components of the complex unit called performance. They are learning processes promoted by the school that involve the transformation of a given state, into a new state, and they are achieved with the integrity in a different unit with cognitive and structural elements. Performance varies according to circumstances, organic and environmental conditions that determine skills and experiences.

The academic performance involves factors such as the intellectual level, personality, motivation, skills, interests, study habits, self-esteem or the teacher-student relationship. When a gap between the academic performance and the student's expected performance occurs, it refers to a diverging performance. An unsatisfactory academic performance is the one that is below the expected performance. Sometimes it can be related to teaching methods. (Marti, 2003, p. 376).

Human psychological development is instrumental to academic performance of Staff and students in higher institutions of learning. Kindall (2016) stated that there are domains in the development of human Psychology. They are called cognitive, affective and psychomotor stages of intellectual development. To him, social cognition studies how people perceive, think about, and remember information about others. In addition, while cognitive development deals with the growth of the brain and the capacity to think, the affective has to do with human emotions in terms of social relationship (educational) as well as interactions with both academic materials and humans for general performance.

According to Sigmund Freud (1964), the psychomotor stage of development consists of behavioural attitude, habits, which manifest in academics, hobbies, punctuality, character, frequent wants / needs, temperament, socialisation ability, self-motivation, self-actualisation, self-discipline, etc. These are the core areas that affect general performance and make human differences inevitable.

The keys to the academic success as put by Jaffe (2015) will undoubtedly beeffective performance through identification of several classifications and academic implementation strategies.

Effects of Drug Abuse

Following the fact provided by Levinthal (2020) that the school becomes less interesting and less attractive for learners, academic performance also becomes poor. Whatever the reason students and teachers abuse drugs and ultimately get addicted to drugs, the effects of such a vice on the drug addict, the consequences on academic performance in higher institutions of learning; and possible ways of prevention, should be stressed publicly not once, not twice, but all the time especially for the helpless students to undertake medical attention when the need arises (Akers, 2019).

Based on the view of Sen (1989), Physical, physiological and psychological or emotional indulgence in drugs can only be discouraged if government at all levels mobilizes its instruments of communication, enlightenment agencies, overhauls the educational sector through the provision of medical facilities and personnel; so as to discourage the students and Staff from running to quarks in order to satisfy their drug urge or needs. There are many social implications of substance abuse ranging from loss of employment, break up of interpersonal relationship, truancy and drop out from schools, suicidal ideation, road traffic accidents and unprotected sex (Baker, George, & Sandle, 1996). Many researches have demonstrated a significant relationship between abuse and unemployment which lead to serious mental problems in the addicts which was thought to be as a result of behavioral changes caused by pre-existing psychopathology (Johnson, Reynolds, & Fisher, 2001). Family disruption and decrease or absence of parenting capacity has been established in individuals with substance abuse that results into child abuse, child neglect and abandonment with significant and serious impairment of parent-child interaction. A significant link between consumption of illicit drugs and increase crime rate among abusers has been shown to exist by many literatures which is more pronounced in drug abusers. This was proposed to be a result of impairment of cognitive functions of the addicts that facilitate criminal activity and increases an individual's aggressive behavior, and this was said to be related with the financial constraints of the addicts and the high black market prices of the drugs (Pernanen, 2001). The form and pattern of the crimes is usually determined by the kind of the substance. For example, stimulants specifically amphetamine were associated with general crimes, opiates mostly heroin were linked with theft and fraud, but cannabis on the other hand has little link with crimes (Fridell, Hesse, Meier, & Kühlhorn, 2008).

Truancy is another aspect of social implications of substance misuse in which a reciprocal relationship was demonstrated. That is, truancy increases the risk of substance abuse and on the other hand substance abuse increases truancy rate (Chou, Ho, Chen, & Chen, 2006). Also, many studies have illustrated the association between use of illicit drugs and school drop out in which high rate of drop out was found in drug abusers (Rumberger & Lim, 2008).

Theoretical Framework: General Strain Theory

General strain theory is Criminology theory that was developed by Robert Agnew in 1992. Originally, however, the theory was first mooted by Robert K. Merton, but Agnew argued that it had limitations from the perspective of full actualization of the range of possible sources of strain in the society, majorly among the youths.

Agnew argues that experiences, especially negative ones, result to stress. Three categories of strain, according to Agnew, are: the inability to achieve positively valued goals, removing or threatening to remove stimuli that are positively valued, and presenting a threat to someone with noxious, and/or negatively valued stimuli. From the perspective of the principles of this theory, it may be argued that high expectations from self, parents, or society to perform well lead to academic pressure on the students leading to stress. Also, another source of strain is financial difficulties and lack of support. Therefore, students use drugs as an emotional escape from academic stress. In conclusion, the General Strain Theory suggests that students facing unimaginable academic or social pressures may turn to drug abuse as a coping strategy, which in turn harms their academic performance.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1Research Design: The design for this study is survey design. Survey design is that type of research design in which information is collected from only a fraction of the population selected in such a way as to represent the whole. The researcher adopted this design because first and foremost, the area covered by this study is large and so, this method enabled the researcher to use sample to draw inference to represent the various elements of the population

3.2 Study Area: The study area for this study is Nasarawa state. Nasarawa state came into existence on the 1st of October, 1996. It was created out of Plateau state. At its creation, Nasarawa state had ten local government areas, with the state's capital in Lafia. By November 1996, three more local government areas were created thus giving a total of thirteen (13) local government areas in the state, which include Akwanga, Awe, Doma, Karu, Keffi, Keana, Kokona, Lafia, Nasarawa, Nasarawa Eggon, Obi, Toto and Wamba Local Government Areas. The state occupies a total land area of 27,137.8sq km, sharing boundary with the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, in the West, Plateau state in the East, Benue state, in the South, and Kaduna state, in the North. The state in terms of education has a Federal Polytechnic in Nasarawa Local Government Area, College of Education in Akwanga, College of Agriculture in Lafia, Nasarawa state Polytechnic in Lafia, Nasarawa state University in Keffi, School of Nursing in Lafia, School of Health Technology in Keffi, and the Federal University of Lafia.

The state is characterized by a tropical sub-humid climate with two distinct seasons, the wet and dry seasons. The major ethnic groups include Eggon, Alago, Migili, Koro, Mada, Rindre, Tiv, Gwandara, Gbagyi, Ebira, Agatu, Bassa, Afo, Ake, Mama, Kantana, Yashi etc. Historically, Nasarawa state constitutes part of the Middle Belt zone of Nigeria and majority of the rural people are engaged in agriculture.

Agriculture is the main economic activity in Nasarawa state and the major crops produces include maize, rice, millet, cowpea, sorghum, groundnut, yam, cassava, soyabeans, benniseed, melon, Bambara nuts, etc. The state also has many mineral deposits, which include Barytes, Sharp sand, Tin, Marble, salt, coal, semi-precious stones, and that is why the state is seen as the home of solid minerals. Nasarawa state is also home of the popular Farin Ruwa Falls in Wamba Local Government Area of the state.

3.3 Sampling Technique

The researcher adopted Cochran (1977) formula for sample size determination.

Formula: no= $\frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$,where

e= desired level of precision i.e margin of error.
P= estimated proportion of the population who are well aware of drug abuse and academic performance of students
q=estimated proportion of the population who are not well aware of drug abuse and academic performance of students (q=1-p)
Z=confidence interval (95% CI is adopted here, i.e z=1.96) in z-score language.
Therefore,

$$\text{no} = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5)(0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{3.8416\ (0.5)\ (0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{3.8416\ (0.25)}{0.0025}$$

$$\frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$

$$=385$$

The study used the snowball sampling technique to select the sample population.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

Data was generated using questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of sections. The first section of the instruction handled the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents to include age, sex, and educational background. Other sections of the instrument took care of the objectives based on the research objectives.

3.5 Statistical Analysis

For the purpose of Data analysis of this study, the researcher first coded the data, and did a data entry using excel 2010 version, which was later transferred into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Data were analyzed through the use of percentages, mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
16 – 30	208	55.3
31 – 40	124	33.0
41-50	38	10.1
51 above	6	1.6
Gender		
Female	208	55.3
Male	164	44.7
Marital Status		
Single	260	69.1
Married	101	26.9
Divorced	15	4.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 above presents the demographic characteristics of respondents indicating their age, gender and marital status, the table shows that 55.3% of the study respondents are within the age of 16 – 30, 33% of the respondent falls within the age range of 31 – 40 while 10.1% of the respondent are within the age of 41 – 50 and only 1.6% falls within the age range of 51 and above, this age shows that majority of the respondents are within the student age group and have the tendencies of exhibiting the habit of abusing drugs or as well have friends that exhibit such habits. 55.3% are females while 44.7% are males. Meanwhile 69.1% of the study population are single, 26.9% are married and only 4% are said to be divorced.

Table 2: Respondents Rating on the Effect of Drug Abuse on Academic Grade Point

S/N	Effect of drug abuse on academic grade point	Ratings (%)					Mean	STD
		SA	A	UD	D	SD		
1	Drug abuse impact academic grade negatively	109 (29.0)	160 (42.6)	41 (5.1)	19 (5.1)	47.5 (12.5)	3.70	1.282
2	Drug abuse has led to decline in my academic performance	91 (24.2)	202 (53.7)	51 (13.6)	15 (4.0)	17 (4.5)	3.89	.967
3	Drugs make it difficult to concentrate on studies	88 (23.4)	185 (49.2)	18 (4.8)	53 (14.1)	32 (8.5)	3.65	1.222
4	It affects ability to meet assignment deadline	121 (32.2)	215 (57.2)	8 (2.1)	20 (5.3)	12 (3.2)	4.10	.914
5	Drug abuse is a significant factor on student low academic performance	187 (49.7)	131 (34.8)	7 (1.9)	35 (9.3)	16 (4.3)	4.16	1.117
6	Drugs affect average grade point	187 (49.7)	117 (31.1)	14 (3.7)	47 (12.5)	11 (2.9)	4.12	1.134

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 shows the rating of respondents about variables seeking to know the perception of respondents on the effects of drug abuse on the academic performance of students in tertiary institution, on a Linkert scale of 5, indicating the mean response and its standard deviation. From all the six items, the mean scores are between 3.65 and 4.16, which all fall above the decision benchmark of 2.5. this means that they respondents generally accepted that drug abuse negatively affects academic performance. The standard deviation (0.914 – 1.282) indicates moderate variation among respondents meaning most of the responses are closely around the mean.

The table shows that drug abuse impact academic grade negatively with a mean = 3.70, SD = 1.282 indicate acceptability that drug abuse lowers academic grades, drug abuse also lead to a decline in academic performance of students with a mean = 3.89, SD = 0.967, respondents views says that drugs makes it difficult for students to concentrate with a mean = 3.65, SD = 1.222, the table also shows that drug abuse affects student ability to meet up with assignment deadline with a mean = 4.10, SD = 0.914 and also there was and admittance by respondents that drug abuse is a significant factor resulting to students low performance in their academic activities with a mean = 4.16, SD = 1.117, while drug abuse is also said to affect student average grade point with a response mean = 4.12, SD = 1.134

Table 3: Respondents Rating on the Effect of Drug Abuse on Lecture Attendance

S/N	Effect of drug abuse on lecture attendance	Ratings (%)					Mean	STD
		SA	A	UD	D	SD		
1	Leads to missing lectures	123 (32.7)	113 (30.1)	25 (6.6)	64 (17.0)	51 (13.6)	3.51	1.437
2	Drugs make one tired and unmotivated	108 (28.7)	198 (52.7)	13 (3.5)	35 (9.3)	22 (5.9)	3.89	1.101
3	Drugs make it difficult to keep with lecture schedule	181 (48.1)	145 (38.6)	8 (2.1)	27 (7.2)	15 (4.0)	4.20	1.055
4	Skipped lectures to use or recover from drugs	115 (30.6)	209 (55.6)	12 (3.2)	23 (6.1)	17 (4.5)	4.02	.996
5	Drugs affect punctuality in attending lectures	123 (32.7)	207 (55.1)	32 (8.5)	9 (2.4)	5 (1.3)	4.15	.778
6	Drugs make it difficult for one to participate in class activities	111 (29.5)	219 (58.2)	24 (6.4)	14 (3.7)	8 (2.1)	4.09	.832

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 shows respondent perspectives on the effect of drug abuse on lecture attendance of students in public tertiary institutions. On Likert scale of 5 and all responses are above the average mean of 2.5. respondents accepted that drugs abuse leads to missing lectures with a mean = 3.51, SD = 1.437, Drugs abuse makes one tired and unmotivated with a mean = 3.89, SD = 1.101, Drugs abuse make it difficult to keep with lecture schedule mean = 4.20, SD = 1.055, drug abuse makes students skipped lectures to use or recover from drugs mean 4.02, SD = .996, meanwhile respondent also accepted that drugs abuse affect punctuality in attending lectures with a mean = 4.15, SD = .778 and drug abuse also makes it difficult to participate in class activities with a mean = 4.09, SD = .832

Table 4: Respondents Rating on the Effect of Drug Abuse on Reading Culture

S/N	Effect of drug abuse on reading culture	Ratings (%)					Mean	STD
		SA	A	UD	D	SD		
1	Drugs abuse reduces interest in reading academic material	48 (12.8)	199 (52.9)	26 (6.9)	59 (15.7)	44 (11.7)	3.39	1.230
2	Drugs make it difficult for one to concentrate	61 (16.2)	260 (69.1)	8 (2.1)	23 (6.1)	24 (6.4)	3.83	.988
3	Drugs use reduce time for reading for assignment and test	40 (10.6)	281 (74.7)	14 (3.7)	25 (6.6)	16 (4.3)	3.81	.871
4	It makes one procrastinate in reading or studying	52 (13.8)	205 (54.5)	44 (11.7)	36 (9.6)	39 (10.4)	3.52	1.159
5	Drugs abuse affect ability to retain information after reading	43 (11.4)	188 (50.0)	14 (3.7)	74 (19.7)	57 (15.2)	3.23	1.309
6	Drugs abuse discourages one from visiting library	107 (28.5)	126 (33.5)	28 (7.4)	81 (21.5)	34 (9.0)	3.51	1.341
7	Drugs abuse makes one feel tired to read	56 (14.9)	181 (48.1)	29 (7.7)	51 (13.6)	59 (15.7)	3.33	1.318

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4 shows respondents' responses on the variable "effect of drug abuse on reading culture of students". On a likert scale of 5, all the seven variables tested ware accepted above the average mean of 2.5. Drugs abuse reduces interest in reading academic material with a mean = 3.39, SD = 1.230, Drugs make it difficult for one to concentrate mean = 3.83, SD = .988, Drugs use reduce time for reading for assignment and test with a mean = 3.81, SD = .871, drug abuse also makes student procrastinate in reading or studying with a mean = 3.52 and SD = 1.159, Drugs abuse affect ability to retain information after reading with a mean = 3.23, SD = 1.309, Drugs abuse discourages one from visiting library with a response mean = 3.51, SD = 1.341, and Drugs abuse makes students feel tired to read with a mean = 3.33, SD = 1.318

Table 5: Respondents Rating on Ways that Could Curb Drug Abuse

S/N	Ways that could curb drug abuse	Ratings (%)					Mean	STD
		SA	A	UD	D	SD		
1	Implement strict penalties for drugs use in campus	106 (28.2)	211 (56.1)	11 (2.9)	30 (8.0)	18 (4.8)	3.95	1.030
2	Institutions should organize regular awareness programmes	96 (25.5)	193 (51.3)	12 (3.2)	34 (9.0)	41 (10.9)	3.72	1.246
3	There should be increased access to counselling and support services	112 (29.8)	168 (44.7)	12 (3.2)	34 (9.0)	50 (14.3)	3.69	1.340
4	Incorporate drug abuse education into the curriculum	112 (29.8)	179 (47.6)	8 (2.1)	23 (6.1)	54 (14.4)	3.72	1.336
5	Involve parents and communities in anti-drug campaigns	125 (33.2)	164 (43.6)	12 (3.2)	32 (8.5)	43 (11.4)	3.79	1.301

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 5 shows respondents' responses on the ways or possible solutions in curbing or reducing drug abuse in public institutions, using a Likert scale of 5, all responses are above the average mean of 2.5. respondent accepted that authorities should Implement strict penalties for drugs use on campus with a mean = 3.95, SD = 1.030, on weather intuitions should organize awareness programs on a regular interval, respondent accepted with a mean = 3.72, SD = 1.246, There should be increased access to counselling and support services was also accepted with a mean = 3.69, SD = 1.340, Incorporate drug abuse education into the curriculum was also accepted by respondents with a mean = 3.72, SD = 1.336 and also for parent and communities to also be involved in anti-drug campaigns has a mean = 3.79, SD = 1.301

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings on the effect of drug abuse on academic performance indicated a high percentage of agreement by respondents to the fact that drug use has great negative academic consequences. All mean values ranged from 3.65 to 4.16, which are above the acceptable benchmark of 2.5. Respondents agreed that drug abuse negatively impacts academic grades, reduces students' ability to concentrate, leads to a decline in academic performance, affects timely submission of assignments, and contributes to low grade point averages. The standard deviation values, which ranged from 0.914–1.282, suggest moderate variation, meaning most respondents shared similar views.

Also, findings on lecture attendance shows a strong agreement that drug abuse affects students' participation in lectures. Respondents indicated that drug use results to missing classes, makes students tired and unmotivated, disrupts lecture schedules, affects punctuality, and reduces participation in class activities. The mean values (3.51–4.20) show a strong agreement of the above effects. This is an indication that constant drug use does not only affects academic performance but also have effect on physical and mental capacity for learning activities.

On the part of reading culture, all the variables also had mean values above the 2.5 benchmark, showing acceptance. Respondents accepted that drug abuse reduces interest in studying academic materials, affects concentration, decreases time available for reading, leads to procrastination, reduces information retention, discourages library usage, and causes tiredness during study sessions. These findings shows that drug abuse limits students' ability to prepare adequately for academic responsibilities and tests.

Lastly, respondents identified several ways to curb drug abuse in tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State. These include implementing strict penalties for drug use, organizing regular awareness programs,

improving access to counselling services, incorporating drug education into the curriculum, and involving parents and communities in anti-drug initiatives. All mean scores (3.69–3.95) indicate strong agreement. This is an indication that students recognize the need for a multi-level approach involving institutional policies, education, counselling, and community engagement.

CONCLUSION

The study indicated that drug abuse has a significant negative impact on students' academic performance, lecture attendance, and reading culture in public tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State. The findings clearly show that drug abuse reduces concentration, lowers academic grades, disrupts lecture participation, and weakens students' commitment to studying. The respondents also accepted that effective strategies such as strict campus policies, awareness programs, counselling, curriculum inclusion, and community involvement are crucial in reducing drug abuse among students. In all, the study concludes that drug abuse remains a major threat to academic achievement and institutional productivity, and must be addressed through coordinated preventive and intervention measures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Tertiary institutions should enforce strict rules and penalties against drug possession and use on campus.
2. Schools should organize periodic seminars, workshops, and campaigns highlighting the dangers of drug abuse and the importance of healthy habits.
3. Guidance and counselling units should be empowered with trained personnel to provide rehabilitation, emotional support, and behavioural counselling for affected students.
4. Drug abuse education should be included in general studies courses to equip students with knowledge about the dangers of substance misuse.
5. Parents, religious leaders, and community groups should collaborate with schools to create a supportive environment that discourages drug use.

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