

Drug abuse and its consequences

By

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Introduction

- There is upsurge of issues of global dimension today like drug abuse
- The adverse effect of drug abuse has reached alarming stage especially among our youths
- Global studies: early initiation of drug use is one of the best predictors of future drug abuse and dependence
- Drug abuse has always been connected to occultism and the youths in Nigeria's tertiary institutions are deeply involved in this practice

Drug use terms and descriptions

What are drugs?

- Substances natural or synthetic used for medical purposes that change the state or function of the body
- Chemical substances which upon entering the body, cause biological effects on humans or other animals
- **In pharmacology**: chemical substances used in the treatment, cure, prevention, or diagnosis of disease

Drug use terms and descriptions

- **Addiction:** Compulsive nature of the drug use despite physical and/or psychological harm to the user and society and includes both licit and illicit drugs
- **Dependence:**
 - **Psychological:** User needs the drug to maintain a feeling of well-being Eg: cocaine
 - **Physical** :tolerance-increasing or using larger doses to achieve the initial effect

Drug use terms and descriptions

- **Hard drug**

- More dangerous drugs, with a higher risk of dependence : Heroin, cocaine, Amphetamine
- Lead to severe physical addiction

- **Soft drug**

- Do not cause physical addiction
- Cause psychological dependency(people feel better when they have the drug): Cannabis

Drug use terms and descriptions

- **Illicit drug:** (illegal drug) Cocaine, heroin, marijuana
- **Designer drug:** synthetic drug very similar in chemical makeup to an existing drug and exert similar effect
- **Club drug:** Use primarily in clubs, bars and trance parties. E.g: Rohypnol, ketamine
- **Recreational drugs:**
 - For fun or leisure: methamphetamine
 - Long distance driving

Origin of Drug use and abuse

- Dates back to existence of farming
- During the 2nd world war, Nigerian war veterans who fought in Burma, came back with them at the end of war, cannabis as souvenirs
- B/w 70's and 80's, mainly Cannabis was produced and abused
- Later in the 90's till date, other harder drugs: cocaine, heroine were brought into Nigeria

Origin of Drug abuse

- Before 2013, Nigeria was only considered as a transit nation for illicit drugs but now; we are an internationally recognized user nation
 - Cannabis and marijuana are abused nationwide
 - Some food vendors/ caterers prepare food with marijuana leaves for special occasions like weddings, birthdays
- Recent report by the govt., 3 million bottles of codeine are drunk every day in the north alone
- About 60% of the nation's Alcohol intake occur in the south

Classes of abused drugs

Medications/ prescription drugs

- Analgesics
- Antibiotics
- Steroids
- Stimulants
- Antipsychotics
- Barbiturates
- Anxiolytics/ tranquilizers: valium, lexotan etc

Legally or socially approved and acceptable drugs

- Tobacco, alcoholic beverages, nicotine, and inhalants (nail polish, glue, inhalers, gasoline)

Illegal or legally disapproved drugs

- Cocaine and crack, cannabis, Amphetamines, heroin, hashish, hallucinogens, Opiates (morphine, fentanyl, pethidine)

Reasons why people abuse drugs

- Anyone can become a drug abuser
- Current information: all ethnicities, social groups and genders can have drug abuse problems
- There is no established fact that drug abuse runs in the family
- Theories: Personality, Learning, Biological or genetic and Social cultural

Reasons why people abuse drugs

- Experimental curiosity
- Peer group pressure effect
- Lack of parental supervision
- Depression
- To keep alert (Cocaine), or be excited (stimulants)
- Personality Problems due to socio-Economic Conditions
 - Unemployment among youths
 - Frustration

Reasons why people abuse drugs

- To enhance performance and work for long hours
 - Athletes and bodybuilders take anabolic steroids
 - Soldiers, college students, athletes, truck drivers take stimulant
- Availability of the Drug
- To prevent withdrawal symptoms (anxiety, drug craving, fatigue)
- Advertisement and its glamour
- Social pathologies
 - Unemployment and parental deprivation

Signs that someone abuses drug

- Isolating from family and friends who don't use drugs
- Spending time with new friends or friends who get high or drink
- Never having money or often asking to borrow money, even for small items
- Paying less attention to basic hygiene
- Changes in sleeping habits

Signs that someone abuses drug

- Extremely private about possessions, including their bag, room, or car
- Lying about using drugs or drinking
- Sneaking away to get high or drunk
- Hidden bottles of alcohol or drug paraphernalia
- Red eyes, dark lips, needle sticks injuries and scars on the skin

Signs that someone abuses drug

- Showing up late to work/school or not showing up at all
- Losing a job
- Doing little to find a job if out of work
- Irritable or agitated, and even blow off commitments or family events

Drugs abused in Nigeria

Alcohols

Beer, stout, ogogoro, burukutu, aspetesi, pito, palmwine, sapele water, kai kai, spirit

- Depresses the nervous system
- Increases the heart-beat
- Blood vessels dilatation
- Poor vitamin B digestion when taken on empty stomach
- Poor judgment and cognition
- Liver cirrhosis
- Alcohol baby syndrome/ low birth weight



Cannabis/Marijuana

Igbo, hemp, weed, ganja

Short term: Temporal euphoria

- Increased appetite
- Increased pulse rate
- Reddening of the eyes
- Short-term memory
- Impaired logical thinking and physical performance
- Distorted perception of senses

Long term: Moderate tolerance, psychol. dependence, risk of lung cancer and other lung diseases



Opiates/Depressants/Tranquilizers

Codeine, Tramadol, Valium, Lexotan,

- Decreased inhibition
- Slowed motor coordination
lethargy, relaxed muscles
- Staggering gait, poor judgment
slow or uncertain reflexes,
disorientation, slurred speech



Inhalants

Lead paint, glue, nail polish, gasoline, toilet fumes,

- **Short-term** euphoria, silliness, dizziness, headaches and fainting or unconsciousness
- **Long-term:** Memory loss, tremors, emotional instability, impairment of reasoning, slurred speech, clumsy, staggering gait, eye flutter, Deafness, loss of sense of smell, and escalating stages of brain atrophy and damage



Cocaine

Coke, crack

- Short term:
 - Loss of appetite
 - Breathless, increased HR and BP
 - Fever, sweating,
 - Bizarre violent behaviour, hallucination
- Restlessness, seizures, irritability, psychosis
- Long term:
 - Destruction of tissues in nose if sniffed
 - Respiratory problems if smoked
 - Infectious diseases, abscesses, if injected
 - Malnutrition and weight loss



Heroines

Speedballing (heroin+cracked cocaine)

- Euphoria
- Dry mouth, hot flushes
- Nausea, vomiting
- Powerless to do normal activity

Long term

- Anxiety, drug craving, irritability
- Increased appetite, diarrhoea, vomiting, fatigue
- Muscle and bone pains
- Poor concentration
- Liver, kidney, heart and lung diseases
- Insomnia
- Sexual dysfunction/irregular menses



Methamphetamine

Ice, Meth

- Sleeplessness for days/weeks
- Total loss of appetite, extreme weight loss
- Excited, talkative, deluded sense of power
- Depression, euphoria, shaking nervousness, unusual sweating,
- Anxiety, hallucinations, aggression
- Dizziness, blurred vision, severe dental problem (meth.mouth)



Consequences of drug abuse

- Academic difficulties
- Health-related problems
 - Physical
 - Mental
- Poor peer relationships
- Family
- Community and society at large

Consequences of drug abuse

- Academic
 - Declining grades
 - Absenteeism from school and other activities
 - Increased potential for dropping out
- Medical
 - HIV-AIDS
 - Hepatitis/ liver cancer
 - Stroke
 - Lung cancer, bronchitis
- Mental
 - Depression
 - Conduct problems
 - Personality disorders/ psychosis
 - Suicidal thoughts, attempted suicide, and suicide

Consequences of drug abuse

- **Physical**
 - Car accident injuries, physical disabilities and diseases
 - Suicide, homicide and illness
- **Poor peer relationships**
 - Disengagement from school and community activities
 - Stigmatization and feeling of unfulfilment
- **Family**
 - Family crisis, financial embarrassment
- **Community and society at large**
 - Burden of supporting victims
 - Financial losses
 - Increased crime and insecurity (Armed robbery, prostitution)

Prevention

- **The Family:**
 - Parents: care, supervise and monitor friends their children keep and guide them against bad company
 - lead their children to God
- **The Community/Religious groups**
 - Set up drug abuse vigilante groups' for early detection and containment
- Limit the availability of drugs to professionals only
- Consent of a doctor should be sought before a prolong intake of a particular soft drug
- **The Pharmaceutical Industry** : manufacturers, importers, distributors and retailers -extra vigilant in the handling such drugs

Prevention

- **Government:**

- Empower the relevant agencies (NDLEA, NAFDAC etc)
- Sanitize distribution and restrict access to dangerous drugs
- Continuous campaign against the use of hard drugs at the federal, state and local levels
- Everybody involved in the handling of drugs must be brought under regulatory control
- Stiff penalty should be meted against anybody found dealing in hard drugs
- Empower the Unemployed and underemployed
- Aggressive extinction of all the sources of these hard drugs including the farms where they are planted by a joint force of authorities

Conclusion

- Drug abuse is a self-destructive indulgence that leads to significant problems and distress
- Can weigh down an individual, family, community, society at large and in all ramifications

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*Thank you for
listening*