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Research Article

DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG THE YOUTHS IN KEBBI STATE

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ABSTRACT

Drug abuse among youths in Kebbi has been a problem to the youths and the society in General. The consequences of drug abuse are not only on the individual user but also on his or her offspring, family and the society. Drugs abuse person will always lost his or her personalities in the society, it also make them to be dependent on some one due to laziness.

Drug abuse is also a major public health, social and individual problem and is seen as an aggravating factor for economic crises; hence, for Nigeria's poverty status. While youth are supposed to be the major agent of change and development, some of them have been destroyed by drug abuse. Drug abuse has a negative impact on the our Youth in their education arena. This work is expected to create awareness, expose and provide useful information to people especially to the youths on the effects of drug abuse.

KEYWORDS

Youths, Dangers, Among, Abuse, Drugs, State, Kebbi.

INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse is one of the social problems that affects everyone, everywhere, either directly or indirectly and children are no exception. (Mabeyo, 2010:8). Drug abuse attraction may be cultivated from early beginning of children lives, either indirectly during pregnancy life or directly during post natal life. The

interaction theory centers around the assumption that through interaction with peers and social learning is when the child learns by his own will on how to use drugs and other anti-social behavior which is in the surrounding environment where the child lives, (Possi, 1996:118) mentioned that the learning theory "holds

that opportunities for a person to use drugs are generated by his association with the users. Thus a person finds support and various reinforcing agents from his peers and becomes a member in the group. Interactional theories include conforming to peer group expectations where drug usage is part of the expected behavior, along with certain tasks in music, clothes and leisure activities.” Drug is any medical or chemical substance that when taken into the body by any means causes a change in the body. (Kilonzo,1996:70). Drug abuse is the sporadic or persistence excessive use of any chemical or substance for any reason other than its acceptable medical purposes which may lead to dependence on drugs has been defined by emotional problem as estates and sometimes also as physical, resulting from the interaction between a living organism and a drug characterized by behavioral and other responses that always include a compulsion to take the drug on continuous or periodic and sometimes to avoid the discomfort of its absence, (Kilonzo,1996:170). An addict is someone who cannot stop using drugs. Diagnosis of substances or drug abuse is determined by the effects of drug use has on an individual functioning, child has to experience one or more of four symptoms related to their drug use within the past year. That is failure to meet obligation of going to school or home, having legal problems like arrested for public intoxication, interpersonal problems like fighting with schoolmates, giving out bad words, etc. Use of one or more substances to meet the intended goal, withdrawal symptoms, that is when one is not using the substance he gets effects such as shakes pain, diarrhea and sniffing.

DRUG ABUSE AND RELATED CONCEPTS

Drug Abuse:

It is the chronic use of a drug for a reason other than for which it was intended. It is the bad use of a drug for example alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, heroin, mandrax and cocaine.

Drug misuse:

This is using a drug for a reason other than its clinical purpose. When a person starts taking drugs regularly, the drugs produce tolerance, addiction, withdrawals and psychological dependence.

CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE

Drug abuse has no single cause. It is important to examine and consider the different theories about possible causes of the problems. Peer influence is one of the causes of drug abuse among the youth in borno. Many youngsters are pulled into drugs by those they associate with. It is learned from those already involved in the practice. Bandura and Walter developed a „social learning theory” of personality which supports this fact. To them, this theory is based on the premise that behaviour is learned and personality can be explained in terms of cumulative effects of a series of learning experiences. The same observation was made by Edwin H. Sutherland and Donald R. Cressey in their „Differential Association Theory”. They formulated the theory in such a way as to show how and otherwise obedient person through stages of successive events begins to engage in deviant or anti-social behaviour. The theory shows how deviant behaviour is learnt without so much biological and psychological defects. Impersonal agencies of communication such as movies, television, radios and newspapers play an important role in the genesis of antisocial behaviour. Drug abuse as a form of anti-social behaviour can be learned through these media. There is however no scientific fact to show the extent to which these agencies have influenced the youth into

drug used in Borno. Some of those thought to have been influenced by this media into the habits actually copy them from their peers and parents. Most of the youth involved in drug abuse do not have access to these media. According to the social control theory, the weakening of the social controls allows the youth to be involved in drugs. With rapid industrialization, urbanization and increased movements to urban areas, new ways of life have been ushered in and new values have replaced the old ones, therefore, creating conditions under which behaviour can be variously defined. Age-old taboos and traditional social control mechanism have ceased to have force, opening the door to permissiveness that has led the youth to indulge in antisocial behaviour including drug abuse. Parents are no longer in the firm position to direct and guide their children. Some of the youth live far away from their parents, either in school or other learning institutions or may be working. Lack of parental care due to the working situations of the mother or both parents and the disintegration of joint family system have tended to encourage the vice. The child relationship with the parents especially the mother is very important in the child development as it shapes the child behaviour. The children according to the socialization theory need both parents to grow up as a normal law abiding youth. Broken homes in Nigeria have caused or increased the percentage of the youngsters involve in drug abuse. But more distractive than the broken homes in a child's growth where parent live together in atmosphere of tension and unhappiness. Frustrations and emotional stress due to failures, sorrows of miseries of life lead people to drug abuse. Rms as they came and so they resort to drugs to forget their problems. But the problem never really go away and soon such people became hooked to drugs. Some people take drugs because they are depressed while other are depressed because they are taking

drugs. Slum areas in cities and towns can also be said to contribute to increase drug abuse.

SPECIFIC DRUGS AND THEIR EFFECTS

Alcohol

Alcohol is contained in drinks such as beer, wine, brandy, spirits and whisky. It is an extremely potent drug. It acts on their body primarily as a depressant and lowers down the brain activity. However, in low doses it can be a stimulant. If used in excess, it will damage or even kill body tissues including muscles and brain cells. Its consumption causes a number of marked changes in behaviour. Even low doses impair judgement and coordination. With extreme intoxication the drinker may lapse into comma. Alcohol has produced many enjoyable moments and sad ones as well. The street names used for alcohol include: booze, pints, slaush, brew and jolly juice. If combined with other depressants of the central nervous system, much lower doses of alcohol will produce the effect just described. Repeated use can lead to dependency. Sudden withdrawal of alcohol intake is likely to produce withdrawal symptoms including severe anxiety, tremors, hallucinations and convulsions. Alcohol withdrawal can be life threatening. Long term consumptions particularly when combined with poor nutrition can led to permanent damage to vital organs such as the brain and the liver. Mothers who drink alcohol during pregnancy may give birth to infants with fetal alcohol syndrome. These infants have irreversible physical abnormalities and mental retardation. In addition research indicates that children of alcoholic parents are at greater risk of becoming.

Tobacco

Tobacco comes in form of cigarettes, cigars, snuff and in smokeless tobacco. Cigarettes are considered a

gateway drugs-a drug first experimented with before trying other drugs with greater psychoactive effects. Smokers are more likely than non-smokers to contract heart disease. Lungs, larynx, oesophagus, bladder, pancreatic and kidney cancer also strike smokers. Smoking during pregnancy poses serious risk. Spontaneous abortion, preterm birth, low birth weight and fatal and infant deaths are all more likely to occur when the pregnant woman is a smoker. The most dangerous substance in tobacco is nicotine. Although it is implicated in the onsets of heart attacks and cancer, its dangerous roles is reinforcing and strengthening the desire to smoke. Because nicotine is highly addictive, addicts find it very difficult to stop smoking. The likelihood of contracting lung cancer is greatly reduced by quitting smoking. The street names used for tobacco include cigs, smokes, mozo, fegi and butts.

Cannabis

It is commonly known as bhang. Also known as marijuana and hashish (cannabis resin). Cannabis is a bisexual stalk plant with green leaves and grows wild in many parts of the country. The cultivation of the herbal cannabis commonly known as bhang is spread throughout the country especially. Cannabis is grown in forests, hilly terrain, river banks or concealed among other crops far away from homes. Chemical spraying is to be recommended for eradication. All forms of cannabis have negative, physical and mental effects. Substantial increase in heartbeat, blood shot eyes, a dry mouth and throat and increased appetite are characteristics of its use. Use of cannabis may impair or reduce short term memories and comprehension, alter sense of time and reduce ability to perform tasks requiring concentration and coordination for example driving. Research shows that those use them like students do not retain knowledge when under

influence. Motivation and cognition may be altered making the acquisition of new information difficult. Marijuana can also produce paranoia and psychosis. Because users often inhale the unfiltered smoke deeply and then hold it in the lungs for as long as possible, marijuana is damaging to the lungs and pulmonary system. Marijuana smoke contains more cancer agents than tobacco smoke. Long term users of cannabis may develop psychological dependents and require more of the drug to get the same effect. The drug can become the centre of their lives. Chronic use leads to damaged lungs, chest pains, bronchitis, emphysema, hallucinations/fantasies, abnormal sperm forms in the male and decreased ovulation or increased menstrual irregularities in female.

Heroin

This is a narcotic drug that lowers perception of pain. It is fine brown/white powder chemically extracted from opium poppy. Heroin finds way into the country into the country through Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) from India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Thailand. Seizure statistics indicate that nationals of Nigeria, Tanzania and Pakistan are the major traffickers. Kenya nationals have also been arrested for trafficking the drug locally and abroad. In 1999, 22 suspects and a total 17 kg of this drug was seized compared to 9 kg in 1998 making an increase of 78.2 %. Local abuse of this drug is prevalent in Nairobi, Mombasa and Malindi towns. The use of this drug leads to Euphoria, reduced appetite, chronic bronchitis, tetanus, hepatitis and endocarditic. Overdose leads to reduce oxygen to the brain, suppressed respiration, coma or even death. It is medically used as an aesthetic and cough suppressant.

Cocaine

It is a crystalline-whitish powder chemically produced by cocoa leaves. This drug is sourced from South Africa of Brazil and Colombia but its availability and abuse in Kenya is minimal. Only 1 kg and 110 gm was seized in 1998 and 1999 respectively. The leaves traditionally were chewed to suppress hunger. It is applied to the gum of the mouth, tongue, eyelids or private parts to delay orgasm. It is also injected and favorably snorted. Its use causes sleeplessness, excitement, loss of appetite, increased sexual desire and feeling of self satisfaction. Prolonged use leads to loss of weight, impotence, blindness, orgasm failure, stomach problems, liver and lung damage. Overdose leads to death due to respiratory paralysis or cardiac arrest.

CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG ABUSE BY THE YOUTH

The abuse of alcohol and other drugs lead to acute effect on the body. It alters judgment, vision, coordination and speech and also leads to risk taking behaviour. Drug use increases the likelihood of being involved in traffic accidents which may lead to death or injury. In the USA alcohol related highway, accidents are the principle cause of death among young people aged 15-24 (teenage drivers). About half of all youth death in drowning, fires and suicide and homicides are alcoholic related. The youth involved in drug related problems affecting their relation with family members and friends. They are likely to be involved in fights and these get them into trouble with the law. Because drugs lead to irresponsible sexual behaviour, girls abusing drugs are likely to get pregnant. Many of the employed youth who abuse drug lose their jobs due to absenteeism and sometimes inefficiency. Drug use is known to lower performance and productivity. In some cases some of the youngsters may resort to embezzlement, forgery, corruption, bribery and extortion in order to many their drinking habits. Prolonged drinking and use of drugs in some situation

leads to psychiatric disorders such as delusional state and chronic dementia. It may lead to death from, for example alcoholic poisoning. Overdose of some of the drugs cause death and prolonged use of most of them lead to a host life threatening diseases. Drug use leads to poor performance in learning. Drugs erode self discipline and motivation necessary for learning. Research shows that drug use leads to declined in academic performance. Drug use is closely tied to being truant and dropping out of school. Those using drugs are mostly likely to skip school. A research in Philadelphia shows that dropouts were almost twice as likely to be frequent drug users. Drug use is associated with crime and misconduct that disrupt the maintenance of an orderly and safe school atmosphere conducive to learning. It leads to distraction of school property and classroom disorder as was seen in many Kenyan schools in the year 2001. Drug use has also been linked to law breaking and involvement in other form of crime. Drug users engage in fights, distraction and disrespect to others. Some steal from family members, friends or employers to buy drugs. Police records indicate relations between alcoholism and various aggressive and criminal acts. Investigation by sociologists and scientists on alcoholism crime relationship reveal that there is a resemblance between structure of alcoholics and criminals. Crimes are usually planned in liquor shops and bars where alcohol is sold. The offenders generally consume alcohol or liquor to overcome their inhibitions and emotional strains. Alcohol and narcotic help remove the element of self criticism from the criminal in relation to himself and his acts. The illegality of purchase and possession of alcohol and narcotic drugs make alcoholic and drug addicts delinquent. Alcoholism and drug addiction being a conduct forbidden by law lead to related crimes like illicit spirit distilling and alcoholic brewery, smuggling of intoxicating drugs, racketeering, underhand deal in

transmission of alcohol and narcotics from one place to another and bribing officials to escape arrest and punishment.

SOLUTION TO THE DRUG PROBLEM

We should not delude ourselves that there are short, swift or easy solutions to drug abuse problem. As one French social worker said, „Any person or any community hoping to change a specific delinquent problem must accept the fact that it is a long thoughtful process, often of discouragement and delay. It is expensive in terms of money, time and effects. It needs hardly be pointed out, however, that the result of delinquency or anti-social behaviour is twice as costly“. The problem of anti-social behaviour is for the whole community and should not be left to a few institutions like schools churches police and courts and professionals like psychologists, psychiatrics and social workers. It should be recognised as their own problem by every individual in the community even if their own children are not involved. The Kenya government has recognised the seriousness of the drug problem and initiated the National Campaign against Drug Abuse (NACADA) in early 2001. This organisation is charged with the responsibility of coordinating activities of individuals and organisations in the campaign against drug abuse. Its mandate is to initiate public education campaign and develop an action plan aimed at curbing drug abuse by the youth. As a first step to prevent and control drug abuse, parents should be sensitised on the dangers of drug abuse, the attendant problems and their functions as role models. They should be encouraged to teach standards of right and wrong. They should instil in the youth, habits, skills and attitudes that will help them become better citizens. Parents should be able to help children resist peer pressure to use alcohol and other drugs by supervising their activities, knowing who their

friends are and talking to them about their interests and problems. They should be knowledgeable about drugs and signs of drug use and when symptoms are observed, response should prompt. Schools should have a drug prevention curriculum from Kindergarten onwards teaching that drug use is wrong and harmful. There should be collaborative arrangement with parents, school boards, law enforcement officers, treatment organizations and non-governmental organizations. There is also need for the school to be in contract with social workers and counselors. These trained personnel should be able to evaluate are relief the pressure that often contribute to the child's failure. The government should train and procure teachers who have demonstrated their activities to work with the children. Education curriculum should not be too stressing. Schools should be able to offer education serves different needs, abilities and talents. Schools should be able to determine the extent and character of alcohol and other drug use and monitor it regularly. Clear and specific rules regarding drug use that include strong corrective action should be established. Students should be encouraged to use their understanding on the dangers of drug use to help other students avoid it. They should encourage other students to resist drugs and persuade those using them to seek help and report those using them to seek help and report those selling drugs to parents and school authorities. There is need for initiation of rehabilitation programmes for drug dependent persons. For the programmes to succeed there is need for continuity and a high degree of co-ordination and a close co-operation between private and government agencies if their existence is to make sense. Guidance personnel like psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers should be readily available and accessible. Counselling, psychotherapy and treatment should be availed. Family based treatment has been found to be especially effective with young drug and alcohol

abusers. It is said to be more difficult to initiate in adulthood when a majority of people no longer reside with the parents. For drug abusers who happen to be prosecuted, the courts should be able to give them a chance to reform through probation.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that the major causes of drug abuse among undergraduates of University of Ilorin was the need to cope with academic challenges. Findings also revealed that the main consequences of drug abuse among undergraduates of the University of Ilorin was low self-esteem. Findings further revealed that there was no significant difference in the causes of drug abuse among undergraduates of University of Ilorin based on gender and their faculty. In addition, findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the consequences of drug abuse among undergraduates of University of Ilorin based on gender and faculty.

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