

Drug Abuse and Trafficking: A Rot in Nigeria`s Denture.

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Abstract.

In any facet of life, there is bound to be genuine and imitation varieties. In the field of business, there is bound to be fake and counterfeit ones also. While the invention of drugs, its trade and usage in the right direction, have been of great benefit to mankind, the reverse is the case when some of these drugs are threat to human`s life, but are still being pushed into the markets for human consumption. Drug abuse entails when one prescribes for himself drugs without that from a qualified medical personnel. Even when it is prescribed by a Doctor, if it is not taken according the dosage, constitutes its abuse. Trafficking of drugs in this context shows a situation when drugs are banned because of their adverse effects on humanity, culprits still smuggle them to the final consumers. Drug trafficking and its twin, drug abuse, have brought untold hardship to the Nigeria`s nation. It has led to murder, imprisonment, madness, depression. The author has used Descriptive phenomenology in his Methodology. Data collection was done through Secondary source. The author found out that the two phenomena cut across ages, status and tribe. Many means were used to conceal the drugs, either in the culprits` anus, handbags, slippers, shoes, or their luggage. It was recommended that the culprits should find legitimate trade; imprisonment to the culprits to serve as deterrent to others; identify flash points, sellers and users being identified so as to fish them out, and possible prosecution. Rehabilitation and empowerment should serve as avenue to make the culprits sane and useful to themselves in particular, and to the Nigerian society in general.

Key Words- Drug Abuse. Drug Trafficking. Rot. Denture.

Introduction

Nigeria as a nation is battling with the menace of Drug trafficking and abuse. This is one of the evils that is spreading like wild fire which has bedeviled the nation. No day passes that citizens will not hear or see the manifestation of the above, either the abuse or the trafficking.

Although Nigeria is here used as a case study, it is a global issue. Yet the phenomena are rife in Nigeria. According to Nwannennaya (2017), "Drug trafficking is a global phenomenon. A report by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), submits that Nigeria tops the list with the highest trafficking and drug use in West Africa". The report went further to elucidate that "Close to 50% of Africa's drug couriers arrested in Europe in 2011 were citizens of Nigeria. Nigerians have been over-represented in the number of West Africans arrested both in Africa and Europe for heroin smuggling" (Nwannennaya,p.2).

Another agency that has brought to limelight the menace above is United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC). "The World Drug Report" according to this agency, "said approximately 284 million people aged 15 and 64 years used drugs worldwide in 2020. UNODC said drug use prevalence in Nigeria in the 21-month period stood at 14.4 per cent, while prevalence stands around 15 per cent, almost three times higher than the global average" (Drug trafficking as national security threat) It will be recalled that it was because of the global nature of drug abuse and trafficking that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, was established to facilitate the sharing of drug related information on the menace among countries (Vanguard Comment. P.18). It is also on record that "Nigeria is a transit point for heroin and cocaine intended for Europe, East Asian, and North American markets. The country has a relatively high rate of drug abuse due to the continued availability of illicitly manufactured and diverted pharmaceutical products containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances." (Drug and Organized Crime).

According to the former Head of state, Muhammadu Buhari speaking while he was inaugurating the War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) in Abuja in 2021, he said that "drug trafficking and abuse as more threatening to the stability of the nation than banditry and insurgency" (Drug trafficking as national security threat). He

further said: "I believe strongly, with every bit of conviction, that if we are able to deal with the issues of drug abuse, substantially, our security challenges will drastically reduce as we walk towards a drug free, Nigeria" (Drug trafficking as national security threat). He concluded by saying that "drug trafficking and organised crime fuel and perpetuate circles of violence and conflicts, including armed groups and terrorism" (Drug trafficking as national security threat). It will also be included that why most students are in secret Cults today is because of drug abuse. Former Governor of Abia State stated this. He "has blamed cultism in schools on drug abuse" (Okey Sampson, 2021.p.27).

In Nigeria, the Organ responsible to fight drug abuse and trafficking is the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLAE). It reported that "14.3 million Nigerians live under banned drugs such as cannabis, opiates, cocaine, heroin, tramadol. Codeine and other unbelievable concoctions" (Vanguard Comment. P.18) This is really a global threat. The world is not safe on this.

Buba Marwa, the chairman of NDLEA said:

For every criminal intention, especially in violent crimes, drug abuse is behind it. Banditry, rape, gender based violence and kidnapping were pointer to the fact that drug abuse was eating deep into the fabrics of Nigeria. Even bandits and terrorists sometimes demand drugs in exchange for persons. It is a person under the influence of drugs that usually commits heinous crimes, therefore, drug abuse and drug trafficking is a war that must be won. (Esther Onyegbule, 2021.p.6).

The above scenarios show the malignant nature of these phenomena to the nation. They cut across gender, ages, status, religions, tribes, complexion and all facets of lives. The menace may kill instantly or slowly. Whichever process it takes, it is a moral-damager; makes one not at ease, and may bring a wealthy man to penury. **ROT:** This could be described as "The process of becoming rotten; putrefaction" (*Vocapture online Dictionary*).

Contextually, this Paper is saying that the teeth of Nigeria are rotten. In other words, the nation is not healthy, rotten because of drug trafficking and abuse.

What is Drug? In the context of the Paper, drug will be described as “A psychoactive substance, especially one which is illegal and addictive, ingested for recreational use, such as cocaine” (*Vocapture*). So, in this sense, drug here must be one that affects the mind or mental processes negatively. It must be declared as illegal by the authority; the users must be addicted to it, form habit of it.

Drug Trafficking: This is “The process of smuggling, distributing **and** selling illegal drugs” (*Vocapture*). Another definition has it that it “is a global black market dedicated to the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of prohibited drugs” (drug abuse (...uh..BYOOS) the definitions are saying that drug trafficking is that a drug must be cultivated, manufactured, smuggled out for its distribution and sale. It is smuggled out for sale because it is illegal.

Drug Abuse: It is the “Misuse of, or overindulgence in, drugs” (*Vocapture*). It could also be known as substance abuse which “is the use of a drug in amounts or by methods that are harmful to the individual or others” (Substance abuse). In other words, it is misusing this drug in a way that it harmful to the person or others. Taking drugs without appropriate authority’s prescription could lead to drug abuse.

The evil effects of these spheres, do more harm than good to the nation. It will not be wrong if one says that Nigeria is under the influence of illicit drugs. This is the assertion of the Chairman of NDLEA Buba Marwa. He said: “one in seven Nigerians use illicit drugs while one in four are female and 14.4 million Nigerians are currently under the influence of illicit drugs” (Juliana Taiwon-Obalonye, 2021.p.8).

Origin of Drug Trafficking in Nigeria: The origin of the problem of drug trafficking in Nigeria could “be traced to the period just after the Second World War. Nigerian soldiers who had served in Burma, India, came back with seeds of the cannabis sativa plant. They went ahead to experiment with its cultivation and

discovered that the plant does very well in some parts of Nigeria, and this led to a rise in the cultivation of the plant” (Nwannennaya, (2017)

Origin of War against Drug Trafficking in Nigeria: This actually is when Nigeria carried arms against drug trafficking. She did not fold her alms to see her citizens plunged into destruction. The following will give the scenario.

The war against drug trafficking in Nigeria started in earnest with the establishment of the Dangerous Ordinance of 1935. This ordinance guided the then Board of Customs and Excise and the Nigeria Police to tackle drugs trafficking locally. Another important period in Nigeria’s war on drugs was the Decree NO. 20 Of 1984 which prescribed the death penalty for all those involved in drugs trafficking. However, due to public outcry this law was adjusted to between two years and life imprisonment, depending on the offence. The enactment of Decree 48 of 1989 saw the establishment by the Federal Military Government of an independent body known as the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to tackle the menace of drugs abuse and trafficking. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency is a Federal agency in Nigeria charged with eliminating the growing, processing, manufacturing, selling, exporting, and trafficking of hard drugs (Nwannennaya, (2017) .

THE ILLICIT DRUGS: It is good at this juncture to have idea of some of these illicit drugs. These include but not limited to them: Cannibis, Alcohol, Heroin, Methamphetamine, Temazepam, and Cocaine (drug abuse (...uh-BYOOS). Others are Barbiturates, Methadone, Ketamine, Benzodiazepines, Amphetamine, Tobacco, Buprenorphine, Solvent drugs, 4-MTA, LSD, Methyphenidate, Anabolic steroids, GHB, Ecstasy, Alkyl nitrites, Khat (Substance abuse).

MODE OF THE BUSINESS: The culprits have many ways of operations. Apart from hiding their wares from the eagle eyes of NDLEA, they operate in these modes.

Online Trade. Electronic system is being deployed. Like any other trade they can be transacted through internet, the traders engage in this. When the transaction is done electronically, the buyer is supplied the goods at the designated place. One of such traders is Ese Patrick “who sells her illicit substances through Instagram account; Ese’sOvenSecret, was tracked and arrested with some pieces of brownies ordered online by NDLEA undercover agents, on May 21, 2021 and delivered by herself and her boyfriend in a Mercedes Benz car” (Godwin Tsa 2021.p.4). Corroborating, Nwannennaya (2017) says that “Drugs are increasingly advertised and traded online in the dark web or markets. The drugs are booked on internets and later transported in parcels to end-users through the traffickers”

Use of Charms: The business has gone satellite that spiritual powers are involved. The use of charms was for the sole purpose to avoid being detected or `seen` by the Drug Enforcement Authority. Buba Marwa the head of NDLEA revealed this. He said: drug triffickers now consult diabolic powers for `lucky days` to move drugs without detection but they still fall into the hands of the agency’s personnel” (Adanna Nnamani, Fred Itua, 2021.p.8.)

The Routes: Those in the business have routes to transact their nefarious activities. These include air, land and sea.

On land, because of the porous nature of our boundaries, these people find it easy to move most of the times without detection. “Drugs are smuggled into the country through the various porous borders. Nigeria is bedevilled with porous borders as it shares common borders with Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger that are known as countries that transit illegal drugs into the country” (Nwannennaya).

The ones transported by air are unique. They are unique because they “are usually wrapped in protective film and swallowed, to be excreted at the destination of the trafficker or are tucked away in the smuggler’s luggage” (Nwannennaya).

It will equally interest the public that some of these illegal drugs are being cultivated in Nigeria, which most of the time, are being destroyed when noticed by NDLEA.

CULPRITS: Those who are involved in this trade come from various strata of the society. They include students, Alhajis, Law Enforcement Agents, Ex Boko haram member, Traditional rulers, fathers and grand fathers, wives, widows and widowers, Dock workers, Freight Agents, Vulcanizer, Barber, pregnant women, false soldier, traders, clergymen. These were caught in one scene or the other.

CONCEALMENT: In order to hide their goods, the culprits hide them in various places. These include the followings:

Black Soap Cartons: “NDLEA intercepted a consignment of 30.10kg methamphetamine going to London, UK, another shipment containing 379grams of the same illicit substance concealed in false bottom of six black soap containers, parked in a carton” (Njoku Emma, 2023.p.4). **Lace and Ankara fabrics:** Two people were involved in this: “Operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, last Thursday, arrested a widower, Ariyibi Ahmed Olaseinde, and a divorcee, Akanbi Silifat Tunrayo, for attempting to export 14.4 kilograms of cocaine concealed in lace and Ankara fabrics” (Godwin Isa, 2023.p.4).

Anus: The culprit, Ezenyeche Kingsley Ebuka, was returning from Pakistan to Nigeria. When NDLEA searched him upon arrival at Murtala Muhammed International Airport Lagos, the five pellets of heroin weighing 250grams were “discovered in his anus” (Godwin Isa, 2021.p.4) **Food stuff:** In a way to conceal the illegality, Okafor Emmanuel Onwuzuruike hid his cannabis he wanted to travel to Dubai “in food stuff” (Nicholas Kalu,2022.p.4).

MP3 Player, Speaker; Motor parts: Courier companies were the players this time. They were helping the owners to transport them to their destinations. “Not less than 25 kilograms of Methamphetamine, Tramadol, Cannnabis and Khat concealed in motor parts, MP3 player, speaker heading to USA, UK, Australia, Dubai and Madagascar were seized at three major courier companies in Lagos” (Nicholas Kalu,2022.p.4).

Custard powder containers; Jerry cans: The first who were apprehended by NDLEA were Freight agent Nwobodo Chidiebere; a female suspect, Chioma Lucy Akuta and Charles Chinedu Eze. The methamphetamine was “concealed

powdered custard containers” (Emma Njoku, 2023.p.5). The latter was Faisal Mohammed who “was arrested in Mubi following the interception of a truck from Onitsha, Anambra State, where a total of 2,376 sachets of tramadol, comprising 23,760 pills were found in three blue rubber Jerry cans, which were hidden underneath the body part of the trailer” (Njoku Emma, 2023.p.5).

Private part: This was the case of Bashar Abdu who was caught at Illela in Sokoto. The 1.460kgs of skunk he was with, was “wrapped round his private part” (Christopher Oji, 2023.p.4).

Check-in bags; Slippers; Packs Air Freshener; Carton of Indomie Noodles; Container bearing Used Vehicles; Bags of Fertilizer; Bags of Cassava Flour: Emma Njoku and Godwin Tsa reported of these. According to them, NDLEA arrested Molokwu Nwachukwu at Murtala Muhammed International Air Port “with 36 parcels of concaine concealed in different parts of his check-in bags, hand luggage and two pairs of slippers while heading to Southeast Asia” (Emma Njoku and Tsa Godwin, 2023.p.4.)

That of packs of Air Freshener was linked to Onyeze Obiora. He wanted “to export a cocaine consignment consisting of 300grams of raw cocaine and 200 grams of phenacetin, a chemical agent used to adulterate and increase the volume of cocaine, concealed in packs of air freshener, going to Malabo” (Emma Njoku and Tsa Godwin, 2023.p.4.).

Also in the same vein, Osasere MacDonald wanted to export 500grams of tramadol 225mg to Reggio Italy. These he “concealed inside a carton of indomie noodles” (Emma Njoku and Tsa Godwin, 2023.p.4.).

It was discovered from a container bearing four used cars which were imported from Toronto, Canada, “107 kilograms of cannabis indica” (Emma Njoku and Tsa Godwin, 2023.p.4.). The suspects included Ademola Adekunle and Dayo Olatunji. The one that concerned bags of fertilizer were 69 bags of cannabis sativa weighing 700 kilograms. These were loaded in a trailer which was intercepted at Auchi. The cannabis were “concealed under bags of fertilizer” (Emma Njoku and Tsa Godwin,

2023.p.4.). The driver of the trailer Babangida Mande and his assistant Mandir Abdullahi were arrested.

The last they reported took place in Delta state. "96 compressed blocks of cannabis weighing 82kg [were] concealed inside jumbo bags of cassava flour were recovered at Basket Market Asaba" (Emma Njoku and Tsa Godwin, 2023.p.4.).

Soft Drinks Crates; Consolidated Cargo; Bournvita Container: Twelve suspects were concerned with that of crates of Soft drinks. Part of the team were two dock workers, a wine shop business man. They were "arrested in connection with the recovery of 152 kilograms of skunk from two dealers in Kano; 100,000 pills of tramadol in Imo State and 520kgs of cannabis hidden in soft drinks crates loaded in an Abuja bound truck" (Emma Njoku, 2022.p.5).

The culprit on this case was Iyanda Ogunleye. The cannabis and ecstasy pills known as MDMA which he wanted to export to Dubai, were "concealed in beverage drink, Bournvita containers" (Emma Njoku, 2022.p.5).

Body cream; Tea bags; Vehicle oil Air filters: In their desperate bid to traffic their illegal drugs which include "over two kilograms of cocaine, methamphetamine and cannabis," they hid them "inside containers of body cream, tea bags, vehicle oil and air filters to London, Saudi Arabia through two major courier firms in Lagos scuttled by narcotic officers of the NDLEA" (Emma Njoku, 2021.p.4)

Cans of Black Bullet Alcoholic Drinks; Food Items: The long hands of the officers of NDLEA caught up with two pregnant women. The first person was Mrs Seun Babatunde, while the second was Mrs GLORY Asibor. Seun has an alcoholic joint at Iyana Ipaja. When the officers came to her Joint, several cartons were opened in her presence. It was found out that "seven parcels of cannabis and a sachet of ecstasy drug were found concealed inside cans of black bullet alcoholic drinks" (Kingsley Omonobi, 2022.p.6). The next woman who was to board a Turkish Airline to Bolonia, was searched. In her luggage containing food items "led to the discovery of 300 tablets of 200mg and 225mg high dosage Tramadol concealed in crayfish" (Kingsley Omonobi, 2022.p.6).

Hotel; Bush; Forest: The hotel is located at 30 Lobito Crescent, Wuse 2 Abuja. When NDLEA searched the place, "some quantity of Rohynol and paraphernalia for smoking crack cocaine were recovered" (Emma Njoku, 2021.p.4). The Agency also "evacuated 10 bags of cannabis sativa weighing 135kg, in Amahor bush in the Igueben area [Benin]" (Emma Njoku, 2021.p.4). In a related development, the Agency "evacuated 2,937 kilograms of cannabis sativa from Utese forest in Ovia North East local government area of Edo state" (Emma Njoku, 2021.p.4).

Degree Certificate: In their continued quest to rid to country from illicit drugs, NDLEA had "seized 40 grammes of cocaine concealed in a University of Uyo degree certificate, bound for Australia" (Godwin Tsa, 2021.p.4).

Reasons for Drug Trafficking and Abuse

There are always reasons for actions. These reasons may be positive, or negative. However, in the context of this Paper, the reasons are negative because they affect the individual and the society at large and in the long run.

Finance: Monetary gain has been the major bait for drug trafficking. It is a major source of revenue for the traffickers.

Why was Ariyibi Ahmed Olaseinde involved in drug trafficking? According to him when he was arrested at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, he said the he "was expected to be paid N1,800,000 upon successful delivery of the consignment in Medina, Saudi Arabia" (Godwin Tsa, 2023.p.4). The same could be said of Iyanda Ogunleye Yaya, a vulcaniser. He agreed to export quantities of cannabis and ecstasy pills concealed in beverage drink to Dubia "for a fee of N4,000." (Emma Njoku.2022.p.5). Nworie Chikwendu came under this also. He was returning from Brazil. His friend induced him to export two parcels of cocaine which he hid in a pair of slippers. Upon interrogation, he confessed that "his Brazilian friend gave him the drug to deliver to Lagos for a fee of N2,000,000" (Kinsley Omonobi, 2022.p.6). Nwannennaya summarized this quest for money. "Another factor is the quest of Nigerian youths to make money big and fast. The drugs trade with its attendant risks is a quick way to make money. Youths that have weak and low moral structures can easily fall victim to this evil act of trafficking drugs from one nation to other" (2017) Financial inducement is a major

reason why especially youths engage in drug trafficking. A nation that may not offer hope for her future generation; where corruption and poverty hold sway, create opportunity that lures the young people to get 'employed'.

Neglect by the Society: When the government neglects her citizens especially the youths, one of the resultant effects is drug abuse. This may be practised because of frustration due to lack meaningful jobs and amenities. "drug addicts vent their anger and frustration on the society they believe had neglected them" (Tony Iwuoma, 2021.p.16).

Peer Pressure: Drug abuse sometimes is emulated through peer pressure. The addicts will always pressurize their friends to taste the drugs and benefit from all 'good' things. Out of good promises, the friends will accept. Here comes the beginning of drug abuse. Through this "it is possible to get the other one influenced into the system" (Nwannennaya.2017).

Sexual Stimulant: Ruffians, in order to rape girls whom ordinarily they would not have done, take these illicit drugs in order to gain sexual vigour. Others who have erectile problem usually take them. "People take hard or illicit drugs in order to gain sexual vigour. This is a result of suffering from erectile dysfunction while having sexual relationship with loved ones. As a result of this, they use hard drugs" (Nwannennaya.2017).

Broken Relationship: In order to cope with a broken relationship, either marital, friendship or business, some resort to use of illicit drug in order find 'solace or comfort', and 'forget' the incident. That is why some of these people are involved in "heroin, meth, cocaine and others in order to quickly put behind the break-up experience in them" (Nwannennaya.2017).

Disadvantages of Drug Abuse and Trafficking

That they are rot in the denture of Nigeria is not a misnomer. If there is any gain, the evil effects overwhelm the gain. This is so because according to Sheikh Abdullahi Bala, "the crisis bedeviling the country had its roots in drug abuse. There could neither be peace nor development in a country, with the unacceptable

level of drug abuse as in Nigeria today” (Noah Ebije, 2021.p.4). It has brought shame to the nation and among comity of nations.

Out of School Syndrome: Some youths who are supposed to be in school, are not because of illegal engagement in drug. An example is the four young girls who were working for a syndicate for illicit drugs. They were supposed to be in school, but drug business took them away. These girls were operating from a duplex rented by drug traffickers “purposely for four young girls who the syndicate used for marketing and distribution of illicit drugs” (Godwin Tsa, 2023.p.4).
Imprisonment: One of the punishments for dealing with illegal drugs, is imprisonment. Some of the culprits have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

“A 55-year-old, Oyeyemi Abiodun Sharafadeen, has been convicted and sentenced to five years imprisonment by the Federal High Court, Lagos, for exporting several banned substances” (Lukman Olabiyi, 2023.p.5). In the same vein,

Six drug traffickers have been sentenced to a total of 156 years imprisonment by the Federal High Court in Lagos and Ogun States for offences bordering on drug dealing, worse hit is 27-year-old drug dealer, Ahmed Abdulsabur. Hon. Justice Joyce Obehi Abdulmalik, delivering judgement on six count charge brought against [him] sentenced him to 10 years imprisonment on each count, bringing the total to 60. In a similar ruling, Justice Abdulmalik sentenced another dealer, Olumide Elegbede to 20 years jail term; 10 years for each of the two counts brought against him. At the Federal High Court in Lagos, Okechukwu Ume; Lanre Adebayo; Adigun Adeshina and Emmanuel Omijeh [were each] sentenced to five years on count one; seven years each on counts two and three. (Emma Njoku, 2023.p.5).

It is also worthy of note of the following: “The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency said no fewer than 475 people were convicted and sentenced to various jail terms between September and November 2021. The figure represents a portion

of the over 1,000 traffickers who were jailed between January and November for drug offences” (Godwin Tsa, 2021.p.4).

These that had been jailed, what is their fate in Correctional Centres? Their future is bleak. Their dependants will suffer including families. Their potentials as they are confined, will not be tapped.

Destruction of Future Generation: The youths are the future generation. If this generation is destroyed through consumption of illicit drugs, hope for future is not guaranteed. The reason being that Popoola Abayomi who was caught by NDLEA, was “selling assorted illicit drugs to students of a Federal University and cultists in Ogun State” (Godwin Tsa, 2021.p.5).

Similarly, Rhoda Agbje and her boyfriend Ifeanyi Nwankwo, “specialize in producing and selling drug cookies to school children and other unsuspecting members of the public in Abuja” (Godwin Tsa, 2021.p.4). It is reported that after she gave a young girl the cookies to eat, after eating the drug cookies, she “lost her mind and could not sleep, making incoherent utterances due to the effects of the cookies” (Godwin Tsa, 2021.p.4). Mohammed Buba Marwa, the Chairman of NDLEA said, “abuse of drugs posed a potent threat to the future of the country and the destiny of the youths” (Job Osazuwa,2021.p.14).

Waylaying of NDLEA Officers: This is a criminal offence, waylaying or blocking the way of an officer on his official duty. When Popoola Abayomi who was mentioned above, and one Ogah, a motorcycle rider were arrested, some Students` Union of the Federal University in Ogun State, “blocked the NDLEA team with their official vehicle. The narcotic agents, however, restrained themselves and after hours of standoff succeeded in moving the suspects to custody” (Godwin Tsa, 2021.p.5). What if the agents who were with riffles shot the students in a way to have their way? Lives would have been lost.

Self-exile: Charles Chinedu Eze was living in UK, but now, lives in Nigeria because of drug offence. “Eze lived with his wife and children in London until December 10, 2022 when he fled to Nigeria after his involvement in a drug related offence in the UK” (Emma Njoku, 2023.p.5).

Addiction: When one is addicted or possessed with the spirit of something, it is not always easy to liberate oneself from it. This could be seen with Prince Ikechukwu Uzoma. The spirit of drug trafficking has possessed him that he found it difficult to stop it. "NDLEA operatives in Adamawa arrested a 32-year-old notorious drug dealer, Prince Ikechukwu Uzoma, in the Mubi area of the state, with 1kg of skunk. Ikechukwu had been twice been arrested in the past, and convicted for the same offence. He was in 2017 sentenced to six months imprisonment and in 2019 he was, again, sent to two years in jail" (Emma Njoku, 2023.p.5).

Mental Destruction: The mental destruction of this hard drug known as Methamphetamine was exposed by the House of Representatives. According to the House, this "Crystal meth is a crystal narcotic hallucination that is capable of destroying a person mentally" (Levinus Nwabughio, 2021.p.7). According to the House, "addiction has no medical treatment at the moment" (Levinus Nwabughio, 2021.p.7). Not only that, "As a stimulant, it has a power euphoric effect similar to those of cocaine. Meth typically keeps users awake, depriving them of sleep, making them react violently and takes a toll on the physical look of its users" (Levinus Nwabughio, 2021.p.7). In his own contribution, Tony Iwuoma said that Methamphetamine is "highly addictive stimulant that distorts the central nervous system which could lead to insanity; could make the user hyperactive with the tendency to destruction, including suicide or homicide at the slightest provocation and without a feeling of remorse, and could rape even their mothers or sisters" (Iwuoma Tony, 2021.p.16).

Forfeitures: These were the things forfeited by culprits included vehicle and cash which was used in conveying the drugs and money given as bribe to NDLEA operatives by the quartet mentioned earlier who bagged 76 years imprisonment for their involvement in the transport of 532.8 kilograms of Loud variant of cannabis. Justice Akintayo Aluko granted the application of NDLEA "for the final forfeiture of a white colour Ford bus with registration number: PHC 315 ZT, used in conveying the cannabis. The court also granted the final forfeiture of N3,000,000 offered as bribe by the convicts to NDLEA officers" (Emma Njoku, 2023.p. 6).

National Image-Damage: This nefarious activity of drug trafficking has made citizens being subjected to thorough searching when they go abroad, and made

subjects of ridicule and scorn. The sighting of Nigerian Passports abroad attracts extra search because Drug Traffickers are around. This is “tarnishing Nigeria’s image as a nation” (Nwannennaya 2017).

Murder: It has been said earlier that one of the effects of drug abuse is murder. The empirical evidence has emerged. This time, it was Chekwube Nnamani who killed under the influence of hard drug. “A young man, Chekwube Nnamani has allegedly hacked his two siblings, Ekenechukwu and Afamefula, popularly known as ‘Spirit’ and three others with machete at Mgbalukwu Isukoma in Anicha Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Though the suspect is still at large, Police authorities have blamed his action on the influence of methamphetamine” (Wilson Okereke, 2022, p.4).

Conclusion

The dangers associated with drug abuse and trafficking are enormous that no sane person should allow himself to be a culprit. This is an affair that extinguishes future hope of wellbeing. Time of theories has gone; empirical actions should be employed to put an end to this nefarious activity. There should be no sacred cow in this case. Culprits should be brought to book. Drug abusers and traffickers should be seen as potential murderers. Those who collude and collaborate with them in their business should be seen as murderers also. Every hand must be on the deck to kill this monster. If we do not kill it, it will kill us. Let every culprit reflect on the harm he is causing the nation.

Recommendations

Public Lectures: Like the National Orientation Agency, NDLEA should from time to time, organize Public Lectures to the public. They can do at Schools, Village squares, Markets, Campuses, Churches, Mosques, Community Festivals, anywhere people will be found especially the youths. Here, the dangers of drug abuse and trafficking will be exposed. This can help to reduce the participation of the trend. “The Nigerian youth needs to be further oriented on the dangers involved with engaging in trafficking and abuse of drugs and not to see it as a means of livelihood. This orientation should not be left only to be done by the government or educational institutions but parents and guardians should also step up their role in this” (Nwannennaya, 2017).

Counselling and Rehabilitation: Counsellors should be engaged to counsel the culprits. Those who are counselled should be rehabilitated in Centres meant for that. Former Governor of Katsina State Aminu Masari has helped in this case. Mohammed Bashir, the NDLEA Commander of Katsina State said that he “sponsored the counselling and rehabilitation of 45 SUDs [Substance Use Disorders] in our centre” (Ogochukwu Anioke, 2022.p.2). Buba Marwa addressing his men on their efforts in the year 2021, informed them that they had “7,066 counselled and rehabilitated, all in our facilities” (Emma Njoku, 2021.p.4).

War against Drug Abuse and Trafficking: There should be political will to fight this menace. It should not be treated with kids` gloves and deodorant. The government should be out and have it as part of its duties to save her citizens from this malady. A problem left unsolved, is still unsolved. War should be declared against it. NDLEA Leader saw it as war to eradicate this. He should be encouraged. “We are doing our utmost to win this war against drug abuse and trafficking of illicit substances, both from a policy perspective (such as the launch of the National Drug Control Master Plan, NDCMP 2021-20250 and from a tactical perspective (like the gradual take-off of War Against Drug Abuse (WADA), across the 36 states” (Emma Njoku, 2021.p.4).

Supply Routes Identified and Cut Off: On this, It includes the farmers, the sellers, the transporters and flash points. The view of the Minority Leader of the 9th Senate Toby Okechukwu is that “NDLEA to trace the manufactures and others in the chain, make sure we take meth out of the market” (Levinus Nwabughio.2021.p.7).

In addition to the above, “communities must collaborate with the NDLEA to identify all flash points and destroy them. Sellers and consumers must also be identified and arrested. All the sneaky spots, such as brothels, must also be identified, and the hookers chased away” (Tony Iwuoma, 2021.p.16).

Another aspect of intelligence gathering is the monitoring of Blogs and Websites. This is because, some of these trades are transacted through these media. Technology should be employed to monitor them. “Various web pages and blogs are the most common source of trade in drugs. Therefore, there is need for the

security agencies; NDLEA and others to spring into actions by tracking the nefarious activities of drug peddling” (Nwannennaya, 2017).

Training and Motivation of Officers: Officers should adequately be trained and equipped with modern technology to be effective in their work; ill training and ill-equipment result in low performance. For example, “United States has donated full body scanning machines for the Lagos, Kano, Abuja and Port Harcourt airports” (Nwannennaya, 2017). These machines that “have proved effective in catching smugglers and couriers taking cocaine from Latin America to Europe by way of Nigeria” (Nwannennaya, 2017), will not be effectively used if the personnel are not trained.

Collaboration: It is not only national collaboration. International collaboration will equally help in curbing this menace. The one Nigeria and Pakistan did is a good example. Iheanacho Nwosu gave the report. He said:

The recent plan by the National Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to collaborate with its Pakistani counterparts, the Division of Control Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) and Controlled Substances Section, Ministry of Narcotics Control, to plug the channels of trafficking illicit drugs between Nigeria and Pakistan is laudable” (Iheanacho Nwosu, 2023.p.11).

The author said that the above “is a follow-up to a similar arrangement to work with the Indian authorities to combat illegal drug trafficking between the two countries” (Iheanacho Nwosu, 2023.p.11)

Empowerment of the Youths: One of the reasons youths are engaged in this trade and its use, is because of unemployment. If they are gainfully employed, some may not see themselves in this scenario. When the hand is idle, the mind is idle, the next thing is to think how to make body and soul to be together. Any job offered at that time, is accepted. During the holidays also, they should be engaged in something meaningful to occupy their time. It may be Computer Training, Skills Acquisition, or Football. This will occupy their minds which will make them think less of evil.

Arrest, Prosecution and Imprisonment of Offenders: One of the problems of Nigeria is god-fatherism. When those who commit heinous crimes walk freely on the road because powers that be are behind them, no arrests, but those who have no man, languish in Correctional Centres because of pilfering. The Yahoo boys are those much sought for, while the sacred cows are untouchable. The government should be prepared to prosecute whoever that is involved, no matter whose ox is gored. Selective prosecution will no help in this fight. When people know that they will be prosecuted if they are caught and imprisoned, the tendency to engage in this business will be reduced.

Role of Churches and Mosques: Religious leaders should help also in this direction. In their services, they should let their members know the dangers of drug abuse and trafficking; persuade them to love God and be patriotic citizens. The leaders also could be Vocation Centres where the young people can come and learn trade skill. When they are gainfully occupied, the urge to engage in the above `trade`, will be reduced.

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