



EFFECT OF LOGO THERAPY ON PERCEPTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TARABA STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

Substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria, has emerged as a critical public health and educational concern with far-reaching consequences for academic performance, psychological well-being, and social functioning. This study examined the effect of Logo therapy on perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria. Two specific objectives guided the study: to determine the effect of Logo therapy on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students, and to determine its effect according to gender. A quasi-experimental pre-test post-test on treatment and control groups design was adopted. A sample of 100 secondary school students participated in the study. The Perception of Substance Abuse Questionnaire (POSAQ) was used as the instrument for data collection. The instrument recorded a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.851. Data were analyzed using paired samples t-test and independent samples t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Results revealed that Logo therapy had a significant effect on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students ($t = 36.297$, $df = 99$, $p < .05$), but there was no significant difference in the effect of Logo therapy on perception of substance abuse according to gender ($t = 1.006$, $df = 98$, $p > .05$). It was concluded that Logo therapy is a potent psychological intervention for reshaping students' perception of substance abuse irrespective of gender. It was recommended that school counsellors in Taraba State integrate Logo therapy into their guidance and counselling programmes to address substance abuse prevention among adolescents.

Keywords: Logo therapy, perception, substance abuse, secondary school students, Taraba State, gender

INTRODUCTION

Substance abuse is a growing global concern, particularly among adolescents who are increasingly vulnerable to experimenting with psychoactive substances such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and prescribed medications. The World Health Organization (2022) reports that early substance use is strongly associated with a range of negative outcomes, including impaired brain development, academic failure, and an increased risk of mental health disorders. The global trend shows a troubling rise in the number of young people who engage in substance abuse due to factors such

as peer influence, emotional instability, and limited access to accurate health information. These challenges underscore the need for effective psychological interventions that can reshape perceptions and prevent the development of addictive behaviours.

In Nigeria, substance abuse among young people has escalated due to socio-economic instability, unemployment, weak regulatory enforcement, and cultural attitudes towards drug use. The problem is especially evident in secondary schools, where students are exposed to drugs such as tramadol, codeine, and Indian hemp, often resulting in academic decline and behavioural problems. According to Usman and Adamu (2022), the increase in drug use among Nigerian adolescents poses a serious threat to the country's educational and social systems. This high prevalence is attributed to factors such as peer pressure, family instability, and the easy accessibility of drugs, leading to increased rates of violence, academic failure, and mental health issues among Nigerian youth.

In Taraba State specifically, substance abuse among students has emerged as a critical issue reflecting broader national trends. A recent survey conducted by the Taraba State Ministry of Education (2022) revealed that approximately 25% of secondary school students in the region had experimented with drugs, including marijuana, codeine, and various inhalants. Factors such as socio-economic challenges, limited recreational opportunities, and peer pressure contribute significantly to this alarming trend, leading to increased school dropouts, poor academic performance, and heightened incidences of juvenile delinquency (Ibrahim & Musa, 2021). These efforts are often hampered by inadequate funding, lack of trained personnel, and cultural stigmas associated with seeking help for substance abuse.

Perception plays a crucial role in shaping students' behaviour toward substance use. When students view substance abuse as acceptable, harmless, or even beneficial, they are more likely to experiment with or regularly use drugs. These perceptions are influenced by misconceptions, peer approval, and limited awareness of the consequences of drug use (Yahaya & Jimoh, 2018). Students' perception of substance abuse is not formed in isolation; it is deeply influenced by their exposure to environmental and social factors such as family background, peer relationships, school policies, and the media. These elements help shape their beliefs about the acceptability, risks, or benefits of drug use. When perceptions are distorted due to poor drug education or misleading media portrayals, students may underestimate the dangers associated with substance abuse. Addressing these misperceptions through targeted awareness campaigns and school-based interventions can help shift students' attitudes and reduce the tendency to engage in drug-related behaviours (Olagunju and Eze, 2023).

Logo therapy, founded by Viktor Frankl, emphasizes finding meaning and purpose in life, which can significantly impact adolescents' attitudes towards substance abuse. According to Frankl (2019), the search for meaning is a primary motivational force in humans. This is particularly relevant for secondary school students, who are at a critical developmental stage. By helping students discover a sense of purpose, logo therapy can reduce the appeal of substance use as a coping mechanism. A study by Smith and Johnson (2016) found that adolescents who participated in logo therapy sessions reported a significant increase in their perception about the dangers of substance abuse. The therapy sessions provided them with tools to understand the negative consequences of drug use, which in turn influenced their attitudes and behaviours. This suggests that logo therapy can be an effective educational tool in substance abuse prevention programmes

(Smith and Johnson, 2016). This study therefore investigated the effect of Logo therapy on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria, has become an increasing concern, with observable trends indicating a growing tolerance and risky perception toward drug use among adolescents. Many students perceive substance abuse as a means of coping with academic stress, social pressure, or personal challenges, while others see it as fashionable or harmless due to peer influence and misleading media portrayals. These distorted perceptions have contributed to a rise in experimentation with substances such as codeine, marijuana, and tramadol, despite awareness campaigns and school regulations.

Unfortunately, conventional disciplinary measures and awareness programmes appear to have limited impact in reshaping these harmful beliefs and behaviours. This raises critical questions about the effectiveness of alternative psychological interventions such as Logo therapy, which is designed to promote value-based thinking and encourage personal responsibility through meaning-centred dialogue. The problem, therefore, lies in the urgent need to assess how Logo therapy can influence and potentially improve the perception of secondary school students towards substance abuse in Taraba State. There is limited empirical research on the effectiveness of Logo therapy on secondary school students' perception of substance abuse in Taraba State, creating an evidence gap that this study seeks to fill.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to examine the effect of Logo therapy on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the effect of Logo therapy on perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria.
2. Determine the effect of Logo therapy on perception of substance abuse among secondary school students according to gender in Taraba State, Nigeria.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant effect of Logo therapy on perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant effect of Logo therapy on perception of substance abuse among secondary school students according to gender in Taraba State, Nigeria.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on two major theories, Logo Theory developed by Viktor Frankl and Social Cognitive Theory developed by Albert Bandura. These theories provide the foundation for explaining how counselling interventions can influence students' perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Logo Theory (Viktor Frankl) 1938

Logo Theory, also known as Logo therapy, was developed by Viktor Frankl in 1938 as an existential approach to psychotherapy. The theory emphasizes that the primary motivation of human beings is the search for meaning in life rather than the pursuit of pleasure or power (Frankl, 1985). Frankl argued that life has meaning under all conditions, including suffering, and that individuals can endure challenges when they discover a sense of purpose.

The theory is centred on three major principles: freedom of will, will to meaning, and meaning of life. Freedom of will suggests that individuals possess the ability to make choices regardless of external conditions. The will to meaning explains that human beings are naturally driven to seek purpose and fulfilment, while the meaning of life emphasizes that each person can discover meaning through relationships, achievements, values, and attitudes toward suffering (Frankl, 1985).

Logo Theory employs therapeutic techniques such as Socratic dialogue, dereflection, and attitude modification. Socratic dialogue involves guided questioning to help individuals identify their values and life goals. Dereflection redirects attention away from excessive self-focus toward meaningful activities and relationships, while attitude modification encourages individuals to adopt positive attitudes in difficult situations (Lukas, 2019).

Logo Theory is especially relevant in addressing substance abuse among adolescents and secondary school students. Substance abuse is often associated with feelings of emptiness, hopelessness, and lack of purpose. Logo therapy helps students discover meaning, personal goals, and positive values, thereby reducing their likelihood of engaging in drug and alcohol abuse. Research by Steger et al. (2014) showed that individuals involved in meaning-centred therapy demonstrated stronger motivation for recovery and lower relapse tendencies. In educational settings, Logo Theory can help students develop positive attitudes, resilience, and a sense of direction. Meaning-centred educational programmes encourage students to connect their behaviours with future aspirations and responsible decision-making. Wong (2016) reported that students exposed to meaning-centred interventions showed improved academic performance and psychological well-being.

Logo Theory offers a valuable framework for addressing students' perceptions and attitudes toward substance abuse. By helping adolescents discover meaning and purpose in life, the theory promotes resilience, healthy decision-making, and psychological well-being. Its integration with other counselling approaches makes it an effective strategy for reducing substance abuse and fostering positive development among secondary school students.

METHOD

The researcher adopted a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest for this study. This design was considered appropriate because it allowed for the measurement of changes in students' perception of substance abuse before and after the Logo therapy intervention, while controlling for pre-existing differences between groups. The target population comprised secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria. A sample of 100 secondary school students was drawn using purposive sampling, comprising 25 males and 75 females. Participants were selected based on identified susceptibility to substance abuse and willingness to participate in the counselling

intervention. Data were collected using the Perception of Substance Abuse Questionnaire (POSAQ), a 20-item researcher-developed instrument rated on a 4-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated by experts in counselling psychology and educational measurement. Reliability was established through a pilot test of 40 respondents, yielding a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.851, indicating high internal consistency. The Logo therapy intervention was conducted in structured group sessions over a period of eight weeks. The sessions incorporated key Logo therapy techniques including Socratic dialogue, dereflection, values clarification, attitude modification, and existential reflection exercises. Each session lasted approximately 60 minutes and was facilitated by a trained counsellor. Pre-test data were collected before the commencement of the intervention, while post-test data were gathered immediately after its conclusion. Data were analyzed using paired samples t-test to determine the effect of Logo therapy on students' perception of substance abuse, and independent samples t-test to examine gender differences in post-test perception scores. All analyses were conducted at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS version 25.0.

RESULTS

Hypothesis One: There is no significant effect of logo therapy on perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State Nigeria.

Table 1: Paired Sample t-test on Effect of Logo Therapy on Perception of Substance Abuse Among Secondary School Students

Abuse Among Secondary School Students

	Paired Differences		Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation		Lower	Upper			
PRETEST_POSA Q_LOGO POSTTEST_POSA Q_LOGO	1.76824	.48716	.0487	1.86490	1.86490	36.29	99	.000
			2			7		

Source: Field work (2026)

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to examine the effect of Logo therapy on students' perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria. The result revealed a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores, $t(99) = 36.30$, $p < .05$. The mean difference between the pretest and posttest scores was 1.77 (SD = 0.49), with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.67 to 1.86. This indicates that students' perception of substance abuse significantly improved after exposure to Logo therapy. Since the p-value (.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that Logo therapy has a significant effect on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant effect of logo therapy on perception of substance abuse among secondary school students according to gender in Taraba State Nigeria.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-test on Effect of Logo Therapy on Perception of Substance Abuse Among Secondary School Students According to Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Difference	Lower	Upper
POSTTE	Equal variances assumed	1.076	.302	1.006	98	.317	.08032	.07987	-.07818	.23881
ST_POSA	Equal variances not assumed			.956	37.976	.345	.08032	.08399	-.08971	.25034
Q_LOGO										

Source: Field work (2026)

An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine the effect of Logo therapy on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students according to gender in Taraba State, Nigeria. The result revealed no statistically significant difference between male and female students' posttest scores, $t(98) = 1.01$, $p = .317$. The mean difference between the two groups was 0.08, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.08 to 0.24. Since the confidence interval includes zero, it indicates that the observed difference in perception between male and female students may have occurred by chance. Given that the p-value (.317) is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that Logo therapy has no significant differential effect on students' perception of substance abuse based on gender.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first finding revealed that Logo therapy has a significant effect on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria. This finding implies that when adolescents are helped to discover meaning and purpose in life through logotherapeutic interventions, their understanding and perception of substance abuse undergoes a measurable shift. This finding is in alignment with Frankl's foundational premise that the search for meaning is the primary motivational force in human life, and when this need is met, individuals are less prone to escapist behaviours such as substance abuse. This is consistent with Obi and Nwosu (2022), who

stated that Logo therapy, by orienting individuals toward life's deeper meaning, significantly reduces the attractiveness of substance use as a coping mechanism, thereby transforming their perception of drugs from a solution to a problem. It is also in line with Okafor, Eze, and Chukwu (2021), who observed that adolescents exposed to logotherapeutic sessions demonstrated significantly improved awareness of the dangers and consequences of substance abuse, indicating a clear perceptual change. Furthermore, it corroborates the position of Emeka and Adaeze (2020), who found that Logo therapy effectively enhanced secondary school students' perception of risk associated with substance use, noting that students who underwent the therapy showed greater cognizance of the physical, psychological, and social hazards of drug abuse. In the same vein, Nwosu and Obiechina (2023) affirmed that Logo therapy's existential focus equips young people with values-based decision-making skills that reframe their perception of substance abuse as incompatible with a purposeful life. Additionally, Ugwu, Okonkwo, and Eze (2019) established that Logo therapy-based group counselling interventions produced statistically significant differences in the perceptual orientation of adolescents toward substance use, with treated groups displaying more accurate and health-promoting perceptions of drug risks than control groups.

The second finding revealed that Logo therapy has no significant effect on the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students based on gender in Taraba State, Nigeria. This finding suggests that the benefits of Logo therapy on perception of substance abuse are equally distributed across male and female students, with gender not serving as a moderating variable. This finding is consistent with the position of Adebayo and Salami (2022), who noted that logotherapeutic group counselling interventions produced comparable outcomes across gender lines when applied to adolescent populations in Nigerian secondary schools, arguing that the existential and meaning-oriented nature of the therapy transcends gender-specific patterns. The finding also aligns with Okonkwo and Ibe (2020), who found no statistically significant gender-based differences in the outcomes of existential therapeutic approaches on substance-related perceptions, suggesting that the human need for meaning is universally distributed regardless of sex. This is corroborated by Suleiman, Abubakar, and Musa (2021), who in their study of Logo therapy among adolescents in Northern Nigeria concluded that both male and female participants benefited equally from the intervention, with no significant gender interaction effect observed on perceptual outcomes. Similarly, Eke and Okoye (2019) found in their comparative study that gender was not a significant predictor of Logo therapy outcomes among secondary school students in Nigeria, attributing this to the universal human experience of existential vacuum that the therapy addresses. This finding is further supported by Aneke and Obi (2023), who examined gender as a moderating variable in the effects of Logo therapy on adolescent behavioural perceptions and found no significant differential effects, concluding that Logo therapy is a gender-neutral intervention whose benefits are accessible to all students irrespective of their sex.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that Logo therapy is a highly effective psychological intervention for improving the perception of substance abuse among secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria. The therapy produced significant pre-to-post changes in students' perceptual orientation toward substance use, moving them from permissive or uninformed views to a more realistic and health-conscious understanding of the dangers of drug use. Furthermore, the effectiveness of Logo therapy was found to be consistent across gender, indicating that it is a universally applicable intervention for adolescent substance abuse prevention. The meaning-centred principles of Logo therapy equip students with the psychological tools

necessary to resist the social and environmental pressures that often precipitate substance experimentation and abuse in secondary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Since Logo therapy has a significant effect on students' perception of substance abuse, school counsellors should actively integrate Logo therapy techniques into counselling sessions to enhance students' understanding of substance abuse.
2. Given that Logo therapy shows no significant gender difference in perception, counsellors should apply Logo therapy interventions equally to both male and female students without gender bias.

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