



Empirical analysis of the influence of peer pressure on students' drug abuse on selected tertiary institution in Enugu State, Nigeria

Onodugo Ifeanyi Chris¹, Dr Uzochukwu Silba², Onyeledo Peace Ijeoma³, Chidi Enemo Chinaza⁴

¹ Department of General Studies, College of health science and technology, ezzamgbo

² Department of Business Admin, Charisma University, United States, America

³ Department of Human Resource Management Charisma University, United States, America

⁴ Department of Education Management Charisma University, United States, America

Abstract

Empirically examine the influence of peer pressure on drug abuse amongst students of selected tertiary institutions in Enugu state, Nigeria. To achieve the objectives of the research, data were collected, analyzed and interpreted. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) are designed for students and key informants (KI). Accordingly, to fulfill the intended sample size of 150 participants. The total number of participants that took part in the study were 150. These constituted a total of 90 male students and 60 female students. Students engaged in social activities and leadership were selected by using a purposive sampling method. A structured questionnaire item was used to collect data from the 150 respondents, the appropriate method was used to analyze the data using data analysis processes. Five major themes were identified in line with the objectives of this study: roles of peer pressure, forms of peer pressure, more DRUGs abused among students, factors leading to tertiary institutions student and the effects of DRUG abuse on students and peer pressure in the learning environment. Major findings focused on this study have largely demonstrated that peers play a leading and protected role, given and promoted, influence roles and leadership roles. Both forms of negative and positive peer pressure are also common among students. Regarding the most commonly abused drugs among tertiary institutions student, Khat, cigarettes, alcohol, shisha and Sniff glue (benzene) was said to be, Hashish is the most commonly used Drug by students while drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and marijuana can be used by students in selected institutions. Poverty, divorce or separation, deviant behavior, family related issues, the death of parents/guardians and peer pressure are factors that lead young people in the campuses. In addition, the effects of drug abuse such as mental health problems, social and economic consequences, physical injury, and dependence on drug use and mental disorders of drug abusers are very common.

Keywords: Drug, Drug Abuse, students, Peer Pressure, tertiary institutions

Introduction

A common denominator between the majority of these students is that they use (or more appropriately, abuse) different substances. The universal phenomenon that goes hand in hand with a typical Campus life is the abuse of different substances (Adlaf et al, 1996) ^[1]. These substances are used by these members of society for different purposes. Although the types and amounts of the substances students on the campus use vary expansively, many of these substances are commonly harmful to the body and cause much damage.

Johnson *et al.* (2005) ^[2] list many reasons for the abusive behavior of students including fulfilling the need to be accepted as a vital member of a group, to cope with the situation they find themselves in, as well as for recreational purposes. UNODC (2014) ^[14] points out, „there is an increase in the rate of drug abuse in the world where 230 million people or 5% of the world's adult population is estimated to have used illicit drugs at least once in 2010“. Maithya (2009) ^[4] reported that children between the ages of 11 and 13 in neighboring Ghana were found to be involved in drug abuse. This is a criminal act and is actually considered immoral in Ghana cultural views. These students are found on the campus at any hour of the day - not only in urban areas, but also in many rural cities - plagued with all kinds of violence, crime, drug abuse, physical and emotional abuse and criminal behavior.

Substance abuse and drug abuse have always been the subject of handshakes and discussions about Campus life. Organizations working with students and young people will never fail to address the need to help these active students overcome their thirst for illegal and dangerous use of drugs. Studies show that students on campus „start first with simple things like alcohol and tobacco because this is cheaper and more accessible“ (Wittig, Wright & Kaminsky, 1997) ^[5]. After that, these older people go and use some of the more difficult things, eventually graduating from the integrity of some of the most dangerous things out there, putting their lives at risk. Brown *et al* (1986) ^[6] states that peer pressure is 'a feeling of being pressured, urged, or influenced by others to do certain things or to actually do certain things because others pressured, coaxed you, or tempted you'. Most teenagers crave love and want to be accepted by their friends and acquaintances. They do all they can to please those close to them so that they will not be trapped and left out. In a recent report, of major issues that put young people on the campus, the environmental influences (peer and community) stated by the Ethiopian government (MOLSA, 2004) ^[7]. Most of the peer groups on the campus, however, are the hardest kind of company to keep. Peer pressure can be good or bad depending on the type of peer group involved.

Students want to be accepted by their peers even more than their normal peers. It is very important for these young people to gain the recognition and acceptance of their peers

as they do not want to be alone in a difficult campus life. Young people follow a variety of ways to gain the approval of their peers while living on the Campus. This includes doing the same things that their peers do. „They use substances or engage in other activities that can be harmful to health are the means of being easily accepted“ (WHO, 2014) ^[9]. Although there are a number of studies examining peer pressure, many peer pressure measures are designed for young adults or adults.

Adverse Features of Peer Pressure

Lindgren (1980) ^[10] suggested that peer pressure also had negative implications for young people and made poor decisions and decisions. He suggested that young people with bad influences should be satisfied with all their needs and be seen living only for a moment. For example, these young people, according to Berndt (1996) ^[11], were unable to assess and visualize the long-term effects of alcohol and drug abuse. In addition, they become heavy smokers despite the overwhelming evidence that smoking can be harmful to their health and apparently believe that the “invisible shield” around them will protect them from the long-term effects of such behavior (Muuss, 2000) ^[12]. Peer-to-peer youths do not learn to work hard and do not try to get good grades, they do not care, they wear clothes that are not acceptable to their families or communities, they do bad habits such as drinking beer, smoking cigarettes, going to school dances or schooling, cutting classes or skipping school and so on (Coleman, 1991) ^[13].

According to Clasen and Brown (1985) ^[14], peer groups encourage teens to act contrary to their parents' wishes, not to do too many things for their families, not to be late for homework, and to steal different things, (i.e. shoplifting, lock, etc.), if influenced theirs to them is not true. It was also suggested in one study that peer groups force teens to give teachers difficulty, retaliation or wisdom to adults, to ignore what their parents tell them to do, to trash or destroy things (i.e. writing on walls, breaking windows, etc.), not letting their parents know where they are going and what they do, and harass their parents as a whole (Gray, 1991) ^[15].

Statement of The Problem

Since students do not have a permanent home, it is obvious to anyone that a home is a basic need when it is dark and in need of shelter. The most difficult part of student's life is, therefore, nightmares: rape, burglary, abuse or worse, murder. It is very difficult to think about living on the campus of girls, especially because they are prone to abuse and are at risk of becoming violent. These and other conditions are pushing students to become drug addicts. They claim that these drugs help them to control their emotions and provide a temporary escape from the harsh reality of becoming citizens.

These effects are not resistant to students solely due to apparent malnutrition and lack of personal hygiene (UddinTalukder, Md. *et al.*, 2015, pp. 240-245) ^[16].

Literature Review

Campus students have been roaming the campus of many Nigerian cities for decades. As some institutional documents reveal, students lived and worked in the campus for less than half a century.

The responsibility for the upbringing, protection and coexistence of students is primarily given to the family because it is the best and most appropriate place for students

to grow up normally. In addition to these provisions, student's hardships range from bad to worse (FSCE, 2003) ^[17]. In the case of Nigeria, many students are left unattended and neglected by their parents, which inevitably prevents them from becoming campus dwellers. Without the death or abandonment of a parent, students end up becoming homeless and neglected because of visible poverty and migration from their original cities. According to a report by FSCE (1999) ^[18], urbanization and other complex social problems such as poverty, unemployment, rapid population growth, family breakdown, migration, have greatly increased the number of children who make roads their own homes. MOLSA also reports that the major factors leading to street life include 'increasing poverty, domestic violence, migration, school dropouts, family migration and the need to support yourself and the family' (MOLSA, 2004) ^[7].

In fast-growing countries like Nigeria, urban cities are rapidly filling up with a large number of campus students (MOLSA, 1993). In (2007) MOLSA in a UNICEF-supported study also estimated the total number of Students on the campus of Nigerian cities is approximately 150,000 and that 60,000 students are estimated to live on the campus of Addis Ababa and the surrounding (UNICEF, 2012). It should be noted that there is no single reason for young people to be street children, rather, it is a combination of economic, social, political and cultural factors that force students to take to the campus According to Lalor, (1999) ^[20] 'students come to campus life for economic reasons (poverty, family reasons, orphans, joining friends), peer pressure, parental pressure.' Fathers, few have tried to study the situation of campus students It is difficult to calculate the number of Campus students and campus students because of their floating nature. Their lack of a permanent address, their travel routes, and their changing workplaces make them a difficult group to find (Petel, 1990 in Pietkiewicz, 2012) ^[21].

There are no accurate estimates of the number of street youth in the world, and estimates often vary from one source to another. More than half, 650 million of the world's 1.2 billion people living in poverty are children (UNICEF, 2011) ^[19].

Comprehensive Perception on Campus students

The situation of students has become one of the urban problems that needs the attention of the international community. Experts from all walks of life have highlighted the various social and economic factors they have encountered in their studies. It is reported that students living and working in the campus are present in all parts of the world. Studies have also shown that students are becoming more prevalent in urban areas in developing countries. However, the fact that they do not have permanent residences makes it difficult to obtain reliable statistics and to estimate their numbers. In 1998, UNICEF estimates that there are 100 million Campus students worldwide. The numbers have plummeted in recent decades as a result of widespread economic stagnation, political unrest, social unrest, increased family decline, urban and rural poverty, natural disasters, and rapid industrial development. The United Nations International Children's Education Funds (UNICEF) estimates that of the 100 million campus students, only 20 million live on the campus, apart from their families.

The problem of students living in the campus is a global phenomenon. It is also causing serious damage to millions of students in all parts of the world. These students live short lives and lack basic necessities such as food, health care, and a secure environment (UNICEF, 2007) [22]. Students are a growing phenomenon in developing countries as well as in economically developed countries. Once on the road, their life experiences can be viewed as a state of extreme and chronic poverty (Conticini, no Hulme, 2006).

According to recent studies, because social services are inadequate and almost nonexistent, African children in need of care are often denied adequate care and protection (UNICEF, 2005). They are at risk of physical injury, substance abuse and health-related problems including sexual and reproductive health. And they do not have a formal and informal educational life. They are particularly lacking in life skills and opportunities and the protection of their rights as set out in the protection and protection of their rights as set forth in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Drugs and alcohol intensify the violence inflicted on young people every day. Involvement in crimes related to the effects of drug abuse is also common in many parts of the world. There are also students who use it as a way of life on the campus. This has therefore led to a large proportion of children and youth entering criminal justice systems. This ultimately leads to their admission to correctional facilities (Human Rights Watch Report on campus students, 2005). The socio-political environment in which children live has a profound effect on family life in the country as elsewhere. The level of national poverty in modern-day Enugu suppresses family relationships and, in particular, relationships between adults, children and the elderly. Significantly, among other indicators of rising rates of campus students, rising poverty rates in institution are rising as extreme poverty is one of the reasons forcing children to flee their homes (UNICEF, 2012).

Students often need to become campus beggars in order to earn money or to do menial tasks such as managing people's luggage and daily staff. The fragmentation of families and the harsh environments of the home inevitably pushes children, adults and teenagers to take to the campus. UNICEF reports indicate that, worse yet, the situation of HIV / AIDS orphans is left without protection and care. Many of these students are forced to take to the campus as the only means of survival despite its negative effects on their growth and development (UNICEF, 2007) [22]. Other recent and specific studies, aimed at different groups of people and places, have also shown similar results. For example, a study on other drug-related behaviors among campus students in four selected cities in the country showed a current increase of 56.2% khat followed by 51.9%, 46.8%, 28%, and 18% alcohol, tobacco, benzene and marijuana, respectively. The study revealed that 32.2% of campus student's in the study were heavy users (who took medication several times a week), 28.4% light users (who used the drug once or twice a month) and 41.9% who were users (never eaten or no longer ate). Alcohol, cardamom, and tobacco is among the most widely used. Above all, report statistics show that approximately 58% of street children in the study reported using the same drug or combination of the above-mentioned drug at a difficult or experimental level.

Another study conducted from November 1998 to May 1999 on the initiation and effects of substance abuse among 1,780 randomly selected students from 30 high schools in Enugu showed a life expectancy of 49.6%, 40%, 20.7% and 11% alcohol, khat, tobacco and marijuana respectively. The study also revealed that the age of drug testing for most students (63.6%) was from 15 to 19 years, probably when they were in high school (John Godanna, 1999). A recent survey of tobacco, a global youth survey, conducted in 2003 in 25 high schools in Enugu showed a 10.1 percent increase among young people in grades 9 to 12, which is one in ten students who have ever tried to smoke, and currently 9% of students use any form of tobacco, 3% smoke cigarettes and 8% use any other form of tobacco (DACA, 2005) [23].

Comprehensive Perception on tertiary students

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Theoretical Framework

According to Clark (2009) [26], a peer is defined as „a special relationship between two or more people“.

Peer pressure can have many different meanings and interpretations depending on the point and context in which it is used. It is simply a matter of encouraging or persuading people who have the same standing with each other to do what they do to make that person acceptable to the group. In a group, peer pressure is one of the most powerful forces you must work against in order to make decisions. The process of peer pressure involves becoming accustomed to certain group practices that one cannot do otherwise. For example, if a young person is part of a peer group, he or she will definitely look, dress, speak, or walk like all members of a peer group.

When members of a peer group value a job, there will be a kind of power that will motivate others to agree. In a similar way, if your peers smoke, it would be extremely difficult for them to be in that group and say no to smoking. To say that a person is their age means that they are at the same or the same level of life. It could mean people of the same age, educational background or level of professionalism. When it comes to what your peers say, it's just a group of people who are about the same age as the economy or education who spend time together. Members of these peer groups learn from each other and give clues to each other so that they look and feel the same. Initially, a group of peers may be different and not all members can do the same; but as time goes on, they learn from each other and begin to do what everyone else in the group does.

Social learning theory is defined as the way people learn from others by imitating what they do. This is good news for people because it means they don't always have to make mistakes to understand that something is dangerous. This view continues to support the fact that people learn from others by observing them. Bandura (1971) [27] explains that „the basic learning style, based on direct experience, is largely governed by the beneficial and punishable outcomes that follow any given action.“ This explains the many behaviors learned in a peer group. If a person in a peer group sees that other people in the group seem to be getting rewards for certain behaviors, that person will be tempted to try these behaviors and consider them appropriate. Therefore, if a person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the person in that group will be drawn to his or her behavior.

Social learning helps because it helps people to learn from other people's successes and failures without having to suffer for doing something yourself. The downside to this, however, is that, just as a person can learn good things from others, he can also learn bad things. Just as you may have learned to behave badly by watching other people, it is also possible not to teach yourself.

In a recent study, „dangerous and protective substances“ can help to identify different lifestyles for individuals, families and communities (Naidoo & Wills, 2009) [28]. Risk factors help to identify the tendency that a peer group member will engage in risky activities for both themselves and groups. On the other hand, protective equipment greatly reduces the risk of side effects. These substances, both harmful and protective, are found in relation to drug abuse at different levels of society (Hemphill, *et al.* 2011) [29]. These problems are often seen in older groups and at levels of development in relation to drug use. This is because, at this age, young people and young adults look to the actions of their peers for guidance and imitate their actions (Hemphill, *et al.* 2011; Arteaga, *et al.* 2010) [29]. It is reported that drug use that begins in the early stages of adolescence, especially before the age of 15, can lead to further development in later life (Goldberg, 2012) [31]. Many young people try illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, cocaine and heroin, but it is reported that very few begin to become addicted to the most dangerous drugs that carry the burden of disease worldwide (WHO, 2007). Studies looking at the relationship between early drug use and continued use in adulthood have shown that „people who started using drugs before the age of 21 had a greater degree of dependence on older people“. The effects of alcohol abuse include increased anger, physical and mental illness, injury, unsafe sex and mental retardation (WHO 2007).

Methodology

The research design used in this study is quantitative research. The population of the study is 2500 students out of whom 150 students were used as sample size, representing 10% of the total population. Random sampling technique was adopted in selecting these 150 students, of whom 90 were male and, 60 were female. A structured questionnaire and structured interview questions were used in collecting data from the respondent. While the data collected were analyzed using simple regression method.

Obtaining objectives, a standardized research method, e.g. Case study, used for this study. The reason for this is that the research is highly dependent on the experience of campus students in the administration of the city of Enugu. The study focused on students using drugs in the small town of Enugu. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) explain that quality research is often interpreted and understood to understand something in its context in greater depth. In addition, it seeks to clarify the nature of social actions, relationships, and beliefs and the meaning of human experience from the perspective of participants. The study is a case study, aimed at examining the role played by peer pressure on youth drug abuse in the village of Enugu. This approach empowers the researcher to find in-depth explanations or facts embedded in the lives of students who may be abusing drugs and to assess their view of the impact of peer pressure on their drug abuse. In this regard, Hancock, Windridge and Ockleford (2007) ^[33] argue that qualitative research has sought to deepen and / or deepen our understanding of how things turned out in our social world. Yin (2011) ^[34] argued that quality research involves studying the meaning of human life under real-world conditions and is unique in that it is able to represent the views and opinions of participants in the study.

To date, the researcher assumes that a quality approach may be appropriate to investigate research questions by talking to relevant research people. This approach emphasizes the need to see through the eyes of the researcher and to understand the nature of the subjects from their point of view. Quality research assesses and evaluates the events under study as they arise in their natural state. This is similar to the way data quality analysis helps researchers to convert their observations into data without changing or altering their status. The sampling design employed in this study is purposive sampling. This is because the nature of student's not having a permanent place of residence makes it difficult for a research to be conducted on a randomly selected sample and the researcher needed to get students who are using substances in the required age range. The researcher used non-probability sampling technique. According to Howitt (2000), in non-probability sampling technique, research participants or respondents will be selected from the total population in a non-random manner. Accordingly, to fulfill the intended sample size of 18 participants, the study selected Enugu state for the convenience of getting representative samples. After determining which sub-city the researcher should collect data from, all the street children in the woredas of this city were considered as a population. Therefore, to *get all* the targeted participants, the researcher arranged specific dates to minimize the risk of missing the target population, since students tend to move around a lot and don't stay at one place for an extended time. The total number of participants that took part in the study were 18. These constituted a total

of 12 students and six employees engaged in campus activities. For this particular study, samples of 12 street youth and six employees have been taken by using a purposive sampling method.

Data Analysis

The method of data analysis for this particular study was thematic analysis. After data was collected from the field, the data was thoroughly verified to check its comprehensiveness and consistency. According to Lacey and Luff (2007) ^[35], almost all qualitative research studies involve some degree of transcription – the data may be tape recorded interviews, focus groups, video recordings or handwritten field notes. For that reason, the recorded data of the study was carefully transcribed. In this process, the original collected data and the translated/transcribed one was cross-checked to avoid differences that occur in meaning.

Findings

A total of 18 participants in the study. A total of 12 students and six staff members work in NGOs and government offices. In this study, samples of 12 students and six staff members were taken using an objective sampling method. Sample respondents were selected from the small town of Gullele, in seven and eight woredas. Under this clause, responses to 12 students (67%) and 6 trained employees (33%) are discussed below. Twelve students, six in the interview and six others in the focus group discussion, participated in the study from the selected area. Of the 12 new campus students, six were male and the remaining six were female. The average age of student's participants was 22.9 (ranging in age from 17 to 28).

In terms of educational background, the highest level of education was grade 10 and the youngest was illiterate. Among the participants, two were illiterate, three were fourth graders, two sixth graders and seven respectively. Of the remaining five participants, three are in eighth grade and two are in 10th grade. In terms of marital only two campus students were married and the other, ten, were single. Seven participants were born in Enugu while five were from other cities in the country. Orthodoxy was the dominant religion with 58.3%, while other religions - Protestantism and Islam were 33.3% and 8.5% respectively.

Conclusion

According to Brown, (1990) peer influence manifests itself in at least four ways: direct peer pressure, indirect peer modeling or association, normative regulation, and the structuring of opportunities. The first way is explained as peers directly try to influence the behavior of others. This is one of the most commonly discussed aspects of peer influence (Velleman, Templeton, & Copello, 2005) ^[36]. The second focus is the indirect and often unintentional modeling of behaviors, which can be measured by assessing adolescents' associations with peers who engage in certain behaviors. Research on indirect peer association has found that having friends who participate in deviant behaviors are consistently correlated with adolescents' own risky behaviors (Hundleby & Mercier, 1987) ^[37]. Thus, the current study results which revealed that most street youth are influenced to participate in substance abuse, deviant behaviors and follow others attitudes or behaviors has shown congruency with the above study findings of

Velleman, Templeton, & Copello (2005) ^[36] and Hundleby & Mercier (1987) ^[37].

The influential role of peer pressure is also explained in the literature which is connected with active and passive peer influence. Peer socialization has been conceptualized as both active and passive (Graham, Marks, & Hansen, 1991; Read *et al*, 2005) ^[38]. Passive influence is defined as direct modeling of peers' behavior and normative influence (e.g., the influence of the group as a whole). Active influence is defined as the effect of direct offers or encouragement to use. However, as shown here, according to Ellickson, Tucker, Klein, & Saner (2004) ^[39], the active influence which is related to the frequency of direct offers was related to marijuana use in adolescence. The current study result that showed street youth are actively and passively influenced by their peers' pressure. They are actively influenced because even if they don't have money, their peers offer them and encourage them to use substances and are passively influenced to follow their peers' behavior and norms.

According to the findings of the present study peer encouragement, which was defined by the number of participants' closest friends who encourage him or her to use a substance, also plays a role in predicting drug use. All of the participants in the KI explained that they were encouraged once or two times to use substances or behave inappropriately. This is similar to the longitudinal study made by Duncan, Duncan, & Stryker, (2002) ^[40].

Recommendation

The major recommendation of this study is advocacy on drug abuse and managing peer pressure should be mounted in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This is to expose the students to the causes, and dangers of drug abuse and also how to manage peer pressure and channel the energy to positivism.

Secondly, both parental academic staff and even non-academic staff should rise up to the challenges of training, mentoring, coaching and modeling healthy behavior for our young generation through exemplary living, teachings and disciplinary measures.

Finally, the religious leaders should also be involved strategically and meticulously in the fight against drug abuse and negative peer pressure through structured sermon delivery and moral absolutism.

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