INFORMATION ON DRUG ABUSE AMONG SCIENCE EDUCATION STUDENTS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA: THE ROLE OF LIBRARIANS

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Abstract

Illicit circulation of drugs around the world has led to substance abuse among youths at an alarming rate which has both physiological and psychological effects on humans. This paper focuses on the role of librarians as service providers in the provision of information on drug abuse among the Science Education students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. To achieve this, three (3) research questions were formulated. However, survey research design was adopted for the study, the total population of registered Science education students was 1009 and the sample size of ten (10%) out of the total population of is 100. The closed ended questionnaire was used, which covered all the research questions. The total response rate derived was 83(83%). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and results were presented in tables. The findings revealed a high level of awareness on drug related matter. It was recommended that librarians should intensify awareness and intervention strategies on curbing drug abuse.

Keywords: Information, Drug abuse, Youth, Librarians

Introduction

Drug abuse has since become a matter of grave concern to educational stakeholders, medical practitioners, sociologist, religious leaders, counselors, and parents. It has also become a national and international sensitive challenge that needs urgent attention due to the alarming rate of youth involvement (Abdul-Raheem, 2013).

Drugs according to (Makande, 2017,World Health Organization, 2009) are any chemical substance with effect on human, which may be used to fight infections, illness, minimize pain, fatigue, anxiety or sometimes to achieve a certain level of euphoria to produce reactions which alters psychological functioning.

Drug abuse, therefore, is a deliberate patterned use of substance in amounts or with methods which are harmful to the entire body system. Drug abuse is said to have occurred when chemical substance is used in manners that are not consistent with the prescribed standard, in Nigeria, it was reported recently that about 3million codeine-containing cough preparations are consumed daily in Kano and about 6 million bottles in the Northwest (Ojo, 2018).

Drug use disorder is a common problem affecting about 5% of the world population on average an estimated 8% in the USA. Scholars like (Obiechena & Istguzo, 2016, Adeyeye, 2018 &United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018) averred that the drugs mainly consumed by youths are beer, cannabis, cocaine, tramadol and hemp to mention but a few.

Youth have been found to have involved themselves in drug abuse which could be as a result of dispositional factors such as peer group influence, coping with academics and availability of drugs (Muhia, 2021, Okafor, 2019 & John et al., 2023).

Substance abuse has been linked to influence from peer group, style of parenting, broken homes, and law enforcement corruption has also boosted the menace (Siro, 2017). Students are the life wire of any university system where knowledge and good morale's are been passed across, due to the ever-alarming involvement of students in drugs the librarians as service providers have a great role to play in the life of the stakeholders who are students.

This can be achieved by the librarian's intervention through outreach and other enriching services discharged to students on campus (Shiva & Shipra, 2019) .

Statement of the Problem

Drug abuse has become a global problem with an alarming increase rate among youth leading to social vices. The level of abuse among youth is alarming with effect on individual, families and society (National Drug and Law Enforcement Agency, 2021).

Illegal drugs are marketable which has become a source of livelihood for many (Stephen, 2016). Moreover, (Tulu & Keshi, 2015) submitted that alcohol and drug abuse among university students is on the increase and have become a problem that government and institutions are facing which seeks urgent attention.

The report on the prevalence rate of drug abuse in Nigeria was said to be 14.4% among persons of 15 and 64 years of age (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018).

It may surprise us that a frightening number of people engage in using or abusing drug with the impression of being euphoric, self-confident, and energetic which is especially among the young folk(Olaniyi, 2020).

Due to the readily available drugs over the counter, drug misuse is inevitable. Evidences from previous researches have indicated that the young people are more susceptible to this menace.

It is worth to note that librarians as producers of information services are yet to figure out on the intervention strategies that can address the issue at hand.

This study aims to explore the avenue that librarians can leverage on to provide information as a pivotal role.

Research Questions:

1. What is the level of information on drug abuse among undergraduate students in the Department of Science Education at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?
2. How can librarians intervene to inform undergraduate students in the Department of Science Education Ahmadu Bello University Zaria on drug abuse?
3. Why have librarians not intervene as information service providers in curbing drug abuse among students of Science Education, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?
4. Empirical Review of Literatures on Drug Abuse among Students

Evidence from researches have shown that drug abuse is rampant and youth and young adult have been affected irrespective of their ages, gender and educational background.

Kabbash et al., 2022 in a cross-sectional study that investigated the substance use among Kafr El-Sheikh university students in Egypt among university students. The population consisted of 2552 students of the 2018/2019.

It was concluded that men significantly abused substances than women, students were also reported to abuse drugs with a high risk associated with sex and college type.

Scholars like (Aguocha & Nwefoh, 2021) researched the prevalence and correlates of

substance use among undergraduates in developing country using a descriptive cross-sectional study with a population of fifteen thousand undergraduates (15000) and a sample of eight hundred and twenty-five (855) was derived using both multi-stage and proportionate sampling technique.

Data were analyzed using Pearsons's chi-square and logistic regression to test associations between variable. Psychoactive substance use was reported higher among male students.

Ages, religion, place of residence, family and peer use of substance are determinants of psychoactive substance use. From the literature reviewed it is evident that drugs are abused among students which call for intervention, this is where the role of librarians as service providers sets in to help salvage the situation and save our youths from futuristic problems.

Likewise, (Durowade et al., 2021)carried out an investigation on substance use, prevalence, pattern and risk factors among undergraduates' students in Afe Babalola university with a total population of 8500 students and a sample of 421 was derived the researcher recruited 430 students.

Multilevel data analysis was conducted with a clear progression from univariate, bivariate to multivariate. Inferential statistics. The level of significance was set at p value of less than 0.05.

The study concluded that the reason for substance use amongst respondents was attributed to youthful curiosity, peer pressure and media influence. Substance use was significantly associated with age, sex and level of the student in school.

Prevalence of drug abuse amongst university students in Benin City, Nigeria was conducted on eight (800) students using a descriptive survey design and a structured questionnaire for data collection.

Descriptive and inferential statistics using Pearson product moment correlation was used for data analysis. Report showed the higher percentages were male and 46.6% of them have taken substance on non-medical grounds. It was indicated by respondents that drugs were abused as a result of poor student and teacher relationship, faulty parental upbringing and peer group influence.

Results also revealed that is a significant relationship between university environment and drug abuse among UNIBEN students especially those who are resident in the school environment (Adeyemo et al., 2016).

Research in respect to secondary school students, (Idowu et al., 2018)studied the prevalence and factors associated with substance abuse in selected public schools in Ogbomoso in South-West Nigeria using a cross-sectional design and a multi-stage sampling technique, with 218 students used as sample, questionnaire was used to solicit data.

The descriptive and inferential statistics using Chi-square was used at a level of 0.05. The results of the finding showed a significantly high level of unawareness among students because they had not received any formal lectures on the subject.

Causes and Repercussion of Drug Abuse among Youths in Nigeria

The availability of drugs over the counter where sale is not been cautioned as well as the low prices to such drugs have greatly contributed to the abuse of psychoactive substances such as alcohol, tobacco and prescribed drugs as diazepam.

The inadequate knowledge about the drugs and over use of drug is a common factor of drug abuse among student. Stress, physical performance and pleasure, peer group are all causative factor for substance abuse among

students and youths (Muhammad et al., 2015,Jatau et al., 2021 & Mayanchi, 2020).

In Nigeria most social vices have been linked to drug misuse among the youths. Consuming drugs which are chemical substances above its recommended prescriptions have adverse side effects. The abuse of illicit drug has led to destruction of lives and properties which undermine sustainable human development and high rate in crime, youths are most vulnerable on hard drugs and this brings a lot of adverse effects (Obiechena & Istguzo, 2016).

Young people who persistently abuse substances often experience an array of problems, including academic difficulties, health related problems, poor peer relationships and involvement in social vices and lawlessness (Adenugba & Okeshola, 2018, Dankani, 2012).

Furthermore, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER, 2023) reported that drug abuse can case impaired driving, that is driving under the influence of any drug affects driving skills, it puts the driver, passengers and others on the road at risk.

Level of Awareness on Drug Abuse

Research study on awareness of drug abuse among teenager by (Sai et al., 2018) revealed that adolescents under study were highly informed and 67% of them have attended programme on the subject matter. In Nigeria 79% of students indicated their awareness on drug abuse related information (Umukoro et al., 2021).

In India a study was conducted on the level of awareness and attitude of adolescent on substance abuse, it was discovered that 50% of them had information on drug abuse and social effect that accompanies it (Divya & Anu, 2018).

Another scholar, (Kiriru, 2018) observed the effect of awareness of substance abuse among university students in Kenya and discovered that the level of awareness led to a drastic drop on substance abuse, implying that the more the awareness level the higher the diminishing level of substance abuse.

In Nigeria, (Abonyi et al., 2022) discovered that students got informed from diverse means such as social media, blogs and press media.

This was in a study that evaluated the awareness, prevalence and factors affecting substance use.

Intervention Strategies for Curbing Drug Abuse

There are numerous strategies that can be explored to curb drug abuse among students. The implementation of preventive measures, awareness campaigns, treatment options, policy formation which would involve the larger community, parents and community leaders (Joseph & Isaac, 2024). (Akpabio, 2003)opined that the most effective measure is the preventive measure, he further suggested curative, rehabilitative, counselling and psychotherapy.

Another way is through the dissemination of information, education, religious counselling, zero tolerance policies were said to be intervention strategies, drug surveillance system should be on campus, community, organizational and individual intervention (Ezeruigbo, 2023,Anene, 2021).

Librarians Intervention Strategy as Service Providers

Young people all over the world are a vital and important segment of the society in which they live. A disciplined, focused and law-abiding youth can create a bright future for any nation. Conversely, a lawless, indulgent and violent youth is a threat to the nation's peace and security (Anasi, 2010).

It is worthy to say that libraries play crucial role in inculcating positive value, attitudes and behaviors in the society. Libraries and librarians

help ensure that access to information is not denied to information seekers.

However, (Anasi, 2010), agrees that information is necessary for people to be liberated from the shackles of ignorance, misconceptions, economic stagnation, social unrest, and political instability.

The role of the library is to acquire process, preserve and disseminate recorded information. In light of this, therefore, the library can help enlighten youths about drug abuse and its implication to nation building. (Okogwu, 2014) opined that libraries provide detailed information about the dangers of drug abuse, it was further buttressed that libraries serve as a place of solace to ease off stresses and strains associated with adolescents without resorting to drug intake.

In the same vein (Udoh et al., 2020) suggested that librarians can intervene by adopting strategies of seminars, workshops, student group discussion, policy formulation, having guidance and counseling unit, media blog as well as television and radio broadcast (Akoja & Adefarasin, 2019) opined the use of communication posters, flyers, seminars as effective methods for intervention.

Udoh. et al., 2020 in his study suggested communication methods librarians may undertake to curb drug abuse among students in Nigerian university such as outreach services using both the conventional method and the technological driven method.

Hindrances on Curbing Drug Abuse

There are so many factors that have contributed to curbing drug abuse and drug related matters on campus. The ineffective of guidance and counseling, poverty rate which increases vulnerability, lack of parental involvement have been opined by (Chidakwa et al., 2023).

Also, Kisaka, 2019 was the opinion that exposure to the media, laxity in the school administration and failure of parents in cooperating with war against drug and substance use are hindrances to curbing abuse.

Research Methodology

The quantitative research method was adopted for the study and the design was survey research. The total population of registered Science Education undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria used for the study was 1009.

The sample size of ten percent (10%) was used from the entire population which was100. The response rate was 83(83%). The instrument for data collection was an adopted and self-structured questionnaire to elicit responses from respondents which were divided into three sections.

The questionnaire was adopted from (Geramian et al., 2014, Poonam & Parajauli, 2022) which was framed to fit into the library context. Collected data were analyzed and interpreted descriptively using frequency and tables.

Findings and Discussions

Information on Drug Abuse Awareness among Science Education Students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Table 1: Information on Drug Abuse Awareness among Science Education Students

Information on Drug Abuse Awareness	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Are you aware of drug abuse	71(85)	-	10 (12)
Have you used drugs other than for medical reasons		67 (80)	
Have you abused prescription drugs	26(31)	-	-
Have drug abuse affected your performance and concentration as a student	10(12)	6 (7)	2 (2)
Have you gotten into unlawful activities due to drug influence	17(20)	58(70)	8(9.6)
Do you feel guilty about your engagement in drug abuse	25(30)		44(53)
Have you gone to anyone for help for a drug related problem	-	64(77)	-
Have you been treated for any drug related illness before		68(82)	13 (16)

From the analysis in table 1, the awareness of drug abuse is high with 85%, also 80% of the students disagree to have abused substances, while 82% also noted that they have never been treated for any drug related illness.

This can be supported (Sai et al., 2018, Umukoro et al., 2021 and Abonyi et al., 2022)which were studies carried out in Nigeria which reported high levels of awareness of drug abuse among youths and adolescents.

How Librarians Can Intervene to Inform Undergraduate Students in the Department of Science Education Ahmadu Bello University Zaria on Drug Abuse?

Table 2: Librarian's Intervention to Information on Drug Abuse

How Librarians Can Intervene to Information on Drug Abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Drug awareness campaign	68	82
Counseling	79	95
Library orientation with focus on substance use	65	78
Policy formulation on substance abuse	38	46
Follow up	62	75
Annually observing the international day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking on 26th June	57	69
Having forums on drug and substance misuse	68	82
Mental health talk show in libraries	74	89

Table 2 above indicated that counseling is essential with 95%, followed by mental health talk shows in libraries with 89%, while campaign and forums on drug and substance misuse was 82% respectively. This finding can be supported by the report of (Okogwu, 2014, Udoh et al., 2020, Akoja & Adefarasin, 2019) which were

centered on information, seminars, forums and means of communications such as flyers.

Hindrances of Librarians to Intervention on Drug Abuse as Information Service Providers

Table 3: Hindrances of Librarians to Intervention on Drug Abuse

Hindrances of Librarians to Intervention on Drug Abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Librarians are not trained health professionals and counselors	64	77
Non availability of information resources on drug abuse	52	62
Not having forum discussions on campus	37	45
Media blogs not having information on drug abuse	21	25
Exhibitions have never been done on drug related matters	30	36
Library website have no content on drug related information	16	19
Social media platforms of the library is restricted only to library affairs	43	51

Table 3 above reveals that librarians are not trained professionals and counselors on drug related affairs by 77%, the non-availability of information resources on drug related matter 62% and finally the use of social media platforms only for library related matters 51%.

According to (Chidakwa et al., 2023) who opined that ineffective guidance and counseling have hindered the curbing of drug abuse effectively.

Conclusion

Youths have been seen as the most vulnerable due to their susceptibility to drug addiction and abuse.

It is observed that students are aware of drug abuse, it is now dawn on librarians to intervene to curbing the menace by strategizing to campaign, formulate policies to the parent institutions and have counseling unit in the library, using the library social media platform to educate the students and the community on drug related matters, this is so because the library is a people-oriented institution.

Recommendations

1. The level of awareness should be intensified on campuses and the parent institution should take the issue as a matter of urgency to help youth who are the most vulnerable.
2. It is believed that what people see, hear and partializes has more effects on them and so there is the need for librarians to constantly organize seminars and workshops to educate and enlighten undergraduate students on drug abuse and substance related matters.
3. Intervention strategies should be taken seriously, librarians should campaign and also seek trainings on counseling, the social media platforms of the library should also be used to convey information which relates to drug abuse and substance related matters for proper information and outreach services.

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