

UNDERSTANDING PULL FACTORS OF DRUG USE AMONG UPPER BASIC SCHOOL STUDENTS: A PATHWAY FOR HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The study investigated the understanding of the pull factors of drug use among upper basic school students: a pathway to human capital development. The study adopted a qualitative form survey design. The population for the study were public upper basic schools in three Area of Ilorin metropolis. The target population were the upper basic seven, eighth and nine (J.S.S I, II, and III) students that use drugs. A sample size of 9 secondary schools was purposively sampled. Twenty-one basic school students' drug users were sampled through snowballing simple technique. The study applied a qualitative method using an open-ended interview approach developed by the researcher. The thematic data analysis technique was used to analyze the interview data retrieved from the participants. qualitative computer data analysis software (NVIVO 10) was used to analyze the data. Results revealed Alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine, inhalants, methadone, tramadol, codeine, morphine, cannabis or marijuana, opiates, heroin 'EJA', JEDI, and cocaine among others. Parental easy access, peer influence, and experimental curiosity were some of the pull factors, while increased enlightenment, parental role, and limited access to the drug are some of the measures drug users need to quit drugs.

Keywords: Drug users; basic school; pull factors; development and human capital

Introduction

Drug use and abuse among Nigeria's populace cut across all categories of population, as it includes both the dependent to independent. The dependent category is subdivided into two groups. The first group are those under the ages of zero to 14, who are under the custodian of their parents or guardians while the second group are those over the age of 65 that have retired from active service and are now dependent on the working class. The independent population are those under the ages of 15 to 65, who are also referred to as the active population. The first dependent population group are characterized by total reliance on parents for access to basic needs of life which are food, cloth and shelter. It also includes parental control such as loyalty to parents and those in authority, and obedience to the rules and regulations of the family as well as that of society. Another feature is that they are the school-going age. Thus, they undergo training in the form of education both at home and in school.

Informal training in the form of moral education is given at home while the school provides formal training required for life survival and contributing meaningfully to the development of their society. Education is the backbone of the development of any nation, as it is capable of improving the quality of society through the refinement of its potential. Education enhances the application of man's achievement towards the improvement of his environment (OECD, 2020). The role of education, therefore, cannot be ruled out in the quest for the human capital development of any nation. Due to the importance of education, educators throughout Nigeria have remained relentless in their continuous strive to find means of improving the Nigerian child physically, socially, psychologically, emotionally and morally to become useful to themselves and the larger society.

The much-expected ideal situation of effective teaching and learning is fading away in Nigerian schools today, due to so many factors, that are distracting the much-needed attention required in teaching and learning.

The most recent one today is the rate at which learners are getting involved in the use and abuse of drugs. Before now, drugs are consumed by youth and adults (the working population or independent population) that are mostly found in tertiary institutions, or mostly working-class adults.

Cases of drug use and abuse have been witnessed by young people in senior secondary school over the years, but recently, it has extended to junior secondary school level (Upper basic school) to also be involved in drug use. A drug is a substance that can be taken into the human body and, once taken, alters some processes within the body. Drugs can be used in the diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of a disease (Okoye, 2001). It is also considered a substance that modifies perceptions, cognition, mood, behaviour and general body functions (Balogun, 2013). These could thus, be considered chemical modifiers of the living tissues that could bring about psychological and behavioural changes (Nnachi, 2007).

The word drug use is defined as the use of illegal drugs or the use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used, or in excessive amounts, while drug abuse is the excessive, maladaptive, or addictive use of drugs for nonmedical purposes despite social, psychological, and physical problems that may arise from such use (Sussman & Ames, 2011). Odejide (2000) posited that a drug is said to be abused when its use is not pharmacologically necessary, especially when used in the face of legal prohibition or when a socially acceptable beverage is used excessively. The majority of Nigerian youths ignorantly depend on one form of drug or the other for their various daily activities such as social, educational, political, moral etc. such drugs include tobacco, Indian hemp, cocaine, morphine, Heroin, Alcohol, Ephedrine, Madras, caffeine, Glue, Barbiturates, Amphetamines etc (Omage, & Oshiokoya, 2017). Most of the time when drug users can no longer survive without using a drug, it becomes an addiction.

The issue of drug use and abuse is a well-known phenomenon among secondary school students in major cities in Nigeria, which include Kano, Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, Ilorin, Ibadan, and Katsina. It has gained public condemnation by all and sundry the federal, state and local governments through the mass media. According to Okoye, (2001) drug users are at risk in their academic and career development. Drugs create vivid distortion in the sense of the users' consciousness (Inciardi, Horowitz, & Pottierger, 2011). It can also becloud the users' sense of judgment (Maguire & Pastore, 2012). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2019) gave an estimated 585,000 drug-related deaths, worldwide. Between 2010 and 2021, the number of people using drugs increased by 22 percent. Based on demographic changes alone, current projections suggest an 11 percent rise in the number of people who use drugs globally by 2030 -- and a marked increase of 40 percent in Africa, due to its rapidly growing and young population. In Nigeria, this would signify that the country will have to grapple with approximately 20 million drug users by 2030 further deepening the public health and public security challenges as well as human capital development.

According to the latest global estimates, about 5.5 percent of the population aged between 15 and 64 years have used drugs at least once in the past year, while 36.3 million people, or 13 percent of the total number of persons who use drugs, suffer from drug use disorders. In Nigeria, the drug use prevalence is 14.4% which is significantly higher than the global average. Drugs that were commonly abused in Nigeria include tramadol, opiate, cannabis, amphetamines, barbiturate, benzodiazepines (Valium), and bromazepam (Lexotan) (Yunusa, Bello, Idris, Haddad, Adamu, 2017). The West African Commission on Drugs (WACD; 2014) findings indicated that most secondary students commonly use and abuse a mixture of drugs, results have it that they take a mixture of cannabis with alcohol (known in the ingroup language as combined). Others drink a mixture of codeine and tramadol (known in the ingroup language as Reliefine). Other combinations

which are popular among them include a mixture of lizard dung with lacasera and inhaling of paint and latrine. The smoking of Paw-Paw leaves and the seeds of “Zakami” (*Datura metel*) also serve as a stimulant. The finding of Abdulkarim, Mokuolu, and Adeniyi (2005) revealed the types and frequency of drug use and abuse among 1200 students in Ilorin metropolis between ages 15 and 19 years as having a prevalence rate of 40.1% including mild stimulants such as kolanut and coffee 294 (26.2%), alcohol 164 (14.5%), sniffing agents 80 (7.2%), amphetamine and ephedrine 66 (6.7%), cigarette 54 (4.8%), heroin 45 (4%) cocaine 40 (3.6%) and cannabis 38 (3.4%). Seventeen years after this study, the International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP, 2021) reported the result of a survey conducted by the Option2world Initiative against Drug Abuse in collaboration with the office of the first lady of Nigeria, revealing that Kwara State is having the highest prevalence rate drug users and abusers in the North Central region with 13.0 % (213,000).

Apart from the increase in the number of patients hospitalized in connection with drug abuse, addiction, and dependence, drug use and abuse are associated with impaired coordination and the loss of capacity for self-control (West African Commission on Drugs (WACD), 2014). Drug use and abuse can also damage brain cells and make the brain shrink, thus resulting in organic brain damage (Ejikeme, 2010). Drugs such as stimulants activate the central nervous system, which results in restlessness, nervousness, increased aggressiveness, and anxiety that may be beyond the control of the user (Lahey, 2004). Many researchers have also agreed that emotional breakdown and inability to control oneself as a result of drug use and abuse are associated with inner-city crises, crime, and youth violence which is negative to human capital development (Klantschnig, 2013).

Despite all these and many negative effects of the drug on its users, the rate of involvement among students is still on the increase. Several studies have been carried out on drug and drug abuse among secondary school students

in Nigeria (Abdu-Raheem, 2013; AbdulKareem, Mokuolu, Adeniyi, 2017) but none was carried out on junior secondary schools, which is the focus of this study.

These scenarios are a pointer to the main thrust of this paper. A civic education teacher employed by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in 2021 was posted to one of the public schools in the Ilorin metropolis. The teacher was handling basic seven (Junior secondary class 1) in civic education, after the explanation of the concepts, and summary notes on the chalkboard. The teacher noticed that some particular group of three male students were not writing, and upon moving close to inquire why they were not writing. It was discovered that they had just taken Igbo also known as Indian hemp, other names including marijuana, grass, weed, joint, stone, pot, ganga, hashish, bhang, sinsemilla and morocco and they were unsettled to pick anything from the teachers' lesson or even copy the summary note on the chalkboard. When they were taken out of the class for proper investigation, other class members told the teacher that, it has been their habit and that other teachers are already aware of their case. This happened in a basic seven class that is the first year in secondary school, among students of 10 - 13 years, these students are already taking hard drugs.

A visit to the guidance and counselling unit of another school in the metropolis on one of the Career Day programmes organized by A Non-governmental Organization which is faith-based. Seven different cases of Junior secondary students involved in the use of drugs of different types were presented to the organizers. And the school made a special request for enlightenment talks on the danger of using drugs. This and many others pose a serious question to the researcher: what will the future of the country be? If students of 10-15 years are readily taking to the use of the drug. How will these students fit into that picture of leaders of tomorrow in this great Country? How will the teachers teach? If at year one of secondary school

level they are into a drug, what could be the pull factors for students in the upper basic (Junior Secondary school) to take to the use of drugs?

Many researchers such as Adeoti (2010), and Oluremi (2012) gave the causes of drug use and abuse as experimental Curiosity, peer group influence, poor parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions, the need for energy to work for long hours, availability of the drugs, and the need to prevent the occurrence of withdrawal. Mackenzie, Annette, Jennifer and Mark (2013) finding revealed three Risk Factors for Adolescent Substance Use such as (1) familiar risk factors; physical and sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect, (2) Social Risk Factors, Deviant Peer Relationships, Peer Pressure and Popularity/Gang Affiliation, and (3) Individual Risk Factors, Depression. The cause of Drug use and abuse according to the World Drug Report 2018 had been identified as a risk factors category at different levels, micro and macro levels. The micro-level influences include Income and resources, Poverty, Homelessness, refugee status, Child labour, lack of access to health care, social environment, Antisocial norms, poor informal social controls, lack of social cohesion, disconnectedness, and lack of social capital. Conflict/war, social exclusion, inequality, discrimination. And physical environments such as Decay: abandoned buildings, and substandard housing. Neighbourhood disorder, Access to alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, firearms, Lack of access to nutritious foods, Exposure to toxins, and Media. Similarly, research with a focus on young people has sought to identify motives for illicit drug use. It was evident that their decision to use a drug is based on a rational appraisal process, rather than a passive reaction to the context in which a substance is available (Boys et al.2014). This study investigated understanding the pull factors that influenced children of upper basic schools into taking to the use of the drug to understand develop youth that can contribute to national development.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigated understanding pull factors of drug use among upper basic school students: a pathway to human capital development.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

- a. What are the common drugs used by upper basic school students in three selected areas in Ilorin?
- b. What are the pull factors responsible for upper basic school students' use of drugs?
- c. Are the upper basic school students who use drugs want to quit?
- d. How can upper-basic school students who use drugs be helped to quit?

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative form of survey design as the study used open-ended questions to produce results. The population for the study were the public upper basic school students in Ilorin metropolis. Ilorin Metropolis comprises of Ilorin East, West and South Local government areas. The target population were the upper basic school students that use drugs in three areas of Ilorin metropolis (Okelele, Adeta and Gaa-Akanbi areas).

Twenty-one drug users from nine public upper basic schools were purposively selected using a snowballing sampling technique. This is in line with Sambo (2010) who maintains that a researcher can choose a sample if it meets the researchers' characteristics of interest. A snowball-sampling approach is a sampling method used by researchers to generate a pool of participants for a research study through referrals made by individuals who share a particular characteristic of research interest with the target population. In this regard a teacher identifies a current drug user who then helped to identify others.

The characteristics of the sample were current upper basic school drug users with no history of treatment, aged 10–15 years, having used illegal drugs during the past 90 days for upper basic seven (Junior School 1), and one year for upper basic eight (Junior school 2) and two years for upper basic nine (Junior school 3).

The study applied a qualitative method using an open-ended interview approach developed by the researcher. The interview has two sections A and B. Section A consists Biodata information of the participants while section B comprised four questions which are (i) what are the types of drug use? (ii) please give five reasons why you are into drug use. (iii) Are you ready to quit? And (iv) how can we help you quit? The instrument was validated by experts in educational Research, measurement and evaluation unit of the Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin.

The interview was personally conducted by the researcher. It was a one-on-one interview, the recording was made using a recording device after permission of such had been granted by the participants. Transcription was made using thematic coding. The researcher followed (Creswell, 2012) guidelines to carry out data analysis stages. However, the use of qualitative computer data analysis software (NVIVO 10) was adopted. According to Creswell (2012), it is used to facilitate the process of storing, sorting, coding, analyzing and perpetration of representation of the data.

To protect the confidentiality of the participants the study used a pseudonym to report the perceptions of the participants in line with the advice of (McCann & Clark, 2003). As noted by Creswell (2009), the researcher must be mindful of how to protect the anonymity of individuals, roles and incidents in the research through the use of pseudonyms for both individuals and places of data collection sometimes.

Results

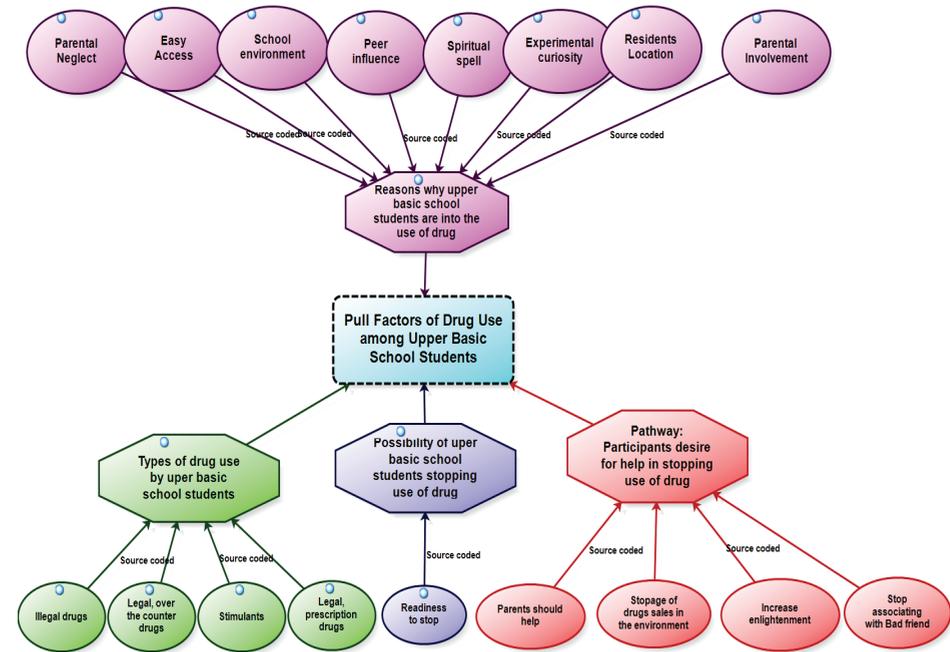


Figure 1. Themes and sub-themes of the pull factors of drug use among upper basic school students

The study investigated the understanding of pull factors responsible for drug use among upper basic school Students as a pathway for human capital development. The thematic approach allows the analysis to be presented in themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes as well as in graphical models through which the perspectives and the actual words of the 21 participants were systematically presented. The main aim of this paper is to investigate the understanding of pull factors responsible for drug use among upper basic school Students to establish the pathway for human capital development. Given this, the study discovered the common drugs used by upper basic school students in the Ilorin metropolis, the pull factors responsible for upper basic school students' use of drugs and the possibility of upper basic school students stopping the use of the drug. The emerged sub-themes and sub-sub-themes representing the perceptions of the students are visualized in Figure 1.

Research Question One: What are the common drugs used by upper basic school students in the Ilorin metropolis?

Common drugs used by upper basic school students in Ilorin metropolis

From the first finding, the majority of the participants identified the illegal drugs, legal but over-the-counter drugs, legal but prescription drugs and stimulant drugs as the types they mostly used as shown in Figure 2.

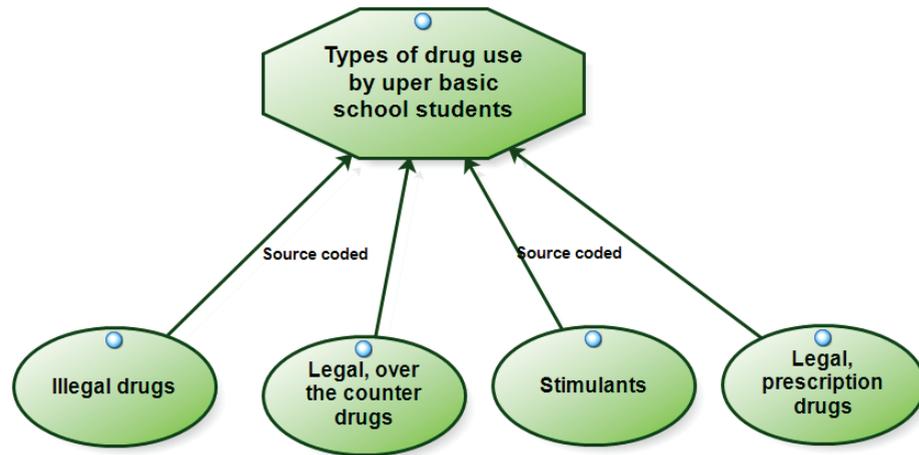


Figure 2. Types of drugs used by upper basic school students in three areas of Ilorin metropolis

Based on the findings, some of the participants, particularly, 002, 008, 011, 014, 020 and 021 and 006 confirmed that cigarette is their commonly used (Vinhalants). Concerning sub-theme two, which is about the legal drugs being used, participants 004, 011, 014, 015, 017, and 019 disclosed that Trama and R2 is the drug being used (Legal, prescription drugs such as Benzodiazepines, barbiturates, Methadone, oxycodone, Tramadol, codeine, Morphine etc. Meanwhile, concerning Illegal drugs such as cannabis or marijuana, opiates, heroin etc, all the participants revealed that they use them. For instance, participants 001, 002, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 012, 013, 014, 015, 016, 017, 018, 019, 020, and 021 confirmed their usage of the illegal drug referred to as 'EJA'. From the perspectives of the participants 001, 006, 007, 009, 011, 016 and 018 the illegal drug called 'JEDI' was what they used mostly. However, to participants 002, 005, 016, 017,

018, 019, and 021, 'MARIJUANA' which is categorized under illegal drugs, was what he used most times. Finally, under illegal drugs, participants 003, 006, 007, 012, 014, and 020, confirmed that the drug named 'SK (SKUNK)' is their preferred drug to them. In the categorization of stimulants such as methamphetamines, cocaine and hallucinogens, participant 001, 007 and 008 were the few ones taking the drug named 'ALEKO (MANPOWER)'. Lastly, it was revealed that 17 participants were users of more than one drug, and the remaining four participants were users of only one drug.

Research Question Two: What are the pull factors responsible for upper basic school students' use of drugs?

Pull factors responsible for upper basic school students' use of drugs

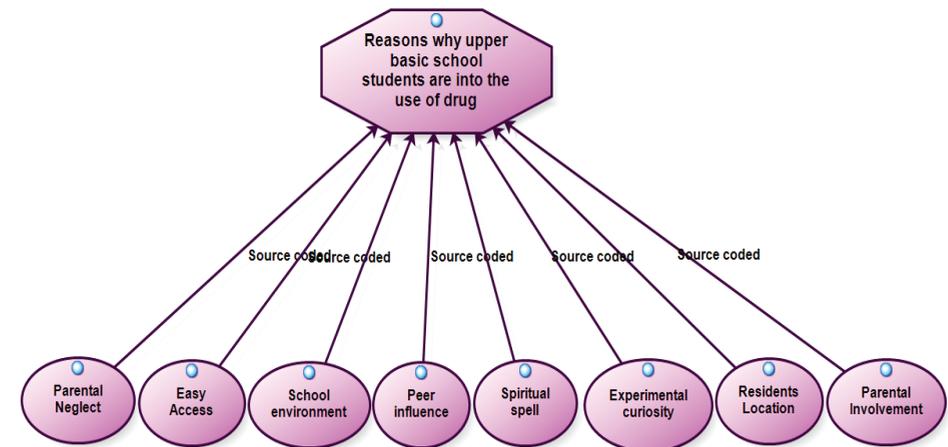


Figure 3. Pull factors responsible for upper basic school students' use of drugs

Figure 3, revealed that parental neglect was very vital as a pull factor responsible for the use and abuse of drugs, this was evident in the confirmation of the participants, particularly, 001, 002, 004, 006, 008, 011, 012, 013, 014, 015, 017, 018 and 019. These participants face parental neglect, their parents were not always around to monitor them after school which gave them the opportunity of taking to the use drug(s). Easy access to drugs in the community for the users was also a very strong pulling

factor why the participants were into the use and abuse of drug(s), from the result all the participants that are from 001 to 021 confirmed that drugs readily accessible to them to buy any time, which makes it easy for them to use. The factor of the school environment as a place for motivating the use and abuse of the drug was pointed out by only participants 002, 005 and 009 implications all other participant did not consider their school environment as a pull factor. Peer influence, that is the influence of friends and playmates as a pull factor for the use and abuse of drug(s) was confirmed by almost all the participants except only participant 006. This implies that peer influence is another strong force. On the factors of a spiritual spell, only three participants: 001, 011 and 016 gave spiritual spells cast by a stepmother and grandmother as to why they took to the drug was used. Experimental curiosity was confirmed by participants 007, 017, 020 and 021 among other pull factors, as responsible for their choice of use of the drug. Meaning that they only wanted to fulfil his curiosity and it became a habit. The residential location of parents was disclosed as a reason for the use of the drug by participants 001, 003, 004, 005, 008, 009, 010, 011, 012, 014, 015, 016 and 017. Most of the parents are residing in a drug-prone area, where their wards are easily exposed to the danger of drugs because many people around them are into it. Lastly, participants 001, 005, 006, 009, 013, 018, and 019 attested to the fact that their parents are also involved in the use of the drug, many confirmed their father taking alcohol and cigarettes, thus, parental involvement was also a vital pull factor among others.

Research Question 3: Are the upper basic school students who use drugs want to quit?

Possibility of upper basic school students stopping the use of drugs

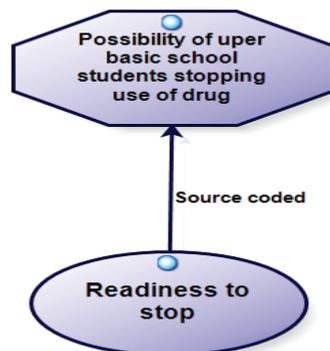


Figure 4: Possibility of upper basic school students stopping the use of drugs

The possibility of the participants stopping the use of the drug, which is changing from drug user /abuser to non-user is very high. All the participants gave a positive response by confirming that they are ready to stop. Since they all are ready to stop, how do they want to be helped to quit the drug, was the next research question.

Research Question 4: How can upper basic school students who use drugs be helped to quit?

Pathway



Figure 5: measures to help drug users to quit drug

Results from the participants indicated that their parents have a vital role to play in helping them quit the drug, this was affirmed by all the participants. On the point of, accessibility to drugs in the environment, 20 out of the 21 participants confirmed that the sales of the drug should be banned from the environment. Another point raised regarding measure to take in helping participants to quit drug is that more enlightenment programme on the danger of drugs is required. Participants all the participants attested to this. While the last point raised was there is a need for drug users to disassociate themselves from the company of bad friends who will continue to influence them into the act of using drugs.

Discussion

Findings from the study revealed that upper basic school students with an age range of 11 to 15 years and within the school year of one and three who are male are found to be drug users and dependent. This category of students is considered by society as the leaders of the next generation, who will be well trained in the act and skills required to manage the affairs of the nation economically, politically, technologically, and socially. These students have taken to the use and abuse of drugs of different types as revealed by the study. Drugs such as Legal, over-the-counter drugs such as: (Alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine, and inhalants). Legal, prescribed drugs such as Benzodiazepines, barbiturates, methadone, tramadol, codeine, morphine etc. Illegal drugs such as cannabis or marijuana, opiates, heroin etc. Also, an illegal drug with the street name 'EJA', JEDI, MARIJUANA, SK (Skunk). They also use Stimulants, like cocaine and ALEKO (MANPOWER). This finding corroborated that of Abdulkarim, Mokuolu, & Adeniyi (2005), and the statistical report of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (2017) that tramadol, opiate, cannabis, amphetamines, barbiturate, benzodiazepines (Valium), and bromazepam (Lexotan) were commonly used and abused drugs among secondary students and youth in Lafia.

The second finding on what contributed pull factors to why upper basic school students are into the use of drugs revealed that the parents of the respondents constituted one of the major pull factors. Their children (the respondents) confirmed that they are always not available at home to spend quality time in the upbringing of their children. They are always out of the house to seek economic means of survival. Due to their constant absence, the children are free to do whatsoever they like and wanted. Also, most parents' places of residence are porous and prone to dangers of different kinds, such as violence, gangs, drugs, and assault among others. This serves as an exposed root to the respondent's use of the drug. Also because of the location of the houses, access to the drug because so easy. Drugs were sold in all the nooks and crannies of the environment where the respondents reside. At times drugs were sold very close to the schools. To worsen the situation some of the parents of the respondents were drug users, due to this singular act, their children sees them as a model worthy of emulation and also took to the use of the drug.

Children who lack parental attention will associate with any type of friend, and most of the time it is always the bad ones that can influence them negatively. This was the situation upper basic school students find themselves in, the majority of them were lured into the use of the drug by their friends. From the report of the interviews, these friends were majorly around their neighbourhood and school, some are much older but they became friends because they share the same feature. These findings are in tune with the findings of Adeoti (2010); Oluremi (2012) and Mackenzie, Annette, Jennifer and Mark (2013) who gave the causes of drug use and abuse among secondary school students and young adults as experimental curiosity, peer influence, poor parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions, the need for energy to work for long hours, availability of the drugs in the society, and the need to prevent the occurrence of withdrawal. They also highlighted parental neglect, peer relationships, and popularity/gang affiliation.

It was a unanimous decision of the participants from the study that, they are ready to quit drug(s). This is because they are aware of the danger that drug use and abuse pose to them as an individual, family, the community where they live, their nation and the world at large. But what measures can be taken to quit drugs becomes an issue? By quitting drugs these students stand the opportunity of acquiring the knowledge and skill needed to contribute positively to national development. They stand a chance of becoming an asset to national development.

Lastly, measures such as good parenting are required as pointed out by the participants. It was revealed that most of the students got into drugs because of the neglect, abandonment, nonchalant and uninvolved attitudes of their parents. It was suggested by these students that, their parents need to give them attention, they need close and good monitoring, and they need a good and conducive home environment. They needed parents who can understand them any time they are having issues in school. A parent who can always provide them with advice on the kind of peers to keep and associate with. They also confirmed that they needed parents who will not also use the drug since some take to the drug because they see their parents as a model. They needed parents who will provide them with the basic needs of life.

Also, the effort of government at all levels is highly required to help in the control and sales of the drug in society, communities, the environment and in the Country generally. Government need to come up with stiffer measures to clamp down on the sales of the drug in the environment. If drugs are no more in circulation and students can no longer see them everywhere, there is a very high tendency to quitting their use, as suggested by its users in this study. And lastly, enlightenment programmes through different means such as the mass and social media, schools, the establishment of clubs, guidance and counselling programmes, and billboard displays on the danger of drug use and abuse were recommended as a good measure. If they are reminded always of the danger it poses to health, and education in the form of their career, social and political life, they will be ready to quit its use. With all these measures in place, society will have drug-free youth, with a good level of intelligence, and stable emotions who will be ready to contribute positively to national development by teaching and training upper students in school to attain the needed skill for human capital development will be possible.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Upper basic students in the Ilorin metropolis constitute a vital group of the Nigerian population who can contribute meaningfully to the development of their society and the nation at large, only if they are given the quality knowledge and skills required for this task. The task of national development is dependent on students and youth that are independent of the drug. It is on this premise that the study recommends among others:

- a There is a need to create awareness among parents about the drug culture in the metropolis, understand their responsibilities towards their children, and need to restrain their children.
- b. There is a need to strengthen the institutions of government in charge of drug control to curb drug production and supply. And also provide an effective check on drug use in the Metropolis.
- c. More enlightenment programmes should be embarked upon by the government at all levels, that is, local, state and federal.

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