



ISSN 2278 – 0211 (Online)

The Effects of Adolescent Substance Abuse on the Socio-Economic Development of Yobe State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The use and abuse of drugs by adolescents have become one of the most disturbing socio-economic related phenomena in Yobe State and Nigeria at large. Substance is referred to as an element that modifies perceptions, cognition, mood, behaviour and general body functions. The menace of this phenomenon has eaten deep into the fabrics of Yobe State society. Youths are dying morally, our streets have turned to breeding ground of these cankers and the volume of mentally deranged people increases tremendously. This has also affected the socio-economic well-being of the entire state. The increasing rate of social restiveness characterized by political and social violence is also attributed to this effect. It is estimated that hundreds of lives were lost through this incidence. High budgetary expenditure by governments and quasi -governmental bodies became ineffective over the years. This study found, among others socio-economic stress, poor parental supervision and peer group relation as the major propounding factors of this incidence.

Keywords: substance, crime, youths, development

1. Introduction

Substances abuse is a major public social problem all over the world. It referred to as an act of illicit consumption, sneezing or injection of any chemical or psychotropic element that could bring about a change in the biological function of a person. It is a phenomenon that has eaten deep into the fabric of all human societies. It is one of the major threats for the effective functioning of a nation. The menace of it have occupied a central position on the daily activities of majority of Nigerians particular the youths. It is evidential today that market places, Motor Park and all other public gatherings remained a breeding ground of these cankers. Today, it has become a norm that social, political and economic activities are celebrated with hard drugs by youths. The magnitude of this incidence in Yobe state with an estimated two and half million population (NPC, 2006) and a Youth population of 1,747,721 (NBS, 2012) was enlisted in among the most prevalent states youth abuse of substance in Nigeria an incidence which many attributed with the geographical location of the state. Yobe State is located in Northern part of Nigeria sharing boundaries with Borno state on the eastern axis, Jigawa and Bauchi state on the west, Gombe state on the south and shares an international border with the Republic of Niger to the North. It has an estimated territorial land mass of 46,909.760km².

The magnitude of substance abuse in Yobe State was recently documented in 2011 Report of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), in which it posited that out of the 1,052 drug related arrest; Yobe State was numbered second with 24.4% after Adamawa with 33% among the six States of the North East Geopolitical Zone (NDLEA 2011). This scenario was further justified by the increasing rates of automobile accidents in the state. According to Federal Road safety Command from 2007 to 2010 a total of 892 accidents involving 1,498 peoples were recorded mostly due to drunk driving and over speeding drivers (FRSC 2011). The consequential effect of this is further justified by the virulent political violence that erupted after the declaration of the 2011 that claimed tens of lives and properties worth millions of naira.

The contemporary effects of Perennial poverty and declining moral standard cannot be distance from these defects. As a result of these incidences, the socio-cultural values which the State was known has been thrown overboard, and now replaced by terrorism, rapes, burglary etc which are hitherto not known to these societies.

1.1. Statement of Research Problem

The major problem which informs this research is the persistent rise of substance abuse among adolescent Youth in Yobe State, Nigeria; a situation which has deprived the social and economic values of the State. The magnitudes of this incidence was portrayed in 2011 NDLEA Report in which it reported to have seized a total weight of 696.129kgs of substance and arrested 257

people in relation to drugs offences (NDLEA, 2011). This scenario has nevertheless enlisted Yobe State as among the comity of high drugs States.

Another problem is that of prevalence of psychopathic illness in the State. It is non-arguable that, today the State is occupied by mentally deranged youths in addition to high rocketing school drop-out, poor school performances, organized crimes, automobiles accidents etc.

Added to all these problems is that of huge government budgetary spending in substitutions to other pressing and yarning community need. These problems among others dragged for the need of this research.

1.2. Significances of the Study

The advantage of this research lies in her effort to recommend solutions that should be finding useful for policy makers in the State to overcome the menace of these incidences. This should be made possible by its desire of exploring the predisposing factors and determining the socio-economic consequences of substance abuse on the same paper. The study should also be found useful for future researchers by it propound desire of contributing to the existing literatures in the area.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the research is to identify the factors that lead to substance abuse and to determine its possible consequences on individual, Community and society at large.

The specific objectives are the following.

- To identify the factors that lead to substance abuse among youth in Yobe State.
- To identify the consequences of substance abuse on socio economic development of Yobe State.
- To determine the efforts made by government and quasi government organizations in curbing substance abuse.
- To add to the existing literatures of drug abuse for future academic consumptions.

1.4. Research Questions

The following are the questions the research has answered.

- What are the predisposing factors to the drug abuse?
- What are the social and economic consequences of substance abuse on the people of Yobe State?
- What categories of drugs mostly abuse by people in Yobe State?
- What role does drug agencies and community leaders' plays in curbing substance abuse?

1.5. Scope and Limitations

This research is attributed to two sets of delimitation. The first delimitation is that security challenges. The study conducted when the security situations in the State is deteriorated by the insurgent group Boko Haram. As a result, some areas have not been in reached by the researcher for the administration of the instruments.

The second delimitation of the research is that of non-availability or limited nature of required information propounded largely by the existence of little literature in the study area in the State. And in situations where the information exists, access is limited and in some cases completely denied due to their legislative or institutional policies. In the course of the questionnaires and the interviews, suspicions and fair of intimidation by security operatives surrounded the affairs of most respondents amidst the confidentiality guarantee.

2. Literature Review

Balogun (2006) defined Substance as an element that modifies perceptions, cognition, mood, behaviour and general body functions. NAFDAC (2000) cited in Fareo (2012) defined the term substance abuse as an excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug or its components without due regard to its medically or ethically accepted norms. Manbe (2008) defined substance abuse as the excessive, maladaptive or addictive use of drugs for non-medical purpose. While Abdulahi (2009) viewed substance abuse as the uses of drugs to the extent that it interferes with the health and social functions of an individual.

According to Omega and Omega (2012), the major causes of substance abuse among Nigerian youth are joblessness, peer pressure, search for identity, emotional and psychological stresses among others.

The American Psychiatric Association (1987) in Olamadjohwoefe (2010) defined drug abuse as a continued use of psycho active substance despite knowledge of it adverse effects. To them, people consumed illicit substances knowingly of its consequences but because of certain predisposing factors they resort to abuse.

Contributing on the social compositions of substances abusers, Ogege (2010) opined that substances abuse is not limited or attributed to a particular age grade or sex but it permeated all levels of social structures; cultural ,religious and geographical boundaries. This is also true in the findings of Substance Abuse and Mental health (2005) in which it revealed that drug abuse cut across all professions both in the public and private sector and its does not have age specification.

Reporting, however the British Crime Survey (1982) revealed that even though abuse of substance is general phenomenon, its prevalence is high among unemployed youth. In its study, it stated that the prevalence of substance on unemployed Youth is 60 percent higher than on an employed youth. To this survey, there is a strong relationship between unemployment and substance abuse.

Likewise, Adeoti (2012) opined that unemployed people particularly the youth resort to substance abuse as a cooling mechanism for their social distresses.

The social effect of these incidence was captured in a study conducted by International Labour Organization (ILO, 2005) in which it revealed that specific performance impairments, absenteeism to work, workplace violence and aggressions is high among people who depend on one drug or the other. In a related study, Hawkins, Catalona and Miller (1982) in their researched of drug Abuse and student performance revealed that declining grade, absenteeism from school and school activities, increasing potential for dropping out of school is high among Nigeria's students as a result of adolescent substance abuse.

In his side, Adeoti (2012) further opined that Substance abuse may reduce undergraduate chances of graduating from school or of landing and holding a steady job. To him most Nigeria's institutional academic calendar was disrupted due to students restiveness proffered by substances. While Nyame, et al (2013) opined that youths under the influence of drugs tend to be unproductive besides absenteeism at work place, poor commitment, over dependence and excessive wastage of valuable resources.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

There are plethoras of theories explaining why people indulge in drug or substance abuse. A theory is simply an explanation for a general category of phenomena, that is, any set of events or conditions.

Researchers over the years have agreed that there are two absolutely necessary preconditions for substance use and abuse among people; these are "predisposition" or motive and susceptibility to do so, and the "availability" of one or more psychoactive substances. Each of these two preconditions is necessary but not sufficient to explain drug/substances use or abuse. The availability factor stressed that, if a drug is not available in a particular community, abuse is not possible whether the predisposition to use is prevalent. Likewise, without the predisposition to use, abuse cannot take place even if they are available. Each of these is an essential or necessary condition for use; but neither is sufficient for it to take place alone.

In addition to the above, there are more theories emerging in modern literature in explaining the causes of substance abuse and other deviant behaviours in different perspectives. Though, the validity of one theoretical perspective does not imply the falsity of another. Each theory addresses a portion of a large complex phenomenon. No single theory could possibly explain everything that one might want to know about the phenomena. For example, Fareo (2012) outline four major perspectives in explaining substance abuse; Personality theories, biological theories, learning theories and socio-cultural theories.

The personality theories according to him are prevalent among individuals who have high level of inability to delay gratification, low tolerance for frustration, poor impulse control, and high emotional dependence on other people, poor coping ability and low self-esteem.

The learning theory of drug of abuse maintains that dependence or abuse of drugs occurs as a result of learning. This learning could be by means of conditioning, instrumental learning or social learning.

Biological Theory of Drug Abuse maintains that drug abuse is propounded by an individual biological or genetics factors which make them vulnerable to drug addiction. While the Socio-cultural theory maintained that drug abuse is determined by socio-cultural values of the people. For instance, while certain cultures permit the consumption of alcohol and marijuana, other cultures do not. For example among the Urhobo, Ijaw, Ibibio, Edo, Igbo, Yoruba and Itsekiri, alcohol i.e. Oogoro is used in cultural activities. In Northern Nigeria, alcohol is forbidden due to Islamic injunctions.

As early mentioned, theoretical perspective of drugs abuse varied and no one theory is relevant to all situations or has the ability to explain all situations. The sociological theory which gave broader explanations of the predisposing factor surrounding substances abuse as far as Nigeria's environment is concern should be guide of this research.

3. Methodology

This is a survey research that utilized data from a primary source of questionnaire and interview sources and a secondary information from published library documents and internet materials. Three hundred (300) questionnaires on youths aging 16- 40 years were administered. The sample was obtained through a stratified method based on senatorial zones A, B and C. But because of the inequality in the distributions of their Local Government Areas, the questionnaire was distributed on a ratio 105:95:100 respectively and further clustered on their local Governments on a ratio 4:3:3. To examine the factors that lead to substance abuse, the research raised the question of "What are the predisposing factors for substance abuse in Yobe State?" Below is a chart presenting the response obtained from the various responses.

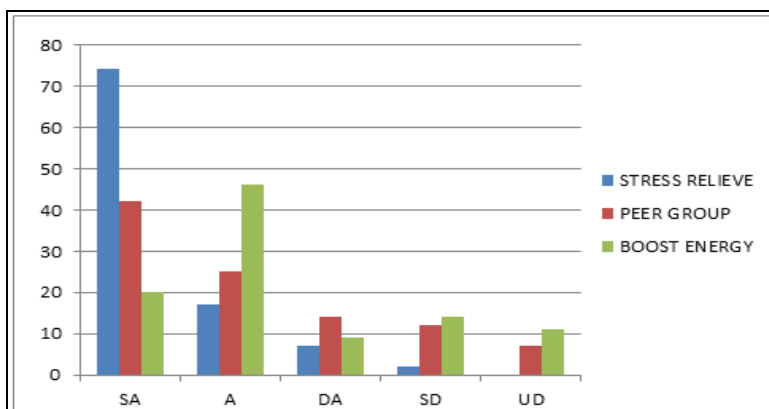


Figure 1: Factors that leads to Substance Abuse in Yobe State
Source: Field data

Figure 1 presented the various contributing factors to Youth substance abuse in Yobe state. Among the three factors explored by this research, it was found that stress relieve happens to play a dominant role. Data collected by this research as shown in the figure 1.2 through a structured questionnaire administered using Likert Rensis five measurement scale of strongly agree (SA), agreed (A), disagreed (DA), strongly disagreed (SD) and undecided (UD) provided that 211 (74%) of respondents strongly agreed that substances are abused due to stresses relating to economic, politics or social and so was taken as a cooling mechanism. 50 respondents (17%) agreed but not substantially, 19 respondents representing 7% disagreed (DA) and 5 respondents representing 2% strongly disagreed that substance is abused for stresses.

Another factor of substance abuse examined by this research is that of peer group relations. It was gathered that a majority of adolescent youth indulge in the abuse of substances as a result of their relationship with friends, co-worker or school mates etc. Based on the findings, 42% strongly agreed that social relations with peer groups contributed to substance abuse. 25% agreed (A), 14% disagreed, 12% strongly disagreed while 7% were yet to decide on this aspect. This finding has tallied with that of Haladu (2003), who stated that a person can easily be exposed to substances through his social relations with other groups.

The third factor examined was that of boosting energy. It was observed that youth indulge in one substance or the other as a boosting mechanism for long hours of work. The study found that 20% of the respondents strongly agreed that substance is taken to boost energy to enable them work for a long period of hours. 46% agreed, 9% disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed and 11% were yet to decide.

In her objective to explore the prevailing consequences of the substance in Yobe State, it raises a question of; "What are the socio-economic effects of substance abuse in Yobe State?"

Five major areas were examined; social restiveness, work performance, criminality, automobile incidences, marital relations, and infectious diseases based on the question; find below is the distribution of the responses to the various options.

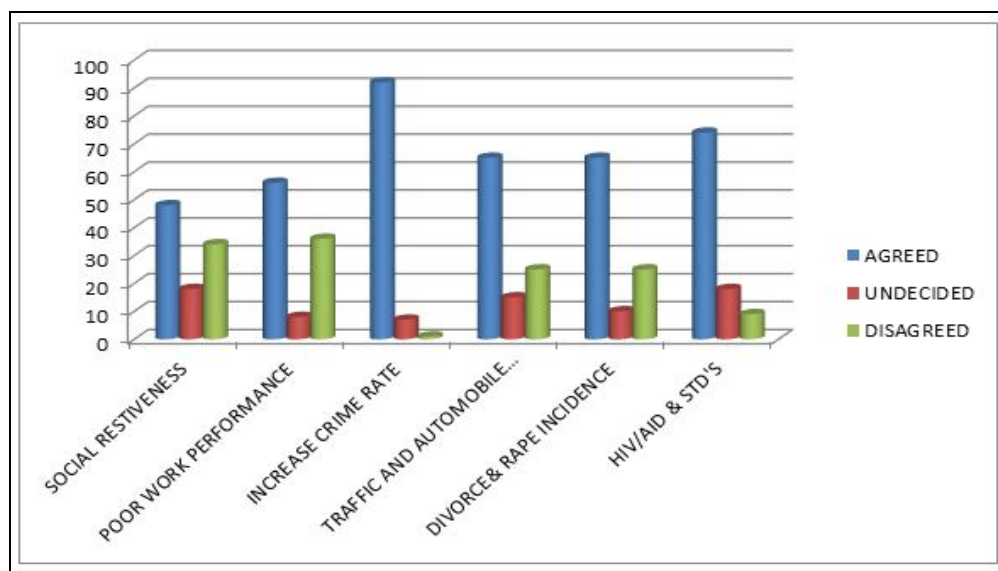


Figure 2: Socio-economic effects of substance abuse in Yobe State
Source: Field data

Figure 2 is a presentation of the magnitudes of substance effects in Yobe State. Response obtained through the use of three scale of Linkert gathered that 48% of the respondents agreed that social restiveness among youth who abuse substance is high in Yobe state. 34% disagreed while 18% are yet to decide. This has also held true in the reports of International Labour Organization (ILO, 2005), that people who are involved in substance are too prone violence and aggressions. Today, Political violence, arm robbery, burglary and above all militarism are portrayed in the affairs of daily youth activities.

On the relationship between work performance and substance abuse, 56% agreed that workers who are drug addicts perform poorly in their work places. This Contention was justified in the works of (Adoeti, 2012, Nyame et al, 2013) that workers under the influence of drugs are poor performance in their work places. They were mostly adorned to high wastage, dishonesty and misconducts. However, 36% disagreed with the contention while 8% were yet to decide.

On the issue of increase crimes 92% agreed that there is a strong relationship between substance abuse and crime rate. 7% were yet to decide and 1% disagreed.

With regard to traffic and automobile accidents, 60% agreed, 25% disagreed and 15% were yet to decide their positions.

On the effects of substances on marital lives, it was gathered that marital break (divorce) have become prevalent in most of the communities. It was glaringly obvious by the reports of one of our interviews that about 45% of marriage among youth couples cannot wait to celebrate her first birth day for factors relating to substance abuses. However, most of the divorces proclamations were made unconsciously (in toxic), though religious laws made them valid. On Figure 3, 65% of the respondents agreed, 25% disagreed and 10% were yet to decide that increasing rate of divorce is due to substance abuse. Report by National Bureau of Statistics (2012) revealed an estimated 1,989 divorces, 2,227 separations and 7671 widows exist in Yobe State at the time of its reports. These situations attributed mostly to factors of drug abuse.

The research also gathered that the spread of Sexually Transmitted Diseases like HIV/AIDS is prevalent among adolescent who abuse substances. Data obtained illustrated that 74% respondents agreed that prevalence of HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's) is high among people involve in substances abuse. 9% disagreed and 7% were yet to decide. In exploring the roles plays by different agencies in curtailing the menace of this deviant behaviour, the researcher administered the question of

To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the roles of governments and community leaders in curbing drug abuse?

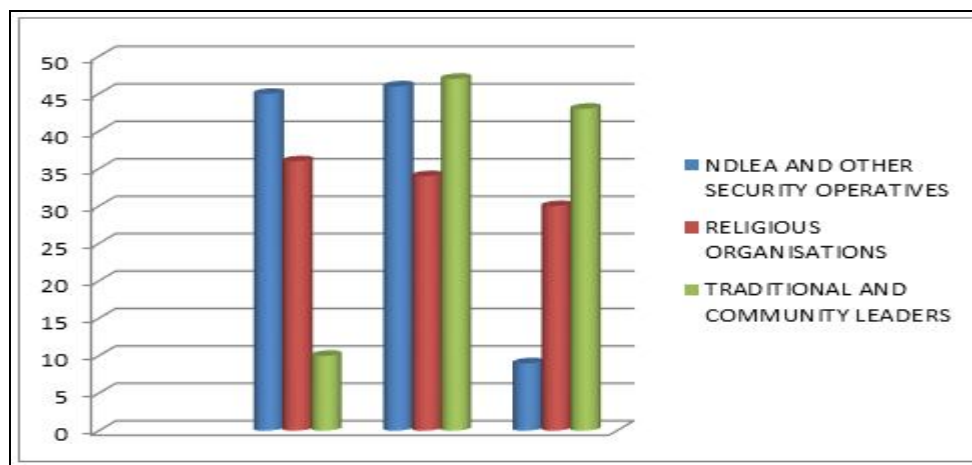


Figure 3: Roles of governments/agencies and community leaders in curbing substance abuse

Source: Field data

It was observed that curbing the menace of drugs required collective efforts of governments, drug agencies like National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, religious leaders and community leaders. Each of these bodies played great roles in their arena. However, the appreciation of their functions among the people varies considerably. Figure 1.4 is a presentation of the responses on the roles played by different the bodies in curbing the menace of substance in Yobe State. It was gathered that National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has 45% satisfaction, 46% dissatisfaction and 9% decided. This response is nevertheless in line with the annual report of NDLEA(2011) that posited an arrest of 257 people (253 male, 4 female) in the state in relation to drug trafficking, sales and consumption and have also seized a substance/drug weighted 696.129kgs in the same year (NDLEA, 2011) .

This research also explored that 36% of Yobe people were satisfied with the roles of religious leaders in curbing the menace of substances in their localities, while 34% were not satisfied and 30% have not commented.

Even though it is difficult to quantify roles of religion in regulating behaviour, qualitative data available has satisfied for that. Religious leaders play a greater role in preventing and managing crime and criminal behaviour in many communities .For example, Fagan (1996) has succinctly captured this in his words

When policymakers consider America's grave social problems, including violent crime and rising illegitimacy, substance abuse, and welfare dependency, they should heed the findings in the professional literature of the social sciences on the positive consequences that flow from the practice of religion.

The relationship between religious teaching and good behaviour is well documented in extant literatures. Religion leaders were known in their behavioural transformation and attitudinal molding to conform to the Spiritual laws while families trained to conform to the requirement of their immediate communities.

Likewise, the roles of community leaders were satisfied by 10%, not satisfied by 47% and 43% are yet to decide.

4. Conclusion

Drug abuse is a problem that has eaten deep into the fabric of Yobe State society. It is a subject of serious concern to both individuals and government all over the world. The problem is prevalent among adolescents who in most cases are prone to these incidences. Many Youth engaged in drug abuse out of frustration due to poverty, lack of parental supervision, peer group influence and experimental curiosities among others. This research found that high level of illiteracy and poor job opportunities are also among the contributing factors to Youths substances abuses. It was discovered that most of these abusers are individual who neither attend formal nor the informal education. It is also noted that the prevalence is high in rural areas than the major towns factors majorly attributed to the inadequacy of security operatives to checkmate the situations. For example the NDLEA which was charged with the responsibility of checkmating the substances in Nigeria is estimated to have staff of one ratio thirty one thousand eight hundred and fifty three (1:31853) (NDLEA, 2011). This number is neither adequate nor enough for a larger population of 170 million population. This inadequacy exacerbated into poor monitoring and control and hence manifested in availability of these substances. It was gathered that Tramadol (Analgesic) which is commonly abused was bought at an approximate cost of #100 per capsule in the year 2000, was presently sold at less than #30. Because of this cost relatives, abuse also high rocketed. It was found that a minimum of 6 and maximum of 3 cards of this substance were abused by youth in Yobe State. Below is the manpower capacity and number of charges by NDLEA from 2007-2011

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Staff Capacity	3530	3464	3405	3332	5337
Charges labeled	1508	1720	1506	1526	1501

*Table1: Ndlea Staffs Dispositions Year And Number Charges Labeled against Drugs
Source: Ndlea (2011)*

Another factor added to the inadequate manpower is the illegitimate and deviant behaviours of some of the security operatives. An interview with a drug dealer (source confidential) revealed that an amount ranging from fifty to sixty thousand naira is paid by him to their immediate security office as weekly due (return) to facilitate his freer businesses. To him, this amount is even higher for some dealers because it depends on individual's capital base. The effects of this as obtained in an interview in one rural community was that, neuropathic stroke (convulsion) became prevalent. With their estimated population of not more than 1000, reported that they were experiencing a convulsion case of not less than five people a day due to intake of tramadol capsule. They also reported a mortality of 5 Youths in a fishing ground to river due to convulsion in the last three month of 2013. Other issue well noted is the poor parental background of most of the Youths. This is also propounded as a result of the high poverty incidence of the state. Because of the inability of most families to carter for the needs of their offspring's, they were left at the mercy of street hawking and the fact that Nigeria's streets are breeds of hard drugs peddlers is no longer to be argued. Through experimental curiosity, these children should come to occupy the center stages of this behaviour.

It is also gathered that some parents deliberately introduced their younger ones to these substances to boost their energy on their farmland. However, it is observed that this has some few exceptions in some communities but it is prevalent in the riverine areas.

However, even though substance is in her alarming rate, many of the respondents expressed optimisms that they should abandon it if they should get opportunity of ameliorating their stresses. According to one NDLEA official (name withheld), poor governmental commitment, improper sector management and inadequate counseling of drug abusers are among the factors contributing to the abuse of substances in Yobe State.

5. Recommendations

Based on its findings, this research recommended the following as a panacea to the problems studied.

Since it was noted that substances is prevalent among broken families, there is need for every family to take a stringent measure in monitoring the affairs of their children. This can be done together with other community members to monitor the behaviours of their children and other intruders. The saying that charity begins at homes and a broken family is a broken society cannot be ignored.

Secondly, the State Ministry of education together with the Local Education Authorities should add to their educational curriculums a special drug education program to acquaint the younger ones the dangers and the adherence consequences of substance abuse. The research observed that most youths found themselves in this act through experiments from friends without adherent knowledge of the dangers involved to their health and to their societies. By educating them, I am of the opinion that it will help in deterring them in indulging in the act.

Thirdly, government and other relevant authorities should launch out anti-drugs campaigns to supplement the efforts of the NDLEA. This should be done through establishing drug awareness units both at the state and local governments' levels that should be charge with the responsibility of counseling already addicts and educating prospective ones the dangers of this behaviour. Through legislation, there is need to propound a State Drug Law Agency (YOSDLA). The idea of one ratio thirty one thousand (1:31,000) is neither reliable nor effective even for health of the country let alone the State. By establishing such a body, every community should be empowered to monitor the affairs of their communities and be mandated to give a situational report on regular basis. The present system of unnecessary delay in prosecuting offenders can be avoided.

Fourthly, campaigns against illicit drugs by National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) should be intensified in collaboration with communities and religious leaders.

Fifthly, in addition to frequent inspections of drug stores and supervisions by the drug agency, special teams to regulate the State's borders need to be established. It was noted that in some communities particularly in the international border areas, drug pushers transacts at the border points by constantly crossing to each other countries to escape being arrest by the securities of both sides. The establishment of this team should be done in collaboration with the neighboring country.

Governments through legislations should empower the traditional rulers in the state. Since the Nigeria's securities are insufficient to hold every society, the services of the traditional rulers became inevitable to supplement the deficient areas. It has been learned in the history of Nigeria that before 1976, when the native administration system exist, the contemporary security challenges were less known, a role which was credited mostly to the involvement of traditional rulers in the affairs of the country.

Sixthly, Governments in collaboration with the private institutions should provide conventional job opportunities for the youth. The engagement of the youths in the hard to earn seasonal agriculture must be reviewed. Governments should provide farm incentives and high yielding and drought resisting seeds to boost productions in the state. This can also be done together with providing irrigation equipment for irrigation farming.

Finally, the present fine charges system for drug offences must be avoided. There is need of a stiffer penalty for those that contravene the prohibited drug laws. This cannot also be done without overhauling the various agencies charged with the responsibility of tackling the phenomenon to conform to lay down regulations. This is because; stiffer penalty is nothing if drug enforcement agents do not live to their expectations.

By so doing, it is the believe of this paper that substance should be an issue of history while the respects and dignities to which Yobe State societies were known will be restored in all her ramifications.

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