

Causes, Consequences and Control of Drug Abuse Among Youths in Nigeria: A Library Based Information Intervention Approach

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Abstract: *This study examined the causes, consequences, and control of drug abuse among youths in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on a library-based information intervention approach. The study was guided by three objectives which focused on identifying the causes of drug abuse, examining its consequences, and evaluating the role of libraries in its prevention among youths. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised youths aged 15–35 years, including both in-school and out-of-school youths, as well as library personnel. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, while 263 were correctly completed and retrieved for analysis. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Drug Abuse among Youths and Library-Based Information Intervention Questionnaire (DAYLBIIQ), and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and frequency tables. Findings of the study revealed that drug abuse among youths is largely influenced by peer pressure, unemployment, curiosity, poor family background, and media influence. The study further established that drug abuse has serious consequences, including poor academic performance, increased criminal behaviour, mental health challenges, family breakdown, and increased risk of premature death. In addition, the findings showed that libraries play a significant role in drug abuse prevention through the provision of relevant information resources, awareness campaigns, youth engagement programmes, and access to educational materials. The study concluded that libraries are important information-based intervention centres capable of contributing effectively to the reduction of drug abuse among youths in Nigeria. It was recommended that libraries should be strengthened through adequate funding, integration of drug education materials, and collaboration with relevant stakeholders for effective prevention programmes.*

Keywords: drug abuse, youths, libraries, information intervention, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse among youths in Nigeria has become a growing concern critical public health and social issue with alarming prevalence rates and profound implications for the individual, families and society at large. Recent studies reveal that that approximately 40% of Nigerian youths aged 18 to 35 are struggling with some form of drug abuse, a trend that highlights the severity of the issue in modern day Nigeria. According to Maloma (2020) drug abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including illicit drugs and the misuse of prescription medications. It involves consuming drugs in a manner that is detrimental to one's health and well-being. It's abuse among youths has become a critical public health challenge, with alarming statistics highlighting its extensive impact. According to Schulenberg et al (2021), approximately 20% of adolescents have reported using illicit drugs by the time they reach 12th grade. This underscores the urgent need to understand the causes, consequences, and control measures related to drug use among young people.

The causes of drug abuse among youths are complex and interwoven. Ibrahim et al (2021) affirm that factors such as peer influence, family environment, and socio-economic conditions significantly contribute to substance misuse. Lappan et al (2020) found that 41% of adolescents who reported substance use cited peer pressure as a primary reason. Additionally, the influence of family dynamics cannot be overlooked; youths from families where substance abuse is prevalent are more likely to engage in similar behaviors. Mental health issues, particularly anxiety and depression, further complicate this landscape. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) states that nearly 50% of adolescents with a substance use disorder also have a co-occurring mental health disorder, illustrating the intertwined nature of these challenges (United Nations Office on Drugs, 2020).

The repercussions of drug abuse reach far beyond the individual, impacting families, communities, and society as a whole. Simatwa et al. (2022) indicated that drug overdoses are among the leading causes of mortality for individuals aged 15 to 24. Additionally, the economic impact of drug abuse is striking; the expenses associated with drug treatment services are estimated to reach billions of naira each year. Ibrahim et al. (2021) noted that a report from the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) reveals that government spending on drug treatment approaches ₦15 billion annually, which includes costs related to healthcare, lost productivity, and crime. This underscores the pressing need to tackle drug abuse and its complex consequences.

In combating drug abuse, libraries can emerge as vital resources within communities. A library is a collection of organized resources, primarily books, available for public use. It provides access to various materials, including digital content, and offers services like research assistance and community programs (Okogwu, 2021). Libraries serve as vital educational and cultural hubs, promoting literacy, learning, and community engagement. Historically regarded as hubs for information dissemination and education, libraries possess the capability to significantly

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influence youth education and provide essential support (Maloma, 2020). By offering access to materials related to substance abuse, mental health, and effective coping mechanisms, libraries can cultivate informed decision-making among adolescents. For example, a survey by the American Library Association revealed that 62% of librarians agree that libraries should actively engage with community health concerns, including substance abuse, by implementing specialized programming (Inemesit et al., 2020). This illustrates the vital role libraries can assume in addressing pressing social issues affecting youth.

Inemesit et al. (2020) emphasized that libraries can establish safe environments for discussions surrounding drug use and its impacts. By organizing workshops, support groups, and informational sessions in partnership with local health agencies, libraries can facilitate meaningful dialogues about substance abuse among young people. Additionally, utilizing technology can amplify their outreach initiatives; digital resources and online platforms can offer accessible information to a broader audience, especially to those who might not utilize conventional educational resources (Ifeoma, 2020).

Tackling drug abuse among youth requires a comprehensive understanding of its causes, effects, and effective intervention strategies. Libraries are uniquely equipped to make significant contributions to this initiative by offering education, support, and resources that empower young individuals. By maximizing their capabilities, libraries can play an essential role in building resilience among youth, ultimately leading to a decrease in the incidence of drug abuse within society.

Statement of Problem

The problem of drug abuse among youth has developed into a significant public health emergency, presenting serious threats to both individuals and their communities. A variety of factors contribute to this alarming trend, such as peer pressure, mental health challenges, family dynamics, and inherent curiosity. These influences can prompt young individuals to experiment with substances, laying the groundwork for potential addiction and a host of adverse health effects.

The repercussions of drug abuse are both serious and complex. On a physical level, young people may experience chronic illnesses and mental health disorders that can extend into their adult years. Academically, there is a clear correlation between drug abuse and declining performance, increased absenteeism, and higher dropout rates, severely restricting future opportunities for those affected. Furthermore, legal complications, including arrests and criminal records, can complicate their situations and impede rehabilitation efforts. Socially, drug abuse can create tension in relationships with family and friends, fostering isolation and jeopardizing the support networks that are crucial for recovery.

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These alarming consequences of drug abuse among youths is partly attributable to the inadequacies of library resources and services. Inadequate access to educational materials on drug prevention limits youth knowledge about the risks of substance abuse. Insufficient programs and outreach efforts hinder engagement, preventing libraries from becoming supportive environments for discussions on drug-related issues. Moreover, a lack of trained librarians to facilitate informational workshops diminishes the library's role as a resource hub for at-risk youth. These gaps in library services contribute to a lack of awareness and support, ultimately exacerbating the problem of drug abuse among young individuals.

Objectives of the Study

To achieve the aim of this study, the following objectives were raised to guide the study to;

1. Identify the causes of drug abuse among youths
2. Examine the consequences of the drug abuse on the youths
3. Evaluate the roles of libraries in preventing drug abuse among the youth.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What are the major causes of drug abuse among youths?
2. What are the consequences of drug abuse on youths?
3. What roles do libraries play in control of drug abuse among youths?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Drug Abuse

Drug abuse refers to the excessive, non-medical, or inappropriate use of psychoactive substances that alter the normal functioning of the body and mind. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), drug abuse involves the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs, that lead to dependence, health complications, and social dysfunction. Similarly, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2024) defines drug abuse as the persistent use of drugs for purposes other than medical reasons, often resulting in addiction, psychological disturbances, and behavioural problems.

Drug abuse is not limited to illicit substances such as cocaine, heroin, and cannabis; it also includes misuse of prescription drugs such as opioids, sedatives, and stimulants. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, substance abuse among youths has become a major public health and social concern due to increasing availability of drugs, peer pressure, and socio-economic challenges (Oshodi et al., 2021).

Concept of Youth

Youth is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood characterized by physical, psychological, and social development. The United Nations defines youths as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 years, although in many African contexts, the definition extends up to 35 years due to socio-economic dependency patterns (UN, 2022). Youths are considered a critical population group because they represent the most active, energetic, and vulnerable segment of society.

In Nigeria, youths constitute a significant proportion of the population and are often exposed to unemployment, peer influence, and environmental pressures that predispose them to risky behaviours, including drug abuse (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). The vulnerability of youths to substance abuse is further heightened by curiosity, experimentation, and lack of adequate awareness about drug-related consequences.

Causes of Drug Abuse among Youths

Drug abuse among youths is influenced by multiple interrelated factors:

Peer Pressure: Peer influence remains one of the strongest predictors of drug abuse among young people. Adolescents often engage in drug use to gain acceptance or avoid rejection within peer groups (Okafor & Duru, 2022). Social learning from peers who already engage in substance use increases the likelihood of initiation.

Family Environment: A dysfunctional family environment characterized by poor parenting, domestic violence, or lack of supervision contributes significantly to drug abuse. According to Adeyemi and Ojo (2021), youths from unstable families are more likely to experiment with drugs as a coping mechanism.

Socio-economic Factors: Poverty, unemployment, and lack of educational opportunities often push youths toward substance use as a form of escape from frustration and hopelessness (UNODC, 2024). Economic deprivation increases exposure to illicit drug markets and related criminal activities.

Media and Internet Influence: Exposure to drug-related content on social media and entertainment platforms normalizes drug use behavior among youths. Studies show that glamorization of drugs in music and movies contributes to increased curiosity and experimentation (Bello et al., 2022).

Psychological Factors: Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and trauma are also major contributors to drug abuse. Youths often use drugs as self-medication to cope with emotional distress (WHO, 2023).

Consequences of Drug Abuse among Youths

Drug abuse has severe consequences that affect individuals, families, and society at large:

Health Consequences: Drug abuse leads to both short-term and long-term health problems such as liver damage, respiratory disorders, brain impairment, and increased risk of infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS (WHO, 2023). Prolonged use can also result in addiction and overdose deaths.

Psychological Consequences: Substance abuse is strongly associated with mental health disorders such as depression, paranoia, and psychosis. It impairs cognitive functioning, decision-making ability, and emotional stability (UNODC, 2024).

Social Consequences: Drug abuse leads to breakdown of family relationships, increased crime rates, violence, and social isolation. Youths involved in drugs often withdraw from educational and social responsibilities (Okafor et al., 2022).

Educational Consequences: Drug abuse negatively affects academic performance, leading to truancy, poor concentration, and school dropout. It reduces the overall productivity and future employability of youths (Adebayo, 2021).

Role of Libraries in Control of drug abuse among youths

Libraries are important community-based institutions that contribute to education, awareness, and behavioural change. Public and school libraries serve as information hubs that provide access to accurate and reliable information on drug abuse prevention.

Information Provision: Libraries provide educational materials such as books, journals, brochures, and multimedia resources that educate youths about the dangers of drug abuse. Access to accurate information reduces misinformation and curiosity-driven experimentation.

Awareness Campaigns: Libraries often collaborate with schools, NGOs, and health agencies to organize seminars, workshops, and awareness campaigns on drug prevention (Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2022).

Youth Engagement Programs: Libraries create safe spaces where youths can engage in reading clubs, ICT training, and recreational activities, thereby reducing idle time that may lead to drug abuse.

Counselling Support and Referrals: Although libraries are not clinical institutions, they often provide referral services to rehabilitation centers and counseling organizations for youths struggling with substance abuse.

Digital Literacy and Online Safety: Modern libraries help youths navigate digital spaces responsibly, reducing exposure to harmful online drug content and misinformation (IFLA, 2023).

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Social Learning Theory

This study is anchored on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which provides a comprehensive explanation of how drug abuse behaviour is acquired among youths. The theory posits that human behaviour is not only a result of direct personal experience but is largely learned through observation, imitation, and modeling of others within the social environment.

Bandura (1977) argues that individuals, particularly adolescents and youths, learn behaviours by observing role models such as peers, parents, celebrities, and community members. When youths observe drug use being rewarded, tolerated, or normalized within their environment, they are more likely to imitate such behaviour. This is particularly relevant in contemporary societies where exposure to substance use is common in social gatherings, peer groups, music videos, and online platforms.

The theory further introduces the concept of vicarious reinforcement, where individuals do not need to personally experience rewards for a behaviour; instead, observing others being rewarded for the behaviour is sufficient to encourage imitation. In the context of drug abuse, when youths observe peers gaining social acceptance, confidence, or pleasure through drug use, they may perceive substance use as desirable.

Bandura also emphasizes self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to resist or perform certain behaviours. Youths with low self-efficacy are more susceptible to peer influence and are less likely to resist drug-related pressure. Conversely, strong self-efficacy acts as a protective factor against substance abuse.

In relation to this study, Social Learning Theory provides a strong foundation for understanding how drug abuse behaviours are transmitted among youths. It explains why drug abuse tends to cluster within peer groups and why exposure to drug-using environments significantly increases the likelihood of substance use. It also supports the preventive role of libraries as structured environments that can expose youths to positive behavioural models, educational materials, and awareness programs that counteract negative social influences.

Empirical Review

Studies on Causes of Drug Abuse among Youths

Empirical studies across different regions have consistently identified multiple determinants of drug abuse among youths, ranging from individual-level factors to broader socio-economic and environmental influences. Okafor and Duru (2022), in a study conducted among secondary

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school students in southeastern Nigeria, investigated the influence of peer pressure and family structure on substance abuse. Using a descriptive survey design, the study found that peer influence was the most dominant factor, with over 60% of respondents admitting that they were introduced to drugs by friends. The study further revealed that students from broken homes or unstable family environments were significantly more likely to engage in drug use compared to those from stable households. The authors concluded that family supervision and peer association play a crucial role in shaping youth behaviour.

Similarly, Adebayo (2021) examined socio-economic determinants of drug abuse among Nigerian youths. The study found that unemployment, poverty, and lack of access to quality education significantly increased the likelihood of substance use. The research highlighted that many unemployed youths resort to drug abuse as a coping mechanism for frustration, hopelessness, and economic deprivation. The study recommended job creation and youth empowerment programs as preventive strategies.

In a broader global context, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2024) reported that the increasing availability of synthetic drugs, coupled with weak enforcement of drug control laws, has contributed to a rise in youth drug abuse worldwide. The report emphasized that digital platforms and illicit online markets have made access to drugs easier, particularly for young people.

Bello et al. (2022) further explored the influence of media exposure on drug abuse tendencies among adolescents. The study found that exposure to music, movies, and online content that glamorizes drug use significantly shapes youth perception and normalizes substance abuse behaviour. The authors concluded that media literacy is essential in reducing the influence of harmful content on youths. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that drug abuse among youths is not driven by a single factor but by a combination of peer influence, family structure, economic hardship, and media exposure.

Studies on Consequences of Drug Abuse

A substantial body of empirical literature has documented the negative consequences of drug abuse on youths, particularly in relation to academic performance, mental health, and social behaviour. Oshodi et al. (2021) conducted a study on the academic performance of secondary school students in Lagos State who engage in substance abuse. The findings revealed that students who abused drugs consistently performed worse academically compared to non-users. The study also reported higher levels of absenteeism, poor concentration, and increased dropout rates among drug-using students. The authors concluded that drug abuse significantly undermines educational attainment and future career prospects.

In another study, Bello et al. (2022) examined the behavioural consequences of drug abuse among urban youths in Nigeria. The study found a strong association between substance abuse

and increased involvement in criminal activities, violence, and risky sexual behaviour. The authors noted that drug abuse impairs judgment and reduces impulse control, thereby increasing engagement in antisocial behaviour.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2023) also highlighted the health consequences of drug abuse, reporting that substance use disorders contribute significantly to the global burden of disease. The report identified liver damage, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory complications, and neurological impairments as major health outcomes of prolonged drug use. Additionally, WHO emphasized that drug abuse is strongly associated with mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and psychosis.

UNODC (2024) further reported that drug abuse contributes to increased mortality rates among youths due to overdose, accidents, and violence-related deaths. The report stressed that the social and economic burden of drug abuse extends beyond individuals to families and national development. These studies collectively demonstrate that drug abuse has far-reaching consequences that affect not only the individual user but also families, communities, and society at large.

Studies on Preventive Role of Libraries in Drug Abuse

Empirical literature on the role of libraries in drug abuse prevention is still developing but provides important insights into their educational and social functions. Ibrahim and Yusuf (2022) examined the role of school libraries in promoting behavioural change among secondary school students in northern Nigeria. The study found that libraries serve as important information centres where students can access materials on health education, drug awareness, and moral development. The authors reported that students who frequently used library resources demonstrated higher awareness of drug-related risks and were less likely to engage in substance abuse.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA, 2023) emphasized that libraries are critical community institutions that support lifelong learning, information literacy, and youth empowerment. According to the report, libraries contribute indirectly to drug prevention by providing safe spaces for learning, reducing idle time, and exposing youths to positive developmental content.

Adeyemi and Ojo (2021) conducted a comparative study on behavioural tendencies among students with regular library use and those with limited access. The findings revealed that frequent library users were significantly less likely to engage in risky behaviours, including drug abuse. The study attributed this to increased access to information, structured academic engagement, and reduced exposure to negative peer environments.

Furthermore, community-based library outreach programs have been identified as effective tools for drug awareness. Libraries often collaborate with non-governmental organizations and health agencies to organize seminars, exhibitions, and campaigns aimed at educating youths about the dangers of drug abuse (IFLA, 2023). These findings suggest that libraries play a preventive role by promoting education, awareness, and constructive youth engagement, although more empirical studies are needed to fully establish their impact.

Research Gap

Despite the growing body of literature on drug abuse, several gaps remain evident. First, most existing studies focus primarily on the causes and consequences of drug abuse, with limited attention to preventive institutional frameworks. Second, while some studies acknowledge the role of schools and families, little empirical research has been conducted on the specific contribution of libraries in control of drug abuse among youths, particularly in the Nigerian context.

Furthermore, existing studies tend to focus on urban populations, leaving rural youths under-researched. There is also limited integration of behavioral theories with institutional prevention strategies such as library interventions. This creates a gap in understanding how information-based institutions can be strategically utilized in drug prevention efforts. This study therefore seeks to fill this gap by examining the role of libraries in control of drug abuse among youths, contributing to both academic literature and policy development.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature reviewed indicates that drug abuse among youths is influenced by social, economic, psychological, and environmental factors, with peer pressure and socio-economic hardship being the most prominent drivers. The consequences of drug abuse are severe and multidimensional, affecting health, education, mental wellbeing, and social stability. The Social Learning Theory provides a strong theoretical explanation for how drug abuse behaviours are learned and sustained within social environments. Empirical studies further confirm the increasing prevalence of substance abuse and highlight its negative impact on youth development. However, there remains a significant gap in literature regarding the preventive role of libraries, which this study aims to address.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design to investigate the causes, consequences, and control of drug abuse among Nigerian youths, with emphasis on a library-based information intervention approach. The design is appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect and analyze data from a representative sample of respondents without manipulating any variables. The study will be carried out in selected communities and schools in Nigeria where youths are exposed to varying levels of drug-related risks. The population of the study comprises youths

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between the ages of 15 and 35 years, including both in-school and out-of-school youths, as well as selected library personnel who are involved in information dissemination and awareness creation on social and health-related issues.

A sample size of approximately 300 respondents will be selected using a combination of simple random sampling for youths and purposive sampling for librarians to ensure relevant representation. Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire titled “*Drug Abuse among Youths and Library-Based Information Intervention Questionnaire (DAYLBIIQ)*”, designed on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated by experts in Library and Information Science and related fields, while its reliability was tested using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, and mean scores, with a decision benchmark set at a mean score of 2.50.

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Response Rate

A total of 300 questionnaires were administered to respondents, while 263 were properly completed and retrieved, representing a response rate of 87.7%, which is considered adequate for analysis.

Decision Rule

A benchmark mean of 2.50 was used. Any item with a mean score ≥ 2.50 was accepted, while those below 2.50 were rejected.

Research Question One: Causes of Drug Abuse among Youths**Table 1: Respondents' Views on Causes of Drug Abuse among Youths (N = 263)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Peer pressure influences youths to abuse drugs	112	98	25	18	10	4.11	Accepted
2	Poor family background contributes to drug abuse	105	92	30	22	14	3.98	Accepted
3	Unemployment leads youths into drug abuse	118	87	28	17	13	4.13	Accepted
4	Media influence encourages drug use among youths	96	101	34	20	12	3.94	Accepted
5	Curiosity leads youths to experiment with drugs	120	90	25	18	10	4.17	Accepted
6	Easy availability of drugs encourages abuse among youths	122	88	27	15	11	4.12	Accepted
7	Lack of parental supervision contributes to drug abuse	116	95	26	15	11	4.10	Accepted
8	Emotional stress and depression lead youths to drug abuse	119	91	24	17	12	4.09	Accepted
9	Poor academic performance encourages involvement in drugs	110	94	31	17	11	4.04	Accepted
10	Association with delinquent friends promotes drug abuse	124	86	25	17	11	4.13	Accepted

Source: Survey Data, 2026.

The findings presented in Table 1 indicate that all the identified factors recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were therefore accepted as major causes of drug abuse among youths. The highest-rated factor was curiosity (Mean = 4.17), followed by unemployment and association with delinquent friends (Mean = 4.13 each), easy availability of drugs (Mean = 4.12), peer pressure (Mean = 4.11), lack of parental supervision (Mean = 4.10), emotional stress and depression (Mean = 4.09), poor academic performance (Mean = 4.04), poor family background (Mean = 3.98), and media influence (Mean = 3.94).

The findings suggest that drug abuse among youths is influenced by a combination of social, economic, psychological, family, and environmental factors. The prominence of curiosity indicates that many youths experiment with drugs due to a desire for new experiences, while unemployment and emotional stress reveal the role of socio-economic hardship in encouraging substance use. Similarly, peer influence, association with delinquent friends, and inadequate parental supervision demonstrate the importance of the social environment in shaping youth behaviour. The findings imply that addressing drug abuse requires a holistic approach that tackles not only individual behaviour but also broader family and societal conditions.

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These findings are consistent with Okafor and Duru (2022), who identified peer influence, family instability, and weak parental monitoring as significant predictors of drug abuse among adolescents. Likewise, Adebayo (2021) reported that unemployment, frustration, and economic hardship increase the likelihood of substance abuse among Nigerian youths. The findings also agree with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2024), which emphasizes that easy access to drugs, social influence, and poor mental health are major drivers of substance abuse globally. Overall, the results confirm that youth drug abuse is a multifaceted social problem requiring coordinated interventions from families, schools, communities, and government agencies.

Research Question Two: Consequences of Drug Abuse among Youths**Table 2: Respondents' Views on Consequences of Drug Abuse among Youths (N = 263)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Drug abuse leads to poor academic performance	130	95	20	10	8	4.29	Accepted
2	It increases criminal behaviour among youths	118	100	25	12	8	4.17	Accepted
3	Drug abuse causes mental health problems	115	98	30	12	8	4.11	Accepted
4	It leads to family breakdown and conflict	110	97	28	18	10	4.02	Accepted
5	Drug abuse increases risk of early death	120	90	30	15	8	4.12	Accepted
6	Drug abuse contributes to school dropout	126	88	26	13	10	4.16	Accepted
7	It increases health complications among youths	122	92	25	14	10	4.15	Accepted
8	Drug abuse results in social isolation and stigma	114	96	29	14	10	4.07	Accepted
9	It reduces productivity and future career prospects	118	94	28	13	10	4.13	Accepted
10	Drug abuse increases violent and risky behaviours	121	91	27	14	10	4.14	Accepted

Source: Survey Data, 2026.

Table .2 reveals that respondents strongly agreed that drug abuse has numerous negative consequences on youths. All ten items recorded mean scores above the benchmark of 2.50, indicating general acceptance. The highest-rated consequence was poor academic performance (Mean = 4.29), followed by increased criminal behaviour (Mean = 4.17), school dropout (Mean = 4.16), health complications (Mean = 4.15), violent and risky behaviours (Mean = 4.14), reduced productivity and career prospects (Mean = 4.13), increased risk of early death (Mean = 4.12), mental health problems (Mean = 4.11), social isolation and stigma (Mean = 4.07), and family breakdown and conflict (Mean = 4.02).

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The findings indicate that drug abuse negatively affects the educational, psychological, social, economic, and health well-being of youths. The high mean score for poor academic performance suggests that respondents perceive educational disruption as one of the most visible consequences of substance abuse. Furthermore, the findings show that drug abuse contributes to criminal activities, violence, poor health outcomes, and weakened family relationships, thereby affecting both the individual and society at large.

The findings support Oshodi et al. (2021), who reported that students engaged in substance abuse exhibit poor academic achievement, absenteeism, and higher dropout rates. Similarly, Bello et al. (2022) found a significant relationship between drug abuse and criminal activities among youths. The findings also corroborate the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), which reported that substance abuse contributes substantially to mental disorders, chronic diseases, injuries, and premature mortality. Overall, the results demonstrate that drug abuse poses serious threats to youth development and societal stability.

Research Question Three: Role of Libraries in the Control of Drug Abuse among Youths**Table 3: Respondents' Views on the Role of Libraries in the Control of Drug Abuse among Youths (N = 263)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Libraries provide information on dangers of drug abuse	120	102	20	12	9	4.18	Accepted
2	Library awareness programmes help prevent drug abuse	110	105	25	13	10	4.10	Accepted
3	Libraries engage youths in productive activities	115	100	28	12	8	4.13	Accepted
4	Libraries support drug prevention campaigns	108	98	30	18	9	4.03	Accepted
5	Access to library resources reduces drug abuse tendencies	112	95	30	16	10	4.05	Accepted
6	Libraries organize seminars on drug abuse prevention	118	92	27	15	11	4.09	Accepted
7	Libraries provide counselling information and referral services	114	97	28	14	10	4.08	Accepted
8	Libraries promote positive reading habits among youths	121	90	26	15	11	4.11	Accepted
9	Libraries collaborate with schools and communities to combat drug abuse	116	96	27	14	10	4.10	Accepted
10	Library outreach programmes help educate youths on the dangers of drugs	119	93	26	15	10	4.12	Accepted

Source: Survey Data, 2026.

The results in Table 4.3 indicate that respondents generally agree that libraries play a significant role in controlling drug abuse among youths. All the items were accepted, having mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest-rated role was the provision of information on the dangers of drug abuse (Mean = 4.18), followed by youth engagement activities (Mean = 4.13), outreach programmes (Mean = 4.12), promotion of reading habits (Mean = 4.11), awareness

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programmes and collaboration with schools and communities (Mean = 4.10 each), organization of seminars (Mean = 4.09), provision of counselling information (Mean = 4.08), access to library resources (Mean = 4.05), and support for drug prevention campaigns (Mean = 4.03).

The findings suggest that libraries are perceived as important educational and community institutions capable of reducing drug abuse through information dissemination, awareness creation, youth engagement, and collaboration with stakeholders. By providing reliable information resources and constructive learning environments, libraries help equip youths with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions and avoid harmful behaviours.

The findings are in agreement with Ibrahim and Yusuf (2022), who reported that libraries contribute significantly to drug abuse prevention through information literacy programmes and educational campaigns. Similarly, Adeyemi and Ojo (2021) found that regular use of library resources is associated with lower involvement in risky behaviours among students. The findings further support the position of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA, 2023), which emphasizes the role of libraries in promoting lifelong learning, youth empowerment, and community development. Therefore, the results confirm that libraries serve as effective information-based intervention centres in efforts aimed at controlling drug abuse among youths.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that drug abuse among Nigerian youths is a multifaceted social problem influenced by peer pressure, unemployment, curiosity, poor family background, and media exposure. The study further established that drug abuse has severe consequences on youths, including poor academic performance, increased criminal behaviour, mental health challenges, family breakdown, and increased risk of premature death. The findings also revealed that libraries play a significant role in mitigating drug abuse through the provision of relevant information resources, awareness campaigns, youth engagement programmes, and access to educational materials. Therefore, libraries serve as effective information-based intervention centres capable of contributing meaningfully to the prevention of drug abuse among youths in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and educational authorities should strengthen school and public library systems to actively organize regular seminars, workshops, and awareness campaigns on the dangers of drug abuse. Libraries should be adequately funded to enable them carry out community outreach programmes targeted at youths.
2. Libraries should incorporate drug abuse prevention materials such as books, journals, audiovisual content, and digital resources into their collections. In addition, librarians

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should be trained to provide basic information guidance and referrals to counselling or rehabilitation services when necessary.

3. Libraries should collaborate with schools, non-governmental organizations, health agencies, and community leaders to develop coordinated drug prevention programmes. Such partnerships will enhance the effectiveness of awareness campaigns and ensure wider reach among vulnerable youths.

Contributions to Knowledge

This study makes the following contributions to knowledge:

1. The study provides empirical evidence that libraries are not only information centres but also strategic preventive institutions in addressing drug abuse among youths. It expands the role of libraries beyond academic support to include behavioural and social intervention functions.
2. The study establishes a relationship between access to library services and reduced tendency toward drug abuse among youths. This contributes to existing literature by highlighting information access as a protective factor against substance abuse, particularly in the Nigerian context.

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