

THE ROLE OF RELIGIONS AND COMMUNITIES IN FIGHTING AGAINST DRUG ABUSE IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigerian communities are today facing numerous problems relating to social, economic, political and so on. Most of these problems are self-imposed. This means that such problems are resultant of the people's lackadaisical attitude on one thing or another. The menace of drug abuse is really disturbing and negatively affecting all sectors of life. Substance abuse in early life exposes adolescents and young people in danger. Use of harmful legal products through drinking, swallowing, sniffing, chewing, smoking and injection as well as inhaling or ingesting drugs illegally constitute a devastating health condition for individuals, community and Nigerian societies in general. As such, a single approach towards preventing the menace of drug abuse and misuse among some youths and adolescents will not be sufficient to reduce such negative effects among the population groups at both community and societal levels. Hence, the need for religious intervention and community participation. However, the focus of this research paper is on integrated community participation and religious intervention towards prevention of substance abuse, with the aim of promoting health of the vulnerable groups, protection and enhancing the community health and safety. The methodology adopted are empirical through questionnaires, where information generated are studied, examined and analysed. Interviews were also conducted. Experts were

consulted and their views are of paramount importance. Among such experts are religious scholars from Islam, Christianity and even traditional religions. Library research method is also applied. Textbooks, magazines, periodicals, journals related to the area of research were consulted. The paper recommends among others that approaches of health education and enlightenment need to be employed with the aim of reducing the menace of drug abuse, improving health of the vulnerable groups, community and society at large and that business orientation should be needed to instil attitude of self-reliance. In order to reduce menace of drug abuse in Nigeria and improve health of the community and society at large, religious intervention is also recommended to inculcate virtues capable of making youths to be morally upright.

Keywords: *Drug Abuse; Youths; Adolescents; Religious Intervention; Community Participation and National Development.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past years, herbs, leaves and plants have been used to heal and control diseases. A drug refers to a substance that could bring about a change in the biological function through its chemical reactions (Okoye, 2001). It is also considered as a substance that modifies perceptions, cognition, mood, behaviour 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). However, the use of drugs in itself

does not constitute any threat or danger, because drugs correctly administered have been a blessing (Fareo, 2012).

According to Fawa (2003), drug is defined as any substance, which is used for treatment or prevention of a disease in man and animals. It 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, (Fawa, 2003).

Sambo (2008) maintains that, chronic use of substances can cause serious and sometimes irreversible damage to youths' physical and psychological development. This may, however, affect community as well as national development at large. The use of drugs could be beneficial or harmful depending on the mode of use. Therefore, inappropriate use of drugs could be considered as drug abuse (Fareo, 2012).

Impact of drug abuse on various factors of human endeavour could not be over emphasized. Effects of drug abuse among youth and adolescents and the consequences on their health and educational performance; on community development and national progress is questionably alarming. As such, this paper discusses the Roles of Religions and Communities in Fighting Against Drug Abuse in Nigeria.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Drug abuse is a major public health problem all over the world (UNODC, 2005). The use and abuse of drugs by some adolescents and youths had becoming a disturbing health related phenomenon in Nigeria and other parts of the world (NDLEA, 1997). School attendees, such as adolescents and

young people usually experience one or more mental health problems. This could either be temporarily or for a long-time effect on their health and academic performance, some become insane, maladjusted to school situations and eventually drop out of school, as a result national development is negatively affected (Fareo, 2012).

Abdullahi (2009) opines that, drug abuse is the use of drugs to the extent that interferes with the health and social function of an individual. In essence, drug abuse may be defined as the arbitrary overdependence or misuse of one particular drug with or without a prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioners. It can also be viewed as the unlawful overdose in the use of drug(s), Abdullahi added.

The problem of the drug abuse places a significant threat to the social and economic structures of individuals, families, community, society and the entire nations (Hamisu, et Al., 2014). Almost every country in the world is affected from one or more drug being abused by its citizens (Shehu, 2011; Oshodi et al., 2010). According to UNODC (2007), the increased of drug abuse globally has brought problems such as increase in violence and crimes, increase in Hepatitis B and C virus, increase in HIV/AIDS diseases, collapse of the veins and collapse in the social structure (UNODC, 2007; Oshodi et al., 2010).

The term drug abuse is an excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to the medically or culturally accepted patterns (NAFDAC, 2000). It is the use of a drug to the extent that it interferes with the health and social function of an individual, (Haladu, 2003) added. World Book of

Encyclopedia (2004) maintained that, drug abuse is the non-medical use of a drug that interferes with a healthy and productive life. Manbe (2008) further explains that, drug abuse is the excessive, maladaptive or addictive use of drugs for non-medical purpose.

According to Abbas, Usman Sani (2019) The menace of drug abuse is an issue that could not be tackled without multidimensional approach of interventions which encompass individuals, community as well as religious interventions. Religious teachings in establishing virtues such as sincerity, sympathy, simplicity, justice, kindness, honesty, self-reliance, determination and dedication to duties, courage, and creativity and God consciousness are highly needed. However, realization of such virtues could not be achieved if persistent menace of drug abuse among youth and adolescents in the country is widespread. As such, teachings of religions (such as Islam, Christianity and traditional religions) that usually discourage unfavourable attitudes like drug abuse and addictions could be employed as interventions in fighting against the drug abuse in Nigeria. These interventions might play a vital role in curtailment of drug abuse, because, belief and morality are fundamental principles of religions in Nigeria (Abbas, Usman Sani, 2019).

The menace of drug abuse among youth and adolescents is an issue of concern that need to be addressed. However, prevention of negative attitudes, protection of individuals and community health need collaborative efforts of community members. Community participation is an essential service required in fighting against drug abuse, promoting health and

national development. Social protection is an effective vehicle for providing relief services to the masses against drug abuse (Isah, Adamu et al., 2019). UNDCP (1995), suggests that, problems of drug abuse prevention and control can be addressed in a constructive, coordinated approach.

Drug abuse occurs more frequently among adolescents and young people compared to other age groups. The risk factors for drug use often occur before entry into the workforce. The drug abuse problems of the community are, therefore, brought into the workplace leading to lack of commitment to duties and lack of determination. The age group with the highest frequency of drug use is often eighteen to thirty-five years, although wide variation exists between countries. (UNDCP, 1995). Thus, the point of maximum benefit of prevention programmes may occur before or at the point of entry into the labour market. Employers, as community members can make major contributions to the prevention of drug abuse, helping themselves and the community in the process. Effective workplace initiatives to prevent drug abuse should begin in the community and be directed at adolescents and young persons who are potential leaders. (UNDCP, 1995).

In some countries, where minority of the children go to school, and those in school may stay there for only a few years. In these situations, methods need to be adapted when preparing health education approaches for drug abuse prevention, particularly for rural youths and adolescents. Flexible methods include innovative out-of-school approaches to health promotion activities consistent with community values and standards. When fewer children go to school or when families

are less integrated, adaptive changes in educational interventions are needed for both formal and informal approaches. (UNDCP, 1995).

Based on this background, this paper addresses the menace of drug abuse among some youths and adolescents in Nigeria. The researchers look at the categories and classifications of commonly abused drugs and the impact of the drugs on individuals, community and national development. It also addresses religious interventions, family and community participation in fighting against the menace of drug abuse in Nigeria.

2.1 Categories and Classification of Drugs That Are Usually Abused by Some Youths and Adolescents

Addictive drugs have been classified according to their types and physiological effects: Hence, depressants; stimulants; narcotics; cannabis/relaxants; inhalants; hallucinogens and aphrodisiacs. Nevertheless, some psychoactive drugs fall into one of the general categories presented in table one below. Terminologies and common names referred to specific drugs are presented, route of administering them, and the possible effects of the drugs are also presented in table one below.

Table 1. Classification of Commonly Abused Drugs

S/ N	Classification	Drug	Terminologies/ Common names	Route of Administering	Most likely Effects
1.	Depressants	Alcohol, Barbiturate, Tranquilizer, Rohypnol	Liquor, beer, spirit. Blue dog, blue tips, blue devils, Tuinal. Roofies	Drinking, Swallowed	Slurred speck, disorientation, drunken behaviour with or without odor of alcohol. Decrease blood pressure, Relaxation, sleepiness.
2.	Stimulants	Cocaine Caffeine Nicotine Amphetamine	Coke, gold, dust, gin, girlfriend, girl, double bubble, Snow, kolanut. Delcobese, bam, amps, beans, black mollies.	Sniffed, injected, swallowed, or chewed	Increased alertness, excitation, euphoria, Increased pulse rate, and blood pressure, insomnia, loss of appetite, and dry mouth.
3.	Narcotics	Heroin, Opium, Morphine, Codeine, Tramadol	Horse, scat, junk, smack, scag, stuff, dope, courage pill, dead on arrival. Chinese tobacco, first line, emsel, pectoral, syrup, coder, painkiller	Injected or swallowed.	Euphoria, drowsiness, respiratory depression, constricted pupil, nausea. Elated mood, anxiety reduction.

4.	Cannabis or Relaxants	Marijuana	Blue sage, grass, pot, tea dope joints, Thai, sticks.	Smoked, swallowed, and sniffed.	Euphoria, relaxed inhibitions, increase appetite, disoriented behaviour
5.	Inhalants	Vasodilator Anesthetic, Gases	Solvent, aerosols	Sniffed	Intoxication, excitation, disorientation, aggression.
6.	Hallucinogens	Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD) Mescaline	Sunshine, brown bomber. Cactus, chief.	Swallowed	Poor perception of time and distance, delusion.
7.	Aphrodisiacs	Manpower, paraga, sepe, opa eyin.	Performance enhancing	Drinking, Swallowed	Increased pulse rate, and blood pressure, excitation

Source: Adapted from Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016).

2.1.1 Stimulants

The primary use of stimulants is to increase the activities of the central nervous system (CNS) with increase heart rate, blood pressure and the rate of brain function. The users feel uplifted and less fatigue (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016). Some of the stimulants include caffeine, cocaine, nicotine and amphetamine.

- a) Caffeine: It is a tasteless drug found in coffee, tea, cocoa, many soft drinks and several groups of over-the-

counter drugs (National Centre on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2004) as cited by Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016). Moderate intake of it is relatively harmless to the individual health. However, chronic users show evidence of withdrawal and physical dependence (Obiechina & Isiguzo, 2016).

- b) Cocaine: This is a very strong stimulant. Cocaine produces a feeling of excitement, increase confidence and willingness to work (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016). Cocaine use is on the increase among students as it is perceived as a confirmation of one's big boy status (Pike, J. 2011).
- c) Amphetamines: These are usually used to increase activity, mood elevation, create series of wellbeing and also suppress appetite. They improve physical and mental performance (Gupta & Ghai, 2007). However, large doses may result in anxiety, feeling of nervous and physical tension (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016).
- d) Nicotine: This is a poisonous alkaloid derived from tobacco plant. It is responsible for the dependence of regular smokers on cigarettes. (Elizabeth & Martin, 2007). Nicotine is in tar, cigars, cigarettes, tobacco and traditional snuff. A small dose of nicotine has a stimulating effect on the autonomic nervous system (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016). It is mostly abused by secondary school students (Thomas, Carl, & Jacqueline, 1986).

2.1.2 Narcotics

These categories are among the potent dependence producing drugs, used medically to relieve pain and induce sleep (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016). Narcotics are derived from plants such as opium, morphine, codeine and heroin. They are extremely addictive and can be inhaled, (snorted), injected, or smoked (Gateway Foundation, 2013).

- (a) Heroin: It is a white crystalline power derived from morphine but with a short-term duration of action. According to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2005), heroin was highly popular among young adults in United States between 1990 to 1998. It is quick acting. It alters the brain chemistry which interferes with an individual's ability to make decision (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016).
- (b) Opium: Is a milky substance derived from the unripe seed pods of the poppy. It has analgesic effect and may cause drowsiness (Gupta & Ghai, 2007). The abusers of opium are mostly adolescents and health care professionals (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016).
- (c) Morphine: It is also found in poppy head. It is a potent analgesic drug used mainly to relieve severe and persistent pain (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016). However, individuals develop both tolerance and dependence. Morphine is commonly abused by medical health care professionals and adolescents (SAMHSA, 2005). The injected drugs can lead to collapsed veins and infection of the blood vessels.

- (d) Codeine: Is an analgesic derived from opium poppy and morphine. It is less potent as a pain killer and sedative, and is less toxic (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016). Because of the presence of codeine in cough syrups, it has become a favourite for many drug abusers. They could easily be obtained over the counter at big and small medicine stores (Encomium, 2013). Codeine is generally abused by students of secondary and higher institutions, who mix the syrup with soft drink or use it to soak garri (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016).
- (e) Tramadol: Tramadol is a painkiller which is often prescribed for moderate to severe pain for arthritis patients. However, it is a narcotic drug, meaning that users may be at risk of addiction if they use it for a long period of time (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016). It works by blocking pain synapse traveling between the nerves and the brain, thereby the user becomes “high” (GFADTC, 2013).

2.1.3 Cannabis

Cannabis is a drug prepared from Indian hemp plant (cannabis sativa) also known as pot, *marijuana*, *hashish* and *bang*. It has little therapeutic value and its nonmedical use is illegal, (Obiechina & Isiguzo, 2016). Cannabis in Nigeria is illegal, yet the country is a major source of West African-grown cannabis, and ranked the world's eighth highest consumer of cannabis (Ministerial Committee on Drug Policy, 2007).

Cannabis, popularly known as marijuana is one of the drugs commonly abused in Nigeria especially by adolescents and

young people (Obiechina & Isiguzo (2016). Marijuana was introduced to Nigeria by soldiers returning from Second World War (Odejide, 2000). The plant grows easily in the tropical climate of Nigeria, though, production in large commercial quantities is concentrated in a few parts of the country. It is planted in small plots and on large farmlands in many parts. Before long, cannabis was being exported to Western countries by Nigerians as local production increased (Isidore S. Obot, 2004).

According to (Lambo, 1965), many West Africans were prosecuted in the United Kingdom for trafficking cannabis in the early 1960s. Lambo further explained that, within the country (United Kingdom), in 1961 and 1962, eight hundred and twenty-three kilograms (823 kg) and seven thousand one hundred and fifty-two kilograms (7152 kg) of cannabis were respectively seized. A majority of those arrested for the cultivation of cannabis were men who regarded cannabis as a cash crop 'with the greatest remuneration'. Thus, the roots of drug trafficking and abuse experienced in Nigeria dates back to many years. (Lambo, 1960).

2.1.4 *Depressants*

According to (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016), depressants are agents that reduce the normal activity of any body system or function. They are also known as sedative, slowing down the Central Nervous System function. It produces tolerance in abusers as well as strong psychological and physical dependence. Drugs under this category include alcohol, barbiturate, tranquilizer and rohypnol.

- a) Alcohols: These are strong central nervous system depressants. The primary depressant effects of alcohol occur in the brain and spinal cord. Many people think of alcohol as a stimulant because of the way most users feel after consuming a serving or two of their favourite drink (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016). At that moment, any temporal sensations of excitement, boldness or relief are attributable to alcohol's ability to release personal inhibitions and provide temporal relief from tension (Kinney, 2006).
- b) Barbiturates: Barbiturates are drugs that depress activity of the central nervous system. Regular use of this type of drug will produce tolerance (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016). A high dose takes a long period to wear off from the user. Barbiturates are more common among females to relieve anxiety (Johnston, O'malley & Bachman, 2002).
- c) Tranquilizers: According to (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016) Tranquilizers are minor depressants that are meant to reduce anxiety, tension and relax people having problems managing stress. Such drugs are diazepam (valium) and chlordiazepoxide (Librium). People can be addicted easily to it and may have severe withdrawal symptoms which can be life threatening (Adegoke, 2003).
- d) Rohypnol: The drug is manufactured in South America, Mexico, Europe and Asia and illegally imported into Nigeria. It is commonly abused by Nigerian youths because of its fast action and long-time effect,

rohypnol is known as 'roofies' on the street (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016). It is stronger than other tranquilizers and causes a drunk, sleepy feeling that can last up to eight hours, rohypnol is known as date rape drug which adolescents add in a drink for their girls (Encomium, 2013).

2.1.5 *Hallucinogens*

This type of drug is one of the oldest drugs used by mankind that is capable of producing hallucination. They are called psychedelics, dissociative or deliriant (mind) vision (Nichols, 2004). Psychedelic brings about evident cerebral excitation in the form of illusion, hallucination and vision. Dissociative produces analgesia, amnesia and catalepsy at anesthetic doses thus disassociation from his environment (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016). Deliriant as the name implies induce a state of delirium in the user, characterized by extreme confusion and inability to control one's action (Dyck, 2005). These drugs are used within medicine, religion and traditional settings around the world for ceremonies, healing and rituals of syncretistic/amalgamated movements (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016).

- a) Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD): It is a potent hallucinogen which is produced in crystalline form and then mixed or diluted as a liquid to be ingested. The effect is felt within 20-30 minutes after consumption (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016). The user may experience extreme changes in mood shifts, time and space distortions including impulsive behaviour (National Survey on Drug use and Health, 2010). The

user may experience visual hallucination, impaired depth and time perception with distorted perception of size and shape of objects, movements, colour, sound, touch and body image (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016).

2.1. 6 Inhalants

These are breathable chemical vapours or gases that produce psychoactive effects when abused or misused (National Inhalant Prevention Coalition (NIPC, 2012). They include volatile organic solvents, fuel, gases, nitrites and anaesthetic gases (chloroform, nitrous oxide and ether), commercial solvents like gasoline, kerosene, glue, and typewriter correction fluid among others. The abusers inhale the toxic chemical products which result to low blood pressure, dizziness, loss of hearing, damage to the lung and heart (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016).

- a) Solvents: This could be industrial or household solvent products such as paint, thinners, dry cleaning fluid spray lubricants, gasoline, kerosene, nail polish or remover, furniture polish and wax (NIPC, 2012).
- b) Gasses and propellants: These are house hold or commercial products which includes butane lighters, propane, hair and deodorant sprays, room deodorizer sprays, refrigerants sprays, ether, chloroform and halothane. This type of drug might cause loss of hearing, damage to the lung and heart (Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016).

2.1.7 *Aphrodisiacs*

An aphrodisiac is a substance that increases sexual desire, sexual pleasure, or sexual behavior (Lehmiller, Justin J., 2017). Substances range from a variety of plants, spices, foods, and synthetic chemicals (Melnyk, et al, 2011). Therefore, they can be classified by their chemical properties (i.e., substances that are natural and unnatural). (Bella, Anthony J, 2014). Natural aphrodisiacs like alcohol are further classified into plant-based and non-plant-based substances (Shamloul, Rany, 2010). Unnatural aphrodisiacs like ecstasy are classified as those that are manufactured to imitate a natural substance (Lehmiller, Justin J., 2017). Aphrodisiacs can also be classified by their type of effects (i.e., psychological or physiological), (Melnyk, et al., 2011). Aphrodisiacs that contain hallucinogenic properties like Bufo toad have psychological effects on a person that can increase sexual desire and sexual pleasure (Sandroni, Paola, 2001). Aphrodisiacs that contain smooth muscle relaxing properties like yohimbine have physiological effects on a person that can affect hormone levels and increase blood flow (Melnyk, et al., 2011).

Table 2. Effects of Drugs and Alcohol Abuse on Adolescents' Physical, Social, Psychological and Possible Behaviours and the Health Consequences

S N	Drugs	Physical Effects	Social Effects	Psychological Effects	Possible Effects	Consequences
1	Depressants	Difficulty in school, increased risk taking, distorted vision.	Antisocial, drastic change in eating and sleeping.	Cognitive deficits, altered, perception and emotions.	Loss of self-control, slurred speech, addiction impaired judgment.	Brain, lung and liver Damage leading to Liver failure (cirrhosis).
2	Stimulants	Increase physical Activities, wakefulness, insomnia, poor appetite.	Lack of motivation and drive. Feeling of anger and resentment toward others	Anxiety, confusion, depression, loss of interest in ever thing family, friend, food.	Laziness, theft, sadness, loss of self-control, paranoid or violent behaviour.	Convulsion, heart attack, seizure, Possible death.
3	Narcotics	Constipation, stress, eliminate pain, loss of appetite.	Unwillingness to deal with personal problems, causing them to become worse.	Tension, anxiety, mild Confusion, negative Relationship.	Drowsiness, needle Marks on the body, loss of appetite, paranoid, aggressiveness.	Mental deterioration, destruction of brain, liver, hepatitis. Death From overdose.
4	Cannabis / Relaxants	Sleepiness, loss of Memory, inability to Perform tasks, dry Mouth.	Decrease social inhibition, desire to experiment with other drugs.	Poor coordination, increase heart rate, poor extinguished sexual pleasure.	Lack of coordination increased appetite, aggressiveness, impaired judgment.	Damage to the brain Heart and lung.

5	Inhalations	Intolerance to light, High truancy, crime Relationship.	Peer group influence Socialization , disruptive Family or siblings.	Frustrations a result of dynamic and family instability, disappointment.	Violence, appearance of drunkenness, dreamy aggressiveness	Brain, lung and liver damage, death through suffocation, or choking, anaemia.
6	Hallucinations	Pupil dilation, weakness, clenching jaw, inflicted injuries	Not able to face crowd, Youth sub-culture, modelling, advertising and self-care movement	Repeating itself, altered, state of the mind, sense of time, anxiety, depression.	Risk of domestic violence, suspicion and loss of control. Hallucination.	Nausea and vomiting, abdominal pain.
7	Aphrodisiacs	Increase libido.	Inability to meet up with Sexual partner.	Frustration, poor extinguished sexual pleasure.	Performance enhancing.	Mental disorder, suicidal tendency, tremor, headache.

Source: Adapted from Obiechina, G. O. & Isiguzo (2016)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted are empirical through questionnaires, where information generated are studied, examined and analysed. Interviews were also conducted. Experts were consulted and their views are of paramount importance. Among such experts are religious scholars from Islam, Christianity and even traditional religions. Library research method is also applied. Textbooks, magazines, periodicals, journals related to the area of research were consulted.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Effects of Drug Abuse Among Some Youths and Adolescents, and The Consequences on Individuals Health, Educational Performance, Community and National Development

Drug abuse is a serious issue that is abolishing the dreams of our future generation as it affects youth and adolescents. African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC, 2017). Therefore, providing drug rehabilitation and a stable environment for young generation is essential to overcome the menace of drug abuse and possible addictions in Nigeria. This might be a collaborative effort of parents, community members, stakeholders and religions (Islam, Christianity and Traditional religions) and the government (national, state and local governments). Adolescents and youths are the backbone of every society and the rampant use of illicit drugs among these groups have negative impact on individuals, communities and society as well as national development.

4.1.1 *Impact of Drug Abuse on Health of Individuals*

Touitou Tina C. (2016) narrated that, Akunyili, D. in the year 2012 highlighted the following effects of Alcohol, Indian hemp, Heroin, Cocaine, Depressants and Volatile solvents, on individuals, thus;

i. Alcohol

Alcohol can cause malnutrition, resulting from depression of one's appetite; cancer of the mouth; oesophagus and stomach; decreased resistance to diseases; damage to brain cells,

pancreas, kidney; Impotence and sterility in men; it can also cause birth defects such as low birth weight, small head sizes, limb abnormalities, muscle cramps and oedema in babies born by pregnant women who indulge in drinking; premature aging; peptic ulcer; fatty liver and ultimately liver cirrhosis as well as loss of coordination, wife beating, child battering and broken home. These related problems of the drug abuse are terrifying issues that need to be tackled through collaborative efforts of parents, community members and the government, in such a way that the problems will not persist (Touitou Tina C., 2016).

ii. Indian hemp

It is also called and referred to various names by some community. Thus, referred to as “we-we” by Hausa community, while Igbo called it “Ibo”. However, Yoruba community called it “Igbo”. It’s also called “marijuana” by some community members. Indian Hemp can cause the following: mood alteration; impaired memory and low self-perception; lung diseases such as cancer, chest pain, bronchitis; affect the immune response of the body to infections e.g. increasing the risk of developing full-blown AIDS; mental problems which can degenerate to full blown madness; increased heartbeat and blood pressure; babies with low birth weight and small heads might be borne by mothers who smoked Indian hemp; destroys the testicle in men; decreased ovulation and increased menstrual irregularities in women; increased apathy; loss of ambition and effectiveness; diminished ability to carry out long term plans; and it can cause difficulty in concentrating and decline in school or work performance, all of which cripple

individual, community and societal development. (Touitou Tina C., 2016).

iii. Tobacco

Tobacco contains nicotine, tar and carbon monoxide. Nicotine can be habit forming; tar can cause cancer, while carbon monoxide is a very dangerous gas. It causes: cough bronchitis and ulcer; heart attack; stroke; tissue damage as well as causing cancer of the lungs, stomach, throat and lower parts of the large intestine. (Touitou Tina C., 2016).

iv. Heroin

According to (Akunyili, D., 2012), heroin is very addictive and usually results in continuous or persistent craving for the drug. An attempt to stop it leads to significant and painful withdrawal symptoms), such as: User is content to sit and dream in an euphoric state; malnutrition because it suppresses hunger; chronic bronchitis because it suppresses cough reflexes; can cause abscess at the site of injection; hepatitis, tetanus and endocarditis (infection of the heart lining); can result in permanent necrosis and scarring at injection site; can lead to HIV infection because of sharing of needles and syringes. However, overdose can lead to death; for women who use heroin during pregnancy, it can cause heart disease, hepatitis, pneumonia, still birth or miscarriages and babies are smaller than average. (Touitou Tina C., 2016).

v. Cocaine

This is very addictive and can kill. It is a very strong stimulant to the Central Nervous System, including the brain), it can

cause: increased heart rate and high blood pressure; heart attack; nasal congestion and running nose; disintegration of mucous membrane of the nose and damage to nasal septum; restlessness, irritability and anxiety; depression when drug is not available; weight loss; impotence; orgasmic failure; stomach problems and damage to liver, lungs and may lead to death when used for a long time. (Touitou Tina C., 2016).

vi. Depressants

These drugs depress the Central Nervous System (CNS) and include the following: Hypnotics, Sedatives, e.g. phenobarbitone and Tranquilizers e.g. Valium and Librium. They are prescribed to induce sleep, relieve anxiety and relax muscles. They are dangerous when used with alcohol, which is also a depressant. Abuse of depressants can cause: Accidents either on the highway or household; dependence and tolerance; seizure during withdrawal; unconsciousness and death from overdose or when mixed with alcohol; and can cause loss of memory over a long period of use. (Touitou Tina C., 2016).

vii. Volatile Solvents

Volatile Solvents such as glue, petrol, acetone and toluene (mostly abused through inhalation by youngsters between the ages of ten to eighteen years) are also dangerous to our teaming youths and adolescents, if proper care is not taken the persistent issues will endanger the situation, making the dreams for community development unachievable. (Touitou Tina C., 2016).

4.1.2 Impact of Drug Abuse on Educational Performance

Youth that become addicted to drugs can suffer from intellectual impairment, short-term memory loss and even impaired sensory function. African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC, 2017). All of these problems in combination with the addiction itself will contribute to poor academic performance and low self-esteem. A low self-image may lead to depression or an even greater dependence on drugs. It is a vicious cycle for youth and adolescents in the country. African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC, 2017).

4.1.3 Impact of Drug Abuse on Community Development

There is often a strong correlation between unemployment and drug-taking habits, both in developed and developing countries. There are also linked between drug abuse and low productivity and accidents. Overall, an increase in drug abuse can also affect the safety of a community. The disintegration of the family also adds to substance abuse problems. In a study by UNRISD and the United Nations University on Mexico, it was determined that drug use correlates more strongly with disintegration of the family than with poverty. African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC, 2017).

Drugs can also increase the likelihood of many kinds of criminal activity in developing countries including Nigeria. Violent conflicts among competing trafficking groups can become problematic. Those needing money to feed their drug habit may turn even to theft, robbery and prostitution. (ASEC, 2017).

4.1.4 Impact of Drug Abuse on National Development

The menace of drug abuse in Nigeria has effects both on the economy and the society at large. Drug abuse can affect work, employment and productivity. There is also a cost that will be created by the increased drug abuse in the country. According to (ASEC, 2017), More drugs and drug use means increased budgets for:

- i. Law enforcement.
- ii. Justice system and courts.
- iii. Healthcare (illness, premature death, emergency room visits).
- iv. Reduced productivity.

Generally, it is believed that, youth are the future of the country and they must do everything possible they can to foster their development. In reality, they could not do it alone. If the nation puts a plan into action to deal with drug abuse and Illicit trafficking, the country can combat and slow down drug abuse, hence, speed up economic development.

4.2 The Role of Family, Religions and Community Towards Prevention of Drug Abuse, Safeguarding Individuals, Promotion of Health and Realization of National Development

Fighting against drug abuse among youngsters in Nigeria is not one man's job, it needs collaborative efforts of family, religions and community involvement. Such collaborative interventions are essentially important towards achieving the purpose. Drug

abusers who exhibit symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, behaviour changes, fatigue and loss or increase in appetite should be treated by medical experts and counsellors to save them from deadly diseases. (Odejide, 2000).

However, Delphi Behavioural Health Group (DBHG) explained that, Government agencies, community leaders and school officials are always on the lookout for new ways to prevent teenage substance abuse, this suggests that the preventive measures being taken are effective at reducing the menace, if not getting rid of the problem. Although it is still the issue of discussion in the country, and the rates at which substance abuse rises among youths and adolescents is frightening. Thus, the need for intervention of different stakeholders. The most important and suggested interventions by experts towards positive impact on prevention of drug abuse and misuse are: parental involvement, the role of religions and community in fighting against it. Educational support approach, career opportunities and empowerment are equally essential.

The use of harmful products through drinking, swallowing, sniffing, chewing, smoking and injection as well as inhaling or ingesting constitute a devastating health condition for individuals, community and Nigerian societies in general. As such, a single approach towards preventing the menace of drug abuse and misuse among some youths and adolescents will not be sufficient in reducing such negative behaviour and its effects among the population groups at both community and societal levels. Hence, the need for family involvement, religious intervention and community participation.

4.2.1 Family Involvement in the Lives of Teenagers and Young People

The biggest impact of substance abuse on youth and adolescents is lack of proper parental care and involvement. Youths who grow up with parents that discuss with them about the dangers of taking illegal substance are far less likely to develop a dependence on drugs. Delphi Behavioural Health Group (DBHG) highlighted some ways through which parents can instil strong anti-addiction values in their teens include:

i. Setting an Example

By showing their teenagers what appropriate substance use or abstinence looks like, parents can teach them by example. This means limiting alcohol use and never driving after drinking. Designated drivers send a powerful message to teens about the importance of not driving under the influence.

ii. Dispelling Misconceptions

Young people may internalize the idea that everybody drinks or that some drugs are harmless. It's important for parents to be aware of these beliefs and help debunk them.

iii. Encouraging Open Communication

Teens should feel comfortable sharing anything with their parents, including questions about drug or alcohol use. This starts with parents opening up communication about substance abuse, telling their children where they stand and showing them that it's not a taboo topic.

iv. Avoiding and Debunking Media that Glamorizes Drug Abuse

Movies, television shows, music and video games may paint substance abuse in a positive light. Whenever possible, it's best to limit these influences, but some are unavoidable. It's important for parents to talk to their children about these messages and help them understand why drugs in real life aren't as harmless or as fun as they are portrayed to be in movies.

4.2.2 Community Participation in Combating the Menace of Drug Abuse in Nigeria

The five variables are conceptualized as important in reducing youth use of harmful legal products (shown with italics in Figure 1), i.e., community readiness, rules and regulations, anti-drug norms, social influence, and cultural identity. Community readiness concerns the extent to which a community can effectively respond to substance abuse problems, such as youths' use of harmful legal products—and act to reduce these problems (Edwards, Jumper-Thurman, Plested, Oetting, & Swanson, 2000; Oetting et al., 1995). Rules and regulations refer to restrictions on the availability of legal abusable products in homes, retail stores, and schools (Edwards & Holder, 2000; Johnson, 1996; Massachusetts Inhalant Abuse Task Force, 2005).

Anti-drug Norms refers to the level of concern among retailers, families, and school officials about the use of inhalants and other harmful legal products in the community and support for local actions to prevent use (Birckmayer, Holder, Yacoubian, &

Friend, 2004; Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 2006). Social Influence relates to social pressures from peers, parents, and community which increase or decrease use of harmful legal products (Botvin, Baker, Goldberg, Dusenbury, & Botvin, 1992; Botvin, Schinke, & Orlandi, 1989).

Schinke, Tepavac, and Cole (2000) assumed that social influence and cultural relevance were important correlates in designing an effective prevention program for American Indian youth. Cultural identity is a sense of belonging based on a set of attitudes, beliefs, and actions that are shared among people that help to define them as a cohesive group (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989).

Consistent with these key variables (Figure 1), three evidence-based prevention intervention components are combined to form a comprehensive community prevention intervention to combat youth use of harmful legal products: 1) community mobilization; 2) environmental strategies; and 3) a school-based prevention education. These components are based upon the best available scientific evidence on effective prevention strategies.

4.2.3 The Role and Intervention of Religions and Communities Toward the Prevention and Combating the Menace of Drug Abuse in Nigeria

The position of religion in establishing virtues such as sincerity, sympathy, simplicity, love, justice, kindness, honesty, tolerance, self-reliance, determination and dedication to duties, courage, creativity and God consciousness could not be

overemphasized. Realization of such virtues could not be achieved when persistent menace of drug abuse among youth and adolescents is widespread. Teachings of religions (such as Islam, Christianity and Traditional religions) discourage unfavourable attitudes like drug abuse and addictions.

Nigeria was and is never a secular state. Secularism is defined as a system of belief and practices that rejects any form of religious faith. It simply means the belief that religion should be separated from the state. Nigeria is a multi-religious nation with Islam Christianity and Traditional religions as the three dominant religions. (Usman Sani Abbas, 2019). Religious interventions play a vital role in curtailment of drug abuse, as belief and morality are fundamental principles of religion in Nigeria.

Features and obligations of these religions do not accommodate negative attitudes such as drug abuse. However, religious teachings promote attitudes such as morality, dignity of human being, love for others, superior of knowledge, brotherhood, service to humanity, justice, peacefulness, politeness, honesty, courage and patience, forgiveness, sympathy and leniency.

i. Traditional Religion

Before the advent of Islam and Christianity to Nigeria, there was traditional religion with a great number of adherents. This is because in Africa, beliefs and morality are the fruit of religion. Thus, every institution in the society is religious oriented. Traditional religion, therefore, sets the code of behaviour for the community as a whole. (Usman Sani Abbas, 2019). Africans

believed that moral values are not human interventions, because God has put his laws into man and that man should use his conscience to behave in good way in order to avoid the wrath of God. As such, one understands that morals as part of traditional religion keep society away from negative attitudes (drug abuse inclusive) and lack of functionality in community participation and obligations (Usman Sani Abbas, 2019).

ii. Islam

Islam is a total submission to the way of Allah by complying with His dos and don'ts. (Nguru, 2010). The **dos** comprise of positive attitudes while **don'ts** encompass negative attitudes such as drug abuse. Different verses of the glorious Qur'an prohibit substance abuse.

Allah addresses Prophet Muhammad, and he says to him:

"They ask you (O' Muhammad) about strong drinks, wine (*khamr*) and games of chance (gambling)".

The prophet is consequently directed by Allah that:

"O' Muhammad reply them as, "in them (strong drinks and games of chance) is great sin and (yet, some) utility for people. But their sin is greater than their usefulness." Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah 2:219.

It is also, stated in the glorious Qur'an that:

"O' you who believe! Draw not near unto prayer (*Salat*) when you are drunken, till you know that which you utter". Qur'an Surah Al-Nisa'i 4:43.

“O’ you who believe! Strong drink, indeed, intoxicants (*Khamr*) and games of chance and idols and divine arrows are only an infamy of Satan’s handiwork. Leave it aside in order that you may succeed. Qur’an Surah Al-Ma’idah (5:90).

From the above verses of the glorious Qur’an, one understands that substance abuse is strongly prohibited, because this negative attitude hinders the individuals’ development physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually. It could also hinder developmental tasks at community and society levels. Islam advocate service to humanity, peace, and politeness which could not be achieved with drug abuse.

iii. Christianity

Christianity as a religion exhorts its adherents to virtuous deeds which if properly adhered to and put into actions can play a very vital role in facilitating development in Nigeria. However, teachings of the religion discourage unfavourable attitudes like drug abuse.

The Holy Bible says:

“Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.” Proverbs 20:1.

It is also stated in the Holy Bible that:

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” Ephesians 5:18.

“Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.” Titus 2:3.

From the verses of the Holy Bible above, one understands that teachings of religion are vehemently against the use of harmful products such as substance abuse and illicit drug.

Generally, it is observatory clear that religions and spirituality might referred to as collective faiths that are egregiously powerful. Hence, religious approach might be essential part of interventions in combating the menace of drug abuse. This is because youths and adolescents were trained and taught religiously right from childhood up to the stage of maturity. Therefore, religious leaders, teachers, mentors, guardians and counsellors should emphasize and focus on innovative prevention strategies towards prevention and control of substance and or drug abuse. Religion is an integral part, as well as indispensable resources in substance abuse prevention and recovery. The efficacy of religious faith encompasses not only the behaviours people engage in or don't engage in but, also the control of people's attitudes. Hence, religion should be a powerful weapon for prevention, control as well as guidance and counselling services to be directed against drug abuse. It might, however, strengthen people's faith and the support the find in belonging to faith communities for the betterment of individuals, communities and society in general.

4.3 Impacts of Religion on Education

Education is the skill and experience, which one acquires from the time he was born up to the time, he dies. (Adeyemo, 1979). It is the process of developing an individual morally, socially, intellectually, economically, politically and otherwise. Hence, the essence of education is to ensure all round development of and individual. However, religion equips education with some

ethical values capable of making achieve its purpose. These ethical values quest for education in order to serve Supreme Being and to offer services to humanity, self-reliance, courage sincerity, justice, kindness, sympathy, simplicity, honesty, and other ethical values which could only be achieved by combating the menace of drug abuse among the potential leaders of the country such as youths and adolescents. (Usman Sani Abbas, 2019).

4.3.1 Educating Teenagers and Young People on the Risks of Drug Abuse

The teenage brain is in a state of rapid development, which can lead to erratic behavior. (DBHG) suggested that human brain is not completely mature until twenty-five years old, and the most dramatic changes in growth happen during adolescence. Because of this, teenagers are not always mentally equipped to make the best decisions about their health and future.

Therefore, educating young people on the potential risks of abusing drugs and alcohol can enable them to make better choices. Some of the education programs currently in use are designed as three separate segments to target different types of students. These segments are:

i. Universal Segment

These educational initiatives were created for all teenagers, regardless of background or potential for drug abuse. Universal programs teach personal, social and drug resistance skills in brief weekly sessions.

ii. Selective Segment

These intervention programs are for students who have been identified as at risk due to family, personal or community risk factors. Selective education helps inform teenagers about the risks of substance abuse.

iii. Indicated Segment

Students in the indicated education program are already showing signs of problem behavior. Indicated programs are less focused on prevention and more on reducing or controlling existing drug use.

4.4 Impacts of Religion on Social Stability

The impact of religion on social stability could not be stressed, because, all the messengers were sent by God among other things to establish and ordain justice as well as promoting cordial relationship among individuals. All the prophets however, discouraged negative attitudes and evil deeds such as, violence, wickedness, theft, banditry, insecurity and all other sorts of criminal acts of which drug abuse mostly caused.

4.5 Impacts Of Religion on Economy and National Development

After Adam's and Hauwa'a (Eve's) coming to the earth from heaven, Adam survived with fruits, vegetables and water. However, later on, God gifted him with idea of farming to sustain him and his generations. This is because, all mankind are originally from Adam and Hauwa. This is why all mankind are referred to as children of Adam. (Usman Sani Abbas, 2019).

From the time onwards, Adam engaged in farming. He was the first agriculture engineer and farmer. Therefore, farming was the first occupation engaged by the first man on earth. All prophets and messengers of *Allah* (God) engaged in one occupation or another. For instance, Prophet Idris was the establisher of tailoring and confectioning, Prophet Noah was the father of carpenter, prophet Hud was a trader. Prophet Zakariyya was a carpenter. However, prophet Dawud was a blacksmith, Prophet Dhul-Kifl used to bake bread. He was the father of the bakers. Prophet Sulaiman was the first to forge copper mine. So also, Prophet Ilyas was the father of weavers and thread choosers, while, Prophet Yunus was the father of fishermen. Prophet Uzair on the other hand, was the father of those who are occupied with gardening. Prophet Luqman was the father of doctors and pharmacists. Prophet Isa (Jesus) was a hunter, and Prophet Muhammad was a trader. (Hussein, 2010).

As part of religious impacts on the economy and national development, God almighty is the real owner of all things including wealth. This is why all issues relating to economy should not be carried out completely without divine guidance. Business creation is the ability to bring into existence business ideas, products and processes through imaginative skills (Usman Sani Abbas, 2019). However, it is important to note that business creation could only be achieved in a place where drug abuse is withered away. This could be realized if citizens adhere strictly to the moral standard encouraged by their respective religions and belief systems.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Youths and adolescents are undoubtedly the potential leaders. They are expected to take responsibilities in different sectors of life. These important groups are expected to take over leadership responsibilities in the near future. As such, they are most likely to involve and contribute to the national development in different areas, such as education; science and technology; politics; commerce; military; religion; sports among others. If properly guided and monitored, youths and adolescents are most likely having abilities as well as capabilities of bringing out positive developmental changes, innovation and creativity for the benefits of the community at both national and international levels. Conversely, youths involve into drug abuse, might not bring about positive impact to the community and society at large, rather cripple the development of the nation, hence the need for collaborative efforts of parents, guardians, teachers, community members as well as religious scholars in order to train and groom youth to be of great benefit to themselves, their communities and Nigeria in general.

In view of the foregoing, the paper recommends the followings:

- i. That approaches of health education and enlightenment need to be employed in order to reduce the menace of drug abuse as well as improving health of the vulnerable groups, community and society at large.

- ii. Business orientation is highly needed to instil and inculcate attitude of self-reliance. This may help to reduce the number of unemployed youths and adolescents.
- iii. Guidance and Counselling strategies are essentially needed to prevent youths, adolescents and other members of the society from becoming victims of drug abuse.
- iv. Religious intervention is very essential to inculcate virtues capable of making youths to be morally upright. This could help in combating drug abuse.
- v. Providing of community development programs will assist in reducing the rate of poverty in Nigeria.
- vi. Family support program and assistance needed to be directed to less privileged. This is because, lack of family support and assistance may lead to broken homes. Broken homes, on the other hand, is one of the causative agents of drug abuse among youth and adolescents.

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