

**DRUG ABUSE AS A HINDERANCE TO THE EDUCATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIETY.**

BY:

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INTRODUCTION

One of the disturbing phenomena to parents, educational administrators, teachers, law enforcement agencies and the society is the problem of drug abuse amongst our youths in both primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. The problem has taken a serious dimension that a coordinated effort have to put place by all concerned to curtail the menace.

Drug abuse has now become a common case of indiscipline found among our school going children. Many Nigerian adolescents are known to parents teachers and neighbors to have problems with drugs. Many promising youth boys and girls who are known to be bright in schools have been affected by drug abuse, those who are lucky among them quit at a point and the unfortunate ones for long periods, thus the need for societal attention and participation in curtailing the practice. This discussion is intended to look at the following:-

1. What is drug abuse;
2. Reasons for drug abuse;
3. kinds of drug abused;
4. Drug abuse as a hindrance to the educational development

WHAT IS DRUG ABUSE?

The term "drug abuse" refers to "deliberate misuse of chemical substances for purpose inconsistent with medical practice". Drug abuse can be exemplified with the use of psychoactive substance like alcohol, barbiturates, cocaine, heroin, amphetamine and Indian hemp. The issue of overdose of drugs is referred to as "drug misuse" which is the use of drugs without

doctors prescription. It could be an under dose or over dose of prescribed drugs like antibiotics and analgesics.

REASONS FOR DRUG ABUSE.

Investigations have revealed that students indulged In drug abuse due to the following reasons:-

1. PEER PRESSURE:- This is a situation whereby an individual student gets into drug because he does not want to be out of a particular group who are his friends and are drug abusers.

2. FEEL GROWN UP:-Some students would want to experiment drugs to show to parents and significant others that they are of age and can indulge in things adults do. It is also a rebellion from parents authority.

3. CURIOSITY:- This group consists of those who would want to experiment what others feel when they take a particular drug. This could be the beginning of continued drug abusing.

4. ESCAPE EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS:-This category of students are those that may not be able to face examination or may not be able to accept failure in the in examinations as such they take the drug as a consolation so that, they can forget their worries which would not solve their problems but would only compound it.

5. TO BE SOCIALLY ACCEPTED:-individual students attending functions like marriage ceremonies when confronted by a group of drug abusers may not want to be called anti-social, instead they engage into it to be socially accepted.

6. CAPTIVATING ADVERTISEMENT:-This comes from either bill-boards, news-papers and magazines, radio and television where things like alcohol are advertised in an enticing language. Also

things like cigarette like Rothmans which has "the best tobacco 'money can buy", as its advertisement would make youths wanting to taste how best it is.

KINDS OF DRUGS ABUSED

The following are some of the drugs identified as the ones abused by students.

1. Alcohol -e.g. Beer, wine and spirits.
2. Cannabis - e.g. Indian hemp
3. Stimulants - e.g. Amphetamine and its derivatives such as caffeine
4. Tobacco - e.g. Cigarettes, pipe-tobacco and chewing tobacco.
5. Volatile Solvents -e.g. glue, petrol and solution, codine, cough mixture etc.

A brief discussion on the individual effects of the above would be done here:-

ALCOHOL

Acute abuse of alcohol may lead to short term impairment of functioning and control. This happens through damages to the cerebellum which act as feed back centre for control of muscles and hence movement. Unstable eye movement, poor speech and feet tremor are all possible effects of alcohol abuse. Failure to recall events and information as well as inability to hear or form new memories have also been associated with alcoholism. Other problems include aggressiveness, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver" malnutrition and alcohol dependence.

INDIAN HEMP

The World Health Organization (**WHO**) (1983) reports indicated that research on the effect of Indian hemp is complex and subject to different interpretations. However, aggressiveness, 'carelessness

and quarrel are associated with Indian Hemp also mental problem is the ultimate end of such abusers.

AMPHETAMINE.

Abuse of amphetamine could create paranoid reaction. Death have been reported in high doses of amphetamine. The abuse may also result in violence and crime.

TOBACCO/CIGARETTES.

Tobacco does a lot of damage due to nicotine and tar content. The World Health Organization (**WHO**) chronicles (1985) has indicated that, the earlier a person begins to smoke the greater the risk of developing lung cancer and other life threatening diseases. It is specially noted that someone who begins to smoke before the age of 14 years is 15 times more likely to develop lung cancer than a non-smoker. At the same-time some one who begins at the age of 25 is only 3 times more likely to contract lung cancer. Other health risks of smoking are of greater chance of heart disease and chronic bronchitis. Perhaps because of all health risks associated with smoking, it is found that smokers have higher annual rates of medical-care-utilization than non-smokers (**WHO** 1985).

VOLATILE SOLUTION.

The most commonly abused solvents are:- paints, glue, rubber solution and battery concoction. Some of the volatile solvents have intoxicating result while others produce illusions and visual

hallucinations. Serious abuse of this highly toxic solvents leads to severe tissue damage of various internal organs such as lungs and kidney.

DRUG ABUSE AS A HINDERANCE TO EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIETY

1. Consistent drug abuse would lead to lack of concentration in students and possible withdrawal from school.

2. Street fighting is noticed nowadays in our cities, this could lead to serious injuries or be arrested by police and sent to jail.

3. Petroleum hawking is one of the major identifiers of drug abusers. They leave school and join it to make money. In most cases they end up in police cells for either fighting, stealing or smoking of Indian Hemp.

4. **Truancy:-** Drug abuse makes a student truant, because he would always feel irritated by other behaviours towards him. Since they do not belong to the same world, as such he would want to avoid them.

5. **Abnormal Behaviours:-** A constant drug abuser has the tendency of exhibiting abnormal behaviours in any situation, because to him every body may want to disturb his peace of mind thereby he is always picking quarrels.

6. **Mental Problems:-** The end results of a drug abuser is madness. A great number of people surveyed in the mental homes are victims of drug abuse. This sickness could relapse and come back again after treatment. The victim may not be a complete normal human being again for the rest of his life. He would always be viewed by the public as once a mad man and could be so again.

7. Unwanted pregnancies: For school girls who happens to indulge in drug abuse, they may likely end up being misused by the boys in the group or gang she joins for the abuse and she may end up been impregnated. Such girls are prone to venereal diseases HIV/AIDS and other allied sexually transmitted disease. As soon as such happens, the girl has automatically finished her studies and may end her life in the most disasterous way.

8. Drug abusers may likely fall into stealing when they don't have money to buy such drugs, the stealing could lead to armed robbery.

9. Absenteeism:- A drug abuser could likely be a victim of absenteeism from classes which may result in failure in academic performance.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Parents should monitor their children/ward movements and associations they identify with.

2. The stiffer penalties provided for by the law for sellers and abusers should be strictly followed.

3.The State government should legislate against hawking, petrol selling among youths of school going age 6-18 years.

4. Parents should monitor the movement and associates of their children during vacations.

5. In the schools children with learning difficulties should be identified and assisted out of their problems

6.The curriculum should be tailored to be learner friendly, so that children are allowed to choose from alternatives, wherever course that befit their intellectual capabilities.

7. Foreign films and publications that portray drug abuse as Heroism by actors and casts should be censored and banned from circulating, because such are what our youths try to copy.