

Drug Abuse and Youth Restiveness in the Eastern Senatorial District of Kogi State: Manifestations, Consequences and Way Forward

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Abstract

This paper established the link between drug abuse and youth restiveness with particular emphasis on the eastern senatorial district of kogi state. The paper also examines the causes, the manifestation, consequences and ways of curbing youth restiveness in the eastern senatorial district of kogi state. Data for this paper were drawn from secondary source, mainly from the library. Historical-descriptive were also analyze via content analysis. The general theory of development which was utilized is predicated on the notion that the political and economic activities undertaken by a country improved quality of living among citizens. The paper reveals that drug abuse and youth restiveness are caused by illiteracy, unemployment, peer group influence, poverty, and impact of single parents among others. These creates avenue of vulnerability for manipulation. The paper recommends among other the need for public enlightenment and skill acquisition programmes to curb the menace of youth restiveness in kogi east in particular and in Nigeria at large.

Key words: Drug abuse; Youth restiveness; Manifestation; Consequence; Way forward

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INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse and youth restiveness in the eastern senatorial district of kogi state, it is very critical and sensitive; which requires urgent government attention. In fact, drug abuse is a generic term for the abuse of any drug, including alcohol and cigarettes among the youth in eastern senatorial district of kogi state.

Kogi State was previously a geo-political unit called Kabba province in the then Northern region. It was made up of Igala, Ebira, Kogi and Kabba divisions with its administrative head office in the current State capital, Lokoja. The state creation exercise of 1967, 1976 and 1991 excised the provinces and regions, to create Kogi state. It has 21 local government areas (Kogi state government, 2008). The three major ethnic groups and languages that constitute 95% of the total population of the State includes: Ebira (Central), Igala (East), and Okuns (West) (Wikipedia free encyclopedia, 2008). The Eastern senatorial flank (Igalas), no doubt are the majority group with 9 local government areas and population figure of approximately 1,479,144 people; that are predominantly youths. This is against the total population figure of 3,314,043 people in the State (National Bureau of Statistics, 2006). National Bureau of Statistics writes that 60% of populations in the eastern senatorial district of kogi state are predominately youths. This populace was alleged of inappropriate use of substances, including cigarettes, inhalants, alcohol, marijuana, heroin, methamphetamines and tramadol for purposes such as pleasure, to perform better in certain situations, or to change one's perception of reality.

This drug addiction among youth in kogi east constitutes a major common social problem affecting the security in the eastern senatorial district of Kogi State. This, however, rippled multiple adverse effects that is manifesting in form of terrorism, militancy, kidnapping and armed robbery (Ikechukwu, 2018). So far, drug

addiction had change youth perception of relationship in the eastern part of the State. This had increased the occurrence of acts of violence and lawlessness, including things like hostage-taking of prominent citizens, arms insurgence, cultism, arms robbery in the neighbouring states. Nonetheless, youth restiveness is not a recent phenomenon.

Data for this paper were drawn from the secondary source mainly from the library. Historical-descriptive were also analyze via content analysis. It is believed that secondary sources of data improve the understanding of drug abuse and youth restiveness in kogi east in particular and in Nigerian at large, in order to ensure a comprehensive analysis on the drug abuse and youth restiveness, the manifestation, consequences and ways forward. This method benefited from the collection of academic journals, books, and government reports Gazettes, newspaper and Nigeria dailies and websites to determine both the historical context and current reality of the study.

The paper argues that drug abuse plays a crucial role in inculcating negative values, attitudes, and behaviours that promote youth restiveness. Against this background, the paper set out to examine drug abuse and youth restiveness in the Eastern part of the state, especially in area of its manifestation, consequences and ways forward.

1. REVIEW OF CONCEPTS

This part of the paper is dealing with the review of concepts, namely: youth, youth restiveness, drug and drug abuse.

2. YOUTH

The National Youth Development Policy (2001) defines youth as people aged 18-35. They constitute about 40 percent of the more than 140 million people of Nigeria. The total population of youth between 10 and 24 in Nigeria was 45.4 million in 2006, which is 34 percent of the total population. Youth occupy a prominent place in any society. Apart from being the owners and leaders of tomorrow, they outnumber the middle-aged and the aged (Onyekpe, 2007). Besides numerical superiority, youth have energy and ideas that are society's great potentials (Onyekpe, 2007). The National Youth Development Policy (2001, p.1) asserts that:

Youth are the foundation of a society. Their energies, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pace of development and security of a nation. Through their creative talents and labour power, a nation makes giant strides in economic development and socio-political attainments. In their dreams and hopes, a nation finds her motivation; on their energies, she builds her vitality and purpose.

The statement above acknowledges the role of the youth in the peace and security of a nation. As the most

active segment of any society, youth are the major determiners of peace and stability of a nation. Conversely, the degree of disorderliness and instability in society is also determined in part by youth. The United Nations General Assembly and World Bank cited in Adewuyi (2008) defined the youth as people between ages 15 to 24 years. In Nigeria, the people within the age limit of 30 years are considered as youths hence they are allowed to participate in the National Youth Service Scheme

2.1 Youth Restiveness

Elegbeleye (2005) writes that youth restiveness is a declaration embarked upon to enforce desired outcome from a constituted authority by an organized body of youths. It is marked by violence and disruption of lawful activity. Chikuezi (2009) defined youth restiveness as a combination of actions or conduct that constitutes or runs contrary to accepted societal norms and standard. The Advanced Learner Dictionary (1999) observes that restiveness is the inability to stay still or unwilling to be controlled, especially because of dissatisfaction. So far, Youth restiveness has unspoken inclusive dimension in all the communities around Eastern senatorial district where the youths are unsatisfied with government policies or where government has neither provided promulgated social welfare policies nor thought of implementing people oriented programme that will capture restiveness in youth.

On the other hand, when the energy is negatively channeled, restiveness and its resultant effects are likely to be felt. Chika and Onyene (2010) observed that to be restive is to be unable to stay still, or unwilling to be controlled especially because one is bored or not satisfied with certain decisions, changed or existing laws considered to be unfavourable. Youth restiveness involves the combination of actions, conducts and behaviour which constitutes unwholesome, socially unacceptable behaviour exhibited by youths in the society.

Youth restiveness has been a device used by the youth to get what they want from the relevant authority. Chika and Onyene (2010) asserted that youth resistance to conditions, issues and unwelcomed leadership regimes dates back to 1934 when Herbert Macaulay floated a political party to kick against dependency with fellow elite youths that had contact with the West.

A number of studies have identified many factors responsible for the negative attitude of youth's restiveness in Kogi East. Parents are no longer committed to the training of their children due to frantic rush to make money and make ends meet. Children are now left to their own whims and caprices while the elders watch helplessly as youths perpetrate all manner of crime. Apart from poor parental care for their children nowadays, the education system has failed. Peer group influence cannot be discounted. Our youths are neck-deep in joining secret cults, and smoking, drinking, arm robbery, kidnapping,

and arm insurgency. This is activities prominent in the Niger Delta region.

Elegbeleye (2005) identifies three major factors that cause youth restiveness in Nigeria. These include the peer motivated excitement of being a student, the xenophobic pursuit of patriotic ideas, and perceived victimization arising from economic exploitation. Better still, Ofem and Ajayi (2008) identified lack of humanitarian and social welfare, lack of good governance, corrupt practices of government officials, inadequate training program, unemployment, inadequate recreational facilities, lack of quality education, and poverty as the basic reasons for incessant youth restiveness.

3. DRUG

A medicine or substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body. According to Collins English dictionary, drug is a chemical which is given to people in order to treat or prevent disease or illness.

3.1 Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is an extreme desire to obtain, and use, increasing amounts of one or more substances. Drug abuse is a generic term for the abuse of any drug, including alcohol and cigarettes. A drug is any substance (other than food that provides nutritional support) that, when inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed absorbed via a patch on the skin, or dissolved under the tongue causes a temporary physiological change in the body (Sredman's Medical Dictionary, 2014). In pharmacology, a drug is a chemical substance of known structure, other than a nutrient of an essential dietary ingredient, which, when administered to a living organism produces a biological effect (Rang, Dale, Ritter, Flower and Henderson, 2011, p.1). Drug abuse is not a character flaw but rather a medical condition that has developed over time. Drug abuse can be abuse of any chemical substance including cigarettes, inhalants, alcohol and others. Drug abuse information shows both legal and illegal drugs can lead to drug abuse. Categories of drugs that is commonly abuse either if it legal prescribe or not these include: alcohol, cigarettes, inhalants, marijuana, heroin and cocaine.

Drug abuse is a major problem in the United States. One of the most significant issues concerning drug abuse is the high risk for developing an addiction. The abuse of drugs can have serious ramifications on a person's physical health, mental health, and overall well-being (Leah Miller, 2018). Recent media reports and personal observations indicates cases of armed conflicts, killings, wanton destruction of lives and properties kidnappings, lootings, pipeline destructions among others in most Nigerian States; Portrays man's negative side of social development as a result of impact of drug abuse.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this paper is general theory of development. The theory concerned with both the economic and political activities undertaken by a country for the improvement of quality life of its citizens, and its social consequences (Gaubu, 2007, p.492). It is predicated on the notion that man found it convenient and necessary to come together in groups to hunt and for the sake of survival. From that basic stage man has progressed into living an organized life, where law governing human relation and diverse strategies of human development were firmly established. Man has consequently been confronted with the task of exploring the content and strategies of bring about development. Rodney, (1977, p.2) agree that development increase the ability to guard the independence of the social group and indeed not to infringe upon the freedom of other. This by implication helps the youth to increase their ability to regulate both internal and external relationship that can sustain peaceful co-existence.

For instance, at the level of individual, development has been taken to mean "increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being" (Rodney, 1977, p.3). The issue of personal development is however, "determined by age, class and one's personal code of what is wrong (Rodney, 1977, p.3). Since personal development is determined by age and class, parents should be committed to educate their kids at that tender age, instead of frantic rush to make money at the expense of their family. Children should not be left to their own whims and caprices while the elders watch helplessly as youths perpetrate all manner of crime, since personal code of what is wrong is determined age and class.

Looking at development from economic sense, Rodney (1972, p.4) argues "a society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment." This capacity for dealing with the environment is however, dependent on the extent to which they understand the law of nature, on the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by devising tools (technology) and on the manner in which work is organized.

However, development has also been seen as "a dynamic process of structural change and capital accumulation that moves society close to meeting the human needs of the majority in society, i.e. for shelter, clothing, education, health, food, employment, etc. without which it connotes poverty, inequality and social injustice that traumatizes the poor (Ihonvbere, 1986, p.2). With the recent development of none payment staff salaries in Kogi State, most people live below the poverty line, and survive less than US \$1 dollar per day. This situation is cynical and frustrating; which triggers the youths to seek an opportunity to express their anger

against the state. Seers, (1969) also attempts to define development by raising these crucial questions:

The questions to ask about a country's development are therefore: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubts, this has been a period of development for the county concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if the entire three have, it would be strange to call the result "development" even if per capital income double (quoted in Mabogunje, 1989, p.36).

Undoubtedly, development is a multi-faceted process that refers to the positive changes that affect the majority of the citizens in their social, economic, political, spiritual and cultural lives. This shows that individuals and groups have their complexities, needs, aspirations, hopes, goals, opinions, views and values which could be social, economic, religious, psychological or political. Consequently, there is bound to be restiveness among different groups of people especially youths who are at their prime age.

Conclusively, making development people-oriented a key factor, it helps to avoid those factors responsible for the negative attitude of drug abuse and youth restiveness in Kogi East and beyond. In the pursuance of a holistic development strategy, government should focus on job creations to alleviate poverty; an educational system that cannot produce self-employed graduates must be defective, this addresses the question of personal development acknowledged by Rodney.

5. DRUG ABUSE AND YOUTH RESTIVENESS KOGI EAST

Drug abuse is an extreme desire to obtain, and use, increasing amounts of one or more substances, while youth restiveness is the combination of actions and behaviour exhibited by youths that are socially unacceptable in the society. Drug abuse and Youth restiveness portrays man's negative side of social development. This negative development is rather unfortunate and has become one of the many security challenges facing man in the contemporary society. In many occasions, lives and properties worth millions of naira have been lost or vandalized and some razed down by restive youths. Most of the youth who part take in this antisocial vices act on the influence of drugs as such, alcohol, cigarettes, inhalants, marijuana, heroin, and cocaine.

Chukwuemeka and Agbara (2010), observes that human society and in fact the entire universe is simply and squarely a complex entity. In view of this, individuals and groups have their complexities, needs, aspirations, hopes, goals, opinions, views and values which could be social, economic, religious, psychological or political.

Consequently, the clicks of peer group, cult members, and children of single parents, unemployed youth and ardent smoker in Nigeria are used as instrument of violence for political elites at their prime age.

Ndu (2000) and Yusuf (2001) writes that excessive energy that needs to be use, which is not guarded, is channeled into negative tendencies that produces these adverse effect namely addiction, poor judgment, armed robbery, cultism, and grievance due to intoxication, lifelong legal problems and development of mental illness as consequences. With the proliferation of illegal drugs, For instance, drug abuse led many youths to make risky decisions that place them into dangerous situations, along with those around them. These decisions can have lasting impacts on a variety of situations. Today, through drug addiction youth association like students' unions, ethnic cliques and cultism have misplace their priority for reckless activities such as excess alcohol consumption, which led to anxiety and depression. Conclusively, drug abuse instigates Youth restiveness that produce actions, and behaviour that is socially unacceptable in the societies.

The paper identified illiteracy, unequal distribution of natural resources, poor child upbringing, unemployment, poverty among these causes of youth restiveness. Illiteracy among the Kogi East youths has been a thing of concern to many citizens. Knowledge and education acquired by individuals most often help them in their levels of patriotism, value orientations and healthy lifestyles. National Bureau of Statistics writes that 60% of population in the Eastern senatorial district of Kogi State is predominately youths and about 30% of them were not enrolled in schools. Hence, the findings agree with Onekpe (2007) assertion that most youths that did not have access to formal education are talks for restiveness.

This finding also agreed with present situation of nonpayment of worker salaries in kogi state is an incidence of social right denial, poverty and economic wreckage by the Kogi State Government, had triggered off the irate youths in the area to involve in all sorts of restiveness. This scenario also agreed with the work of Elegbeleye (2005). Similarly, Ofem and Ajayi (2008) agreed with the findings that youth restiveness is associated with lack of humanitarian and social welfare, lack of good governance, corrupt practices of government officials, inadequate training programmes, unemployment and lack of quality education. This indicates that causes of youth restiveness are multifaceted in nature. It therefore means that curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria might also take multidimensional approach.

The paper finds that drug abuse has influence upsurge of social vices, crimes and lawlessness. These includes hostage-taking of prominent citizens, abduction, cultism, arms robbery and destruction of lives and properties in Kogi East. Incidences of such seem to be on the increase in our society in recent years.

Chukwuemeka and Aghara (2010) agreed that the abduction and kidnapping of foreign nationals working in oil companies in the Niger Delta, for instance, are outcomes of youth restiveness.

Increase in poverty due to unemployment rate was also identified. Due to economic recession some people lose their job and other jobs relocating from high security risk areas. Such areas of high rate of youth restiveness discourage investors. Zakaria (2006) agrees that youth restiveness increases youth unemployment. Therefore, I argue that absence of job opportunities in Kogi East is responsible for youth restiveness.

The paper sought to suggest ways of curbing youth restiveness in Kogi East. The study identified skill acquisition programmes, enlightenment campaigns, and formal education among others. Mutiba (2011) writes that education is the primary medium for value development. Even when some youth gives priority to western education, value development, character building, and moral standards in children are not given adequate emphasis in school curriculum. For formal education to help curb youth restiveness in the country our education has to be modeled towards value inculcation and citizen education at all levels of our education. Our education must be made to be functional meeting the students' needs. More emphasis should be placed on vocational and technical education which will help students acquire skills that will introduce them to entrepreneurship development.

Enlightenment campaigns against youth restiveness are also important. During this period relevant information is disseminated to the citizens.

CONCLUSION

If you build the youth; you build the society, says a popular adage. On the contrary, if you destroy the youth, you destroy the society. This inference explained the relevance of the youth in nations building.

Drug abuse and Youth restiveness are social vice that is giving the entire Kogi east and beyond sleepless nights. The causes are multifaceted and hence resolving it requires multidimensional approach. The paper believes that effective counselling to youths, parents and political leaders at various levels of governance could go a long way in curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria. Consequently, there is no gain in lawlessness and every criminal has a limited time of operation before the inevitable day of doom.

RECOMMENDATION

The paper recommends that effective counseling and public enlightenment campaign on the danger of drug addicts among the youths; Single parents should wake up to their responsibility of instill discipline among their children;

Parents should make child education their priority; Political leaders at various levels of governance put law in place to criminalize youth restiveness in Nigeria.

Government should adopt proactive poverty alleviation programs rather than pay lip service to the issue of masses welfare; also leaders should strengthen their roles and responsibilities in addressing societal ills and problems; especially the problems of tribalism, nepotism, selective prosecution, sectionalism, and marginalization in the country.

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