



YOUTH PERCEPTION ON CONTROL MEASURES IN REDUCING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN SOKOTO, SOKOTO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Substance abuse is a maladaptive use of a drug, resulting in impairment of functioning or distress, as manifested by a failure to perform adequately at home, school or work. In Nigeria, a large number of the population mostly the youth buy drugs without any physician's prescription. The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of the youth on measure in reducing or controlling substances abuse in Sokoto, Sokoto state, Nigeria. An exploratory descriptive qualitative design was used. Twelve youth between the ages 18 to 30 years who abuse different substances but were not in psychotic state were recruited using snowball and purposive sampling methods. Semi-structured interview guide was used to interview the respondents after obtaining an informed consent from the respondents. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim, the data was analyzed using content analysis. The findings of this study revealed that Job provision, enlightenment and education were perceived measures in prevention, reduction or controlling substance abuse in Sokoto. Recommendations were made based on the findings of the study such as the government and non-governmental organizations should provide job opportunities for the youth.

Keywords: Substances, Substance Abuse, Youth, Sokoto, Measures.

INTRODUCTION

Various literatures were reviewed to find out possible measures that can be taken to control substance abuse among the youth. It was found that educating and enlighten the youth on the issues of substances abuse can help reduce the menace of substance abuse. Other measures that were reviewed include; provision of employment, parental monitoring, law enforcement and religious measures.

Enlightenment and education

Education has a significant influence on substance abuse (Ahmed, 2012; Ndeti, Khasakhala, Mutiso, Ongecha-owuor, & Kokonyo, 2010; Jibril, et al, 2008). Student who are aware or educated on the dangers or effect of substance abuse are more likely not to indulge in substance abuse than students who are not aware of the dangers involved (Ahmad 2012; Aliyu, 2014; Ndeti et al., 2010 Kulis et al., 2009). The weaker student are using substance abuse as a means of compensation to their academic weakness and as a diversional therapy (Ndeti et al., 2010). Moreover, parental education has influence on substance abuse among the youth (Jibril et al., 2008). Youth whose parents has no formal education has a higher rate of substance abuse than those whose parents had formal education (Jibril et al., 2008). This may be likely because those youth whose parents has formal education are more likely to be aware of the dangers of substance abuse than those whose parent has no formal education (Kulis et al., 2009; Shehu & Idris, 2008).

Educating community about the problems of drug and other substance abuse will help in reducing the menace of substance abuse among the youth in the society. Educating youth can be inform of organizing program so as to enlighten youth on the effects of indulging into substance abuse and the benefit of avoiding these substances. A study was conducted to determine the impact of a universal school-base substance abuse prevention program "Take charge of your life (TCYL)" with the aim to prevent or reduce the use of tobacco, alcohol or marijuana. The findings show that student who use those substance show a significant positive treatment effect for marijuana use. The main aim of the program is to acquire knowledge on decision marking and resistance skill, and to modify intension to use tobacco, alcohol and marijuana. The program targeted on the mediator to these behavior, (Sloboda et al., 2009). Although, the program only have significant effects on normatic beliefs and the influence of some confounds such as

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

assessing the quality of the implementation of the program and measuring the exposure to other prevention program which constitute intervention were not considered. Educational programme interventions on drug prevention programmes known as life skills training have been found to be successful with young adolescents (Faggiano et al., 2010). Life skills training are based on findings that most adolescent first use drugs in social situations and that their decisions are influenced not just by one factor but a variety. Effective programs focus on enhancing problem solving skills and aiding students to evaluate the influence of the media. Effective programs help improve self-esteem, and reduce stress and anxiety (Hamisu & Badamasi, 2014). These skills are taught using a combination of methods including demonstration, practice, feedback and praise. Another proven approach is training designed to teach skills to confront a problem-specific focus, emphasizing the application of skills directly to the problem of substance abuse (Ekpenyong, 2012).

Mass media involve the use of newspapers, radio, television, magazine and the internet. Media campaigns have been widely used for the prevention of substance abuse and illicit drug use among young people (Dray et al., 2012; Werb et al., 2011). Most of these media often address specific substances with the aim of reducing use and raising awareness about its associated problems. These types of campaign typically target young people because evidence shows that drug use often starts during adolescence, a time in life when young people may experiment with cigarettes, alcohol and illicit drugs. Mass media have been a major agent of socialization and tools for social changes especially now that people depend on message from mass media (Werb et al., 2011).

Job provision (Youth Empowerment)

About 1 in 6 unemployed workers in New York (US) are addicted to alcohol or drug, the ratio is almost twice the rate for full-time workers (Kurtz, 2013; White, 2014). A survey by Kurtz (2013), shows that 17% of unemployed workers had substance abuse disorder, where only 9% of full-time workers had similar disorder. The numbers in survey are self-reported, and therefore, could not be generalized or could even be higher in real situations. The high rate of unemployment among the youth in Nigeria has contributed to the high rate of poverty, insecurity and indulgence to substance abuse in the country (Ajufo, 2013).

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

Unemployment is significantly correlated to substance abuse (Gascon & Spiller, 2009; Thornton & Deitz-Allyn, 2010). In a study to determine if there is a relationship between unemployment rate and rate of substance abuse in Kentucky, United State, show a significant positive correlation between higher unemployment rate and higher rate of substance abuse (Gascon & Spiller, 2009). This is similar to the finding of Thornton and Deitz-Allyn (2010), in an exploratory study, found that there is a strong relationship between problems with unemployment and substance abuse in the southwest Virginia region. Also in Ghana, a qualitative study conducted using unstructured interview where twenty six participant were interviewed in Tudu area of Greater Accra, the result found that unemployment is one of the predisposing factor to substance abuse among the youth (Affinnih, 2012). In Nigeria, 85.5% of the youth who abuse substances are unemployed (Usman & Usman, 2012). With this, job provision will be a measure in controlling substance abuse among the youth.

Religious measures

Religion can be understood as a shared set of beliefs and practices that has been developed in community with people who have similar understandings of the transcendent, which is designed to mediate an individual's relationship with God or the transcendent (Hodge, Marsiglia, & Nieri, 2011). As such religion can be a protection against some of the social behavior such as youth involvement in substance abuse. Youth who actively involved in religious activities are less likely to indulge in substance abuse (Hodge et al., 2011). This could be due to the fact that the time spent engaging into religious activities translates into less available time for antisocial activities such as substance abuse.

In most African societies, religious beliefs serve as a guide to the people's way of living and it prescribed the expectations on how individual relate to his immediate environment. For instance, Sokoto (Northern part of Nigerian), is an Islamic state and being the seat of the caliphate of the country, consumption and selling of alcohol is totally prohibited according to Islamic law (sharia), and as such public sale and consumption of alcohol is completely disallowed within the entire territory of Sokoto and most states in the Northern part of the country. This make prevalence of alcohol use to be very low in northern Nigeria (Ahmed, 2012; Dankani, 2012; Jibril et al., 2008).

Parental monitoring

Parental monitoring refers to a parent's knowledge of his or her child's activities, associations, and whereabouts to ensure that the child's behavior is not harmful to his or her development and safety (Bertrand et al., 2013). Inadequate and poor parental monitoring has been associated with both elevated levels of substance consumption and poorer prognoses regarding treatment outcomes. A marked decline in parental monitoring also has an influence on adolescents' increased alcohol use (Luyckx et al., 2011). To be adequately informed of their child's whereabouts, parents can rely on various sources of information, namely parental control or parental solicitation (e.g. asking their child for information) and child self-disclosure (e.g. the child confiding in the parent, revealing information about his or her activities, interests, and/or behaviors). Branstetter and Furman (2013), supported the relevance of spontaneous adolescent self-disclosure to ensure adequate parental monitoring. Indeed, adolescent self-disclosure reveals adolescents' deviant behaviors more than behavioral types of monitoring such as parental control or parental solicitation (Bertrand et al., 2013; Branstetter & Furman, 2013). Parental practices, such as behavioral control and parents' responsiveness, are related to adolescent self-disclosure and parental knowledge, which, in turn, predict adolescents' substance use and antisocial behaviors.

A strong parent-child relationship is also an important protective factor when it comes to prevention of substance abuse problems among the youth (Davis & Spillman, 2011). A positive and protective relationship is characterized by a high degree of parental warmth, (e.g. show of interest in the child's activities and friends), an expression of enthusiasm for and pride in the child's accomplishments, and a demonstration of affection and love (Bertrand et al., 2013; Branstetter & Furman, 2013; Karine Bertrand, 2013). A mutual attachment between mothers and their adolescent reduces the risk of drug use in adolescence (Davis & Spillman, 2011).

Parental support is another factor that protects adolescent and youth against risky behavior such as substance abuse. Evidence shows that adolescent from more cohesive families are less likely to consume alcohol or other illicit substances (Gryczynski & Ward, 2011). Offspring of substance abusing fathers are at high increased risk for developing a substance use disorder when compare to children whose parent did not abuse substances, as such parent where considered to be a measure in reducing

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

substance abuse. Therefore, parents should set a warm and friendly atmosphere at home so that their children can feel easy to cooperate with them and take their advice on risky behavior such as substance abuse, (Tarter, Schultz, Kirisci, & Dunn, 2008).

The parental style is considered to be a factor that can has an influence on the children. Permissive parental style was found to be a contributing factor the individual's attraction to substances and to the ultimate abuse thereof, as such drug and alcohol become their comfort, there confident and their motivator. Therefore, parents are consider to be a measure in reducing substance abuse among youth (Kizhakumpurath, 2012).

Law enforcement

Enforcement of laws, rules and regulation for the control in drugs supply will help to control drugs and substance abuse among the youth. Despite the efforts of Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and other governmental agencies such as the National Agency for Food Drugs Administration and Control that are to stem the tide of substance abuse in Nigeria, there has been a consistent rapid rise in the number of cases of drug and substance abuse among young people (ages 10- 24) in Nigeria (Abdu-Raheem, 2013). Improper law, political influence, corruption and bribery are some of the factors that hinder the effectiveness of the law on drugs and drugs related cases. Proper and effective law against drug trafficking will reduce the menace of drug and substance abuse. The welfare of Law Enforcement Agencies should be improved to reduce the problem of bribery and corruption by law enforcement agents. In addition, more avenues of counselling and bailing drug offenders should be provided by the NDLEA and Police (Siro, 2014).

METHOD

An exploratory descriptive qualitative design was used for this study. This design is appropriate for areas where little has been reported and that is the reason that motivated the researcher to explore the perception of the youth on substance abuse.

Also, a qualitative approach allows the researcher to use a naturalistic method to gain in-depth understanding on perceptions of the youth on substance abuse. Accordingly, this study employed qualitative techniques in both the collection and analysis of the data (Field & Morse, 1985). The research was conducted in Sokoto, Sokoto state,

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

Nigeria. A non-probability sampling methods (purposive and snowball sampling techniques) were used to select the participants from Sokoto.

PATICIPANTS: The populations for this study were twelve (12) youth between 18-30 years who abuse substances but do not have obvious signs of psychosis in Sokoto, Sokoto state, Nigeria,

DATA COLLECTION: An in-depth interview was conducted with each participant, using open ended interview questions and following a topical semi- structured interview guide after obtaining an ethical approval was sought from the Institutional Review Board of Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research. Each interview lasted for about 30-45 minutes. The interviews were audio taped and later transcribed in English, verbatim. Interviews conducted in Hausa were also translated in English. The transcript was discussed with an expert in Hausa to ensure accuracy of the translation.

ANALYSIS: Data was analyzed using a content analysis as described by Mayan, (2001). Also, content analysis of the individual participant's in-depth interview was used to achieve all the objectives of the study. In this study, data was analyzed to identify the main themes and sub-themes within the narratives given by the participants. The analysis began once the first interview was conducted and continued throughout the data gathering process. Following the completion of each interview, the researcher would then transcribe the tape recordings. Each written transcript was read several times, while listening to the corresponding audio tape to ensure the accuracy of the transcribed tape. In addition, the transcripts were given to the supervisors to ensure integrity of the transcription. Important phrases, sentences or paragraphs were highlighted and assigned a label or code; this process was repeated until all the data was coded. The coded passages were then compared and codes that had common elements were grouped to form major themes and sub-themes. These themes and their supporting passages were continuously revised during the process of going through the transcripts. Every data was scrutinized to ascertain its suitability within the assigned theme. The themes were compared with each other and this helped to identify the relationships among the themes which were used to describe the perceived measures in controlling or preventing of substance abuse among the youth.

RESULT

Interviewees were between the ages of 18-30 years old. One (1) out of the twelve had a national certificate of education and three (3) had primary education and the remaining nine (9) had secondary school education. Only four (4) participants were not working and eight (8) were working, out of which two (2) were motor mechanics, one (1) was a businessman who sells cloth and the other one (1) was a watchman whilst the other two (2) were primary school teachers in a private and public primary school each. One (1) was working at an international airport in Sokoto. Half of the participants were single whilst the other half were married. Two (2) out of the married participants had children. All the participants were males and Muslim by religion. All the participants were interviewed in Hausa because they understood the language better and preferred to be interviewed in Hausa. All the participants were living in Sokoto, Sokoto state, Nigeria.

A number of themes were identified, such as education or enlightenment, job provision, religious measures, mass media, parental mentoring or control, and enforcement of laws. These were plausible perceived control measures to curb the menace of substance abuse.

Enlightenment and Education

The study brought to bear that education can be useful in enlightening youths who abuse substances to stop. It was recommended that the family, particularly parents, and the government should involve themselves in sensitizing people on the effects of substance abuse.

"The first way is by education and enlightenment. The second way is the involvement of parents, which is by calling on the parents to train their children well, because good parental upbringing is a measure that can help reduce our numbers. After that also, the government can help in the enlightenment and provide a strong law that will prohibit the sale and consumption of these substances. Actually, these can help to control substances abuse". (Participant 1)

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

“Ways of reducing substance abuse include educating and enlighten the youth on the dangers involved in abusing substances. Also the government should involve youths into enlightenment campaign against drugs. (Participant 2)

It was found that formal education is a very helpful measure in controlling substance abuse and those who have acquired formal education hardly engage in substance abuse since they know the effects of the substance abused. Participant twelve narrates:

“Those that are educated are hardly involved in substance abuse. They are less likely to be involved. Those that know the effects of substance abuse are less likely to be involved. So, education and enlightenment campaigns could help”. (Participant 12)

Respondents also suggested ways in which the education and enlightenment should be conducted. Mass media such as radio, television can be used to educate and enlighten the youth. Respondent six explained that:

“The Government should also enlighten the youth on the effects and dangers of substance abuse. Mass media such as radio, television and newspaper could help to educate the youth on the effects of abusing substances, and benefits of abstaining from abusing substances. All these can help in the control of substance abuse”. (Participant 6)

Respondent three endorsed that if the youth are aware of the dangers involved in substance abuse through education and enlightenment, then the menace of substance abuse can be reduced or controlled:

“If we were aware of the dangers involved in substance abuse, we will not have allowed ourselves into the act. Most of the youth were not aware of the dangers involved. Most of the youth were not educated or enlightened on the consequences of indulging in substance abuse. These could be the reasons why they were abusing the substances. (Participant 3)

Job Provision

The study exposed that one of the reasons of the youth engagement in substance abuse was lack of employment. Thus, it was suggested that provision of job opportunities for the youth so as to absorb them and made them productive, will help curb the menace of substance abuse. It was found that since the youth did not have any work doing, they engaged in all sorts of vices, particularly substance abuse so that they can feel normal.

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

"Most of the us who abused substances are those who are unemployed, they are youth like me, I don't have any work to do, so what do you expect?..... It is because we don't have work to do. If I had work to do, I won't have time to waste. Employment will totally change this habit of substance abuse, and if you promise me work today I will stop it today, yes I will". (Participant 1)

"You know some of us used these substances because of stress, and this stress is unemployment related. So, provision of jobs or other skills acquisition programmes like training us on some skills such as tailoring, carpentry, mechanics and many of them can help prevent, reduce or even control youth indulgence to substance abuse". (Participant 5)

Also some politicians gave money for the youth to attack opponents after abusing substances. A respondent related this to unemployment and believed that provision of jobs or having money to start a business will eradicate substance abuse among the youth.

"The government can help, by providing job opportunity, to the youth. If the government provides employment for the youth, the problem of politicians using the youth will be solved. They will not give us these substances to go and attack their opponent for political reasons. So once we have work we will no longer abuse substances. If I have work to do, I will not have time for all this. They can also give us money to start a business". (Participant 12)

Religious measures

It was suggested that religious leaders can make strides in the reduction or eradication of substance abuse. The religious leaders should incorporate topics on substance abuse in their sermons and also preach to children and the youth in places such as schools and mosques:

"Yes, religious leaders can help in reducing substance abuse. I can even say they are in a better position of controlling substance abuse. Because in Nigeria, especially the northern part of Nigeria, we highly respect our religious leaders, both Muslims and Christians. In the mosque or in the church, whatever we are advised to do by our religious leaders we do it and what we are asked not to do we abstain from it. So we take their advice and respect them very well". (Participant 3)

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

"The religious leaders can help in controlling substance abuse. They can include substance abuse issues in their sermon and preaching sessions. They can also preach to the youth in schools and mosque". (Participant 2)

Respondent three described how religion can be helpful in controlling substance abuse. He stated that the holy Quran prohibits substances such as Alcohol.

"Islamic religion prohibited the selling and consumption of substances such as alcohol. It is totally prohibited by Allah in the holy Quran: It is a great sin for any Muslim to take Alcohol. So on this note; I think religious leaders can help by telling us or reminding us, that taking these substances is totally prohibited according to the teaching of Islam". (Participant 7)

Others believed that, religious leaders can help in controlling substance abuse through preaching and prayers:

"Honestly, religious leaders can help pray for us. They can also preach on the dangers involved in substance abuse, and this will make the youth not to be involved and those who are involved will quit". (Participant 5)

Parental monitoring

The study found that proper parental upbringing and monitoring can help reduce substance abuse. Participants thought that, parents are supposed to monitor their children, the type of friends they have and visit their schools to check on them. That is to say, parents should invest time to know their children.

"Parents can help but if the child can abide by what his parent ordered him to do or not to do. You know the youth; some listen to their parents' advice while others don't. If parents can stick to their words at home, they will help direct their children to a better life. The parent can help by monitoring their children's behaviour through proper parental upbringing and advice. You have to know the type of friends your child have. You need to know when and where the child goes.... You can even go to their school and ask about the child". (Participant 5)

"Parents can help to caution and advise their children, they are the first to detect any change of behaviour. As a father you need to monitor your child. You have to get time and listen to your children, advice, guide and monitor them as well. So it is important to

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

monitor your children as a father or mother so as to find any change in their behaviour or change in friends. All this will help to control or reduce substance abuse” (Participant 11)

Law enforcement

It was found that legislation on substance abuse should be enforced by existing agencies like the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). However, it was suggested that instead of arresting those who are engaged in substance abuse, those who sell the substances should rather be arrested to solve the problem from the source. Once sellers are dealt with, buying will no more be a problem and engagement will be lost. Respondent seven said:

“There is a law, but it cannot prevent the youth from abusing substances, it can only reduce it. But I am advising the government to arrest those who sell substances, because we cannot produce those substances and once we cannot see these substances to buy, we will stop taking them, but once they are available we will always use them”.

(Participant 7)

It was suggested that the government should strengthen the laws on importation of illicit substances from the source countries. Respondents six suggested that:

“The government should block the entire route through which those substances are imported; because they are not produced here, but are imported mostly from the southern part of the country, even though the dealers will not tell you the exact place where the substances are transported from. I am 100% in support of banning even the cigarette companies in Nigeria”. **(Participant 6)**

Death penalty was suggested for those who import substances.

“The government can control substance abuse by imposing death penalty on the culprits, so any body is caught in the production or importation of these substances into the country should be sentenced to death. I mean whoever is caught should be sentenced to death without favour”. **(Participant 11)**

It was also reported that the law can help only if the government arrest the main suppliers of these substances and ensure that those that are arrested are jailed:

“If the government wants to stop or control substance abuse, they should sentence those that are involved as I am sure the government knows these big dealers. But they will be

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

caught today, and released tomorrow; the highest they can stay in jail is one day”.

(Participant 8)

DISCUSSION

Findings on the perceived control measures or ways in which substance abuse can be prevented, reduced or controlled were discussed based on the following: education and enlightenment, job provision, religious measures, parental monitoring and law enforcement.

Educating and enlightening the youth who were abusing or not abusing substances was found to be a measure in the prevention, reduction or controlling the menace of substance abuse among the youth. This study found that sensitization campaigns involving the family particularly the parents on the effects of substance abuse could help in controlling youth indulgence in substances abuse. This was based on the fact that the youth whose parents were not educated or aware of the effects of substance abuse has a higher rate of indulgence in substance abuse than those youth whose parents are educated on substance abuse (Jibril et al., 2008; Ekpenyong, 2012). In this study, mass media involved the use of Radio and television and it was suggested that these media can be used to educate on substance abuse. This is in line with previous studies by Dray et al. (2012) and Werb et al. (2011). Other mass media mentioned by a few participants were Newspapers, magazine and the use of internet. The use of these could be restricted at Sokoto because of illiteracy level or lack of education. Also, this study found that organizing educational programmes on substance abuse prevention such as in schools, mosque and churches as a means of educating and enlightening the community on the dangers or effects of abusing substances could help in preventing youth indulgence in substance abuse. This finding is in line with the previous studies by Sloboda et al. (2009) and Ekpenyong (2012).

Unemployment was found to be a predisposing factor for substances abuse (Kurtz, 2013; White, 2014; Ajufo, 2013; Gascon & Spiller, 2009; Thornton & Deitz-Allyn, 2010). This was the basis of the assertion that provision of job opportunities could help in the prevention, reduction and control of substance abuse among the youth (Affinnih, 2012). In this study, half of the respondents were unemployed and their indulgence in substance abuse could be unemployment related. There is a strong relationship between problems with unemployment and substance abuse in both low income

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

countries such as Ghana and higher income countries such as United State (Thornton and Deitz-Allyn, 2010; Affinnim, 2012). This study inferred that if youth are employed, they may not engage in abusing substances, as such, job provision was considered to be a measure for reducing or controlling substance abuse. Similar finding was reported by Ajufo (2013), that the high rate of unemployment among the youth in Nigeria has contributed to the high rate of poverty, insecurity and substance abuse in the country.

Moreover, this study found that religion and religious leaders could make strides in the reduction or eradication of substance abuse among the youth. In this study, it was found that religious leaders could help in preventing, reducing or eradicating substance abuse among the youth by preaching and incorporation of topics on substance abuse in their sermons in mosques or churches as reported by other studies (Ahmed, 2012; Dankani, 2012; Jibril et al., 2008; Hodge et al., 2011). This study also found that, some of the substances that were prohibited by religion were less abused by the youth in those communities such as alcohol. This finding is congruent with that of Ahmed (2012), Dankani (2012) and Jibril et al. (2008).

Proper parental upbringing can help reduce substance abuse as indicated by Ahmed (2012). In this study, parents were supposed to monitor their children on the type of friends they had and also visit their schools to check on them. However, Ahmed (2012) reported parental role on discouraging their children not to indulge in substance abuse. This study also found that, parent should invest time to monitor and know their children as emphasised by Luyckx et al. (2011) and Branstetter and Furman (2013) who claimed that parental monitoring has influence on adolescents' alcohol use. Furthermore, this study found that a strong parent-child relationship help parents to identify any change in the child's behaviour such as indulgence to substances abuse and could also help prevent the menace of substance abuse as supported by Davis and Spillman (2011). Even though this study did not support the findings of the studies by Bertrand et al.(2013), Branstetter and Furman (2013) and Karine (2013) who reported that substance abuse can be suppressed through demonstration of affection and love by parents, it supports their assertion on parents interest in the children's activities and friends.

Moreover, in this study, law enforcement was found to be effective only if those that sold the substance could be arrested and prosecuted instead of arresting the abusers.

International Journal of Nursing and Medical Science 2018; 7 (2), 737-754

This assertion was made by the majority of the respondents based on the fact that the drug dealers were encouraging the use of these substances by making them available in the community. The youth could only use the substances because they were made available to them by the drug dealers. This finding is contrary to the findings of previous studies (Abdu-Raheem, 2013; Siro, 2014), but in support of their findings on the factors that hinder the effectiveness of law such as bribery and corruption.

In summary, the most commonly abused substance was Marijuana, while the least abused was cocaine and the reasons were affordability and availability. Alcohol was not commonly abused due to religious prohibition. In this study, impaired relationships and violence were the effects of substance abuse that mostly affected the youth in Sokoto. Finally, most of the respondents agreed that job provision, enlightenment and education could help control substance abuse.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed at exploring the perception of the youth on control measures on substance abuse in Sokoto, Sokoto state, Nigeria. Various perceptions that the participants had towards the control measures on substances abuse were critically examined after conducting twelve in-depth interviews. The participants provided narratives regarding their perceptions on the control measures on substances they abused. The findings of this study revealed four major themes which are discussed. These major themes are: enlightenment and education, job provision, Religious measures, parental monitor, Law enforcement. Discussions of findings in this study have been done in relation to previous studies.

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