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**Influence of Drug Abuse on Academic Performances, Parents’ life style and Peer-Pressure among the Nigerian University students**

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**Abstract**

The paper tries to explore the influence of drug abuse on academic performances, parents’ life style and peer-pressure among the Nigerian University students. A total sample size of 350 University undergraduates was interviewed through questionnaire administration in a private University in Ota Ogun state, Nigeria. The sample taking for the study was 14 percent of the total population (2,480) of the students in 2013 during data gathering. The univariate, bivariate and Chi-square tests were employed in the analyses of the study. The major findings of

this study are: Firstly, at p=0.000, there is a high significant influence of drug abuse on academic performances among the Nigerian University students. Secondly, at p=0.01, it was discovered that parents’ lifestyle (parents’ drug-in-take) had a significant effect on drug abuse by the Nigerian University students. Thirdly, the study revealed that peer influence has no significant effect on drug abuse amongst the University students at p=0.216. The recommendations for this study are: firstly, there should be henceforth, minimum of 5 years jail-term for any Nigerian University student found guilty of drug abuse both within and outside the campus. Secondly, from now on, those parents found guilty of drug abuse in Nigerian society should be sentenced to 10 years imprisonment with hard labor. Thirdly, in any Nigerian family where either the child or parent is guilty of drug abuse, such family should not be allowed to hold any public leadership position in any capacity throughout their life time.

**Key Words:** Academic performances,Drug abuse, Nigerian university students.

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### 1.Background to the Study

Drug abuse among teenagers has been a great concern across the globe due to increasing risks involved in abuse itself as well as other adverse physical and psychosocial outcomes (Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Brown, 1999). In 2003, the statistics showed that alcohol, tobacco and drugs use are in decline among the youths but the trend is less among the teenagers, perhaps reflecting a generational shift (Johnston, O’Malley, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2004).

Moreover, the age at which teenagers enter into excessive drinking and drug abuse is becoming alarming (Degenhardt, Lynskey, & Hall, 2000). Although, it was discovered that early onset of drug use is often associated with both greater likelihood of continuation (Chen & Kandel, 1998) and greater long-term harm and dependence (Grant & Dawson, 1997).

Nevertheless, it is not everyone who abuse drugs that advance to problematic levels. Notwithstanding, psychosocial risk models describe a complex interplay between individual and personality factors, environmental, social and family factors, and drug-taking behaviour (Jones & Heaven, 1998).

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Obviously, drugs have varied physiological effects. Some of it’s adverse consequences include: insomnia, prolonged loss of appetite, increased body temperature, greater risk of hepatitis and HIV/AIDS infection, death, various forms of cancers, ulcers and brain damages (Perkinson, 2002).

In-fact, a prominent study buttressed the following: that 264 accelerated heart-beats speeding in the peripheral circulation of the blood, alteration of blood pressure, fast-breathing rate and other body malfunctions are obvious deteriorating effects of drug abuse. Evidence also showed that Cannabis usage affects the hormonal and reproductive system. No doubt, the regular use of cannabis can reduce male testosterone and sperm cells. More importantly, drug abuse contributes to the formation of uric acid which accelerates unhealthy conditions like arthritis, gout, osteoporosis, and heart attacks, particularly those with pre-existing coronary hypertensive problems. In addition, drug abuse affects the brain thereby resulting in a major decline in its functions (Winger, Wood and Hofmann, 2004).

Drugs can affect student’s concentration thereby impeding his/her interest in academic work as well as extracurricular activities. In effect, we have increased absenteeism among those who drop out of schools. As a matter of fact, most psychoactive drugs usually affect the decision making process of students, their creative thinking; the development of their general well-being and social skills. Also, drugs interfere with an individual’s awareness of unique potential and interest in their career development (Louw, 2001).

Nevertheless, a study posit that when the students are feeling bad about themselves or are feeling unworthy, unloved or rejected, they usually turn to drug usage (Merki, 1993).

In time past in Nigeria, those who used and abuse drugs often keep it secret. However, the case is not the same today, students in schools brag about abusing drugs and alcohol (Azuike, Oni & Dirisu; 2012).

By definition, substance abuse is the wrong use or inappropriate use of chemical substances which are capable of changing functions of cells in the body (Ajayi & Ayodele, 2003).

To be specific, it was discovered that drug abuse is simply the overdependence and misuse of one particular drug with or without a prior medical verification from qualified health practitioners. Drugs such as Indian hemp (Marijuana), tobacco, cocaine, morphine, heroine, cough syrup (codeine) have been identified as few among the drugs commonly abused by the youths in Nigeria (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2010). Moreover, many adolescents have limited knowledge of the negative consequences of psychoactive substances, despite worldwide campaign and orientations on this subject (Oshodi, Aina & Onajole; 2010). The authors buttressed that curiosity, social ills, and peer pressure influence are noted to be primary reasons for substance misuse.

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In-fact, Makanjuola, Daramola and Obembe (2007), Aina and Olorunsola (2008), and Buddy (2009) unamiously reported that a significant percentage of the nation’s budgetary allocation is utilized for treatment and rehabilitation of people with substance abuse problems in Nigeria.

No doubt, the rate at which drug is used and abused among youths in the Universities has become a serious issue across the globe. The wide spread use and abuse of drug varies across nations; for example, in United States of America, 52 percent of eight graders and 80 percent of high school seniors have used alcohol at one time or the other, while 25 percent of eight graders and 62 percent of high school seniors have also been under the influence of alcohol. In essence, there is a widespread consumption of alcohol among the youths and there is an increasing tendency of alcohol consumption (Adeyemo, 2007).

In the past four decades, Americans have increasingly involved in raising the academic achievements of their children because the American public institutions are aware of the fact that the educational achievements of children ultimately influences the nation’s ability to compete economically, and improving the standard of living as well as ensuring its national security (Cao, 1996, Rosenbaum; 1997).

Data from developing countries, such as Kenya and Nigeria, shows evidences of high and rising drug abuse. A report by the Ministry of Health (2000) indicates that 67 percent of men and 32 percent of women in Kenya smoked and 45 percent of those who smoked are below 20 years. Moreover, the United Nations Drug Control Programme report of 2006 showed that 60 percent of students in the developing world are involved in drug abuse.

In recent times, most Nigerian students in the Universities are teenagers and some of them engage in various risky activities which include: smoking, drinking, reckless driving, unprotected sexual activities and drug misuse. It is worthy to note that unhealthy lifestyles amongst Nigerian youths are connected to their high rate of death. Liquor consumption among the University students engenders risky behaviours, which in the long run affect their wellbeing and academic performances (Onogha, 2012).

Moreover, the poor academic performance of students can be linked to the following: substance abuse, students missing lectures, failing tests, dropping out of school as a result of poor grades and jeopardizing the academic targets of Polytechnics and Universities (Atemi &Ondieki, 2012).

A prominent study clearly emphasized that the primary source of all social ills that beset our society today is corruption; which emanates from lack of knowledge (Dike, 2010).

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Another notable study depict that 80.5 percent of students saw drug abuse as a problem in the University and majority of them have witnessed violence resulting from substance abuse with alcohol and marijuana; which are the two topmost on the list of substance abuse by males and females (Ndom, Igbokwe &Ekeruo, 2012).

At this juncture, it is interesting to note that Nigerian adolescents usually start using and abusing drug at young ages. For instance, the adolescents from the Eastern part of the country were of the views that they started drinking between the age of 11 and 20 years (Chikere & Mayowa, 2011). However, a previous study revealed that the adolescents in Southern part of Nigeria started using drugs at the age of 14 years or below (Fatoye and Morakinyo, 2002).

Furthermore, Shehu and Idris (2008); also discovered that in the Northern part of Nigeria, the adolescents who belong to age category 10-14 years in junior secondary schools in Zaria (Kaduna state) are already abusing drugs.

It is surprising to discover that drug use and abuse actually began as early as when students are in primary schools. For instance, two comparative studies were conducted amongst Nigerian secondary school students and discovered that drug use among the students decreased in 1993 from what it was in 1988. However, these scholars concluded that drug use was higher amongst rural secondary students (Adelekan & Ndom, 1997).

In spite of the above challenges, the alarming rates of failure in our society today and undue irrational acts of the University undergraduates have prompted this research. There are victims of drug addiction among the adolescents that are menace to our society at large.

More importantly, this recent study raised the following questions: Firstly, is there any significant influence of drug abuse on academic performance of the University students in the study area? Secondly, can we probably advocate that parental lifestyle has any significant effect on drug abuse by the University students? Thirdly, can we affirm that peer influence has any significant effect on drug abuse amongst the University students in the study area?

To be specific, this study tries to explore the influence of drug abuse on academic performances, parents’ life style (parents’ drug-in-take), and peer pressure among the Nigerian University students.

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**1.1Methods and Materials Used in the Study**

The study comprises of 350 male and female University students within the age range 15-24 years in the various department in the University from 100-500 level. The study adopted a quantitative research method in capturing the influence of drug abuse on academic performances, parents’ life style (parents’ drug-in-take), and peer pressure among the Nigerian University students. The study target population is the Bells University of technology located in Ota area of Ogun state, Nigeria. It is the first private University of technology in Nigeria. The Bells educational foundation is owned by General Olusegun Obasanjo, the former President of Nigeria. Of-course, the Bells University of technology was founded in 2004. More importantly, the vision of the proprietor of the University is to be a world-renowned University that is committed to the development and transformation of society through environmental friendly technological and other innovations. The University has six colleges housing over thirty departments. These colleges include: the college of applied and natural sciences, college of food sciences, college of information and communication technology, college of management sciences, college of engineering, and lastly college of environmental sciences. In 2013, the University had about 2,480 students from within and outside the country. The sampling techniques adopted in this study are: purposive and simple random sampling. The purposive sampling is done by ensuring that only those respondents who belong to age-category 15-24 years were interviewed within the University campus. The simple random sampling was carried out by selecting 75 respondents in each level that is, from 100 to 500 level in various departments in the University. Out of 400 questionnaires that were administered to the respondents, only 350 of them were returned due losses of questionnaires in the field. The information obtained from questionnaire interviews were analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 15.0) in order to establish the degree of relationship among the variables of interest. This study embraced univariate, bivariate and Chi-square test analyses.

**1.1.1 Presentation of Tables and Interpretations**

Table 1(univariate analyses) reflects the age, sex, religion and ethnicity of respondents. The percentage distribution showed that 15-18 years (57.4 percent) and female respondents (65.4 percent) dominated the study. According to religious affiliation, Christianity (53.4 percent) dominated compared to their Islamic (42.6 percent) and other worshippers (4.0 percent). The ethnic group showed that Yoruba (52.9 percent) are the major respondents compared to others with 21.7 percent, Hausa (14.3 percent) and Igbo (11.1 percent) respectively.

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**Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** |  | **Frequency** | **%** |
| **Age** | 15-18 | 201 | 57.4 |
| 19-21 | 118 | 33.7 |
| 22-24 | 31 | 8.9 |
| **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Gender | Male | 121 | 34.6 |
| Female | 229 | 65.4 |
| **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Religion | Christianity | 187 | 53.4 |
|  | Islamic | 149 | 42.6 |
|  | Others | 14 | 4.0 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Ethnicity | Yoruba | 185 | 52.9 |
|  | Igbo | 39 | 11.1 |
|  | Hausa | 50 | 14.3 |
|  | Others | 76 | 21.7 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| **Source: Field Survey, 2014** | | | |

Table 2 (univariate analyses) revealed the illicit drug usage; how drug use enhanced academic performances, current CGPA (Cumulative Grades Points Average), expected CGPA, parents’ drug-in-take and peer pressure of respondents in the study. A slightly lesser proportion of respondents (38.6 percent) are using illicit drugs compared to their counterparts (38.9 percent) who are not using illicit drugs. In-fact, a lesser proportion of respondents (29.4 percent) used drugs to enhance their academic performances compared to their counterparts (30.0 percent) who don’t use drugs to enhance their academic performances in the study. Obviously, a greater proportion of respondents (61.4 percent) decided personally to take drugs compared to their counterparts (21.4 percent) who had no personal decision to take drugs.

The relationship between respondents who engage in drug abuse and their Cumulative Grades Points Averages (CGPA) are discussed below: On the first note, 3.1 percent of respondents who engage in drug abuse had below 1.5 as their current CGPAs compared to their counterparts with (approximately 1 percent) who expected below 1.5 CGPA. This implies that drug abuse had no effect on academic performances of respondents with CGPA below 1.5.

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Secondly, approximately 5 percent of respondents who engage in drug abuse had between 1.5 and 2.5 as their current CGPAs compared to their counterparts with 2 percent who expected CGPAs between 1.5 and 2.5. This implies that drug abuse had no effect on academic performances of respondents with CGPAs between 1.5 and 2.5.

Thirdly, Precisely 16 percent of respondents who engage in drug abuse had between 2.6 and 3.5 as their current CGPAs compared to their counterparts with 31.4 percent who expected CGPA between 1.5 and 2.5. This shows that drug abuse had influence on academic performances of respondents with CGPAs between 2.6 and 3.5.

Fourthly, 46.9 percent of respondents who abused drug had between 3.6 and 4.5 as their current CGPAs compared to their counterparts with 58.6 percent who expected CGPAs between 3.6 and 4.5. This depicts that drug abuse had influence on academic performances of respondents with CGPAs between 3.6 and 4.5.

Fifthly, 12.3 percent of respondents who abused drug had between 4.6 and above as their current CGPAs compared to their counterparts with 7.1 percent who expected CGPAs between 4.6 and above. This indicates that drug abuse had adverse effect on academic performances of respondents with CGPAs between 4.6 and above.

Interestingly, the majority of respondents (36.3 percent) indicated that their parents take drugs regularly compared to their counterparts whose parents take drugs occasionally (6.9 percent). Moreover, the data showed that the dominant proportion of respondents (54.6 percents) is under the influence of peer-pressure in the study.

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**Table 2: Illicit drug usage, Drug use enhanced Academic performance, Current CGPA, Expected CGPA, Parents’ drug-in-take and Peer pressure of respondents**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** |  | **Frequency** | **%** |
| Illicit Drug Usage | Yes | 135 | 38.6 |
|  | No | 136 | 38.9 |
|  | No Response | 79 | 22.5 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Drug use enhanced Academic Performance | Yes | 103 | 29.4 |
|  | No | 105 | 30.0 |
|  | No Response | 142 | 40.6 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Personal decision to take drugs | Yes | 215 | 61.4 |
|  | No | 82 | 23.4 |
|  | No Response | 62 | 15.2 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Current CGPA | Below 1.5 | 11 | 3.1 |
|  | 1.5-2.5 | 17 | 4.9 |
|  | 2.6-3.5 | 54 | 15.6 |
|  | 3.6-4.5 | 164 | 46.9 |
|  | 4.6 and Above | 43 | 12.3 |
|  | No Response | 61 | 17.4 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Expected CGPA | Below 1.5 | 3 | 0.9 |
|  | 1.5-2.5 | 7 | 2 |
|  | 2.6-3.5 | 109 | 31.4 |
|  | 3.6-4.5 | 206 | 58.6 |
|  | 4.6 and Above | 25 | 7.1 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Parents’ drug-in-take | Occasionally | 24 | 6.9 |
|  | Regularly | 127 | 36.3 |
|  | No Response | 199 | 56.9 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| Peer Pressure | Yes | 191 | 54.6 |
|  | No | 158 | 45.1 |
|  | No Response | 1 | 0.3 |
|  | **Total** | **350** | **100.0** |
| **Source: Field Survey, 2014 CGPA=Cumulative Grades Points Average** | | | |

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Table 3 shows the bivariate relationship between drug abuse and academic performances of respondents in the study area. The major proportion of respondents (77.6 percent) indicated that drug abuse had influence on their academic performances compared to their counterparts (22.4 percent) who did not engage in drug abuse. To be specific, the dominant proportion of respondents (96.1 percent) indicated that drug abuse had no influence on their academic performances in the study.

**Table 3: Bivariate relationship between Drug abuse and Academic performance of respondents**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | **Drug Abuse by Respondents** | |  |
| **Academic Performance** | **Yes (%)** | **No (%)** | **Total** |
| **Yes** | 97 (77.6) | 4 (3.9) | 101 |
| **No** | 28 (22.4) | 99 (96.1) | 127 |
| **Total** | **125 (100.0)** | **103 (100.0)** | **228** |
| **Source: Field Survey, 2014** | | | |

Table 4 display the bivariate relationship between drugs abused by respondents and their parents’ life-style in the study. No doubt, lesser proportion of respondents (34.8 percent) who abused drugs are influenced by their parents’ life-style compared to their counterparts who did not engage in drug abuse (65.2 percent). However, the major proportion of respondents (82.4 percent) who abused drugs is not influenced by their parents’ life-style.

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**Table 4: Bivariate relationship between Drugs abused by respondents and their Parents’ life-style**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | **Drug Abused by Respondents** | |  |
| **Parental life-style** | **Yes (%)** | **No (%)** | **Total** |
| **Yes** | 47 (34.8) | 22 (17.8) | 69 |
| **No** | 88 (65.2) | 103 (82.4) | 191 |
| **Total** | **135 (100.0)** | **125 (100.0)** | **260** |
| **Source: Field Survey, 2014** | | | |

Table 5 depicts the bivariate relationship between peer-pressure influence and drugs abused by respondents in the study area. Greater proportion of respondents (71.1 percent) indicated that they engage in drug abuse by the influence of peer-pressure compared to their counterparts (28.9 percent) who said that their drug abuse is not influenced by peer-pressure.

However, the dominant proportion of respondents (34.1 percent) indicated they had no peer-pressure and do not engage in drug abuse.

**Table 5: Bivariate relationship between Peer-pressure influence and Drugs abused by respondents**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | **Drug Abused by Respondents** | |  |
| **Peer-Pressure** | **Yes (%)** | **No (%)** | **Total** |
| **Yes** | 96 (71.1) | 89 (65.9) | 185 |
| **No** | 39 (28.9) | 46 (34.1) | 85 |
| **Total** | **135 (100.0)** | **135 (100.0)** | **270** |
| **Source: Field Survey, 2014** | | | |

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Table 6 displays the chi-square test relationship between drug abuse and academic performances of respondents in the study. At p=0.000, there is a highly significant interaction between drug abuse and academic performances of respondents. This implies that drug abuse has a great influence on academic performances among Nigerian University students in the study location.

Table 7 shows the chi-square test relationship between drug abuse by respondents and their parents’ life style in the study. At p=0.001, there is a highly significant relationship between drug abuse by respondents and their parents’ life style. Here, it can be inferred that drug abuse by Nigerian University students has strong influence on their parents’ life style (parents’ drug-in-take) in the study.

Table 8 sheds light on the chi-square test relationship between drug abuse by respondents and their peer-pressure in the study. At p=0.216, there is no significant relationship between drug abuse by respondents and their peer-pressure. This simply means that peer pressure has no influence on drug abuse by Nigerian University students in the study.

**Table 6: Chi-square test on relationship between Drug abuse and Academic performance of respondents**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Value | Df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) | Exact Sig. (2-sided) | Exact Sig. (1-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 124.362 | 1 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Continuity Correctionb | 121.392 | 1 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Likelihood Ratio | 146.293 | 1 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Fisher's Exact Test | - | - | - | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 123.816 | 1 | 0.000 | - | - |
| No. of Valid Cases | 228 |  |  |  |  |
| **Table 7: Chi-square test on relationship between Drug abuse by respondents and their Parents’ life-style** | | | | | |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 9.866 | 1 | 0.002 | - | - |
| Continuity Correctionb | 9.003 | 1 | 0.003 | - | - |
| Likelihood Ratio | 10.062 | 1 | 0.002 | - | - |
| Fisher's Exact Test | - | - | - | 0.002 | 0.001 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 9.828 | 1 | 0.002 | - | - |
| No. of Valid Cases | 260 |  |  |  |  |
| **Table 8: Chi-square test on relationship between Drug abuse by respondents and their Peer pressure** | | | | | |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 0.841 | 1 | 0.359 |  |  |
| Continuity Correctionb | 0.618 | 1 | 0.432 |  |  |
| Likelihood Ratio | 0.842 | 1 | 0.359 |  |  |
| Fisher's Exact Test | - | - | - | 0.432 | 0.216 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 0.838 | 1 | 0.360 |  |  |
| No. of Valid Cases | 270 |  |  |  |  |
| **Source: Field Survey, 2014** | | | | | |

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**1.1.3 Summary of findings**

The paper clarifies the influence of drug abuse on academic performances, parents’ drug-in-take and peer-pressure among Nigerian University students. The univariate results showed that the majority of respondents are 15-18 years, females, Christians and Yoruba people. Moreover, this study reflects the following the dominant respondents; those who used illicit drugs, those who used drugs to enhance their academic performances, those who take drugs by personal decisions, those with current CGPA between 3.6 and 4.5, those with expected CGPA between 3.6 and 4.5, those parents who take drugs regularly and those who engage in drugs taken by peer pressure. The bivariate findings depict the following major respondents: those with influence of drug abuse on academic performances, those who engage in drug abuse by parents’ drug-in-take and those who engage in drug abuse by peer-pressure. The chi-square tests indicate the following findings: those respondents with high significant influence of drug abuse on academic performances, those respondents with significant influence of drug abuse on parents’ drug-in-take and lastly, those respondents without significant influence of drug abuse on peer-pressure.

**1.1.4 Conclusions**

Obviously, this recent study has investigated the influence of drug abuse on academic performances, parents’ drug-in-take and peer-pressure among Nigerian University students is hereby concluded as follows: firstly, that there is a high significant influence of drug abuse on academic performances among Nigerian University students. Secondly, there is a significant influence of drug abuse by Nigerian University students on parents’ life style (parents’ drug-in-take). Thirdly, there is no significant influence of peer pressure on drug abuse by the Nigerian University students in the study area.

**1.1.5 Recommendations**

The recommendations for this study are: firstly, there should be henceforth, minimum of 5 years jail-term for any Nigerian University student found guilty of drug abuse both within and outside the campus. Secondly, from now on, those parents found guilty of drug abuse in Nigerian society should be sentenced to 10 years imprisonment with hard labor. Thirdly, in any Nigerian family where either the child or parent is guilty of drug abuse, such family should not be allowed to hold any public leadership position in any capacity throughout their life time.

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