

## Information Diffusion and Utilization of Undergraduates ‘Drug Free Clubs’ Against Drug Trafficking in Anambra State

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### Abstract

This study evaluated Information Diffusion and Utilization of Undergraduates Drug Free Clubs against Drug Trafficking in Anambra State. The study grew from the alarming rate at which youths are being arrested, prosecuted, jailed and executed for drug trafficking within and outside the country. It is premised against the background that youths are the most vulnerable to drug trafficking, therefore examined the information diffusion and utilization of drug free clubs against drug trafficking among youths of tertiary institutions in Anambra State from three senatorial districts of the state. Anchored on Social Cognitive theory and Diffusion of Innovation theory, the objective of the study was aimed at ascertaining the respondents’ exposure to information against drug trafficking, their source of information against drug trafficking and the attitude of the respondents to campaign message. The study adopted a survey research method with questionnaire as instrument for data collection. It also used Krejcie and Morgan formular table to determine the sample size for the population of 50, 652 students. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequencies and percentages were used in answering the research questions. Results obtained from the study showed that respondents were exposed to information against drug trafficking, their channels of exposure include drug free clubs and mass media, it was also observed that majority of the respondents benefited from information diffusion of drug free clubs from their schools. The study recommended advocacy campaigns to further discourage students from engaging in drug trafficking.

**Key words:** Information; Diffusion; Utilization; Drug trafficking

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### INTRODUCTION

Drug trafficking is a prevailing form of coordinated criminal adventure that involves the cultivation, manufacturing, distribution and marketing of substances which are vulnerable to drug prohibition laws. It commands a compelling and thriving threat to national security with critical implications for public protection, health and economic establishment. International Narcotics Control INC (2012) says that Nigeria tops the list with the highest trafficking and drug use in West Africa. Drug trafficking has metamorphosed into a booming business with a more severe side effects that are detrimental to the society, waste of nation’s human capital to hard drugs and trafficking. Drug trafficking has spread like wildfire to nearly every part of the world.

Nwannennaya (2017) writes that the most widely abused and locally trafficked illicit drug in Nigeria and indeed West Africa is cannabis, in its herbal form because it is quite affordable and readily available due to the fact that it is cultivated and produced locally.

Okon (2013) posits that drug business holds the strongest appeal for the youths whose expectations of making it in life have been truncated by political greed and failed government policies. The UN estimates that about 200 million people (4.8% of the world’s population aged 15-64) use illegal drugs annually with 25 million being classed as problem users (0.6%)

Nigerian government has engaged many legal, economic and social approaches towards eradication of drug trafficking. Nwannennaya (2017) notes that illicit drugs are usually smuggled across the nation’s land, air

and sea ports. However, various types of drugs in heavy kilogrammes and grammes; cannabis, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and others are smuggled in and out of the country and are sealed in ceramics, woman hairs, bags, sewing threads, basket handles and even swallowed by the traffickers. Drug trafficking has evolved to a dangerous dimension that it carries a huge impact on the world.

It is against the foregoing background that the Anambra state government and some Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) came up with the idea of campaign against drug trafficking among undergraduates to discourage youths from indulging in trafficking.

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## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

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The Nigerian media reports are awash with cases of drug trafficking exploits of its citizens within and outside the country. The rising wave of drug trafficking has serious implications for national development and negative influence to the image of the country. Tanimu (2000) writes that the Nigeria corporate existence and development can be undermined by a number of factors among which is an escalating and uncontrolled crime problem. The alarming rate at which young Nigerians are being arrested, prosecuted, jailed and executed for drug trafficking is worrisome.

Drug trafficking has assumed a worrisome dimension. In the light of the worsening situation, it is not clear whether youths in the study area are favourably disposed to the information diffusion and utilization of undergraduates 'Drug Free Clubs' against drug trafficking in Anambra State. To the researcher, this is a major gap in knowledge that calls for empirical examination. This in essence is the major problem this study is set to investigate.

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## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

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The general objective of the study is to investigate the information diffusion and utilization of undergraduates' drug free clubs. However, the specific objectives are:

- To ascertain whether the respondents are exposed to information against drug trafficking;
- To determine the respondents' source of information against drug trafficking;
- To ascertain the respondents' attitude change towards the campaign message.

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## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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The following research questions were formulated to further guide the study:

- Are the respondents exposed to information against drug trafficking?
- What is the respondents source of information against drug trafficking?
- Did the respondents' attitude change after the campaign message?

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## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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A theory offers an explanation of the relationship that exists among concepts. This study is anchored on the Social Cognitive theory. The theory started initially as the Social Learning Theory in the 1960s by Albert Bandura but was later developed into the Social Cognitive Theory in 1986. The theory asserts that environment, people and behaviour are factors that are constantly influencing one another. The relevance of the theory to the study aptly refers to how undergraduates 'Drug Free Clubs' information against drug trafficking occurs in a social context with a flexible and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment and behaviour.

The study also adopted Diffusion of innovation theory. The theory was developed by Everett Rogers in 1945, popularized in 1962. The theory believes that the media and interpersonal contacts have a way of providing information which could influence opinion and judgment. The relevance of the theory to the study refers to how undergraduates 'Drug Free Clubs' information against drug trafficking seeks to communicate information that will sustain positive behaviour or bring change of behaviour to desired direction.

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## DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

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The emphasis in this study is on the information diffusion and utilization of undergraduates 'Drug Free Clubs' against drug trafficking in Anambra State. The drug free clubs in tertiary institutions in collaboration with NDLEA with series of interactive sessions between the NDLEA and tertiary institutions were therefore used as delimitation for the study.

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## Understanding Campaign Against Drug Trafficking in Tertiary Institutions

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In line with the measures put in place to check drug abuse/ drug trafficking, the Nigerian government has established some anti-drug trafficking agencies like the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC). These agencies, coupled with the help of the National Orientation Agency (NOA), have embarked on various campaigns to minimize the rate of trafficking and use of illicit drugs in Nigeria.

The National Drug Laws Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) took the campaigns on drug abuse and drug trafficking to tertiary institutions to ensure the youths know the dangers inherent in drug trafficking. The aim of the campaign is to contribute to a reduction in the trafficking of drugs among youths in the state by raising awareness of the dangers associated with drug trafficking and encouraging and supporting the decision not to engage in drug trafficking.

## METHOD OF STUDY

The area of study was Tertiary Institutions in Anambra state. There are about ten tertiary institutions in Anambra state. They include:

**Table 1**  
**Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State**

S/N	Name of institution	Location
UNIVERSITIES		
1.	ChukwuemekaOdumegwu University	Uli/Igbariam/Awka
2.	Madonna University	Okija
3.	NnamdiAzikiwe University	Awka/Nnewi
4.	Paul University	Awka
5.	Tansian University	Umunya
POLYTECHNICS		
6.	Federal Polytechnic	Oko
7.	Anambra Polytechnic	Mgbakwu
COLLEGES OF EDUCATION		
8.	Federal College of Education Technical	Umunze
9.	NwaforOrizu College of Education	Nsugbe
10.	Anambra State College of Agriculture	Igbariam

It is obvious from table 1, that not less than 10 tertiary institutions exist in the study area. The study used cluster sampling technique to divide the institutions into three subsets and sampled each cluster using simple random method from the list of institutions in each cluster. The institutions obtained include: Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU) Igbarim representing Anambra North senatorial district, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka representing Anambra central senatorial district and Federal Polytechnic Oko representing Anambra south senatorial district. The institutions have many faculties, departments and schools. The population of the selected institutions include:

ChukwuemekaOdumegwuOjukwu University Igbariam = 10,950  
 NnamdiAzikiwe University Awka = 24,706  
 Federal Polytechnic Oko =17,000

$$\text{ChukwuemekaOdumegwuOjukwu University Igbariam} = \frac{\text{Population}}{\text{Total population}} \times \text{sample size}$$

$$= \frac{10,950}{52,656} \times 381 = 79$$

$$\text{NnamdiAzikiwe University Awka} = \frac{\text{Population}}{\text{Total population}} \times \text{sample size}$$

$$= \frac{24,706}{52,656} \times 381 = 179$$

$$\text{Federal Polytechnic Oko} = \frac{\text{Population}}{\text{Total population}} \times \text{sample size}$$

$$= \frac{17,000}{52,656} \times 381 = 123$$

The data generated from the study were analysed with the aid of table and simple percentages.

Total population=52,656 students

According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), if the population is 50,000, then the required sample size is 381 at 5% margin of error and 95% confidence interval. Therefore, the sample size for the study comprised of 381 students. A cluster sampling technique was employed to select the respondents across the three selected institutions. Each institution was divided into faculty or school, and then three faculties/schools were selected at random from each selected institution, thereafter simple random sampling was used to select the departments for the study. Systematic sampling technique was used to select the respondents according to their sitting arrangement at their classes.

The study adopted Survey research method. A survey is a research method that centers on a sample from the whole population. Kunle and Muiyiwa (2003) noted that survey research method is most commonly used by behavioural scientists. Its approach involves drawing up a set of questions on various aspects of a subject to which selected numbers of a population are requested." It is mainly suitable for research works which are aimed at eliciting information on any behavioural patterns. Nwodu (2017) writes that survey research works on the premise, that a given population is too large for any researcher to realistically observe all the elements in the population.

The population of study was all the students from three tertiary institutions selected from three senatorial districts in Anambra State. Obasi (2008) believes that sample is a small group of element or subject drawn through a definite population. It is the representative part of the whole population selected for the study.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The researcher made a total of 381 copies of the questionnaire for distribution and analysis. The copies of questionnaire were shared according to the population strength of each institution under study.

**Table 2**  
**Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval**

Respondents	No. distributed	No. returned	Percentage
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University	79	77	97
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	179	175	98
Federal Polytechnic Oko	123	120	97
Total	381	372	97.6

A total of 381 copies of questionnaire was administered, 372 copies were retrieved and found usable. This represents 97.9% hence; the analysis was based on the 97.6% (372) responses rate, which was considered significant enough to make objective analysis.

## ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### Research Question 1

#### Awareness/ knowledge response

Are the respondents exposed to information against drug trafficking?

Item 1 from the questionnaire provided the answer used in analyzing the research question

**Table 3**  
**Have You Ever Heard of Information Against Drug Trafficking?**

Response categories	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	240	64
No	70	19
Don't Know	62	17
Total	372	100

Source: Field study, 2017

The information on the table above indicated that majority of the students (64%) have significant knowledge/exposure to campaign against drug trafficking. This shows that the knowledge and exposure to campaign against drug trafficking is relatively high. Also 19% of the respondents had no knowledge of the campaign against drug trafficking while 17% of the students had no opinion on the issue.

### Research Question 2

#### Response to Information Source

What is the respondents source of information against drug trafficking?

Item 3 from the questionnaire was used to elicit responses from the respondents

**Table 4**  
**Which of the Channels Were You Exposed to Campaign Against Drug Trafficking?**

Response categories	Frequency	Percentage
School Drug free club	127	34
Mass media	125	34
All of the above	120	32
None of the above	-	-
Total	372	100

Source: Field study, 2017

The information on table 4 showed that 34% of the respondents were either exposed to information against drug trafficking through school drug free club and mass media while 32% of the respondents were exposed to both drug free club and mass media information against drug trafficking.

### Research Question 3

#### Response to Attitude Change

Did the respondents attitude change after campaign message?

To answer research question three, item 5 from the questionnaire was used

**Table 5**  
**Did You Benefit From the Information Against Drug Trafficking?**

Response categories	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	240	65
No	08	2
No comment	124	33
Total	372	100

Source: Field study, 2017

The table shows that majority of the respondents representing 65% benefited from information against drug trafficking, it means that respondents have favourable attitude to campaign message while 2% of the respondents did not benefit from such while 33% were undecided.

## FINDINGS

The findings of this study show that students of tertiary institutions in Anambra state showed significant knowledge of campaign against drug trafficking. The findings also indicate that they were actually exposed to drug information through drug free clubs and the mass media that enabled them to benefit from such exposure. The findings also showed that, the introduction of drug free clubs in many tertiary institutions with some interactive sessions with the NDLEA necessitated the respondents exposure as well as favourable attitude to the campaign against drug trafficking. Both the mass media and the students' drug free clubs were channels of communication and information for campaign against drug trafficking.

Knowledge, environment and belief are the factors that are affecting the behavioural change and awareness, positive attitude and action are needed to effect desired change.

## CONCLUSION

Against the major findings of this study, it is concluded that students from tertiary institutions from the study area have significant knowledge of campaign against drug trafficking. The exposure to the campaign made the majority of the students to be equipped with information

that are of immense benefits to both the students and the entire society.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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The study recommended that Advocacy campaigns should be sustained to achieve the desired objectives. Advocacy campaigns normally use multi-media and varied communication, persuasion and strategies to achieve desired objectives. The advocacy should endeavour to win the sympathy of influential individuals like the religious, traditional and political leaders who can help and convince others to adopt the behavioural change message.

It is also recommended that a similar study be carried out in other states to either refute or reinforce the results of this study. A repeat of the study in other institutions if found valid, will enhance further generalization of the study. The campaign message should be designed and disseminated in patterns that will be attractive and interesting to the youths.

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