

## Research Article

# The Roles of Language in Curbing Drugs Abuse among Secondary School Students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja

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### Abstract

This study was aimed at finding out the roles of language in curbing drugs abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja. Descriptive research design was employed in carrying out the study. Questionnaire was the instrument used in collecting data from the Sixty (60) respondents who were teachers in secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja. The study revealed that peer groups influence, cheap and availability of drugs among others were the major causes of drugs abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja while communicating with drug abusers in the language they will understand especially the mother tongue (L1) among others were the possible solutions to drug abuse among secondary school students. The study recommended among others that the government agencies, especially National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and other concerned organizations should intervene and engage in sensitization programmes and establish links with schools in order to bring the menace of drugs abuse under control.

### Introduction

The use of drugs dates back into the pre-history of man. Since time in memorial, Drugs such as herbs, roots, bark trees have been used to relieve pain or cure and control diseases [1]. History tells us that Chinese used Opium as a cure of dysentery before the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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European countries such as Britain and Holland were known to exchange opium growth in their colonies for tea and silk with China [2]. Unfortunately, certain drugs that initially produce effects such as sense of feeling good, elation, serenity and power have evolved into problem of dependence and abuse. Drugs as defined by the World Health Organization as any substance which taken by living organisms may modify the functions of living organism. The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control [3], stated that situations of ill-health provide the compelling need for drugs that is in order to modify the functions of the body and restore it to life. However, the major issue with drugs is not in its use for curative purposes but in the abuse and misuse of these drugs especially when these drugs are psychoactive drugs.

Language, like any other concept, has several definitions. This is, of course, due to the fact that people seem to view things from different perspectives. However, most definitions of language seem to have some similarities. This can be seen in some of the definitions of the concept: "Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words". Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts. Every human on earth speaks one or two languages and this language is the medium through which thought and ideas are pass from one person to another. In order to solve the issues of drugs abuse there is a need to communicate with the abuser in the language they will understand. Language plays important roles in eradicating the acts of drugs abuse as it is the primary channel through which culture of a people are transmitted. In doing this, the abuser will be aware of the consequences of abusing drugs and possible ways of bringing the issue under control.

### Conceptual Framework

#### Language

Language occupies a unique position in the culture of any group of people [4]. Esland opines that language is an important regulator of individual consciousness and social control. It therefore means that language reflects the minds of individuals. It is a viable instrument of expression and communication [5]. While Awoniyi [6] views language as a mother tongue of a speech community, which an individual acquires in early years and which becomes his instrument of thought and communication. It is widely accepted that the best medium of teaching a child is the mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that is in the mind of the child that works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which it belongs. Educationally, the child learns more quickly through the mother tongue than the unfamiliar linguistic medium (Fasold in Daniels [7]). The National Policy on Education [NPE] stipulates among other things that mother-tongue should be the medium or language of instruction in primary and pre-primary schools. With regard to this provision, it should be noted that the government have not made any serious effort to enforce this provision and there is no provision on how government intends to enforce it. What is in practice is

the opposite; English language instead, is the medium of instruction at these levels of education. This practice is against Article 30 of the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child [UNCRC]. It is a contradiction that the policy supports the use of the mother-tongue or language of the immediate community in the education of the child and yet most of the educational institutions do not use the learner's mother-tongue as language of teaching and learning. The majority of parents expressly prefer their children to be taught in English.

Olagoke [8] asserts that lack of mother-tongue education not only creates a barrier between the child and his uneducated parents, but it will cause him to despise the language of his people with high regard to foreign language and its culture. It is language that keeps people's history alive. Culture is transmitted through language, so if a language is lost, it means the people that owns the language is also lost because their belief system, customs, traditions and everything about them will be lost with their language. Moreover, it is believed that the first language has many natural resources rooted in the norms, tradition and culture of people, a rich and predominantly oral culture that can be tapped to ensure maximum understanding. But the children are devoid of whatever the language carries, expect the inevitable.

Drugs which we know, does not originate from Africa, rather is a culture copied from the western world and that account, for how it has been abused especially among secondary school students. In order to bring this menace called drugs abuse among secondary school students under control, there is a need to communicate with these students (children) in the language they will understand especially their mother-tongue. However, the use of these drugs among young people has so much effect on individuals, families and the society at large. The problems range from social, psychological, economical and even political problems. This paper therefore seeks to find out the role of language in curbing drug abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja.

## Drug abuse

The word drug abuse is termed to mean a pattern of use of a drug which is grudged socially or medically harmful because of the unknown origin and quality of the compound, the illegality of distribution, the socially disapproved intention of the seller and the buyer and the harmful effect of the use of the drug on the individual and the society. The drugs of major concern are those that affect the central nervous system, and changes a person's way of thinking, feeling and behaviour. In the word of Fox, Morgan and Sinha [9], drug abuse means non-prescriptive use of psychoactive chemicals to alter the psychological state of individuals which results in altered functions. The World Health Organisation (WHO) [10] defined a drug as any substance that when taken into the living organism, may modify one or more of its functions. It is anything that alters the chemistry of the body or affects the mind [11] while Griffith and Malcolm [12] defined drug abuse as a state psychic and sometimes physical, resulting from the interaction between a living organism and a drug, characterized by behaviour and other responses that always include a compulsion to take more drugs in a continuous basis. It is a substance that by its chemical nature, affects the structure or function of the living organism. Lukoff in Yambo and Acuda [13] suggests that sociological theories which seek to explain drug abuse behaviour are usually inspired by theories of delinquency, criminality or deviant behaviour.

## Causes of drugs abuse

In the course of this study, the researcher found out that the following factors listed below contribute towards drug and substance abuse among secondary school students.

**Peer pressure:** The interest and expectation of the peer groups have an important bearing on whether or not a person will try to use drugs or substances. This is because; peer groups have the largest influence on one's life. A friend or peer group is likely to be the source of Information, for potential drug users about the availability of drugs and their alleageable effects. Peer pressure where each student wants to associate self with the colleagues who use drugs. According to the United Nations [14], drugs user like others people seek approval for their behaviour from the peers, whom they attempt to convince to join them in their habit as a way of seeking acceptance

**Lack of parental control:** Parents have left the work of raising their children to other people. They include house helps who are unable to handle the children appropriately in terms of instilling good behaviour in them. This has led children, particularly the teenagers, to take drugs as they have nobody to 'ask' them. Pudo [15] observed that some parents have lost control even in their children's way of life in what they believe to be the children's democratic rights. The children are left to make hard decisions about their lives, what to do in their free time, the ill talk of the children's teachers in the presence of the students themselves, thus a growing un-collaborative spirit between teachers, students and the parents

**Teachers involvement:** In most schools both private and public, teachers have tended to concentrate on delivery of knowledge in a classroom setting. This leaves students with no time to learn virtues through extra-curriculum activities. Some teachers have also been associated with allowing entry of drugs in schools. Lack of well-organized time management in some schools has left students to utilize the time at their disposal wrongly

**Family influence:** The family especially the parents are the child's basic socializing agent where they are moulded from tender age. A number of students are motivated to copy behaviour of drugs use from parents either smoke or drink alcohol, to the point that some become worse than their parent; much has been said and written about the relationship between the home environment and drug abuse among students. Pudo [15] conceded that children who come from home where parents take drugs tend to be socialized in the field of drugs, also Hirschfeld MJ, Schneekloth TD and Ebbert JO [16] illustrates that parent's attitude towards tobacco, alcohol and other drugs Play a major role in children's behaviour as well as children neglect, divorce or separation of the parents may also lead to drug taking and abuse

**Mass media:** The increase in drugs abuse can be traced to the advertisement of such drugs on our news channels. Our nation is constantly bombarded with mass media messages by way of television, radio, newspapers and online. Most drug advertisement has a very attractive scene. The people in the advertisements are very happy enjoying the drugs. As a result, students take alcohol, for example, to experience what they see or hear on mass media. According to Makinde [17] the advertisements run in the mass media encourage the youth to indulge in drug abuse. Mass media has been blamed for the rising cases of drug abuse in secondary schools and other institutions of higher learning. Advertisements portraying benefits derived from drug use are an important factor that has contributed largely to drug abuse

considering young people are fond of giving every aspect of curiosity a try. Social pressure from media is universal risk factor for drug abuse among students in developed and developing countries [18].

**Availability of drugs:** Availability and cheap cost of drugs is associated with drug abuse. The availability of illegal drugs such as heroin, cocaine and mandrax together with the availability of legal drugs such as cigarettes and alcohol may lead to drug abuse. The ready availability of most drugs appears to be most important cause of prevalence drug use and abuse among Nigerian students. For instance, medicines (drugs) are purchased from chemists even without a physician's prescription. Cheap and unclean alcohol like "burukutu" is readily available among students from the poor population. It was observed that if there is easy access of drugs, a student may decide to abuse them despite the governing rules that prohibit the use of drugs

### Most commonly abused drugs

In Nigeria, concern over the possible increase of drug abuse, especially among students has led to few surveys carried out to ascertain the type of drug abused by student. Kennedy, Epstein, Phillips and Preston [19] list some of the most commonly used drugs as Alcohol, Tobacco, Cannabis and Heroine.

#### Alcohol

Alcohol is the oldest and commonly used drug of abuse. Alcohol is a psycho-active substance but society has allowed the use by the public either socially or medication. In chemical terminology, alcohols are a large group of organic compounds derived from hydrocarbons and containing one or more hydroxyl group. Ethanol (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH, ethyl alcohol) is one of these classes of compounds, and is the main psychoactive ingredient in alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic beverages come in many forms. Kennedy, Epstein, Phillips and Preston [19] reported that alcohol is the most abused drug in the world. Alcohol affects the central nervous system by depressing this impairs the normal functioning of the body taken in large amounts it leads to loss of consciousness. This condition results in impaired speech, drowsiness, and impaired gait, inability to drive, aggression and disorder leading to violence.

Some reasons why Alcohol is the most abused drug given [20] include;

- Alcohol, unlike other drugs, does not have a drastic effect on personal health when consumed moderately
- Alcohol is readily available and it is consumed mainly in pubs and other entertainment centres which have features which students crave for
- It is more acceptable in the society compared to other types of drugs
- Alcohol can easily be sneaked into school without detection, for example when mixed with juice or chocolates

#### Tobacco

Tobacco is the other commonly used drug. Nicotine, present natural in tobacco acts as a stimulant Nicotine affects the central nervous system by increasing alertness. Tobacco comes in many forms, cigarette being the most common. Tobacco can be chewed or smoked in pipes. Snuff is powdered tobacco and can be smoked or sniffed. It has been recognized that 90% of cigarette smoke is made up of tiny

poisonous gases or chemicals said to be 4000 in number. The chemical substances can be classified into three broad categories: Pollutants, Poisonous chemicals, Cancer causing and promoting agents. The effects of smoking have been cited to be dizziness, confusion, increased heart rate and blood pressure. From the study by Maikano and Aminu [21] there exist a correlation between alcohol usage and smoking, thus the reasons for use of tobacco and alcohol are strongly related.

#### Heroine

Heroine is made from morphine which is prepared opium derived from plants of the narcotics class [21]. The effects of heroine are impaired sexual stimulation in male and irregular periods in women. In school going young people and especially girls, prevalence of irregular periods causes anxiety which in turn may impact negatively on students learning behaviour.

#### Cannabis/opium

The plant *Cannabis sativa* is the source of Bhang, hashish and hashish oil. The leaves, flowers, and twigs of the plant are crushed to produce marijuana; its concentrated resin is hashish while an extract of hashish using vegetable oil gives hashish oil. The active ingredient in Bhang is delta 9-Tetrahydrocannabinol-or-THC (THC) in Bhang has been found to have high affinity for the fatty structures. In addition to the brain, Bhang has been found to affect the liver, the respirator, reproductive, and blood cell-systems. Bhang use causes; a state of relaxation, accelerated heart beat rate, perceived slowing of time, and a sense of heightened hearing, taste, touch and smell. It affects the user's psychology through intense anxiety, depression, hallucination being dreamy and forgetfulness [22]. These effects vary depending on the amount of drug consumed and the circumstances under which it is taken. Bhang and hashish are not thought to produce psychological dependence except when taken in large daily doses. The drug can be dangerous, however, especially when smoked before an activity requiring concentration.

#### Effects of drugs abuse

##### Effects of drug abuse on individual

Some people have the ability to use prescription and recreational drugs with little to no hazardous effects while others can become addicted to a particular drug after using it one time. The effects of drug abuse from person, particularly when individual just start consuming certain drug. The effect of drug abuse on individual using inhalants can cause a host of breathing and respiratory problem. There are a wide range of individuals who regularly inhale gasoline, paint, hair spray, and other every product for the sole purpose of getting high, the product usually has a very strong smell, and their vapours often contain a host of chemical. Individuals who inhale drugs can be addicted very quickly. There is a common gas found in most inhalants called butane and this gas has chemical that send message to the brain, when inhaled, butane and other chemical first go to the cerebellum which on the part of the brain that control movement this can initially make the user clumsy and uncoordinated.

**Social effects;** Drugs does not have only physical effects but they have social effects as well, drug abuse can cause individual to isolate depression, drug abuse can negatively affect the relationship that individuals have with those when they love.

- Including their parents and children
- Drug abuse can cause individual to skip important events, miss work and slack off pretty regularly
- Drug abuse can also cause individual to become aggressive, making it difficult for them to make and keep friends
- A person addicted to drug has a difficult time setting goals and often lacks confidence

Regularly using and abusing drugs can also cause the following;

- Lack of motivation
- Feeling of anger and resentment towards others
- Drastic changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Emotional instability
- Desire to experiment with various drugs
- Unwillingness to deal with them to become worse

#### Effect of drugs abuse on parents

When a person has a drug problem, they have a disease that can hurt the parent or family. Drug abuse put a lot stress on parents, brothers and sister's grandparent anyone who is part of the home.

- You cannot count on them to do what they say they will do
- They might lie or steal money to buy drugs
- They might get fired from their jobs
- They might not come home at night
- They may do bad things they would never do if they were not abuse drugs

Family members might fight a lot because of the problems the drugs abuse is causing, the drug user might do and say things that upset neighbors and friends and make the family ashamed.

#### Effects of drugs abuse on government

The federal government and business and community are increasingly recognizing the negative consequences of substance abuse on the economy and the nation's work force. Abuse of drugs and alcohol is costly for our society and left untreated, place a burden on our workplace, our healthcare system and our communities. A number of reports and surveys highlight the detrimental effect substance abuse has on business productivity and competitiveness as it also increases workplace injuries and absenteeism, in 2009, the majority (67%) of current drug users aged 18 or older were employed either full-time (48%) or part-time (19%) with the unemployed accounting for 13% and the remaining 21% not in the labour force. Among full-time workers aged 18 or older nearly one in 12 (8%) reported past month (current) use of an illicit drug in 2009, Unemployed workers were twice as likely one in 2009 to report current drug abuse in 2009. In the same period, full-time who were current drug users were more likely to report missing two or more days to report missing two or more workdays in the past month due to illness or when compared with workers who were not current users (16.4% vs 11.0%).

Full-time workers who were current drug users also were about twice as likely as non-users to skip one or more days of work in the

past month (16.3% vs 8.2%). Students who are not current users of marijuana are more than twice as likely to report an average grade of "A" than those who are current users of marijuana (30.5% vs 12.5%)

#### Effects of drugs abuse on society

- The negative consequence of drug abuse affects not only individuals who abuse drugs but also their families and friends' various business and government resources. Although many of these effects cannot be quantified, ONDCP recently reported that in 2002, the economic cost of drug abuse to the United States was 180.9 billion
- The most obvious effects of drug abuse include ill health, sickness and ultimately, death particularly devastating to an abuser's health is the contraction of needle-borne illnesses including hepatitis and HIV/AIDS through injection drug use.
- NSDUH data indicate that in 2004 over 3.5 million individuals aged 18 and older admitted to having injected and illicit drugs during their lifetime of these individuals, 14 percent were under the age of 25
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 123,235 adults living with AIDS in the United States in 2003 contracted the disease from injection drug use and these persons are less than that for persons who contract AIDS from any other mode of transmission

#### Role of language in curbing drugs abuse

Few things in life have as many different uses as language. Consequently, an attempt at identifying the roles of language is an oversimplification. However, we would attempt to identify some of these roles, with the hope that they would broaden our understanding of the complexity of language. Of course, the functions would give us insight into nothing but the purpose of language, what it does and its uses. Definitely, this would be familiar ground to any reader because language is a part of who we are - as humans. The following are some of the roles:

**Means of communication:** Language, of course, is the major means by which humans communicate. We use it in passing messages from one party to another. This is possible through both speech and writing

**Transmission of culture:** Language is the major vehicle for the transmission of culture from one generation to another. It is through language that we learn the values and norms of our society. It is through language that all the elements of culture are passed on to younger members of a society

**It is a means of thought:** Basically, all human thought is done within the scope of language. We do not seem to have the ability to formulate our thoughts outside the scope of language. Therefore, it is a vehicle of human thought

**Diffusion of knowledge:** Knowledge is passed on through language. It is used for instruction both in formal and informal educational situations. It is used in both schools and homes to spread knowledge

**A cohesive political force:** Language has always been used or relied upon as a cohesive political tool. This is why some languages are sometimes promoted while some are discouraged. An example of this was the prohibition of Basque during the Spanish civil war in the 1930's



It unites people: Language enable people to unite based on linguistic affiliations. We tend to naturally associate with people who share a language with us.

**It is a means of cultural identity:** This is closely related to how it unites people. Human cultural affiliations and identity has always been inseparable from the use of a shared language or some linguistic characteristics between members of a group. This is why people in sub-cultures such as “Area Boys” could be found using language in a peculiar form from that of the larger society

**Existence of society through cooperation:** Human society basically exists because its members have language to facilitate their cooperation. We use it in almost every type of relationship. We use it in the family, at work, in the streets, etc. We use language to move the society forward and eradicate deviant behaviour such as drugs abuse

**Therapeutic function:** Language is used to ease anxiety, tension, fear, worries and pain. A soothing word goes a long way in making one feel better despite the intensity of a situation

**Means of socialization:** We use language in expressing our ideas: - Language enables us to express our ideas, feelings and desires in such a way that is easily understood by others. The characteristics of human language make it possible for it to serve this purpose for whatever feelings, desires or ideas those are to be communicated from one party to another

The cooperation that enables human society to exist and make progress is only possible because of language. After all, our societies would fail without a shared means of communication to enable us cooperate towards sustaining these societies. This is why even the most multilingual societies in the world tend to have some lingua franca by which the speakers of the various languages could cooperate towards the sustenance and advancement of that society.

In finding solution to the problem of drug abuse the causes must be identified. The knowledge of the causes will enable the educationist to design an adequate programme to correct the anomalies. The roles of language in curbing drug abuse cannot be overemphasized as language is a medium of communication and transmission of culture from generation to generation. Language plays a key role in the awareness and sensitization of students on the various consequences of drugs abuse to their general well-being. Some students abused drugs due to ignorance and peer pressure as thus, there is a need for parents to communicate to their children on the kinds of friends they keep and this communication should be in the language that these children will understand. The government also has a role to play in curbing this menace called drug abuse. It is not that the government is not concerned about the plight of its people pertaining to drug abuse, the problem is that the effort is relatively small. One of its efforts is reported by the Lagos state Governor, Navy Captain Okhal Akhigbe in the Daily times of December 3, 1987 that a hospital specially designed for the treatment of drug addicts is to be operative in Lagos.

The hospital which is the first of its kind, would be equipped with modern facilities essential in the treatment of drug related cases to enhance the current national campaign against drug abuse has started to build its 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the hospital complex (pp.7). The abuse and subsequent addiction to hard drugs like cocaine heroin and other psychoactive substances is a relatively new phenomena in the Nigeria drug scene. The government in 1948 as a result of the perceived damage

to country’s (Nigeria) image abroad enacted a decree against possession, sale, production, use, inhalation, smoking or trafficking in any of the substance. This is why there is conflict between the adult and the youth generation. Conclusively, this review shows different authors opinion about drug abuse, various reasons were established for drug misuse and abuse among student, either because of societal complexities, conformity with peer group, depression, frustration, ignorance, deprivation, ineffective study habit escape and quest for identify or to obtain a more pleasing metal state. It will take the government greater efforts in combating and reducing this act into its barest minimum so that it doesn’t continue to spread like wide fire that will eventually engulf the whole land.

## Theoretical framework

### B.F Skinner’s behaviorist perspective

Tackling the issue of drug abuse and role of language from a different perspective was B.F Skinner, the behavioral psychologist. Simply put, the behavioral perspective postulates that everything we do is dictated by our environment and that our behavior is a response to external stimuli through operant conditioning, the process through which behavior changes with positive and negative reinforcement. B.F Skinner theorized that language acquisition is dictated by our environment and the positive or negative reinforcement we receive from it. Parents, for example, enforce correct usage of a word in children with positive facial or verbal reactions.

They play larger roles in our “verbal behavior,” a concept Skinner describes in his book. Verbal behavior introduces the concept of functions to words, as well as meanings. For example, a child may know what to call a toilet, but they must also learn what the use of that word will allow them to acquire or express. They’ve heard their parents say this word, but what happens when they say it? Most likely, their parents take them to it. So, in this case, the most basic function of the word is to express a need to use the bathroom. A pretty important thing to be able to express, wouldn’t you say?

### Piaget’s cognitive development theory

Jean Piaget was another prominent psychologist who offered yet another takes on language acquisition and development. His focus was on child development and the stages children go through to develop and learn. He asserted that children would only be able to fully grasp some concepts within specific developmental stages, due to the fact that certain sections of the brain would only further develop at certain ages. For example, since the sensorimotor area develops first during the first two years of a child’s life, children focus on their immediate surroundings, experimenting with the things around them by playing with them, biting them or throwing them. Throughout this stage, they’ll take things apart, put things back together and explore the concept of things existing in and out of sight. By the end of it all, they’ll be able to visualize things that aren’t there in front of them, which is arguably the most crucial part of this stage when it comes to language and communication. Next comes the preoperational stage in which children are able to develop their imagination and think in slightly more abstract ways. They begin to toy with symbols. They’ll use words in ways that aren’t generally accepted or understood. For example, they may use the word “pillow” to mean “cloth” purely because of the few shared characteristics between the two objects. They do this for egocentric communication. Anyone who’s ever tried to communicate with a two-year-old will know that they aren’t all that interested in other perspectives. They’re too busy trying to explore

their own mind, so don't take it personally. You may have noticed already that these concepts focus less on language and more on cognitive development during childhood and you'd be right. That being said, it's still important to know because Piaget did establish that language plays a huge role in cognitive development, chiefly in the way children use language throughout each stage.

During the sensorimotor stage, children experiment with sounds, and language is mostly about the auditory aspects. They don't care about the meaning; they just like to create sounds. During the pre-operational stage, children use language to express themselves, but they can't really distinguish conversation from pure expression. During the concrete operational stage, children state facts and observations. Finally, during the formal operational stage, children are able to use language to express, discuss and debate abstract concepts.

### Research design

The researcher used a descriptive research survey design in the study. The choice of this research design was considered appropriate because of its advantages of identifying the attributes of a large population from group of individuals. The design was suitable for the study, as the study sought to a critical analysis of the role of language in curbing drug abuse among secondary school students.

### Population and sample

Population of a study is a group of persons or aggregate items; the researcher is interested in getting information on the role of language in curbing drugs abuse among secondary school students. The population of the study comprises of 60 teachers in public secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT, Abuja.

### Instrument for data collection

The research instrument was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to obtain sufficient and relevant information from the respondents. The questionnaire was structured along the four-point Scale of (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (D) Disagree, and (SD) Strongly Disagree. Any items with the means score of 2.50 and above was adjudged agreed while below 2.50 was adjudged disagreed.

### Validity of instrument

The instrument for study was subjected to validation by consulting with the three-research expert. The suggestion made was used in making the necessary improvement of the instrument of the instrument. This was done in order to ensure the face, content and construct validity of the instrument and to also ensure that the items of the questionnaire adequately covered the research questions for the study.

### Reliability of instrument

A pilot study was carried out in Government Day Secondary School, Gwagwalada using Ten (10) teachers. The result of the pilot test produced an index value of 0.84 which showed that the instrument was adequate for the study.

### Data collection procedure

The researcher visited the selected sampled schools and administered the instrument. The instrument was distributed to teachers in their various schools with the help of a research assistant. The instrument was administered by the researcher who retrieved them on the

spot. Data obtained from the administration of the questionnaire was collected for further analysis.

### Method of data analysis

The data collected was not an end in itself but it served as a means to an end. The data collected was analysed for meaningful interpretation. It is for this reason that the following methods were adopted in the research project for the analysis of the data collected. For a comprehensive analysis of data collected, emphasis was laid on the means score, frequency counts and percentages. A decision rule was made that a mean score is 2.50 and above was adjudged to be agreed and accepted, while is 2.49 and below was adjudged by the researcher to be disagreed (unaccepted).

### Data analysis

#### Research question one: What are the various causes of Drugs Abuse? (Table 1)

N=60							
S/no	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean Score	Decision
1.	Peer pressure influences drug abuse among secondary students	15	23	12	10	2.72	Agreed
2.	Drug abuse among students may be due to parental behaviour e.g parent smoking	21	16	11	12	2.77	Agreed
3.	Cheap and availability of drugs causes drugs abuse among students.	13	31	12	04	2.88	Agreed
4.	Frustration at home	14	25	15	06	2.78	Agreed
5.	The mass media can lead students to drug abuse	31	12	15	02	3.20	Agreed
6.	Indiscipline among students may lead to drug abuse	27	13	05	15	2.87	Agreed
7.	School failure may also be a factor that influences drug abuse secondary school students	11	24	13	12	2.57	Agreed
Overall Mean Score						2.83	Agreed

**Table 1:** Various causes of drugs abuse

Table 1, above with the overall mean score of 2.83 presented the various causes of drugs abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja. From the analysis it was discovered that over average of the respondents agreed to all the items in table 1 as some of the major causes of drugs abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja which is in line with the decision rules that 2.50 and above be accepted and below be rejected.

#### Research question two: What are the roles of language in curbing Drugs Abuse? (Table 2)

Table 2, above with the overall mean score of 2.89 presented the language in curbing drugs abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja. From the analysis it was discovered that over average of the respondents agreed to all the items

in table 2 as some of the major roles of language in curbing drugs abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja which is in line with the decision rules that 2.50 and above be accepted and below be rejected.

N=60							
S/no	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean Score	Decision
1.	Means of Communication	23	17	15	05	2.97	Agreed
2.	Transmission of Culture	24	13	11	12	2.82	Agreed
3.	It is a means of thought	17	21	15	07	2.80	Agreed
4.	Diffusion of Knowledge	22	19	11	08	2.92	Agreed
5.	Usage of appropriate languages on mass media can curb drug abuse	21	20	15	06	3.00	Agreed
6.	Using mother tongue in counselling of students can curb drug abuse	25	15	10	10	2.92	Agreed
7.	Language is used to ease anxiety, tension, fear, worries and pain. A soothing word goes a long way in making one feel better despite the intensity of a situation.	20	18	12	10	2.80	Agreed
	Overall Mean Score					2.89	Agreed

**Table 2:** Roles of language in curbing drugs abuse.

## Findings

The study revealed the following findings:

- Peer pressure influences drug abuse among secondary students, drug abuse among students may be due to parental behaviour e.g., parent smoking, cheap and availability of drugs causes drugs abuse among students, frustration at home, the mass media can lead students to drug abuse, indiscipline among students may lead to drug abuse and school failure may also be a factor that influences drug abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja
- Means of communication, transmission of culture, means of thought, diffusion of knowledge, usage of appropriate languages on mass media can curb drug abuse and language is used to ease anxiety, tension, fear, worries and pain were some of the roles of language

## Discussion

Items in table 1 were structured to determine the various causes of drugs abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja. From the findings it was discovered that peer pressure, parental behaviour such as parent smoking, cheap and availability of drugs, frustration at home, the mass media, indiscipline

among students and school failure as some of the major causes of drug abuse among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT-Abuja. This finding is in line with the findings of Oluremi, [22] who revealed that one of the major causes of drug abuse is peer groups influence that is curiosity arising by conforming to group behaviour (age mates and friends) who motivate others to take drugs. Maikano, et al., [21] conceded that young people are curious and like having fun. Therefore, some take drugs as a discovery of their effects. In addition; other youth take drugs to produce thrills that in their normal state could not do it. He added that the peer pressure plays a big role in luring young people into drug abuse. The more peers talk about drugs the more the person is tempted to try to see whether it is true from what is being said. Mass media influence through advertisements in radio, television sets, newspapers and magazines on beer, cigarettes and spirits encourage the youth to indulge in drug abuse.

Language as a means of communication, transmission of culture, means of thought, diffusion of knowledge, usage of appropriate languages on mass media can curb drug abuse and language is used to ease anxiety, tension, fear, worries and pain were some of the roles of language. These findings are in line with the findings of Daniels [7] who asserted that language is a means of identification among the members of the community to which it belongs. Educationally, the child learns more quickly through the mother tongue than the unfamiliar linguistic medium as thus, can be used to curb drugs abuse.

## Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- The government agencies, especially National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and other concerned organizations should intervene and engage in sensitization programmes and establish links with schools in order to bring the menace of drug abuse under control
- Teaching what constitute drug abuse and the effects of such behaviour on the individual and family through mother tongue should be part of the school curriculum from primary to tertiary institutions. The essence is to dispel ignorance on the part of the youths who are parents of tomorrow and encourage them to imbibe positive attitude and keep good company both at home and at school
- Parents and school teachers should make deliberate effort to instil high moral standard in their children/students and ensure they monitor or advise them on the kind of friends they should or shouldn't hang out with in the community, as doing so will help reduce drug abuse behaviour among secondary school students

## Conclusion

Drug use among students with multiple risk factors is more likely to lead to addiction and affects their academic standing. Other risk factors could include depression, navigating major life changes or living in a familial community setting where drug use is prevalent. The people students associate with and how they behave are often visible indicators of risk for trying drugs as well as possible signs of current drug use. Advanced brain scan imaging has proven that, the human brain is not fully developed at puberty as previously thought with maturation occurring as late as 24 years of age. While each drug

produces different physical effects, all abused substance shares one thing in common: repeated use of any drug can alter the way the brain looks and functions. Common effects of drug use on the brain that impact academic learning includes;

- Difficulty in concentrating
- Inability to process information and
- Problems with working memory

Drug abuse has so many effects, and it affects the academic performance of a child, social life, psychological, physical and so many more.

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