

# Drug use and criminal behavior research paper

[Health & Medicine](#), [Drug Abuse](#)



## **Introduction**

Relationship between drug and crime

Drug abuse occurs as a result of maladaptive habits of drug use. It is manifested by recurrent and significant impact associated with repeated intake of the drugs. These problems occur repeatedly during the period of 12 months. The criteria include; harmful impacts of repeated use rather than tolerance and pattern of compulsive use. Drug abuse leads to addiction and drug dependency. The dependency raises the maladaptive pattern of substance abuse, resulting to cluster of behavioral and psychological phenomenon that develops after several drugs intakes. Drug dependency includes a strong urge to take the drug; difficulties in preventing its use, using drugs persistently despite its harmful consequences, giving the drug use a high priority than any other activities, physical state of withdrawal and increase tolerance to drugs. Drug abuse consists of terms like addiction and habituation. Drug addiction refers to a chronic disorder characterized by urge to take a drug. This results to physical, social and emotional harm. It also results to continue using of drugs despite evidence of the danger. Drug habituation is a condition that results from the repeated drug consumption, in which there is mental and emotional dependency on the drug.

There exist a multidimensional relationship between drug and crime. For instance, it is an offence to own abuse, distribute or manufacture drugs categorized as having ability for abuse such as cocaine, marijuana, and heroin. Drugs are also connected to the crime through the impact they have on the user's behavior and by causing violence and other illegal activities linked with drug smuggling. For instance, drug-connected homicide can

include murders related to drug circulation, murders carried out when a person is on drugs and the murders committed aims at obtaining money for drugs. Other murders easily occur in high-drug-use areas. Nevertheless, it is hard to count offenses of aggressive behavior resulting from drug effects. The relationship between illegal use of drugs and criminal offences has been one of the most studied and challenging issues within the field of criminology (White, &Gorman, 2000).

**There are several ways in which drugs and crimes are related. This includes;**

Drug defined offenses- Defilements of laws banning or controlling the possession, circulation and manufacturing illegal drugs. For instance, Drug ownership and use, Marijuana farming, Methamphetamine production and marijuana sales.

Drug related offences- this are offenses caused by the effect of drug use. They include; offenses aggravated by the user's need for money to support the habit and offenses associated to drug circulation itself.

Drug-using lifestyle- Drug abuse and crime is a common feature of a deviant lifestyle. The likelihood of one getting involved in illegal activity is increased since drug users do not participate in the genuine economy and are subjected to situations that promote crime. For instance, lifestyle that emphasizes on short term objectives which support illegal activities. The goal to offend includes being associated with criminals where they learn their skills (Weekes, Moser & Langevin, 1999)

## **Importance of researcher to Examine Relationship between Drug use and Crime**

It is critical for the researcher to examine the relationship between drug use and crime. Because they will help in providing a sufficient review to pertinent knowledge about the drugs crime association and will be able to stimulate more discussion concerning drug abuse and the important questions that still need attention. The knowledge obtained will help those in authority to develop of new approaches to the drugs-crime relationship. According to Brownstein it is the researchers who have the best chance to interpret their findings and give advice based on their conclusions” (Brownstein 1991, p. 132).

Examining the relation of drug use and crime will enable the researcher to document the existence of the drugs-crime relationship. The researcher can address the nature and complexity of that relationship and summarize philosophical and theoretical contributions that may best address the relationship. Understanding drug crime relationship will help the state and federal- level policy to break this relationship. Finally, the approaches that can help in future research will be put forward. (Diamond,& Middaugh, 1997).

The examination will help both the public and government not to make assumptions that crime is always committed simply to fund drug use.

Through various interviews and researches, one can understand that other persistent drug users may commit drug-driven crime for a period of their persistent carriers. It will help in further investigations on the relation between individual’s careers and transition, drugs and crime. Understanding the relationship between drugs and crime will help the researcher provide a

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clear way on how various issues related drugs can be addressed.

Understanding how crime and drugs are related will also help those working on matters relating to drugs youth workers, drug educators, teachers, clinicians, psychologists, social workers, project managers and police officers, to continue with these general guidelines to the implementation stage, additional tools will be needed. Certain guidance on practical implementation approaches is put in the web where everyone can access (Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, 1999).

Learning on drug crime relationship will enable the authority to eliminate the thinking that doing away with drugs from a person's day-to-day life will certainly put an end to criminal activity. Such realization is crucial in terms of intervention and policy development, since any explanation of crime that attributes great value to drugs may result to the implementation of inefficient intervention policies (White & Helene, 1992).

## **Theories explaining the relationship between drug use and crime**

There are three theories that explain the relationship between drug use and crime. These theories include;

Substance use that result to crime

This model argues that alcohol and drug use results to crime due to economic motivation, psychopharmacological properties of the drug or the systematic aggression related to the unlawful drug market. The psychopharmacological model suggests that the impacts of intoxication such as poor judgments, attention shortfall, reasoning-perceptual bends and neurochemical changes results to criminal behaviors. Constant intoxication,

which results from factors such as withdrawal, nutrition deficits, sleep deprivation, damaging of neuropsychological functioning and enhancement of psychopathologic personality disorders, also contribute to successive attacks and crime (Doerner, 1988).

This model has been greatly supported in the literature of alcohol than in literature concerning other drugs. Several biological and neuropsychological devices have been offered to describe how alcohol use increases the danger of violence. Studies show that the constant use of opiates, marijuana, and amphetamines fuels the risk of violent behavior. It is likely that drug and alcohol abuse may act together to influence violent behavior. The psychopharmacological model seems relevant in explaining a possible causal relationship between alcohol and violence between adults but small of the relationship between drugs and crime (Parker & Kathleen, 1999).

The economic motivation model believes that the drug users must generate illegal income to aid their drug habit. Therefore, they involve themselves in crimes such as theft and prostitution to obtain drugs or the money to purchase them. Support for the economic motivation model originates from literature on heroin addicts, which denotes that raising or lowering the frequency of drug use among addict's increases or lessens their frequency of crime, particularly property crime. Studies conducted in 1970s found that many female drug abusers were prostitutes than were drug dealers. Some women abandoned prostitution in favor of dealing with drugs. Nevertheless, majority of women who used crack continued to be heavily involved in prostitution. The economic motive is obvious. The main illegal activity for heroin-cocaine abusers is drug circulation. Studies indicate that the crack

users are greatly involved in dealing, but they are also engaged in nondrug delinquencies (Pihlo&Peterson, 1993).

According to the systemic model, the system of drug distribution and abuse is innately associated with violent crime. The systemic forms of crimes in relation to drug distribution include conflicts over structural and territorial issues, implementation of rules, punishments of in efforts to protect buyers and sellers, transaction-related offences such as robberies of dealers and resolution of disputes over quality and assaults to collect debts. The marketers of drugs create community inadequacy, which affect the norms and behaviors of those people living in it. Such community inadequacies may be connected with rises in crime that are indirectly related to drug selling. These models most likely accounts for most of the present violence connected to illicit drug use, particularly drug-related homicides. Goldstein (1997) proposed that, at any given time, universal violence is connected with whatever drug is most popular. The consequences of these reports indicate that deviant persons are attracted to drug selling, more than the facts of drug selling causing individuals to turn into criminals.

### **Crime leads to substance use**

It is based on assumptions that deviant persons are more likely than non-deviant persons to choose or be forced into social situations and subcultures in which severe drinking and drug use are tolerated and encouraged. For example, apart from drugs compelling an individual to engage in robbery, the income obtained from a robbery might give a person extra money to secure drugs for sale, placing them in an environment that supports drug use. It is believed that numerous aspects of the expert criminal lifestyle are

favorable to serious drinking and drug use, such as working occasionally, partying in between jobs, being single, and being geographically active. In addition, it has been suggested that deviant persons are likely to use drugs in order to self-medicate and to justify themselves for their deviant acts. It is a likely that both of the above models are acceptable and that the relationship between substance abuse and crime is mutual. That means a substance abuse and crime should be causally connected and equally are reinforcing deviant behaviors. For example, when a drug addict gets a chance to commit a crime, they will perform to obtained money, not out of coercion but rather as consumer expenditure. Equally, when the urge for drugs is high, drug users will perform a crime so that they get money to buy the drugs (Weekes, Moser & Langevin, 1999).

### **The relationship results from common causes**

The common cause model assumes that substance abuse and crime are connected since they share similar causes such as temperamental traits, alcoholism and antisocial personality disorder. Additionally, drug abuse and crime may have similar environmental and situational causes. Studies show that the rates of violent crime and delinquency are high in areas that are poor, densely populated, ethnically segregated, and consist of a transient population. Social disorders and shortage of social capital seem to be the central mechanisms connecting these structural features to crime.

Therefore, it is clear that a single model cannot account for the drug-crime relationship in all people. For some persons the intense, and possibly chronic, cognitive impacts of some drugs, for instance, alcohol, increase the tendency toward criminal behaviors. In other people, engaging in deviant



behaviors weakens the bond of convention to norms. It increases attachments in deviant subcultures that are reinforced by use of drugs. Lastly, other factors such as temperament in conjunction with socio-environmental factors, increases the danger of participation in all forms of risky behaviors (Ehlers, Slutske, Gilder, & Wilhelmsen, 2006).

### **Policies that reintegrate drugs and the results of crime**

A drug policy refers to the effort of the government to fight the effect of the drug, addiction and misuse in the society. The government develops policies that address the demand and distribution of drugs as well as those that mitigate the harms of the drugs. There are several local abolitions dating back in 16c that were mostly aiming to abolish drug use in most countries. The attempts were not long lasting. According to Duke and Gross (1963, p. 19) drug use was informally controlled by cultural norms and were widely used. Harris act of (1914) was the first federal act in use that abolished heroin, cocaine and other drugs. It was followed by enactment of drug abolition law which was at the state level. Pure food and drug act of 1904 created the modern framework for regulation and circulation of pharmaceutical drugs. The 2008 report of international narcotic control bond and the UN single convention on narcotic drug of 1961 merge the multinational treaties in the field of drugs. The Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, established an international system for psychotropic substance control. In 1988, the united nation convention that fought illicit drug was adopted (1988) it was compost of legislative and administrative measures against trafficking of drugs, which included provisions against money laundering and diversion of precursor chemicals. After the political

declaration of the commission on Narcotic drug of 2009, united nation members agreed to tackle the drug problem and promote a society free of drug abuse. They vowed to ensure that peace and dignity, security and health are guaranteed (Dozier, 1966).

## **Programs that are there to curb drug and effect of crime in school and work settings**

### Education program

An important step in addressing drug abuse is to raise awareness through education among parent, youths and health providers. Although a lot has been done in raising awareness on the dangers of drug abuse many people are still abusing them. Drug abuse has resulted in many deaths and addiction (White & Gorman. 2000).

Youth and parent particularly require a better education about the danger of drug abuse. Many youths have a notion that prescribed drug when misused has less harmful effect as compared to illegal drugs. Some young people will misuse prescribed drugs in the name of reducing stress at work. Parents may fail to understand the danger associated with giving their teenage children medicine which is not prescribed. Many would leave prescribed drug in an open cabinet where children can reach. These misconceptions that are enhanced by direct to consumer advertising increases the demand for such medication to be abused (Weekes, Moser & Langevin, 1999).

This program is implemented in school because it is in school where youths spent most of their time. Prevention program can be implemented in the community and within organizations. The programs seek to eliminate early and future drug abuse. Many preventive programs have been evaluated over

time and have produced positive results. School based programs are categorized in three parts (Wolfe, David, Claire, Debbie & Chiodo, 2005).

## **Project SUCCESS**

The program is developed for youths who are at high risk of drug abuse. It places trained professionals in school to give early intervention services. Project success refers to Schools Using Coordinated Community Efforts to Strengthen Students. It was made to children of 14 to 18 year- old. It was made separately from the general school population. The participants were from low income families and multi-ethnic families. The project aimed at reducing the high risk of drug use among high school adolescents. The project works in partnership with prevention agency and alternative schools. A trained person was recruited to give school with drug abuse prevention and early interventions. The person recruited work in the school as an alternative success Counselor (Ellis, 2003).

## **Project TND**

Project TND refers to Toward No Drug Abuse. It is an interactive and interventions program that was developed to help youths in high school (ages 14-19) resist substance abuse. The program consists of twelve lessons of 40-50 minute that include; social skill training, decision making component and motivational activities. The above is delivered through role-playing exercise, games and student worksheet over a period of four weeks. Research follow-up conducted by the schools in southern California indicated a significant reduction on drug use among the children who had gone

through the interventions. Male student in the treatment had a lower risk of victimization than in the alternative control group.

## **Project ALERT**

Like Project SUCCESS and TND, ALERT program help in reducing misuse of the drug among the youths. The project target to prevent alcohol, cigarette and marijuana abuse and assists the youth in identifying and resisting pro-drug pressure. The aim of the program is to motivate students the students against drug abuse and to offer them skills to resist motivation to drug.

ALERT is a science based program and draw its arguments on social learning theory. The theory illustrates that people learn by observing others. Creation of awareness and expectations of future can be reinforced through and punishments.

## **Substance Abuse Prevention Program (SAPP)**

Substance Abuse Prevention Program (SAPP) is a training program that gives course work in areas of drug prevention, treatment and recovery. SAPP instructors work with client, communities and organization. Workers within an organization, professionals and community members may take the course offered by SAPP to broaden their knowledge on how to avoid drug abuse. They may also help their colleagues at work with the skills they obtain.

(Denny, Holtzman & Cobb, 2003)

## **Life Skills Training program**

The programs aim at reducing psychosocial factors connected with the onset of drug. The program offers drug resistance skills, drug related knowledge, attitudes and norms. It also offers skills of how people should overcome

media and pressure to abuse drugs. It helps in improving interpersonal skills and social competence. LST program is intended for junior school students. The program is highly effective especially when booster sessions are included (Ekblom, 1994).

## **Interventions and Counseling programs**

Brief intervention may include cognitive behavioral therapy motivational interviewing or single session therapy. The counseling is offered by expertise where companies and organization book session for their employees as part of training. It helps in reducing high risk behaviors among the workers. The interventions could also be conducted in clinics setting. It takes 15 minutes to one hour.

## **Nation's Community Mobilization against Drugs (CMAD) Program**

The program was developed in 2003 with the aim of reducing abuse, addiction, and drug trafficking. A laundry list of measures was produced and put in place towards the end. They included; adoption of banishment as punishment for arrested drug dealers, implementation of a zero-tolerance, implementation of drug testing of tribal employees, development of adult drug courts and substance of policy in school and family wellness program. The aim was to reduce substance abuse in within schools, organizations and in the community (Ellickson, Tucker, & Klein, 2003)

## **Conclusion**

The literature review and theories of crime indicate that there is a relationship between the abuse of drugs and the crime. It considers crime

and drug abuse and examines the circumstance in which the two occurs. It looks at the importance of researcher examining the relationship of drug and crime where they help in giving ideas on which preventive measures to apply. The report focuses on the available policies and their complications in trying to fight drug use, whether they deliver fully in fighting drug or have counter-productive effects. Lastly it lists the available programs and initiatives that aim at preventing the effect of the drug in school and place of work. One can conclude that Government and community members should work together to eliminate drug use and its effects.

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