

DRUG ADDICTION AND ITS TRAUMA ON ADOLESCENTS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA.

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Abstract

This study investigated drug addiction and its trauma on adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The study had three objectives, three research questions, and two null hypotheses, which guided it. The research design was a survey design. The population of the study was 3,547, out of which 346 students were selected randomly from nine schools within the study area. The instrument used to collect the data was a self-structured questionnaire entitled: "Drug Addiction and Trauma Questionnaire" (DATQ). The research questions were analysed, using simple percentages and mean scores, while all the hypotheses were tested using a t-test. All the hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that drug addiction leads to complicated health challenges, such as depression, worries, loss of sense of belonging, anxiety, psychological disorder, and subsequently self-harm. It was also revealed that, drug addiction leads to trauma among adolescents. Results from the tested hypotheses revealed that drug addiction has no respect for gender and location. Students in rural areas were more involved and victims of drug addiction. It was recommended that stakeholders like counsellors, parents, social organisations, and religious bodies should use every available opportunity to assist students who are experiencing trauma as a result of drug addiction, both in urban and rural areas of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Keyword: Drug addition, trauma, adolescents, Senior Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Many people take drugs for one reason or the other. When it is prescribed, it may be for health purposes, but it becomes an addiction when it is unprescribed and more importantly when one cannot resist the urge to take them, no matter the harm it may cause to him or her. Many people take drugs because of the way it makes them feel. They feel that they can control how much or how often they take the drug, but unconsciously they become addicted to one drug or the other. Over time, drugs change how one's brain works, which is usually manifested physically, psychologically, and emotionally. These physical, psychological, and emotional changes can last for a long time, which

may lead to loss of self-control and damage to the brain, especially among adolescents (Maleka & Hyma, 2019).

Addiction is seen as a chronic, relapsing disorder characterised by compulsive drug seeking and use despite adverse consequences. The result or effects of drug addiction are; the inability to concentrate, to be productive in school and life in general. These can make the adolescent feel irrelevant to himself and the society. It also increases emotional numbing, social isolation, anger, irritability, and depression (Taylor & Lewis, 2013). They further stressed that drug addiction often results in psychological and physical problems such as anxiety disorders like panic attacks, phobias, incapacitating worry or compulsions, mood disorders such as depression or dysthymia, and disruptive behaviour disorders like attention deficit or antisocial personality disorder. Other possible effects of substance abuse or addiction are trauma related problems, including sleep disorder, anger, anxiety, depression, and work or relationship difficulties, and these seem to bother many, especially the adolescents. Henden, (2017) noted that drug addiction has a great effect on an individual, which quite often becomes the source of worry for the victims because it affects the mind and body, which results in changes in appetite, increased heart rate, and slurred speech.

He further added that it leads to changes in cognitive ability, loss of co-ordination and difficulty in maintaining personal hygiene. On the other hand, drug addiction alters a person's brain structure and function in terms of the level of reasoning, which usually results in long-term psychological effects, such as depression, anxiety, panic disorders, increased aggression and paranoia, which put adolescents into the state of coma emotionally and psychologically and many become a problem to themselves and the society. It is on the above background that the researchers were prompted to carry out this study, coupled with the personal experience of one of the researchers whose student was addicted to a drug, all attempts to help the student proved abortive which made the student-run mad. On the other hand, John and Enoch (2017) asserted that many adolescents became victims of drug addiction as a result of friends' and parents' misbehaviour which includes sexual and psychological harassment. They added that some take to drugs just to forget their unpleasant experiences like rape, armed robbery, or accident that claimed the lives of their loved ones.

The effects of drug addiction and its trauma on adolescents cannot be overemphasised since it affects the body and the brain of an individual especially adolescents. Apart from the body and brain, it has health consequences which could last for a long time or cause permanent damage to the body system, and these can put adolescents in a state of confusion and emotional imbalance. According to Taylor and Francis (2019), more than 7 million males and females suffer from drug addiction and one in four die on a daily basis. They further asserted that many developed illnesses and some were disabled, both physically and psychologically. People suffering from drug addiction have a higher risk of unintentional injuries, accidents and domestic violence most especially adolescents. Lewis (2018) noted that drug addiction weakens the immune system, increases the risk of illness, and mental confusion and leads to brain damage which oftentimes affects the emotional well-being of adolescents especially those in rural areas.

Apart from the physical and psychological effects of drug addiction, it causes an economic drain both on the part of the parents and the adolescents. It is on the above background that the researchers are prompted to carry out this study on drug addiction and its trauma on adolescents in senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Objective of the study

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To find out the causes of drug addiction among adolescents in senior secondary schools in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.
- ii. To examine the effects of drug addiction on the adolescent's psychological well-being in senior secondary schools in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.
- iii. To examine the psychological trauma confronting adolescents as a result of drug addiction in senior secondary schools in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The researchers raised the following questions to guide the study:

- i. What are the causes of drug addiction among adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in FCT Abuja, Nigeria?
- ii. What are the effects of drug addiction on adolescents' psychological well-being in Senior Secondary Schools in FCT Abuja, Nigeria?
- iii. What are the psychological trauma confronting adolescents as a result of drug addiction in Senior Secondary Schools in FCT Abuja, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study and tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the effects of drug addiction on the psychological well-being of adolescents in a Senior Secondary Schools based on gender in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the psychological trauma confronting adolescents as a result of drug addiction in Senior Secondary Schools based on location in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.

Methodology

A survey research design was adopted for this study. According to Nworgu (2016), a survey research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied, by collecting and analysing data from only a few people, or items considered to be representative of the entire group.

The population for this study comprised all the Senior Secondary II students in Senior Secondary Schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The population comprised 3,547 students from nine selected Senior Secondary Schools of senior secondary II students. Thus, these 3,547 students became the population for this study.

The sample size for this study was 346, which comprised of students who were in Senior Secondary II from nine (9) selected Senior Secondary Schools in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. This study adopted a stratified random sampling technique in selecting the sample size from the population. The researchers considered the formula of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) appropriate. They opined that there is no fixed number or percentage of subjects that determines the size of an adequate sample. Senior secondary II students were chosen for this study because they fall into the category of adolescents.

The research instrument used for this study was a self-structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled: Drug Addiction and Trauma Questionnaire (DATQ). This instrument was

validated through face, construct and content validity by an expert in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation, Faculty of Education, University of Abuja. The instrument was tested for reliability using the test-retest method. The instrument was pilot tested within three weeks after administering the first test and it yielded an index of stability of 0.68, which was considered high enough for the study.

The researchers with the help of two research assistants who were briefed about the subject matter helped to distribute the copies of the questionnaire to all the respondents in the sample schools during school hours, and the completed questionnaire was collected on the spot.

The data collected from respondents were analysed using percentages, frequency counts, and mean scores for the demographic data and answers to research questions. Hypotheses were tested using a t-test statistical technique at a 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was that any value from 2.50 and above was accepted and any value below 2.50 was rejected.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One: What are the causes of drug addiction among adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?

Table 1: Causes of Drug Addiction N=346

S/No.	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
5.	I became addicted to drugs through my friends	2.82	0.89	Agree
6.	My parents' misbehaviour towards me has caused me pain	2.71	0.94	Agree
7.	Drugs make me forget my harassment	2.83	0.93	Agree
8.	Drugs make me feel happy	2.90	0.91	Agree
		2.82		

The results in Table 1 show the causes of drug addiction among adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The mean indicates agreement with all the items with the sectional mean of 2.82 underscores the fact that friends, parents' misbehaviour, harassment of any kind, and an unconscious desire to be happy make adolescents fall victim to drug addiction.

Research Question Two: What are the effects of drug addiction on adolescents' psychological well-being in Senior Secondary Schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?

Table 2: Effects of Drug Addiction N=346

S/No.	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	I always find it difficult to concentrate in the class	3.36	0.70	Agree
2.	Thinking about my life makes me go sleepless	3.06	0.75	Agree
3.	I always feel pain internally	2.95	0.83	Agree
4.	I always lose sense of belonging	3.19	0.59	Agree
	Sectional Mean	3.14		

The results in Table 2 show the effects of drug addiction on adolescents in senior secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The mean indicates agreement with all the items, with the sectional mean of 3.14 underscores the fact that drug addiction leads to lack of concentration, sleeplessness, internal pain, and loss of sense of belonging.

Research Question Three: What are the psychological trauma confronting the adolescents as a result of drug addiction in Senior Secondary Schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Table 3: *Psychological trauma confronting adolescents N=346*

S/No.	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
9.	I can't explain why I am unhappy	3.14	0.63	Agree
10.	I don't know why I always think of harming myself	3.14	0.63	Agree
11.	My unconscious behaviour worries me	3.05	0.70	Agree
12.	I have done more harm to myself than good	3.00	0.75	Agree
Sectional Mean		3.08		

The results in Table 3 show the psychological trauma confronting adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The mean indicates agreement with all the items with the sectional mean of 3.08 showing that adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools are experiencing worries, regression, and thoughts of harming themselves as a result of drug addiction and other substances.

H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the effects of drug addiction on the psychological well-being of adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools based on gender in F.C.T.

Table 4: T-test on Difference in the Effects of Drug Addiction on Male and Female Adolescents in F.C.T.

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	141	2.77	0.882	-.858	344	0.391	Accepted
Female	205	2.85	0.817				

The analysis in Table 4 was carried out to determine whether male and female students differed significantly in the effects of drug addiction on their psychological well-being. With a significant value of 0.391 (more than the 0.05 level of significance), the hypothesis was accepted. Male and female students do not differ significantly in the effects of drug addiction on their psychological well-being.

H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the psychological trauma confronting adolescents as a result of drug addiction in Senior Secondary Schools based on location in F.C.T.

Table 5: T-test on Difference in the Psychological Trauma Confronting Adolescents in Urban and Rural in F.C.T.

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
Rural	207	3.38	0.404	25.768	344	0.000	Rejected
Urban	139	1.98	0.603				

The analysis in Table 5 was carried out to determine whether urban and rural adolescents differed significantly in the psychological trauma confronting them. With a significant value of .000, (less than the 0.05 level of significance), the hypothesis was rejected. Rural and urban adolescents differ significantly in the psychological trauma confronting them as a result of drug addiction and the rural adolescents are more victims.

Discussion of Results

The answer to the first research question revealed that adolescents were usually addicted to drugs as a result of their relationships with friends, parents' misbehaviour, and harassment both sexually and psychologically. This finding is in line with the opinion of John and Enoch (2017) that many adolescents are victims of drug addiction as a result of their relationships with friends, unguided utterances, and sexual or psychological harassment.

The second finding from answering research question two revealed that students, especially adolescents who are addicted to drugs usually lack concentration and loss a sense of belonging. This finding is in agreement with Malenka and Hyman, (2019) who are of the opinion that the effects of drug addiction are inability to concentrate, to be productive in school, and be useful to himself and society in general.

The third finding from answering research question three revealed that drug addiction leads to trauma among adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. This finding is also in line with the assertion of Henden (2019) that drug addiction has a great effect on an individual, which often becomes the source of worry for the victims because it affects the mind and body, resulting in a change in appetite, increased heart rate, and slurred speech.

The first hypothesis state that male and female do not differ significantly in the effects of drug addiction on their psychological well-being. The hypothesis was accepted which is in line with the opinion of Francis (2019) that, more than 7 million of both males and females suffer from drug addiction and one in every four dies on a daily basis. He added that many developed illnesses and some were disabled both physically and psychologically.

The second hypothesis states that rural and urban adolescents do not differ significantly in the psychological trauma confronting them. It was revealed that adolescents in rural areas are more involved in drug addiction and confronted with psychological trauma as a result of drug addiction. This finding is supported by the opinion of Taylor, Lewis and Olive (2013) that drug addiction weakens the immune system, increases the risk of illness, mental confusion, and more importantly leads to brain damage which oftentimes affects the emotional well-being of adolescents, especially those in the rural area.

Conclusion

This study concluded that friends, unguided utterances from parents, sexual and psychological harassment lured students, especially the adolescent into drug abuse or addiction, which usually leads to a lack of concentration and loss of sense of belonging among adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools. The study also discovered that drug addiction leads to trauma irrespective of gender, and the adolescents in rural areas were more involved in drug addiction and are more victims of trauma as a result of drug addiction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it recommended that:

1. There should be urgent and grassroots education and enlightenment by all the stakeholders in education against the growing threat and dangers of drug addiction or abuse on individual students. It was also recommended that stakeholders like counsellors, parents, social organisations and religious bodies should use every available opportunity to assist students who are experiencing trauma as a result of drug addiction both in the urban and rural areas of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
2. Parents should be conscious about the type of friends their wards keep and always allow them to bring their friends home to know who their friends are. The study also recommended that parents should be conscious of their utterances towards their wards, most especially the adolescents, as some words have the capacity of demoralising the individual.
3. There should be psychological counselling and therapy programme for adolescents who are experiencing trauma as a result of drug addiction. There should be a counselling programme for drug abusers especially adolescents.
4. There should be periodic counselling programmes for all gender irrespective of the location that would address the psychological well-being of adolescents. The study also recommended that there should be functional counselling centres in every senior secondary school both in the rural and urban areas respectively.

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