

An Assessment of the Effects of Drug Abuse on the Youths of Ikot Abasi Local Government Area

By

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Abstract

This study was carried out to examine the effects of drug abuse on the youths of Ikot Abasi Local Government Area. Two specific objectives were formulated to guide the study. The researcher adopted a descriptive survey design for the study as it created a platform for the researcher to make full description of the causes, effects and extent of the effects caused by the variables. A total of 200 questionnaires were administered randomly to a cross section of respondents. The research also employed chi-square in the analysis and testing of the hypothesis. The research revealed that there is a high level of drug abuse among youths in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area. It is evident in the researcher's observation that youths are the most vulnerable and deeply involved group in the social menace of drug abuse. This abuse comes with its attendant effect of physical assault, physical attack, mental depreciation, crime and deaths. The study observed that youths in Ikot Abasi L. G. Area were strongly engaged in drug abuse. Furthermore, the study proved that drug abuse creates devastating effect on the health of the individual social structural institution and human capacities. One of the recommendations was that government should ensure that it establishes drug and alcohol vigilantes to monitor and punish drug traders, drug addicts as this may help ameliorate the situation.

KEYWORD: Social Effect, Drug Abuse, Youths, Economic Impact, Drug Abuse, Youths

Introduction

Natural herbs, leaves and plants have been used to heal and control diseases. The proper use of drugs in itself does not constitute any danger because drugs correctly administered have been blessings. (Falco, 1988) as cited by Sambo (2008) viewed that "Chronic use of substance can cause serious, sometimes irreversible damage to youth's physical and psychological development". A drug refers to a substance that could bring about a change in the biological function through its chemical actions (Okoye, 2001). It is also considered as a substance that modifies perceptions, cognition mood, behavior and general body functions (Balogun, 2006). They could thus, be considered as chemical modifiers of the living tissues that could bring about physiological and behavioural changes (Nnachi, 2007).

Weekly trust (2016) posits that more Nigeria gradually graduates from a drug consuming nation to a drug producing one. Furthermore, the chairman of NDLEA, expressed concern over the emergence of illegal laboratories installed for the illicit production of methamphetamine in Lagos. The first laboratory was discovered in July, 2011 and two Nigerians were being prosecuted while the second laboratory was detected in February that same year. Over 6millions bottles of cocaine were sold on a daily bases in the North-West part of the country. National

Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) reported of 2010, also shows that over 11% of people in the North West Zone use drug. He also said due to the rise in drug addiction, young people make use of cough syrups to make themselves high. "We have had few newspaper reports where people kill owners of pharmacy shops or chemists because they refused to sell codeine to them." A doctor said younger people abuse prescription of drugs almost much more than what is refer to as illicit drugs. He disclosed that majority of patients who visit their facility are those who use combination of substances, some take cocaine, heroin, codeine, cannabis and alcohol at the same time. Consequently drug addiction is a case peculiar with people between the age of eighteen and twenty. Though there are cases recorded of people younger and older than this age range.

Boris (1974) say drug abuse can play or serve a significant role in everyday interpersonal affairs although there is no data shown, but many youth in Nigeria are user, however, there are many other users of drug that is beyond moderate level to them, drug abuse constitute a very solving problem and this condition appears to be based on an underlined psychological abnormality. Drug abuse seriously affect the individuals health and social function, it also hurt the users family, friends and colleagues and society as whole. The havoc caused by excessive drug abuse. According to him it has broken up more homes, murdered more human beings, made papers of more careers and cause more single factor on the surface of the earth. To this end, this research is out to investigate any positive effect of drug abuse on the family and youth especially among the youths of Ikot Abasi L. G. Area

Statement of the Problem

This study is instigated by the increasing use and abuse of drug among family and youth in Ikot Abasi community. Drug abuse and its effects on youth, family are relevant to the present trend of event, which was noticed to be increasingly growing as observed by the research. Drug abuse has been found to bring different kind of hazard to both the individual group and the community as a result of an increase intake. EJikeme (2001) draw attention to the factors that drug abuse and alcohol it is not less harmful than other chemical it possess some degree of risk to the user. However, as a result of socialization, culture has taken a greater part in drug intake, it is said that any group or society in which the use of drug and drinking of alcohol custom. Value and sanction together with attitude of all segment of the group or society are well established and agreed upon by all play a significant role in determining the people behaviour. In this way, culture is the acquired characteristic of a people, their total way of life, or how they do their own things, acquired through socialization.

Objectives of the Study

Based on the research problems and question the following are the specific objectives of the study:

- i. To find out the social effect of drug abuse on the youth
- ii. To examine the economic impact of drug abuse on the youth

Research Questions

The following formulated questions are provided to serve as a guide for the research.

1. What effect does drug abuse have on the youth?
2. What economics impact does drug abuse have on the youth?

Research Hypothesis

1. Nigerian youths are not strongly engaged in drug abuses.
2. Abuse of drugs has no significant effects on Nigerian youths.

Literature Review

Concept of Drugs Abuse

The production of drug predicts the coming of the European to our country Nigeria. Ejikeme (2010) in his inaugural lecture delivered at the university of Jos clearly pointed out that, the availability and use of relatively cheap but □highly potent drug in some parts of Nigeria play critical role in mental health and lead to some social unpleasant consequences in both rural and urban population in the country especially in an era of global economic meltdown characterized by high rate of poverty, unemployment, inflation, social disorganization and criminal behavior. The sale of other local harmful chemical substances that are associated criminal violence is prohibited by law in some state in the country, supply and demand is a hindrance to systematic, empirical research on it chemical properties and degree of toxicity.

Osikoya and Ali, (2006); asserted that socially, a drug abuser is always preoccupied with how to obtain drug of choice and crave for the substance. Escn (1979) stated that Nigeria secondary school adolescents under the influence of Indian hemp shed all inhibitions and produce behaviour that is inconsistent with school discipline. Kobiowu (2006) study revealed that the academic pursuit of those undergraduates who engages in drug miss-use is not unduly jeopardized, and that the abusers do not socialize extra ordinarily, contrary to seemingly expectation. Barry (1984) and Ejikeme (2003) explained that people in under-privileged socio-economic group with higher purchasing power to procure expensive drug) tend to consume relatively cheap but highly potent drug such as the locally brewed gin or alcohol.

Children and youth who are socially alerted or isolated economically deprived especially in broken homes and have dropped out of school may exhibit signs of frustration, anger, militancy, rage, hate, bitterness and where these indicator of emotional turmoil and stress disorder are not detected and treated at their onset, such youth can become restive and violent in relating to their victim with or without the use drug as catalysts. Drug can aggravate anger, and so, it can also be argued that high supply of these cheap drugs are more disturbing and scary indicator of criminal violence, low emotional intelligence and deficit in emotion regulation then the consequence of economic deprivation. Unemployment, homelessness and other poverty related factors that are associated with violence behavior and low emotion intelligence.

Effects of Drug Abuse on the Users

Young people who persistently abuse substance often experience an array of problems including academic difficulties, health related problems including mental health, poor peer relationships and involvement with the juvenile system. The effects are as follows;

- a. Academic Effects of Drug Abuse:** Declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, and increased potential for dropping out of school are problem associated with the youth in Ibaka. Miller (1992) sited research indicating that a low level of commitment to education and higher truancy rates appears to be related to substance use among adolescents. Cognitive and behavioural problems experienced by alcohol and drug using youth may interfere with their academic performance and also present obstacles to learning for their classmates.
- b. The Effect of Drug Abuse on Health:** Substance use disorders are associated with a wide range of short and long terms health effects. They can vary depending on the type of drug, how much and how often it is taken and the person's general health. Overall, the effect of drug abuse and dependence can be far-reaching. They can impact almost every organ in the human body.
- c. Drug Effect on Behaviour:** Substance use disorders can lead to multiple behavioural problems, both in the short and long term, which can include paranoia,

aggressiveness, hallucinate addiction, impaired judgment, impulsiveness, loss of self-control.

These behaviours have serious consequences, like missed work, punishable offences accident and injuries. In fact, alcohol and drugs are partly to blame in an estimated 80 percent of offenses leading to jail time in the United States. These incidents include domestic violence, driving while intoxicated and offenses related to damaged property. Legal and illegal drugs excluding alcohol are involved in about 16 percent of motor vehicle crashes. In the past years, almost 12 million people drove under influence of illicit drugs and almost 4,000 fatally injured drivers tested positive for drug involvement (www.gatewayfoundation.org/addiction/drug-addiction/effects).

- d. **Physical Health:** Injuries due to accidents (such as car accidents), physical disabilities, and the effects of possible overdoses are among the health consequences of teenage substance abuse. Disproportionate numbers of youth involved with alcohol and other drugs face an increased risk of death through suicide, homicide, accident and illness (The drug abuse warning network DAWN, 2011).
- e. **Family Effect:** In addition to personal adversities, the abuse of alcohol and other drugs by youth may result in family crises and jeopardize many aspects of family life, sometime resulting in family dysfunction. Both siblings and parents are profoundly affected by alcohol and drug-involved youth. □(Nowinski, 1990) substance abuse can drain a family's financial and emotional resources.
- f. **The Social and Economic Effects:** The social and economic costs related to youth drug abuse are high. They result from the financial losses and distress suffered by alcohol and drug related crime victims, increased burdens for the support of adolescents and young adults who are not able to become self-supporting and greater demands for medical and other treatment services for these youth (Ashton, 1987) observed that abuse of drugs such as caffeine/stimulants which is normally used to cure hunger and gain strength drought in the northern part of Nigeria affects the central nervous system.

2.4 Economic Impact of Drug Abuse on the Youths

The devastating physical effects of drug abuse have long been established. However, there are negative impacts addiction or drug abuse can have on one's economic and emotional well-being. One of such impact is the financial burden inflicted on addicted individuals, their families and society as a whole.

As a person descends or goes deeper and deeper into drug or alcohol abuse, his ability to earn money often decreases, while, on the other hand, his addiction related expenses continue to soar. Therefore, many youths who find themselves in this situation rely upon friends or family members, for financial assistance, while others end up destitute. The implication of this is that they will not have financial stability; they often spend carelessly as well (Barry, 1984).

Furthermore, the impact of drug abuse increases crime and consequently leads to the loss of potential productivity and disability, death and withdrawal from the legitimate workforce. No matter the type of drug a person may take, abusing that drug can have serious consequences when it comes to having and maintaining a job. The national institute of drug abuse (2015) asserts that in the short term, impaired judgment and lack of sleep from drug use can make the user perform poorly in the duties he or she used to excel at. Whereas, in the long run, desperation from addiction can lead to stealing, lying, excessive absences and other undependable behaviours that an employer will find unacceptable.

In other words, substances abuse has direct or indirect bearing on the economy. The national drug master plan (2012-2016) estimates the costs of illicit drugs to south African economy at 6.4% of GDP or R136 billion per year. The same document estimates that 17.2 million south Africans bore the emotional and financial burden of illegal drugs. However, these figures are simple a fraction of the actual costs to society. Other major costs such as drug related violence, injuries, deaths, disease, law enforcement and cost productivity remain largely unquantified.

Other economic impact of drug abuse on the youths are:

- **Impact on Health**

A person's health is greatly affected by drug abuse. Economically, this manifests itself in prevention and treatment costs, health-care and hospital costs, increased morbidity and mortality.

- **Costs of Drug Prevention and Treatment**

The phenomenon of drug abuse requires societies to dedicate resources to evidence-based prevention, education and interventions, including treatment and rehabilitation. Although such activities can be resource-intensive, studies have shown that for every \$1 spent, good prevention programmes can save Governments up to \$10 in subsequent costs. Heroin, cannabis and cocaine are the drugs most frequently reported by people entering treatment worldwide. It is estimated that only one in six problem drug users worldwide, some 4.5 million people, receives the required treatment, at a global cost of about \$35 billion annually. There is a wide variation from region to region. For example, in Africa only 1 in 18 problem drug users receive treatment.

- **Health Care and Hospitals**

Visits to hospitals in connection with drug abuse are costly to society. Such visits occur as a result of overdoses, adverse reactions, psychotic episodes and symptoms of infectious diseases that can be transmitted through, inter alia, injecting drug use, such as hepatitis B and C, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and other illnesses related to drug use. Additionally, hospitals open need to treat victims of drug-related crimes and accidents.

- **Morbidity and mortality**

Globally, it is estimated that drug-related deaths account for between 0.5 and 1.3 per cent of all-cause mortality for people aged 15-64 years. It is estimated that there are 211,000 drug-related deaths annually, with younger people facing a particularly high risk. In Europe, the average age of death from drug use is in the mid-30s.

It is important to note that little information regarding drug-related mortality is available for Asia and Africa. In addition to drug-related mortality, estimates indicate that of the 14 million injecting drug users worldwide, 1.6 million are living with HIV, 7.2 million are living with hepatitis C, and 1.2 million are living with hepatitis B. A global scientist study estimated that the burden of disease attributable to drug use was substantial, rising in 2010 relative to 1990. Out of 43 risk factors, drug use was nineteenth in the ranking of the top global killers (alcohol was third and tobacco was second). For people aged 15-49 years, drug use was the sixth most common reason for death.

- **Impact on public safety**

Beyond health costs, people under the influence of drugs pose major safety risks and costs to people around them and the environment. For example, drug-affected driving accidents have emerged as a major global threat in recent years. Additionally, a greater awareness of the impacts on the environment of illicit drug cultivation, production and manufacture has emerged.

- **Drug-affected driving**

The abuse of drugs affects perception, attention, cognition, coordination and reaction time, among other neurological functions, which affect safe driving. Cannabis is the most prevalent illicit drug detected in drivers in Canada and the United States and Europe and Oceania. Research has found that habitual cannabis use is linked to a 9.5-fold greater risk of driving accidents, cocaine and benzodiazepines increase the risk 2-10 times, amphetamines or multiple drug use increase the risk 5-30 times, and alcohol in combination with drugs increases the risk of getting seriously injured or killed while driving by a factor of 20-200 at increased risk also has consequences for passengers and others on the road, who may become victims of drug-affected driving.

METHODS

Research Design

The researcher adopted a descriptive survey design. This type of design creates a platform for the researcher to make full description of the causes, effects and extent of the effects caused by the variables.

Area of the Study

The area for this study was Nigeria as the giant of Africa.

Population of the Study

The population of the study are the residents of Ikot Abasi Local Government Area.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The researcher used a simple random sampling technique in selecting to draw the 240 respondents for the study. Both male and female respondents were considered for the research.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation used for this study was structured questionnaire developed by researcher with the help of some testing experts. The questionnaire has two sections. The first section requests the respondent's personal data such age, sex, etc. The second section of the study was on the topic of the study, which is Effects of Drug Abuse on the Youths Ikot Abasi Local Government Area. The obtained data were coded for the statistical analysis.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument used for the research was approved by the research supervisor as valid and reliable for the research study after necessary vetting, modifications and corrections.

Reliability of the Instrument:

The researcher used Cronbach Alpha reliability technique to measure the level of reliability of the instrument, using 30 persons at Urue Ofong Oruko Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The test helped to produce reliability coefficient of (0.82) which passed reliability and justification of the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher subjected the data generated to appropriate statistical techniques such as Chi-square analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

**Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents
 RESPONDENTS PER GENDER**

MAJOR VILAGES	ETE	IKWA	ESENE	EDEMAYA	OKON	IBEKWE
No. of Respondents(%)	30%	15%	10%	10%	15%	20%
AGE						
Range	15-20yrs		21-25yrs		26-30yrs	31-40yrs
No. of Respondents(%)	15%		35%		30%	20%
SEX						
Male Youths	80%					
Female Youths	20%					

The above table shows that the residents of Ete, Ikwa, Esene, Edemaya, Okon and Ibekwe were the respondents involved in this exercise. Out of two hundred respondents, 30% were Ete youths, 15% were Ikwa, 10% were Esene youth, 10% were Edemaya, 15% were Okon youths while Ibekwe youths constituted the remaining 20%. The ages of the respondents ranged from 15-20yrs representing 15%. Persons whose ages ranged from 21-25yrs represented 35%, respondents with ages between 26-30yrs represented 30% whereas those between the ages of 31-40 represented 15% of the total respondents. Both male and female respondents involved in the exercise were 80% and 20% respectively.

Table 2: Respondents views on whether Nigerian youths are strongly engaged in drug abuse.

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
SA	135	67.5%
A	30	15%
D	20	10%
SD	15	7.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

Table 4.2 clearly indicates that 135 persons representing 67.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that youths are strongly engaged in drug abuse. 30% of the respondents lend support to this proposition, 10% disagreed whereas 15% of respondents strongly disagreed.

Table 3: Respondents views on whether abuse of drugs has significant effects on Nigerian youths.

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
SA	120	60%
A	35	17.5%
D	40	20%
SD	5	2.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

A table 4.3 show that 120 persons representing 60% of respondents strongly agreed that abuse of drugs has significant effects on Nigerian youths. 35 respondents representing 17.5% agreed while 40 persons representing 20% disagreed whereas the exercise recorded 5 persons representing 2.5% of respondents indicated strong disagreement to the statement.

Hypothesis One

The workings of the hypothesis are presented thus:

Ho: Nigerian youths are not strongly engaged in drug abuse.

Hi: Nigerian youths are strongly engaged in drug abuse.

Testing the hypothesis was based on data collected from the questionnaire in table two (2); respondent’s views on whether Nigerian youths are strongly engaged in drug abuse. To establish the validity of the hypothesis, Chi-Square analysis was applied to determine the degree of association.

Table 4: Chi-Square Contingent Table

Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{Fo-Fe}{Fe}^2$
135	25	110	12,100	484
30	25	5	25	1
20	25	-5	25	1
15	25	-10	10	0.4
200	100			484.4

- Given df = (r-1) (c-1)
- R = Number of row
- C = Number of columns
- Df = (4-1) (2-1)
- = (3) (1)
- Df = 3

At three degree of freedom with 0.05 significance level, the table value of chi-square is 7.81. The calculated Chi-Square as seen in table 4.2 is 484.4. Since the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, it therefore follows that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. This means that Nigerian youths are strongly engaged in drug abuse.

Hypothesis Two

The workings of the hypothesis are presented thus:

Ho: Abuse of drugs has no significant effects among Nigerian youths.

Hi: Abuse of drugs has significant effects on Nigerian youths.

Testing the hypothesis was based on data collected from the questionnaire in table three (3); respondent’s views on whether abuse of drugs has significant effects on Nigerian youths. To establish the validity of the hypothesis, Chi-Square analysis was applied to determine the degree of association.

Table 5: Chi-Square Contingent Table

Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{Fo-Fe^2}{Fe}$
120	25	95	9,025	361
35	25	10	100	4
40	25	15	225	9
5	25	-20	-400	0.016
200	100			374.016

Given df = (r-1) (c-1)
 R = Number of row
 C = Number of columns
 Df = (4-1) (2-1)
 = (3) (1)
 Df = 3

At three degree of freedom with 0.05 significance level, the table value of chi-square is 7.81. The calculated Chi-Square as seen in table 4.3 is 374.016. Since the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, it therefore follows that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. This means that abuse of drugs has significant effects on Nigerian youths.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the first hypothesis showed that Nigerian youths are strongly engaged in drug abuse. The findings of this hypothesis are in line with the position of Afe (2001), who maintained that “excessive doses of cocaine may lead to convulsions seizures, stroke and cerebral hemorrhagic or heart failure, while long term effects include the following; destruction of tissues in nose if sniffed, respiratory problems if smoked, infectious diseases, abscesses, if injected, malnutrition and weight loss. Short term effects of cocaine includes: loss of appetite, faster breathing, increase heart rate and blood pressure, increase body temperature, sweating, dilation of pupils, bizarre, erratic sometimes violent behaviour”.

The result of the **Second** hypothesis showed that abuse of drugs has significant effect on Nigerian youths. The finding of this hypothesis is in line with National Institute of Drug Abuse (2015), which stated that “marijuana has both short term and long term effect. The short term effects are increased appetite, increase pulse rate, reddening of the eyes, short term memory, logical thinking and physical performance (eg driving a car or performing other complex tasks) are impaired. Others are the users becomes quiet, reflective and sleepy. Long term effect includes: Developing of moderate tolerance, possible psychological dependence, loss drive and risk of long cancer, chronic bronchitis and other lung diseases.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the research work, it was concluded that, the effect of drug abuse greatly exist in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area. It also proved that drug abuse creates devastating effect on the health of the individual social structural institution and human capacities. This has seriously affected development. Drug abuse is a disorder that is characterized by self-destructive pattern of using a substance that leads to significant problem and distress.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are deemed necessary:

1. Government should ensure that it establishes drug and alcohol vigilantes to monitor and punish drug traders, drug addicts as this may help ameliorate the situation
2. There should also be campaigns and demonstrations against drug abuse in the community.
3. Government should set a body that may help interrogate the youths that are loitering in the community to order to know their problems and try to solve it.
4. Counseling centres should be opened where youths can be reached in order to discourage them from even attempting to give it first trial.

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