

Implications of Drug Use and Abuse as Perceived by Student Athletes of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, South-West Nigeria

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Abstract

The unabated use and misuse of drugs among students as reported in recent times suggests that students are unaware of the consequences of drug use and misuse it becomes worrisome to researchers in the field of research in education. This study was hence conducted to investigate the perceived implications of drug use/ abuse among students of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, South-West, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted to study the target population made up of all full-time athlete students of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, South-West, Nigeria. A representative sample of 112 athletes comprising 84 male (75%) and 28 females (25%) was obtained through purposive random sampling techniques. A validated self structured questionnaire with a Cronbach-Alpha reliability of 0.83 and standardized Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST), developed in 1982, as instrument were used to collect data. The data collected were analysed using frequency counts, pie-chart, chi-square and t-test. The study revealed that there is inadequate education on banned drugs which encourages the continual use of drugs; also, there is relationship between high risky behaviors and illegal drug use. It was concluded that male and female athletes had similar view about drug use and abuse. It is therefore recommended that drug education should be effortlessly reinforced and taught in schools at all levels through various means.

Keywords: Drug Use, Substance Abuse, Athletes, Illicit Drugs.

Introduction

Drug use and abuse otherwise known as substance abuse or recreational drugs present health and psycho-social dilemma that can impact negatively with unquantifiable consequences, capable of tearing any society apart. Indulgence in drug use and abuse may provide a temporary relieve for pain of failure, give short-term pleasure, but at terrible cost in terms of family, social, society and even, professional life. This menace is one of the most severe problems facing the Nigerian society. Although, it is difficult to get the exact figures regarding the use of certain drugs, but it is a known fact that youths in all parts of Nigeria take drugs to enhance performance. The use and abuse of drugs is not an exclusive of male. Young ladies are also in the habit of substance abuse. Substance abuse according to Wikipedia (2019), is also known as drug abuse, and is a patterned use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods which are harmful to themselves or others, and is a form of substance – related disorder. There are growing concerns that the use of performance-enhancing substances among amateur athletes may be on the rise globally. While most studies done in Nigeria as stated by Ijaduola, Odia, Adepoju, Igwe, Ayorinde and Koyenikan (2018), have been limited to elite athletes. They opined that the fact remains that Nigeria University athletes constitute about 40% of the country's representatives in international competitions.

It is important therefore to be concerned about their well-being because anything they do will have a rippled effect on the society. This has caused the members of the House of Representative in Nigeria to demand urgent measures to be put in place by regulatory agencies. They noted that boys and girls have been abusing the drugs freely and becoming addicts in the process. The parliamentarians added that codeine and tramadol had been identified to cause health risks such as breathing disorder, asthma and kidney disease. Athletes in Nigeria University who are mainly youths are faced with the threat of being rendered useless from adverse effects of the abuse of the medicine, including health challenges and the rise in violence such as sexual abuse, civil disturbances and murder.

Drug use and abuse as explained by Sigmund (2018), is a chronic use of drugs leading to socially deviant behaviours, worsening health and behavioral inconsistency. Russell and Browne (2018) expressed that young athletes are faced with many influences to use both licit and illicit drugs. They pointed out that mood altering and psychoactive substances are not only the types of drug being abuse. Using illicit drugs, including narcotics, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, cannabis among others

are also considered substance or drug abuse. Intake of drugs is the primary reason why many youths have been incarcerated and it has also been a source of crime and health problems in Nigeria. Aside the attributable health problems occasioned by drug abuse, the psycho-social effects include road accidents, suicide, murder, indulgence in occultism, poor academic and job performances various forms of violence, political thuggery, more University drop-outs and the death of our societal values.

Previous literature (International Athletic Federation, 2010; Eno-Abasi, 2013; Adegboyega, 2014; Olanipekun and Ajayi-Vincent, 2016), have shown that attempts by professionals in sports, health education and medicine to make elite athletes stay – off completely from drug use and abuse, have not yielded desired results. Therefore, there is a need to embark on further research among the amateur athletes in Nigeria universities as they are aspiring to become elite athletes after completing their university education. This is expected to encourage the rationale for the adoption of psychological and mechanical aids to complement the coaches training in skills and techniques and to stem the tide of drug use and abuse for performance enhancement. Hence, this study is set to find out the implication of drug use and abuse as perceived by student athletes of OlabisiOnabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, South-West, Nigeria

Materials and Methods

Participant: One hundred and twelve (n=112) randomly selected participants constituted the sample size for this study. Eighty-four (n=84) were males, while twenty-eight (n=28) were females, full time students of Ogun Stated owned, OlabisiOnabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, South –West Nigeria. The majority of the participants were within the age-range of 19years and 21years.

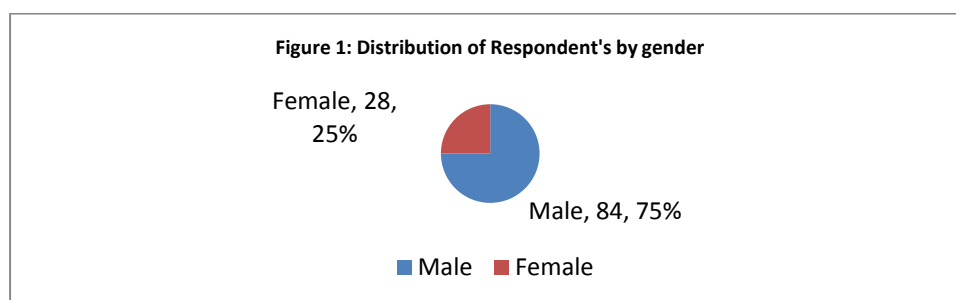
Instrumentation: The Drug abuse screening Test (DAST) developed in 1982 and reviewed by Skinner (2008) was the instrument used to collect data for this study. It was originally a 28-item self-report scale, but pruned down to 20 items. The DAST instrument was slightly modified and the reliability was re-established. Using the Cronbach-Alpha, the internal consistency stood at 0.83.

Procedure for Data Collection: Ethical clearance was obtained from the University Coaches. Voluntary consent of the University athletes was obtained while codes were used in order to shield the identity of the student athletes, and thereby ensuring confidentiality. The researchers took adequate time to inform the participants on the importance of the study. The questionnaire was administered and the researchers retrieved them after completion. One hundred and twelve forms were filled and used for analysis to draw inferences for this study.

Statistical Analysis: The data retrieved were analysed using the statistical package for social sciences, with chi-square statistics. The significance level for all the hypotheses was set at 0.05 alpha level.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Below were the results of data analysis in line with the aims and objective of the study. In this research work, the result of the Pie chart, Chi-square and t-test were presented below



The chart above represents the distribution of respondents by gender. According to the result of the analysis, 28(25.0%) of the respondents were female while 84 representing 75.0% of the entire population were male. This research showed that majority of the respondents that constitutes the sample size for the study was male gender.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Risk-taking behaviours will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes

Table 1: Chi-Square Analysis indicated whether Risk-taking behaviours will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes

R e s p o n s e	Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ²	Chi-Square	P
Strongly Agree	1 9	2 8	9	8 1	1 7 . 8 6	< . 0 5
A g r e e	1 7	2 8	1 1	1 2 1		
D i s a g r e e	3 1	2 8	3	9		
Strongly Disagree	4 5	2 8	1 7	2 8 9		
T O T A L	1 1 2					

Table 1 presents a chi-square showing risk-taking behaviours will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes. From the table above, 19 out of 112 respondents strongly agree, 17 out of 112 agreed and 31 out of 112 disagreed while 45 out of 112 strongly disagreed. Going by their response rate, one can thus inferred that Risk-taking behaviours will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes. In support the above assertion, the result of the chi-Square calculated value of 17.86 whose probability < 0.05 shows statistically there is enough evidence to justify that Risk-taking behaviours will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes. Hence, the null hypothesis one is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Two: Inadequate education about banned drugs will not be significantly perceived by students-athletes as an implication for continual drug use

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis indicated whether inadequate education about banned drugs will not be significantly perceived by students-athletes as an implication for continual drug use

R e s p o n s e	Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ²	Chi-Square	P
Strongly Agree	1 6	2 8	1 2	1 4 4	2 0 . 6 4	< . 0 5
A g r e e	2 3	2 8	5	2 5		
D i s a g r e e	4 8	2 8	2 0	4 0 0		
Strongly Disagree	2 5	2 8	3	9		
T O T A L	1 1 2					

Table 2 presents a chi-square showing inadequate education about banned drugs will not be significantly perceived by students-athletes as an implication for continual drug use. From the table above, 16 out of 112 respondents strongly agree, 23 out of 112 agreed and 48 out of 112 disagreed while 25 out of 112 strongly disagreed. Going by their response rate, one can thus inferred that inadequate education about banned drugs will significantly be perceived by students-athletes as an implication for continual drug use. In support the above assertion, the result of the chi-Square calculated value of 20.64 whose probability < 0.05 shows statistically there is enough evidence to justify that inadequate education about banned drugs will be significantly perceived by student-athletes as an implication for continual drug use. Hence, the null hypothesis one is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Three: Social alienation will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes

Table 3: Chi-Square Analysis indicated whether Social alienation will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes

R e s p o n s e	Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ²	Chi-Square	P
Strongly Agree	1 3	2 8	1 5	2 2 5	3 2 . 2 1	< . 0 5
A g r e e	1 8	2 8	1 0	1 0 0		
D i s a g r e e	2 9	2 8	1	1		
Strongly Disagree	5 2	2 8	2 4	5 7 6		
T O T A L	1 1 2					

Table 3 presents a chi-square showing that social alienation will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by students-athletes. From Table 3, 13 out of 112 respondents strongly

agreed, 18 out of 112 agreed and 29 out of 112 disagreed while 52 out of 112 strongly disagreed. Going by their response rate, one can thus infer that social alienation will significantly be perceived as an implication of drug abuse by student-athletes. In supporting the above assertion, the result of the chi-Square calculated value of 32.21 whose probability < 0.05 shows statistically that there is enough evidence to justify that social alienation will significantly be perceived as an implication of drug abuse by student-athletes. Hence, the null hypothesis one is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Four: Vulnerability to infectious diseases will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by student-athletes

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis indicated whether vulnerability to infectious diseases will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by student-athletes

R e s p o n s e	Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ²	Chi-Square	P
Strongly Agree	1 4	2 8	1 4	1 9 6	1 8 . 0 0	< . 0 5
A g r e e	2 0	2 8	8	6 4		
D i s a g r e e	4 0	2 8	1 2	1 4 4		
Strongly Disagree	3 8	2 8	1 0	1 0 0		
T O T A L	1 1 2					

The table 4 above present a chi-square showing vulnerability to infectious diseases will not be significantly perceived as an implication of drug abuse by student-athletes. From the table above, 14 out of 112 respondents strongly agreed, 20 out of 112 agreed and 40 out of 112 disagreed while 38 out of 112 strongly disagreed. Going by their response rate, one can thus inferred that vulnerability to infectious diseases will significantly be perceived as an implication of drug abuse by student-athletes. In supporting the above assertion, the result of the chi-Square calculated value of 18.00 whose probability < 0.05 shows statistically there is enough evidence to justify that vulnerability to infectious diseases will significantly be perceived as an implication of drug abuse by student-athletes. Hence, the null hypothesis one is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Five: There will be no significant differences between the perception of male and female athletes on drug use and misuse

Table 5: Independent sample t-test showing significant gender differences in the perception of athletes on drug use and misuse

G e n d e r	N	M e a n	S D	Std Error	t - c a l	S i g o f t
M a l e	8 4	3 0 . 6 2	2 . 1 2	0 . 2 3	0 . 5 0 1	0 . 6 1 7
F e m a l e	2 8	3 0 . 8 6	2 . 3 5	0 . 4 4		

The result in table 5 revealed a non-significant outcome ($t = 0.501$, $p > 0.05$). The outcome implies that there will be no significant differences between the perception of male and female athletes on drug use and misuse. The mean perception of athletes on drug use and misuse ($\bar{x} = 30.62$) obtained by male athletes was merely lesser than the mean perception ($\bar{x} = 30.86$) obtained by female students. The difference is statistically in-significant. Hence it can be concluded that there will be no significant differences between the perception of male and female athletes on drug use and misuse.

Discussion of Finding

This research work determined the implications of drug use and abuse as perceived by student athletes of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, South-West Nigeria. Five hypotheses were tested and are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one was tested and the result revealed significance. That is, the hypothesis one was rejected. This implies that the responses of the student athletes indicated that majority of them believed that they are prone to risk-taking behaviours when they use and abuse drugs. Drug abusers have the tendency of acting aggressive and causing public fights. Some dangerous driving and auto-accidents are attributable to drugs and alcohol influence. Violence, intentionally threatening and physical harms are some of the risk-taking behaviours that drug abusers are susceptible to. The finding in hypothesis one gives credence to the study of Kobulsky, Mines, Min and singer (2017), where they examined the relationship

between violence exposure and early substance use as mediated by trauma symptoms. Mediation analysis indicated direct relationships between high risk behaviours such as violence and illegal drug use. Their findings further reported that substance use is a potential high-risk factor associated with elevated threat of developing psychiatric disorder, suicidal behaviours, violent and deviant behaviours. This finding also buttresses the statement of the World Health Organization (WHO, 2019), that illicit drug use is a major public health challenge. It was stated by the WHO that involvement in drug use can increase the risks of being both a victim and/or perpetrator of violence while experiencing violence can increase the risks of initiating illicit drug use. It was noted that impacts of drug-related high-risk behaviours can be substantial, damaging individuals' health and the cohesion and development of communities, whilst disturbing peaceful coexistence.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two was tested and the result revealed a significance in the responses of student athletes. In effect, the student athletes attributed the continual use of illicit drugs to inadequate drug education about banned drugs. It is imperative to note that drug education enables youths to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will make them appreciate the benefits of living healthily, promote responsibility towards the use of drugs and relate to their own actions and those of others, both now and in their future lives. Drug education avail student athletes the opportunity to make their own informed decision about drugs; whether to take them or not and to be able to assess and avoid risks. The result in hypothesis two is in agreement with the finding of Ghobain (2017), in a study on the use of performance enhancing substances (doping) by athletes in Saudi Arabia where the study confirmed that doping is a common problem in Saudi Arabia, and suggested an improvement in anti-doping screening and education to ensure a safe and fair sporting environment for Saudi Arabian athletes. It was further found out that the high prevalence of the use of stimulants and cannabis by Saudi athletes suggests that the intake of these substances is more likely to be recreational rather than intention to cheat in sport. The study therefore concluded that education can play a counterbalancing role in shaping a normative culture of safety moderation and informed decision-making.

The result of this study is in agreement with the position of Lippi, Franchini and Guichi (2008). They pointed out that competitive athletes have been familiar with the use of substances to aid performance and they will probably continue to use unfair and harmful substances, because their inclination to victory, along with the mirage of glory and money, will probably overcome health and legal risks. In sports, it was explained that doping is conventionally referred to as the use of performance enhancing drugs, particularly those that are forbidden by the organisations that regulate competitions. It was therefore recommended that general practitioners and sport physicians have particular responsibilities in addressing this issue, in that they need to be aware of the multifaceted categories and problem of doping, and sport authorities need to ensure that ethical education and guidance for athletes are of the highest standard. This, reliable educational and preventive policies starting from the schools should be on-going imitative addressed to undergraduates, young people and children.

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three was rejected, implying that student-athletes suggested that social alienation will be a significant implication of drug abuse. Drug use and abuse curtail brain development, hinders academic performance, increase risk of injuries, criminal activity and violence; contribution to risky sex and teenage pregnancy; and negatively affects life course trajectories. The result of this study in hypothesis three agrees with the finding of Byron, Pagano and Stephen (2018) in a study of the impact of social isolation and helping others on alcohol and other drug use and criminal activity, where it was discovered that social isolation and its counterpart, social connection, are products of substance use. The study established that drug addiction is the primary driver of isolation, pain and distress experienced by users. The study expressed that there was evidence that American youths today are more socially isolated despite technological advancement. It showed concern that the increase in youth isolation has been noted, but far less discussed are the detrimental effects of social isolation to physical and mental health. This study further buttressed the finding of Pagano, Wang, Roveles, Lee and Johnson (2015), in a study of social anxiety and peer-helping in adolescent addiction treatment, alcoholism; clinical and experimental research, where it was concluded that drug addiction results to

social isolation which increases the risk of committing violent crimes. Thus, social isolation that is due to drug abuse and addiction with little sense of control may be expressed in rage outbursts with devastating consequences.

Hypothesis Four

The result under data and interpretation regarding the hypothesis four shows that the hypothesis four stood rejected. That is, the student athletes responded that vulnerability to infectious diseases is an implication of drug abuse. It is widely believed that drug abuse impacts negatively on the immune system of the body. As such, drug abusers and addicts are prone to contracting infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, syphilis among other. The result in respect of hypothesis four gives support to the statement of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2017) that injection of drugs accounts for one in ten of cases of HIV. Injection drug is also a major factor in the spread of hepatitis C and can be the cause of endocarditis and cellulitis. Injection drug use is not the only way that drug use contributes to the spread of infectious diseases. Drugs that are mis-used can cause intoxication, which hinders judgment and increase the chance of risky sexual behaviours. It was also stated that infection of the heart and its valves (endocarditis) and skin infection (cellulitis) can occur after exposure to bacteria by injection drug use.

The centers for Disease control (2018), also clearly pointed out that a deadly consequence of the drug crisis is increased incidence of blood-borne infections, including hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and bacteria that cause heart infections (endocarditis). The use of contaminated injection, drug equipment is a primary transmission route for both HIV and hepatitis C. Increasing injection drug use has placed new populations, including young people at risk. In people living with HIV, substance use can hasten disease progression, affect adherence to antiretroviral therapy (HIV medicine), and worsen the overall consequences of HIV. Crack cocaine is a stimulant that can create a cycle in which people quickly exhaust their resources and turn to other ways to get the drug including trading sex for drugs or money which increases HIV risk.

Hypothesis Five

The result obtained in respect of hypothesis five shows an acceptance of the postulated hypothesis. That is, student athletes believed that no difference exists in the perception of male and female regarding drug use and abuse. It has been noted that when women have drug problems, they are easier to convince to enter into a support or rehabilitation program than their male counterparts. Although, there are similarities in the reason for drug addiction by both males and females. But differences also exist because women are more susceptible to emotional breakdown than their men counterparts. That means differences also exist in the reasons for drug use and abuse across the genders. The result of this study in respect of hypothesis five above has given credence to the study of Palis, March and Oviedo-Jockes (2017) in a study that investigated men's and women's response to treatment and perceptions of outcomes in a randomised controlled trial of injectable opioid use disorder, and it was established that women's and men's perception about drug use and abuse were not different. Also, their perception of treatment effectiveness showed no significant difference. The result of the hypothesis five equally has found a support in the report of Psychiatric Times (2018), where it was reported that drug addiction is a problem that affects people across every demographic, but the individual effects of the problem can be felt differently. It concluded that perhaps, the most basic fact is that men and women are prone to substance abuse, impacted by substance abuse or treated for substance abuse.

Conclusions

It can be deduced from this study that;

1. Risk-taking behaviours was significantly perceived by student athlete as an implication of drug abuse and use.
2. Inadequate education about banned drugs was significantly perceived by student-athletes as an implication for continual drug abuse.
3. Social alienation was believed by student-athletes to be an implication of drug use and abuse.
4. Student-athletes believed that vulnerability to infectious diseases will become resultant effects of drug abuse.

5. Male and female student-athletes had similar perception regarding the concept, effects of drugs and treatment of drug abusers.

Recommendations

This study recommends thus;

1. Support programmes should be organised for the student-athletes that are already involved in drug use and abuse by the governing council, in conjunction with the medical health center, University sports unit and the school counseling unit. This support programme will address the cause of drug abuse while student-athletes can be taught about how to increase their self-esteem, self-efficiency and positive mental attitude. This is because those who have those qualities believe more in themselves and are not likely to indulge in drugs.
2. The best solution to the problem of drug use and abuse among student-athletes and youths is drug education. Student-athletes should be reached in an organised manner and be provided with fact-based drug education.
3. Student-athletes should be exposed to the notion that consumption of drugs to enhance performance amounts to cheating. Teaching morality in all areas in the University system is capable of impacting positively on preventing drug use and abuse.
4. Coping skills such as self-confidence, stress management, positive self-talk, discouraging self-doubt are capable of inhibiting drug use and abuse by student-athletes in Universities.

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