

An Assessment of the Broadcast Media Campaign against Drugs Abuse in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The use of drugs to cure and heal the body system has been of irreplaceable value to humanity. In other words, it is practically impossible, if not impossible, to dispose of drugs. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), drug means any substance or product that is used or intended to be used to modify the physiological system or pathological state for the benefit of the recipient or user. Different scholarly studies have shown that drugs are useful to boost the immune and metabolic systems of a living being. However, the misuse and abuse of drugs have been problematic issues for the wellbeing of society. As a matter of fact, the abuse of drugs has been on the rise among youths in Nigeria. On a daily basis, many youths in Nigeria consume and abuse different drugs and substances such as heroin, cocaine, marijuana, codeine, amphetamines, narcotics, and the like that produce high dependence. This undoubtedly exposed many Nigerian youths to different harmful health conditions, such as deterioration and weak physical appearance, and irresponsible attitudes like stealing and fighting, among others. Hence, the aim of this paper is to critically examine the use and impacts of drug abuse or addiction among youths in Nigeria and the effectiveness of broadcast media campaigns against drug abuse in Nigeria. The paper will employ different research methods, such as conceptual analysis, to delineate the meaning of major concepts like drugs, drug abuse, and media; the method of critical assessment will also be used to critically evaluate and assess the impacts of media in the campaign against drug abuse among youths in Nigeria. The paper concludes with an affirmation that the intake of illegal drugs among youths in Nigeria is alarming and, as such, dangerous and harmful to their health. Hence, the paper recommends that the government and Non-government organizations should engage more in media campaigns against drug abuse and also be firm and unbiased in enforcing the laws against lawbreakers, especially youths engaging in the consumption of illegal drugs.*

KEYWORDS: drugs, drug abuse, broadcast media, youths, Nigeria, WHO

INTRODUCTION

The media is a tool to communicate and transfer information from one place to another. Different types of information, knowledge, and skills have been acquired using the media. As a matter of fact, the media has greatly contributed to the development and growth of society by keeping people abreast of things happening in it. In fact, it has been used as a means to settle and manage crises. Conversely, the media has also been used in a negative way. An instance is the use of media, especially social media, to defraud people, spread false information, and instigate crises in society. Consequently, the media has been seen as a two-edged sword that has both negative and positive impacts on society. Apparently, broadcast media holds substantial promise as a tool for reaching and persuading people to adopt new, healthier, and peaceful lifestyles. Living a healthy lifestyle has been the interest of people and organizations campaigning against the abuse of drugs and other unhealthy behaviors that could jeopardize people's health and wellbeing.

Drug abuse is a term commonly used when prescriptions or medications with sedative, anxiolytic, analgesic, or stimulant properties are used for mood alteration or intoxication, ignoring the fact that overdoses of such medicines have serious adverse effects. The use of broadcast media campaigns as a drug abuse control and prevention intervention is relatively strategic and part of living a healthy lifestyle.

In the 1970s, the use of broadcast media campaigns to reduce health problems in society gained momentum, with an initial focus on improving cardiovascular health. The positive results obtained by the first campaigns led to their further use in areas as diverse as heart disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS prevention, family planning, and domestic violence. From the 1970s on, media campaigns were increasingly used in the prevention of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug use (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2013).

Every government, no matter its policy, recognizes the role of the media (broadcast and social media) in combating drug abuse. Undoubtedly, the media makes a greater contribution towards societal improvements, such that it is right to emphasize that the media is the hub that holds the wheel of society together and that it has a role to play in combating the various scourges that afflict man and, by extension, society. One such problem that has threatened the existence of man is drug abuse (Atkin, 2009).

Nigeria has many serious problems that have very serious health, social, and economic implications for society. According to research, a higher percentage of our youths within the age bracket of eighteen (18) to twenty-eight (28) have tried one drug or another. A high percentage of those admitted for mental-related problems also come from the same group. Thus, the drug abuse

epidemic is gradually eroding the manpower and labor force of society and, consequently, the future of Nigeria.

Drug abuse is not just about taking drugs with a medical doctor's prescription but also about the youths and students who cannot read without taking unsweetened coffee, kola nuts, or pills. It is also about a lover who turns to the use of drugs for sexual enhancement. The business executive who must smoke to be able to work, the retrenched worker who floods his veins with extraneous substances to forget his sorrows and adventures, who tries to get high because others are doing it, The shy youth who must take illegal substances to boost his ego and bravery so he can face and address a large crowd Thus, drug abuse is not just about misusing drugs but the use of any chemical substances that have an effect on the body, which include Indian hemp, cannabis, heroin, cocaine, and other narcotic substances.

From time past, there have been series of advertisements, campaigns, announcements, seminars, lecturers, teachings in school and in religious gatherings, and a public outcry against certain hard drugs, their effects, and dangers through different broadcast media like television and radio, with such slogans as say no to drugs; drugs kill; a drug trafficking; you may end up behind bars," and so many others. The above slogans and many similar ones are some examples of the campaign against drug abuse and trafficking, both from government and private agencies, to preserve life rather than destroy it.

Broadcast media communication campaigns to alter risky behavior are seen increasingly as a critical adjunct to school-based programs and community-wide interventions. To what extent is this widespread faith in the power of the media justified? Although the early history of broadcast media campaigns, particularly those involving health, was largely one of failure, the promise of reaching large audiences has led to continued efforts, a sharpening of design methodologies, and more realistic campaign expectations. These more sophisticated efforts, combined with more powerful evaluation methodologies, provide evidence that media health campaigns can be effective in changing beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and even behaviors when properly designed. More rigorous techniques of formative, process, and summative evaluation, coupled with more powerful statistical tools, have detected a variety of campaign effects. Such research generally shows that coupling media with other kinds of interventions is more successful than either media or non-media efforts alone. There is growing evidence, however, that, when used correctly, broadcast media alone can have significant positive impacts on health-related attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Before delving further into the discussion, it is imperative to start with the conceptual analysis of some contentious and equivocal concepts for better clarification and elucidation. This will help, according to Zinberg et al. (1995), to unravel the difficulties that surround defining these concepts, which have also hampered efforts to prescribe solutions that reflect social acceptance of the wrong use and abuse of drugs for any purpose.

Theoretical Frameworks

This study is largely dependent on the "development media theory" (Okoro &Olley, 2019; Nnamani, 2017). According to Okunna (1999:136), the development theory emerged in the 1980s to fill the void, which became increasingly noticeable as the gap between developed and developing countries widened. For Nwodu &Ukozor (2003:5152), the development media theory is therefore premised on the belief that the mass media and the government should work closely to ensure that the media assist in the overall development of the country. The development media theory, according to Okoro &Olley (2019), identified four focal normative theories of the press. These are:

1. That the media must accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with national policy.
2. Freedom of the media should be open to economic priorities and the development needs of society.
3. The media should give priority in news and information to linking with other developing countries that are close geographically, culturally, or politically.
4. Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks.

The development media theory is significant, and its relevance to this research is hinged on the fact that this study sets out to identify the role of the broadcast media in disseminating relevant information and campaigning against drug abuse.

On the Conceptual Analysis of Drugs, Drug Abuse, and Broadcast Media

Drug

A drug, generally, is any substance that, when taken, can change the function of the body or the structure of an organism. Similarly, Okoye (2001) defines a drug as any substance that could bring about a change in biological and physiological function through its chemical actions. For Balogun (2006), a drug is a substance that modifies the perceptions, cognition, mood, behavior, and general body functions of an organism. The definitions above agree that a drug is a modifier substance, which implies that it could alter and cause chemical reactions in the body system. By implication, a modifier could harm or boost the body's systems for proper functioning. This is explicitly illustrated in the view that the use of drugs could be beneficial or harmful depending on the mode of use and chemical combinations. Zinberg et al. (1978:15), in reference to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938, submit that all drugs have three elements in common. These are: (1) a drug is a substance recognized in an official pharmacopoeia or formulary; (2) a substance intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of diseases; and (3) a substance other than food intended to affect the structure or function of the body.

The processing of drugs in the body takes four steps. First is "administration," which refers to how the drug enters the body. Drugs could enter the body through different methods, such as ingestion (swallowing), inhalation (smoking or vaporous), injection (intravenous, intramuscular, or subcutaneous), or absorption (through the skin or mucous membranes). The second method is through "distribution." This refers to how efficiently a drug moves throughout the body. Distribution is largely influenced by the size of the various drug molecules and their solubility. The third mode of processing is "metabolism." Metabolism refers to the effects (action) of the drug. On the one hand, some drugs have beneficial effects on the body's systems, while others have harmful effects when they enter the body. Lastly, "elimination" refers to the breakdown and excretion of drugs from a body (<https://cambridge.org/core/books/drug-abuse/concepts-of-drugs-drug-use-misuse-and-abuse/C5AA916628212E57E85B5D6D906F2A6C>).

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is defined as the deliberate use of chemical substances for reasons other than intended medical purposes that results in physical, mental, emotional, or social impairment in the user. In another way, drug abuse, according to Zinberg et al. (1978:16), summarizes the definition of drug abuse as presented by the American Psychiatric Association and the National Association for Mental Health as:

The illegal, nonmedical use of a limited number of substances, most of them drugs, which have properties of altering the mental state in ways that are considered by social norms and defined by statute to be inappropriate, undesirable, harmful, threatening, or, at minimum, culturally alien, The definition above clearly defines abuse as the illegal or misuse of drugs without a medical practitioner's prescription. This aligns with the definition of drug abuse stated by the American Medical Association (AMA), which refers to drug abuse as the self-administration of drugs without medical supervision (Zinberg et al., 1978:16). Put differently, drug abuse could also be defined as the use of a drug to the extent that it interferes with the health, physiological, psychological, and social functions of an individual. However, for Zinberg et al. (1978), the use of drugs has caused more damage than good because the use of drugs is equivocal, pejorative, and confusing, making it difficult to prevent the misuse of drugs. For them, they argue that rather than use the term drug abuse, it is unequivocally satisfactory to use the term drug use. They posit that: Dropping the term "drug abuse" is one step toward enabling both users and society as a whole to understand when people use drugs, how they use them, and above all, to find out whether they can use them successfully. By speaking of use instead of abuse, we can carry out research in a precise and non-condemnatory way. Some descriptions of use will obviously show that the use is excessive, but other descriptions will reveal the same complexity that has characterized our cases in the DA study (1978:31).

However, our concern in this paper is not to dovetail into a linguistic argument between use and abuse. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this paper, the definition of drug abuse adopted for use

aligns with NAFDAC's (2000) conceptions of drug abuse, which state that "it is the excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to the medically or culturally accepted patterns.

Broadcast Media

Media are electronic devices that are used to gather and disseminate all forms of information or messages to the general public, irrespective of their geographical location (Nnamani, 2017:63). Nnamani Florence further stresses the relevance of media in society. For her, the media is used to circulate information, to educate and sensitize the people on some crucial issues like drug abuse, cultism, and the like, to entertain, for cultural propagation and socialization, and for the purpose of national integration, among others (Nnamani, 2017, emphasis added). The media today has been an integral part of society, such that its influence cannot be overemphasized. In fact, the media is ubiquitous, such that it has great influence politically, socially, culturally, and economically. Media falls into different categories. The media is broadly categorized into three categories: broadcast, social, and print media. Examples of print media include newspapers and magazines. Although the purpose of this paper is to underscore the impacts of broadcast media on the prevention of drug abuse, it is nonetheless imperative that the idea of social media be briefly discussed. The questions to address are: What is broadcast media? What is social media? What is the difference between broadcast media and social media?

Broadcast media, according to Nnamani (2017:66), quoting Okoye (2009:2), is defined as:

The electronic device that transmits audio-visual signals from the studio through the transmitter into the air Radio broadcasting can therefore be defined as the dissemination of audio signals through the airwaves, while television broadcasting involves the dissemination of visual and audio signals through the airwaves. In television broadcasting, the image of a scene, together with sound, is transmitted to and produced at another place without reliance on direct optical methods.

The definition above shows that broadcast media is further divided into two major streams: radio and television broadcast. One element common to both television and radio broadcasts is the transmission of sound from the studio into the air. However, while television is an audio-visual transmission, radio is solely an audio transmission. Although, the pervasiveness of the social media has changed the narration and the traditional knowledge of radio as an audio transmission broadcast. In recent times, some radio programs have been watched live on Facebook and Instagram.

Social media, according to Okoro et al. (2013), cited by Nnamani (2017), are interactive web-based media sites that belong to the new genre of media that focuses on social networking, allowing users to express themselves, interact with friends, share personal information, and publish their own views on the internet. Social media is the integration of technology, social interaction, and content creation using the "wisdom of crowds" to collaboratively connect online information."

One unique feature of social media is that its operations are not restricted based on location. The reason for this is not far-fetched. Social media is carried out with the use of the internet and network systems; thus, it is an online media activity that gives people access to connect with one another regardless of location and distance. The significance of this for the media is that social media transmit information faster and more globally.

The broadcast media, social media, and print media are generally categorized under what is called "the Mass Media." The mass media is a primary means of communication used to reach the vast majority of the general public. As a matter of fact, people rely on the mass media for information on politics, education, health, the economy, agriculture, industries, sports, entertainment, and so on. One major advantage of mass media is that it provides us with huge amounts of news and, as such, enriches human lives because it makes them better informed. The media can be used to avert impending dangers because it can be used to warn people and prepare them against danger.

The broadcast media is significant in the campaign against drug abuse among youths in Nigeria. Okoro Ferdinand Elope and Olley Oritsesan Wilfred's submission on the significance of broadcast media is instructive. They contend that:

The broadcast media, of which radio is an intrinsic part, was designed to be a companion, sharing useful information that could help knit the fabric of society closer as well as promote socio-cultural, economic, and political gains for the people. Where there are programs and policies that are aimed at improving the lot of society, the broadcast media become indispensable (2019:179). The above quotation shows the impacts and relevance of broadcast media in society as it helps in creating awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and its effects on society, not only on broadcast but also on social and print media. The task of this paper in the next section is to explore the discourse of drug abuse in Nigeria.

Drug Abuse in Nigeria

The abuse of drugs and other substances among youths, particularly undergraduate students in Nigeria, is prevalent and, as such, constitutes a great health and social problem. According to John Afeez Olanrewaju et al. (2022), the current prevalence of drug and substance abuse has plagued society, caused its members to lose self-consciousness, and led many to mental disorders, addiction, hardship, and other health challenges like damaged kidneys, livers, and so on (emphasis added).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 270 million people (or about 5.5% of the global population aged 15-64) used psychoactive drugs in 2017, and about 35 million people are estimated to be affected by drug use disorders (harmful patterns of drug use or drug dependence) (https://www.who.int/health-topics/drugs-psychoactive#tab=tab_2). In another statistic, about 0.5 million deaths annually are attributable to drug use, with about 350,000 male

and 150,000 female deaths (https://www.who.int/health-topics/drugs-psychoactive#tab=tab_2). More than 42 million years of healthy life loss (daily) were attributable to drug use in 2017; that is about 1.3% of the global burden of disease (https://www.who.int/health-topics/drugs-psychoactive#tab=tab_2). WHO estimated that 0.7% of the global burden of disease in 2004 was due to cocaine and opioid use, with the social cost of illicit substance use being in the region of 2% of GDP in those countries that have measured it (<https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/substance-abuse>).

In Nigeria, a population of 30 to 35 million spends approximately USD \$15,000 and USD \$30,000 annually on psychotropic drugs and alcoholic beverages, respectively. According to a report from the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) in Nigeria shows that 14.4% (14.3 million) of people aged between 15 and 64 years abuse drugs, of which close to 3 million suffered from a drug use disorder (UNODC, 2021). Below are the statistics on the consumption and abuse of drugs in Nigeria:



Figure 1 – Adapted from UNODC, World Drug Report 2018.

The prevalence of drug use in Nigeria by geopolitical zones and states is presented in figure II below:

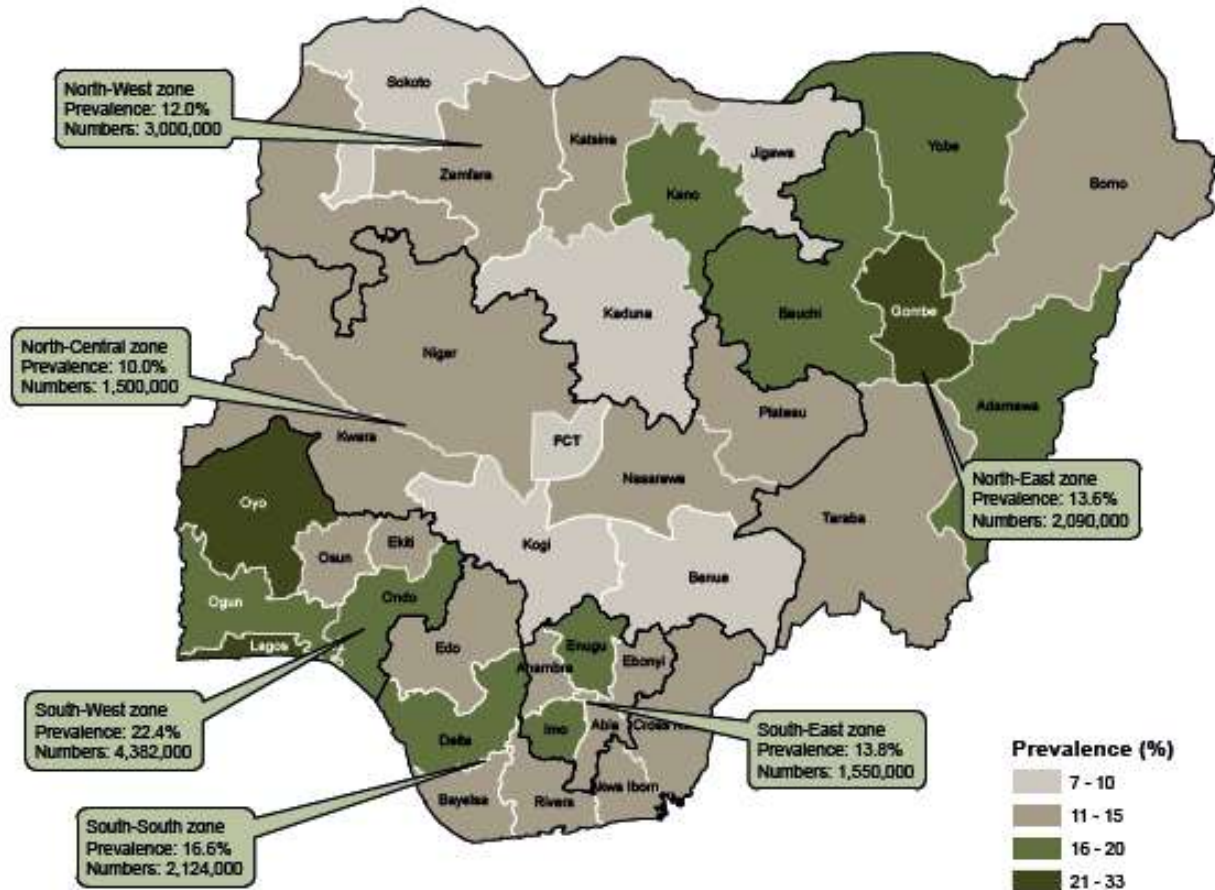


Figure II – Adapted from UNODC, World Drug Report 2018

In Nigeria, findings revealed that geographically, the highest past-year prevalence of drug use was found in the southern geopolitical zones (past-year prevalence ranging between 13.8% and 22.4%) compared to the northern geopolitical zones (past-year prevalence ranging between 10% and 13.6%) (UNODC, 2018). Findings revealed that the abuse of drugs is not common among men, as women are also involved in the ingestion of illegal substances. According to UNODC 2018 findings, among every 4 drug users in Nigeria, 1 is a woman. Nevertheless, more men (annual prevalence of 21.8%, or 10.8 million men) than women (annual prevalence of 7.0%, or 3.4 million women) were reported on the issue of drug abuse in 2017. Below is the statistics of the annual prevalence of drug use by gender in Nigeria, 2017.

	Men		Women		National	
	Estimated prevalence	Estimated number*	Estimated prevalence	Estimated number*	Estimated prevalence	Estimated number*
Any drug use	21.8	10,850,000	7.0	3,430,000	14.4	14,300,000
High-risk drug use	0.6	319,000	0.12	57,000	0.4	376,000
People who inject drugs	0.12	61,000	0.04	18,000	0.08	80,000
By drug type						
Cannabis	18.8	9,360,000	2.6	1,280,000	10.8	10,640,000
Opioids	6.0	3,010,000	3.3	1,606,000	4.7	4,610,000
Heroin	0.1	71,000	0.03	16,000	0.1	87,000
Pharmaceutical opioids (tramadol, codeine, morphine)	6.0	3,008,000	3.3	1,600,000	4.7	4,608,000
Cocaine	0.1	71,000	0.04	21,000	0.1	92,000
Tranquilizers/sedatives	0.5	270,000	0.4	212,000	0.5	481,000
Amphetamines	0.3	161,000	0.2	77,000	0.2	238,000
Pharmaceutical amphetamine and illicit amphetamine	0.2	96,400	0.1	58,100	0.2	155,000
Methamphetamine	0.1	69,500	0.04	19,000	0.1	89,000
Ecstasy	0.4	211,000	0.3	129,000	0.3	340,000
Hallucinogens	0.03	16,500	0.02	10,000	0.03	27,000
Solvents/inhalants	0.5	248,000	0.1	51,000	0.3	300,000
Cough syrups	2.3	1,157,000	2.5	1,200,000	2.4	2,360,000

Figure III – Adapted from UNODC, World Drug Report 2018

In Nigeria, the most common types of abused drugs, according to NAFDAC (2000), are categorized as follows:

1. **Narcotics:** These drugs relieve pain, induce sleep, and are addictive. They are found in heroin, codeine, opium, etc.
2. **Stimulants:** These are substances that directly act on and stimulate the central nervous system. Users at the initial stage experience pleasant effects such as an energy increase. The major source of these comes from caffeine.
3. **Sedatives:** These drugs are among the most widely used and abused. This is largely due to the belief that they relieve stress and anxiety, and some of them induce sleep, ease tension, cause relaxation, or help users forget their problems. They are sourced from valium, alcohol, promotazine, and chloroform.

4. **Hallucinogens:** These are drugs that alter the sensory processing unit in the brain. Thus, they normally come from marijuana, LSD, etc., and produce distorted perception, feelings of anxiety and euphoria, sadness, and inner joy.
5. **Tranquilizers:** They are believed to produce calmness without bringing drowsiness; they are chiefly derived from Librium, Valium, etc.
6. **Miscellaneous:** This is a group of volatile solvents or inhalants that provide euphoria, emotional disinhibition, and perpetual distortion of thought to the user. The main sources are glues, spot removers, tube repair, perfumes, chemicals, etc.

Causes and Effects of Drug Abuse among Users in Nigeria

The effects of an occurrence are preceded by its cause. As such, there is a necessary connection between cause and effect, just as it is impossible to separate a fire from smoke. Before delving into the effects of drug abuse among users in Nigeria, it is unavoidable to explore the causes of drug abuse. Haladu (2003), as cited by James Odivwri (2014:536), has identified causes of drug abuse that include experimental curiosity, peer group influence, a lack of parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions, the need for energy for long hours, the availability of the drugs, and the need to prevent the occurrence of withdrawal syndrome.

Experimental curiosity is the eagerness to experiment with unknown facts about drugs, which thus motivates youths into drug use. The first experience of drug abuse, subsequently, produces a state of arousal as well as happiness and pleasure, which in turn motivates them to continue in the act. Another cause of drug abuse in Nigeria, particularly among youths, is peer group influence. Peer pressure plays a significant role in socializing and influencing the behaviors and attitudes of youth in society. As a matter of fact, belonging to a bad peer group will highly influence one to act in a way that is contrary to the societal norms and values upheld in society. Some youths are into drug abuse as a result of peer group influence. Youths are easily influenced to follow suit out of fear of isolation and denigration. Lack of parental supervision is another cause of drug abuse. Many parents failed in their responsibilities to see to the welfare and affairs of their children, thus neglecting them to act and make decisions on their own. Some parents have little or no interaction with their children, while others put pressure on their children to pass exams or perform better than others in their studies to the detriment of the child's welfare. Consequently, some children are addicted to taking drugs and substances to stimulate and boost their hormones so they can stay up longer at night to read and study.

Poverty is another cause of drug abuse in Nigeria. Poverty has caused some people to suffer from personality disorders as a result of incessant drug abuse. Also, the need for energy to work for long hours has contributed to the prevalence of drug abuse in Nigeria. Lastly, the need to prevent the occurrence of withdrawal symptoms has contributed to the availability of drugs in society. If a drug is stopped, the user experiences what is termed "withdrawal symptoms". Pain, anxiety,

excessive sweating, and shaking characterize such symptoms. The inability of the drug user to tolerate the symptoms motivates him to continue.

The abuse and misuse of drugs are characterized by different effects ranging from physical signs (fatigue, lasting cough, red and glazed eyes, repeated health complaints, and weak stamina); emotional signs (personality change, sudden mood changes, irresponsible behavior, poor judgment, irritability); school behaviors (truancy, indiscipline in school, low academic performance, and negative attitude); social problems (causing chaos in society, picking fights unnecessarily, and negative attitude); and family dynamics (starting arguments, negative attitude, breaking rules, secretiveness, and withdrawal from families). The implications of drug abuse for individuals are that it results in the danger of death and injury by overdose. Other health damages caused by drug abuse include, but are not limited to, brain damage, liver or kidney failure, and mental disorders. The use of drugs also results in legal consequences such as the risk of imprisonment (for armed robbery, rape, and cultism), fines, and a criminal record.

An Assessment of the Broadcast Media Campaign against Drug Abuse in Nigeria

The broadcast media – radio and television have been effective in the campaign against drug abuse. Different programs on the radio and television are dedicated to discussing the risks and health challenges associated with drug abuse among youths and adolescents. No doubt, the significance of broadcast media is to inform, educate, and entertain the general public. On African Independent Television (AIT) programs, the commander of the Ekiti State command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has been invited to sensitize youths against the dangers of substance abuse. At the program, the commander appealed to the public to partner with the agency by providing relevant information that could help curb the menace of drug abuse among young people (<https://ait.live/drug-abuse-ndlea-identifies-causes-of-menace/>).

Broadcast stations in Nigeria, both government and privately owned television stations, have featured many programs, seminars, and conferences kicking against the abuse and trafficking of drugs in Nigeria. An illustration is seen on the occasion of the 2022 United Nations International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking, which has as its theme "Addressing Drug Challenges in Health and Humanitarian Crises." This event was broadcast by different Television stations, including Arise TV. At the event, the former vice president of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, said, "We are winning this war. The days of the scourge of drug abuse and dependency are clearly numbered, but it will involve even greater investment in focus and determination for the long haul." (<https://www.arise.tv/days-of-drug-abuse-in-nigeria-are-numbered-says-vp-osinbajo/>). Broadcast media has kept people abreast of crucial information that is related to the abuse and trafficking of drugs. In April 2023, there was a broadcast on Arise TV stating that the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at working jointly to tackle the menace of drug trafficking in the country (<https://www.arise.tv/nigeria-customs-ndlea-sign-mou-to-tackle->

drug-trafficking/). This is a significant step to stop the distribution and availability of illicit drugs among youths and adolescents.

Radio programs as a form of broadcast media are very significant in the campaign against drug abuse in Nigeria. Radio programs, like television programs, educate, inform, and influence the perception of listeners on issues related to drug abuse and trafficking. Radio programs are significant and a very effective tool in the campaign against drug abuse because radio is relatively affordable in every home, particularly in rural communities. As a result, radio has a widespread audience because of its accessibility and availability. In fact, technology has helped spread radio because mobile phones come with radio applications. Radio stations, both government-owned and privately owned, consistently exposed the public to the dangers and health challenges that surround the abuse and trafficking of drugs. However, there is a need for the broadcast media to intensify its efforts in campaigning against drug abuse by consistently informing and educating the public on the need to stay away from the abuse of drugs. Television stations can sponsor movie industries to produce movies that will not only entertain but also educate people with visual images and the life experiences of drug abuse users.

CONCLUSION

Thus far, this paper has been preoccupied with the assessment of the role of broadcast media in the campaign against drug abuse in Nigeria. This research finds that while drugs are unavoidable to keep the body and mind fit, they can also cause harm and injury to the body when abused and misused. This research also finds that drug abuse is prevalent among youths and adolescents in Nigeria. The causes and effects of drug abuse have also been analyzed in this paper. More importantly, this paper also discussed the role of the broadcast media television and radio in the campaign against drug abuse.

Recommendations

This paper, based on its findings, will make the following recommendations: :

1. The government should sponsor and give support to the broadcast media, particularly television stations (government and privately owned), in order to sponsor the Nollywood industry to produce a series of movies that will educate youths and adolescents on the dangers of drug abuse.
2. The government should also engage the youth and empower them with skills and job acquisitions in order to better their lives and avoid living frustrated lives.
3. The government must also support NDLEA and other agencies working against drug abuse by increasing their salaries, giving them adequate training, and prioritizing their welfare. This will enable them to work actively so as to stop the menace of drug abuse among youths.

4. Broadcasting station must ensure that all ethnic groups are considered and given equal opportunity in their different programmes as this will ensure that information about the dangers of drugs abuse reach all ethnic groups, including the minority ethnic groups.

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