The Use Of Psychotherapy In Rehabilitating Students With Conduct Disorders In Redeemer’s University, Nigeria

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Abstract
The need for the Nigerian society to adequately cater for areas of failure of public universities comprising incessant strikes, cultism, sexual harassment, substance abuse, poor academic performance and truancy has prompted the establishment of private universities in the country. Redeemer’s University, a private university, in line with this expectation has made provision to identify erring students and take disciplinary measures through a two-in-one intervention programme called Recovery of Destiny (ROD). ROD is a collaboration between the university and two organisations; Redeemed Christian School of Missions (RECSOM) for immoral conducts and Christ Against Drug Abuse Ministry (CADAM) for drug related conducts. This programme engages psychotherapeutic techniques and Christian faith exercises. Between 2012 and 2016, 51 cases of immoral conducts and 42 drug-related cases have been treated of which 50 and 37 cases were successfully rehabilitated respectively. However, 7 cases of immoral conduct and 8 drug related cases reoccurred within 6 months and 2 years after return to the campus. Results show the usefulness of psychotherapeutic intervention in the management of immoral conducts and drug related disorders, particularly among university undergraduates in faith based institutions. Hence, this approach is recommended for other tertiary institutions in Nigeria and nations with similar socio-cultural backgrounds.

Key words: Psychotherapy, Rehabilitation, Conduct Disorders, Students

Introduction
The place of knowledge creation and distribution in the development of human society cannot be overemphasized. Knowledge is indeed sine-qua-non to human development (Kalam, 2009). However, despite the presence of numerous educational institutions established to fulfil this function, Nigeria - Africa’s most populous country has yet suffered major setbacks politically, economically, socially and even educationally.

The growth of the Nigerian educational system, in particular tertiary educational institutions, has been impeded by several factors over the years. This in turn has caused major hindrances in the proper development of the Nigerian society. Incessant unrest has become a norm in several tertiary institutions in the country which in some cases has resulted in loss of
lives and properties (Adelola, 1999; Adewale, 2005; Ige, 2011; Igodo, 2002; Obadan, 1999; Osaigbovo, 2000; Ossai, 2001). Also, universities in Nigeria over the years have experienced constant fluctuations and compressions in academic calendar leading to the dwindled quality of training (Baikie, 2001).

Also, the rate at which industrial strike actions occur in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has become a source of concern (Afolabi, 2003; Obe, 2003; Onyenoru & Bankole, 2001;). While some strikes are born out of disagreement between staff members and university administrators over salary and other benefits, others are as a result of alleged mismanagement of fund by some officials and clamor for improved conditions of service (Onyenoru & Bankole, 2001; Odewunmi, 2003; Enomah, 2010). The union uses strike as a viable tool to emphasize their stand and make resolutions with the federal government. In 2013, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) embarked on a strike from 1st July 2013 to 17th December 2013 in order to visit areas of grievances with the Federal Government of Nigeria (Mohammed, 2013). The effect of these repeated closures of universities can only be better imagined than described. The unwholesome part of the story is that there seems to exist several groups within the university system such that when the government is resolving with one, another is about to down tools. This has subjected students to pitiable conditions disrupting academic programs and giving undeserved extension in their study years (Baikie, 2001).

Additionally, the rate of conduct disorder among university students in Nigeria is alarming. However, research shows that there are peculiar characteristics surrounding offences committed in educational institutions (Haigh & Clifford, 2008), that is, what may be considered an offence within a university premises may not be considered an offence in the larger society. Offences typically very rampant within university premises include drug and alcohol abuse, gambling, internet fraud, cultism and forcible rape (Westerheijden, Stensaker & Rosa, 2007).

In trying to understand student offences, the National Open University of Nigeria (2012) published a course guide describing various types of offenders in educational institutions, some of which are:

a) Moralistic Offenders: These offenders violate rules and regulations that forbid certain immoral actions such as gambling, smoking and drinking of alcohol.

b) Legalistic Offenders: These offenders break institutional laws simply because of their inability to understand their own actions; the offenders commit crimes unintentionally.

c) Habitual Offenders: These type of offenders easily yield to pressure and may be overpowered by circumstances that lead them to committing crimes repeatedly e.g. theft.

d) Psychotic Offenders: These offenders have difficulty controlling their behaviour and therefore engage in criminal acts due to psychological impairment.

e) Situational Offenders: These offenders deviate from the norm due to a sense of overpowering circumstances such as loss or failure.

f) Political Offenders: These offenders commit offences in order to gain political power and attain outcome that is political in nature.

g) Professional Offenders: These offenders violate institutional laws for business related purposes.
Despite the aforementioned challenges of tertiary education system in the country, the clamor for higher education is on the rise as the quest for education keeps deepening throughout the nation. The rapidly growing demand for tertiary education, the declining standard of education and a need to propagate moral values coupled with major challenges such as poor infrastructure in the universities, sexual harassment, cultism, violence and truancy that has pervaded characterize public owned universities has led to the creation of private universities in Nigeria since 1999 (Ige, 2013) as . Private universities are owned and managed by individuals and corporate/religious bodies (Shuaib, 2011), typically patronised by the middle class and wealthy due to their relatively expensive fees.

Although the rationale behind the establishment of private universities is to adequately cater for certain areas of failure of the public universities such as cultism, immorality, sexual harassment, abuse of dangerous substances, poor academic performance and truancy, it is surprising that only a few of these problems are being effectively tackled by the crop of private universities in Nigeria. The confirmation of this point is the fact that many of these universities have over time adopted different programmes to rehabilitate conduct disorders among erring undergraduates from their campuses. This study highlights the psychotherapeutic intervention adopted by Redeemer’s University, a Christian faith based institution, and response profile of the beneficiaries of the interventions.

**The Redeemer’s University and Student Rehabilitation**

The Redeemer’s University is a privately owned Christian faith based university located in Ede, Osun State. The University was established in 2005 by the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and awards foundational, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. The university has student population strength of about three thousand (3000) students.

Over the years, the university has been intolerant of students caught violating that rules and regulations of the university. The Redeemer’s University broadly classifies student offences into two categories which are: drug abuse related offences and general immoral conduct offences. Adeshina (2015) found out that many youngsters used illicit drugs to gain social acceptance. According to the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress (2014), parental use of illicit drugs may be a source of influence on children’s use of illicit drugs. Eiserer, Sulton and Wober (2007) are of the opinion that the mass media has propagated a lifestyle of substance abuse among many young people across the globe. In the instance where a student began to abuse substance before gaining admission into a university that prohibits drug use, the student is likely to yearn for the experience thereby violating the universities rules and regulation if he/she ends up abusing substance within the university premises (Mcdonald, Wodak, Dolan, Van Beek, Cunningham & Kaldor, 2000). Some of the substances commonly abused include tobacco, Indian hemp, cocaine, morphine, heroine, alcohol, ephedrine, madras, caffeine, glue, barbiturates and amphetamines (Oshikoya & Alli, 2006). General immoral conducts found among student offenders include examination malpractice, sexual harassment, internet fraud, homosexuality among others.

In 2015, the Vice Chancellor of the University, unveiled for the management of student offences called Recovery of Destiny (ROD). The initiative set out to reduce the rate of expulsion and foster reintegration by effectively managing student offences using religious and therapeutic processes in collaboration with two external
organizations namely Christ Against Drug Abuse Ministry (CADAM) and the Redeemed Christian School of Missions (RECSOM). The programme adopts psychotherapeutic strategies of behaviour modification which include psychoeducation, assertiveness training and counseling. It also adopts Christian faith based strategies such as faith building and engagement in intense praying and fasting. Student offenders upon expulsion are given the freewill to choose between either rehabilitation as an opportunity to be reintegrated into the university after completing the rehabilitation or outright expulsion.

Christ Against Drug Abuse Ministry (CADAM) is a non-governmental organization that works with the university to rehabilitate students offenders caught engaging in drug-related vices. The Coordinator of CADAM, Dr Dokun Adedeji while delivering a lecture at the 2014 Bells University Parents Forum on the topic “Challenges of the Growing Use and Abuse of Drugs in Tertiary Institutions” posited that drug abuse is a global challenge. He also stated that faith-based university students have been identified as major culprits. He further disclosed that the 21-year old undergraduate of Redeemer’s University who killed his father blamed his actions on the influence of drugs (Kukogbo, 2014).

The Redeemed Christian School of Missions (RECSOM) is headed by a pastor. RECSOM is the mission service training arm of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. This agency provides attitude/character alignment services for participants involved with immoral conducts. These conducts include assault, fighting, possession of pornographic materials, examination malpractices, forgery, and impersonation among others.

Between 2012 and 2016, 51 cases of immorality conduct and 42 drug related cases have been passed through the rehabilitation programmes. 50 and 37 cases were successfully rehabilitated through the psychotherapeutic programmes. 5 cases of immoral conduct and 8 cases of drug related behaviour were found to re-occur (relapse) after a period between 6 months and two years after return. Result shows the usefulness of psychotherapeutic intervention in the management of immoral conduct and drug related disorders particularly among institutions and hence recommended for other tertiary institutions in Nigeria, other nations and similar socio-cultural backgrounds.

Methods
This preliminary study involved expelled students from Redeemer’s University between the years 2012 and 2016. Data for the research was derived from compilation made by the Redeemer’s University Recovery of Destiny Committee headed by a pastor. Data was presented using quantitative method of research. The students expelled within this period were given an option to participate in the Recovery of Destiny, a University organized programme intended as attitude alignment programme for expelled students. Those who opt out of the Recovery of Destiny programme can only seek admission in other universities. However, the transcript of such students for transfer purposes will include a clause clearly stating the reason behind the expulsion as required by the guidelines of National Universities Commission (NUC) which is the regulatory body for university education in Nigeria.

A summary of offences committed by some students who have been expelled from the university between 2012 and 2016 is as follows: stealing of gadgets (phones, laptops, iPads), using ATM card to
withdraw funds without the consent of account holder, examination malpractices, impersonation (writing continuous assessment on behalf of a female friend), deceit (making a false excuse for leaving the University premises), consumption of marijuana and other related substances (Rohypnol, etc), engaging in immoral sexual activities within or outside the university, forging the university school fees receipt, sales of illicit substances such as marijuana, fighting within the school premises, possession of pornographic materials and misappropriation of school fees.

Two external organizations are presently collaborating with Redeemer’s University in the rehabilitation programme. The two agencies are Christ Against Drug Abuse Ministry (CADAM), Lagos and Redeemed Christian School of Missions (RECSOM), Ede. The programme runs for one academic session in both agencies where participants engage in several activities during the period, the most important one being psychotherapy which is often considered as counselling.

Participants were between the ages of 17 and 26 years and a few of them have been previously expelled from other universities before their admission to Redeemer’s University. A greater proportion of them attested to their involvement in drug abuse as the leading cause of their previous expulsion, 97.5% of such cases are male while 2.5% are female.

As a major psychotherapeutic intervention, participants were taken on individual therapy to possibly uncover the causation of their disorder, the role of their parents, peer pressure and the duration of their behaviour disorders. The programme involves activities that we can categorise psychotherapeutic strategies such as behaviour modification; psychoeducation, assertiveness training, counseling, and Christian faith based strategies such as faith building as well intense praying and fasting. The programme is fully residential and the participants are free to move and use the available recreational facilities to exercise themselves within the respective premises. The freedom of movement, expression and interaction is also therapeutic.

Participants who were sent to CADAM personally handled a number of activities including cooking, dishwashing and premises sanitation in groups. Participation in these activities is also therapeutic. Parents are hardly permitted to visit their wards in CADAM. This is unlike the pattern adopted for participants sent to RECSOM where parents are allowed to visit their wards at least once in two months. The participants in RECSOM are not assigned menial jobs unless they violate certain rules and regulations. This is because there are service providers who handle catering and laundry.

Results and Discussion
The Table 1 below presents the number of participants at the beginning of each of the programme from year 2012 to 2016.

**Table 1: Number of Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RECSOM</th>
<th>CADAM</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>2013/14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>2014/15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: Completion of Rehabilitation Programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Rehabilitated</th>
<th>Drop Out Of Rehabilitation</th>
<th>Successful Rehabilitation</th>
<th>Relapse Within 6mths-2yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RECSOM</td>
<td>51 (35%)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>30 (98%)</td>
<td>8 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CADAM</td>
<td>42 (45%)</td>
<td>5 (12%)</td>
<td>37 (88%)</td>
<td>9 (24.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>93 (100%)</td>
<td>6 (6.5%)</td>
<td>87 (93.5%)</td>
<td>17 (19.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result above shows the rate of successful completion of the rehabilitation programme. The total number of participants that began treatment across the period of review is 93 (100%), 51 (55%) in RECSOM and 42 (45%) in CADAM. However, in the course of the programme thus far, there has been a total of 6 (6.5%) cases of participation who dropped out during the rehabilitation phase, 1 (2%) from RESCOM and the other 5 (12%) from CADAM. 87 (98%) successfully completed the rehabilitation programme: 50 (98%) of which were rehabilitated for immoral conduct disorders in RECSOM and 37 (88%) for drug related disorders in CADAM. This suggests that the program has been effective. There were however a few students who after successful completion of the rehabilitation programme refused to continue their academic programme in the Redeemer’s University but decided to seek admission elsewhere for fear of stigmatization and discrimination by colleagues and old friends.

The table also shows the rate of relapse among participants after completing the rehabilitation programme; 8 (16%) of the participants who were rehabilitated for immoral conduct experienced a relapse while 9 (24.3%) participants who were rehabilitated for drug related offences suffered a relapse. In total, 17 (19.5%) of all participants that were rehabilitated experienced a relapse.

Conclusion
Findings from this preliminary study show the usefulness of psychotherapeutic intervention in the management of immoral conducts and drug related disorders, particularly among university undergraduates in faith based institutions. We can also conclude that the relapse rate was high, ranging from 16% for drug related disorders to 24.3% for immoral conduct, meaning that the employed therapeutic techniques was less efficacious for clients with drug related disorders than those with immoral conduct disorders. Those with immoral conduct disorders are likely to stay in therapy more than participants with drug related disorders.

Recommendation
The following recommendations are put forward based on the findings from the study:

1) Other universities in Nigeria, secular or faith-based, should emulate Redeemer’s University’s Recovery of Destiny programme.
2) University should endeavour to frequently organize sensitization of students on the dangers of drug abuse and immoral conducts.
3) There is a need for further research on more viable strategies that can be employed in rehabilitation of university students.

References


