THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVOCACY ON DRUG ABUSE AMONG THE YOUTHS IN OWO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Abstract

This paper examined Social Media as Advocate for Sensitising the Youth in Owo Local Government on the Consequences of Drug Abuse. This paper employed Agenda setting theory. Moreover, this study adopted survey design method and Owo local government areawas selected as area of the study. The population of the study was 341,400and this consisted of the total population of the selected area. However the study considered 400 participants which make up the sampling size and this was derived from 341,400entire populations of the selected local government areas through Taro Yamane formula. The findings of this study revealed that, social media advocacy has played vital roles in sensitising the youth on the negative effects of drug abuse. The study further revealed that, attitudinal change, public enlightening on the effects of drug abuse are necessary tools to reduce or eradicate drug abuse in the study area. Finally, the study recommends that, media should give much preference to issues relating to drug abuse as it will help to sensitise the general public on the negative effects of drug abuse. That, government at all level should consider social media as a functional medium of sensitising the general public on issue relating to drug abuse onpersonal health.

Keywords*:* Drug Abuse, Social media, Consequences

1. Introduction

Drug abuse has become one of the prevailing issues in Nigeria society especially amongst the youth that happen to be the major consumer of some illicit drug that are harmful to the body. However, drug abuse take various dimension in the society, some youth basically involved in taking some hard drug that contain narcotine such as Tranmadol and some youth engaged in other form of drug abuse such as, cocaine, taking herbal gins that contain drug without considering the health consequences attached to drug abuse(Abone, C. 2008). Some scholars in their study consider drug abuse as any form of excessive drug consumption as stipulated by medical practitioners, basically, the essence of drug is to help stabilize health status if there is any form of ailment in the body and the drug is expected to be used according to

medical prescription and any order attempt to engaged in self dosage is drug abuse (Atkin C. 2013).

For the purpose of this study, this paper will concentrate on the prevailing drug abuse by youth in Owo local government area of Ondo state having consider the area to be one of the major producer of drug especially marijuana, therefore, this study will centred on how social media through it advocacy campaign has helped to sensitize the youth in the area on the consequences of drug abuse. Mass media have been a major agent of socialization and tool for social change especially now that people depend on message from mass media. The potential power of the mass media helps solve social problems. According to conventional wisdom, it could be possible to use mass communications to get people to act on behalf of their own health and well-being or to do right things (Edward E. 2015).

It is not surprising, then, that prevention advocates would look to the mass media as an important aid in addressing the problem of drug abuse especially among the youth in Nigeria. Some advocates have pushed for reform or other restrictions on illicit drug. Others have sought to influence entertainment producers to end the glorification of drug users on social media, newspaper, magazine, television and in the movies (Montgomery, 2019). More recently, prevention advocates have produced a small number of media campaigns designed to change youth knowledge, attitudes and behaviour on the consequences of drug abuse (Esan 2016).

Scholars across different walks of life have defined the term drug from different perspectives based on their discipline and sometimes experience (Salimian, 2014). The meaning of the word drug often varies depending on the context in which it is used (Oliha, 2018). Regardless of the various definitions, there seems to be an agreement that drug is a chemical substance capable of modifying, altering the mood, physiological and biological composition of the user (Oliha, 2018). Drug abuse on the other hand, can be defined as the unwarranted use of a drug in order to achieve a ‘high’ or for performance enhancement (Jernigan, 2013). People who abuse drugs usually don’t have a prescription for the drug and abusing drug usually leads to dependency and addiction.

Thus, the emergence of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, among others, has contributed immensely to the developmental communication especially as it helps to project various attitudinal change campaign advocacy programme especially those related to drug abuse among youths in order to effect positive attitudinal change in the society (Mwesigye, 2022). However,

several advocacy campaign programme on social media especially on YouTube has help to project major consequences attached to drug abuse in Nigeria society, for example, some social media influencers and bloggers project skits where drug abuser were projected in such way that it appeals to the general public especially the youth to dissuade from engaging in social media. Most of the prevailing skit that flooded virtually all the social media was the one tag "On Colos" where a particular young man jumped inside erosion thinking it was a swimming pool after he took Colorado, one of the popular hard drug. Some other campaign social media senstitisation campaign on drug abuse include, "Smokers die younger" on Youbtube by NGO organisation, AY Youtube comedy skit sensitization on drug abuse, etc. Though, most of this program comes inform of comic contents, but it basically help to reshape the attitude of youth towards drug abuse (Delong &Winsten, 2000).

However, it would be noted that, social media as an advocate for sensitising youth on the consequences of drug abuse has being able to project several campaign programme and this have realy impacted in reshaping the attitude of the youth on drug abuse, though, there has been a shift from drug abuse by the youth to excessive intake of energy drinks, and this shows that, the shift from drug abuse to addiction to energy drink is as a result of media especially social media projection of the consequences of drug abuse in the society especially in Owo Local government area of Ondo State. Hence, this paper examines social media as advocate for sensitising the youth in Owo Local Government on the consequences of drug abuse. Drug abuse menace has strangled youthful population reducing them to dummies zombies and drooling figure as well as wasting their lives at the age which they are most needed in the society (Ngesu, Ndiku and Masese dangers 2008). Despite the worldwide concern and education about the of drug abuse most of the citizen have limited knowledge of how consequences of the habit (Ngesuetal 2008).

Fundamentally, one of the responsibilities of the media is to set agenda to change public perception on a particular, issue or phenomenon so as to ensure positive attitudinal or behavioural change in the society. However, the role of media especially social media in sensitising the general public on any salient issues in the society especially issues related to drug abuse base on it power to set agenda to ensure attitudinal change in the society. Moreover, it would be noted that, despite the sensitization role of media especially social media, there is still prevailing issues related to drug abuse in Nigeria

society, especially youth in Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State.

2. Thematic Review of Literature

2.1 The Concept of Social Media

Social media is not really new. While it has only recently become part of mainstream culture and the business world, people have been using digital media for networking, socializing, and gathering of information. Social media started as a concept many years ago but has evolved into sophisticated technology (Ahmed, 2013). The concept of social media can be dated back to the use of the analogue telephone for social interactions. The most recognizable use of social media was through innovative application, an online dialogue framework, created by Ward Christensen, a former IBM employee and Randy. Initially they envisioned a place where they could immediately contact their co-employees for announcement, that is, meetings, reports, and other affairs, rather than making multiple phone calls, distributing memos and the like. They were looking into creating a computerized bulletin board, which is why they named the program CBBS (Computerized Bulletin Board System) (Severine& Tanker 2013).

Soon enough, more and more employees contributed their ideas and comments in the said online community. That event was a momentous episode in the history of computer and internet. It was the birth of online social networking. The CBBS platform was made known to other companies and was used for specific purposes. The Bulletin Board System expanded largely and began breaking into mainstream much sooner than it was planned. It was during the rise of the Internet Service Providers in the early 1990s that social networking sites began to flourish. Along with the availability of the internet service to people, many people rummaged to have themselves acquainted with the new technology.

Social media attained a great measure of success with the launch of the then very popular Friendster.com. Creator of Friendster, Jonathan Abrams concocted a perfect mix of popular features from earlier social networking predecessors. Friendster became an instant success and gathered about 3 million members who signed up in its early month of launch. Friendster unfortunately got out of hand and suffered from too many glitches in the server.

The concept of MySpace opened the internet users to vast opportunities of self-expression which include wide control over a user's profile content. In MySpace, users experienced the best of creating unique identities to show to the online world. MySpace remained as the uncontested favorite among all social networking sites until 2005 when it met its competitor in the market. Facebook.com. started as a local social network made for the students of Harvard University. It was developed by a sophomore, Mark Zuckerberg. Facebook was actually made by hacking Harvard database containing identification images of students. The initial idea was to compare the faces of students with images of animals, for entertainment purposes. However, due to the potentially damaging contents of the site, the creators decided to put it down, before it caught the attention of the school authorities. The application was shut down, but the idea of creating an online community of students came into existence.

Hence, the platform was then improved and sooner than they expected, Facebook.com. ultimately offered the opportunity to the rest of the world. Facebook has grown to become the most popular and biggest social networking site with 800 million active users worldwide (Facebook statistics 2012). as at 2021 monthly active facebook users are about 3 billion, other social networking sites continue to appear in the scene such as, Twitter, Google+, Flickr, Badoo, Amazon and many others (Bruce and Douglas, 2018).

Similarly, some refer to social media as social networks. However, the two terms are said to be same side of a coin. Wikipedia defines social networks as "a social structure made up of individuals (or organizations) called "nodes", which are connected by one or more specific types of inter-dependency such as, friendship, kinship, financial exchange, dislikes, sexual relationships or relationship of beliefs, knowledge or prestige". Some also defines social media as "media designed to be disseminated through social interactions, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing technique".

Boyd and Allison (2017) define social network sites as "web-based services that allows individuals to; construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the systems". The definition focuses on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Based on a strict theoretical understanding, all networked tools that allow establishing connections between at least two humans, have to be understood as social networking platforms. However, Social media

technologies take on many different forms including magazines, internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, social networks, podcasts, photographs or pictures, videos, ratings, and social bookmarking. By applying a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence and social richness) and social processes (self-presentation and self-disclosure), Kaplan and Haenlein created a classification scheme in Business Horizons article (2010), with six different types of social media which include:

- Collaborative projects: example Wikipedia
- Blogs and microblogs: example Twitter
- Content communities: example YouTube
- Social networking sites: example Facebook
- Virtual game world: example World of Warcraft
- Virtual social worlds: example Second Life

These social media services focus on some or all of the seven functional building blocks which are; identity, conversation, sharing, presence, relationship, reputation and groups. These building blocks help understand the engagement needs of the social media audience. For example, YouTube‟s primary building blocks are sharing, conversations, groups, and reputation. Many companies build their own social containers that attempt to link the seven functional building blocks around their brands. These are private communities that engage people around a narrower theme, as in around a particular brand, vocation or hobby, than social media containers such as Google+, Facebook, and Twitter.

Youtube

According to TechTerms.com, YouTube is a video sharing service that allows users to watch videos posted by other users and upload videos of their own.

Facebook

Social networks such as Facebook as essentially online communities that allow users to cometogether, communicate and share things such as photographs, music or other files; and, most prolifically, to create short messages, often in the style of a mobi le phone text message butshared among a group. (Haigh 2010)

LinkedIn

LinkedIn as a business social networking site which encourages business contacts to connect, (Peacock 2011).

2.2 Concept of Drug Abuse

Psychoactive substance abuse refers to the habitual use of drugs not needed for therapeutic purposes, to alter one's mood, or state of consciousness. It is a maladaptive pattern of drug or substance use that can result in social, legal, occupational or physical consequences.There is no doubt that human's use drug to improve their general well-being. Fareo (2013) notes that since the early times, herbs, leaves and plants have been use to heal and control diseases. The use of drugs in itself does not constitute any danger, when correctly administered. However, drug obsession and addiction among youths has become one of the nauseating problems confronting the Nigerian society as this poses significant social, economic, and psychological problems in the country. Majority of the Nigerian youths ignorantly depend on one form of drug or the other for their various daily activities, and are increasingly abusing and experimenting with hard drugs like heroin and cocaine. Others substances like Indian hemp, which is frequently produced in Nigeria as well as Methamphetamine and tablet with codeine capable of intoxicating are mostly found in schools (FadeyiI. O. 2014).

Apart from cannabis, there is a growing abuse of synthetic drugs, that were once strange to the Nigerian environment which include but not limited to amphetamine, cocaine, heroin, glue, methamphetamine, paint thinner, cement, animal excreta, spirit, cough syrup made with codeine and so on. Studies conducted by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) revealed that adolescents and youths of both sex and between the ages of 13-35 years constitute the high risk group for drug abuse. Also the Rapid Situation Assessment of Drug problem in Nigeria conducted by NDLEA in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) revealed that the vulnerable groups for drug abuse include students, the unemployed, artisans (craftsman), commercial sex workers, long distance drivers, and street children. Lately, there are reports of obtaining feelings of euphoria in Nigeria through unusual means such as fumes from burning tyres, dry papaya leaves, burnt bitumen, and mixing methylated spirit withcoca-cola soft drinks (FadeyiI. O. 2014). Over the years, a number of therapeutic approaches for drug and alcohol addiction have been utilized. However, relapse - the resumption of drug taking following a period of drug abstinence - is considered the main hurdle in treating drug addiction.

Drug abuse is the recurrent use of illegal drugs, or the misuse of prescription or over the counter drugs with negative consequences. These consequences may involve problems at work, school, home or

in international relationship. Consequently, addiction to alcohol was rampant in the so called cradle of civilization and people during that time generally lived much shorter lives, thanks to diseases and presumably drunkenness.

Various conquistadors discovered the drugs that kept the locals going, especially cocaine, which was touted as a wonder cure for all ailments. One of the major drugs that came out of the new world was tobacco. Sir Walter Raleigh famously introduced dried tobacco leaved to England, where they were controlled and taxed heavily. Again, abuse of tobacco led to very expensive addictions, as it was a risky but incredibly profitable voyage for those who made it over the Atlantic.

In the late half of the 19th century, drug abuse was widespread that Britain went to war twice with china to keep opium trade routes open, and these naturally became unknown as the opium wars. Cocaine was isolated in 1884 and quickly became yet another widespread of drug abuse. Heroine and other opiates were synthesized and marketed as non addictive alternative to morphine. Of course, heroine was addictive causing were people to abuse the drug. Thanks to increased chemical and drug development in the 20th century, more drugs with abuse potential became available. LSD, methamphetamine and synthetic opiates are all relatively recent drugs. To counter the growing tide of addiction, drug laws became stricter, and drug addiction started to carry a serious social stigma. Fortunately, there are now placed to help people with addictions live a healthy life. While early 20th century society felt drug addiction was a moral flaw, it is now recognized for what it is a disease. There are various forms of drugsand most common ones are:

Marijuana: Marijuana is also called “grass”, “pot”, “reefer”, “joint”, “hashish”, “cannabis”, “weed”, and “Mary Jane”. Marijuana comes from a plant called hemp (cannabis sativa). The main, active ingredient in marijuana is the (short for 9-tetrahyro Cannabinol). This and other ingredients called Cannabinoids are found in leaves and flowering part for the marijuana plant. Hashish is substance taken from the tops of female marijuana plants. It contains the highest amount of the.

Alcohol: Although legal, alcohol is a toxic Substance, particularly to a developing fetus when a mother consumes this drug during pregnancy. One of their most common addictions, alcoholism can have devoting effects on the alcohol individual’s physical health, as well as his or her ability to function interpersonally and at work.

Amphetamines: This groups of drugs comes in many forms from prescription medications like methylphenidate (Ritalin, concerta) and dextroamphetamine and amphetamine (addrall) to illegally manufactured drugs like methamphetamine ("meth"). Over dose of any of these substances can result in seizure and death.

Anabolic steroids: A group of substances abused by body builders and other athletes, this group of drugs can lead to terrible psychological effect like aggression and paranoia, as well as devastating long-term physical effect like infertility and organ failure.

Caffeine: While it is consumed by many, coffee, tea and soda drinkers, when consumed in excess this substance can be habit forming and produce palpitations, insomnia, tremors and significant anxiety.

Cannabis: More commonly called marijuana, the scientific name for cannabis is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).in addition to the negative effects the drug itself can produce (for example, infertility, paranoia, lack of motivation) the fact that it is commonly mixed ("cut") with other substances so drug dealers can make more money selling the diluted substances or expose the user to more addictive drugs exposes the marijuana user to the danger associated with those added substances. Examples of ingredients that marijuana is commonly cut with include baby powder, oregano, embalming fluid, PCP, opiate and cocaine.

Cocaine: a drug that tends to stimulate the nervous system, cocaine can be snorted in powder form, smoked when in the form of rocks("crack" cocaine), or injected when made into a liquid.

Ectasy: Also called MDMA to denote its chemical composition (methylenedioxymethamphetamine), this drug tends to create a sense of euphoria and an expansive love or desire to nurture others. In overdose, it can increase body temperature to the point of being fatal.

Hallucinogens: Example include LSD and mescaline, as well as so called naturally occurring hallucinogens like certain mushrooms .these drugs can be dangerous in their ability to alter the perceptions of the users. For example, a person who is intoxicated with hallucinogen may perceive dangers where there is none and to think that situation that are truly dangerous are not. Those misperceptions can result to dangerous behavior (like jumping out of the window because the individual think they are riding on an elephant that can fly).

Inhalant: One of the most commonly abused group of substances due to its accessibility, inhalant are usually contained in household cleaners like ammonia, bleach other substances that emit fumes. Brain damage, even to the point of death, can result of death, can result

from using an inhalant just once or over the course of time, depending on the individual.

Nicotine: The addictive substance found in cigarettes, nicotine is actually one of the most addictive substances that exist. In fact, nicotine addiction is often compared to the intense addictiveness association with opiates like heroin.

Opiates, Opioids and Narcotics: This group is also called narcotics and includes drugs like heroine, codeine, vicodin, oxycontin, percocet and percodan. This group of substance sharply decreases the functioning of the nervous system. The lethality of opiates is often the result of eth abuser having to use increasingly higher amounts to achieve the same level of intoxication, ultimately to the point that the dose needed to get high is the same as the does that is the same as the dose that is lethal for that individual by halting the person's breathing (respiratory arrest).

Phencyclidine: Commonly referred to as PCP, this drug can cause the user to feel extremely paranoid, become quite aggressive and to have unusual amount of physical strength. This can make the individual quite dangerous to others.

Sedative, Hypnotic or Anti anxiety drugs: As these substances quell or depress the nervous system, they can cause death by respiratory arrest of the person who either uses these drugs in overdose or who mixes one or more of these drugs with another nervous system depressant drug (like alcohol another sedative drug or an opiate).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Agenda Setting Theory

Agenda setting theory was founded in 1972 by Mc combs and Shaw. The theory describes the very powerful influences of the media, which is the media's ability to tell us what issues are important and what persons are important in the society. These issues and individuals who the media choose to publicize become the issues and individuals we think and talk about. According to Mc combs and Shaw (1999), the media audience judge as important what the media judge as important. By implication, media help people to determine what is important in the public discourse. The theory and the study both emphasized on the influence of the media on audience, which is the media's ability to tell us what issues are important, such issue may be drug abuse and substance abuse that affect the society, most especially our young youths and students. The media therefore proffered solution to such issues by organizing programmes relating to drug abuse in order to reduce such illegal act as it set agenda through it advocacy campaign programme on issues related to the consequences of drug abuse. Moreover, media especially social media

through it agenda setting has powerful effect on the audience as it can easily influence their attitude or perception in respect of any social issue. Therefore, agenda setting theory is best in position to fit into this study base on the fact that, social media has been able to reshape the attitude of youth in Owo local government toward drug abuse especially bloggers and social media influencer projects more media contents both in comedy skit and campaign programme on the consequences of child abuse in the society.

3. Methods and Materials

The research design of this study was survey method. Survey method was adopted in order to ensure proper data gathering base on the fact that, the study was opinionated, however, the area of the study was Owo local government area of Ondo state. Moreover, the population of this study was341,400and this comprised of the total population of the selected Local Government area**.** A random sampling approach was considered appropriate for this study base on the large heterogeneous social media users in Owo metro in order to get gather relevant data. Hence, primary source of data collection was adopted in the study and questionnaires were used as the instruments of data collection. However, the questionnaires consist of problem that arises in the course of this study and a sampling size of 400 participant was selected from the total population of the study and this was consider appropriate because the total population is quite voluminous for the study, therefore, the study arrived at a reasonable 400 sampling size through Taro Yamane formula state below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size (341,400)

N = population (341,400)

e = level of significance (5%)

1 = Constant (1)

The researcher used 5% 'level of significance to determine the sample size.

$$n = \frac{341{,}400}{1 + 341{,}400(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{341{,}400}{1 + 341{,}400(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{341{,}400}{1 + 853.5}$$

$$n = \frac{341{,}400}{854.5}$$

n= 399.5

n= 400 (sample size)

Finally, out of the 400 participant that was questionnaires were attested to, 385 were duellyadministered by the respondents for data analysis. However, this was as a result of 12 negative responses to the questionnaire and 3 cases of no opinion.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis of Variable Sampled

Index: Personal Data Distribution

Table 1: How does social media advocacy sensitise the youth on the consequences of drug abuse and to what extent does social media senstiseOwo Local Government youths on the consequences of drug abuse?

Variable	No of respondents		Percentage
1 Are you expose to social media advocacy campaign on the consequences of drug abuse?	Yes	324	84%
	No	61	16%
	Total	**385**	**100%**
2 Do you consider social media as relevant media for the campaign against drug abuse in Nigeria?	Yes	321	83%
	No	64	17%
	Total	**385**	**100%**
3 How does social media advocacy sensitise the youth on the consequences of drug abuse?	Attitudinal change	21	5%
	Enlightening on how to end drug abuse	51	13%
	Sensitising the on consequences of drug abuse	56	15%
	All of the Above	257	67%
	Total	**385**	**100%**
4 To what extent does social media senstise youth in Owoon the consequences of drug abuse?	To a greater extent	97	25%
	To some extent	221	57%
	On rare occasion	67	17%
	Total	**385**	**100%**

	Total: **385**	

From the above table, item (1), 324 respondents representing 84% admit that, they are expose to social media advocacy campaign on the consequences of drug abuse while the remaining 61 respondents representing 16% have contrary opinion. Moreover, item (2) in the above table revealed that, 321respondents representing 83% consider social media as relevant media for the campaign against drug abuse in Nigeria while the remaining 64 respondents representing 17% have contrary opinion. In item (3), 21 respondents representing 5% admit that, social media basically sensitise the youth towards attitudinal change on drug abuse, 51 respondents representing 13% admit that social media basically enlightening the youth on how to end drug abuse, 56 respondents representing 15% admit that social media basically engaged in sensitising the youth on the consequences of drug abuse, while the remaining 257 respondents representing 67% admit that social media basically, sensitise the youth on the consequences of drug abuse across all the listed option in the study. Finally, in the same table 1, item (4), 221 respondents representing 57% admit that, social media senstise youth in Owoon the consequences of drug abuse to a greater extent, 97 respondents representing 25% admit that, social media senstise youth in Owoon the consequences of drug abuse to some extent, while the remaining 67 respondents representing 17% admit that, social media senstise youth in Owo on the consequences of drug abuse on a rear occasion.

Table 2: What are the consequences of drug abuse on the users and the level of drug abuse by youth in Owo local government area?

Variable	**No of respondents**	**Percentage**
1. Are there consequences attached to drug abuse?	Yes 385	100%
	No -	-
	Total 385	**100%**
2. What are the consequences of drug abuse on the users?	Mental Disorder 35	9%
	Death 57	15%
	Violent act 36	9% 67% **100%**

	All of the Above	257	
	Total	**385**	
3. Can drug abuse be curbed in Nigeria society?	Yes	207	54%
	No	178	46%
	Total	**385**	**100%**
4. What is the level of drug abuse among youth in Owo?	Very high	65	17%
	High	302	78%
	Very low	-	-
	Low	18	5%
	Total	**385**	**100%**

From the above table 2, item (1), 385 respondents representing 100% which is the total number of respondents admit that, there consequences attached to drug abuse. Moreover, item (2) in the table 2 above table revealed that, 35 respondents representing 9% admit that, mental disorder is the consequences of drug abuse, 57 respondents representing 15% admit that, death is the consequences of drug abuse on the users, 36 respondents representing 9% admit that, violent act is the consequences of drug abuse on the users, while the remaining 257respondents representing 67% admit that, all the listed option in the study which include; mental disorder, death and violent act are the consequences of drug abuse on the users. In item (3) of the same table, 207 respondents representing 54% admit that, drug abuse can be curb in Nigeria society, while the remaining 178 respondents representing 46% have contrary opinion. Finally, in item (4), 302 respondents representing 78% admit that, the level of drug abuse among youth in Owo is very high, 65 respondents representing 17% admit that, the level of drug abuse among youth in Owo is high, while the remaining 18 respondents representing 5% admit that, the level of drug abuse among youth in Owo is relatively very low.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

This paper examined Social Media as Advocate for Sensitising the Youth in Owo Local Government on the Consequences of Drug Abuse

Research question 1 how social media advocacy sensitise the youth on the consequences of drug abuse, it was however discovered in table item (1) where the highest number of 324 respondents representing 84% are exposed to social media advocacy campaign on

the consequences of drug abuse, and also revealed in item (3) in the same table 1 where the total highest number of 257 respondents representing 67% admit that, all the listed options which includes: attitudinal change, enlightening on how to end drug abuse, sensitisation on consequences of drug abuse are the manner in which social media sensitise the youth on the consequences of drug abuse. Hence, it can be deduced from the above attestation that, social media advocate campaign sensitise the youth on the consequences of drug abuse and also that, attitudinal change, enlightening on how to end drug abuse, sensitisation on consequences of drug abuse are the basic engagement of social media in sensitising the youth on the consequences of drug abuse on the users.

Moreover, **Research question 2,** investigate the extent to which social media senstise youth in Owo on the consequences of drug abuse. It was discovered in item (2) table 1 where the total highest number of 321 respondents representing 83% considers social media as relevant media for the campaign against drug abuse in Nigeria. Moreover, it was discovered in item (4) table 1 that, social media senstise youth on the consequences of drug abuse to some extent by the total highest number of 221 respondents representing 57%. From the above attestation, it can be deduced that, social media are relevant medium for the campaign against drug abuse in Nigeria and also that, social media senstise youth on the consequences of drug abuse to some extent.

The role of social media as a medium of advocacy campaign on the misuse of drug has generated several thought amidst scholars in the field of mass communication and communication studies, base on it immense role in ensuring prompt and adequate transmission of information to the target audience (Anderson J. 2018). However, in a country like Nigeria where media especially the mainstream media function in the society is consider has ineffective base on ownership influence or government policies, social media now become the major media through which the general public communicate salient issues in the society with the notion to generate reaction that will reshape public opinion about the issue especially issue related to drug abuse which has become an epidemic in Nigeria. It is worthy of note that, social media being a medium through which general public reflect the society has become effective in sensitising the general public especially the youth on the consequences of drug abuse (Coding 2019).

However, the projections of several skits by bloggers which reflect the consequences of drug abuse in the society sometimes influence

the users to dissuade from such act (Fadeyi, I.O. 2014). Most especially, the youtube NAFDAC campaign on drug abuse, targeted to ensure attitudinal change of drug users really help to reduce users attitude towards drug abuse, some of the NAFDAC campaign programme on drug abuse includes; "Smokers are liable to die young", "Youth safe your life", "Drug abuse killed faster than gun" and some other bloggers skit campaign which include; House of Ajebo, Apox, etc. all these social media campaign against drug abuse really sensitise the youth as it portrayed the consequences of drug abuse on the users (Fadeyi, I.O. 2014). Social media as a powerful medium that set agenda to reshape the thought, perception and believe of the public has prevalently sensitise the youth on drug abuse, and that was why in year 2021, some NGO organisation organized an online talk show on Youtube where the organisation project that majority of insanity case reported in the society is as a result of drug abuse, the recorded programme was projected for almost six months on Youtube and recorded over 17 million viewers with 11 million comments.

Research question 3 evaluates the consequences of drug abuse on the users. However, it was discovered in item (1) table 2 where the total number of 385 respondents representing 100% which is the total number of respondents attested to the fact that, there are consequences attached to drug abuse. Moreover, item (2) in the same table revealed that, all the listed option in the study which include; mental disorder, death and violent act are the consequences of drug abuse on the users. It can be deduced from the above attestation that, there are consequences attached to drug abuse and also that mental disorder, death and violent act are the consequences of drug abuse on the users as attested to by the highest number of respondents.

Drug abuse seems to have become a prominent social problem in Nigeria especially among our undergraduate. According to La"aro, A. (2012), drug abuse leads to serious health hazards for drug addicts. Drug abuse has adverse effects on the brain, kidney, liver, pancrease, heartand lung, thereby making them vulnerable to disease (La"aro, A. 2012). It also leads to other physical complications such as hepatitis, hepatic failure, and tuberculosis in relation to alcohol abuse, infection and emaciation (Iwayemi, A. 2001). Again, drug abuse may result to serious psychiatric implications; these include confusion, restlessness and sometimes serious abnormal behavior or outright madness. At least one out of the psychiatric cases is due to delirious effects of marijuana. Besides, statistics have shown that70 percent of patients undergoing treatment at psychiatric hospitals are undergraduates

between the ages of 16 and 25years. It may also lead to poor performance in school work and may ultimately result in school dropout (Siringi, 1999). According to Munyoki, 2008, drug abuse results to lack of morals and deteriorating learning standards. This has led to strikes in secondary school characterized by violence, destruction of school property and in some cases loss of lives. Cases noted in some schools include: Kiangoma mixed secondary school in Nyeri where drugged students set. A new comer on fire to test the function and authority of the newly posted principal (Central Province Educational Board Report, May 2001); St. Kizito mixed secondary school where male students invaded the girls' dormitory and raped 72 girls where 19 of them lost their lives and school property destroyed (Wangai Report, Nation July 17, 2000); and Kyanguli Secondary school where 68 students were burnt beyond recognition while others suffered injuries and property of unknown value destroyed (Report of the Task force on student unrest in secondary schools 2001).

Therefore, from the above cases among the many, it can be noticed that drug abuse has been blamed for many strikes and student unrest that take place' in schools in different parts of the country. Different types of drugs are readily available in school locations. Such drugs and substances include alcohol, bhang, and tobacco among others. Drag abuse association with interpersonal conflicts, students unrest and destruction of property, may be an indicator of a larger pattern of deviant behaviour.

Finally, **Research question 4** basically examined the level of drug abuse among youth in Owo local area. It was however discovered in item (4), table 2 where the total highest number of 302 respondents representing 78% attested that, the level of drug abuse among youth in Owo local area is high.

4.3 Summary of Findings

Social media has become of the relevant and reliable medium for advocacy campaign in Nigeria especially in sensitising the youth on the consequences of drug abuse. Though, social media have its own side effect but majorly, it impact in sensitising the general public on salient issues in the society especially in Nigeria has been remarkable. Therefore, this paper examined Social Media as Advocate for Sensitising the Youth in Owo Local Government on the Consequences of Drug Abuse. Moreover, it also identified the consequences of drug abuse on the users. The study make used of Agenda setting theory to justify the proposition of the study, and quantitative method of research was selected. Moreover, a

longitudinal survey design was considered appropriate for this study and the Owo was chosen as the area of the study. However, the population of the study was 341,400 and this consists of total population of the selected area, hence, a random sampling technique was considered relevant to this study base on the large heterogeneous social media users in the area. A sampling size of 400 was considered appropriate for the conduct of this study and this was derived from the total 341,400population of the selected area through Taro Yamane formula. Furthermore, primary source of data collection was used and questionnaire was the instruments of data collection. However, a well structured open ended questionnaire was administered to 400 participant from the selected area and out of the 400, administered 385, where 8 negative reaction was recorded and 7 non-responses was also recorded and the 385 administered was duly recovered. Moreover, a simple percentage data analysis was used to present and analysed the data.

However, the findings of the study revealed, social media advocacy campaign sensitise the youth on the consequences of drug abuse and also that, attitudinal change, enlightening on how to end drug abuse, sensitisation on consequences of drug abuse are the basic engagement of social media in sensitising the youth on the consequences of drug abuse on the users. The findings of the study also revealed that, social media senstise youth on the consequences of drug abuse to some extent and also that, mental disorder, death and violent act are the consequences of drug abuse on the users. Finally, the findings of the study revealed that, the level of drug abuse among youth in Owo local area is high.

5. Recommendations

In view of the above conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

- Media organisation especially should give much preference to issues relating to drug abuse as it will help to sensitise the general public.
- It also recommends that, government should consider media as a functional medium of sensitising the general public on issue relating to drug abuse health and consequences of drug abuse.
- Finally, the study recommends that, the general public should keep listening to educative programmes on radio in order to be aware of salient issues in the environment.

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