

**THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF DRUG ABUSE ON STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN UMARU  
ALI SHINKAFI POLYTECHNIC SOKOTO STATE NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Drug Abuse is becoming an increasing problem in Nigeria. This research sought to determine the prevalence of drug abuse among students in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto, Nigeria. Drug abuse, also known as Drug addiction, is a chronic, relapsing brain disease characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite its harmful consequences. The initial decision of drug taking is voluntary, but repeated uses lead to addiction. Addiction of any form is dangerous. What is even worse is that this storm hits most young children and youth, and it affects their academic performance. Most illicit use of drugs starts at the age of 16-20 years of age. It starts with merely smoking cigarettes and gradually drowns the person into the trap of drug abuse. Stress, anxiety, peer pressure, and poverty are leading causes of drug abuse. Therefore, a descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, and a simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents for the study. Therefore, it is recommended that the school's management establish a Public health intervention to prevent drug use among students. In addition, it should be designed to raise awareness about the adverse effects of drug abuse.*

**Keywords:** Drug Abuse, Drug Addiction, Academic Performance

**INTRODUCTION**

Drug abuse, also known as Drug addiction, is a chronic, relapsing brain disease characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite its harmful consequences. The initial decision of drug taking is voluntary, but repeated uses lead to addiction. Addiction of any form is dangerous. Even worse, this storm hits most young children and youth. Most illicit use of drugs starts at the age of 16-17 years of age. It starts with merely smoking cigarettes and gradually drowns the person into the trap of drug abuse. Stress, anxiety, peer pressure, and poverty are leading causes of drug abuse. Youngsters, the essential components of society, are mainly influenced by drugs and alcohol. Illegal drugs and alcohol affect everyone directly or indirectly, whether in a town, city, community, family, school or college. Several drugs like cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, heroin, opium, nicotine, cocaine, glue, paint thinner, painkillers, codeine and morphine are usually used in substance abuse (WHO, 2016). Substance abuse in the youthful population in our society has become one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality.

Patterns of adolescent substance abuse heightened the risk of social, medical, psychosocial, and occupational issues later in life Wise and Koob (2014). Therefore, this research focused on the disturbing trend of drug abuse and students' academic performance at Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic to find out the relationship between drug abuse and academic performance among Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto in the area of study. A descriptive survey research design will be adopted for this research study, which is concerned with collecting data to describe and interpret the existing condition. However, with this research design method, questionnaires, personal interviews and close observation will be used to collect data and inferential statistics that would serve as a method of data analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables. This research is designed to last for a maximum period of six months to have adequate data. The study area sample will comprise the seven (7) colleges in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto. The sampling technique adopted for this research work will be random sampling. This consists of 30-50 students to be selected based on the population from each college in the institution, which will give us a total of two hundred and ninety (290) respondents. The research is expected to produce results that would be used to address the menace of drug abuse among the students in the institution.

Academic success significantly influences a student's self-esteem, motivation, and perseverance in higher education. Poor academic performance or high failure rates may result in unacceptable levels of attrition, reduced



graduation, and increased cost of education (Santhi Balakrishnan et al., 2014). The issue of academic performance continued to be worrisome to educationists and researchers.

### **Research Problem**

The issue here is that the current terrain of drug abuse has infiltrated the academic environment and has harmed their academic performance. In Nigeria, it has been consistently reported that drug abuse is a widespread social practice among tertiary school students. Many factors have been found to influence tertiary school students to indulge in drug abuse. These factors include family factors (e.g., lack of parental care, low-income family background, marital breakdown), school factors (e.g., educational stress, poor teacher-student relationships, poor academic performance, absence from lecture), economic factors (e.g., unemployment, poor feeding) psychological factors (e.g., frustration, and emotional stress), and others. Unfortunately, drug abuse is becoming a monstrous problem in Nigerian society. Despite the various measures taken by the government and other agencies to curb the abuse of drugs in Nigeria, many students are still indulging in drug misuse, reducing them to puppets and zombies due to the addictive effect of drug abuse. The health and social consequences of drug abuse are many.

Drug abuse can result in kidney problems, intestinal problems, mental illness, and even death. It is so unfortunate that many abusers of drugs are dependent on such drugs, and they will at one point develop medical problems due to their chronic use. This study also found that drug abuse has a heavy negative social impact on respondents with a history of such. It is so alarming that more than a third of those respondents that gave a positive history of drug abuse: felt guilty for their engagement in drug abuse practices; had experienced problems with their spouses, friends, and parents; had engaged in a fight and illegal activity as a result of drugs; and had got arrested and expelled from school as a result of drug abuse.

This research was carried out to ascertain the social impact of drug abuse and students' academic performance at Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto. Previous works have emphasized the role of illegal drugs in worsening students' academic performance. This research motivated this research to explore a new avenue and untapped area on the impact of drug abuse and academic performance in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were developed as follows:

- i. To examine the linkage between the consumption of illegal drugs and the academic performance of students
- ii. Assess the prevalence of drug abuse amongst the students of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic
- iii. Identify the factors responsible for drug abuse among Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto students.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Drugs and Drug Abuse**

The situation took another dimension due to the contact with the Europeans whose adulterated socio-cultural setting of the society. Colonialism removed everything belonging to African heritage, relegating it to emperor status (Shehu, 2017). Colonialism imposed economic hardship not only on the Nigerian people but also on the entire African continent. Because of colonial activities, Africa has become underdeveloped (Shehu, 2017). The development of urbanization coupled with the rise of population, which creates a scarcity of resources, also contributed to the development and influx of many people trouping to cities searching for greener pastures which led to overpopulation in the major cities in Nigeria. Kano and Lagos states experienced the most in this situation than any cities in the country. Its strategic position as the commercial center and industrial city led to the unprecedented congestion of different ethnicities divided, struggling to earn a moderate living. It is a known fact that when cities are congested, no doubt it bound to face all sorts of criminalities. Kano, Lagos and other cities like Sokoto are not exceptional in this aspect because for many decades; the cities remained the empire of drug addicts operating day and night under the bridges and uncompleted buildings as their hide-out (Owan et al., 2018).



### **Classification of Drugs**

Different classification of drugs exists. It can be divided into two major groups

- Legal drugs
- Illegal drugs

Legal drugs are manufactured, produced, bought and sold within the confines of the law. Drugs like aspirin, cough syrups, laxatives, antacids, vitamins and certain contraceptives are legal drugs that can be obtained without a prescription from a physician. These non-prescription drugs are used for hunger control, sedation, stimulation, dandruff, constipation, relief etc. and are produced and marketed for billions of dollars worldwide. Drugs and medications dispensed by pharmacists on prescriptions given by doctors and dentists are called prescription drugs. They include analgesics, contraceptives, antibiotics, medicated shampoos, stimulants, sedatives, antidepressants, and anesthetics. At the same time, many psychoactive prescription drugs like amphetamines, barbiturates, and narcotics. They are abused to alter the state of consciousness and sensitivity to pain. Huge quantities of alcohol, tobacco, coffee, and tea are used, abused and misused as social drugs. They are legally available psychoactive drugs. Thus these are divided into 3 categories:

(a) Non-prescription drugs

(b) Prescription drugs

(c) Social drugs – nicotine, caffeine and alcohol

Illegal drugs are those which are not used legally but are abused. Broadly it can be further divided into two according to its potential to produce high and low dependence:

- The amphetamines, cocaine, depressants, narcotics. Produce high dependency.
- Marijuana and other hallucinogens produce low dependency.

Illegal drugs vary according to their ability to produce clinical dependency. Heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, etc., strongly depend on producing drugs. At the same time, Marijuana, LSD, Psilocybin etc., are weekly dependence-producing drugs. Their education in tertiary institutions of learning has become a challenging issue considering their academic performance, which affected them seriously due to social neglect. Against this background, this research intends to study the impact of drug abuse and academic performance in tertiary institutions in Nigeria with Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto, as a case study. It is therefore recommended that Public health intervention aimed at preventing drug use among students should be designed to raise awareness about the adverse effects of drug abuse.

Various kinds of literature are captured in this research, based on the conceptualization of the drug abuse phenomena and academic performance. Drug abuse is the use of a mood or behavior-altering substance resulting in significant impairment or distress. Adeyemo et al. (2016) viewed drug abuse as the use of drugs to the extent that it interferes with an individual's health and social function. According to Nkyi (2015), drugs commonly abused by adolescents are; Amphetamines, Anabolic steroids, alcohol, Marijuana (Cannabis or Indian hemp), cocaine, heroin, caffeine, barbiturates, amphetamines, narcotics, inhalants, codeine and cough syrup; which have an excitatory or inhibitory effect which is thought to enhance performance in sport by delaying the onset of fatigue or hasten recovery rate. The use of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other psychoactive substances constitutes one of the most critical public health problems among adolescents worldwide (Oshodi et al., 2010).

### **Effect of Drug Abuse on Students' Academic Performance**

Students who persistently abuse drugs often experience an array of problems. These problems include;

- **Academics Effects**, issues of declining grades, absenteeism from school and other academic activities, and increased potential for dropping out of school are problems associated with students' drug abuse. A low level of commitment to education and higher truancy rates appear to be related to drug use among the students of higher institutions of learning. Drug abuse interferes with their academic performance and is an obstacle to learning.
- **Physical Health Effects**, injuries due to accidents, physical disabilities and diseases, and the effect of possible overdose are among the health-related consequences of young people's drug abuse. In addition, drug-abusing youth engage in behaviors that risk contracting HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. Respiratory deficits such as smoking cigarettes cause bronchitis and lung cancer. Cocaine causes long damage and severe



respiratory problem. Kidney damage is another problem related to drug abuse; it causes kidney damage or failure from dehydration, dangerous increase in body temperature and muscle breakdown. Lastly, among the health effect of drug abuse is death; there are more deaths, illnesses, and disabilities from drug use than from any other preventable health condition. Today one in four deaths is attributed to alcohol, tobacco, and illicit or prescription drug use.

- **Mental Health Effects**, mental health problems such as depression, developmental lags, apathy, withdrawal and other psychological dysfunction are frequently linked to drug abuse among youths. Other mental health problem includes personal disorder, suicidal thoughts, attempted suicide and suicide. Marijuana use, prevalent among youths, has been shown to interfere with short-term-memory learning, skills, motivation and emotional development.
- **Peers Effects**, drug abusing youths often are alienated from and stigmatized by their peers. As a result, those using drugs often disengage from school and community activities, depriving their peers and communities of the positive contributions they might have made.
- **Family Effects**, Drug abuse, may result in family crises and jeopardize many aspects of family life, sometimes resulting in family dysfunction. Drug abuse can drain a family's financial and emotional resources

### **Implications of Drug Abuse**

- Risk to personal safety (danger of death or injury by overdose, accident or aggression)
- Damage to health (including brain damage, liver failure, and mental problems.)
- Legal consequences (risk of imprisonment, fines and criminal record).
- Destructive behavior (harm to self, family and friends).
- Drug dependency is also a common cause of financial problems and difficulties at work or school.
- People may lie or steal to continue using the drug, and as a result, they may lose the trust of their friends and family.

### **Academic Performance**

Academic performance has been described in terms of examination performance. In this study, academic performance was characterized by the overall performance in each year, culminating in a Grade Point Average (GPA). The GPA score would consider students' performance in tests, course work and examinations. The method of computing the GPA is shown below (Reporter, 2003). Past research studies have identified several factors that affect students' academic performance in various centers of learning. Some factors include class attendance (Abisola & Adam, 2017), age, learning styles or preferences, gender, class size, entry qualifications and family income Owen. et al. (2018). It has been examined that nothing is more practical than a good theory. Given the importance of student success in college, using instructive perspectives to guide research and practice is essential. Fortunately, a handful of sound approaches are available. However, as we shall see, no single view is comprehensive enough to account for the complicated factors that influence student and institutional performance (Dhufera, 2015). Braxton et al. (1997) call this 'the student departure puzzle.' The most often cited theories define student success in college as persistence and educational attainment, or achieving the desired degree or educational credential. These perspectives emphasize, to varying degrees, the importance of academic preparation and the quality of student experiences during college. This section is organized around theoretical perspectives of demographical, sociological, organizational, psychological, cultural, and economical, all of which contribute to our understanding of student success in college. Taken together, the different theoretical perspectives on student success and departure provide a holistic accounting of many of the critical factors that come into play to shape what students are prepared to do when they get to college and Influence the meanings they make of their experiences (Ahmad et al., 2017).

Many researchers have discussed the different factors that affect student academic performance in their research. There are two types of factors that affect a student's academic performance. These are internal and external classroom factors, and these factors strongly affect the students' performance. Internal classroom factors include student competence in English, class schedules, class size, English textbooks, class test results, learning facilities,



homework, the class environment, the course material's complexity, teachers' role in the class, the technology used in the class and exam systems. External classroom factors include extracurricular activities, family problems, work and finances, and other problems. Research studies show that students' performance depends on many factors, such as learning facilities, gender and age differences, that can affect student performance (Hansen, 2006). It also stated that the most critical factor positively affecting students' performance is student competence in English. Students strong communication skills and a firm grip on English increases their performance (Ahmad et al., 2017). The student's performance is affected by communication skills; it is possible to see communication as a variable that may be positively related to the student's performance in open learning. A significant distinction of this study from previous studies is that it focuses on open learning (Khan, 2012).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study was a descriptive survey design concerned with data collection or the purpose of describing and interpreting the existing problems. The instrument for data collection was the "Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire" (SAPQ). The response scale was structured in line with the 4-point Likert scale of measurement: strongly agree (SA) 4 points; (A) = 3 points; Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. The judgments validated the SAP designed by the researcher to some lecturers in the Department of Mathematics and Statistic Department of Umaru All Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto. In addition, the instrument was subjected to a reliability test using the Pearson-Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, which yielded an  $r$  — coefficient value of 0.80.

### **The population of the study**

The study area is Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto, and the population of this study area comprises all the colleges of the institution.

### **Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

It is impractical to collect data on the whole population, considering the size and time available to the researcher, hence the need to select a sample that represents the whole population because of the study's time, budget and accuracy. The simple random sampling method guarantees that every programmed location has the same probability of being chosen for the sample, giving every part of the population an equal chance of being selected. The samples for the study are drug abusers' academic performance from all the colleges of (Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto, and 140) drug abusers students are randomly selected. The sample was selected using Krejci and Morgan (1970).

Table 1

<b>Level</b>	<b>Colleges in the Institution</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Sample</b>
A	College of Administration and business studies	50	44
B	College of Agricultural Science	30	28
C	College of Art and Humanity	40	36
D	College of General Studies	50	44
E	College of Engineering	50	44
F	College of Environmental Studies	30	28
G	College of Science and Technology	40	36
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>260</b>

### **Data Collection**

Both primary and secondary sources of data will be used for this study. The primary data, known as first-hand data, are collected for the first time and hence, will be collected through survey research using personally administered questionnaires from the study area. A review of relevant theoretical and empirical literature was made mainly on the impact of drug abuse on students' academic performance. In addition to this, data are gathered from published and unpublished sources. The questionnaire will be administered to respondents while the interview is adopted to complement the questionnaire. The advantage of using the questionnaire for this research is that it permits



comprehensive coverage for a minimum expense, both in money and effort. In addition, it affords broader geographical coverage than any other technique and reaches individuals who are usually difficult to contact. Both open and close-ended questionnaires will be used to explore information, encourage respondents and validity in terms of the representativeness of returns and enable the respondent to give an adequate presentation of his particular case.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, inferential statistics were established, and the relationship between Academic performance and the independent variables was explained. Results of the analysis were presented using tables and graphs. The Statistical Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 generates descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage to present a sample demographic profile of respondents.

### **RESULTS**

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between illegal drugs and the performance of students of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto.

Table 1: t-test of difference between illegal student drugs and student performance

	<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Academic Performance	Illegal drugs	170	56.683	9.381	148	2.456	.008	Rejected
	Non-illegal drugs	90	42.931	7.846				

Table 1 shows a significant difference between the academic performance of students who abuse drugs and those who do not, which is rejected. Therefore  $t=2.456$ ,  $p=.008$  at 0.05 level of significance.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference among drug abusers based on academic performance.

Table 2: t-test of difference among drug abusers based on student academic performance.

	<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Academic Performance	Male	190	61.3500	10.946	85	3.506	.001	Rejected
	Female	70	55.1642	5.221				

Table 2 shows a significant gender difference among student drug abusers and performance,  $t= 3.506$ ,  $p=.001$ . The hypothesis is therefore rejected.

### **DISCUSSION**

Drug abuse among students of institutions of learning worldwide is a foremost challenge that has elicited concern from stakeholders. The current study's average age (18 years) falls within the adolescent period (the high-risk age group for substance abuse). It is similar to data obtained in previous studies in Nigeria Egbuonu et al.(2004), Odejide (2000).

The first hypothesis was rejected, which states that there is no significant difference between the academic performance of students who abuse substances and those who do not. The result, according to table 1, reveals a significant difference in the academic performance of students who abuse drugs and those who do not. The finding is similar to that of Obiamaka (2004), Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2004) and Odejide (2000), whose study indicated that the problem of drug abuse knows no boundaries or social class. It impedes the development of any society as it threatens the life, health, academic performance and dignity of the adolescent. This result is in line with Cook and Moore (1993) that it could be the case that alcohol or drug consumption only has a negative causal effect on schooling achievements when consumed frequently and in large quantities, as suggested by other previous empirical studies. The finding also supports the claim made by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (1989). According to the



report, there are significant changes in drug abusers' behavior, including distinct downward performance in school, increased absenteeism, chronic dishonesty, hostility and reduced self-esteem.

Hypothesis 2 showed a significant gender difference among adolescent drug abusers based on academic performance. The difference is that male adolescent drug abusers were more affected by academic performance than females. This confirms the findings of (Odejide,2000; Ogunremi & Rotimi, 1979; Agunlana, 1999; Ubom, 2004; Obiamaka, 2004; Okorodudu and Okorodudu, 2004). In their research on the effect of drug abuse on the educational performance of some adolescent drug abusers in Umaru Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto. Fayombo and Aremu (2000) found that the misuse of marijuana has reached an epidemic level in the present Nigerian society. Drug abuse could lead to reduced academic achievement or even halt one's entire academic process. Odejide (2000) points out that the desire to succeed in a competitive world is a significant factor responsible for drug abuse among students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Drug abuse has become a severe problem that has affected millions of people, including the youth, who are supposed to be the torchbearers of the next generation. Drug abuse has had adverse effects on millions of drug addicts throughout the globe, as it has forced them to live miserable lives where they cannot distinguish between life and death. From the result of the research, the researcher asserts that the primary root factors and impacts of drug abuse among men are drug enforcers and police, which they all highly believe includes peer influence, absence of parental support and affection, severe dispute or household confusion, absence of parental guidance, and feeble foundation on religious and moral values, suffering frustration in love, purpose or any desire/plan in life, lack of activities to prevent drug abuse, means to forget problems temporarily (Nkvi, 2015)

Drug abuse has many inherent problems, as it causes immense human distress, and its illegal production and distribution of drugs increase crime and violence worldwide. The world community has undertaken many tasks to sensitize the people in general and youth in particular about the menace of drugs. Nevertheless, drug addiction can be a preventable disease. Research has shown that prevention programs involving the family, schools, communities, and the media effectively reduce drug abuse. Although many events and cultural factors affect drug abuse trends, youths reduce their drug intake when they perceive it as harmful. Therefore, it is necessary to help youth and the general public understand the risks of drug abuse and for teachers, parents, and health care professionals to keep sending the message that drug addiction can be prevented if a person never abuses drugs.

Drug abusers are regarded as un-useful among the entire Populace and suffer the rejection of society due to their unwanted and unbecoming behaviors. However, that is a narrow perception because many of them are intelligent, only that they have not been given a second chance to prove their ability.

## **Preventive Measures on Drug Abuse**

The following are the preventive measures, among others;

- ❖ Awareness and sensitization programs on the danger of taking illegal drugs are beneficial.
- ❖ Resistance from peer group influence
- ❖ Manage stress and anxiety
- ❖ Increase taxes on all addictive substances like cocaine, marijuana, cigarettes
  
- ❖ The role of parents is imperative to constant monitoring of their children

## **Recommendations**

- ❖ Benefits of healthy lifestyle choices and developing skills needed to make responsible decisions to resist drug abuse among students should be emphasized.
- ❖ The government should enforce laws to regulate the importation, production and consumption of the local drugs and production of alcohol which seem to be the bases where students learn the behavior of drug and alcohol abuses.
- ❖ Any sensitization awareness or educational programs aimed at addressing drug abuse among students should therefore be holistic and address both the risk and protective factors. The aim should be to strengthen the



protective factors where potential buffers include strong family bonding, positive role models, school commitment and a strong belief in one's efficacy. In addition, parents require information on how to be good role models and the right values by family members.

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