

**IMPACT OF AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON DRUG ABUSE AMONG
UNDERGRADUATES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY
EDO STATE**

BY

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BENIN CITY**

MARCH, 2025

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**A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
WORK, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, IN PARTIAL
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BACHELOR OF SCIENCES (B.SC.) DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK,
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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned, certify that this research work was carried out by **Caleb Rovie OMINIABOHS** with matriculation number **SSC1911859** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Sciences Degree (B.Sc) Hons in Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Almighty God for His wisdom, strength, and guidance throughout this research journey. His unwavering support has been my source of inspiration and perseverance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I give all glory and adoration to Almighty God, whose infinite mercy, favor, and love have been my guiding light throughout this journey. His unwavering presence has given me strength in moments of doubt, resilience in challenges, and wisdom to navigate this academic pursuit. Without His grace, this milestone would not have been possible.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	i
Certification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ii
Dedication	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iii
Acknowledgments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iv
Table of Contents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	v
Abstract	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	vii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Background to the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1.2	Statement of the Problem	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
1.3	Objective of Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1.4	Research Questions	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1.5	Scope of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
1.6	Significance of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
1.7	Definition of Terms	-	-	-	-	-	-	6

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1	Concept of Drug	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
2.2	Theoretical Framework	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
2.3	Empirical Review	-	-	-	-	-	-	35

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
3.2	Research Design	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
3.3	Population of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
3.4	Sample Size and Sampling Techniques	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
3.5	Instrument for Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
3.6	Methods of Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
3.7	Method of Data Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
3.8	Validity of the Instruments	-	-	-	-	-	-	39
3.9	Reliability of the Instruments	-	-	-	-	-	-	39

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULT

4.1	Presentation of Respondents' Profile	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
4.2	Presentation of Respondents and Responds	-	-	-	-	-	-	43

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1	Discussion	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
5.2	Recommendations	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
5.3	Suggestion for Further Studies	-	-	-	-	-	-	55
	References	-	-	-	-	-	-	59
	Appendix	-	-	-	-	-	-	62

Abstract

The data gathered from the survey of University of Benin students highlights significant insights regarding the factors contributing to drug abuse, its prevalence, and the impact of awareness campaigns. A total of 100 respondents participated, with a fairly balanced distribution of 47% male and 53% female students. The majority of respondents were below 18 years of age (36%), followed by those aged 18-22 years (28%). The survey also included students from various academic levels, with the largest group being in the 400 level (26%).

In terms of reasons for drug abuse, peer pressure emerged as the dominant factor, with 76% of respondents acknowledging its influence. Curiosity and the easy availability of drugs on campus were also significant contributors, while academic stress and anxiety were less frequently cited as reasons for drug use. Despite these factors, a majority did not view drug abuse as a widespread issue at the university, with only 34% agreeing that many students were involved in drug abuse.

Awareness campaigns, although successful in informing students about the dangers of drug abuse, have had limited success in changing behaviors. While 78% of respondents agreed that campaigns have raised awareness, only 10% felt that these initiatives have significantly reduced drug abuse. Additionally, most students believe that the campaigns need to be improved to reach a larger audience and to be more effective in changing attitudes toward drug use. Overall, while the campaigns have made progress in educating students, there remains a significant gap in their ability to influence behaviour and reduce drug abuse.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Drugs are effective substance for good health they are used for beneficent therapeutic purposes but they are being abused by people especially youths. In our society today, drug abuse as a pervasive behaviour is astronomically on the huge. Drug abuse is a major public health problem worldwide (Mbutia, G. W. (2016). Adults and adolescents are both victims of the psycho-social phenomenon. Drug abuse is also referred to as substance abuse and can be defined as the harmful intake of drugs by individuals in ways or quantities hazardous to them or people around them, or both (Ahmad, et al (2022).

The effects of drug abuse differ depending on their mechanism of action, the amount consumed and the history of the user among other factors. However, it has been reported that at a global level drug abuse have negative effects on the health, wealth and well-being of nations (Abidemi, A (2023); Kabbash, et al (2022). Globally, research has shown that all forms of drug dependence and drug associated disorders are highest at the age group of 20–29 years (Degenhardt *et al.*, 2013).

Effective drug prevention programs should involve the family, schools, communities, and the media which includes creating healthy home environment with parental control on the children; easy and affordable access to rehabilitation

centres; creating employment opportunities for the youth; effective awareness/campaign programs on drug abuse; establishment of recreational centres; and compulsory physical fitness classes in the schools and colleges (Bererah, S (2018). The primary purpose of a campaign is to create awareness, influence behavior, promote a message, or drive action among a target audience (Nwaoboli, Chukwu, Arijeniwa & Asemah, 2021; Nwaoboli, Ogunyemi & Ezegwu, 2023; Nwaoboli & Asemah, 2021; Ovie & Nwaoboli, 2022). This study, therefore, seeks to evaluate how awareness campaign against drugs abuse influences undergraduates in University of Benin (Ugbowo Campus) in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, a lot of people take to self-medication or visiting quack medicine stores where drugs are prescribed by untrained physicians who have little or no knowledge of the drugs being given or sold to people. The use of hard drugs by undergraduates in Nigerian tertiary institutions has become an embarrassing occurrence to parents, schools, government authorities and the society at large. Recent studies have shown that a significant proportion of tertiary/higher institutions' students consumes and/or use illicit or hard drugs (Akanbi Godwin, Anyio, Muhammad & Ajiboye, 2015; Ofuebe, 2020; Iheanacho, Jumbo & Etumnu, 2021; Okoye, Agbim, Ohaji, Etumnu, Okodogbe & Odionyenma, 2022; *The Punch*, 2022).

This implies that despite the measures and successive awareness campaigns that have been rolled out and put in place to checkmate the scourge of drug abuse amongst students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, this menace is still rampant, especially among undergraduates in university campuses. Substance abuse among university students is therefore a problem of public health importance since it predisposes one to drug dependence in adult life (Jennison, 2004; Kandel *et al.*, 1986; Nelson *et al.*, 2015).

To this end, this research seeks to investigate the impact of awareness campaign against drug abuse among undergraduates of University of Benin, Benin City.

1.3 Objective of Study

1. To find the reasons why students of the University of Benin indulge in drug abuse
2. To determine the prevalence of drug abuse among University of Benin Students.
3. To ascertain the degree of the influence of awareness campaign on behaviour change among university

1.4 Research Questions

In studying the above stated problems the following questions were postulated.

1. What are the reasons students of the University of Benin indulge in drug abuse?
2. What are the prevalence of drug abuse among University of Benin Students?

3. To what extent has awareness campaigns influenced the change of behaviour among University of Benin?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the University of Benin, Benin City Edo State Nigeria. The research focuses on the investigation into the impact of awareness campaign against drug abuse among students of the University of Benin.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is important because the result of the finding may stimulate the interest of the following reasons:

- **Enhanced Understanding of Awareness Effectiveness:** This study will help evaluate how well awareness campaigns reach and sound with undergraduate students. It can reveal whether the messaging, delivery methods, and content are effective in changing attitudes and behaviors related to drug abuse.
- **Informed Policy Making:** Findings can guide university policies and programs aimed at preventing drug abuse. By understanding what works, institutions can design more effective interventions and support systems.
- **Resource Allocation:** Universities and organizations can better allocate resources based on the study's insights. This ensures that efforts and funding are directed towards the most impactful strategies for combating drug abuse.
- **Behavioral Change Insights:** It can offer insights into how awareness campaigns influence students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding

drug use. Understanding these changes helps in developing strategies to promote healthy behaviors and reduce substance abuse.

- **Tailored Interventions:** The study can identify specific needs or gaps in current awareness campaigns. Tailoring interventions to address these gaps can make them more relevant and effective for the undergraduate population.
- **Educational Impact:** The results can contribute to the broader educational field by providing evidence-based practices for designing and implementing educational campaigns on various health issues, not just drug abuse.
- **Community Well-being:** Effective awareness campaigns can lead to a decrease in drug abuse, improving overall campus health and safety. This contributes to a healthier academic environment and enhances students' overall well-being.
- **Long-Term Effects:** By assessing the immediate and long-term impacts of awareness campaigns, the study can provide valuable information on how sustained interventions can continue to influence student behavior and attitudes.

Overall, studying the impact of these campaigns is crucial for creating effective strategies to address drug abuse, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more informed student population.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in the study:

1. Drug: It is an illegal substance that some people take to give them pleasant or exciting feelings. It is any chemical that influences or modifies the actions of the body own chemistry which may result in the physiological or behavioral changes. It is also a substance used for medical purposes.
2. Abuse: This is said to include self-medication, excessive quantities of drug, which may lead to tolerance, physical and psychological dependence, mental confusion and other symptoms of a normal behaviour. The use of something that is wrong or harmful.
3. Drug abuse: Person who cannot get along without a particular.
4. Abuse: A drug is said to be abused when an individual takes any substance under circumstance in a does that significantly increase the hazard potential whether or not used legally or as prescribed by a physician and include the misuse of any drug obtained in medically or socially acceptable way.
6. Self-Medication: This mean using drugs which were prescribed once.
7. Addiction: The condition of being an addict.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the review of relevant literature from books, and journals under the following headings:

1. Concept of drug
2. Prevalence of Drug Abuse among Tertiary Institution Students
3. Controlling Drug Abuse through the Mass Media
4. Causes of Drug Abuse
5. Age, Gender, Socio-economic Status, and Their Influence on Drug Abuse Rates
6. Theoretical Framework
7. Effectiveness of Awareness Campaigns on Drug Abuse Among University Students

2.1 Concept of Drug

Drugs are said to be as old as mankind. In many civilizations and societies, drug use and abuse has a long history. Natural plants, such as opium, coca, and cannabis, have been used for centuries. A drug is defined as any natural or manufactured substance, other than food, that alters the structure or function of a living organism due to its chemical or physical nature (Okoye L. et al, 2022). It is

described as a chemical substance used in the treatment, cure, prevention, or diagnosis of disease, or used to

improve physical or mental well-being in some other way. Pharmaceuticals, like vitamins, are also used as food supplements, and we must benefit from drugs in terms of ill health, even if they are prescribed by doctors (William E. 2022).

Drugs, on the other hand, can be hazardous and even lethal if they are abused. People sometimes confuse substance abuse with drug misuse; however, drugs refer to prescription prescribed by a doctor, whereas substance abuse can involve compounds other than drugs, such as gasoline and glue. If a substance was intentionally used to create physiological or psychological effects for a purpose other than therapeutic purposes, it was termed abused. The term "abuse" refers to inappropriate or harmful behaviour. When these phrases are combined, "drug abuse" it can be defined as the improper use of drugs, the abuse of drugs, the violation of prescribed pharmacological use of medicines, or the use of drugs in a manner that differs from the accepted medical or societal norm. Substance addiction typically begins in adolescence with smoking and alcohol intake. Drug abuse among students, on the other hand, may be caused by interactions across peer groups, as well as the availability and nature of the substance (Merz, 2018; Hamdan-Mansour et al., 2017).

Environmental variables that contribute to drug misuse include cultural influences, parental behaviour, and laws and regulations that restrict drug access. There are seven types of drugs often abused; they are classified based on their physiological effects. Stimulants, narcotics, cannabis, depressants, analgesics, sedatives, performance-enhancing drugs(aphrodisiac), hallucinogens, and inhalants are the most common psychoactive drugs. They include the following:

1. **Stimulants:** They are often used to boost central nervous system (CNS) activities such as heart rate, blood pressure, and brain function rate. Users report feeling more energised and less fatigued. Caffeine, cocaine, nicotine, and amphetamine are examples of stimulants (Okoye L. et al, 2022)
2. **Narcotics:** These are highly addictive medications that are used medically to ease pain and promote sleep. Plants including opium, morphine, codeine, and heroin are used to make narcotics. They can be inhaled (snorted), injected, or smoked and are exceedingly addictive . Heroin, opium, morphine, codeine, and tramadol are all examples of narcotics (Merz, 2018).
3. **Cannabis:** Cannabis, commonly known as pot, marijuana, hashish, and bhang, is a narcotic made from the Indian hemp plant (cannabis sativa). It has limited therapeutic value and is unlawful to use for nonmedical purposes. Cannabis, sometimes referred as marijuana, is a widely abused

narcotic in Nigeria, particularly among young people. Marijuana was first brought to Nigeria by soldiers returning from World War II (Chikerere & Mayowa, 2011)

4. **Depressants:** These are drugs that lower the natural activity of any organ or system in the body. They are also known as sedatives because they slow down CNS function. It causes abusers to develop tolerance as well as intense psychological and physical reliance. Alcohol, barbiturates, tranquillizers, and rohypnol are some of the drugs used (Chikerere & Mayowa, 2011)

5. **Hallucinogens:** One of the earliest chemicals used by humans, hallucinogens can cause hallucinations. Psychedelics, dissociatives, and deliriant (mind) vision are some of the terms used to describe them. The effects of psychedelics are visible in the form of illusion, hallucination, and vision. At anaesthetic levels, Dissociative causes analgesia, forgetfulness, and catalepsy, causing him to become dissociated from his surroundings. Deliriant cause delirium in the user, which is characterised by acute bewilderment and the inability to regulate one's actions. They are employed for ceremonies, healing, and syncretistic movement rituals all over the world in medicine, religion, and traditions: Diethylamide of lysergic acid (LSD) (Okoye L. et al, 2022)

6. **Inhalants:** These are breathable chemical vapours or gases that generate psychoactive effects when abused or misused. VOCs, fuels, gases, nitrites, and anaesthetic gases (chloroform, nitrous oxide, and ether) are among them, as are industrial solvents such as gasoline, kerosene, glue, and typewriter correction fluid. Abusers inhale toxic chemicals that induce low blood pressure, dizziness, hearing loss, and lung and heart damage: Gases, solvents, and propellants are all examples of propellants (Chikerere & Mayowa, 2011)
7. **Aphrodisiacs:** These are chemicals that boost a person's sexual capacity or inspire sexual desire (Enconmium 2022). They're also referred as sexual drive boosters and are typically referred to as "labour on the streets." The chemicals improve sexual urges and contribute to increased sexual satisfaction.

2.1.1 Causes of Drug Abuse

Students are drawn into drug abuse due to some reasons. Peer group pressure or conformity is a key factor causing drug/substance abuse among university students. World Drug report indicated that drug users seek approval from their peers to join their habit as a way of seeking acceptance (Merz, 2018). This is connected with the desire to experience something unique characteristic of students who love to explore their new environments. Nkonge (2017) found out

that drug and substance abuse was more prevalent among students in third and fourth years in school compared to 100 level and second year students due to lack of exposure and freedom.

Another problem revolves around upbringing. It has been contended that families that indulge in drug abuse may expose their members to such attitudes. Parents and older siblings who abuse drugs may negatively impact their younger ones into drug and substance abuse activities (Hamdan-Mansour, Razeeq, AbduHaq, Arabiat & Khalil, 2017). Oluwoye (2017) implicated social media and cultural identity in drug and substance use and abuse among students who are fans of popular musicians or musicians themselves. People abuse drugs and substances with most of the music videos clearly depicting the use of alcohol and cannabis sativa. Mixed culture may have a high tendency to influence the use of drugs and other substances especially through social media in different ways such as the presence of drug and substance abuse on television.

2.1.2 Age, Gender, Socio-economic Status, and Their Influence on Drug Abuse Rates

Drug abuse is a multifaceted public health issue, influenced by various demographic factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status (SES). Understanding these influences is essential for developing targeted prevention and intervention strategies.

Age

Age is a significant determinant of drug use patterns. Research shows that drug abuse is most prevalent among young adults, particularly those in the late teens to mid-twenties. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020), individuals aged 18 to 25 have the highest rates of substance use disorders. This age group often experiences increased peer pressure and social exploration, contributing to higher rates of experimentation with drugs (Miech et al., 2021).

A longitudinal study by Schulenberg et al. (2018) highlighted that drug use typically peaks during late adolescence and early adulthood. Factors such as academic stress, social dynamics, and the transition to independent living can exacerbate vulnerability to substance use during this critical period. Furthermore, research indicates that patterns of drug use can shift as individuals transition into later adulthood, often decreasing as responsibilities increase (Bachman et al., 2019).

Gender

Gender differences in drug abuse are pronounced. Studies consistently show that men are more likely to abuse drugs than women. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) reported that men are approximately twice as likely as women to use illicit drugs. However, trends indicate that the gender gap is narrowing,

particularly in specific substance categories such as prescription opioids and stimulants (Swendsen et al., 2021).

Research by McHugh et al. (2018) suggests that women may be more likely to misuse prescription drugs due to factors such as higher rates of chronic pain and mental health issues, which often co-occur with substance use disorders. Furthermore, societal norms and expectations surrounding gender roles can impact the ways in which men and women engage with substances, with men more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviours while women may face social stigma for substance use (Brady & Sinha, 2019).

Socio-economic Status (SES)

Socio-economic status plays a critical role in drug abuse patterns. Individuals from lower SES backgrounds often face increased stressors, including financial instability, limited access to healthcare, and lack of educational opportunities, which can contribute to higher rates of substance abuse (Hussaini et al., 2019). A study conducted by Karriker-Jaffe (2018) found that individuals in lower income brackets were more likely to engage in drug use compared to their higher SES counterparts.

Moreover, neighbourhood factors associated with SES, such as crime rates and availability of drugs, also influence drug use behaviours. Research indicates that individuals living in economically disadvantaged areas are at a higher risk for

substance use due to increased exposure to drug availability and peer influences (Cerdá et al., 2018). Conversely, higher SES is not a protective factor against drug abuse but can influence the types of substances used. For instance, individuals from affluent backgrounds may be more likely to engage in the misuse of prescription drugs, often viewed as a "safer" alternative compared to illicit substances (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019).

Conclusively, the interplay between age, gender, and socio-economic status significantly influences drug abuse rates. Young adults are particularly vulnerable, with gender dynamics showing differing patterns of use and abuse between men and women. socio-economic factors further complicate this landscape, with lower SES associated with higher rates of drug use due to a combination of environmental stressors and access issues. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies tailored to the unique needs of various demographic groups.

2.1.3 Prevalence of Drug Abuse among Tertiary Institution Students

To state the obvious, drug/substance abuse is common place. Drugs prevalently abused in tertiary institutions include alcoholic drinks, cannabis (marijuana), heroin, cocaine, tobacco. Alcohol is a product of fermented sugar and water usually associated with drinks like beer, liquor, wine, palm wine, *ogogoro*, brandy, whisky, gin, rum and so on that come in various packages and sizes. When taken

excessively, alcohol affects reasoning and self-control. In the long run, addiction to alcohol may harmfully affect the liver and brain(Chikere & Mayowa, 2011).

Another commonly abused substance in campuses is tobacco, which basically contains nicotine derived from tobacco leaf. Tobacco is an unrestricted drug found campuses majorly in form of brands of cigarette like Benson and Hedges, Gold Leaf, Consulate, Rothmans, London, Sweet Menthol, and Gold Bond (Chikere & Mayowa, 2011). Students usually smoke these tobacco substances, which sometimes makes them skip lectures or makes them feel high to the point losing self-control that they eventually indulge in some anti-social vices.

Cannabis, also called marijuana or *Igbo* in Nigeria is household drug largely used and abused by university undergraduates. It is derived from the dried leaves of flowers of hemp plants. It can be inhaled in form of cigarette as narcotic or hallucinogen. Some students use it to cook food like rice and beans. People engage in marijuana cultivation in Nigeria. It is the most commonly abused substance among students due to its ubiquity and affordability.

Heroin is another form of drug that is commonly abused by undergraduates. According to Chikere and Mayowa (2011), heroin is the powdery substance extracted from opium poppy. It can be prepared as a paste, powder or solution.

Cocaine is another usually abused drug by students. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (2013) described cocaine as a powdery addictive stimulant drug

made from leaves of the cocoa plants from South America. It is one of the most addictive drugs taken for its ability to cause short-term euphoria energy and talkativeness without minding the risk of increase heart rate and blood pressure associated with it.

2.1.4 Controlling Drug Abuse through the Mass Media

Both drug abuse and its control have always been difficult problems to solve. In reality, no single method or plan for combating this threat has been effective in the past. In general, one school of thought advocates controlling the supply side (illicit supply and trafficking), whereas the other advocates limiting the demand side. Prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation are the best options. Despite the fact that many people believe that despite vast sums of money spent, they have not been able to eradicate addiction, it is impossible to infer that drug abuse prevention is not a priority. Many people are pessimistic about their country's ability to combat drug abuse. In fact, the greatest approach is prevention, which can be accomplished through a range of strategies tailored to each community's unique characteristics, cultural diversity, and structure (De Jong W, 2027)

The term "mass media" refers to all technological or mechanical equipment used by a source with the goal of concurrently reaching a diverse and complex audience with messages. According to Okunna (1999;2009), mass media are

multiple routes through which mass communication takes place. The media does not possess a magic wand to

solve complex issues such as drugs. However, given the severity of drug addiction, the media must assume the moral obligation of informing the public about drugs and drug abuse, by focusing more on the disease as well as other problems. It has the potential to set the tone and be the driving force behind national drug awareness and education (De Jong W. 2017). It has the potential to highlight both macro and micro factors leading to the establishment of this disease, as well as encourage community participation in preventing the problem from getting worse (Okoye L. et al, 2022). The media has an impact on public opinion around the world. The media can assist in establishing a regular assessment of the extent and scope of drug use and abuse, as well as drug-related problems in society. The media can assist in educating the public about the dangers of drug addiction (Odorume A. 2015).

The media's role in preventing drug misuse has rarely been recognised, and the general consensus is that it has done a lot less than it could have done, and at times, more than it could have done, but in the opposite direction (De Jong W. 2017).

Instead, it is blamed for heavily popularising drug use. In any case, there is widespread agreement that the mass media have the power to change the situation

and successfully combat the malaise. The media can help to establish and maintain the drug problem on the national agenda by sending out basic and implicit messages targeted at gaining population stability (EMCCDA, 2018). The mass media have the capacity to create awareness, educate and inform people about the possible danger that the society may likely face as a result of some behaviour of people (Uju C.F.D., 2015).

Knowledge is increased by education and exposure to the media. To tackle this problem, media advocacy could target regions for psychotherapy (Udofia U., 2014). While underlining the dangers of drug use, the media must also provide information about available aid centres. As a result, there is an urgent need for a large-scale media campaign to disseminate information about the negative repercussions, legal provisions, and the availability of therapeutic and counselling services for the treatment and social rehabilitation of addicts who have been detoxed (De Jong W. 2017).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Understanding how to effectively promote behaviour change, especially in the context of drug abuse, requires applying established theoretical frameworks. Three prominent models are the Health Belief Model, Social Cognitive Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour. Each offers unique insights into the mechanisms that drive individuals to change their behaviours .

Health Belief Model

The Health Belief Model (HBM) posits that individuals are more likely to engage in health-promoting behaviours if they believe they are susceptible to a health issue, believe the issue can have serious consequences, and believe that taking a specific action would reduce their susceptibility or severity (Rosenstock et al., 2018).

Key Components of the HBM

1. **Perceived Susceptibility:** This refers to an individual's belief about their chances of getting a disease or experiencing a health issue. In the context of drug abuse, if students believe they are at high risk for developing substance use disorders, they are more likely to take preventive actions. For instance, campaigns that highlight statistics on drug use prevalence among peers can effectively increase perceived susceptibility.

2. **Perceived Severity:** This component deals with an individual's belief about the seriousness of a health issue and its potential consequences. If students understand that drug abuse can lead to severe health issues, academic failure, and social problems, they may be more motivated to avoid substance use.

3. **Perceived Benefits:** This aspect refers to an individual's belief in the efficacy of the advised action to reduce risk or seriousness. For example, if students believe

that avoiding drugs can lead to better academic performance, improved mental health, and enhanced social relationships, they are more likely to engage in those health-promoting behaviours.

4. Perceived Barriers: This involves the potential obstacles that may prevent individuals from taking action. If students perceive significant barriers—such as social pressures, availability of drugs, or lack of support—they may be less likely to resist substance use, even if they understand the risks.

5. Cues to Action: These are triggers that prompt individuals to act. Campaigns can use various cues, such as workshops, peer discussions, or social media messages, to encourage students to adopt healthier behaviours .

6. Self-Efficacy: This newer addition to the model emphasizes an individual's confidence in their ability to take action. Enhancing self-efficacy can be achieved through skills training and providing support, which can empower students to resist drug use.

Understanding Perceptions of Risk and Benefits

Perceptions of risk are crucial in shaping behaviours related to drug use. Research indicates that when individuals perceive a high level of risk associated with drug use, they are less likely to engage in such behaviours . For instance, Champion and Skinner (2020) found that college students who recognized the

dangers of drug use—such as addiction, academic decline, and legal issues—reported lower instances of substance use. This highlights the importance of effectively communicating risks through awareness campaigns.

Effective awareness campaigns should focus on educating students about the risks of drug abuse and the tangible benefits of abstaining from drugs. These campaigns can utilize a variety of strategies:

1. Educational Workshops: Hosting workshops that provide detailed information about the health risks associated with drug use can help increase perceived susceptibility and severity.

2. Personal Testimonials: Sharing stories from individuals who have experienced negative consequences due to drug use can personalize the risks and enhance perceived severity.

3. Social Media Campaigns: Utilizing social media platforms to disseminate information can reach a broader audience. Posts that outline the benefits of sobriety—such as improved mental health, better academic performance, and stronger social connections—can motivate students to make healthier choices.

4. Peer-Led Initiatives: Empowering students to lead discussions and campaigns can increase the credibility of the message. Peer influence plays a significant role

in shaping behaviours , and campaigns that utilize peer educators can effectively communicate the risks and benefits of avoiding drugs.

5. Support Resources: Providing clear information about available resources for those struggling with substance use can address perceived barriers and enhance self-efficacy. This includes information on counselling services, hotlines, and support groups.

The Health Belief Model serves as a valuable framework for understanding how perceptions of risk and benefits influence drug use behaviours among university students. By effectively leveraging the components of the HBM, awareness campaigns can foster healthier choices and ultimately reduce drug abuse rates within this population. Continued research into the specific perceptions and beliefs of students can further enhance the effectiveness of these interventions.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura, emphasizes the significance of observational learning, imitation, and modelling in understanding how behaviours are acquired and changed (Bandura, 2018). This theory posits that individuals do not learn in isolation but rather through interactions with others and the environment. SCT underscores the dynamic interplay between personal factors, Behaviour, and environmental influences, often referred to as the triadic reciprocal causation.

Key Components of SCT

Observational Learning: This is the core concept of SCT, where individuals learn by observing the behaviours of others, particularly role models. When individuals see someone they admire engaging in a particular behaviour and experiencing positive outcomes, they are more likely to imitate that Behaviour . This is particularly relevant in the context of drug use, as students may observe their peers either using drugs or abstaining from them.

Imitation: Imitation goes beyond mere observation; it involves replicating the actions of role models. This is especially potent among adolescents and young adults, who are influenced by their peers. For instance, if students observe their friends engaging in healthy lifestyles, they are more inclined to adopt similar habits.

Modelling: This refers to the process of demonstrating behaviours for others to observe and imitate. In awareness campaigns, utilizing positive role models—such as senior students, athletes, or influential figures in the community—can effectively promote healthy behaviours and discourage drug use.

Role of Observational Learning and Social Influences

The influence of social factors and the environment on behaviour cannot be overstated. SCT posits that individuals are shaped by their social context, and this is particularly evident in drug use behaviours among students. A study by Bexiga et al. (2020) highlighted that college students are more likely to engage in healthy behaviours when they see their peers doing the same. This finding illustrates how social norms and peer behaviours can significantly impact individual choices.

Peer-Led Initiatives: Awareness campaigns that incorporate peer-led initiatives can be highly effective. When students take on the role of educators, sharing their experiences and modelling positive behaviours, they can influence their peers more effectively than traditional authority figures. This approach capitalizes on the tendency of individuals to look to their peers for guidance and validation.

Positive Role Models: Campaigns that feature relatable role models can enhance the likelihood of behaviour change. For instance, when students see peers who abstain from drug use succeeding academically and socially, it creates a compelling narrative that promotes similar choices. The effectiveness of these models lies in their relatability; students are more likely to emulate behaviours they perceive as attainable.

Environmental Influences: The social environment, including campus culture and community norms, plays a crucial role in shaping behaviours. Campaigns that work to create supportive environments—such as drug-free events, safe spaces for

discussion, and access to resources—can facilitate positive behaviour change. The presence of a supportive peer group that discourages drug use can significantly impact individual choices.

Feedback Mechanisms: SCT also highlights the importance of feedback in behaviour change. Positive reinforcement from peers—such as praise for abstaining from drugs or engaging in healthy activities—can strengthen the likelihood of continuing those behaviours. Creating environments where positive behaviours are recognized can enhance motivation and commitment.

Social Cognitive Theory provides a robust framework for understanding how observational learning and social influences shape behaviours related to drug use among university students. By focusing on peer-led initiatives and the promotion of positive role models, awareness campaigns can effectively harness the power of social dynamics to foster healthier choices. Continued emphasis on creating supportive environments will further enhance the impact of these campaigns, ultimately reducing drug abuse rates in this population.

Theory of Planned behaviour (TPB)

The Theory of Planned behaviour (TPB), developed by Icek Ajzen in the 1980s, posits that individual behaviour is primarily driven by Behavioural intentions. These intentions are influenced by three key components: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived Behavioural control (Ajzen, 2020). The TPB provides a

comprehensive framework for understanding how these factors interact to shape Behaviour , particularly in contexts like drug use among college students.

Key Components of TPB

Attitudes: Attitudes refer to an individual's overall evaluation of engaging in a particular Behaviour . In the context of drug use, if students hold positive attitudes toward abstaining from drugs—believing it leads to better health, academic performance, and social relationships—they are more likely to intend to avoid drug use. Research by Tuck and Neumann (2019) highlights that students with favorable attitudes towards abstaining from drugs reported significantly lower rates of substance use. Thus, campaigns that aim to improve attitudes through educational efforts and awareness of the negative consequences of drug use can influence intentions positively.

Subjective Norms: Subjective norms encompass an individual's perceptions of social pressures to engage or not engage in a Behaviour . In the case of drug use, if students perceive that their peers disapprove of drug use, they are less likely to engage in it. This peer influence is critical, as students often look to their social circles for guidance on acceptable behaviours . Campaigns that effectively communicate the message that abstaining from drugs is the norm within a peer group can leverage subjective norms to promote healthier choices.

Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC): Perceived Behavioural control reflects an individual's belief in their ability to perform a Behaviour. It encompasses both self-efficacy (confidence in one's abilities) and the perceived ease or difficulty of engaging in the Behaviour. In the context of drug use, if students believe they have the skills and resources to resist peer pressure and avoid drugs, they are more likely to intend to abstain. Skills-building activities—such as workshops focused on refusal skills and coping strategies—can enhance perceived Behavioural control, making students feel more capable of resisting drug use (Kivimäki et al., 2021).

Interaction of Components

The interplay between attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived Behavioural control is crucial in determining Behavioural intentions. For instance, even if a student has a positive attitude toward abstaining from drugs, strong peer pressure (subjective norms) to engage in drug use can diminish their intention to avoid it. Conversely, if students feel confident in their ability to resist drugs and perceive that their peers support their choice to abstain, they are more likely to intend to avoid drug use.

Application in Awareness Campaigns

Understanding the TPB allows for the development of targeted awareness campaigns that address these components effectively:

Changing Attitudes: Campaigns can use testimonials, facts, and engaging content to change attitudes towards drug use. Highlighting the benefits of a drug-free lifestyle—such as improved mental health and academic success—can foster positive attitudes.

Leveraging Subjective Norms: Campaigns should communicate that abstaining from drugs is a norm among peers. Using social media to showcase students who choose not to use drugs can create a perception that this behaviour is widely accepted and supported.

Enhancing Perceived Behavioural Control: Providing students with practical skills and resources to resist drug use is essential. Workshops that teach refusal skills, stress management, and coping strategies can empower students, making them feel more capable of making healthy choices.

The Theory of Planned behaviour offers a robust framework for understanding the factors that influence drug use behaviours among university students. By focusing on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived Behavioural control, awareness campaigns can be designed to effectively promote healthier behaviours and reduce drug abuse in this population.

These theoretical frameworks provide valuable insights into the mechanisms behind behaviour change in the context of drug abuse awareness campaigns. By understanding and applying the Health Belief Model, Social Cognitive Theory,

and the Theory of Planned Behaviour , campaign designers can create more effective interventions tailored to the specific needs and perceptions of university students.

Effectiveness of Awareness Campaigns on Drug Abuse Among University Students

Awareness campaigns and studies on public perceptions indicate that increased awareness can influence support for drug-related policies. Despite the high rates of drug abuse, there is often only mild concern and interest in intervention among students.

Awareness campaigns are critical tools in addressing drug abuse among university students, aiming to educate and inform this vulnerable population about the risks associated with substance use. These campaigns often utilize a combination of strategies, including social media, peer-led initiatives, and educational workshops, to effectively reach students.

Effectiveness of Awareness Campaigns

Research indicates that awareness campaigns can significantly alter knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours regarding drug use. For instance, a study by DeJong et al. (2019) found that targeted campaigns focused on the consequences of binge drinking and drug abuse led to a notable decrease in these behaviours among

college students. By utilizing relatable messaging and leveraging social norms, these campaigns can foster a culture of safety and awareness.

Another critical aspect of these campaigns is their ability to reduce stigma associated with seeking help for substance use issues. According to a systematic review by Tones and Tilford (2018), campaigns that incorporate personal stories and testimonials can humanize the issue, encouraging students to reach out for support without fear of judgment.

Digital and Social Media Campaigns

The rise of digital technology has transformed how awareness campaigns are conducted. Social media platforms provide a unique opportunity to engage with students where they are most active. A study by Poon et al. (2020) highlighted that online campaigns utilizing platforms like Instagram and Facebook not only increased awareness but also prompted discussions about drug use and mental health among peers. These platforms can amplify the reach and impact of campaigns, making them more relevant to the student demographic.

Peer-Led Initiatives

Peer-led initiatives have also shown promise in changing attitudes toward drug use. Research by Abar et al. (2020) emphasized the effectiveness of peer educators in disseminating information and providing support. Students often

relate more to their peers, which can enhance the credibility of the message and promote behaviour change.

Awareness campaigns are a vital component in combating drug abuse among university students. By effectively utilizing various strategies, including digital platforms and peer involvement, these campaigns can enhance knowledge, reduce stigma, and ultimately influence healthier behaviours . Continued research and innovative approaches are essential to ensure these campaigns remain impactful and relevant.

Awareness campaigns play a crucial role in addressing drug abuse, especially among university students. The effectiveness of these campaigns is influenced by several key factors that ensure they resonate with the target audience and drive behaviour change.

1. Targeted Messaging

Successful awareness campaigns are built on targeted messaging that speaks directly to the needs, values, and experiences of the audience. Campaigns that use language and imagery that resonate with students' realities tend to be more effective. For example, research by Atkin and Freimuth (2019) emphasizes the importance of crafting messages that are culturally relevant and emotionally engaging. Tailoring content to reflect the specific demographics and interests of students can enhance engagement and retention.

2. Use of Multiple Channels

Utilizing multiple communication channels is essential for maximizing reach and impact. Campaigns that combine traditional media (posters, flyers) with digital platforms (social media, websites) and interactive elements (workshops, webinars) can engage students through various touchpoints. According to a study by Turner et al. (2020), campaigns that leverage social media effectively not only reach a wider audience but also encourage peer-to-peer sharing, amplifying the campaign's message.

3. Involvement of Peers and Role Models

Incorporating peers and influential role models in awareness campaigns significantly enhances their effectiveness. When students see their peers or respected figures promoting healthy behaviours, they are more likely to emulate those behaviours. A study by Bexiga et al. (2020) found that peer-led initiatives were particularly effective in changing attitudes toward drug use. Engaging students as campaign leaders fosters a sense of ownership and credibility, making the message more relatable.

4. Emphasis on Skill Development

Beyond simply raising awareness, effective campaigns focus on equipping students with the skills necessary to make informed choices. Workshops and

training sessions that teach refusal skills, coping strategies, and decision-making processes are vital. Kivimäki et al. (2021) suggest that campaigns incorporating skills training enhance students' perceived Behaviour al control, making them feel more capable of resisting drug use.

5. Social Norms and Environment

Addressing and reshaping social norms is critical in promoting behaviour change. Campaigns that successfully communicate that drug abstinence is the norm within the student population can alter perceptions and behaviours . Research indicates that students are influenced by their peers' behaviours and beliefs, making it important to create an environment where healthy choices are celebrated and promoted (Tuck & Neumann, 2019).

6. Continuous Evaluation and Feedback

Effective awareness campaigns incorporate mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and feedback. By assessing the campaign's impact through surveys, focus groups, and data analysis, organizers can identify what works and what doesn't. Continuous feedback allows for real-time adjustments to messaging and strategies, ensuring that the campaign remains relevant and effective over time (McCormack et al., 2019).

7. Integration with Support Services

Linking awareness campaigns with available support services can enhance their effectiveness. Providing students with easy access to counseling, helplines, and other resources encourages them to seek help when needed. Research by Zuckerman et al. (2021) highlights the importance of creating a supportive network around awareness campaigns to ensure students feel they have the resources to follow through on healthy choices.

2.3 Empirical Review

Research has extensively examined the factors contributing to drug abuse among university students. A study conducted by Obot (2001) identified stress, peer pressure, and curiosity as significant predictors of drug use among Nigerian university students. Similarly, Adelekan et al. (2014) found that students experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression were more likely to engage in drug abuse.

The prevalence of drug abuse among university students in Nigeria is a significant concern. Oshodi et al. (2010) reported that 34.6% of university students in Nigeria had used drugs at least once in their lifetime. Furthermore, Chukwu et al. (2016) found a prevalence rate of 27.1% among university students in Edo State, where the University of Benin is located.

Awareness campaigns have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing drug abuse among university students. Okanla et al. (2013) found that students exposed to an awareness campaign on the dangers of drug abuse were more likely to report a reduction in drug use. Additionally, Nwosu et al. (2018) reported that an awareness campaign led to a significant increase in knowledge and attitudes towards drug abuse among university students.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section explains the research methodology that was used in carrying out the research. It highlighted the following; Research design, Target population, Sample and sampling procedure, Research instruments, Reliability and validity of the instruments, Data collection and Data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research Design

The research design that was adopted is the descriptive survey design. This was because the descriptive survey design helped to determine the frequency of occurrences of the phenomenon and discover whether or not relationships exist between the variables.

3.3 Population of the Study

This population was made up of the 77,000 and 1 students. The categories of respondents comprised students of the University of Benin, Ugbowo campus, Benin City Edo State.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The sampling techniques that were adopted for this study was Simple Random Sampling Technique (SRS). The total sample size that was used to carry out this

research consist of 100 individuals, made up of students of the University of Benin, Ugbowo campus, Benin City Edo State.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The research instrument that was adopted for data collection is a questionnaire which will be made up of twenty (20) items with different responses designed by the researcher after a careful review of related literature. The questions was focused on the variables in the research question. The questionnaire comprises two sections which are section A and section B. The first section, section A comprises of bio data of the respondents while the second section, section B comprise of the general questions related to research questions raised on the impact of awareness campaign on drug abuse.

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

The researcher administer questionnaires to respondents. All copies were collected back to be used for data analysis.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The data that were collected for this study were analyzed with descriptive statistics and simple percentage. The social demographic characteristics of the respondents were presented with simple percentage and pie charts, while the

major research questions were analyzed with descriptive statistics and frequency distribution tables.

3.8 Validity of the Instruments

This research employed content validity test. It is the degree of success of an instrument in measuring what is set out to be measured so that differences in individual scores can be taken as representing true differences in the characteristics being studied.

3.9 Reliability of the Instruments

The questionnaires was pre-tested through a pilot study to assure their reliability in collecting data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULT

This chapter presents and analyses the data obtained from the field survey. It consists of the bio-graphical data of the respondents, presentation of responses and analysis of data. In the course of the research, the research administered a total of one hundred (100) questionnaires and all one hundred (100) were retrieved, representing 100%. The questionnaires were then analyzed as summarized in tables below.

4.1 Presentation of Respondents' Profile

SECTION A

This section presents the bio-graphical data of respondents to the survey which include their sex, age distribution, level and religion.

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents

SEX	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	47	47
Female	53	53
Total	100	100

Source: Field survey (2025)

Table 1 above shows that 100 responded to the research, 47 persons representing 47% are male while 53 persons representing 53% are female. Thus, in the research both sexes were involved.

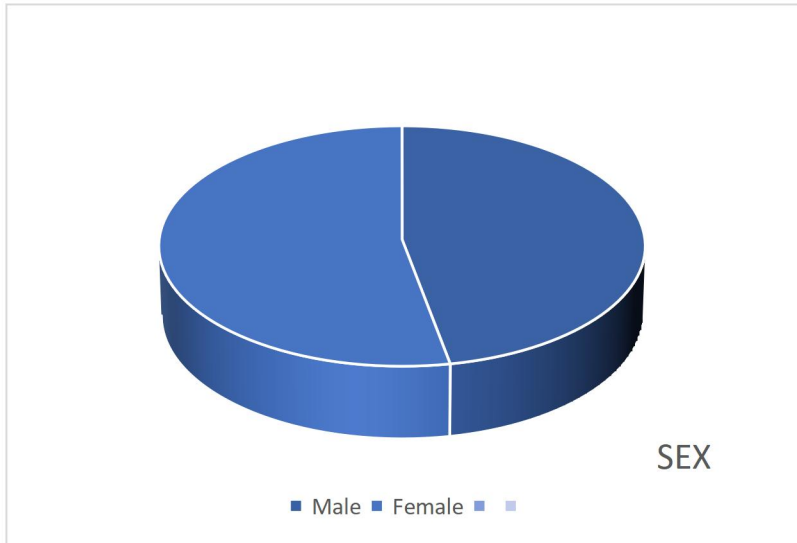


Fig 1:

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

AGE(YEARS)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below18	36	36
18 – 22	28	28
23 - 27	13	13
28 and above	23	23
Total	100	100

Source: Field survey (2025)

Table 2 above shows the total of 100 respondents and 36%, 28%, 13% and 23% of the responded were below 18, between 18 to 22, 23 to 27 and 28 and above respectively.

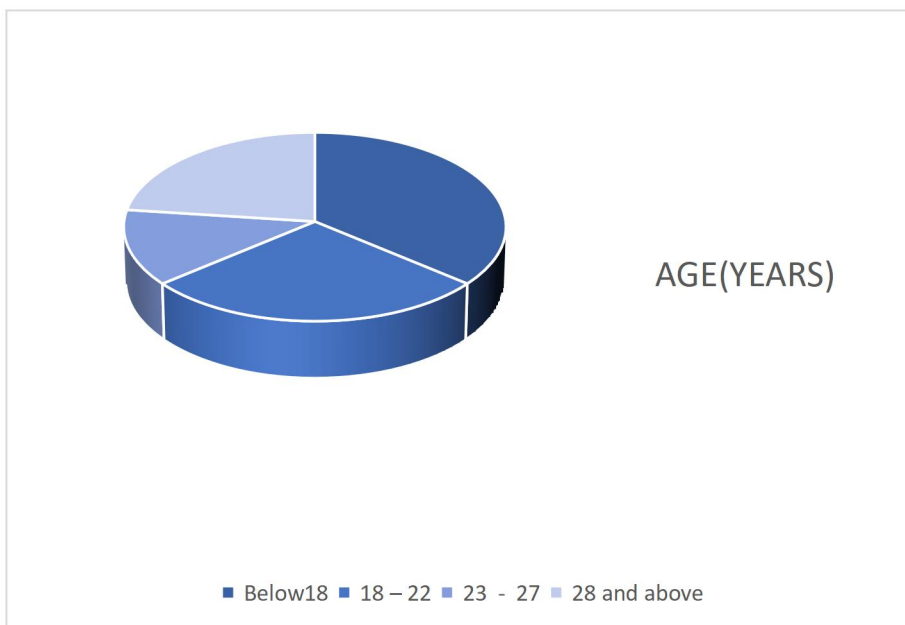


Figure 2

Table 3: Level

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
100	9	9
200	22	22
300	19	19
400	24	24
Above 400	26	26
Total	100	100

Source: Field survey (2025)

Table 3 above shows the level of the respondent. From 100 to beyond 400 level.

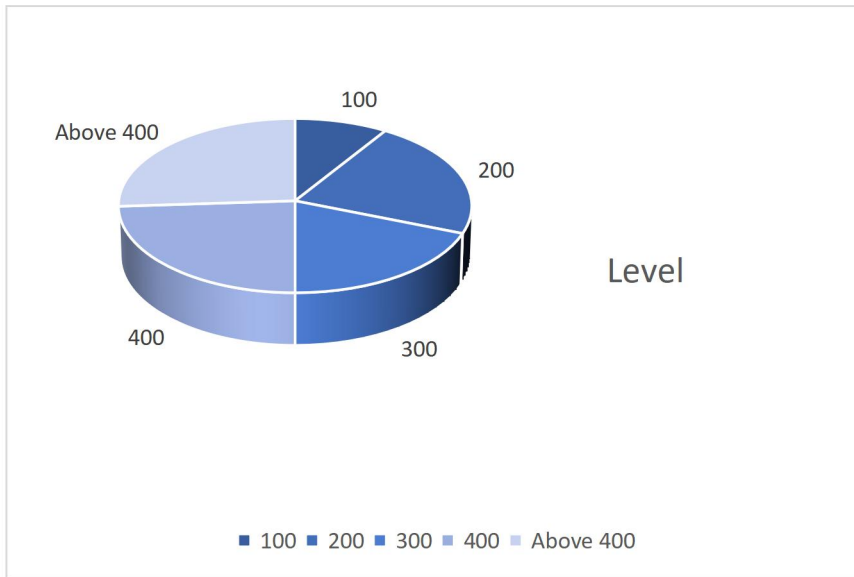


Figure 3

SECTION B

4.2 Presentation of Respondents and Responds

This section will analyze the respondent answers to the research question with either strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD)

Table 4: What are the reasons students of the University of Benin indulge in drug abuse?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1	Peer pressure Is a major factor that influences students to indulge in drug abuse.	76	17	6	1
2	Students use drugs as a means to cope with academic stress and anxiety.	23	12	51	4
3	Curiosity and the desire to experiment contribute to drug abuse among students.	48	19	6	27
4	Easy access to drugs on campus encourages drug abuse among students.	26	38	27	9

Source: Field survey (2025)

The survey data presented here offers an insightful exploration of the factors contributing to drug abuse among students. Through four specific statements, the data reveals how peer pressure, academic stress, curiosity, and the accessibility of drugs influence students' choices. The results, drawn from a field survey conducted in 2025, are categorized into four responses: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). This breakdown allows us to closely examine the reasons behind student drug abuse and understand the varying perspectives on the issue.

The first statement, "Peer pressure is a major factor that influences students to indulge in drug abuse," received strong support, with 76 respondents strongly agreeing and 17 agreeing. Only 6 disagreed, and a mere 1 respondent strongly disagreed. This overwhelming response underscores the significant role that peer pressure plays in influencing students' decisions to engage in drug abuse. It highlights the social dynamics within student communities, where the need to fit in and conform to peer behaviors can lead to unhealthy choices, such as substance abuse.

The second statement, "Students use drugs as a means to cope with academic stress and anxiety," presents a different angle, focusing on mental health and stress. The data here is more mixed, with only 23 strongly agreeing, 12 agreeing, 51 disagreeing, and 4 strongly disagreeing. This suggests that while a portion of students might turn to drugs as a coping mechanism for academic pressure, a significant majority does not perceive drugs as a solution to their stress. This division may reflect varying individual coping strategies or a lack of awareness about the impact of drugs on mental well-being.

Curiosity and the desire to experiment, as indicated in the third statement, are also contributing factors to drug abuse. Here, the responses are spread out: 48 strongly agree, 19 agree, 6 disagree, and 27 strongly disagree. The desire to experiment with drugs, driven by curiosity, seems to have a notable presence, but it's clear

that not all students view experimentation as a significant reason for their drug use. This variation could stem from differences in personal values, the availability of substances, or the influence of other social factors, such as family dynamics or previous experiences.

Lastly, the statement "Easy access to drugs on campus encourages drug abuse among students" highlights the issue of drug availability. With 26 strongly agreeing, 38 agreeing, 27 disagreeing, and 9 strongly disagreeing, the data shows that access to drugs is seen as a contributing factor by a substantial portion of students. While many acknowledge that drugs are readily available on campus, there is a notable segment of the population that either doesn't perceive this as an issue or may not be affected by it directly. This disparity emphasizes the role of environmental factors in shaping student behavior and the need for targeted interventions to limit access to harmful substances.

In conclusion, the survey results paint a complex picture of drug abuse among students. Peer pressure emerges as a dominant force, while academic stress, curiosity, and accessibility also play significant roles in influencing student behavior. The responses reflect a range of perspectives and experiences, underscoring the multifaceted nature of this issue. To address drug abuse effectively, it is crucial to consider all these factors, as they collectively shape the choices and behaviors of students in various educational environments.

Table 5: What is the prevalence of drug abuse among University of Benin students?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1	A significant number of students at the University of Benin are involved in drug abuse.	34	25	41	0
2	Drug abuse is more common among male students than female students.	19	40	27	24
3	Drug abuse is a growing trend among students in the University of Benin.	58	17	23	2
4	Students are more likely to abuse drugs during social events or parties.	28	65	5	2

Source: Field survey (2025)

The table provides insights into the prevalence of drug abuse among students at the University of Benin. It outlines responses to four key statements related to the issue, with a focus on the perception of the extent and nature of drug abuse on campus.

The first statement, suggesting that a significant number of students are involved in drug abuse, shows a divided response. While 34 respondents strongly agree and 25 agree, 41 disagree, indicating that the majority do not view drug abuse as widespread among students. The second statement, which asserts that drug abuse is more common among male students than female students, reveals that many

respondents (59) either agree or strongly agree with this assertion, while 51 disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting mixed perceptions about gender differences in drug abuse.

The third statement highlights a growing trend of drug abuse among students, with a strong majority of respondents (75) either agreeing or strongly agreeing. This reflects a consensus that drug abuse is becoming more prevalent on campus. Lastly, the fourth statement, which links drug abuse to social events or parties, also garners overwhelming agreement, with 93 respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing. This suggests that many believe drug abuse is more common in social settings.

In conclusion, the data reflects a growing concern over drug abuse among University of Benin students, particularly in social contexts, and points to a general belief that drug abuse may be more prevalent among male students. Despite some disagreement, the overall trend suggests that the issue is perceived as significant and growing.

Table 6: To what extent have awareness campaigns influenced the change of behaviour among University of Benin students?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1	Awareness campaigns have helped reduce the rate of drug abuse among students.	10	13	69	8
2	Students are more informed about the dangers of drug abuse because of awareness campaigns.	78	12	7	3
3	The university's campaigns have successfully changed students' attitudes towards drug use.	2	34	57	7
4	Campaigns on drug abuse need to be improved to reach more students effectively.	34	61	0	5

Source: Field survey (2025)

Table 9 above shows the influence of awareness campaigns on changing behavior regarding drug abuse among University of Benin students. It presents responses to four statements concerning the effectiveness of these campaigns, with options for Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The first statement, which asks if awareness campaigns have helped reduce drug abuse rates, shows that the majority of respondents (69) disagree, with only 10 strongly agreeing and 13 agreeing. This suggests that many students do not feel that the campaigns have had a significant impact on reducing drug abuse.

In contrast, the second statement, which evaluates whether students are more informed about the dangers of drug abuse due to the campaigns, receives a strong positive response. A majority of 78 strongly agree, while only 7 disagree, indicating that the campaigns have been successful in raising awareness about the risks of drug abuse.

The third statement, which asserts that the university's campaigns have successfully changed students' attitudes toward drug use, shows a mixed response. Only 2 strongly agree and 34 agree, while 57 disagree, suggesting that while some students believe the campaigns have had an effect, the majority feel that the campaigns have not significantly altered their attitudes.

The final statement, which suggests that campaigns need to be improved to reach more students, has widespread support, with 34 strongly agreeing and 61 agreeing. Only 5 strongly disagree, indicating a general consensus that the current campaigns could be more effective in reaching a larger audience.

In conclusion, while awareness campaigns at the University of Benin have made students more informed about the dangers of drug abuse, they have had limited success in changing behavior and attitudes. There is a strong belief that these campaigns need improvement to reach a broader student population more effectively.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Discussion

The data gathered from the survey of University of Benin students highlights significant insights regarding the factors contributing to drug abuse, its prevalence, and the impact of awareness campaigns. A total of 100 respondents participated, with a fairly balanced distribution of 47% male and 53% female students. The majority of respondents were below 18 years of age (36%), followed by those aged 18-22 years (28%). The survey also included students from various academic levels, with the largest group being in the 400 level (26%).

In terms of reasons for drug abuse, peer pressure emerged as the dominant factor, with 76% of respondents acknowledging its influence. Curiosity and the easy availability of drugs on campus were also significant contributors, while academic stress and anxiety were less frequently cited as reasons for drug use. Despite these factors, a majority did not view drug abuse as a widespread issue at the university, with only 34% agreeing that many students were involved in drug abuse.

Awareness campaigns, although successful in informing students about the dangers of drug abuse, have had limited success in changing behaviors. While 78% of respondents agreed that campaigns have raised awareness, only 10% felt that these initiatives have significantly reduced drug abuse. Additionally, most

students believe that the campaigns need to be improved to reach a larger audience and to be more effective in changing attitudes toward drug use. Overall, while the campaigns have made progress in educating students, there remains a significant gap in their ability to influence behavior and reduce drug abuse.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the survey regarding drug abuse among University of Benin students, several recommendations can be made to address the issue and improve the effectiveness of awareness campaigns:

1. **Enhance Peer Education Programs:** Given that peer pressure is identified as a major factor influencing drug abuse, creating peer-led education and counseling programs could help reduce the negative impact of peer pressure. Students who can relate to their peers may be more effective in encouraging positive behaviors and providing support for those at risk of engaging in drug use.
2. **Address Academic Stress Through Alternative Coping Mechanisms:** Since academic stress is cited as a factor influencing drug abuse, the university should provide alternative stress-relief mechanisms such as mindfulness workshops, counseling services, and stress management seminars.

These can help students better manage academic pressure without resorting to drug use.

3. **Increase Accessibility to Mental Health Support:** The survey shows that drug abuse may be linked to stress and anxiety. The university should invest in expanding mental health services, ensuring that students have easy access to counseling and support for mental health issues, which could reduce the need for substances as coping mechanisms.
4. **Strengthen Campus Security and Monitor Drug Access:** Since easy access to drugs is a significant issue, enhancing security measures and monitoring areas where drugs are commonly distributed or consumed on campus could reduce availability. Increasing surveillance in high-risk areas, conducting random checks, and collaborating with local authorities could help curb the supply of drugs.
5. **Improve and Target Awareness Campaigns:** Although awareness campaigns have raised some awareness, they have had limited success in changing behavior. These campaigns should be tailored to different student groups, incorporating more engaging methods such as interactive sessions, real-life testimonials, and the involvement of influential student leaders to make the messages more relatable.
6. **Expand Social and Extracurricular Activities:** Since drug abuse is more prevalent during social events, offering more supervised, substance-free social

and extracurricular activities could provide students with healthy alternatives. These activities could include sports, arts, and cultural events that engage students in a positive, supportive environment.

7. **Focus on Gender-Specific Campaigns:** As some respondents suggested that drug abuse may be more common among male students, there could be targeted campaigns addressing male students' specific concerns and challenges regarding drug use. These could involve male role models and focus on debunking myths surrounding masculinity and substance use.
8. **Evaluate and Revise Campaign Strategies Regularly:** The university should continuously assess the effectiveness of its awareness campaigns. By gathering feedback from students and monitoring trends in drug abuse, the campaigns can be adjusted and improved to remain relevant and impactful.
9. **Promote Parental and Community Involvement:** Engaging families and the broader community in drug abuse prevention efforts can help create a supportive environment for students. Workshops for parents about recognizing the signs of drug abuse and supporting their children can complement campus initiatives.
10. **Encourage Student Advocacy and Support Groups:** Finally, establishing student-run support groups or advocacy programs for drug abuse prevention can empower students to take an active role in addressing the issue. These

groups could help raise awareness, organize interventions, and provide support for students struggling with substance abuse.

These recommendations aim to create a holistic approach to reducing drug abuse and fostering a healthier, more supportive university environment. By addressing both the individual and environmental factors contributing to drug use, the University of Benin can better support its students and create a more effective framework for combating drug abuse.

5.3 Suggestion for Further Studies

Here are some suggestions for further studies based on the findings of the survey on drug abuse and awareness campaigns at the University of Benin:

1. **Longitudinal Study on the Impact of Awareness Campaigns:** A study that tracks the long-term effectiveness of awareness campaigns over multiple years would provide insights into whether these campaigns lead to lasting changes in student behavior. It could examine whether the information and attitudes learned during campaigns are sustained and if they result in actual reductions in drug abuse.
2. **Exploring the Role of Social Media in Drug Abuse Prevention:** Given the widespread use of social media among students, further research could investigate how online platforms can be utilized to spread awareness and

prevent drug abuse. This study could explore the effectiveness of social media campaigns and peer support groups in reaching students and influencing their behaviors.

3. **Examining the Psychological Factors Contributing to Drug Abuse:** A more in-depth exploration of the psychological factors, such as anxiety, depression, and self-esteem, that contribute to drug abuse among students would be valuable. This could help in developing more targeted mental health interventions that address the root causes of substance use.
4. **Gender-Specific Approaches to Drug Abuse Prevention:** Given the mixed perceptions of drug abuse among male and female students, further research could explore gender-specific factors and how campaigns or interventions could be tailored to address the different needs and experiences of male and female students in relation to drug abuse.
5. **Impact of Family and Community Support on Drug Abuse Prevention:** Research could focus on the role of family and community involvement in drug abuse prevention. This study could investigate how parental guidance, community-based support programs, and other external influences can help prevent drug abuse among university students.
6. **Evaluation of Campus Drug Access Points:** A study could examine specific locations or events on campus where drugs are most commonly accessed or used, providing detailed recommendations for interventions in high-risk areas.

This could include an analysis of the effectiveness of current security measures and their impact on reducing drug availability.

7. **Comparative Study Across Universities:** A comparative study across multiple universities could help identify common factors that contribute to drug abuse on campus. This could allow for the identification of best practices from different institutions in tackling drug abuse and improving awareness campaigns.
8. **Effectiveness of Peer Counseling Programs:** Since peer pressure is a significant factor in drug abuse, a study that assesses the effectiveness of peer counseling or peer support groups could provide insights into how students can influence their peers positively. It could also explore the challenges and successes of peer-led interventions.
9. **Exploring the Relationship Between Drug Abuse and Academic Performance:** Further research could examine how drug abuse impacts academic performance and student well-being. This would help provide a clearer understanding of the broader consequences of drug use on students' academic success and overall university experience.
10. **The Role of Extracurricular Activities in Drug Abuse Prevention:** A study could investigate how participation in extracurricular activities, such as sports, clubs, and arts, can serve as protective factors against drug abuse. This could

identify activities that are particularly effective in providing students with healthy coping mechanisms and alternative outlets for social interaction.

These suggestions aim to further explore the complex issue of drug abuse and its prevention among students, helping universities develop more effective strategies to combat the problem and create a safer, healthier environment for students.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY.

Dear Respondents,

I am an undergraduate student of the above-named institution. I am currently carrying out a research study on the topic 'impact of awareness campaign on drug abuse among undergraduates of the University of Benin, Benin city Edo State

Please kindly help to complete the questionnaire, as your sincere response is of immense assistance and importance to the researcher. Any information given will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Researcher

Section A – Demographic Information

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age: Below18 [] 18- 22[] 23 - 27[] 28and above []
3. Level: 100[] 200[] 300 [] 400 [] above 400 []
4. Religion: Christianity[] Islam [] African Traditional Worship []

SECTION B

Please kindly take out time to read and fill this questionnaire. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement below by ticking [] the option you consider most appropriate. The options are strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD)

Table 1: What are the reasons students of the University of Benin indulge in drug abuse?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1	Peer pressure Is a major factor that influences students to indulge in drug abuse.				
2	Students use drugs as a means to cope with academic stress and anxiety.				
3	Curiosity and the desire to experiment contribute to drug abuse among students.				
4	Easy access to drugs on campus encourages drug abuse among students.				

Table 2: What is the prevalence of drug abuse among University of Benin students?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1	A significant number of students at the University of Benin are involved in drug abuse.				
2	Drug abuse is more common among male students than female students.				
3	Drug abuse is a growing trend among students in the University of Benin.				
4	Students are more likely to abuse drugs during social events or parties.				

Table 3: To what extent have awareness campaigns influenced the change of behaviour among University of Benin students?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1	Awareness campaigns have helped reduce the rate of drug abuse among students.				
2	Students are more informed about the dangers of drug abuse because of awareness campaigns.				
3	The university's campaigns have successfully changed students' attitudes towards drug use.				
4	Campaigns on drug abuse need to be improved to reach more students effectively.				