

Implementation of the Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Program of High School and College Students in Southern De Oro Philippines College

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Abstract

This study evaluated the School-Based Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Program of Southern de Oro Philippines College during School Year 2003–2004. Anchored on the concept that coordinated school-based interventions can improve students' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior toward prohibited drugs, it examined respondents' socio-economic profiles, family relationships, peer group associations, awareness of common prohibited drugs, perceived reasons for drug use, knowledge of drug effects, and awareness of the school's prevention program. The study employed descriptive evaluation research using a researcher-made questionnaire and interviews. A total of 250 respondents participated, comprising 125 high school and 125 college students selected through purposive or deliberate sampling. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, weighted mean, and Spearman Rank-Order Correlation. Findings showed that most respondents came from low-income households and generally had positive family relationships, although limited communication with parents and feelings of being misunderstood were identified. Peer associations reflected both protective and risky influences, including participation in school activities, support for anti-drug campaigns, alcohol use, peer pressure, and exposure to marijuana. Students were highly aware of common prohibited drugs and their harmful effects. Significant relationships were found between high school and college students' awareness of common prohibited drugs, perceived reasons for drug use, knowledge of drug effects, and awareness of the school-based prevention program. The study concluded that the program had generally attained its objectives. It recommended strengthening teacher training, curriculum integration, guidance services, student activities, community outreach, school supervision, and future program evaluations. The study supports SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 16, and SDG 17 through health promotion, preventive education, institutional responsibility, and school-family-community collaboration. Its sustainability impact lies in strengthening long-term educational, public health, institutional, and community systems for preventing drug abuse among students.

Keywords: Drug Abuse Education, Family Relationships, Peer Group Associations, Prohibited Drugs, School-Based Prevention Program, Student Awareness, Student Knowledge, Substance Abuse Prevention

1. Introduction

Drug abuse remains a serious social problem because it affects individuals, families, schools, communities, and society. As a social issue, it requires collective action from institutions, government agencies, families, educators, and community members. The World Health Organization (WHO, 1969) defined drug abuse as “the persistent or sporadic excessive drug use inconsistent with or unrelated to acceptance medical practice,” and its complexity has made prevention and intervention difficult for both experts and laypersons (Manuel B. Garcia, et al 1984). This study focuses on the School-Based Drug Abuse Education Prevention Program of Southern de Oro Philippines College during School Year 2003–2004, particularly the knowledge of high school and college students regarding prohibited drugs, reasons for drug use, effects of drugs, and the implementation of school-based drug abuse prevention education.

1.1 Background of Drug Abuse as a Social and Educational Problem

Drug abuse is not only a Philippine concern but also a worldwide problem that affects the youth, adolescents, and young adults. In the Philippines, the national campaign against drug abuse was strengthened through Republic Act 6425, the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1972. Section 29 of R. A. 6425 mandated the Ministry of Education Culture and Sports (MECS) to implement drug abuse preventive programs in schools and communities and to integrate drug education concepts in the elementary, secondary, and tertiary curricula. Drug abuse prevention education was incorporated into subjects related to personality and values development, science and health, home technology, social studies, and current issues on national development.

1.2 School-Based Drug Abuse Prevention Education in the Philippines

The Department of Education Culture Sports (DECS) further strengthened school-based prevention through the Comprehensive School-Based Drug Abuse Prevention Program (COSDAPP). This five-year program emphasized the Annual Search for Most Outstanding COSDAPP Implementers in the elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Schools were directed to establish Guidance and Counseling Centers, recreational facilities, sports programs, student clubs, drug information centers, parent education programs, and community outreach projects. The program later became associated with NDEP (National Drug Education Program the new name in 1994), which emphasized curriculum instruction, ancillary services, parent education, staff development, research, evaluation, and monitoring.

1.3 Family, Peer Group, and School Influences on Student Drug Awareness

The literature emphasizes that drug abuse prevention must consider the family, peer group, school, and community. The family is considered the basic social institution and primary group in society, usually composed of parents and children, with or without relatives, united by affection and shared social activities (Duran, 2002). Borres (1994) stated that the home and family are strong positive forces in developing a healthy and stable personality. Parents influence children's physical, social, and emotional development, and parent education is important so they can understand their responsibilities toward children. Family stressors may increase the risk of early drug use among children and adolescents. Parental smoking or liquor drinking may weaken the parent's ability to set abstinence as the expected norm, while economic stress disrupts parenting and may increase drug use among children and adolescents (McLoyd, 1990). Cultural stress and acculturation may also affect parenting, but bicultural training can improve family functioning and support positive child outcomes. Divorce, remarriage, and family conflict may also affect children's adjustment, although cooperative parenting and family management can reduce risks (Buchanan et al., 1991). The number of remarriage transitions has been linked to maladjustment and drug use in childhood and early adolescence, but effective family management practices may lessen that risk (Capaldi & Patterson, 1991). Wilson (1980) likewise showed that parental supervision was a protective factor in preventing delinquency. Peer influence is another major theme. In school and community settings, students' social life often revolves around peer interaction. The "barkada" becomes a strong source of adolescent values, and young people may take drugs because of the need to conform, curiosity, or the desire to escape adolescent problems. Peer groups may also become problematic when they develop into rival gangs, where drug use may be associated with status, superiority, or delinquent behavior. Drug use is often associated with friends, parties, discos, and social gatherings, and many drug patients reported using drugs because of peer pressure, curiosity, and family problems. National institute of Drug Abuse (Rahdert & Czechowicz, 1995) stated that curiosity and experimentation with drugs are common during adolescence because young people try new things, seek relief from stress, feel grown up, or attempt to fit in. The school is also central to prevention. Effective education uses humanistic, school-based, and community-oriented strategies, including role playing, values clarification, leadership training, coping skills, decision making, and group development. Rara (1999) recommended that teacher implementers receive training and workshops related to NDEP to improve their skills in preventing and controlling drug abuse. Schools were also encouraged to provide sports and recreational activities that direct students' attention toward useful channels. Since schools shape children's social and economic future, academic difficulties and rule-breaking may affect peer acceptance, while underachievement and antisocial behavior may weaken acceptance by peers. Students who experience academic difficulties and peer rejection may cluster into "deviant peer groups," increasing risks for early drug use, delinquency, and violent behavior.

1.4 Local and Foreign Literature on Drug Abuse Prevention Among Students

The local and national literature shows that drug education must address family, culture, school, and community conditions. According to Bustos (1995), culture reflects the lifestyle practiced by people, and teachers must understand cultural backgrounds to better understand their students. The family provides security, affection, guidance, sympathy, understanding, and love; when parents fail to instill these values, young people may become vulnerable to negative behavior. Socialization develops desirable qualities, habits, values, and relationships with parents, teachers, schoolmates, and friends. However, an unfavorable and unhappy home environment may push the youth toward negative behavior and drug use. Local studies also indicate a need for stronger drug education. Gloria S. Magdale's dissertation found no significant variations between teacher and student respondents in knowledge and practice of drugs, but both groups lacked technical information. Students first heard about drugs from friends, while teachers learned about them through newspapers and magazines. The study concluded that schools needed to give more emphasis to drug education. Other observations indicated that teachers may have inadequate knowledge of drugs and their negative effects, while some students may already have direct exposure to drugs. Isagan (in Research Abstract, Vol. 11, 1982) reported inadequate understanding of tobacco as a drug, insufficient perception of drug use and its effects, and limited general knowledge about drugs. This supports the need for schools to disseminate accurate information because many teenage drug users were unaware of the consequences of drug abuse and were misled by dope peddlers (Reader's Digest, 1979). Foreign literature supports the importance of parenting and family-based intervention. Poor parental monitoring predicts early substance use (Baumrind, 1985, pp. 13-44; Dishion & Loeber, 1985), and lack of monitoring may increase children's unsupervised time with peers and exposure to drug use and delinquent activities. Oppositional problems in preschool may lead to later antisocial behavior, while Webster-Stratton (1984, 1990) documented that parenting groups can improve parent-child interaction and

teacher ratings of preschool behavior problems. Other researchers found parenting interventions effective in reducing early childhood behavior problems, and videotape-based examples of positive parenting practices also supported behavioral change (Webster-Stratton et al., 1988). Antisocial and aggressive behavior in childhood are major predictors of adolescent drug use, and interventions targeting parenting practices may reduce antisocial behavior in middle childhood (Dumas, 1989). McMahon et al. (1984) found that parents were satisfied with parent training. Family-based interventions during adolescence may reduce current problem behavior and future risk, and family management interventions may reduce adolescent substance use. However, parental engagement remains a challenge because parents may not attend meetings or may drop out of programs. Szapocznik and colleagues (1988) found that home visits before family therapy promoted engagement and reduced dropout, while Patterson and Chamberlain (1994) emphasized support, empathy, and reduced confrontation to minimize resistance. Reframing family statements about the cause of problems is also important for change and engagement. Behavioral family therapy supports change in family interaction patterns, but the approach must remain flexible and responsive to family history and motivation (Patterson, 1985, pp. 1344-1379).

1.5 Conceptual Basis of the School Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Program

The study is anchored on the concept that the concerted effort of the school system to implement a school-based drug abuse prevention program may lead to positive outcomes. The conceptual basis links students' socio-economic profile, family relationships, peer group associations, and school environment with their knowledge of common prohibited drugs, reasons for prohibited drug use, effects of drugs, and the School-Based Drug Abuse Education Prevention Program. The framework also recognizes that drug education is a psychological and educational process designed to change knowledge, attitudes, and behavior through information, values clarification, leadership training, role playing, coping skills, and decision making. The operational concepts of the study include awareness, drug, drug abuse, drug addiction, drug education, evaluation research, family relationship, peer group, prohibited drugs, survey, and socio-economic profile. Awareness refers to consciousness, cognizance, alertness, keenness, perception, and comprehension of information, specifically on the drug prevention education program (Guralnik, 1980). Drug refers to foreign substances taken into the body, ranging from painkillers and vitamins to more complex preparations used for infections and metabolic disturbances (Garcia et al., 1984). In the socio-legal sense, "drug" refers to habit-forming substances that affect the brain or nervous system and may alter bodily function, mood, perception, or consciousness, with potential harm to the user or society. Drug abuse refers to persistent or excessive drug use inconsistent with acceptable medical practice (WHO, 1969), while alcoholism is associated with excessive or persistent use of alcoholic beverages (Funk and Wagnall's Standard Dictionary).

1.6 Research Gaps and Rationale for Assessing Student Knowledge and Awareness

Although government and non-government efforts have attempted to address drug abuse, no single measure has been sufficient to counter this multifaceted problem. This creates a continuing need for more effective school-based strategies, particularly because the youth remain vulnerable to the drug menace. The study was therefore considered necessary to determine the extent of awareness and impact of COSDAPP or NDEP at Southern de Oro Philippines College in relation to students' knowledge of prohibited drugs, school-based programs and activities, mass media, and community influences. The study aimed to determine the knowledge of high school and college students regarding the Drug Abuse Education Prevention Program of Southern de Oro Philippines College during School Year 2003–2004. Specifically, it examined the socio-economic profile of respondents in terms of age, gender, number of children in the family, parents' monthly income, and type of family; their family relationships; the kinds of peer groups they associated with; and the correlation of their knowledge in terms of common prohibited drugs, reasons for prohibited drug use, effects of drugs, and school-based drug abuse education prevention. The study also tested whether there were significant correlations in students' awareness of common prohibited drugs, their perceived reasons for drug use, and their knowledge acquired through the School Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Program. The rationale of the study lies in the need to provide benchmark information for school administrators, deans, faculty, parents, and students. For administrators, the findings may guide the monitoring and improvement of the school's drug prevention program. For deans and faculty members, the findings may inform consultation, classroom discussion, and lectures in social science subjects. For parents and students, the study may serve as a basis for family-based awareness, home intervention, and collaboration with teachers and school administrators.

1.7 Alignment with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals

This study aligns with SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being because drug abuse prevention directly concerns the health, safety, and well-being of students. By focusing on knowledge of prohibited drugs, reasons for drug use, effects of drugs, and preventive measures, the study supports efforts to reduce behaviors that may harm the physical, psychological, emotional, and social well-being of young people. The study also aligns with SDG 4 – Quality Education because it examines the role of schools in providing drug education through curriculum integration, guidance services, recreational activities, parent education, and community outreach. Since drug education is presented as a school-based preventive strategy, the study contributes to educational practices that promote informed decision-making, values development, and responsible behavior among students. The study further relates to SDG 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions because it is grounded in the implementation of Republic Act 6425, the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1972, and school-based compliance with national drug prevention programs. By examining how an educational institution implements prevention programs,

the study supports institutional responsibility, student welfare, and community-based prevention against a social problem with legal, social, and economic implications. Lastly, the study supports SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals because the School-Based Drug Abuse Education Prevention Program involves collaboration among schools, parents, community officials, guidance personnel, teachers, and administrators. The study recognizes that drug prevention cannot be addressed by schools alone and requires coordinated action among home, school, and community.

1.8 Importance of the Study to Public Health, Educational, and Community Sustainability

The study contributes to public health sustainability by promoting early awareness and prevention of drug abuse among high school and college students. Since drug dependence affects the youth, adolescents, and young adults, school-based drug education supports long-term well-being and reduces risks associated with substance use, delinquency, and harmful peer influence. It also contributes to educational sustainability by strengthening the role of schools as preventive institutions. Through curriculum instruction, guidance and counseling, teacher training, parent education, sports, recreational activities, and community outreach, schools can provide continuing support systems that help students develop knowledge, values, coping skills, and sound decision-making. The study supports socio-economic and community sustainability by recognizing how family relationships, peer groups, parental supervision, economic stress, and community environments influence drug-related risks. Addressing these factors can help families, schools, and communities create safer and more supportive environments for young people. It also contributes to institutional sustainability by providing benchmark information that school administrators, deans, faculty members, parents, and students may use to improve drug prevention programs and strengthen collaboration across the school and community.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study used descriptive evaluation research to determine the merit of the components of the operational program or the achievement of such program according to prespecified objectives. This method allowed adequate interpretation of the data gathered. Specifically, the study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire and interview technique to gather and validate the needed information.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at SPC, where high school and college students were selected as respondents. Permission to administer the questionnaire was obtained from the High School Principal and the Vice President of Academic Affairs before the data gathering was conducted.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were high school and college students of SPC. There were 125 high school student-respondents and 125 college student-respondents, for a total of 250 respondents. Of the total respondents, 145 or 58% were male and 105 or 42% were female.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study used purposive or deliberate sampling. To meet the purpose of the study, 20 percent of the total population of 625 high school students was selected randomly. The 20 percent requirement, as proposed by Gay (1976), was used because the population under investigation was relatively small. The selection of respondents was done through complete enumeration from the Dean's office. Each student was assigned a number, and all numbers were placed in a box, shaken, and drawn at random.

2.5 Research Instrument

The main research instrument was a questionnaire constructed by the researcher. Items from the references read were incorporated into the questionnaire. The draft was submitted to the adviser for critical review and correction. The second draft was subjected to a validity test among selected SPC high school students who were interviewed on each item. The results of the interview were used to improve and simplify the final form of the questionnaire. The questionnaire had two parts. Part 1 gathered the profile of the students, including questions related to their socio-economic status. Part 2 gathered data on students' knowledge about prohibited drugs, the effects of drug use, and the school's drug prevention education program. The interview technique was used to validate the second draft of the questionnaire by determining the students' understanding of the terms used in each item.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

A written permission to administer the questionnaire to the sample high school and college students was granted by the High School Principal and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The researcher personally distributed 250 questionnaires to ensure that all items were answered and that all questionnaires were retrieved. This also allowed the

researcher to directly answer questions from respondents who needed clarification on some items. After retrieval, the gathered data were tallied and tabulated for statistical treatment.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The gathered data were treated statistically using frequency, percentage, mean, weighted mean, and Spearman RHO. The questionnaire gathered data on the students' personal profile, socio-economic status, family relationship, kinds of peer group, and knowledge of the Drug Use Prevention Educational Program. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize responses to each item. Weighted means were used for the quantitative analysis of responses following a Likert-type scale. The responses were interpreted as Always, Often, Seldom, and Never. Always indicated very much evidence of the activity or practice and that it was very much felt or observed. Often indicated that the function or practice was usually felt or observed but not significantly. Seldom indicated that the function or practice was present but only slightly felt or observed and was becoming non-existent. Never indicated that the function or practice was almost nil or almost non-existent. The fourth problem was analyzed using the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient. Each data set was ranked, differences between paired ranks were computed, and the squared differences were summed. The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient formula was then applied. To determine whether the computed r_s was significant, it was compared with the critical values of r_s in Table C - XIII (Goehring, 1978) using the number of paired data and evaluating the results at the .05 and .01 levels of significance.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Socio-Economic Profile of High School and College Student-Respondents

3.1.1 Age and Gender of the Student-Respondents

The study involved 250 student-respondents, composed of 125 high school students and 125 college students. Among the high school respondents, 73 were male and 52 were female, while among the college respondents, 72 were male and 53 were female. Overall, there were more males than females, with 145 males or 58 percent and 105 females or 42 percent. In terms of age, 43 or 17.2 percent were in the 12 - 14 age bracket and came from the high school level. The largest group belonged to the 15 - 17 age bracket, with 165 respondents or 66 percent from both high school and college. There were also 6 over-age high school students and 31 over-age college students in the higher age brackets. The findings indicate that most student-respondents were within the typical age range for regular high school and college levels. The high concentration of respondents in the 15 - 17 age group suggests that the high school respondents were mostly in the third and fourth year, while many college respondents were likely in the first and second year. The presence of over-age students also shows variation in student progression across both levels.

3.1.2 Number of Children in the Family

The findings showed that 128 or 51.2 percent of the student-respondents came from families with 1 - 4 children. Meanwhile, 112 or 44.8 percent came from families with 5 - 8 children, and 10 or 4 percent came from families with 9 - 12 children. This means that slightly more than half of the respondents came from small families, while 122 respondents came from families with five or more children. The result suggests that a considerable number of respondents belonged to larger families, where parental attention, care, and financial resources may be more limited. Rosales (1983) stated that student-respondents who belong to a big family most likely miss parental care and nurture than what is expected to a small family of 4. In the studies conducted by Pareno (1977) and by Muana (1997), students from large families obtained an unsatisfactory level of school performance compared with those from small families. Students from smaller families may receive more parental support, follow-up on school assignments, guidance about barkadas, and discussion about prohibited drugs.

3.1.3 Parents' Monthly Income

Most respondents came from low-income families. A total of 190 or 76 percent of the high school and college student-respondents had parents with a combined monthly income of P1,000 - 10,000. Another 53 or 21.2 percent had parents earning P11,000 - 20,000, while only 3 or 1.2 percent had parents earning P21,000 - 30,000. Only 4 or 1.6 percent had parents earning P31,000 and above per month. The findings indicate that a large proportion of the respondents belonged to low-income households, many of which also had large family sizes. With the current cost of living, such income may be insufficient to meet the family's daily needs and may compromise some parental commitments at home and school. Socio-economic status, including parental occupation, education, and income, influences students' academic performance. The higher the family's socio-economic status, the more intelligent the children are; thus, intelligence and learning are positively related to socio-economic status (Cerna, 1982; Ilago, 1985; Muana, 1997).

3.1.4 Type of Family

The findings showed that 169 or 67.6 percent of the respondents came from nuclear families and lived with their father, mother, sisters, and brothers. Meanwhile, 46 or 18.4 percent lived in extended families with parents, siblings, and relatives such as grandparents, cousins, nieces, nephews, or aunts. Another 19 or 7.6 percent came from broken families due to death or separation of one or both parents, while 15 or 6 percent lived with grandparents, aunts, or uncles because their parents

were absent due to the nature of their work. The findings suggest that most respondents lived in a nuclear family, which is considered an ideal setting for children's growth and development because it provides security, affection, guidance, responsibility, sympathy, and love. However, students from extended, broken, or absentee-parent families may be more exposed to conditions that affect behavior and adjustment. Children who live in unfavorable and unhappy home environments may resort to negative behaviors that may eventually lead to drug use (Workshop Report, 1980). Garcia (1984) stated that a stable family is one in which at least one parent has a continuous physical and affectionate relationship with children, while higher proportions of drug abusers are products of parental separation, death, and parental absence.

3.2 Family Relationship of the Student-Respondents

3.2.1 Existing Family Relationship

The findings showed generally positive family relationships among the respondents. The strongest indicators were being loved and cared for by parents, being disciplined by the family, being happy and contented with the family, and experiencing quarreling among family members, all of which obtained descriptive values of always. Other indicators, such as enjoying family activities, believing that the family will provide support in times of trouble, and being able to share ideas and problems openly, were rated often. The item indicating that respondents felt they were not part of the family was rated seldom, suggesting that most respondents still felt included in their family. The results indicate that the existing family relationships of the high school and college student-respondents of SPC were generally commendable. However, two areas may weaken family relationships if not properly addressed: respondents reported that they do not always talk to parents about personal problems and that they are often misunderstood by parents. Wilson (1980) stated, "To maintain a positive relationship, parents need to be aware of the positive efforts of their children". Parental monitoring directly and indirectly improves family relationships, while children who are not well monitored may wander in the community and spend time in situations involving drug use and other delinquent activities.

3.3 Peer Group Associations of the Student-Respondents

3.3.1 Kinds of Peer Groups Associated with by the Respondents

The findings showed strong peer group influence among the respondents. Many peer-related behaviors were rated always, including having friends who drink alcoholic beverages, are afraid of taking prohibited drugs, are active in co-curricular activities, take drugs during examinations to stimulate the brain, know a lot about the effects of drugs, support the school drug prevention education program, want the respondent to take drugs with them, are involved in the campaign against drug abuse in the community, and rebel against parents if they do not get what they want. Having friends who had tried marijuana was rated often. The findings show both risk and protective elements in peer group association. Some peer behaviors suggest exposure to alcohol, marijuana, drug use during examinations, peer pressure, and rebellion against parents. Studies have shown that majority of drug patients claimed that they use drugs with the presence of their peers or barkada, that curiosity made them try the drug, that they had family problems, that they use drugs because it feels good, reduce stress, for status and acceptance (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry [AACAP], 1989; National Institute on Drug Abuse [NIDA], 1995). However, the findings also show positive peer influence because many respondents had friends who feared prohibited drugs, joined school activities, supported the drug prevention program, and participated in anti-drug campaigns. These positive behaviors provide a basis for school administrators, teachers, parents, and students to strengthen the school drug abuse education prevention effort.

3.4 Student Knowledge on Drug Use Education Prevention Program

3.4.1 Awareness of Common Prohibited Drugs

The findings showed that high school and college respondents were aware of commonly abused prohibited drugs. The five commonly identified drugs were shabu, marijuana, rugby, syrup, and ecstasy. Cocaine and tranquilizers were the least identified, possibly because they were expensive or less available. The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation result of 0.955 indicated a very high relationship between the high school and college student-respondents' awareness of common prohibited drugs and was significant at the .01 level. The result shows that the awareness of high school and college students regarding prohibited drugs was closely related. This means that both groups had similar knowledge of the drugs commonly used or abused. A study in Cagayan de Oro City among medical students noted that those who belonged to low-income families commonly used relatively cheap drugs such as cough syrup, marijuana, and rugby, while richer teenagers preferred shabu, nubain, and heroin because of greater cash availability. It was also noted that the number of teenage drug abusers who were out of school was significantly higher than the number of student drug abusers (Xavier University: Dr. Jose P. Rizal College of Medicine; January 18, 1995).

3.4.2 Reasons for Prohibited Drug Use

The findings showed differences in how high school and college respondents ranked the reasons for prohibited drug use. Among high school respondents, the leading reason was to escape from pressure at home, followed by the desire to belong to a peer group. Among college respondents, the leading reason was to relieve tension, followed by escaping pressure at home and resisting or defying parents or people in authority. Other reasons, such as demonstrating independence, curiosity, getting over insecurity, and escaping boredom, received lower preferences among the respondents. The computed

Spearman RHO of 0.58 was significant at the .05 level because it was greater than the critical value of .564 with a degree of freedom of 10. The findings indicate that respondents' reasons for drug use differed according to their level of awareness, perception, or personal experience. High school students appeared to associate prohibited drug use more with pressure at home and peer belonging, while college students associated it more with relieving tension and resisting authority. Despite these differences, the significant Spearman RHO shows a high relationship between high school and college students' perceptions of the reasons for prohibited drug use.

3.4.3 Awareness of the Effects of Prohibited Drugs

The findings showed that the respondents generally had proper awareness of the physical and social effects of prohibited drugs. Most respondents believed that prohibited drugs can cause physical health problems, mental problems, death, loss of self-control, changes in family relationships, poor academic performance, and heinous crimes. They were also aware that prohibited drugs do not help one think better, feel better, or make friends. The Spearman RHO of .843 showed a very high relationship between the high school and college respondents' awareness of the effects of prohibited drugs and was significant at the .01 level. The result indicates that both high school and college respondents understood that prohibited drugs cause more harm than good. Their awareness may have been shaped by perceived reality or actual experience, but the findings show that both groups were closely related in their cognizance of the harmful effects of prohibited drugs. This awareness is important because understanding the negative physical, psychological, emotional, behavioral, academic, and social consequences of drugs supports the goals of drug prevention education.

3.4.4 Knowledge of the School-Based Drug Abuse Education Prevention Program

The findings showed that more than four-fifths of the respondents were aware of the school's drug education prevention program. They were particularly aware that symposiums and seminars on drug abuse were conducted, that activities such as sports, glee club, debate, painting, and involvement in recognized school organizations served as alternatives to drugs, and that drug testing was conducted annually. Differences appeared between high school and college respondents in their awareness of the student crime prevention council, integration of drug education in subjects, SPC as a drug-free zone, dismissal as a consequence of drug use and distribution, and the annual drug prevention month celebration. Respondents were least aware of the role of the Director of Student Affairs Services in coordination with the Guidance Office and the provision that the use, possession, and distribution of dangerous drugs in SPC was considered a serious offense. The correlation coefficient of 0.6 showed a significant relationship at the .05 level. The findings suggest that the SPC school drug education prevention program had attained its goals and objectives. The respondents' knowledge of the program was significantly related between the high school and college levels, although their awareness varied in some program components. The school environment, through laws, school rules and regulations, school norms and standards, teaching methods, and curriculum, served as a barrier against the influence of pushers in the social environment. The various activities of the program contributed to the development of respondents' negative perception of prohibited dangerous drugs and supported the school's drug abuse education prevention effort.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that the high school and college student-respondents of Southern de Oro Philippines College were generally aware of the Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Program and had closely related knowledge of common prohibited drugs, reasons for drug use, effects of prohibited drugs, and the school-based prevention program. Most respondents were within the normal age range for their educational level, with more males than females, more than half belonging to small families, and a large majority coming from low socio-economic status families. The respondents generally had commendable family relationships, although concerns were noted regarding communication with parents and feelings of being misunderstood. Peer group associations showed both positive and questionable behaviors, indicating that peers may either support or weaken drug prevention efforts. The findings further showed that the respondents were aware of commonly used prohibited drugs, especially shabu, marijuana, rugby, syrup, and ecstasy; understood that drug use may be driven by pressure at home, desire for enjoyment, resistance to authority, personal problems, and peer belonging; and recognized the harmful effects of prohibited drugs on health, behavior, family relationships, academic performance, and social conduct. The School Drug Abuse Education Prevention Program was found to have attained its objectives, as students were aware of seminars, alternative school activities, annual drug testing, drug education integration, and school policies related to drug prevention.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the study recommended that school management provide periodic in-service education for high school and college teachers to update their knowledge on drug education topics integrated in Values Education, Science, Health, Home Technology, Social Sciences, and Current Issues or Events. The school should also provide copies and comprehensive discussions of the pharmacological classification of drugs, factors contributing to drug abuse, general effects of drug abuse, and penalties under the Dangerous Drugs Act, RA 6425, as amended, and Presidential Decree No. 1619. School management should identify more creative student activities as alternatives to drug use, plan community outreach services, strengthen the functions of the Director of Student Affairs and the Guidance and Counseling

Office, intensify the implementation of the School-Based Drug Abuse Education Prevention Program, and improve supervisory functions for quality teacher services and student development. Teachers should carefully study the lessons prescribed for drug education integration, provide learning activities that develop comprehension, application, and evaluation skills, prepare lessons addressing questionable student behaviors identified in the study, give assignments that enhance learning at home or in the library, and continue professional growth. Future studies should expand the evaluation of the program by including other components, conduct related studies in other private schools at the district or division level, and seek assistance from the Dangerous Drug Board for resource materials, resource persons, and technical support.

The study was limited to determining the knowledge of high school and college students on the Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Program of Southern de Oro Philippines College for School Year 2003-2004. It involved 250 student-respondents, consisting of 125 high school students and 125 college students, selected through purposive or deliberate sampling. The findings were based on survey questionnaire and interview data and focused on the respondents' socio-economic profile, family relationship, peer group association, awareness of common prohibited drugs, reasons for prohibited drug use, effects of prohibited drugs, and knowledge of the school-based drug abuse education prevention program.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study observed institutional permission procedures by securing written approval to administer the questionnaire to the selected high school and college student-respondents. The researcher personally distributed and retrieved the questionnaires and addressed respondents' questions for clarification during data gathering.

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