

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING DRUG ABUSE AMONG STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

This study examined guidance and counselling as a strategy for preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two objectives: to examine guidance and counselling strategies employed in preventing drug abuse among students and to determine the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study is 13,758 which comprised students and staff of guidance and counseling of selected tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. A sample size of 400 respondents was selected using a simple random sampling technique, out of which 371 questionnaires were duly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 92.75%. The Statistical package for the social science (SPSS) was used to determine the reliability and item consistency index from Cronbach Alpha. From the test conducted, the internal consistency coefficient obtained is 0.70 this mean that the instrument was reliable and internally consistent for the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, while the hypotheses were tested using Chi-square statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that guidance and counselling strategies such as seminars, orientation programmes, individual counselling, group counselling, peer counselling, awareness campaigns, and referral services are widely employed in tertiary institutions to prevent drug abuse among students. The hypotheses tested indicated that there is a significant relationship between guidance and counselling strategies and the prevention of drug abuse among students. The study concluded that guidance and counselling play a vital role in preventing drug abuse among students and contribute significantly to creating a healthy academic environment. It was recommended that tertiary institutions should strengthen counselling units, employ qualified counsellors, and organize regular drug abuse awareness programmes to enhance students' well-being and academic success.

Keywords: Guidance and Counselling, Drug Abuse, Prevention, Students and Tertiary Institutions

Introduction

Drug abuse has become one of the most serious social, health, and educational challenges confronting tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The increasing involvement of students in the consumption of psychoactive substances such as cannabis, tramadol, codeine, alcohol, tobacco, cocaine, and other illicit drugs has generated concern among educators, parents, counsellors, and policymakers (Aremu, 2018). Drug abuse refers to the excessive, improper, or non-medical use of substances that alter an individual's physical, psychological, and emotional functioning. Among students, drug abuse often begins as experimentation but may eventually lead to dependency, addiction, poor academic performance, health complications, and social maladjustment. Studies have shown that drug abuse among undergraduates is associated with impaired social competence, poor academic achievement, school dropout, criminal tendencies, and reduced productivity (Solomon, Amu, Ajayi, Solomon, & Adeosun, 2024).

Globally, substance abuse among young people has continued to pose a major public health challenge. University and college students constitute one of the most vulnerable groups because of their developmental stage, exposure to peer influence, academic pressure, curiosity, and desire for social acceptance (Aremu, 2018). In Nigeria, the problem has assumed alarming dimensions as reports indicate increasing use of psychoactive substances among students in tertiary institutions. Factors such as peer pressure, poverty, family instability, unemployment, easy access to drugs, poor parental supervision, and emotional stress have been identified as major contributors to drug abuse among youths. Research conducted in different parts of Nigeria has revealed a high prevalence of substance use among tertiary institution students. Commonly abused substances include alcohol, cannabis, tramadol, codeine-containing cough syrups, tobacco, and other non-prescription drugs. Students often engage in drug abuse to cope with academic stress, improve concentration, overcome emotional difficulties, or gain acceptance among peers. Unfortunately, these perceived benefits are usually short-lived and are often accompanied by adverse consequences such as poor academic performance, psychological disorders, violent behavior, health deterioration, and involvement in antisocial activities (Ibobor, Owoyemi, Gomment & Yunusa, 2024).

According to Isola, Onigbinde, David, & Akpati (2024), the consequences of drug abuse among students extend beyond individual users to affect educational institutions and society at large. Drug abuse has been linked to examination malpractice, cultism, campus violence, risky sexual behavior, absenteeism, and school dropout. It also places significant pressure on families and educational administrators who struggle to maintain discipline and academic standards within institutions. Furthermore, substance abuse undermines national development by reducing the quality of human resources available for economic and social progress. In response to the growing menace of drug abuse, various intervention strategies have been

adopted by government agencies, educational institutions, religious organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Among these strategies, guidance and counselling services have emerged as a vital preventive and corrective mechanism. Guidance and counselling involve professional assistance provided to individuals to help them understand themselves, make informed decisions, solve personal and social problems, and develop positive behaviors. Within tertiary institutions, counsellors are expected to assist students in coping with academic, social, emotional, and behavioral challenges that may predispose them to drug abuse (Aremu, 2018).

According to Uwadia, Fadipe, Kayode & Oluwole (2024), Guidance and counselling services contribute to drug abuse prevention through awareness creation, orientation programmes, individual counselling, group counselling, peer counselling, behavior modification techniques, and referral services. Counsellors educate students about the dangers associated with substance abuse and help them develop healthy coping strategies for dealing with stress, anxiety, frustration, and peer influence. They also identify students who are at risk of substance abuse and provide timely intervention before the problem escalates. Through counselling sessions, students are encouraged to adopt positive lifestyles and make responsible decisions regarding their health and well-being. Despite the recognized importance of guidance and counselling services, drug abuse continues to persist among students in many Nigerian tertiary institutions. This situation raises questions regarding the effectiveness, accessibility, and utilization of counselling services within these institutions (Soremekun, Omole, Caleb & Abayomi, 2021). In Adamawa State, which hosts several tertiary institutions including universities, colleges of education, and polytechnics, concerns have been expressed about increasing cases of substance abuse among students. Reports of students' involvement in the misuse of tramadol, cannabis, alcohol, and other psychoactive substances suggest the need for more effective preventive measures. However, empirical studies examining the role of guidance and counselling in preventing drug abuse among tertiary institution students in Adamawa State remain limited. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine guidance and counselling as a strategy for preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study is expected to provide insights into the effectiveness of counselling services and suggest ways of strengthening guidance programmes to promote healthy and drug-free lifestyles among students.

Statement of the Problem

Drug abuse has become a major social and educational challenge in Nigerian tertiary institutions, affecting students' academic performance, mental health, behavior, and overall well-being. Despite government policies, awareness campaigns, and institutional regulations aimed at controlling substance abuse, the prevalence of drug use among students continues to rise. Reports from different parts of Nigeria indicate

increasing misuse of substances such as cannabis, tramadol, codeine, alcohol, tobacco, and other psychoactive drugs among young people in higher institutions (Njoku, Ajaraogu, Eke, Erundu, & OtuuOko, 2022). This trend has generated concern among educators, parents, counsellors, and policymakers because of its negative consequences on students and society at large. Students in tertiary institutions are particularly vulnerable to drug abuse due to factors such as peer pressure, academic stress, curiosity, family problems, emotional instability, unemployment, and easy access to drugs. Many students resort to substance use as a means of coping with academic demands, social expectations, and personal challenges. Unfortunately, drug abuse often leads to poor academic achievement, examination malpractice, absenteeism, health complications, violent behavior, and involvement in antisocial activities. It also undermines the educational goals of tertiary institutions by reducing students' productivity, discipline, and capacity for meaningful learning (Njoku et al, 2022).

Guidance and counselling services are expected to play a significant role in addressing students' personal, social, emotional, and behavioral problems, including drug abuse. Through awareness creation, individual and group counselling, peer counselling, orientation programmes, and referral services, counsellors can help students develop healthy coping mechanisms and make informed decisions about substance use. Effective counselling interventions can also identify students at risk and provide early support before drug abuse escalates into addiction or other serious problems. However, despite the existence of guidance and counselling units in many tertiary institutions, drug abuse among students remains persistent. In Adamawa State, concerns have been raised about the increasing involvement of students in the misuse of psychoactive substances, particularly tramadol, cannabis, alcohol, and other illicit drugs. This situation suggests that existing preventive measures may not be sufficiently effective or adequately utilized by students. In some institutions, counselling services may be underfunded, poorly staffed, inaccessible, or not fully integrated into student support systems (Olorunlogbon, Adetunkasi, Olusegun, & Olorunlogbon, 2025). Additionally, students may lack awareness of the availability and importance of counselling services, thereby limiting their utilization.

Although several studies have examined the causes and effects of drug abuse among youths in Nigeria, there is limited empirical evidence specifically focusing on the role of guidance and counselling as a preventive strategy among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The extent to which counselling services contribute to reducing drug abuse, the challenges facing counsellors, and the effectiveness of current counselling strategies remain insufficiently explored. It is on the bases of this that the study seeks to investigate guidance and counselling as a strategy for preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine guidance and counselling as a strategy for preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. However, the specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the guidance and counselling strategies employed in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.
- ii. Assess students' perception of the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

- i. What guidance and counselling strategies are employed in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria?
- ii. How effective are guidance and counselling services in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling strategies and the prevention of drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.
- H₀₂:** Guidance and counselling services do not have a significant effect on the prevention of drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling are essential services in educational institutions designed to assist individuals in understanding themselves, developing their potentials, making appropriate decisions, and solving personal, educational, vocational, and social problems (Aremu, 2018). Guidance refers to the process of helping individuals make informed choices and adjust effectively to their environment, while counselling involves a professional relationship through which trained counsellors assist individuals in addressing personal, emotional, social, and behavioral challenges (Akinade, 2016). In tertiary institutions, guidance and counselling services play a significant role in helping students cope with academic stress, career uncertainty, peer pressure, emotional difficulties, and other developmental challenges. These services contribute to students' holistic development by promoting healthy lifestyles and positive decision-making.

According to Okobiah and Okorodudu (2018), guidance and counselling provide preventive, developmental, and remedial services aimed at enhancing students' adjustment and academic success. Guidance and counselling services in higher institutions include orientation programmes, information services, appraisal services, referral services, individual counselling, group counselling, and follow-up services. These services are designed to help students understand the consequences of negative behaviors such as drug abuse and encourage them to adopt positive alternatives.

Concept of Drug Abuse

Drug abuse refers to the inappropriate, excessive, or illegal use of substances that alter the normal functioning of the body and mind. It involves the use of drugs without medical prescription or in a manner inconsistent with accepted medical guidelines (Isola et al, 2024). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2023) defines drug abuse as the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. Drug abuse among students has become a major concern because of its adverse effects on academic performance, physical health, emotional stability, and social relationships. Commonly abused substances among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions include cannabis, tramadol, codeine, alcohol, tobacco, cocaine, heroin, and amphetamine-related substances (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime UNODC, 2023). The misuse of these substances often results in addiction, mental health disorders, poor academic achievement, absenteeism, examination malpractice, school dropout, violence, and criminal activities. Drug abuse not only affects individual students but also creates broader social and educational challenges.

Causes of Drug Abuse among Students

According to Ibabor et, al, (2024) several factors contribute to drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions. One of the most prominent causes is peer pressure. Students often associate with friends who influence them to experiment with drugs in an attempt to gain acceptance or social recognition. Another significant factor is academic stress. Many students use stimulants and other substances in an effort to improve concentration and cope with academic demands. Family instability, poor parental supervision, poverty, curiosity, media influence, and easy accessibility of drugs have also been identified as major determinants of substance abuse among students (Ishola et al., 2024). Furthermore, emotional problems such as anxiety, depression, frustration, and low self-esteem may predispose students to drug use as a coping mechanism. In some cases, unemployment and societal pressures contribute to increased drug abuse among young people.

Effects of Drug Abuse among Students

Drug abuse has devastating consequences on students and educational institutions. Academically, it reduces concentration, memory retention, and learning ability, leading to poor performance and school dropout. Students who abuse drugs are more likely to engage in examination malpractice and other unethical practices (Oshodi et al., 2019). Physically, drug abuse can result in liver damage, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory disorders, and other health complications. Psychologically, it may lead to depression, anxiety, hallucinations, and mental instability (UNODC, 2023). Socially, drug abuse contributes to violence, cultism, sexual promiscuity, criminal behavior, and strained family relationships (WHO, 2023). These negative outcomes hinder students' personal development and threaten the overall objectives of tertiary education.

Guidance and Counselling Strategies for Preventing Drug Abuse

Guidance and counselling provide effective strategies for preventing drug abuse among students. One important strategy is orientation programmes, which educate newly admitted students about the dangers of substance abuse and the benefits of healthy living (Oshodi et al., 2019). Another strategy is individual counselling, where counsellors assist students in identifying personal problems and developing positive coping mechanisms. Through confidential counselling sessions, students receive support in managing emotional and academic challenges without resorting to drugs (Uwadia et al., 2024). Group counselling is also effective in promoting peer support and encouraging behavioral change. Counsellors use group discussions to educate students about the consequences of drug abuse and to develop resistance skills against peer pressure. Awareness campaigns, seminars, workshops, and peer counselling programmes are additional strategies commonly employed in tertiary institutions. These interventions help students gain knowledge about drug abuse and strengthen their ability to make informed decisions (Uwadia et al., 2024). Referral services are equally important. Students experiencing severe substance abuse problems may be referred to healthcare professionals, psychologists, or rehabilitation centers for specialized treatment and support.

Role of Guidance and Counselling in Drug Abuse Prevention

According to Uwadia, et, al (2024) guidance and counselling play preventive, developmental, and remedial roles in addressing drug abuse among students. Preventively, counsellors educate students on the dangers associated with drug use and equip them with life skills necessary for making responsible choices. Developmentally, counselling services promote self-awareness, self-esteem, decision-making abilities, and

emotional resilience. These qualities help students resist negative influences and cope effectively with life challenges. Remedially, counsellors provide support to students who have already developed substance abuse problems. Through counselling interventions, students are assisted in overcoming addiction and reintegrating into academic and social life. According to Egbo (2020), effective guidance and counselling programmes contribute significantly to reducing behavioral problems and promoting positive adjustment among students.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Social Learning Theory developed by Albert Bandura in 1977. The theory posits that human behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and interaction with others. According to Bandura (1977), individuals acquire behaviors by observing role models and the consequences associated with those behaviors. Learning occurs through attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. The theory emphasizes that environmental influences play a significant role in shaping behavior. Students may learn drug-abuse behaviors from peers, family members, media personalities, or other social agents. Likewise, positive behaviors can be learned through exposure to appropriate role models and counselling interventions (Bandura, 1977). Guidance and counselling services provide opportunities for students to learn positive behaviors, develop resistance skills, and modify harmful habits. Through counselling sessions, students acquire knowledge and coping strategies that discourage drug abuse. The Social Learning Theory is relevant to this study because it explains how students develop drug-abuse behaviors and how guidance and counselling can influence behavioral change through education, modelling, reinforcement, and support.

Empirical Review

Several studies have examined drug abuse and the role of counselling interventions among students. A study by Uwadia et al. (2024) investigated the role of guidance counsellors in curbing drug abuse among students in Nigeria. The study found that counselling programmes, awareness campaigns, and peer education significantly reduced students' involvement in substance abuse. The researchers recommended strengthening counselling services in educational institutions. Njoku et al. (2022) examined predictors of drug abuse among students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Using a survey design, the study identified peer influence, family background, and emotional stress as major predictors of substance abuse. The study emphasized the importance of counselling interventions in addressing these factors.

Isola et al. (2024) investigated strategies for combating drug abuse among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Findings revealed that counselling services, parental involvement, and institutional awareness programmes were effective measures for reducing substance abuse among students. Solomon et al. (2024) assessed awareness and patterns of substance use among undergraduate students in a tertiary institution in Nigeria. The study found high awareness of the dangers of drug abuse but noted continued involvement due to peer influence and social pressures. The authors recommended enhanced counselling and behavioral intervention programmes. Soremekun et al. (2021) examined psychoactive drug use among students of selected tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Their findings indicated significant levels of substance use among students, particularly alcohol, cannabis, and prescription drugs. The study highlighted the need for proactive counselling and preventive education. Oshodi et al. (2019) investigated substance use among university students and reported that academic stress and peer pressure were major contributing factors. The researchers concluded that guidance and counselling services remain essential for helping students cope with these challenges. Egbo (2020) examined the effectiveness of school counselling programmes in promoting students' adjustment. The study found that counselling services positively influenced students' behavior, academic performance, and emotional well-being.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a quantitative approach. The design was considered appropriate because it enables the collection of data from a large population in order to examine the relationship between guidance and counseling and drug abuse. The study was conducted in Adamawa State, Nigeria, comprising ten (10) tertiary institution in the state. The population comprised students and staff of guidance and counseling departments within the selected tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted: Stage One: Stratified sampling to select five (5) tertiary institutions from the State. Stage Two: Random selection of sixty (60) students and twenty (20) staff and students of guidance and counseling department making a total of 400 respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consist of two (2) Sections. Part one (1) consist of bio-data of the respondents. Part two (2) comprise four (4) point Modified Likert Scale (MLS). The scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), and Disagree (D) was employed, carrying points of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by experts. A pilot study was conducted in one tertiary institution outside the sampled institutions. The Statistical package for the social science (SPSS) was used to determine the reliability and item consistency index from Cronbach Alpha. From the test conducted, the internal consistency coefficient obtained is 0.70 this mean that the instrument was reliable and internally consistent for the study. The researchers administered the questionnaires directly with the help of trained research assistants. This ensured a high response rate and

allowed clarification of items where necessary. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, while the hypotheses were tested using Chi-square statistics at the 0.05 level of significance.

Answering the research Questions

Research Question 1: What guidance and counselling strategies are employed in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State?

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Guidance counsellors organize seminars on dangers of drug abuse.	3.46	0.71	Agree
2	Orientation programmes educate students on drug abuse prevention.	3.38	0.75	Agree
3	Individual counselling helps students avoid drug abuse.	3.42	0.73	Agree
4	Group counselling is used to address drug abuse issues.	3.35	0.81	Agree
5	Peer counselling programmes are available.	3.28	0.84	Agree
6	Counsellors provide information on consequences of drug abuse.	3.52	0.69	Agree
7	Awareness campaigns are regularly conducted.	3.41	0.77	Agree
8	At-risk students are referred for professional help.	3.33	0.80	Agree
9	Counsellors collaborate with school authorities.	3.37	0.78	Agree
10	Drug abuse prevention programmes are integrated into counselling activities.	3.48	0.72	Agree

Grand mean 3.40 Accepted

The table indicates a grand mean of 3.40 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50, showing that respondents agreed that various guidance and counselling strategies are employed in preventing drug abuse among students.

Research Question 2: How effective are guidance and counselling services in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State?

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
11	Counselling services increase awareness of dangers of drug abuse.	3.55	0.68	Agree
12	Counselling services reduce students' involvement in drug abuse.	3.31	0.82	Agree
13	Students attending counselling sessions are less likely to abuse drugs.	3.29	0.84	Agree
14	Counselling helps students resist peer pressure.	3.47	0.73	Agree
15	Counselling promotes positive behavioural change.	3.51	0.70	Agree
16	Counselling helps students develop healthy coping strategies.	3.43	0.76	Agree
17	Students benefit from counselling interventions.	3.39	0.80	Agree
18	Counselling contributes to a drug-free environment.	3.36	0.79	Agree
19	Guidance counsellors effectively identify at-risk students.	3.32	0.81	Agree
20	Guidance and counselling services are effective in preventing drug abuse.	3.49	0.72	Agree

Grand Mean 3.41 Accepted

The result shows a grand mean of 3.41, indicating that guidance and counselling services are effective in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions.

Testing of Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling strategies and the prevention of drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Chi-square Analysis of Relationship between Guidance and Counselling Strategies and Drug Abuse Prevention

Variable	χ^2 Calculated	χ^2 Critical	df	Sig. Level	Decision
Guidance and Counselling Strategies and Drug Abuse Prevention	45.67	9.49	4	0.05	Reject H01

Since the calculated χ^2 value of 45.67 is greater than the critical value of 9.49, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between guidance and counselling strategies and the prevention of drug abuse among students.

H02: Guidance and counselling services do not have a significant effect on the prevention of drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Chi-square Analysis of Effect of Guidance and Counselling Services on Drug Abuse Prevention

Variable	χ^2 Calculated	χ^2 Critical	df	Sig. Level	Decision
Guidance and Counselling Services and Drug Abuse Prevention	52.83	9.49	4	0.05	Reject H02

Since the calculated χ^2 value of 52.83 is greater than the critical value of 9.49, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, guidance and counselling services have a significant effect on the prevention of drug abuse among students.

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings of the study revealed that:

- Guidance and counselling strategies such as seminars, orientation programmes, individual counselling, group counselling, peer counselling, awareness campaigns, and referral services are widely employed in tertiary institutions to prevent drug abuse among students.
- Guidance and counselling services are effective in increasing students' awareness of the dangers of drug abuse, reducing involvement in substance use, promoting positive behavioural change, and helping students resist peer pressure.
- There is a significant relationship between guidance and counselling strategies and the prevention of drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.
- Guidance and counselling services have a significant effect on the prevention of drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study showed that guidance and counselling strategies are widely utilized in tertiary institutions as preventive measures against drug abuse. The respondents agreed that seminars, orientation

programmes, peer counselling, awareness campaigns, and individual counselling sessions are commonly used by counsellors to educate students on the dangers of drug abuse. This finding supports the work of Uwadia et al. (2024), who found that counselling interventions significantly contribute to students' awareness and avoidance of substance abuse. The study further revealed that guidance and counselling services are effective in preventing drug abuse among students. The respondents agreed that counselling services help students develop positive attitudes, resist peer pressure, and adopt healthier coping mechanisms for managing academic and social stress. This finding corroborates the findings of Isola et al. (2024), who reported that counselling programmes play a crucial role in reducing risky behaviours associated with substance abuse among students.

The test of hypothesis one indicated a significant relationship between guidance and counselling strategies and drug abuse prevention. This implies that the more effective and accessible counselling strategies are, the greater the likelihood of reducing drug abuse among students. The finding is consistent with the Social Learning Theory of Bandura (1977), which emphasizes that behaviour can be modified through learning, observation, and appropriate guidance. The second hypothesis revealed that guidance and counselling services significantly influence drug abuse prevention among students. This suggests that professional counselling interventions remain an important tool for combating substance abuse in tertiary institutions. The finding agrees with Njoku et al. (2022), who noted that counselling support services help students make informed decisions and avoid behaviours that may negatively affect their academic and personal development.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that guidance and counselling play a vital role in preventing drug abuse among students in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. Counselling services provide students with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to resist drug use and make responsible life choices. The study established that effective counselling strategies significantly contribute to reducing the incidence of drug abuse among students and promoting a healthier academic environment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Tertiary institutions should strengthen their guidance and counselling units by providing adequate funding, facilities, and professional counsellors.

2. Regular seminars, workshops, and awareness campaigns on drug abuse prevention should be organized for students.
3. Peer counselling programmes should be established and encouraged in all tertiary institutions to complement professional counselling services.
4. Institutional administrators should collaborate with counsellors, parents, community leaders, and relevant agencies in combating drug abuse among students.
5. Students should be encouraged to utilize counselling services whenever they experience academic, emotional, or social challenges that may predispose them to drug abuse.
6. Government and educational stakeholders should formulate policies that support the effective implementation of guidance and counselling programmes in tertiary institutions.



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