Factors Influencing the Use of Drugs Among College Students: Basis for Students Services Program

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ABSTRACT

The educational institutions in the Philippines today have been mandated by law to include in their academic curriculum a program on drug education. The study intends to find out the factors influencing the use of drugs among college students. The study used the descriptive method. It describes the factors influencing the use of drugs among college students. The respondents of the study were the college students whose drug testing results were positive. The research respondents were composed of 54% respondents from the College of Hospitality and Business Administration, 27% of respondents from the College of Computer Studies and 19% of respondents from the College of Criminology. The findings affirmed Andrews & Bonta (2014) that Social Psychological learning theory focuses on how positive social influences by drug-using peers reinforces the attraction to drugs. The theory focuses more on how the internal states of drug users are affected by a social relationship within families, peer, environment and another close more or far relationship. The Social Psychological learning theory clearly emphasized that the common factors influenced to use the drug are strongly the family, environment, and peers. Thus, majority of respondents are influenced by common factors.

KEYWORDS

Use of drugs, college students, services program, descriptive, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The educational institutions in the Philippines today have been mandated by law to include in their academic curriculum a program on drug education. This is to comply with the educational approach in dealing with the globally pernicious drug problem. The perception by the public of teenage drug use has public school officials scrambling to find effective methods to use or to prevent drug problems.

Random drug testing is an examination or methodological analysis of biological specimens of any person. It is a system in which blood or urine specimens are collected of individuals chosen by spontaneous random drug testing, selection and without prearrangement or planning, for the reason of technically scrutinizing the specimen to conclude whether the individual ingested or was injected with drugs. Mostly, when there is a reason to believe that a drug is probably being abused by a person, determine may be observed to warrant random drug testing.

The Saint Michael College of Caraga, Nasipit, Agusan Del Norte Philippines aims to provide random drug testing. The purpose of drug testing is not to punish a student who uses drugs but to avoid drug abuse and to help students previously using become drug-free. If the student test is positive for drugs, schools can take action to the individual conditions. In cases of a positive result but has not yet progressed to addiction,
the school can promote counseling and follow-up testing. For student is diagnosed with addiction, parents and school administrators can refer them to effective drug treatment programs.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), together with the Department of Health, conducts a random drug testing for college student throughout the region in accordance with Republic Act 9165 or the Dangerous Drug Act of 2002, with the primitive concern of helping students who are into prohibited drugs. Republic Act 9165 is an essential part of this program. The drug testing is mandated per board resolution #6 series of 2003, as amended by Dangerous Drugs Board regulation #3, series of last year. The names of the students found positive for substance abuse cannot be published. The result is confidential. Only the school heads and the parents of the student will know the result. The result cannot and should not be used in any criminal proceedings. If found positive, CHED, in partnership with other government agencies like DOH and DSWD will initiate intervention programs to help the students.

FRAMEWORK

Crowe & Sydney (2000) believe that if “the youth can enter recovery and maintain self-discipline through treatment, they are less likely to cycle through the system multiple times. Identifying youth who needs treatment and obtaining it for they may save money in distorted correctional programs. Similarly, Lashey (1994) anticipated that drug testing, particularly for use in appraisal, is valuable because the adolescent is more likely to overcome denial and to discuss their substance use problems.

As Hutton (1992) argued that too often schools employ a drug-testing policy for symbolic basis. For example, schools may implement a drug-testing policy because drug use is a serious national concern or to set an example of a zero-tolerance policy, rather than basing the policy on well-defined local drug problems in a particular school or district. Hutton (1992) contends that a drug-testing policy sends a message of mistrust and sets the stage for an antagonistic relationship between the school and the students.

Taylor (1996) argued that drug testing could have a “compensating behavior” effect. Taylor believes that a drug-testing policy may lead subsidiary student who accordingly stops their studies or possibly increase their drug use.

Warr (2002) stressed drug use had gained a solid position within popular youth culture accepted through a result of social change and the journey into adulthood that the young generation experience. Parker & Ligon (2002) suggests that such factors as the changes in the financial system and an increase in young people attending university result in the conservatory of the period in which young people adopt their independence and lack of responsibility for their activities. It is suggested that the increasing rates of leisure drug use among student population reflect the notion of “timeout” from the pressures of growing up, in which it is increasingly becoming normal. Even if students have not taken any drugs their awareness and accessibility to access such drugs.
still shows a clear picture of the extent to which drug use is normalized and accepted within society.

Shiner & Newburn (1997) criticize the normalization thesis as they believe that the results discovered in the research do not involve the minorities reporting regular soft drug use are large enough to legalize the “normalization” term. They believed that the normalization thesis exaggerates the degree of drug used by young people as the majority of young people desist from using drugs, preferring socially expressive and pre-occupying alternatives instead. Therefore, they believed that it fails to pay enough attention to the normative contexts in which youthful drug use occurs.

Shiner & Newburn (2009) in their study through interviews found that 16-19 years old have negative attitudes towards drugs and connections with the crime. In addition, they found that 54%, their major category, said they never had an illicit drug at any point in their lives. Patton and Rouse et al. (2005) stated that research was carried out within the respondent schools which may have led the participants to give an answer that was socially desirable and did not represent the actual truth, questioning the legality of the research.

According to the bio-psychosocial model, the primary factors that predict teenage substance abuse are personality, family, and peer influences. Biological, community and societal factors are secondary risk factors. Crucial variables in the development of substance abuse are the teenager’s inability to fulfill the tasks of adolescence, the functioning of the family, and the choice of peers. Family functioning includes the life factors that the family is facing (such as age of the parents or the number of children), the family dynamics (including family strengths and family coping mechanisms), family crises, and family.

According to Reilly et al., (2005), adolescent drug abuse is a symptom of a family dysfunction, which reflects a defect in the “launch sequence” through which the adolescent is prepared for gradual disengagement and separation from their family. The drug dependency plays a functional role in the family by uniting family members around this one concern. In using the family system as the reference point, these theorists consider the function that the addiction serves in the family, rather than the characteristic or pathology of the user.

Borsari & Carey (2001) Social risk factors include the influence of family, peers, and the environment. Families, in which the use of alcohol or drugs is high, as well as chaotic families, tend to have more incidence of teenage drug and alcohol abuse. Adolescents whose peer group is involved with alcohol and drugs, and those who engage in other problem behaviors, such as rebelliousness and delinquent activities, are more at risk. Individual characteristics such as poor academic achievement and low self-esteem and the lack of motivation are positively correlated with use.
Deterrence theory

The Perceptual Deterrence theory stipulates the principle of having a power or skill over someone weaker (Summerfield et al., 2006). Integrity systems have evolved from this power to establish a fear of punishment as a strong deterrent. The modern judicial system in the United States of America was recognized based on the deterrence theory with the belief that a suitable six punishments or threat will control an individual’s desire to commit a crime. In random drug testing, punishment for the student can be the loss of suitability, loss of games played, or dismissal from school. In a review of deterrence theory, Summerfield distinguished that even with harsher punishment and finding unique ways to discipline, crimes continued and still continue today.

Strelan & Boeckmann’s (2006) Deterrence theory was modified to embrace attitudes or perceptions termed PDT “Perceptual deterrence theory.” This theory pursues to scrutinize the attitudes of a deterrent affecting an individual or a group behavior. PDT was only recently applied precisely to random drug test.

Theory of Reasoned Action

The theory of reasoned action has been used in drug testing literature to pull associates from attitude to behavioral objective (Strelan &Boeckmann, 2006; Diacin, Parks, & Allison, 2003). Most of the literature has motivated an attitude leading to behavioral purposes. Literature focusing on attitude toward Random Drug testing has led researchers to conclude behavioral intentions are strongly against drug use though few studies have distinctively referenced theory of reasoned action in their testing methods.

Program Theory

According to Gassman et al., (2010), despite a secure failure over the foregoing time, the occurrence of adolescent substance remains a cause for concern. National approximation recommends that 50 percent to student reports having always illicit drug, and substance use is initiated to be an essential cause of health problems in adolescence and consequently, it remains important for the school to ascertain methods to reducing adolescent substance use.

One approach is RDT “random drug testing. “The theoretical framework of random drug testing forecasts that the programs could reduce substance use in three ways: by deterring substance use, by detecting substance use and by having a spillover effect on students who be located directly subjected to drug testing. Random drug testing is probably to have deterrent effects if the student is attentive of possibility of drug testing and the possible consequences that could result from the positive test. The deterrent effect is more likely to arise when the student is directly subject to testing and for the specific substance protected by the drug testing policy. However, changes in substance use behavior could convey completed during times when directly decrease under the testing policy.
Social Psychological learning theory

According to Andrews & Bonta (2014), this theory focuses on how positive social influences by the drug using peers reinforces the attraction of drugs. This theory focuses more on how the internal states of drug user are affected by a social relationship within families, peer, environment and more distant relationship.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study intends to find out the factors influencing the use of drugs among college students. Specifically, this seeks to answer the following objectives; (1) to determine the students’ characteristics in terms of age, gender, course, and year level; (2) to describe the parent’s profile in terms of Occupation and Monthly Income; (3) to determine factors that influence the college students from using drugs, environment, and family, personal; and (4) design an intervention program.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used the descriptive method. It describes the factors influencing the use of drugs among college students. As defined, a descriptive method provides information that gives meaning to the quality and standing facts that are going on.

Research Locale

This study was conducted in the school year 2015-2016 at Saint Michael College of Caraga, Atupan Street, Nasipit, Agusan Del Norte, Region XIII (Caraga Region), Philippines. This is located beside the Saint Michael College Parish Church.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the college students whose drug testing results were positive. The research respondents were composed of 54% respondents from the College of Hospitality and Business Administration, 27% of respondents from the College of Computer Studies and 19% of respondents from the College of Criminology.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was formulated by the researchers and checked by the adviser. There are two parts of the questionnaire, first is a respondent profile, second is the factors influencing the use of drugs by the respondents.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers asked permission from the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Dennis P. Mausisa, to conduct their study. Due to the confidentiality of the study, only
the thesis adviser was allowed to gather the data needed for the study through the distribution of questionnaires to the respondents.

**Statistical treatment**

The researchers used the following statistical tools to make the analysis and interpretation more valid and reliable and will be tabulated. The following statistical tools were weighted mean and frequency.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Students’ Characteristics**

All respondents are males. Two or 15.38 percent belonged to College of Hospitality and Business Administration, 1 or 7.69 percent belonged to College of Computer Studies, and 10 or 76.92 percent belonged to College of Criminology. Therefore, the majority of the respondents found out positive of using drugs belongs to the college of Criminology.

Eight or 61.52 percent (rank 1) belonged to first-year level, 4 or 30.77 percent (rank 2) belonged to second-year level, 0 or none belonged to third-year, and 1 or 7.69 percent (rank 3) belonged to fourth-year. Majority of the respondents are first-year level.

**Parents’ Characteristics**

Two or 15.38% have fathers who are Overseas Filipino Worker, 3 or 0% have fathers who are Teacher, two or 7.69% have fathers who are Businessman, 2 or 7.69% have fathers who are Farmers, 2 or 7.69% have fathers who are Drivers, two or 7.69% have fathers who have No Work. 1 or 15.38% has a father who is Soldier. Two or 7.69% have fathers who are Government Employees. Two or 7.69% have fathers who are Plumbers. Two or 7.69% have fathers who are Barangay Captains. Two or 7.69% have fathers who are Company Engineers. 2 or 7.69% have fathers who are Security Guards.

Majority of the Parents occupation of the respondents was the Overseas Filipino Worker and Soldier.

Two or 7.69% have Mothers who are Overseas Filipino Workers, 2 or 7.69% are Teachers, 2 or 7.69% are engaged in business, 2 or 7.69% are Farmers, 3 are House Helpers. It further presented that 7 or 53.85 percent (rank 1) have a monthly income that ranged of 5,000-6,000, 2 or 15.38 percent (rank 2) income in the ranged of 6,000-11,000, and 4 or 30.77 (rank 2) that belonged in the ranged of 11, 001 and above. Majority of the parents’ monthly income of the respondents ranged from 5,000-6,000.

**Factors that influenced college students from using drugs**

Some 4.53% of the respondents identified *Lack of Amusement (rank 1)* that influence them to use drugs; 3.31% (rank 2) *Peers*; 3.07% (rank 3) *Joy-Seeking*; 2.84%
(rank 4) Boredom; 1.07% Friends Influence them. Majority said Environment influenced them to use of drugs because of Lack of Amusement.

For Family factor, 3.7 % (rank 1) respondents identified Strict Parents influenced them to use drugs; 3 % (rank 2) Separation of Parents; 2.99% (rank 3) Lack of Attention from Parents; 2.76% (rank 4) Lack of Guidance; and 2.61 % (rank 5) Conflict of Siblings.

For Personal factors, 1.93 (rank 1) respondents identified to Eliminate Shyness that influenced them to used drugs and 1.67% (rank 2) Teenagers Curiosity

CONCLUSION

The findings affirmed Andrews & Bonta (2014) that Social Psychological learning theory focuses on how positive social influences by drug-using peers reinforces the attraction to drugs. The theory focuses more on how the internal states of drug users are affected by a social relationship within families, peer, environment and another close more far relationship.

The Social Psychological learning theory clearly emphasized that the common factors influenced to use the drug are strongly the family, environment and peers. Thus, majority of respondents are influenced by common factors.

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