



## **Secondary School Students' Knowledge and Attitude towards Drug Abuse in Anambra State Nigeria.**

*Nnaemezie, Nkiru Onyinyechukwu<sup>1</sup> and Juliana Chimezie Nwangwu<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Health Promotion and Public Health Education, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka  
[no.nnaemezie@unizik.edu.ng](mailto:no.nnaemezie@unizik.edu.ng)

### **ABSTRACT**

Drug abuse is a public health concern that affects individuals, families and communities. It is associated with a range of negative consequences including physical and mental health problems, social and economic problems and also legal problems. The purpose of this study was to find out Secondary School Students Knowledge and attitude towards drug abuse in Anambra State. A descriptive Research Design was used, six research questions and hypotheses guided the Study. 215 sample were selected randomly from four secondary schools in Orumba South Local Government Area. Self-administered structured knowledge and Attitude Test Questionnaire was used for data collection. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Kuder Richard (K-R20) method for knowledge test and the value was 0.8, on the other hand, Cronbach Alpha's internal consistency measure was used to establish the reliability of the Attitude questions on a five-point scale of SD, D, N, and SA. Reliability coefficient was 0.925. The data collected was Analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 25, mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Results of the findings showed that majority (87.74%) of the students are knowledgeable about drug abuse, Students of both sexes were knowledgeable about drug abuse. The students mean Attitude towards drug abuse was (37.64%), result revealed that the students lack in-depth knowledge of drug abuse. Recommendations: Ministry of Education (Federal and State), should include drug education to the students curriculum for both primary and secondary school, along with lectures, seminars, rallies and film shows for the youths and adolescents on the adverse effects of illicit drug use on the students' academic performance, health and personality. Legislation guiding the sales of drug is enforced. The public should be enlightened about drug abuse and the sales of drug seriously monitored.

**(KEYWORD: DRUG ABUSE, KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE)**

### **Introduction**

Drug abuse is a public health concern that affects individuals, families and communities. It is associated with a range of negative consequences including physical and mental health problems, social and economic problems and also legal problems. Although the history of drug use is centuries old during mid-1960s a widespread introduction of marijuana, and subsequently other illicit drugs, occurred among the young. Since the first experience with drugs occur most frequently at the age of mid adolescence that is between 15 and 19 years (Hotujac, Sagud and Hotujac 2021).

Attending school is a major part of a young person's life. About a quarter of each weekday is spent at school more, if someone participates in extra-curricular activities. A positive school experience isn't just about receiving a high-quality academic education; it's also about belonging to a community which has a warm, inclusive and supportive culture. School is a place to meet new people, make friends, form social circle and try out new hobbies and other activities.

Having good relationships with peers, teachers, sports coaches and other staff, such as school counselors and nurses can impact a young person's development. Feeling a sense of belonging and connection to a school, and having positive role models, can help to protect young people from experiencing harm from alcohol and other drugs. A whole school approach includes policies and plans for the management of any alcohol or other drug-related incidents. While emphasizing the school's commitment to preventing harm, this approach works alongside evidence-based drug education in the classroom.

Drug education usually focuses on influencing students' values, attitudes, knowledge and skills so they make healthier decisions about alcohol and other drugs. There are principles that guide best-practice drug education. Young people need to get the facts around drug use so that they don't believe everyone else is doing it. Lessons should focus on the most commonly used drugs that young people are more likely to be exposed to, which are alcohol, tobacco and cannabis. There are also some education approaches that are not recommended such as lecture-style lessons with little or no student's engagement, one-off presentations that aren't linked with the curriculum, scare tactics that makes inaccurate statements or exaggerate potential harm. Educators should be cautious not to inadvertently glamorize or present alcohol or drug use as exciting or an adventure-even a frightening one. It's best to avoid using language or images that stigmatize people who use drugs, such as describing people who use drugs as 'dirty' or showing extreme images

of people who may have used drugs. Students might have a family member who has experienced dependence or might have need help themselves. Having drug use stigmatized in the classroom may mean they feel too ashamed to ask for support. Knowledge is experience, Knowledge is information in action (Dell and Grayson 2018). Knowledge is information given meaning and integrated with other contents of understanding (Bates, 2020).

According to Webster's Dictionary, (2020) knowledge is the fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association. Prakash (2019) defines knowledge as familiarity or awareness of someone or something such as facts, skills or an object contributing to one's understanding. The longman Dictionary of contemporary English (2021) defines attitude as feelings or thinking about someone or something especially as this influence one's behaviour. According to Freeman (2020), an attitude is a dispositional readiness to respond to certain institutions, persons or objects in a consistent manner which has been learned and has become one's typical mode of response. Thurstone (2021) described attitude as the total of man's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and other any specific topic.

Anastasi (2020), defined attitude as tendency to react favourably or unfavourably towards a designated class of stimuli such as a national or racial group a custom or an institution. These responses could be positive or negative or neutral views of an attitude object. It is also a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like and dislike for an item or issues. This could be achieved through drug education programme in secondary schools. Drug education would help to develop in the students' positive attitude towards drugs and use of drugs. Knowledge and attitude of students may be influenced by variables like gender and school type. The interaction between the independent variable and dependent variable would likely influence the knowledge and attitude of the students. Gender means whether male or female could affect the knowledge and attitude of students. Another variable of interest is school type whether private or public school from the look of things, it is assumed that students in the public schools might have better knowledge due to the presence of qualified teachers available to teach them and they might have be the ones coming from homes where elderly people reside than students in private schools. Students need knowledge on drug abuse, in order to maintain a responsible personality in the future. It is essential for achieving a quality of life. It also promotes knowledge and change in attitude and behaviour of the students. It also helps the students become adaptive and be able to handle stress and disaster (Grat, 2021). Through drug education, school could constructively help people to develop a coping skill about drugs. It is also important to educate not only the students about drug abuse but also to educate their parents about the importance of drug education for the students. Therefore, if drugs and drug abuse related issues is to be combated, the knowledge and attitude of young people need to be more positively constructed so that they would not hold on to illicit drugs at their difficult situations (Johns 2021). For the present generation to understand and appreciate the implications of drug abuse, instruction on drug education must be fixed early enough in their curricular at school. It is against this background that this study has been designed to determine the Secondary School Students Knowledge and Attitude towards drug abuse, with a view to promoting the quality of life and living of the students.

There is also the tendency for increase in anti-social acts and behavioural problems among Secondary Students in and outside the school. This is with a view to suggesting possible ways of curbing and reducing drug abuse among this vulnerable but very significant group of people in our society. In order to address some of these problems faced by students in Orumba South and in relation to drug and drug abuse, this study was designed to determine the Secondary School Students Knowledge and Attitude towards drug abuse in Anambra State.

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## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the Secondary School Students Knowledge and Attitude towards drug abuse in Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined the:

1. Level of knowledge of secondary school students towards drug abuse in Anambra State.
2. Level of knowledge of secondary school students towards drug abuse based on their gender.
3. Level of knowledge of drug abuse in secondary schools in Anambra State based on private and public schools.
4. Attitude of secondary school students towards drug abuse in Anambra State.
5. Attitude of secondary school students towards drug abuse based on their gender.
6. Attitude of drug abuse in secondary schools in Anambra State based on private and public schools.

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## Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

- (1) What is the level of knowledge of secondary school students towards drug abuse in Anambra State? ?
- (2) What is the level of knowledge of secondary school students towards drug abuse based on their gender?
- (3) What is the level of knowledge of drug abuse in secondary schools in Anambra State based on private and public schools?
- (4) What is the attitude of secondary school students towards drug abuse in Anambra State?
- (5) What is the attitude of secondary school students towards drug abuse based on their gender?

- (6) What is the attitude of drug abuse in secondary schools in Anambra State based on private and public schools?

## Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean test scores of secondary school students on their knowledge level towards drug abuse in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean test scores of secondary school students on their knowledge level on drug abuse based on gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean test scores of secondary school knowledge level of drug abuse in Anambra State based on private and public schools.
4. There is no significant difference in the mean test scores of secondary school students on their attitude towards drug abuse in Anambra State.
5. There is no significant difference in the mean test scores attitude of secondary school students towards drug abuse based on their gender.
6. There is no significant difference in the mean test scores attitude of drug abuse in secondary schools in Anambra State based on private and public schools.

## METHODS

This study adopted Descriptive Research Design. The area of the Study is Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The population of this study consisted of 1128 Students of the four secondary schools in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra state. The sample of the Study consisted of 215 Students from the four secondary schools selected in Orumba South Local Government Area. Simple random sample procedure was used to select the school to be included in the study. The Instrument for data collection was Drug Abuse knowledge and Attitude Test Questionnaire (DAKATQ). Knowledge test was tested using Kuder Richard (K-R 20) method and the value was 0.8, on the other hand, Cronbach Alpha's internal consistency measure was used to establish the reliability of the attitude questions on a five-point scale of SD, D, N, A and SA. Reliability coefficient was 0.925 which was very high therefore it was acceptable for use. The data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25. Frequency, mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

### Research Question 1

What is the level of knowledge of Secondary school students on drug abuse in Anambra State?

**Table 1**

*Mean Drug Abuse Knowledge Score of Secondary School Students in Anambra State*

	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Percentage Drug Abuse Knowledge Scores	215	87.74	9.69	Very High

### Research Question 2

What is the level of knowledge of secondary school students on drug abuse based on their gender?

**Table 2**

*Drug Abuse Knowledge Scores of Secondary Schools in Anambra State based on gender*

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Male	128	88.01	8.24	Very High
Female	87	87.40	11.54	Very High
Total	215	87.74	9.70	Very High

### Research Question 3

What is the level of knowledge of secondary school students on drug abuse based on school type (Private and Public)?

**Table 3**

*Drug Abuse Knowledge Scores of Secondary Schools in Anambra State based on School type*

School type	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Public	108	88.38	9.86	Very High
Private	107	87.10	9.52	Very High
Total	215	87.74	9.69	Very High

**Research Question 4**

What is the attitude of secondary school students towards drug abuse in Anambra State?

**Table 4***Mean Attitude to Drug Abuse of Secondary School Students in Anambra State*

	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Attitude to Drug Abuse	215	37.64	4.91	Negative

**Research Question 5**

What is the attitude of secondary school students on drug abuse based on their gender?

**Table 5***Mean Drug Abuse Attitude Scores of Secondary Schools in Anambra State by Gender*

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Male	128	37.98	5.19	Negative
Female	87	37.12	4.45	Negative
Total	215	37.64	4.91	Negative

**Research Question 6**

What is the attitude of secondary school students on drug abuse based on school type (Private and Public)?

**Table 6***Drug Abuse Mean Attitude Scores of Secondary Schools**in Anambra state based on school type*

School type	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Public	108	37.07	4.45	Negative
Private	107	38.21	5.29	Negative
Total	215	37.63	4.91	Negative

**Hypothesis 1**

Mean knowledge on drug abuse of secondary school students in Anambra state will not differ significantly from average.

**Table 7.***One Sample t-test Comparison of Mean Drug Abuse Knowledge of Male and Female Secondary School Students in Anambra State and Average Score*

	N	Mean	SD	Test value	df	T	p	Decision
Drug Abuse Knowledge Scores	215	87.74	8.24	50	214	57.13	0.00	S*

**Hypothesis 2**

There will be no significant difference in the mean drug abuse knowledge of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State.

**Table 8.*****t*-test Comparison of Mean Drug Abuse Knowledge of Male and Female Secondary School Students in Anambra State**

		Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	p	Decision
Drug Abuse Knowledge Scores	Male		128	88.00	8.24	213	0.50	0.63	NS*
	Female		87	87.35	11.53				

\*Not Significant

**Hypothesis 3**

Students in public secondary schools and those in private secondary schools will not differ significantly in their drug abuse mean knowledge scores.

**Table 9.*****t*-test Comparison of Mean Drug Abuse Knowledge of Students in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State**

		School type	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P	Decision
Drug Abuse Knowledge Scores	Public		108	88.40	9.86	213	1.00	0.34	NS
	Private		107	87.10	9.52				

**Hypothesis 4**

Mean Attitude to drug abuse of secondary school students in Anambra state will not differ significantly from average.

**Table 10.*****One Sample t*-test Comparison of Mean Attitude to Drug Abuse Knowledge of Secondary School Students in Anambra State and Scale Average**

	N	Mean	SD	Test value	df	t	p	Decision
Attitude to Drug Abuse	215	37.83	4.91	42	214	-13.04	0.00	S*

**Hypothesis 5**

Male and female secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly in their mean attitude to drug abuse.

**Table 11*****t*-test Comparison of Mean Attitude to Drug Abuse of Male and Female Secondary School Students in Anambra State**

		Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	T	p	Decision
Attitude to Drug Abuse	Male		128	38.00	5.19	213	1.28	0.20	NS
	Female		87	37.11	4.44				

**Hypothesis 6**

Students in public secondary schools and those in private secondary schools will not differ significantly in their mean attitude to drug abuse.

**Table 12.*****t*-test Comparison of Mean Attitude to Drug Abuse of Students in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State**

		School types	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p	Decision
Attitude on Drug Abuse	Public		108	37.07	4.41	213	1.71	0.10	NS
	Private		107	38.21	5.30				

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## Discussion

### Knowledge of Drug Abuse

The result from this study research question 1, showed that all the students are knowledgeable about drug abuse. Students have a basic understanding of the nature of drug substance/abuse. All the participants considered themselves knowledgeable about drug use. A sizeable number agreed that using drugs is bad for a person's health. The findings of this study is in line with the findings of Parajuli (2022), which revealed that 99.1% of the respondents heard about drug abuse, 97.9% said drug abuse is bad for health; therefore, the students had good knowledge of drug abuse.

### Attitude of Students towards Drug Abuse

Result showed that all the participants who are knowledgeable about drug abuse had negative attitude towards drug abuse. This is in line with the findings of Nagafa (2022), which revealed that the students from college and secondary schools had negative attitude towards drug abuse and participation in prevention programs. This indicated that they need much information and guidance on the use of drugs from governmental and non-governmental organizations to promote their health. The null hypothesis of no significant difference in mean attitude score was not rejected.

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## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that majority of secondary school students in Anambra State had high level knowledge of drug abuse. Both male and female Students, public and private secondary schools in Anambra State are knowledgeable about drug abuse. Despite known risks associated with illicit drugs, Students in Anambra State still had negative attitude towards drug abuse.

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## Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusion of the study, the researcher, therefore recommends that

1. Ministry of Education (Federal and State), should include drug education to the students curriculum from both primary and secondary schools, along with lectures, seminars rallies and film shows for the youths and adolescents on the adverse effects of illicit drug use on the students' academic performance, health and personality.
2. Legislation guiding the sales of drugs be enforced, the public should be enlightened about drug use and the sale of drugs seriously monitored.
3. Teachers should encourage and advice the Students on the dangers of using illicit drugs.
4. Parents should monitor their children/wards and address issues relating to drug abuse.

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