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**EVALUATING THE ROLES OF TRADITIONAL RULERS IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST DRUG ABUSE IN AKOKO NORTH WEST
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ONDO STATE.**

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Abstract

Globally, drug abuse has assumed alarming level which has necessitated government at all levels to declare it as a public health issue. Consequently, all hands are on deck to tackle the menace of drug and substance abuse. The situation is worsened with the transnational nature of drugs sales, distribution, and consumption. In Nigeria, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, a body that was set up to tackle the menace of drug abuse has sought collective actions through collaboration with other agencies of the state like National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control, banks, security agencies, media, educational institutions and traditional rulers. The collaboration with traditional rulers is predicated on the premise that crimes are local, therefore, it is necessary to engage a vital institution that is closer to the people. The study main objective is to assess the effectiveness of traditional rulers' roles in tackling drug abuse in Akoko Northwest of Ondo state. Relevant literature were reviewed while Social Deprivation Theory was adopted as theoretical framework. The study method of data collection was through interview while primary and secondary data were used and method of data analysis was qualitative. Findings from the study showed that there is prevalence of drug abuse in Akoko Northwest and the collaboration with traditional rulers by NDLEA has helped in educating residents of the local government on the adverse effects of drug abuse. Creation of employment and strengthening of traditional institution are some of the study recommendations.

Keywords: Drug abuse, Collaboration, Transnational Crime, Traditional Rulers

Introduction

Drug abuse has become a phenomenon that has attracted global attention because of its far reaching effects on the individual, family and the society at large, in addition to its impacts on the global economy as the activities of drug barons have increased money laundering and other illicit trade. According to the United Nations, over two hundred million people are addicted to one drug or the other. In Nigeria, over 20% of the population within age 15-64 live on one form of drug or another. Activities of terrorist groups in Northern Nigeria and the killings and destruction that have been taken place in South-east and wanton destruction of public facilities in South-south by militant groups have been exacerbated and influenced by drug consumption. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) estimated that about 14.3 million drug users are in Nigeria while over 3 million of this population are suffering from one form of disorder, which is a fall out of drug misuse or abuse. (Onazi et al, 2023, The Nation, 2025)

According to the United Nations (UN) drug abuse is the "excessive and inappropriate use of drugs, whether legal or illegal, that leads to physical, psychological or social harm". The consequences, according to the UN, include impairment of natural coping mechanisms and it

has the potential of causing physical harm, psychological issues and other social problems like loss of jobs leading to financial instability and can also affect family ties. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, the government agency that is responsible for the fight against use, sale, and illegal movement of drugs in Nigeria, defined drug abuse as “the excessive and inappropriate use of drugs, whether legal or illegal that leads to physical, psychological or social harm”. It further stated three ways through which drugs are abused: consumption of illicit or prohibited drugs, misuse of prescribed drugs and excessive use of drugs that can lead to mental and emotional impairment. (UNODC Report 2022, Ahmed M. & Dabit,J.2020)

In view of the grave damage drug abuse has caused Nigeria society and its attendant effects on the economy including the negative impacts it poses on Nigeria image in the comity of nations, governments at all levels have not left any stone unturned in their efforts to reduce the social and economic impacts of substance abuse. While federal government has established National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to tackle this menace at all levels, the agency has spread its tentacles to the grassroots through collaboration with sub-national governments, including other critical stakeholders like traditional rulers, women organisations, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Beyond Nigeria border, it has established collaboration with its counterparts in other countries as drug abuse is a transnational crime that involve billions of dollars as criminals also engage in the smuggling and illegal distribution.(Vanguard News,2023, Punch Newspaper,2021)

As a form of transnational crime, the UN defines it as organized crime network carry out by more than three persons and their operations are carried out for a period of time. The existence of criminal organization s has continuity over time and across countries, with the use of systematic violence and corruption to facilitate their criminal activities. These criminal organisations have varying capacities to inflict economic, physical, psychological, and societal harm. The greater their capacity to harm, the greater the danger they pose to society”(Agwu, F., 2009)

From the above definition, one can conclude that drug abuse and distribution is more than a local business. It is a business that is run with high technologies and global network, which has defied all efforts to eradicate it.

Addiction to drug has had unimaginable impacts on family values and the consequences are shared by families and the community at large. For instance, due to increase in the number of drug abuse induced criminal activities like rape, cultism and stealing, community associations have had to double their security surveillance and this has come with huge financial cost. Consequently, drug agency has also sought collaborations with the traditional rulers, who are custodians of traditional institutions, and it is believed that they could exert their influence to curb the sale, distribution and use of drugs within their domain, which include primary and secondary schools within their domain.(Ojei,A.& Onuoha,U.2024)

Government and its agencies court traditional rulers, as custodians of culture, to join in its efforts to stamp out drug abuse within their domain. It was in appreciation of the strategic roles traditional institutions can play that led to the deployment of the officials of NDLEA to local government areas and communities across the country. According to the chairman of the agency, the officials are to partner with traditional rulers and officials of local governments in the implementation of the agency drive at ensuring reduction in the drug supply chains.(The Nation Newspaper, 2025)

Similarly, fighting drug supply chains will require traditional rulers and officials of NDLEA beaming their search light on the activities of local chemist shops who are involved in the sale and distribution of drugs like tramadol, loud to consumers across ages and sex. Also, substance like cannabis is cultivated by local farmers. Traditional rulers know farmers that are into cultivation, sale and distribution of this illicit drugs. Collaboration with officials of NDLEA and other law enforcement agencies will boost collective efforts in fighting drug abuse scourge. Through traditional rulers, security operatives can carry out intelligence gatherings with regards to location of consumers' operational base, farms where illicit drugs are cultivated and consequently assist in unmasking barons.(Business Day, 2025)

Drug abuse or substance abuse is ill wind that blows no good to any society, both in developed or developing world. The devastating effects are manifested in the security sector as insecurity is heightened by the use of drugs. The economic cost is enormous as it has further made national economy more vulnerable. Families are being subjected to social and economic stress due to the exorbitant cost of rehabilitation of victims of substance abuse. Since all criminal activities are local, the roles of traditional institutions in stemming the tide of illicit drugs has become imperative.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian society is not strange to farming, sale ,distribution and consumption of drugs. In the past, people cultivate cannabis in their farmland for personal use. There was consciousness of the illegalities of their action on part of the cultivators , distributors, users and sellers, hence, their trade was conducted in secret. Additionally, traditional institutions' roles in providing moral compass, wrapped in cultural values for the community was strong. Modern society has changed the narrative with open demonstration of disregard for the law. Society has lost its ideological contents and values.

In Akoko northwest, drug abuse among residents have become public health issue and has further constituted serious security issues due to increase in violent induced activities like rape, cultism, robbery among others. These crimes take place within localities where they reside. Since these criminal elements live within the localities, their activities could be curbed by the traditional rulers and elders with the support of youth associations and families. And it is against this background that the chairman of the NDLEA has called for collaborations between the agency and traditional rulers, who are custodians of cultures and they possess reasonable level of traditional authority they can exert to curb antisocial behaviours within their domain.(PunchNewspaper,2021)

Therefore, this study is to evaluate effectiveness of collaboration between traditional institutions and NDLEA agencies in its stride to curb the cultivation, sale, distribution and consumption of illicit substances among residents of Akoko northwest of Ondo state.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the collaboration between NDLEA agents and traditional institutions in their bid to curb the substance abuse in Akoko northwest area of Ondo state. Other objectives are to:

- a. Investigate the factors that are responsible for the consumption of illicit drugs among Akoko northwest residents;
- b. Interrogate the impacts of drugs abuse on the social economic lives of residents of Akoko northwest; and

- c. Examine the effectiveness of the collaboration between the traditional institutions and the NDLEA officials.

The study will attempt to answer the following questions:

- a. What are the factors that are responsible for the consumption of illicit drugs among the residents of Akoko northwest area of Ondo state?;
- b. How has consumption of illicit drugs affected the socio-economic lives of residents of Akoko northwest? and
- c. How effective is the collaboration between traditional institutions and NDLEA officials in their bid to stamp out drug abuse in Akoko northwest area of Ondo state?

Literature Review

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, substance abuse is the consumption of unapproved drugs. These drugs have material contents that cause body to react to them. These drugs give temporary pleasurable and emotional contentment. On the other hand, drug addiction is the regular use of drugs, even when they are prescribed by medical personnel. Experts have not agreed on particular reason for drug addiction. Drug addiction has been attributed to biological and psychological causes. Genetic factor has been identified as the biological cause of drug addiction as some families are genetically prone to drug consumption. Psychological cause particularly among young people include, sexual urge, neglect family problems that may have culminated to chaos and separation. (Kanchan,P.2019,UNODC Report,2021)

Experts have also identified environmental cause of drug addiction. Such environmental factor include peer group influence, children participation in sporting activities where use of performance enhanced drugs are encouraged, use of drugs is prevalent among people of lower social cadre. In Nigeria, addiction to drugs has been adduced to spiritual attacks, as someone could be attacked in the dream with addiction. In Nigeria, the commonly use drug are: alcohol, heroin, cocaine, cannabis, tobacco products like cigarettes.(Kanchan,P.2019)

Drug addiction has several consequences on the addicts and the society at large. Consumers can be pushed into committing heinous crimes that may lead him to a term of imprisonment, thus a blossom careers could be destroyed due to drug abuse. Many countries have become targets of thorough screening and citizens subjected to embarrassing situation in another countries, either at the point of entry or in the host country due to their label as destinations for drugs. In the area of public health, government globally commit millions of dollars in combating drug abuse, through rehabilitation and advocacy.(Iguda, S.2022)

Drug addiction has assumed new dimension with the practice of what is known as backloading. This system involves the practice of self- injection and sharing of syringe by users. This has further complicated the effects of drugs on the society and increase health hazard. Sharing of syringe has the implications of transferring infectious diseases like HIV, hepatitis B and C and other environmental diseases.(UNODCCP,2000) The complication in drug administration by addicts is not about injection or swallowing, users prepare substances in many ways that include breathing.

One of the social problems that is receiving global attention today is the phenomenon of substance abuse. There has been unprecedented increase in domestic violence induced by substance abuse. The plethora of drug abuse have also led to increase in number of people that



have been diagnosed for mental related illness. (Adejimi, M.2021)

Substance abuse as public health concern, has attracted global attention. The World Health Organisation defines drug abuse as the harmful use of psychoactive substances like alcohol and other forms of illicit drugs. People take to drug to fight emotional stress occasioned by socioeconomic and societal pressures.(Afees,J. etal,2022)

Despite various efforts of Nigeria government in combating substance abuse, there has been astronomical rise in the number of people addicted to drug consumption. The World Health Organisation posited that 35 million Nigerians spend an average of \$30,000 on the consumption of illicit drugs annually. In view of the impacts of drug abuse on public health, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), two government agencies established to promote healthy living among Nigerians have embarked on advocacy across the length and breadth of Nigeria, including motor parks, educational institutions, both private and public and other tertiary institutions. (Afees,J. etal,2022)

Substance abuse is a problem that has consumed many youths and adults across Nigeria. As public issue, it has become financial burden to many families due to the astronomical cost of rehabilitation. The present state of drug abuse has put the Nigeria into social imbalance as many Nigerians have lost consciousness and this has caused death and untold hardship.

The devastating effects of drug abuse has led to the United Nations establishment of the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The body was set up in 1977 with office in 150 countries. The mandate of the office is to assist member states in combating transnational crime, including corruption, human trafficking and people smuggling, drug use prevention and treatment, drug trafficking and terrorism. Other mandate of UNODC include research and analysis, address drug trafficking and any other act of terrorism.(UNODC, Report,2024)

However, drug abuse among young people was not a recent development in Nigeria; it has always existed. For instance, increase in the consumption of illicit drug witnessed sharp rise in the sixties and seventies during and after the civil war. This trend continued and today it has assumed astronomical rise. According to world drug report, over 210 million people between age15-64 are into illicit use of drugs yearly. Millions of people lost their lives from substance abuse. The global worth of drug, according to Global Financial Index stands at \$652 billion. It is one of the most lucrative business in the world. Because of the money spinning nature of the trade, it draws dare devil barons who are ready to eliminate any obstacle to this illicit trade.(UNODC Report,2024)

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency has expressed concerns over the addiction of youths between ages15-29 to substance abuse. According to UNODC survey in Nigeria, it is estimated that 14.3 million Nigerians use drugs yearly. Drugs mostly use by the people include cannabis, codeine, cocaine and other form of psychoactive drugs. One of the side effects of drug abuse among its users is behavioural changes and loneliness.(Punchnewspaper, 2024)

Addiction to drug, according to Ogunsola (2016) drug abuse could lead to criminal behaviors, loss of jobs, incarceration, homelessness and financial instability. Drug addicts cannot plan their finances as more resources are required to support their urge.



Drug trafficking has been classified as illegal trade as it deprives countries of revenues and it runs contrary to international law. Traffickers are heavily armed non state actors whose actions have led to the use of military by America to intervene in neighbouring countries of Latin America where traffickers have constituted themselves into security threat not only US but to neighbouring states. US action is no doubt a violation of state sovereignty. To ease trafficking of drugs and other illegal trades, state officials are corrupted and this has further posed threat to national economy. (Goldstein,j &Pevehouse,2011)

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, a body established in 1989 has engaged in collaborative efforts with United Nations Office on Drug (UNODC), the Nigeria Police, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) the Nigeria Immigration Services and Nigeria Custom Service. This collaboration was informed by the nature of the operations of drug barons, which is local and transnational. Collaboration has been extended to financial sector and towards this end the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has strategic operational collaboration with NDLEA in tracing funds acquired through drug sales, trafficking and distribution. Since civil servants and other public officers could be compromised through corrupt practices, NDLEA is also working with the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to curb corruption in drug related issues. Furthermore, Nigeria banks have also put measures in place through their Compliance Department, to combat drug trafficking, abuse and all forms of money laundering. (Punchnewspaper, 2025) Presently, Nigeria faces stiff challenges as the number of citizens that are indulged in drugs and substance abuse has been on the increase. Some experts attributed the rise to the state of the economy, others traced it to globalization and increase in criminal activities. Another reason given for the prevalence of drug abuse is the natural tendencies among adolescents, who are fun of engaging in sheer adventurism, not minding the consequences of their behaviours.

To combat the menace of drug abuse, World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations office on Drugs and Crimes are collaborating to develop comprehensive programmes on how to reduce demand for illicit substances and other forms of crimes. Some of the policies the two bodies have put in place include offering technical support for less developing countries, encourage countries not to discriminate against drug addicts, investment in the treatment and care for drug related treatment. Similarly, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency in Nigeria is working with the United Nation office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) are equally collaborating in strengthening international cooperation, provision of counseling facilities for victims of drug addiction, reaching out to secondary and primary schools to educate students on the dangers that are associated with drug addiction. (UNODC,2020)

In terms of institutional supports, the NDLEA has realized the need for institutional supports that include traditional rulers, the media, political parties, Independent National Electoral Commission hence it has embarked on countrywide publicity campaign against drug abuse through various media houses in Nigeria. (Nnaeto,2024). The body has carried out comprehensive campaign in rural areas, thus shifting the campaign from urban centres as drug abuse has become countrywide challenge (Apiti,A.A, etal,2021)

In addition to mass campaign, which include creation of public awareness on the prevention and healthcare, experts have equally suggested that economic empowerment is necessary as many people took to drugs due to idleness. Since and idle hands is a workshop for the devil, many youths take to drugs due to unemployment. Many of them were lure into terrorism, banditry and other associated crimes due to lack of means of income or livelihood.(Tolulope,A.

& Adebawale,I.2025) Emphasis should not be on traditional media, rather, social media could play significant roles in influencing youths behaviour. Through social media, empowerment and warning messages that are meant to provide interventions are conveyed to the grassroots. This is another means of reinforcing community engagement in combating drug abuse.(Bajeh,M.& Kur,J.2024)

One of the critical stakeholders in combating drug abuse is the traditional rulers. As custodian of traditions and cultures, they are in strategic position, as possessor of traditional authorities in their domain to strengthen government efforts in combating the use of illicit drugs. In many communities in Nigeria, the power of traditional rulers was not defined or affected by the principle of separation of powers as they possess executive, legislative and judiciary powers within their domain. This puts them in position to exercise enormous powers over their subjects.(Ojei,C.& Ugonne,O.)

Despite the limitation posed to political institutions by modern political system, state institutions have continued to engage them in reaching out to the people at the grass root level. One of such areas is in curbing drug abuse. Government efforts at tackling substance abuse is strengthened with the collaboration with traditional rulers who are closer to the people at the grass roots where majority of the criminal activities usually take place. Engagement with the traditional rulers will make a difference since criminals family houses are known and so they can easily be apprehended and make them to bear full consequences of their actions. This measure constitutes the fear of crime.

Realizing the enormous influence of traditional institutions, the African Union has integrated them as strategic partner in its efforts at combating drug abuse. The intervention was informed by the available statistics to AU, which showed that rural areas are worst hit by the use and trafficking of drugs. The situation is worsened by internet connectivity which has turned the world to a global village. Another reason why rural areas have attracted AU attention is the high rate of unemployment and the impacts of climate change, which has affected many communities means of livelihood.(African Union Press Release, 2022)

Akoko Northwest local government is one of the eighteen (18) local governments in Ondo state. It is located in Ondo state North Senatorial District. It shares borders with Edo, Kogi and Ekiti states. The NDLEA has operations office in Okeagbe, the headquarters of Akoko Northwest local government area. Through its office in the local Government area, its officials relate with traditional rulers, religious leaders and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in its campaign against and stemming up the fight against drug abuse in the communities within the local government. This collaboration became necessary due to rising criminal activities like kidnappings, robbery and cultism, which has been aggravated by the consumption of illicit drugs by people, particularly the youths within the local government. Furthermore, the NDLEA has discovered the unholy alliance between traditional rulers and drug barons within the local government.(The Nation Newspaper, 2025)

Theoretical Framework

This study will adopt the Social Deprivation Theory as theory around which the work is built. The theory was propounded by German sociologist, Emile Durheim. The theory was predicated on the assumption that denial of access to resources and social exclusion account for the rise in the use of stimulant in order to “feel high” so as to enjoy temporary relief from his depression.(AkintoyeO.& Akinola, B.2017)

Akoko Northwest local area is an agrarian community. Farmers in the various communities that make up the local government engage in necessary labour, that is only sufficient enough to feed their immediate families. Many of the youths in these communities are not gainfully employed and this has made them to resort into consumption of illicit drugs which has aided criminal activities within the local government.

Research Methodology

The data for this study was collected using both secondary and primary data. Secondary data were the review of books, newspaper and magazines while primary data were collected through interview of traditional rulers in some selected communities within Akoko Northwest local government, some officials of NDLEA and youths were interviewed. And the method of data analysis was qualitative.

Discussion of Findings

The study adopt interview as method of data collection, which involved interactions with traditional rulers and the officials of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in the local government. Since the whole local government could not be covered, the study employed sample technique, which involve interview of selected traditional rulers, youth leaders and officials of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in the local government in accordance with the research objectives and questions.

i What are the factors that are responsible for the consumption of illicit drugs among the residents of Akokonorthwest of Ondo state?

Going by the responses obtained from various stakeholders in Akoko-Northwest, drug users were categorized into three. The first category is the youths, many of them take to use of illicit drugs due to unemployment and peer influence. According to one of the traditional rulers, the second category, who are mostly members of National Union of Roads Transport Workers (NURTW) consume various types of drugs like cannabis, tramadol, unrefined local hot drinks among others, in order to kill boredom as their works demand that they should “feel high” at all times. The third category is the criminals like kidnappers, rapists and armed robbers. For this category of people, drugs serve as an enabler in the drive to commit crimes.

However, officials of NDLEA have identified the huge financial gains as motivating factors for the plethora of drug abuse as the sellers have spread into every part of Akoko-Northwest. According to the officials, there is hardly any village that you will go to in this local government that you will not see a baron, who has planted himself as untouchable. They have tremendously influenced on all categories of people that are into the illicit consumption of drugs.

Some of the traditional rulers attributed the high consumption of illicit drugs in Akoko-Northwest to political activities in the local government. Most of the people that are seeing around with all manners of drugs are thugs to some influential politicians, these traditional rulers lamented.

ii How has consumption of illicit drugs affected socio-economic lives of residents of Akoko-Northwest local government?

Akoko-Northwest is an agrarian society with majority of residents engage in farming activities and some are into small and medium enterprises (SMEs) the local government share border with Edo, Ekiti, Osun and Kogi states. This has made elimination of cross border crimes difficult. Traditional rulers lamented about the negative impacts of drugs abuse on internal security of the local government. Drug abuse is a public health concern, consequently, parents, traditional rulers, authorities at all levels of educational institutions and NDLEA officials are

collaborating to address security implications of drug abuse. The abuse has manifested itself in insecurity across the local government. It has exacerbated cases of robbery, conflict among community using drug drenched youths as arrow heads. Farmers have abandoned their farms due to perennial attacks by kidnappers and other marauders. This is due to increase in ungoverned areas, which has further compromised national security.

Traditional rulers lamented how drug abused has led to increase in the numbers of assault on women, broken homes and youths sleeping in uncompleted buildings in many communities within Akoko-Northwest local government. Even children in primary and secondary schools are not spared from the negative influence of drug abuse as many of them do not go to school again. They have become easy prey in the hands of elderly people, who use them to carry out their nefarious activities after they have taken drugs.

iii Examine the effectiveness of the collaboration between the traditional rulers and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA)

There have been regular interactions and collaborations between traditional rulers in Akoko-Northwest and operatives of NDLEA. According to the officials of NDLEA, traditional rulers within the local government have invited officials of NDLEA for sensitization of residents within their domain on the danger inherent in drug abuse. They have also collaborated in locating farms used for cultivation of illicit drugs like cannabis satiba. They have visited many schools within the local government to sensitize pupils and students. Also, there have been engagement between parents, teachers, traditional rulers, religious leaders and officials of NDLEA.

In spite of the efforts of some traditional rulers to discourage and eliminate the growing influence of drug consumption in Akoko-Northwest, some traditional rulers are found to connive with drug dealers, by selling their land for cultivation, thus shielding them away from facing the wrath of the law.(Vanguard, 2025) However, officials of NDLEA commended traditional rulers for their collaborating with them in fighting planting, circulation, distribution, selling and consumption of illicit drugs in their domain. Officials of NDLEA appreciate some traditional rulers for joining them in their various campaigns and sensitization programmes at motor parks and community meetings.

Discussion of the Findings

Drug abuse has become serious national public health issue in Nigeria. The global dimension it has taken in terms of its enormous contributions to transnational crimes has necessitated the need for collaboration among countries across the world. Non-governmental organisations like the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) have stepped up their fight against sales, distribution and consumption of drugs as drug abuse has exacerbated criminalities. They are working with the NDLEA to ensure that the phenomenon of drug abuse is reduced. For instance, 26th of June is set aside by UNO to raise the campaign against drug abuse and trafficking NGOs in Nigeria join NDLEA to visit schools and communities to enlighten them against drug abuse. They also seize the opportunity of the day to engage teenagers in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking.(Vanguard News,2025)

Findings from this study showed that drug abuse is prevalent among youths and middle age people in Akoko-Northwest and the addiction to drugs was traced to idleness, peer group influence, social media influencers among others. (Interview with NDLEA operatives, 2025) The collaboration between the traditional rulers and officials of NDLEA was a profound one as it enabled NDLEA campaigns to get to the grass root as most of the people interviewed



acknowledged the effects of the collaboration in the reduction of drug abuse within the local government. While traditional rulers and other stakeholders are working with NDLEA officials to reduce drug abuse within the local government. However some communities within border towns are still experiencing security challenges like kidnapping, drug abuse among others.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the roles of traditional rulers in the war against drug abuse. No doubt, traditional rulers have central roles to play in the efforts to eliminate illicit drugs. The central roles of traditional rulers in eliminating drug abuse is very important as traditional are agents of change in the mobilization of people against drug abuse at grass root.

Also, Non governmental organisations are involved in the campaigns against drug abuse. Drug abuse is a global health issue, hence bilateral and multilateral levels of collaborations have been established to deal with drug abuse as transnational crimes. (UNODC Report, 2025)

Recommendations

From the totality of the study, the following recommendations are made.

- i Roles of traditional rulers should be strengthened. This could be done through constitutional amendment as traditional rulers under the present dispensation can not exercise any control on security in their domain
- ii Local hunters and traditionalists are parts of traditional institutions, there is the need to coopt these institutions in the war against drug abuse as they could be used to comb forest where cannabis are planted and subsequently destroy them (Ojo, P.2023)
- iii Drug users are influenced by what they read and view on the internet, no thanks to the globalized world. NDLEA, working with entertainment industry can change youth orientation by promoting local contents of Nigerian music industry should be strengthened so as to make them be at the vanguard as agents of change.
- iv Since most youths in Akoko-Northwest take to drug abuse due to unemployment, private individuals could collaborate with government in setting up industries where youths could be gainfully employed. In this regard, government efforts should include infrastructural development and improved collaboration with local government in development necessary framework for improved security architecture of Akoko-Northwest and Nigeria as a whole.



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