

## Original article

### Influences of drug misuse on secondary school students' academic performance in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria

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#### Abstract

The descriptive survey research design was used in this study to look into the effects of drug abuse on secondary school students' academic achievement in Akure. The target schools consisted of five secondary schools which were sampled using a random method. A total of 75 respondents were surveyed from 60 students, 5 principals, and 10 guidance and counseling teachers. To collect primary data for the study, questionnaires and an interview schedule were used. The study took place between 3<sup>rd</sup> January and 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. The data obtained was statistically analyzed using descriptive methods with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software program. The study found that alcohol (76.7%), followed by tobacco/cigarette (61.7%) was the most commonly abused drug in Akure secondary schools. Drugs were obtained from fellow students and small shops in the school's neighborhood. Peer group influence, drug availability, and a lack of parental care were identified as causes of drug abuse. According to the study, drug and substance abuse among students' lead to school dropouts, a lack of interest in studying, truancy, health problems, and poor grades. Based on the research findings, it is recommended that schools implement drug policies such as organizing awareness creation about the dangers of drug abuse, bringing parents/guidance to school, and referring students for guidance and counseling. Further research on the involvement of teachers and parents in reducing drug abuse, as well as students' perceptions of school principals' strategies is suggested by the study.

**Keywords:** substance abuse, secondary school student, peer group, counseling teachers



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## Introduction

A drug is any illegal substance that, when ingested, smoked, inhaled, or injected, has an effect on the function and operation of the body system. It is any substance that, other than food, affects the structure and function of a living organism due to its chemical nature. Drug abuse or misuse can be defined as the use of drugs for purposes other than medicinal purposes, which has a harmful social, cognitive, or physical impact on a person (Odundo et al., 2014). An individual's increased proclivity to engage in conflicts with friends, teachers, and school administrators may be a result of social effects. Impairments include a person's inability to concentrate on academic work and loss of memory. Drug abuse within the world's youth has now become a concern that affects everybody else. Substance abuse drives many people, particularly young people, into a negative slide of hopelessness that, in some cases, proves fatal. These individuals range from glue sniffers, homeless kids, and teenage ecstasy users, to hard core heroin and cocaine addicts (Mouti et al., 2014).

Drug abuse causes lost wages, property destruction in schools, skyrocketing health-care costs, and broken homes. It is an issue that affects all as parents, children, teachers, government officials, taxpayers, and workers. The cases of alcohol and illegal drug use among college and secondary students, with specific issues identified such as binge drinking, underage drinking, underage binge-drinking, and drug abuse are on the increase. Incidence rates of these behaviors span from 25 to 44 percent. Between 1993 and 2001, there was an increase in the percentage of students self-reporting these behaviors, according to American researchers (2013).

According to research (Mouti et al., 2014; Okari, 2018; Idowu et al., 2018) on drug use among college and secondary students, the currently proposed research seeks to investigate the extent and nature of drug use, as well as how it affects academic performance. Due to the rapid advancement, drug use became popular among students on campus and is even affecting their academic performance. Even with the government's worries and increased campaigns against such vice among high school students, there is a parallel expedited rate of students who use illicit drugs. As a result, the purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between poor academic performance and drug use in public secondary schools in Akure, Ondo State. The research article will also look at the various reasons why students abuse drugs, as well as the various types of drugs that are readily accessible to the student population. It will make recommendations on how to mitigate and minimize drug abuse among secondary school students. The objectives of this study were:

- i. To identify the most commonly abused drugs among secondary school students.

- ii. Find out the causes of drug abuse among students
- iii. Evaluate the impact of drug abuse on student academic performance;
- iv. Determine the measures put in place to combat drug abuse in secondary schools.

## Materials and Methods

The study took place between 3<sup>rd</sup> January and 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. A descriptive survey is used in this study. The study included sixty students, ten guidance and counseling teachers, and five principals from five different schools in Akure South Local Government Areas, Ondo State, Nigeria, for a total of seventy-five. An expert validated the questionnaire used in this study before it was distributed to the 75 respondents. There were two sections to the questionnaires: Based on the research objectives, there were closed and open ended questions. The questionnaires and interview schedules were distributed twice, two weeks apart. Permission was obtained from the school administration prior to distribution, and the respondents were then trained on how to fill out the forms. The respondents provided a complete response. Descriptive analyses (frequency, percentage, Line, pie, and bar charts) were carried out statistically using SPSS software.

## Results and Discussion

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study targeted sixty students, five school principals and ten guidance and counselling teachers in five secondary schools in Akure, Ondo State. Figure 1 confirmed that there was a 100% response from the respondents. The reason for the 100% compliance could be due to the through supervision and the enforcement of the principals used in this study during the questioning campaign. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent; therefore, this response rate was adequate for analysis. Figure 2 depicts the gender of the respondents. The results indicated that 76.7% of the students were females while 23.3% were males. Also, there were 60% female principals, while 40% were males. The last respondents, guidance and counselling teachers consisted of 20% females and 80% males. From the results obtained, only 13.3% of the students was between 12-14years old, while 18-19years and 20years and above formed 10 and 1.7% respectively of the respondents. The bulk (75%) of the students' population fell on 15-17years old (Figure 3). The reason for the high number is that this age falls within middle adolescence. At this stage the children, have the feelings that they are independent. According to Allen and Waterman (2019), they spend less time with their families and more time with friends. This is the time peer pressure peaks. This corroborate the fact that the Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency

(NDLEA) stated that substance abuse is a major problem in schools, colleges and universities in Nigeria (NDLEA, 2013). Many of these students' behaviors are heavily tied to the peer pressure. The results in this study correspond with the view of WHO (2000) and Chukwu et al. (2017) that peer pressure starts from ages 15-17 years middle adolescence.

### **The commonly abused drugs by students in secondary schools**

Figure 4 shows the distribution pattern (frequency and percentage) of students' respondents who have tasted the use of drugs (Yes) and those who have never indulge themselves in it (No). The results depicted that 38 accounting for the 63.30% and 22 (36.7%) Yes and No respectively. The finding shows that majority of the students in secondary schools contacted in Akure have use drugs. This finding is the opposite of the research undertaken by Ibrahim et al. (2019) who reported that 51% of the students in secondary schools in Sokoto have never use drugs.

Figure 5 depicts that the most commonly abused drugs by students in this study is alcohol (76.7%), followed by cigarette (61.7%), tramadol (58.33%), cocaine (47.7%), Indian hemp (38.4%), shisha (27.4%), scushies (14%), and Colorado (10%). Alcohol (76.7%) and cigarette are most common drug used in this study because (i) they are relatively cheap, (ii) legal and (iii) easily accessible to all categories of people within and around the residential areas. This findings agree with those reported by Muoti and Kibera, 2014; Chukwu et al., 2017; Okari, 2018; Ibrahim et al., 2019 who found out that alcohol is frequently used in the schools and this can really affect the performance of the students especially the ones engaging in it because their concentration in class may be affected by the aftermaths of alcohol taking such as hangovers. In other previous studies (Enugu (Igwe et al., 2009), Port-Harcourt (Alex-Hart et al., 2015), and Ogbomoso (Idowu et al., 2018), alcohol is one of the most commonly abused substances among Nigerian youths. In many Nigerian communities, alcohol consumption is socially acceptable; the youth consumes alcohol as a sign of maturity. Besides, alcoholic drinks are freely served in many occasions in Nigeria while people take pleasure in daily alcohol consumption with friends in various joints and club houses as a means of relaxation. Also, alcohol producing companies are sponsoring football and other sporting events which are largely viewed by the Nigerian youths. More-over, popular Nigerian actors and actresses are paid to advertise alcoholic drinks. All these could have served as push factors for increased alcohol consumption among the Nigeria youths (Idowu et al., 2018).

### **The causes of drug abuse among students and the effects on their academic performances**

Figure 6 depicts the reasons why students engage in drugs. The reasons show this order peer pressure > bad upbringing > to get stronger > depression. These are expressed in percentages thus: 93.3, 78.3, 21.7, 13.3, and 5 respectively. This findings suggest that on the average, majority of secondary school students were of the opinion that peer pressure can precipitate drug taking. In comparisons of our results with other previous works, Ajibade et al. (2016), Chukwu et al. (2017), and Okari (2018) agree with ours that peer pressure is the main reason for involvements in drug abuse. In other study peer pressure ranked 6<sup>th</sup> (Okafor, 2020). Many of these behaviours are heavily tied to the peer culture, as children learn from and imitate the peers they like and admire (Kithi, 2007; Dankano and Garba, 2017). According to Allen and Waterman (2019), there are still many differences in how a normal middle adolescent thinks compared to an adult. Much of this is because the frontal lobes are the last areas of the brain to mature development is not complete until a person is well into their 20s! The frontal lobes play a big role in coordinating complex decision making, impulse control, and being able to consider multiple options and consequences.

Figure 7 depicts the students' drug sources. According to the graph, the frequencies of drugs supplied by fellow students are 40, 8, 6, and 5 of the drugs were supplied by fellow students from villagers, gatemen, and small shops within the school's vicinity. The influence of the teachers' drug supply was insignificant. The 40 represented by the student population is a clear indication that the majority of the students' parents either cultivate or sell these drugs. Students whose parents sell cigarettes, Indian hemp, alcohol, and other drugs in motor parks/garages, small hotels, and brothels are examples. The drugs are also supplied by local farmers (villagers).

Figure 8 depicts the corporal punishments meted out to misbehaving students at school. The recommendations were to punish (29%) the wrongdoers in any way deemed appropriate by the school authorities, while 28 percent believed in counseling by school counselors, and another 28 percent believed that creating awareness of the effects of drugs on humans should be done to serve as a source of enlightenment campaign to drug abusers. It is believed that erring students should be dismissed/expelled from school to serve as a lesson to others who may wish to join the bad wagon. Only 4% suggested rehabilitation as a possible option. In general, it was suggested that drug addicts be properly counseled and rehabilitated.

## Response of Principals and Counselors' to the Prevalence of Drug and Substance Abuse in Schools

To effectively address the topic of 'drug abuse in schools,' we interviewed not only students, but also teachers and principals (respondents). According to the results of the overall survey, 60% of the respondents agreed that there is drug abuse among students and that the drugs have negative effects on the students. The remaining 40% either did not agree or preferred to remain neutral. The analysis revealed that there was a high prevalence of drug use in schools (Figure 9). Figure 10 shows the respondents' responses, which are ranked as follows: Peer group > family background > lack of parental care > drug availability, to name a few.

According to the perceptions of the principals and teachers, the main effects of drug addiction were health problems such as headaches, anxiety, and confusion (Figure 11). They believed that when students are confused, they act irrationally on school grounds. Some believe that drug users are uninterested in their studies, while others believe that long-term drug use leads to school dropouts. Others believed that the abusers were perpetual truants in class, and that even when they were present at school, they had poor self-control, resulting in misbehaving and harassing colleagues, neighbors, and even the school administration. The findings here were compared to those of Moye (2015), who found students challenging teachers' authority and bullying colleagues in some schools in Ondo State, Nigeria.

### The measures put in place to curb drug abuse in secondary schools

The respondents in their various schools summarized the steps taken by their respective administrations to curb or reduce the threat in their respective institutions. Firstly, was for the school administration to invite the parents or guardians of these wards to their school to inform, sensitize, and seek their assistance in resolving the problem, among other things. Secondly, was to hold an awareness campaign in the school by inviting various speakers to lecture the school communities on the subject of discourse. Thirdly, was to refer the misbehaving students for counseling to either the school counsellors or to someone else. Lastly, was that the offenders must be punished or rehabilitated (Figure 12).

It is worth noting that respondents recommended that the Ministry of Education play a significant role in dealing with the drug problem in schools (Figure 13). They recommended that the supervising ministry urgently incorporate the effects of drug abuse into the curriculum development for schools at all levels of education, as well as train and retrain teachers, particularly school guardians and counselors.

### Conclusion

The target schools in Akure were five secondary schools. According to the findings, 36.7 percent have never tried or abused drugs. Alcohol was the most commonly abused drug among students in this study (76.7 percent). One of the disciplinary measures taken against the erring student was to punish them in any way deemed appropriate by the school administration. One of the effects of drugs on students, according to the respondents, was health-related problems such as headaches, anxiety, and confusion, to name a few. The respondents suggested that the school management invite the parents or guardians of these wards to school to inform, sensitize, and seek their help in solving the problem, among other things; that an awareness campaign be put in place in the school by inviting different speakers to lecture the school communities on the subject of discourse; and that erring students be referred for counselling to either the school counsellors or from elsewhere. Finally, respondents suggested that the Ministry of Education play a role by incorporating the effects of drug abuse into the school curriculum.

### Acknowledgement

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### Conflict of interest

Authors declared no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study.

### Ethical Approval

The study was approved by the Ethical Review Committee of Ministry of Health, Akure, Ondo State (Protocol No: OSHREC 29/11/2021/403; Assigned No NHREC/18/08/2016). Participants in the study also gave their written consent/assent.

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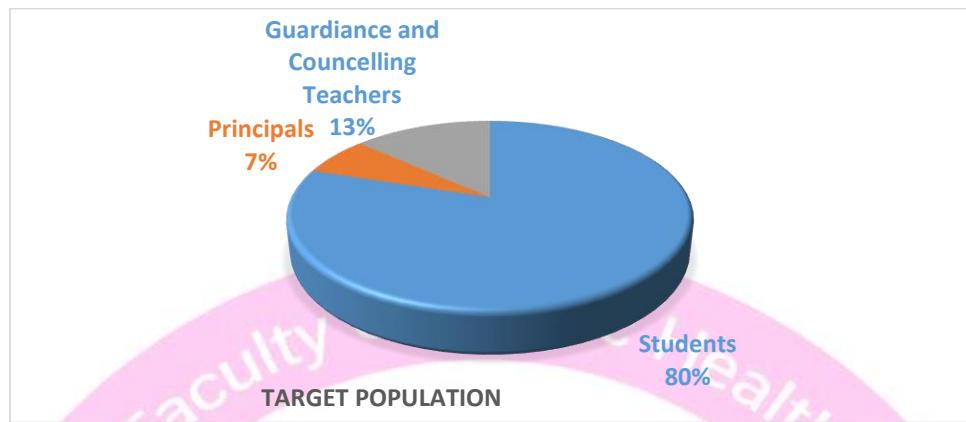


Figure 1: The respondents earmarked for this study

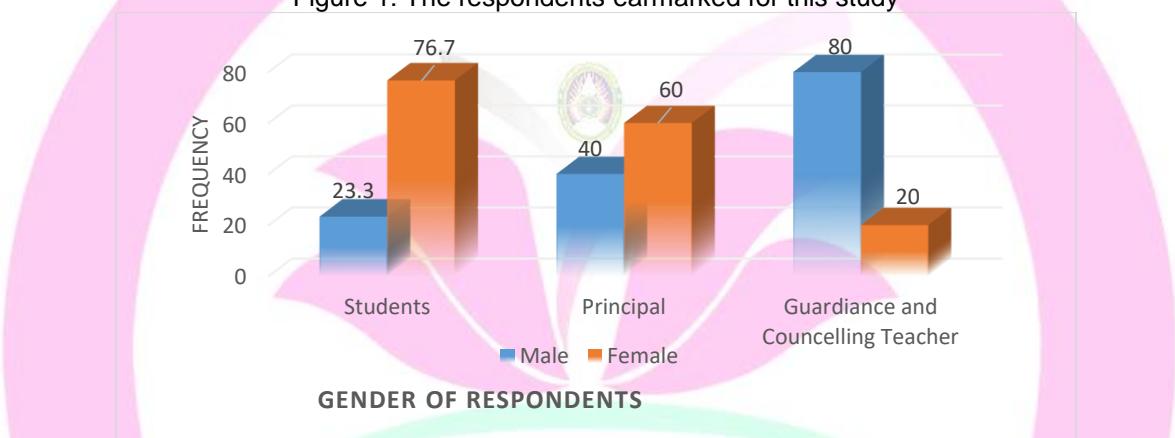


Figure 2: The sexes of respondents

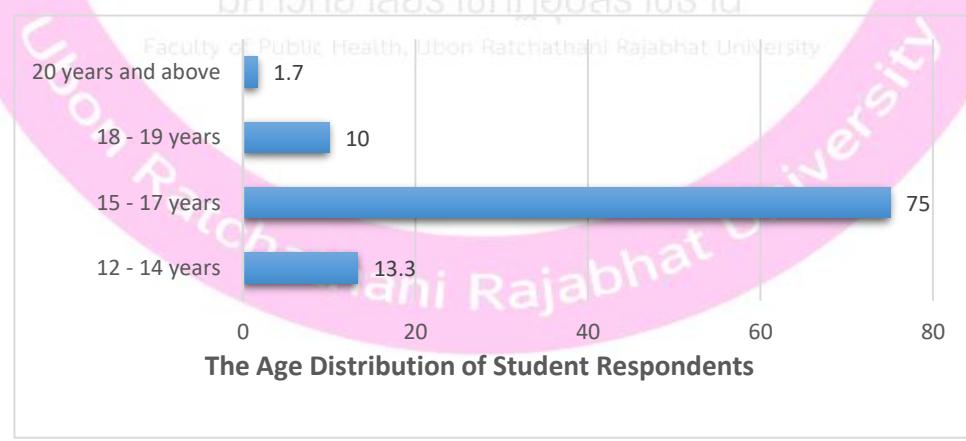


Figure 3: The age distribution of respondents in this study

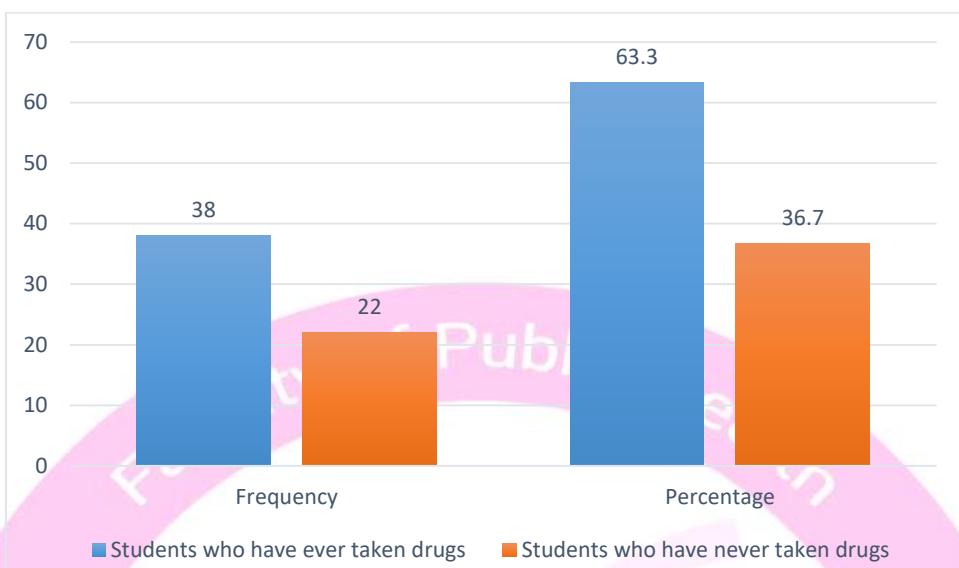


Figure 4: Distribution of students respondents based on drug use

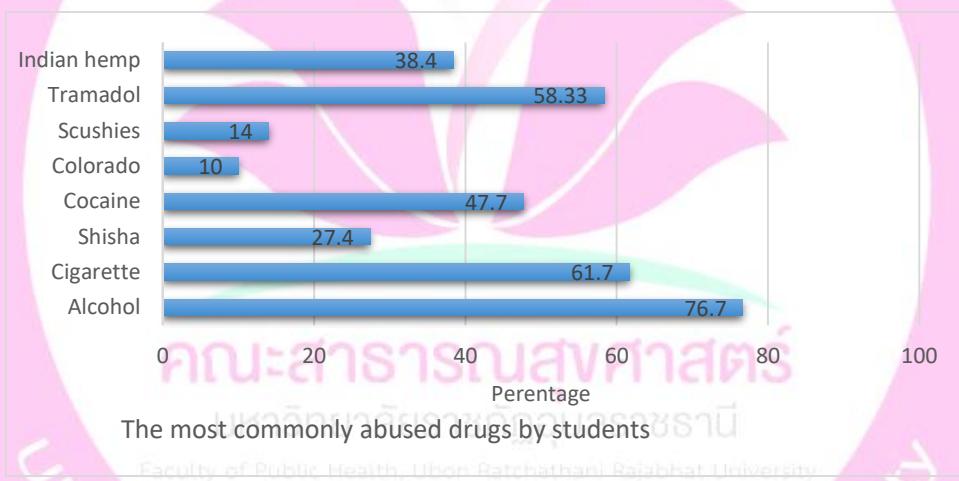


Figure 5: The most commonly abused drugs by students in secondary schools

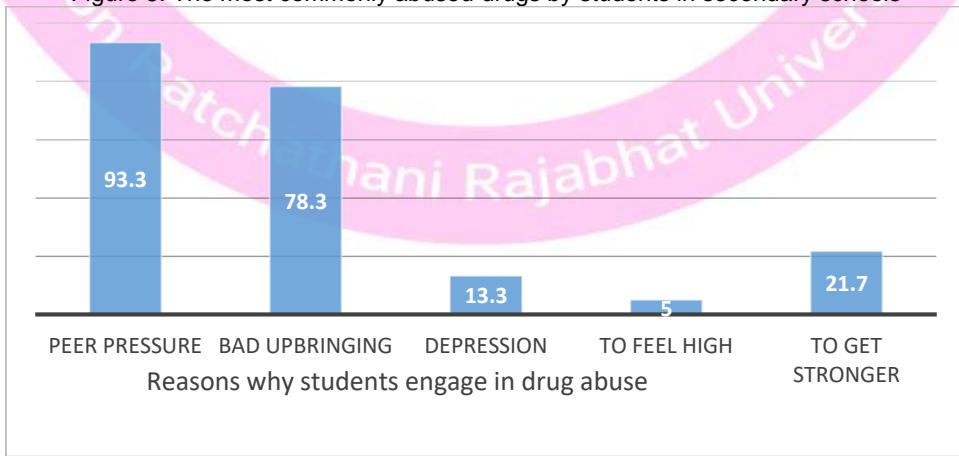


Figure 6: The figure depicts reasons why students engage in drug abuse

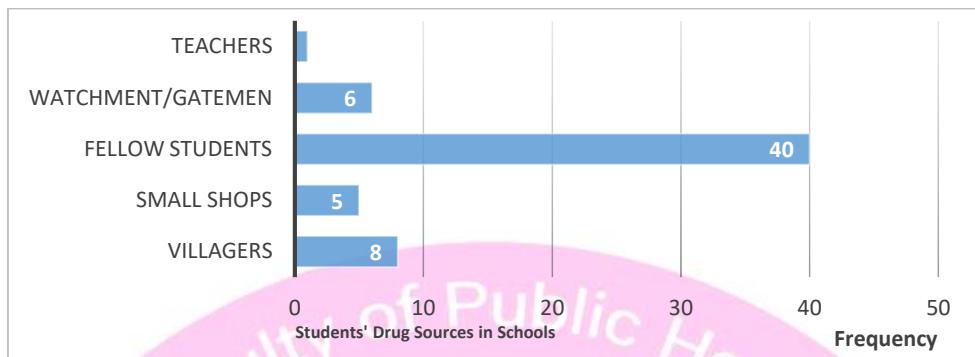


Figure 7: Sources of drugs to students in the schools

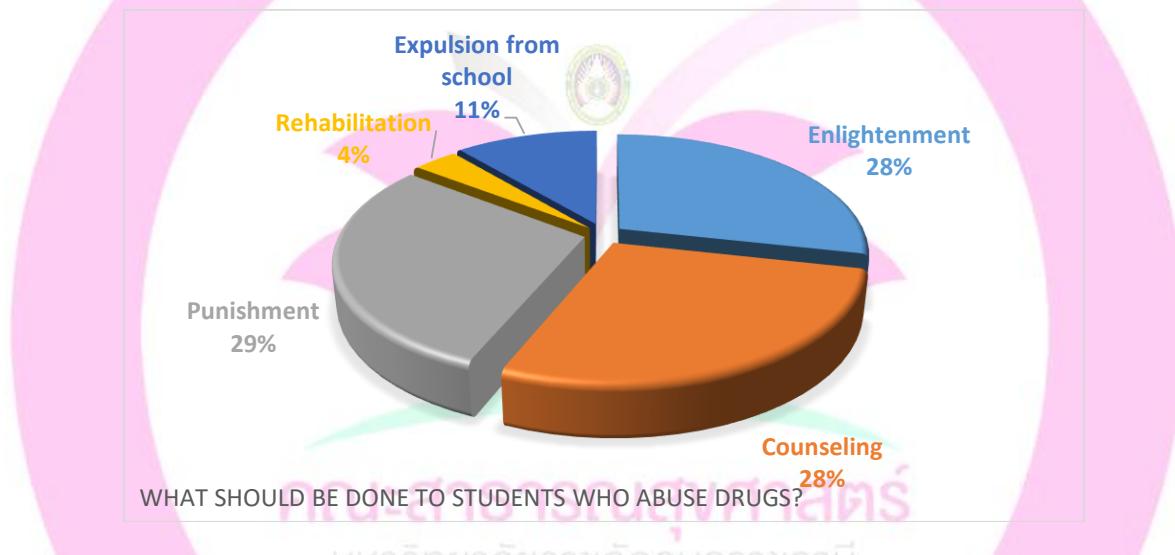


Figure 8: Discipline and corrective measures meted on erring students

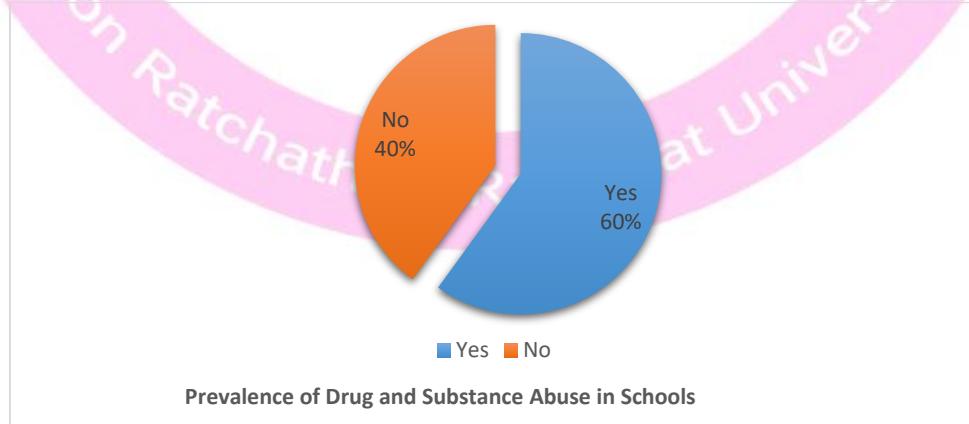


Figure 9: Principals' response to prevalence of drug and substances abused in schools

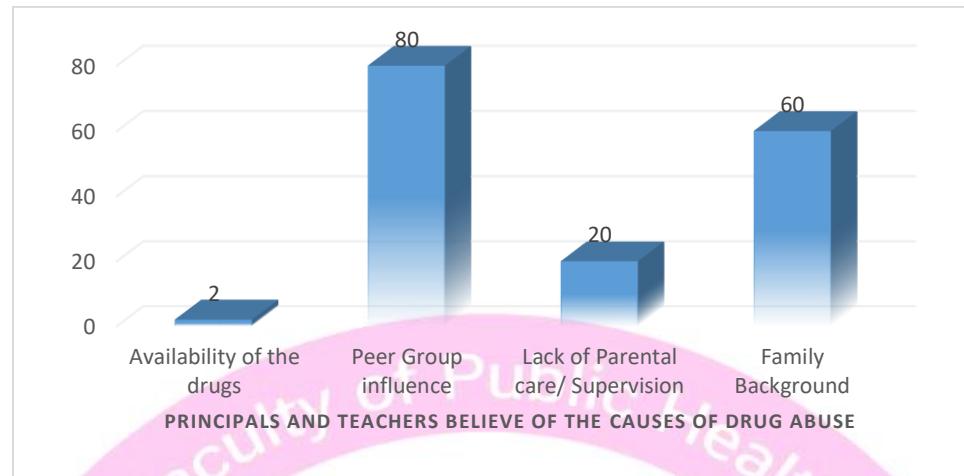


Figure 10: Respondents' opinions on the causes of drug abuse in the schools

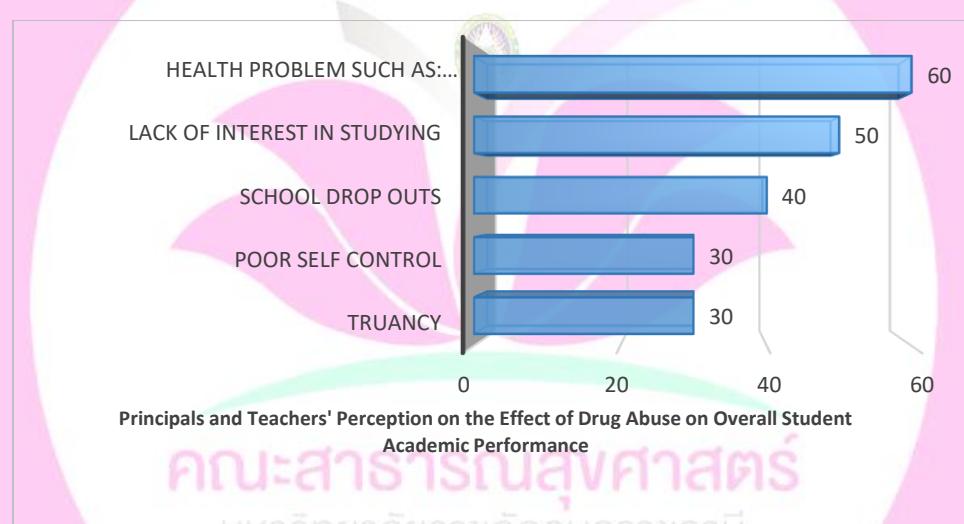


Figure 11: Respondents' perception on the effects of drugs on students' academic performances

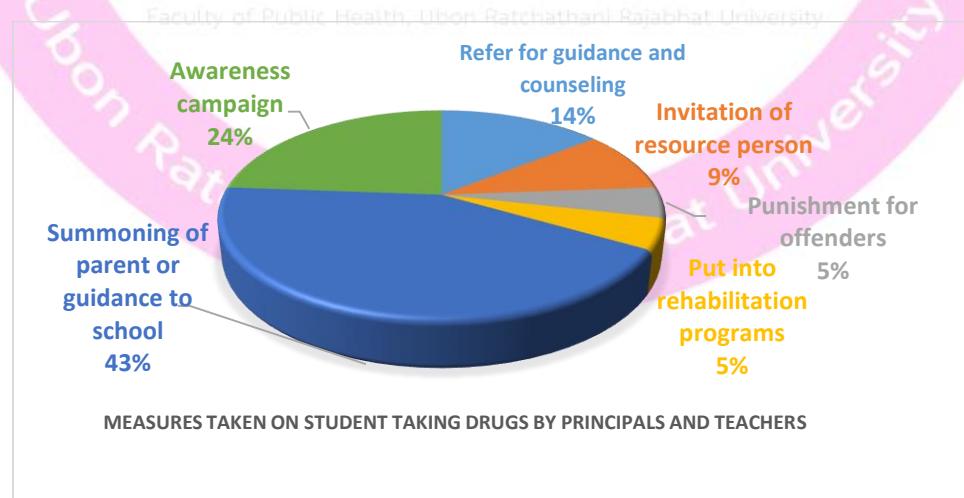


Figure 12: Measures taken to curb the menace within the schools

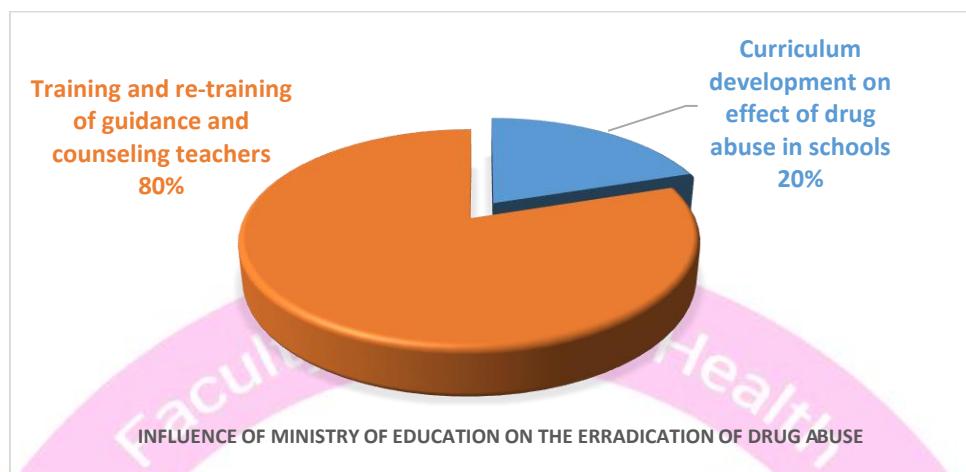


Figure 13: Influence of Ministry of Education on the eradication of drug abuse in schools

