

Addreall (the smart drug) and the college student

Sociology



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ADDREALL (THE SMART DRUG) AND THE COLLEGE Introduction The article “Smart Drugs” talks about a research carried out to examine the influence of the media in the increased use of neuro-enhancement drugs to advance cognitive ability. The research showed that because the media mostly give information about the benefits of the drugs and not the risks associated with their use, their use has been hence increased. This is seen to increase the non-medicine drug use. This is in the case where drugs used to treat mental related illnesses such as Alzheimer’s are being promoted as smart drugs which are seen to improve cognition (Partridge et al 2011). This paper is a critique of the article in question, particularly of whether it has been successful or failed in presenting the research. The research questions of this article are on the portrayal of neuro-enhancement drugs in the newspaper articles. The kind of evidence quoted by these articles and the benefits and risks are mentioned in the articles. Additional research questions would be the prevalence of use of neuro-enhancement substances for non-drug purposes such as cognitive enhancement (Partridge et al 2011), or whether the media reflect the potential risks associated with the non-prescription drugs. The hypothesis of this article is that the media increase the use of drugs for neuro-enhancement. The variables here are the media coverage of drugs and the use of neuro-enhancement drugs. In conceptualization and operationalization of the variables, the research gives the findings in terms of percentages of how the media articles talk about the neuro-enhancements, which reflects both, the benefits - and the risks associated with its use. It has therefore been concluded that the claim that the media increase the use of these drugs has not been supported by sound evidence. The concept which is being discussed in the article is that the increasing

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reference of non-medical use of neuro-enhancement by the researchers is increasing the reference of this drug in the news media. From the empirical findings, it was found that newspaper articles mentioned only the benefits of these drugs with little reference to the risks associated with their use.

Around 44% cited an academic journal or author. However, when these sources were examined, it was seen that they did not support these claims. This therefore implies that the academic journals cannot be blamed for the increased popularization of non-medical use of these drugs. There should however be control measures which ensure that the media print information which is truthful and based on good evidence. This article does not mention culture except the use of the neuro-enhancement drugs by college and school students developing as a culture, which may result in drug dependence (Partridge et al 2011). This article is evidence based. This is because to justify the hypothesis, a research had to be conducted on the media articles which were compared with the academic journals that they referred to. From this kind of research, conclusions were made. It was seen that the information on neuro-enhancement that is mostly printed by the public media had only a weak support for the scientists. This means that it is not to be trusted. In fact, 64% of the newspaper articles did not refer to any literary journal meaning that it was not from an expert and cannot be taken as being truthful. The rest, which quoted an author or journal, when cross checked, were seen to be an exaggeration of the truth. (Partridge et al 2011). There is no mention of gender specification of the research, and the assumption is that the variables are prevalent to the same extent for all genders. The author therefore treats all genders to be equally affected by the popularization of the non-medical use of the neuro-enhancers. The <https://assignbuster.com/addreall-the-smart-drug-and-the-college-student/>

assumption here is that female students get to use these drugs just as much as the male ones. The research findings from this survey show that the claim by the media of the increase in use of neuro-enhancing drugs has been seen to be based on weak evidence. As such, writing articles which support this claim may lead to the stakeholders making policies addressing a problem that does not exist. Nevertheless the article has a limitation in that although it focuses on proving that the media has not fully contributed to an increase of neuro-enhancement drugs, it does not give solution to this problem although it may exist to a small degree (Partridge et al 2011). The research was also limited by the fact that the use of the term enhancer narrowed the research and did not include the articles which could have given a negative account of use of drugs for cognitive ability enhancement. In conclusion, the article shows the importance of research in terms of revealing their data to the media disclosing all information as a way of ensuring that information is not misrepresented. Although the research did have some limitations in the scope, rendering it not representative enough, the findings of the research and the contents of this article can be used as a basis for future research. It has been shown that there is no sufficient proof that the articles in the media are the cause of increased use of neuro-enhancers by people, especially those in college. References Partridge BJ, Bell SK, Lucke JC, Yeates S, Hall WD (2011) Smart Drugs “ As Common As Coffee”: Media Hype about Neuroenhancement. PLoS ONE 6(11): e28416. doi: 10. 1371/journal. pone. 0028416