

Self Reliance Skills, Intrapreneurship and Youth Reorientation a Veritable Solution to Curb the Rising Menace of Hard Drug 'Crystal Meth' (Mkpurumiri) Consumption Prevalent Among the Youth

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Abstract

This paper focused on Self Reliance Skills, Intrapreneurship and Youth Reorientation a Veritable Solution to Curb the Rising Menace of Hard Drug 'Crystal Meth' (Mkpurumiri) Consumption Prevalent among the Youth. It assessed the menace of Mkpuru mmiri and how it could be tackled, especially in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. The work considered the causes of the drug intake before proffering solutions to the challenges. The paper concluded that to curb the menace of Mkpuru Mmiri, the government, society, parent and religious body have a role to play. One of the measures to be adopted is intrapreneurship and learning of self reliance skills.

Introduction

There is a popular saying that speed kills and that is the sad reality of life. This also seems to be the fear in most Southeast communities in recent times. Out of the blues, the youth have taken to drugs at a very alarming rate. Not just the addiction to drugs but to a very infamous one known as Mkpuru mmiri. Ironically, Mkpuru mmiri falls under the hard drugs called 'Speed' which is a street nomenclature for different stimulant drugs that teenagers, young people and others make use to be more wakeful and focused, and in many situations, to feel stimulated. It is also known as Methamphetamine or Crystal Meth, a highly dangerous addictive stimulant drug likened to cocaine which is now in high abuse amongst Nigerian youths. Obinna (2021). The abuse can be noticed in all parts of Nigeria presently.

However, in Southeastern communities, it has taken a disreputable dimension and is currently destroying the youths. This destructive substance has, as a matter of fact, become popular among Igbo youths that it is now given the appellation Mkpuru mmiri which literally translates to ice blocks. The negative aftermath of its consumption is that those high on the substance engage heavily in crime and other immoral acts detrimental to the society at large. The notoriety of the abuse of Mkpuru mmiri is such that it recently attracted the attention of the House Members of the Imo State House of Assembly who deliberated it on the floor of the House and concluded that the State Ministry of Health should run a vigorous media campaign against its intake. George (2021)

As novel as the idea to run a campaign on Mkpuru mmiri is, it is just a flash in the pan of the real deal. The best way to tackle a problem is to discover its root. This holds true for the menace of Mkpuru mmiri. The reasons why youth indulge in the intake of harmful drugs are numerous and taking up these issues squarely can drastically reduce the menace of this drugs.

This observations necessitated this paper that seeks to assess self reliance skills, intrapreneuership and youth reorientation as a veritable solution to curb the rising menace of hard drug ‘crystal meth’ (mkpurumiri) consumption prevalent among the youth.

Mkpuru Mmiri: Origin and the South East Experience

The origin of Mkpuru mmiri can be traced to Japan as far back as 1919, it was first reported that it was heavily abused during World War II when it was administered to war plane pilots on a suicidal mission called Kamikaze. However, after World War II, it was said to have been briefly administered as a medication for depressed patients and for obesity control. It was nevertheless, speedily abandoned and banned thereafter, especially from the 1970s. Presently, it is produced locally. It was reported that since the

1990s, the production of crystal meth has been taken over by Mexican drug cartels and they secretly came into Nigeria to setup illegal laboratories in 2016 . Ndukwe (2020). Mkpuru mmiri is a very addictive stimulant that makes the user hyperactive and inclined to destructive tendencies which is likely to include suicide or homicide at the slightest irritation and without a feeling of remorse.

In March 2019, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, discovered a residential building that turned into a drug factory at No 1 Zion Avenue, Phase 6, Trans-Ekulu, Enugu, where Methamphetamine (Mkpuru mmiri) was being produced in commercial quantities for export to overseas, particularly to South Africa. Three factory workers were arrested, but the main drug baron, whose name was given as Christian Chibuzor, was not arrested since he had fled the country. Ndidi (2019). Also, prior to the Trans-Ekulu incident, a similar factory was discovered in Ozalla, Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu State. The NDLEA, however, refers to the factories as laboratories where it arrested three persons working there. The agency admitted that their arrests were based on credible intelligence report which led to initial arrest of the first two suspects with 100 kilograms of Ephedrine used as one of the raw materials in the production of Methamphetamine, otherwise known as mkpuru mmiri.

Mkpuru mmiri is also taken as a form of recreation; it is often mixed with other drugs. Despite the needed short-term effects of some forms of speed, all forms of speed are dangerous and addictive.

Noting the increasing damage the drug is bringing upon the youth, the Imo House of Assembly recently called on Governor Hope Uzodimma to establish a state committee that will work with NDLEA to tackle the dangerous dimension it has already assumed in many Igbo communities. Imo House of Assembly further suggested that the Ministry of Health be mandated to educate the youths on the use of the illicit drug. Also, Enugu students have commenced a campaign against Mkpuru mmiri.

It is now a common sight to see drug addicts of Mkpuru mmiri on the streets of South-East communities, some of them incoherently walking the streets naked or half naked. One would see them, chiefly young men in their twenties, murmur to themselves while walking on the streets with haggard and unkempt looks, they are victims of Mkpuru mmiri. They entirely operate on a different level from normal human beings.

There are viral videos in circulation on daily basis from various communities in the South-East, of victims of Mkpuru mmiri, with their attendant abnormal behaviours. Some of them were reported to have killed their parents, siblings or burnt their houses under the influence of the drug. Under the influence of drug, they regard nobody, and they look down on whoever they come across. Nobody is anything to them.

By 2019, the drug was noted to be more expensive and widely used than cocaine and its Africa production was rated highly in the global drug market. No one envisaged that the drug was also abused in Nigeria which would later become the destroyer of the South-East youth. Abraham (2021)

Today, many Igbo communities are facing the dangerous effects of Mkpuru mmiri and the youth are heavily into it, and based on this, they have become a nuisance to their families and communities at large as some of them are rumoured to have killed or maimed their family members because the adverse effect of the drug on the brain.

Apart from insomnia and tendency to be violent, users show anti-social behaviours which include paranoia and delusion. The drug also affects the physical appearance of its users. It typically gives them an older look and makes their faces prone to acne. Excessive intake also leads to battered gum and teeth, popularly known as Meth mouth. The frightening issue is that meth addiction is one of the most difficult to rehabilitate. This is because no drug can cure it except by behavioural therapy, which presently, is not in place in Nigeria.

Causes of Drug Abuse: Mkpuru mmiri Narrative

There are definitely some influences and issues that lead to drug abuse among the youth. Parents, the society and the government need to understand these causes so as to let the youth know the dangerous legal, physical, and mental consequences of doing drugs.

Media

According to Theophillus (2016), 45% of young people admit to the fact that movies, music, and television shows make Mkpuru mmiri, marijuana and other hard drugs seem normal to them. It is therefore imperative for parent to be attentive to what media their wards consume.

Boredom

Prime candidates of hard drug abuse in Nigeria are the teenagers and young people who cannot bear loneliness. Hard drugs are often their coping mechanism to make up the internal emptiness. In other words, drugs intake make them to bond with like-minded people in a short time which kills their boredom.

Self-Medication or Escape

Adolescence is cunning and full of ups and downs. Youth often encounter disappointments and frustration for some or other reasons. When they do not get a proper and healthy means to release their stress, they usually take to hard drugs to find solace. Depending on the hard drugs they consume, they may experience unexplained happiness, pleasure, confidence, and vigour. Furthermore, the teenage and youthful age can be rough at times and can assume a major toll on their emotional state. In some situations, it could lead to depression. At such moments, when they are handed drugs to feel relaxed and better, many of them can barely refuse it.

Parental or Peer Influence

It is not strange for young people to see adults including their parents consuming alcohol or using other harmful substances like marijuana, vapes, cigarettes, etc.

Especially when their (parents) social circle often revolves around smokers of marijuana, and heavy alcoholic consumption.

Also, when young people see their friends or peer group enjoying pot, alcohol, or other hard drug substances, there is this increased urge it provokes in them. Such environments make them think that drugs and drinks are normal in society.

Unemployment/Unemployability

The rate of unemployment in Nigeria at the moment is alarming. It is no longer news that for every 10 young persons, only 2 are employed while 5 are unemployable. Richard (2018). This has made the youth to take to hard drugs like Mkpuru mmiri to reduce the thought of hopelessness. In doing this, they get stuck hence the addiction.

Other youth have taken to selling Mkpuru mmiri as a form of merchandise due to lack of jobs. The demand for the drug is on high demand and the seller is definitely going to make lots of money.

Self Reliance Skills, Intrapreneurship and Youth Reorientation a Veritable Solution to Curb the Rising Menace of Mkpuru Mmiri

One of the major causes of the rise in the consumption of Mkpuru Mmiri is unemployment/unemployability. This challenge seems to be the most serious of all, even though they are all important as a discourse. The current violence bedeviling the Southeast in recent times cannot be disconnected from the menace of Mkpuru mmiri.

The first step to tackling the pressing challenge of Mkpuru mmiri is to go back to the days of transferred skills and business acumen. In the past 40 years, the entrepreneurial spirit of the Igbos have been transferred from generations to generations not until recently the youth vehemently refuse to learn skills or trade. The reason for this is not far-fetched - the celebration of unexplainable wealth by the society. In recent times, the youth no longer believe in the dignity of labour. Most youth are ready to take any risk to make money and when the money is not forthcoming, they get depressed and take to hard drugs of which Mkpuru mmiri is inclusive.

It is high time the society starts reechoing the importance of learning self-reliance skills (starting from the home) to get the youth back on track. Apart from trade, skills like carpentry, hairdressing, baking, amongst others can be learned and practiced in a matter of 6 months to two years.

Furthermore, intrapreneurship is another route to take to curb the menace of Mkpuru mmiri. Intrapreneurship is a form of alliance between a firm and an employee whereby the skills of the employee are harness to benefits both the organization and the employee. Denis(2006). It is another way to curb unemployment. Youth who can think outside the boxes are encouraged to approach organizations that would enable them put their ideas to work by providing the needed resources and opportunity. Intrapreneurship has taken a lot of youth off the street in recent times and if adopted in a larger scale can solve Nigeria's unemployment challenges.

In addition, youth reorientation is paramount in the course of tackling the menace of Mkpuru mmiri. The society has to reassess its stance on moral justification. Starting from the family, which is the smallest unit of the society; parents need to groom their children in godly ways. Schools should revamp drug-free clubs in their campuses to speak against drug use. The media also have an important role to play. They should project the negative effects associated with hard drug use so that the youth can connect drug use to negativity and avoid it.

Religious bodies should also not relent in their role as most people attach so much respect to charismatic leadership. Hard drugs use should be preached against in any fora.

Recommendations

1. The media should stop projecting movies, music and other contents that promote the use of hard drugs.
2. Youth should not be allowed to be idle at any point in time. They should be engaged at all times. This can be done through the organization of sporting competitions and organization of state-sponsored training programmes.
3. The youth or teenagers should not be allowed to administer drugs on their own without supervision. In fact, certain drugs should not be sold on the counter to people of certain age grade.
4. Parents need to keep an eye on their wards. The negligence on the part of parents is alarming lately. It is not enough to have children but to also monitor their every move in order to guide them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the menace of Mkpuru mmiri has taken a toll on Nigeria, especially in the Igbo communities. It is high time the people rise up to stand against it. No community has ever developed with the presence of drug addicts in it. It is either they influence more youth or they make the community dangerous for people to live in. This paper has stated the ways to follow in order to tackle the consumption of Mkpuru mmiri to the barest minimum. It is believed the recommendations suggested will be looked into.

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