



**AN ETHICAL EXAMINATION OF THE CONSEQUENCIES OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE
IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CHIKUN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF
KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Substance abuse among secondary school students has become a significant social, educational, health and ethical concern in Nigeria. The problem is particularly important because adolescence is a formative period during which patterns of behaviour may have lasting consequences for individual development and society. This seminar paper examines the ethical consequences of substance abuse among secondary school students in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study adopts Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory as its sole theoretical framework. Methodologically, the paper employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive documentary research design. Data were collected through systematic review and analysis of relevant books, peer-reviewed scholarly publications, official reports, policy documents and credible online publications relating to substance abuse, adolescents, education and the Nigerian context. The reviewed evidence indicates that substance abuse among adolescents is associated with poor academic performance, absenteeism, truancy, indiscipline, school dropout, health problems, psychological difficulties, violence, risky sexual behaviour and strained family and social relationships. The findings further show that peer influence, family circumstances, accessibility of psychoactive substances, weak parental supervision, negative school environments and broader community conditions can contribute to students' vulnerability. The study also finds that substance abuse raises serious ethical concerns relating to human dignity, responsibility, protection of children, justice, care and the responsibility of families, schools, communities and government to provide a safe environment for young people. The study concludes that the major conclusion arising from the findings is that substance abuse among secondary school students in

Chikun LGA is not merely an individual moral failure but a multidimensional ethical and social problem shaped by interacting family, school, peer and community environments.

Keywords: Substance abuse, secondary schools, adolescents, Christian ethics, peace-building, Chikun LGA.

Introduction

Since the earliest periods of human existence, various substances derived from herbs, plants, and natural products have been used for the prevention and treatment of diseases. The use of drugs in itself is not harmful when they are administered appropriately and under professional guidance. Properly prescribed drugs contribute significantly to the treatment, management, and prevention of illnesses. However, the misuse or prolonged use of certain substances can result in serious health consequences, particularly among adolescents whose physical, psychological, and neurological systems are still developing (World Health Organization [WHO], 2024).

Drugs are chemical substances that alter the normal functioning of the body and mind. According to Bagley (2024), drugs include substances that affect physiological processes, mood, perception, cognition, and behaviour. These substances may be used for therapeutic purposes when prescribed by qualified healthcare professionals, but they can become harmful when used inappropriately or excessively. Similarly, Ahmed et al. (2025) describe drugs as chemical agents capable of modifying biological functions and influencing an individual's mental and emotional state.

Substance abuse occurs when drugs or other psychoactive substances are used in a manner that is harmful to the individual or society. The World Health Organization (2024) defines substance abuse as the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs, resulting in adverse physical, psychological, social, or educational consequences. Likewise, Welsh et al. (2025) describe substance abuse as a pattern of repeated substance use that leads to significant impairment in health, social relationships, academic performance, and daily functioning.

Substance abuse has become a major public health concern worldwide, particularly among adolescents. Research indicates that adolescents are more susceptible to substance abuse because of peer influence, curiosity, emotional stress, family instability, and exposure to environments where drug use is common (Adindu et al., 2024). In Nigeria, the misuse of substances such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, tramadol, codeine-containing syrups, and other psychoactive drugs has become increasingly prevalent among secondary school students and young people (Oni et al., 2024).

The consequences of substance abuse among adolescents are far-reaching. Students who abuse drugs often experience poor academic performance, behavioural problems, emotional instability, mental health disorders, and difficulties in social adjustment. Some become involved in violence, cultism, criminal activities, and other forms of delinquent behaviour. In severe cases, prolonged substance abuse may result in addiction, psychiatric disorders, school dropout, and even death (Welsh et al., 2025).

Several scholars have therefore defined substance abuse as the excessive, inappropriate, or non-medical use of drugs that interferes with an individual's physical health, psychological well-being, social functioning, and educational development. It may also be described as the persistent use of psychoactive substances despite their harmful effects on the individual and society. Consequently, substance abuse remains a significant challenge that requires comprehensive prevention, counselling, rehabilitation, and public awareness programmes, especially among adolescents in secondary schools.

Conceptual and Clarification and Theoretical Framework

Substance Abuse

Before proceeding to the substantive argument, it is necessary to clarify six concepts that are central to this paper: Substance abuse, ethics, secondary schools, adolescents, Christian ethics, and peace-building itself.

Substance abuse among secondary school students involves the excessive or non-medical use of substances that alter mood, behavior, or mental functioning. Various contemporary scholars have defined and explained substance abuse from medical, psychological, social, and public health perspectives. Their views emphasize that substance abuse involves the harmful or excessive use of psychoactive substances in ways that negatively affect an individual's health, behaviour, relationships, and overall functioning.

Bagley (2024) describes drugs as substances that affect the brain and body by altering mood, perception, thinking, behavior, or physiological functioning. She notes that drugs may be legally prescribed for medical treatment or used recreationally, but misuse can lead to harmful consequences, particularly among adolescents. Fawa (2003), Assert that, “Drug is defined as any substance, which is used for treatment or prevention of a disease in man and animals. Drug alters the body functions either positively or otherwise depending on the body composition of the user, the type of drug used, the amount used and whether used singly or with other drugs at the same time”. Bagley S.M. (2024). Bagley explains substance abuse as the use of alcohol, nicotine, cannabis, prescription medications, or other psychoactive substances in a manner that causes impairment in physical health, mental health, academic performance, or social functioning. She notes that adolescents are particularly vulnerable because substance use can interfere with brain development and increase the risk of addiction. Welsh et al. (2025). Welsh and colleagues view substance abuse as a chronic behavioural health condition characterized by repeated substance use despite negative consequences. They argue that substance abuse affects educational attainment, family relationships, mental health, and social development, particularly among adolescents and young adults.

Ethics: Ethics, in the context of this study, is defined as the systematic and philosophical study of moral principles that govern individual and collective conduct, particularly regarding what is considered right, wrong, obligatory, or permissible. Aristotle (2009) viewed ethics as the study of how human beings should live in order to attain eudaimonia, or human flourishing. He argued that a morally good life is achieved through the development and practice of virtues such as courage, justice, honesty, and self-control. Thus, ethics involves developing good character and consistently performing virtuous actions. According to Thiroux and Krasemann (2018), ethics involves the investigation of moral reasoning, providing a framework through which human actions are

evaluated against established values. William Frankena (1973) described ethics as a branch of philosophy concerned with questions about morality, including what is good or bad, right or wrong, and what people ought or ought not to do. His understanding emphasizes the systematic and rational examination of moral judgments and principles.

Secondary Schools

Secondary school is a part of the society and it is a vital institution of learning that caters for children typically between the ages of 10 to 24 years. Within this environment, students are expected to develop academically, socially and morally. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) defines secondary education as the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary level. The Nigerian secondary school system is intended to provide learners with broad knowledge, vocational preparation, and the skills necessary for further education and productive participation in society. According to Ocho (2005), secondary education occupies an important position in the Nigerian educational system because it provides learners with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for their personal development and preparation for higher education and useful living within society. Obanya (2004) explains secondary education as a stage of education concerned not only with academic development but also with the development of competencies, values, attitudes, and skills that enable young people to function effectively in their communities and prepare for adulthood. Similarly, Adeyemi (2009) views secondary education as an important stage in the educational process where learners are prepared for higher education, employment, and effective social participation. The stage provides opportunities for intellectual development as well as the acquisition of social and practical skills.

Adolescent

Adolescence is the developmental period between childhood and adulthood during which significant physical, psychological, emotional, social, and cognitive changes occur. Different scholars and organizations define adolescence from slightly different perspectives. Santrock (2019) describes adolescence as a transitional period between childhood and adulthood involving major changes in physical development, cognitive abilities, emotions, and social relationships. He emphasizes that adolescents gradually develop greater independence and begin to establish their personal identities. According to Erikson (1968), adolescence is a critical stage of psychosocial development in which the individual faces the central conflict of identity versus role confusion. During this period, young people explore their values, beliefs, abilities, relationships, and future roles in an effort to develop a stable sense of identity. Steinberg (2020) views adolescence as a period of transition characterized by substantial biological, psychological, and social changes. He notes that adolescents increasingly seek autonomy, develop more sophisticated reasoning abilities, and become strongly influenced by relationships with peers and other social environments.

Christian ethics

Christian ethics refers to the systematic study and application of moral principles based on the Christian faith, the Bible, the character of God, the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It concerns how Christians ought to live and make moral decisions in relation to God, other people, themselves, and the wider society. John Stott (2006) explains Christian ethics in terms of applying biblical principles to contemporary human life. For Stott, Christian moral conduct should reflect God's revealed will and the character of Christ in areas such as personal behaviour, relationships, social responsibility, justice, and human dignity. According

to H. Richard Niebuhr (1963), Christian ethics is concerned with the responsible response of human beings to God and to other people within concrete historical situations. Christian moral life therefore involves responding responsibly to God's action and living faithfully within human relationships. Emil Brunner (1947) understands Christian ethics in relation to the will of God and the responsibility of human beings. He emphasizes that Christian morality is not simply a collection of external rules but involves living in accordance with God's purpose and responding appropriately to God's command.

Peace-building

Peace-building refers to the processes, actions, and strategies used to prevent the recurrence of violence, address the root causes of conflict, rebuild relationships, and establish conditions for sustainable peace. Scholars have explained peace-building from political, social, developmental, and ethical perspectives. John Paul Lederach (1997) defines peace-building as a comprehensive process that seeks to transform relationships and the underlying patterns that produce conflict. He emphasizes reconciliation, relationship-building, justice, and social transformation. For Lederach, sustainable peace requires attention to the personal, relational, structural, and cultural dimensions of conflict. According to Galtung (1996), peace-building should address the root causes of violence and not merely stop direct violence. He distinguishes between negative peace, which is the absence of direct violence, and positive peace, which involves the presence of justice, equality, cooperation, and social structures that promote human well-being. Thus, genuine peace-building requires transforming structures that create or sustain violence. John Darby and Roger Mac Ginty (2008) explain that peace-building involves a range of activities designed to prevent violence, manage conflict, rebuild societies, and create political and social conditions that enable peaceful coexistence. They stress that sustainable peace requires addressing both immediate conflict-related problems and deeper social and political grievances.

Ecological Systems Theory

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917–2005) was an American developmental psychologist whose work focused on understanding human development within the context of family, school, community and wider society. He formally developed the Ecological Systems Theory, which was presented in his influential book *The Ecology of Human Development*, published in 1979.

Bronfenbrenner argued that human development cannot be adequately understood by looking at the individual alone. Rather, development and behaviour are shaped by the continuous interaction between the individual and the different environmental systems in which the person lives.

The theory was initially presented through four major environmental systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. Bronfenbrenner later incorporated the chronosystem, which emphasizes the influence of time and changes in the individual and environment.

Overview of Ecological Systems Theory

Ecological Systems Theory proposes that human behaviour and development result from the interaction between individuals and multiple levels of their social and physical environment.

Relevance of the Theory to the Study

For a study on “An Ethical Examination of the Consequences of Substance Abuse in Secondary Schools in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria,” Bronfenbrenner's theory is particularly appropriate because substance abuse among students is not caused by a single factor. The theory enables the researcher to examine substance abuse as a multidimensional social and ethical problem.

At the microsystem level, the researcher can investigate the influence of parents, peers, teachers, school environment and religious institutions on students' attitudes toward substance abuse.

At the mesosystem level, the study can examine how relationships between parents, schools, religious institutions and communities influence prevention and management of substance abuse.

At the exosystem level, the researcher can investigate broader factors such as community drug-control programmes, media influence, availability of rehabilitation services and local government interventions.

At the macrosystem level, the researcher can examine Nigerian cultural, religious, moral and legal values concerning substance use.

Finally, the chronosystem allows the researcher to consider how changes in students' family circumstances, school experiences, peer groups and wider society may contribute to substance-abuse behaviour over time.

Why the Theory Was Chosen

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory is chosen for this study for several reasons.

1. Substance abuse is a complex social problem that cannot be adequately explained by individual behaviour alone. Students are influenced by family, peers, school, community and society.
2. The theory provides a holistic framework for examining the causes and consequences of substance abuse at different environmental levels.
3. It is appropriate for the secondary-school context, where adolescents are strongly influenced by parents, teachers, friends, classmates and the wider community.
4. The theory is compatible with the ethical dimension of the study because it allows the researcher to examine responsibility at both individual and societal levels.

Thus, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) provides a strong theoretical foundation for examining the consequences of substance abuse among secondary school students. The theory emphasizes that students' behaviour is shaped by interconnected environments ranging from the immediate family and peer group to the school, community, culture and wider society.

For the proposed study in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, the theory is valuable because it provides a framework for examining not only the student's personal behaviour but also the ethical responsibilities of parents, peers, teachers, schools, religious institutions, communities and government in preventing substance abuse and addressing its consequences.

Ethical Dimensions of Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is not only a medical, psychological, or social problem; it is also an ethical problem because it raises questions about human dignity, personal responsibility, autonomy, justice, public safety, care for vulnerable persons, and the appropriate balance between punishment and rehabilitation. The literature supplied for this discussion similarly identifies dignity, autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, stigma, confidentiality, family responsibility, rehabilitation, public safety, accountability, and care as major ethical dimensions.

i. **Human Dignity and Respect for Persons:** One of the most important ethical dimensions of substance abuse is respect for human dignity. Adams and Volkow (2020) argue that addiction should not be treated simply as a moral failure. They maintain that substance-use disorders are treatable health conditions and that stigma can prevent affected persons from seeking treatment. Therefore, although substance abuse may involve morally problematic behaviour, the person should not be stripped of dignity or treated as inherently worthless. This position is particularly important in the Nigerian school context. A student who abuses substances should be held accountable for harmful conduct, but should not be permanently labelled as a "bad student" or excluded from opportunities for rehabilitation. Ethical treatment requires separating the wrongness of the behaviour from the worth of the person.

ii. **Autonomy and Personal Responsibility:** Substance abuse also raises questions concerning autonomy and responsibility. Fingerhood (2020) identifies autonomy as an important ethical principle in addiction treatment. Addiction may interfere with an individual's capacity to exercise control over behaviour, thereby creating a tension between respecting personal choices and protecting the individual from serious harm. Roberts and Bullock (2011) similarly explain that addiction may involve impaired control and cognitive difficulties, raising important questions about personal responsibility and decision-making. The ethical position, therefore, should neither completely excuse substance abuse nor ignore the circumstances that may diminish a person's capacity for self-control.

This is particularly relevant to adolescents because young people may be influenced by peer pressure, family circumstances, availability of substances, emotional difficulties, and social environment. Nigerian research by Adelekan et al. (1993) found that peer influence, poor mental health, parental or guardian supervision, perceived availability, perceived harmfulness, and religiosity were associated with substance use among Nigerian university students.

iii. **Justice and Fair Treatment:** Justice requires that individuals affected by substance abuse receive fair and equitable treatment. The ethical question is whether drug users should be treated exclusively as offenders or whether they should also be regarded as persons who may require healthcare, counselling, and rehabilitation. Obot (1992), in his examination of the Nigerian drug-control system, argues that Nigeria historically placed considerable emphasis on supply reduction and harsh punishment while giving inadequate attention to demand reduction through education, treatment, and rehabilitation. He argues that although the state has a legitimate responsibility to protect citizens from drug-related harm, drug-control measures themselves must not cause unnecessary harm to citizens. This is a significant ethical argument because it introduces the principle of proportionality: punishment and control should be balanced with human rights, treatment, prevention, and rehabilitation.



iv. **Beneficence and the Promotion of Well-being:** Beneficence refers to the ethical responsibility to promote the welfare of persons. In substance-abuse intervention, this means that families, schools, health workers, churches, counsellors, and government agencies should take reasonable steps to protect affected persons and help them recover. The WHO and UNODC (2020) emphasize evidence-based and ethical treatment of drug-use disorders. Consequently, an ethical response should involve prevention, education, counselling, treatment, rehabilitation, and social reintegration rather than punishment alone. The same principle is reflected in the source material, which identifies prevention, counselling, rehabilitation, treatment, education, and reintegration as appropriate ethical responses.

For secondary-school students, beneficence means that schools should not merely expel students discovered using substances; where appropriate, they should provide counselling, involve parents or guardians, and facilitate professional assistance.

v. **Non-maleficence and the Prevention of Harm:** The principle of non-maleficence, or the obligation not to cause harm, operates at two levels. First, substance abuse itself can cause physical, psychological, educational, social, and moral harm. Second, interventions designed to control substance abuse can themselves become harmful if they are excessively punitive, humiliating, or discriminatory.

Obot's (1992) Nigerian analysis is particularly relevant here. He argues that drug-control strategies should not create additional harm for the citizens they are intended to protect. Thus, from an ethical perspective, a school disciplinary system should protect other students while avoiding unnecessary humiliation or stigmatization of students who abuse substances.

vi. **Stigma and Discrimination:** Stigma is another major ethical dimension. People who use substances are sometimes described as immoral, irresponsible, dangerous, or worthless. Such labels can prevent individuals from seeking help and can worsen their social exclusion. Adams and Volkow (2020) argue that stigma against persons with substance-use disorders can create barriers to treatment and compromise the quality of care they receive. Contemporary scholarship therefore encourages a movement away from purely blame-oriented approaches toward treatment and recovery.

This is especially significant for young people. Recent research on adolescents recovering from alcohol and drug use found that young people may experience stigma from family members, friends, and peers, and may also internalize that stigma themselves. Such stigma can interfere with the development of a healthy social identity and engagement with recovery services.

vii. **Right to Treatment and Rehabilitation:** An important ethical question is whether substance users should be given an opportunity for treatment and rehabilitation rather than punishment alone. Obot (1992) strongly criticized the historical Nigerian emphasis on punitive drug-control approaches at the expense of education, treatment, and rehabilitation. Similarly, a Nigerian-focused study on harm reduction argues that excessive reliance on "tough on drugs" approaches may be counterproductive and advocates non-custodial approaches involving social marketing, media education, counselling, and prevention. This suggests that ethical drug policy should seek



not merely to punish offenders but to reduce harm, change behaviour, restore individuals, and protect society.

viii. **Public Safety and the Common Good:** Substance abuse has consequences beyond the individual. It may affect families, schools, communities, health systems, and public safety. Consequently, government and educational institutions have an ethical obligation to protect the common good. Obot (1992) acknowledges the state's right and duty to protect citizens from drug-related harm, but emphasizes that such protection must be pursued through policies that do not themselves cause unjustified harm. Therefore, ethical substance-abuse policy must balance individual liberty with collective welfare. A student should not be permitted to endanger classmates through substance-related behaviour, but disciplinary measures should remain fair, proportionate, and rehabilitative.

ix. **Family and Social Responsibility:** Substance abuse also raises questions about responsibility toward others. Individuals do not live in isolation; their substance-related behaviour may affect parents, siblings, friends, classmates, teachers, and the wider community. Snoek et al. (2021) demonstrate this ethical tension particularly in relation to parental substance abuse, where the interests of substance-dependent adults may conflict with the interests of children and other vulnerable persons. They propose an ethics-of-care perspective that emphasizes relationships and vulnerability. This perspective is applicable to secondary schools because adolescent substance abuse must be understood within the relationships among students, parents, peers, teachers, religious institutions, and the wider community.

x. **Moral Responsibility and Accountability:** Substance abuse presents a difficult question concerning moral accountability. A person may initially make a voluntary decision to experiment with a substance, but continued use may result in dependence and reduced self-control. Roberts and Bullock (2011) therefore identify questions of impaired control and autonomy as important ethical concerns in addiction.

A balanced ethical position should recognize both personal responsibility and the realities of dependence. Students should understand that substance abuse carries consequences, but intervention should also recognize the psychological, social, familial, and environmental factors that contribute to the behaviour.

xi. **Nigerian Youth and the Moral Dimension of Substance Abuse:** Nigerian scholars have also highlighted the moral and social consequences of substance abuse among young people. Adetiloye and Osunwoye (2022) describe drug abuse among Nigerian youths as a growing public-health and social problem, noting its harmful effects and the need for increased vigilance and research-driven prevention and management. Similarly, Abiodun et al. (1994), studying secondary-school students in Ilorin, Nigeria, identified psychosocial factors associated with alcohol, cigarette, and cannabis use, including school location, study difficulties, mental-health concerns, gender, and age. These findings suggest that an ethical analysis should not reduce adolescent substance abuse to individual moral weakness; rather, it should examine the social and environmental circumstances that influence behaviour.

Challenges and Consequences of Substance Abuse

1. **Poor Academic Performance:** Substance abuse impairs concentration, memory, and cognitive abilities, leading to poor academic achievement and examination failure. Studies in Nigeria have linked substance abuse with declining educational performance and school misconduct. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA, 2024) explains that substance use during adolescence can interfere with brain development and may affect learning, decision-making, and academic functioning. Similarly, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2024) highlights the negative effects of drug use on young people's health and social development. Poor academic performance may eventually reduce educational attainment and limit future employment and income opportunities.

2. **Health Problems/Increased healthcare costs:** drug abuse can cause, Mental illness, Depression, Anxiety disorders, Liver damage, respiratory diseases, Addiction, Premature death. Substance abuse increases spending on emergency care, hospitalization, treatment, mental-health services, and the management of diseases and injuries associated with substance use. These costs place a financial burden on individuals and public healthcare systems (World Health Organization [WHO], 2024).

3. **School Dropout:** Students involved in substance abuse often lose interest in education, resulting in absenteeism and eventual dropout. Substance abuse can contribute to school dropout, which has long-term economic consequences for individuals and society. Students who misuse alcohol or drugs may experience poor academic performance, absenteeism, disciplinary problems, and difficulty concentrating, all of which can increase the likelihood of leaving school before completing their education (UNODC, 2024).

4. **Violence, Criminal and Legal Lost Activities:** Drug abuse increases aggressive behavior, cultism, theft, bullying, and other forms of delinquency among students. Some forms of substance abuse are associated with criminal activity, including drug-related offenses and crimes committed while intoxicated or to obtain money for drugs. Governments consequently spend resources on policing, courts, prisons, and other aspects of the criminal justice system (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2024).

5. **Social Isolation:** Substance abuse damages relationships with family members, teachers, and peers, leading to social exclusion. Substance abuse can lead to social isolation, which occurs when individuals withdraw from family, friends, school, work, and other social activities. People who misuse substances may experience stigma, discrimination, conflict with family members, and loss of relationships, causing them to become increasingly isolated (WHO, 2024).

6. **Moral Degeneration:** Drug abuse weakens moral judgment and encourages behaviors that violate societal norms and values. Substance abuse can contribute to moral degeneration, referring to a decline in responsible behaviour, self-control, and adherence to socially accepted values. Individuals affected by substance abuse may engage in behaviours such as dishonesty, neglect of family responsibilities, violence, or other risky and antisocial activities. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2024)



Ethical Challenges Faced by Society and Communities

Substance abuse presents several ethical concerns for society:

1. **Erosion of Moral Values:** The increasing acceptance of drug use among young people undermines societal values such as discipline, honesty, responsibility, and respect.
2. **Threat to Human Dignity:** Every human being possesses inherent dignity. Substance abuse often leads to self-destructive behavior that diminishes personal worth and human flourishing.
3. **Increased Crime and Insecurity:** Drug abuse contributes to criminal behavior, creating fear and insecurity within communities.
4. **Family Disintegration:** Families experience emotional distress, financial hardship, and conflict when children become involved in substance abuse.
5. **Burden on Public Resources:** Governments and communities spend significant resources on healthcare, rehabilitation, law enforcement, and social welfare related to substance abuse. Recent reports from NDLEA indicate that drug abuse remains a major challenge among Nigerian youths, with millions of Nigerians affected and secondary school students considered particularly vulnerable.

Recommendations

To address substance abuse among secondary school students in Chikun LGA, the following measures are recommended:

- I. **Strengthen Drug Education:** Schools should incorporate comprehensive drug education into the curriculum.
- II. **Parental Involvement:** Parents should monitor their children's activities and maintain open communication.
- III. **Guidance and Counseling Services:** Qualified counselors should be available in schools to provide support and early intervention.
- IV. **Religious and Moral Education:** Churches, mosques, and schools should intensify moral and ethical instruction.
- V. **Community Awareness Programs:** Community leaders should organize regular sensitization campaigns.
- VI. **Collaboration with NDLEA, Government:** Schools should partner with NDLEA and the government for prevention programs and awareness campaigns.

Conclusion

Substance abuse among secondary school students in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State represents a serious educational, social, ethical, and spiritual challenge. Its consequences include poor academic performance, health complications, violence, criminal behavior, and moral decline. From a Christian ethical perspective, substance abuse violates principles of self-control,

stewardship, and respect for human dignity. Sustainable solutions require the collective efforts of families, schools, religious institutions, communities, and government agencies. Through ethical education, counseling, peace-building initiatives, and effective law enforcement, substance abuse can be reduced, thereby fostering healthier and more peaceful communities.

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