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PERCEIVED FACTORS OF UNDERGRADUATES' ABUSE OF DRUGS IN KWARA STATE: IMPLICATIONS FOR CIVIC LEARNING IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of university undergraduates on the factors associated with drug abuse in Kwara State, Nigeria. It also investigated the effect of gender, religion, and ethnicity on undergraduates perceived factors for drug abuse. The study adopted a survey design and the sample size for the study comprised 200 undergraduates selected from two faculties of the University of Ilorin . A researcher-designed questionnaire was used to collect data for this study while frequency and percentage, mean and standard deviation, and Multivariate analysis of variance (Manova) were used to analyze the collected data. The results revealed that: undergraduates involvement in drug abuse is perceived to be traceable to three set of factors namely, negative affect (M= 3.09, SD= 0.63), compulsive use (M= 2.98, SD= 0.72), and miscellaneous reasons(M= 2.84, SD= 0. 71). Gender and ethnicity have no significant influence on their perceived involvement in drug abuse and a significant influence of religion on their perceived drug-abuse-related factors was found ($F_{(10, 334)} = 2.384$, p =.009; Wilks' Lamda =.871). Based on the findings, it was recommended that teaching of Civic education should be emphasized at tertiary levels in order, to cater for the developmental needs of the youths at a higher level

Keywords: Perception, Factors, Hard drugs, and Civic Learning

Word Counts: 199

Introduction

One of the related challenges bedeviling the youth nowadays is their indulgence in hard drugs consumption. These challenges seem to be global in dimension and if adequate measures are not taken to nip the menace in the bud, it may jeopardize the future of the youths regarded as the future of any nation. Farlex (2016) defines hard drug as strong narcotic substances that could cause addiction to its users. Also Cambridge University (2016) describes hard drug as a very strong and illegal drug. Smoking of cigarettes and drinking of liquor were initially considered as the exclusive rights of matured adults, which society frowns at if engaged in by young ones. Okoye (2001) opined that chemical involved in drug is intoxicated substance that results in changes of biological function. This implies that certain deformation, mental retardation, and all sorts of physical disabilities that may be noticeable on youths nowadays, sometimes, are not due to accident alone but could be traceable to the effect of hard drugs.

The third Sustainable Development Goal stipulates adequacy of health care and better living for all and sundry. This implies the enhancement of quality life for people through education and campaign against drug addiction. The realization of 2030 target of sustainable growth and development in a developing country, like Nigeria, would be a mirage if her teaming youth population persist in drug abuse. Nigerian government's intervention in the control of hard drugs, such as cocaine, Indian-hemp, heroin, marijuana and host of others seemingly does not yield the desired results, because in all nooks and crannies of our society today, a considerable percentage of our youths can still be found depending on hard drug intake for survival. The Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA, 2013) viewed consumption of hard drug by students in schools and tertiary institutions in Nigeria as potent danger to the future of a developing country. It is quite disheartening that despite the frantic efforts of the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and NDLEA to curtail this ugly incidence among the Nigerian youths, the menace of consumption of hard drugs in Nigeria is still prevalent among the youths.

The fundamental question here is why the promising youth population takes to hard drug. However, it must be emphasized that the challenges of youth indulgence in hard drug consumption is not peculiar to developing nations like Nigeria alone. Sharon (2011) opined that the prevalence use of drugs in America nowadays calls for investigation into reasons behind the interests of the drug users. This author identified nine possible reasons given for taking drug: use of drug to ease suffering; copying of close relations or role models that take drug; reenergizing body from boredom; relieving stress; believing in doctor's prescription; depending on drug for pre-existing injuries; covering painful memory of the past and believing in body fitness through drug.

In addition, Omage (2005) opined that regular academic pressure around students often force them to seek ways of subduing the pressure by taking drugs. Future of Palm Beach (2016) attributed factors contributing to taking of hard drug to genetics, environment, trauma, and mental illness, personality. Drug-free world (2016) also explored categorically reasons for youth indulgence in hard drug. The received responses include, to fit in, escape or relax, relieve boredom, seem grown up, rebel and experiment. The latter submission would be the premise upon which the perception would be examined in this study, because of the concise nature of the reasons. According to Oluremi (2012), consumption of drug has been tied to four theories in order to gain in-depth explanation on the factors of drug abuse in the society. The first of these theories is social-cultural. The notion of this theory hinges on the premise that some cultures sometimes allow the taking of alcohol and cannabis while others disapprove of it. Secondly, the theory of personality explains that low self-concept and esteem may have adverse effect on individual to abstain from drug he or she has high emotional dependence on others to do and undo. Thirdly, biological theory maintains that genetic or biological consideration of what an individual inherits from parents also determines his or her interest in taking drugs. And the fourth theory of learning believes that the interest of an individual in drugs is borne out of learning experiences directly or indirectly.

However, theoretically or ideologically, the bottom line of people's interest in taking drugs is anchored in seeking solutions which if not guided or controlled properly result in havoc and further problems for them. It is not an understatement that drug itself is a sort of poison and the amount taken would determine effect on the body system; small amount stimulates, greater amount sedates and large amount becomes poison and kills. Therefore, Drug-free world (2016) opines that the consequences of taking a large amount of drug or abusing the drug would even be worse beyond the problem one intends to resolve. In view of this, hard drug affects the mind and destroys the creativity. The action of a person taking drug becomes odd, irrational, inappropriate, and destructive. Leadership News Paper (2015) reported some medical doctors view on factors aiding drug abuse in which some doctors opine that no single factor can predict whether a person can become addicted to drug but all agreed that recovering from the addiction could be more difficult and more tasking. Martins Library (2014) also opines that the effects of drug abuse are physical, psychological, social and economical in nature.

Statement of the problem

Statistics have shown that youths worldwide engage in the use of hard drugs. In America between 2002 to 2012, the rate of teenagers' involvement in drug abuse rose from 13% to 13.2%. In 2007 alone, 5.8 % of American youths consumed marijuana. It is noted that the most abused drugs by youths in America is Indian-hemp, popularly called, 'marijuana', because out of 34.1% peak of drug recorded in 1997 the reduction rate in 2014 was 27.2% without cases of marijuana.(http://drugabuse.com/library/drug-abuse-statistics). In Nigeria, it is disheartening to note on the pages of national dailies that teenagers consumption of hard drugs has drastically gone up especially in their consumption of Indian-hemp called " Igbo "in Yoruba and "Gainye" in Hausa languages, respectively. Daily Trust (2016) reported youths aged 15 to 30 years as fond of taking cannabis in large quantity. This pathetic situation is not gender biased as it involves both males and females. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2007), states that the prevalence of

drug consumption in Nigeria indicates 94.2% and 5.8% for by the males and females, respectively.

Leadership News Paper (2015) randomly sampled opinion on consumption of hard drug. The investigation shows that in Lagos State youths indiscriminately indulged in smoking, drinking alcohol and taking of stimulants. In Niger State, in 2013, one hundred and forty three suspects, mainly youths, were apprehended for drug offences, ranging from taking of cannabis to psychotropic substance. In Katsina, one hundred and sixty-four drug suspects, and youths were arrested by the state command of NDLEA. In Taraba State, youths' interest in hard drug was borne out of keeping fit, escaping from stress, boredom, and relaxing. In Ebonyi State between 2008 and 2010, hard drug (Cannabis) worth 619kg were seized and 61-drug addict were apprehended for rehabilitation programmes. According to Akannam (2008), statistics of record in prevalence of drug consumption across the geo-political zones of Nigeria shows that the Northwest has 37.47%, Southwest has 17.32%, Southeast has 13.5%, North-central has 11.7% and Northeast has 8.54%. North-central in which Kwara State belongs is in fourth position and this shows the extent to which the youths are involved in hard drug. In view of the damage drug abuse causes the youth and the society, this paper therefore tries to investigate the factors that induce youth's involvement in drug use with a view to using civic learning to prevent it.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to find out the perceived factors of youths' prevailing consumption of hard-drug in Kwara State and to see how Civic Learning in Nigerian Universities would be an advantage to control the scourge among the youths. Specifically, the study intends to examine and determine respectively:

1. The perception of university undergraduates of reasons for youth consumption of hard drugs
2. The influence of variables like gender, religion, and ethnicity on undergraduates' perceived reasons for drug consumption among youths

Research Question: (1) What are the reasons for youths' consumption of hard drugs as perceived by university undergraduate students?

Hypotheses

H_{01} There is no significant influence of gender on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

H_{02} There is no significant influence of religion on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

H_{03} There is no significant influence of ethnicity on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

Method

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey is found suitable for this present study since the intention is not to manipulate any variable of interest. Population for this study comprised all undergraduates in University of Ilorin. The sample for this study comprised 200 university undergraduates who are currently in part 3 and 4. We expect undergraduates at these levels to have had a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation as a result of their experiences. Two faculties were randomly selected out of fourteen faculties in the university. Also, 100 undergraduates were selected randomly in each of the selected faculty. These selected faculties were Faculty of Education and that of Arts. However, out of the 200 questionnaires administered, 176 of them were found usable for the analysis.

A researcher-designed questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. This questionnaire contained two sections. Section A addressed the socio-demographic information of the undergraduates while section B of the questionnaire contained 16 items on reasons given by drug addicts generated from extensive literature review on the phenomenon. These items took on Likert response type

ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree in which the respondents are expected to indicate their level of agreement or otherwise to the reasons. In order to determine the reliability of this instrument, the instrument was pilot tested before its use. Using internal consistency approach, the instrument yielded a Cronbach Alpha of 0.87 when administered on 40 undergraduates selected from other faculties different from the used faculties in the university. This value was considered high enough to the instrument to fit the purpose of the present use. Data collected through questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency and percentage, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while Multivariate Analysis of Variance (Manova) was used in testing the stated three research hypotheses.

Results

Research Question: What are the reasons for youth consumption of hard drugs as perceived by university undergraduate students?

In order to answer this research question, responses of the undergraduates to individual reasons were subjected to a descriptive analysis; the result is presented in Table 2. In addition, items were then grouped along the five major reasons such as social/ recreational (1, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 16); coping with negative affect (2, 7, 9, and 14); compulsive use (10 and 13); drug effect (11 and 12); and miscellaneous purposes (4 and 15). This grouping is partially in line with the model of Terry-McEltrath, O'Malley and Johnson (2009) on reasons for drug use. Scores on these constituting items were then computed and divided by their respective number of items to have the scores transformed. The result is then presented in Table 3.

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Undergraduates Responses to Reasons for Youth Consumption of Hard Drugs

	Youth take drugs...	SA		A		D		SD	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	to experiment or satisfy their curiosity	70	39.8	80	45.5	21	11.9	5	2.8
2	to relax or relieve tension	65	36.9	82	46.6	18	10.2	11	6.3
3	to feel good or get high	95	54.0	58	33.0	21	11.9	2	1.1
4	to seek deeper insight and understanding	47	26.7	55	31.3	52	29.5	22	12.5
5	to have a good time with their friends	51	29.0	62	35.2	44	25.0	19	10.8
6	to fit in with their group norms	65	36.9	59	33.5	38	21.6	14	8.0
7	to get away from their current problems or troubles	61	34.7	68	38.6	33	18.8	14	8.0
8	to relieve boredom	54	30.7	81	46.0	27	15.3	14	8.0
9	to deal with anger and frustration	66	37.5	70	39.8	29	16.5	11	6.3
10	to get through the day	33	18.8	69	39.2	63	35.8	11	6.3
11	to increase the effects of some other drug(s)	34	19.3	41	23.3	67	38.1	34	19.3
12	to decrease the effects of some other drug(s)	27	15.3	43	24.4	76	43.2	30	17.0
13	because they are hooked (they are addicted to drugs)	96	54.5	41	23.3	26	14.8	13	7.4
14	to boost their low self esteem	70	39.8	69	39.2	26	14.8	11	6.3
15	due to misinformation	62	35.2	56	31.8	46	26.1	12	6.8
16	to satisfy instant gratification	55	31.3	78	44.3	31	17.6	12	6.8

Table 2 shows the reasons for youth consumption of hard drugs as perceived by university undergraduate students. As shown in the table, when combining those who strongly agree with those who agree together, reasons such as to feel good or get high, to experiment or satisfy their curiosity, to relax or relieve tension, to boost their low self esteem, and because they are hooked (they are addicted to drugs) were rated very high among the undergraduates with 87.0%, 85.3%, 83.5%, 79.0% and 77.8%, respectively. However, reasons, such as to decrease the effects of some other drug(s), and to increase the effects of some other drug(s), received low rating with 39.7% and 42.6% of the undergraduates as favourably disposed to these reasons.

Table 3: Undergraduates Perceived Reasons for Youth Consumption of Hard Drugs

Reasons for Hard Drugs Use	N	Mean	SD
Social/Recreational (SR)	176	2.57	0.51
Coping with negative affect (CNA)	176	3.09	0.63
Compulsive Use (CU)	176	2.98	0.72
Drug effect (DE)	176	2.40	0.91
Miscellaneous (M)	176	2.84	0.71

Fig.1: Chart Depicting Undergraduates Perceived Reasons for Youth Consumption of Drugs

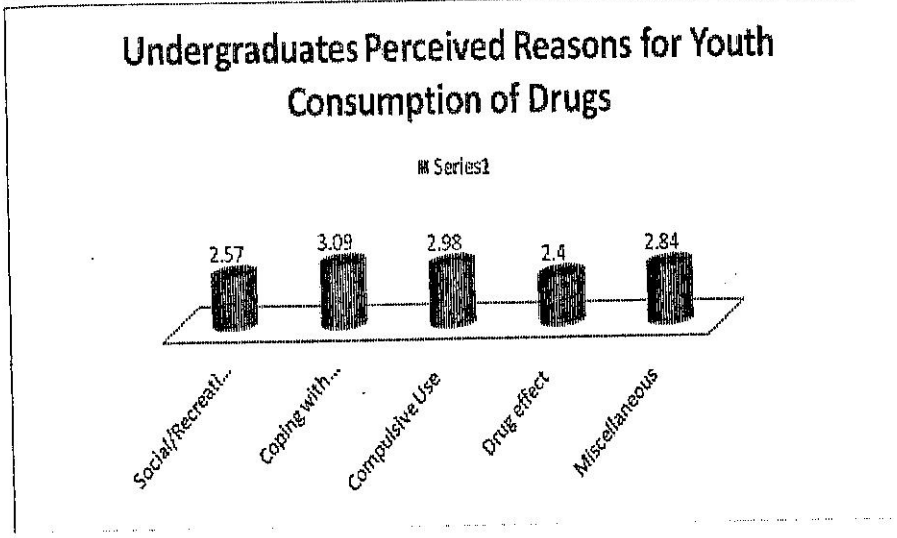


Table 3 and Figure 1 respectively show undergraduates perceived reasons for youth's consumption of hard drugs in the society. As it is shown in the Table 2 and Figure 1, coping with negative affect or mood had the highest mean value of 3.09 with respective standard deviation value of 0.63. Next to this is compulsive use with respective mean and standard deviation value of 2.98 and 0.72. Miscellaneous reasons, such as seeking deeper insight and understanding and due to misinformation, is perceived as the third reason for hard drugs consumption, followed by social and recreational purposes with mean and standard deviation value of 2.57 and 0.51. What seems

to be least perceived reason as perceived by undergraduates is drug effect. There is an indication from these results that what undergraduates perceived as the major reasons for youth consumption of hard drugs were coping with negative effect, compulsive use and miscellaneous reasons.

Hypotheses

H_{01} There is no significant influence of gender on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

Table 4 shows the result of Multivariate Analysis of Variance conducted to investigate the influence of gender on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

Table 4: Multivariate Analysis of the Influence of Gender on Undergraduates' Perception of Reasons for Hard Drugs Consumption among the Youths in Kwara State

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.970	1102.420[b]	5.000	168.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.030	1102.420[b]	5.000	168.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	32.810	1102.420[b]	5.000	168.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	32.810	1102.420[b]	5.000	168.000	.000
Sex	Pillai's Trace	.020	.683[b]	5.000	168.000	.637
	Wilks' Lambda	.980	.683[b]	5.000	168.000	.637
	Hotelling's Trace	.020	.683[b]	5.000	168.000	.637
	Roy's Largest Root	.020	.683[b]	5.000	168.000	.637

Table 4 shows the result of a one way between groups multivariate analysis of variance conducted to investigate the influence of gender on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths. The major five reasons were treated as the dependent variables of youth consumption of hard drugs. They were: social and recreational, coping with negative affect, compulsive use, drug effect, and miscellaneous purposes. The independent variable is students' gender. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers,

homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations noted in the data. There was no statistically significant influence of gender on undergraduates perceived reasons for youth consumption of hard drugs, F (5, 168) = 0.683, p =.637; Wilks' Lamda =.980.This result shows that gender of the undergraduates has no significant influence on their perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths.

H_{02} There is no significant influence of religion on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

Table 5 shows the result of Multivariate Analysis of Variance conducted to investigate the influence of religion on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

Table 5: Multivariate Analysis of the Influence of Religion on Undergraduates' Perception of Reasons for Hard Drugs Consumption among the Youths in Kwara State

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.958	771.321[b]	5.000	167.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.042	771.321[b]	5.000	167.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	23.093	771.321[b]	5.000	167.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	23.093	771.321[b]	5.000	167.000	.000
Religion	Pillai's Trace	.134	2.406	10.000	336.000	.009
	Wilks' Lambda	.871	2.394[b]	10.000	334.000	.009
	Hotelling's Trace	.144	2.383	10.000	332.000	.010
	Roy's Largest Root	.085	2.860[c]	5.000	168.000	.017

Table 5 shows the result of a one way between groups multivariate analysis of variance conducted to investigate the influence of religion on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths. The major five reasons were treated as the dependent variables of youth consumption of hard drugs. They were: social and recreational, coping with negative affect, compulsive use, drug effect, and miscellaneous purposes. The independent variable

is the religion of individual students. There was a statistically significant influence of religion on undergraduates perceived reasons for youth consumption of hard drugs, F (10, 334) = 2.384, p =.009; Wilks' Lamda =.871. This result shows that the religion of the undergraduates has no significant influence on their perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths.

H_{03} There is no significant influence of ethnicity on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

Table 6 shows the result of Multivariate Analysis of Variance conducted to investigate the influence of religion on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths in Kwara State.

Table 6: Multivariate Analysis of the Influence of Ethnicity on Undergraduates' Perception of Reasons for Hard Drugs Consumption among the Youths in Kwara State .

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.961	827.066[b]	5.000	166.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.039	827.066[b]	5.000	166.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	24.912	827.066[b]	5.000	166.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	24.912	827.066[b]	5.000	166.000	.000
Ethnic	Pillai's Trace	.074	1.282	10.000	334.000	.239
	Wilks' Lambda	.927	1.275[b]	10.000	332.000	.243
	Hotelling's Trace	.077	1.268	10.000	330.000	.248
	Roy's Largest Root	.044	1.483[c]	5.000	167.000	.198

Table 6 shows the result of a one way between groups multivariate analysis of variance conducted to investigate the influence of ethnicity on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths. The major five reasons were treated as the dependent variables of youth consumption of hard drugs. They were: social and recreational, coping with negative affect, compulsive use, drug effect, and miscellaneous purposes. The independent variable is the ethnicity of individual students. There

as no statistically significant influence of ethnicity on ndergraduates perceived reasons for youth consumption of hard rugs, F (10, 332) = 1.268, p =.243; Wilks' Lamda =.927. This esult shows that ethnicity of the undergraduates has no significant nfluence on their perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths.

Discussions

The results of this study showed the major factors responsible for youths consumption of hard drugs as perceived by university undergraduates as coping with negative affect, compulsive use and other miscellaneous reasons. Oluremi (2012) found factors resident in social cultural, personality, biological and learning beliefs as responsible for youth consumption of drugs. Also, Omage (2005) attributed youth consumption of hard drugs to their tendency to subdue academic pressures. The findings of this present study were found to be corroborated with early findings. Furthermore, while variables like gender and ethnicity had no significant influence on undergraduates' perception of reasons for drug consumption among the youths, religion was found to exert such significant influence. In other words, gender and ethnicity cannot be regarded as major determinants of individual perception; however, religious beliefs system can exert influence on perception of the individuals.

Implications for Civic Education

Government efforts towards curbing the menace of drugs consumption among the youth through controlling the supply and demand cum consumption of drugs cannot be undermined. However, since prevention, as they say, is better than cure, approaching such issues through re-introduction of civic learning in schools could be an effective educational tool to correct the menace even at the formative years. Since the aim of Civic education, among others, is to correct some issues confronting citizenship and democratic life of the citizenry therefore, the need for responsible citizens who will see the reason to respect fundamental human rights of fellow citizens cannot be overemphasized, as peaceful coexistence becomes imperative. A drug addict, in all standards could not

measure up with the quality of responsible citizenship when it comes to shouldering responsibilities, such as voting in election, community service and development, etc. Drug addicts would rather constitute problems in a democratic setting when they are used as thugs or miscreant to perpetrate evils during election. Therefore, civic education should be all encompassing to take care of all-round development of learners from primary school to university education.

A previous study (Odejide, 2000) emphasized curative and rehabilitate approaches for helping the drug addicts. Martin Library (2014) suggested school based programmes to combat the problem of drug addiction among the youths. Since youths are vulnerable to subcultures in the society, preventive knowledge package should be infused into civic learning curriculum for tertiary institution undergraduates to learn. Therefore, this study rather suggests the inclusion of learning civic education at all levels of educational system as this will to a greater extent serve as preventive programme to safeguard the future of youths from adverse effects of hard drugs. Azebamwan (2010) opined that civic learning should be inclusive, pervasive, and lifelong. These imply that youths should have entitlement to civic learning irrespective of their ability or background. Mobile Youth Nigeria (2015) presented objectives of teaching civic education in schools to include teaching of right attitude, encouraging good citizenship, discouraging bad and unholy attitude, teaching of good leadership and followership and encouraging the spirit of friendship and cooperation. This paper keys into the first, second and third objectives, because of the role they would play in the life of drug addicted learners if they are achieved. Civic learning enables the youths acquire knowledge and understanding capable of helping them discriminate between right and wrong attitudes, thereby discouraging their tendencies towards hard drugs.

Civic learning should transcend the four walls of the classroom and should be the lifelong skills of individual citizens. Emphasis on teaching of civic education at basic and senior secondary education alone may not be able to produce the desired outcomes. This is because, youths need to consolidate whatever civic skills they might have acquired both at primary and secondary levels at higher level

in which if such programme is included in the curriculum of higher institutions will further strengthening civic skills. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2010) opined that introduction of civic learning should not be limited to a level but to all levels, tertiary education inclusive. The organization's declaration and integrated framework Action on Education for Peace, Human rights, and Democracy since 1995 had emphasized the need for every member state to promote civic learning at every stage of their educational levels. Therefore, on a broader scope aforementioned, objectives should be the targets to be achieved through civic learning packages for undergraduates.

Recommendations

1. Youths should be sensitized through Civic Education so as to defuse their minds from recoursing to consumption of hard drugs as coping strategies
2. Teaching of Civic education should be emphasized at tertiary levels in order to cater for developmental needs of the youths at higher level
3. Religious leaders should intensify their efforts towards enhancing civic skills already acquired at schools while engaging the youths in religions activities.

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