

GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM



SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

BY

FRANCIS SAM (MADC 19096)

**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
RESEARCH, GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.)**

DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

© SEPTEMBER 2020

CANDIDATE’S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned solemnly declare that the study titled “**ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA**”, is based on my own work carried out during the course of study under the supervision of **Dr. Kofi Amponsah Bediako**. I further certify that whenever I have used materials from other sources, I have given due credit to them in the text of the report and giving their details in the references.

.....

FRANCIS SAM

(CANDIDATE)

ID: MADC 19096

.....

Date: September,2020

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation of this dissertation was supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of dissertation laid down by Ghana Institute of Journalism.

.....

.....

Dr. Kofi Amponsah Bediako

Date

(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this long essay to God Almighty, my dear parents and my supervisor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere gratitude goes to God for the gift of life, health and the spirit of discipline and persistence to pursue and complete this course in the midst of all the COVID-19 challenges that affected the academic calendar as well as the psychological wellbeing of students around the globe.

Special thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Kofi Amponsah Bediako for his patience, guidance, invaluable support and rich contribution in the development of this study.

To the School of Graduate Studies- Ghana Institute of Journalism, my colleagues and friends, most especially the MA-Development Communication class of 2020, who stood by me through the tough times and gave me the moral support that I needed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CANDIDATE’S DECLARATION	i
SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Justification of the Study	5
1.3 Research Questions	6
1.4 Significance of the Study	6
CHAPTER TWO	7
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Theoretical Literature	7
2.2.1 Theories on Media Effects	7
2.2.1.1 <i>Agenda Setting</i>	8
2.2.1.2 <i>Framing</i>	9
2.2.2 Media and Illicit Substance Abuse: Role and Social Change Strategies	10
2.2.2.1 <i>Surveillance</i>	11
2.2.2.2 <i>Enforcement of Social Norms</i>	12
2.2.2.3 <i>Spot Announcement and Catchy Expressions</i>	12
2.2.3.4 <i>Fear Appeal/Scare Tactics</i>	13
2.2.3.5 <i>Edutainment</i>	13
2.2.4 Substance Abuse and Media	14
2.2.5 Substance Abuse and Society	15
2.2.6 Determinants of Substance Abuse among the Youth	16
2.2.6.1 <i>Age and Gender</i>	16
2.2.6.2 <i>Poverty</i>	17
2.2.6.3 <i>Peer Pressure</i>	17
2.2.6.4 <i>Family</i>	18
2.2.6.5 <i>Availability and Accessibility of Substances</i>	18

2.2.6.6 <i>Community</i>	18
2.2.7 Effects of Substance Abuse	19
2.2.7.1 <i>Social Effects of Substances</i>	19
2.2.7.2 <i>Economic Effects of Substance Abuse</i>	21
2.3 Empirical Literature	21
2.3.2 Discussion of Empirical Studies	25
CHAPTER THREE	28
METHODOLOGY	28
3.1 Introduction	28
3.2 Research Design	28
3.3 Population and Sampling	29
3.3.1 Target Population	29
3.3.2 Sampling Technique and Sample Size	29
3.4 Data Sources	29
3.5 Research Instrument	30
3.6 Data Analysis	30
3.7 Limitations of the Study	31
CHAPTER FOUR	32
CONCLUSION	32

ABSTRACT

Aside terrorism, trafficking and use of illicit drugs have become the most daunting contemporary social challenges. Substance abuse due to its prevalence has become a global issue and governments of various countries including Ghana are making concerted efforts to curb the canker. Substance abuse in Ghana has exacerbated because day in day out, more people are abusing different types of substances. The media have become salient in society because they inform, educate and entertain. In view of this, the study seeks to explore the role of the media in curbing substance abuse in Ghana. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate the strategies mapped up by the media curb substance abuse in Ghana, the level of effectiveness of the strategies, challenges facing the media in their campaigns against substance abuse and the impact of the media campaigns against substance abuse. The study will adopt the qualitative approach and the research design will be exploratory. Purposive sampling will be used to select 5 media outlets and managers of each of the 5 media outlets will be interviewed. An interview guide will be prepared in accordance with the objectives.

Keywords: Substance; Substance Abuse; Substance Abuse Disorders Media; Ghana.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Aside terrorism, trafficking and use of illicit drugs have become the most daunting contemporary social challenges (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015). The upsurge in juvenile violence, heinous crimes, complicated health conditions and early deaths across the globe are as a result of unbridled trafficking and substance abuse specifically among the youth (Psychonaut, 2010). Substance use is defined as the ingestion or administration of any substance that is psychoactive (thus changes consciousness) (BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, 2009). Psychoactive substances comprise alcohol, solvents, glues, medications, illegal drugs, tobacco and caffeine. The use of psychoactive substances has become prevalent due to human cultural behaviour (Statistics Canada, 2007). NSDUH (2010) defined illicit substances as cocaine, marijuana, heroin, cocaine, inhalants, hallucinogens and the non-medical use of pain relievers, stimulants, sedatives (psychotherapeutics) and tranquilizers. Substance use may either be of paramount importance or inimical depending on the quantity, frequency, method or context of usage (Statistics Canada, 2007).

According to University of Maryland Medical Center (2013), substance abuse includes the incessant use of illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs. Substance abuse is defined as the instances or patterns of substance use that are inconsistent with legal or medical guidelines in relation to physical, psychological, economic or social problems. Moreover, the abuse creates risk to health, security or the well-being of persons, families or communities. Substance abuse is not

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

specifically related to the legal aspect of the substance used but the amount used, the pattern of use, the context in which it is used and possible harm (Statistics Canada, 2007).

Substance use falls within a gamut of possible problematic actions based on frequency, intensity and degree of dependency. The gamut comprises experimental (use of substance is motivated by curiosity and limited to a few exposures), social/recreational (use of substance is to enhance a social occasion, use is not regular and usually occurs with others), situational (use is associated with a particular situation, there is some loss of control but persons do not experience negative ramifications) and lastly intensive (use of substance is intense, people may use large amount within a short spate of time or engage in perennial use over a period of time) (BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, 2009).

Substance abuse has become a global health concern and the rate at which the youth are abusing the substances is frightening. An overwhelming majority of students in several institutions across the globe have unfortunately been exposed to tobacco, alcohol, bhang, glue sniffing and khat (Otieno & Ofulla, 2009). Close to 1.3 billion people use tobacco and 230 million between the ages of 14 and 18 years use illegal drugs (Chebukaka, 2014). Ngesu, Ndiku & Masese (2008) posits that children whose parents use drugs follow the footsteps of their parents by also using drugs. According to a US national survey, 78% of adolescents used alcohol. Out of the 78%, 47% drink alcohol regularly (Swendsen, Burstein, Case, Conway & Dierker, 2012). In 2006, there were 90,082 abusers in Central Asia with the exception of Turkmenistan (UNODC, 2008). In 2011, 10,171 cases of substance abuse were registered in Kyrgyzstan and out of this number, 73% were injecting substances into their systems. 60% of the new HIV cases in the country were attributed to the injection of substances (Country Coordinating Committee, 2012). In 2012, it was estimated that

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

1,700 people lost their lives due to substance abuse in the United Kingdom and Island. 70% of those who lost their lives were males (Corkery, Claridge, Loi, Goodair & Schifano, 2014). In 2011, the number of deaths which were as a result of substance abuse among the youth was 211, 000 (UNODC, 2013). Africa and Asia account for about 70% of the world's population using opium and its derivatives (UNODC, 2012).

The Executive Director of UNODC, Antonio Maria indicated that the use of heroin in East Africa is on the ascendancy whereas the use of cocaine is on the ascendancy in West Africa. Failure to control the use of substances could result in health disaster in the developing world (Psychonaut, 2010). Due to the social, political and economic implications of substance abuse, a plethora of world agencies, leaders, governments and health communication are making conscious efforts to curb it (Okon, 2013). UNODC has invested millions of dollars on research and campaigns to curb substance abuse and trafficking. In 2012, UNODC published a detailed report on drugs. The document, thus World Drug Report, 2012 was as result of the research conducted to ameliorate the understanding of issues on illicit drugs and trafficking and to curb the supply of illicit drugs, demand as well as the use (Ibid).

Substance abuse has become prevalent in Ghana due to the amalgamation of rapid social change and traditional social structures. In addition, the prevalence of substance abuse in urban centres is due to rapid urbanization and social and moral decadence (Johnston, 2002). According to WHO (2003), the conundrum of substance abuse in Ghana is not different from that of other African nations however the magnitude of the conundrum varies. In 2014, TODAY newspaper, a local Ghanaian newsprint conducted an investigation into substance abuse in Ghana. The paper also combined statistics from the Narcotics Control Board and revealed that close to 50, 000 people in

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

Ghana were into substance use and out of this number, the youth were the dominant force. Out of the 50, 000 people 35, 000 were students from junior and senior high schools and tertiary institutions aged between 12 and 35 years. The remaining 15, 000 were adults, 9000 males and 6000 females (NACOB, 2014).

In recent times, substance users have ignored the stigma that comes with the use of substances. In Ghana, the use of illicit substances has become one of the major causes of mental illness among the youth in recent times. Fortunately for some substance abusers, they end up in rehabilitation centres whereas others find themselves roaming on the streets (Akyeampong, 2005). In 2008, a health report from Accra Psychiatry indicated that majority of the substance abusers commenced using substances as adolescents and developed tolerance for the substances over time. In 2002, among the top ten causes of admission at psychiatric hospitals in Ghana, had substance abuse ranking second next to schizophrenia with a rate of 17.43%. According to the psychiatric hospitals in Ghana, the substances people abuse include crack, codeine, morphine, cannabis, khat, pethidine, nicotine, cocaine and inhalants such as glue, petrol and thinner (WHO, 2006). The rise in substance use is as a result of increase in availability and accessibility of alcohol, cannabis and other illicit drugs. The outcome is not surprising in the sense that Ghana is regarded as a major transit hub for heroin and cocaine resulting in domestic availability and use (WHO, 2006).

The media are a power platform for disseminating information to the general public. Moreover the media are a powerful communication that can be used to send developmental messages to mass audiences. They set public agenda and also influence public opinions on vital issues (Kiouis & Wu, 2008). According to Lawhon & Herrick (2013: 988) *“the mass media play an influential role in the process of agenda setting by providing one of the primary attention arenas in the public*

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

domain, by calling attention to certain problems and by framing what are seen as “the causes of and solutions to those problems”. Nicholas (2002: 4) also posits that “*mass media campaigns have their primary effects on agenda setting, on influencing the salience of particular drug issues, on stimulating public debate and facilitating structural change*”. Mass media campaigns are a useful tool for drug interventions targeted at the youth however there is no clear information on the extent to which media influences the lives of the youth (Drugscope, 2005).

1.2 Justification of the Study

Substance abuse due to its prevalence has become a global issue and governments of various countries are making concerted efforts to curb the canker. Executives of UNODC after having a conclave reached a decision to invest monies to curb substance abuse. Substance abuse in Ghana has exacerbated because day in day out more people are abusing different types of substances. The situation is worse among the youth who engage in substance use due to a compendium of factors. Some have lost their lives due to substance abuse whereas others are suffering from substance use disorders. The media is very important and salient because they educate, inform and entertain the general public. Every information they disseminate carries weight because they are held in high esteem. The general public form an opinion or engage in discourse as well as actions based on information the media put out. The media have engaged in a plethora of agenda to solve issues. Substance abuse has become a canker however the media’s effort to curb the situation is not yet known by an overwhelming majority of people. Moreover, little research has been done in this area. Substance abuse is retarding the progress of the country therefore it is imperative to ascertain the role of the media in fighting against the canker in the country, the strategies they have adopted to deal with the situation, the challenges they face etc.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

1.3 Research Questions

1. What strategies are mapped up by the media to curb substance abuse in Ghana?
2. What is the level of effectiveness of the strategies mapped up by the media?
3. What are the challenges facing the media in their campaigns against substance abuse.
4. What is the impact of the media campaigns against substance abuse?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study will inform the general public and government on the true state of substance abuse in the country. Moreover, the conscious effort by the media to curb substance abuse as well as the challenges facing them will be known by the general public and government.

The study will also help the government come up with policies or strengthen existing policies that will help in the fight against substance abuse.

The study will be of immense help to parents and guardians as it will educate them on how to support and supervise their wards to prevent them from engaging in substance abuse.

The study will help Civil Society Organizations (NGOs), non-governmental agencies (NGOs) and other stakeholders to come up with ways and means to help fight the canker in the country.

The study will add up to existing literature in this area of study therefore other researchers interested in this area of study will see it to be worthwhile.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on both theoretical literature and empirical literature. The theoretical aspects focus on theories on media effects (agenda setting and framing), role of the media in curtailing illicit substance abuse, substance abuse and media, substance abuse and society, determinants of substance abuse among the youth and effects of substance abuse. The empirical review focuses on works that have been done in this area of study.

2.2 Theoretical Literature

2.2.1 Theories on Media Effects

According to McQuail (2005), media effects theory is a paradox, thus it is inundated by the assumption that the media influences people's thoughts as well as behaviour. However, there are little agreements regarding the nature or extent of the media effects. McLeod, Kosicki & Pan (1991: 242) posited that "media effects may take different forms, have distinctive processes, and require assessment in varied ways." Eveland (2003) unearthed that media effects theory possesses five features and they are 1) a focus on audience 2) some expectation of audience 3) a belief that the influence is due to either to the form or content of a media message system 4) the usage of variable terminology and discourse of causality 5) the creation of empirically testable hypothesis. From the 20th century to the end of the 1960s, there was an emergence of an evolution from post-war propaganda which indicated that media messages had strong effects and operated like a

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

hypodermic syringe injecting the audience with stimulus and creating even behavioural effects. (McQuail, 2005).

Entman (1989) posited that there was an assumption that the audience either screened out messages which did not conform to the preconceived beliefs or did not give much attention to media messages if they did not have an understanding of the messages. McQuail (2005: 461) refers to the position as “negotiated media influence”. This amalgamates elements of strong and minimal effects theory in order to show how the media shapes the construction of social reality. Nevertheless, it also recognizes the diverse means a media message may be processed and interpreted by the audience (Scheufele, 1999). The media influence audiences in a plethora of ways including agenda setting and defining public interest and framing issues via selection and salience. On the back of the mechanisms, the media have an effect on attitudes towards risk and norms (McLeod et al., 1991).

2.2.1.1 Agenda Setting

The agenda setting function defines issues of paramount importance, gets the attention of the public and shapes opinions of the public. There is a direct correlation between the emphasis the media place on an issue and the significance of audience’s perception regarding the issue (McCombs & Show, 1972). Agenda setting theory of the media elucidates the power of the media to raise the importance of an issue in the minds of the public via editorial emphasis and incessant coverage of such an issue. This clearly shows that the media in their reportage give importance to an issue, cause such an issue to gain some level of significance and receive perennial attention from the audience (Larsorsa, 2008).

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

A significant number of studies have revealed that the media influence public concern regarding social control issues such as crime and substance use more than vicissitudes in the actual reported incidence (Beckett, 1994). According to Cohen (1963:13), *“the press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and opinion. It may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about”*. According to McCombs (1997), the media also tell the audience how to think about it. The process of agenda setting builds consensus with regards to issues of paramount importance within the community. Albeit enough evidence indicating that the media shape public opinion and policy, the effect of the message will not be enormous unless there is resonance between the media and public. This is because both parties participate in the process of agenda setting (McCombs, 1997). In a nutshell, the agenda setting theory describes how the media shape information in a manner that certain issues are raised in significance to the public neglecting some other issues and influencing the public to ascertain the information and eventually form an opinion (Nesbitt-Larkinc, 2008).

2.2.1.2 Framing

Kohring & Matthes (2002:143) defines framing as an *“an approach to the effects of media – that in general denotes the idea that the media deal with certain issues in different ways and that, therefore, the issue is covered and reported to the public in different frames or perspectives”*. According to Entman (1993), framing basically entails selection and salience. *“To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”* (Entman, 1993:52). A significant number of studies in behavioural sciences indicate that the manner in which a problem is framed

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

offers a contextual signal which may have an impact on decision making or opinions (Ivengar, 1991). Framing is of paramount importance because in instances where there is absence of personal experience, the manner the media portray issues or events guide interpretation by the audience and also influences them to form new opinions. On the back of principles of selection and salience, there are a plethora of means the media shape the way a story is presented via framing (Clegg Smith, Wakefield, Terry-McElrath, Chaloupka, Flay & Saba, 2008). Selecting and ignoring certain sources contribute to the framing of issues, with official sources such as politicians and government officials incessantly being in the news/media on the back of drugs (Teece & Makkai, 2000) while alternative voices are frequently ostracized (Hansen, Cottle, Negrine, & Newbold, 1998).

2.2.2 Media and Illicit Substance Abuse: Role and Social Change Strategies

The media is a powerful communication platform for disseminating information to the general public or audience. Moreover the media can be used to convey development messages to the mass audience. In view of this, they have a role to play in curbing substance abuse (Kioussis & Wu, 2008). Armstrong cited by Lawhon & Herrick (2013: 988) indicated that *“the mass media play an influential role in the process of agenda setting by providing one of the primary attention arenas in the public domain, by calling attention to certain problems and by framing what are seen as the causes of and solutions to those problems”*. Moreover, Carroll cited by Nicholas (2002) posited that *“mass media campaigns have their primary effects on agenda setting, on influencing the salience of particular drug issues, on stimulating public debate and facilitating structural change”*. According to Lancaster, Hughes, Spicer, Mathew-Simmons & Dillon (2013) *“the*

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

agenda setting function of the news media defines salient issues, captures the attention of the public and shapes public opinion.”

The media inform, educate and entertain the audience. Aside these three fundamental cardinal functions, the media perform other indispensable functions including surveillance, enforcement of social norms, correlation, status conferral as well as cultural transmission (McQuail, 2007). If these functions are performed effectively and efficiently, they will be of immense help to the anti-drug institutions in Ghana in the fight of substance abuse.

2.2.2.1 Surveillance

The media in performing the surveillance functions incessantly watch the environment and inform the mass audience about issues or events that affect the society. The media are more or less societal watch dogs. They explore the environment in order to identify and inform the general public about SWOT analysis because they have an effect on the general public (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2015). Surveillance is in two folds namely warning surveillance and instrumental surveillance. With regards to warning surveillance, the media gather information and inform the audience about the threats or dangers existing in the society. The threats include catastrophes, environmental pollution, unemployment, economic depression, industrial crises and crimes such as cyber fraud, ritual killings, ATM scam and substance use. The media draw the attention of the audience on the threats so that proactive measures can be taken (Eun-Ho, Kyung-Woo P & Afif, 2007). With regards to instrumental surveillance, the media disseminate information about events or issues that are of immense help to the public. Instrumental surveillance consists of news regarding new treatments for malaria, HIV, cancer, employment opportunities, new products and services, current

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

market prices and admissions (Eun-Ho et al., 2007). The media in performing the surveillance functions can help in the fight against substance abuse in Ghana by monitoring the activities of the abusers and exposing them. Exposing criminal activities deters others from moving on that tangent.

2.2.2.2 Enforcement of Social Norms

All societies have norms and values which normally prescribe the standard of conduct. The norms tell people what to do and what not to do. The do's come with rewards whereas the don'ts come with sanctions or punishments (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2015). The media have a responsibility of enforcing the norms by reporting sanctions for violating the norms or reward people for adhering to the norms. Issues relating to substance abuse should receive incessant and intensive editorial emphasis in the media. The media informing the public about arrests of substance users is not enough. The media must assist the government as well as other anti-drug agencies to expose those involved. This forms part of the public service and social responsibilities of the media (Ibid).

In order for the media to perform the functions effectively, they can utilize the following campaign strategies to curb substance abuse.

2.2.2.3 Spot Announcement and Catchy Expressions

This refers to the short public messages specifically by the broadcast media. They are short and precise and are used to create awareness about social issues. They normally come in between or at the end of a newscast (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2015). They may appear in the following forms.

- Stop drug use and trafficking, it is a menace to our society.
- Drink responsibly
- Say no to drugs

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

- Smokers are liable to die young.
- Your future is bright, don't ruin it (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2015)

2.2.3.4 Fear Appeal/Scare Tactics

When other strategies mapped up to curb substance abuse become futile, anti-drug campaigns by the media can be in the form of scare tactics. This strategy is used to cause fear in the audience in order to deter them from engaging in social vices. A significant number of empirical studies have revealed that scare tactics or fear appeal could be effective in deterring the youth from using illicit substances. Scare messages may come in the following forms.

- Use hard drugs and ruin your future
- Hard drugs will kill you
- Heroin has destroyed millions of young heroes.
- Illicit substances are deadly and poisonous
- Don't use cocaine, it will snuff your life out (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2015).

2.2.3.5 Edutainment

This is a media strategy whereby development messages are presented in an entertainment form. It is referred to as a process of designing and implementing messages to educate and entertain the audience. Moreover it is a communication strategy that makes use of popular culture in educating and challenging people. Edutainment is not regarded as a theory but rather a strategy to bring change in society via known entertainment formats (Japhet, 2013). In a nutshell, edutainment is entertainment education. The Soul City Model of entertainment is a good model for behavioral

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

change (Japhet, 2013). The Ghanaian media can adopt this model in order to curb substance use and abuse in Ghana.

2.2.4 Substance Abuse and Media

Substance abuse is palpable in popular culture as fictional and non-fictional media incessantly use substance abuse and recovery as plot devices (Boothroyd, 2006). Media such as Cheech and Chong Films portrayed substance abuse especially smoking of marijuana as the main component of a plot. Other media also portrayed substance abuse and recovery as a storyline. Examples are Sandra Bullock's *Days* and CBS sitcom *Mom*. With *Mom*, the story centres on a mother and daughter who reflect on their past substance abuse. The media play a vital role in shaping public opinion about social and cultural issues including substance abuse (Hughes, Lancaster & Spicer, 2011). How the media portray substance abuse influences the attitudes and behaviour of people. Research has shown that substance abuse in the media mainly focuses on alcohol basically in the context of advertisement or marketing (Nicholls, 2011). Nicholls (2011: 205) however posits that news reports "*often accentuate the negative consequences of drinking such as violence and anti-social behaviour.*" The media show that consumption of alcohol is normal however, excessive consumption of alcohol leads to social harm (Nicholls, 2011).

According to Hersey (2005: 489) understanding the nature of abuse is often shunned in films so that "*the effect is to cut off dialogue and to construct only one possible view of addiction. A view that demonstrates individuals struggling with addiction (primarily alcohol), followed by a prompt and easy recovery to continue a healthy and successful life.*" The media many times portray one way to recover in films via Alcoholics Anonymous. Society sees all abusers and therapies through

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

a particular lens. This assertion is not a true representation of the diverse forms of substance abuse therapies (Hersey, 2005). According to Taylor (2008), some findings of media representations regarding substance abuse create a panic-based society. Hughes et al. (2011) posits that issues that center on substance abuse emerge in the media in relation to deviance. For example, media representations of substance abuse appear in relation to crime, and those crimes are frequently committed by *“rebellious people, gangs, or by people that deserve punishment (not help)”* (Hughes et al., 2011: 286).

Furthermore, the media frequently portray punishment as the solution to substance abuse hence *“reducing drug use to a narrow range of topics and interpretive framework which neglects other possible causes of substance abuse and courses of action.”* (Taylor, 2008: 242). According to Hellman (2010), many times, substance abuse is sensationalized within the media space. The manner in which the media portray substance abuse *“perpetuate distorted and stereotypical preconceptions on the most extreme cases”* (Ayers & Jewkes, 2012: 328).

2.2.5 Substance Abuse and Society

Substance abuse is inimical to society due to its financial, emotional and cultural impact. Substance abuse affects the health of people, both physically and mentally. It is estimated that 14% of patients who are admitted in hospital suffer from substance abuse disorders (NIDA, 2008). Substance abuse has a direct correlation with poverty likewise sexual behaviour (Chen & Biswas, 2012). 17% of criminals confess that they committed their respective crimes to get money and buy substance (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2004) and 70% of people in state penitentiaries have used illegal substances on a regular basis (NIDA, 2008). It is evident substance abuse has an effect on the

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

physical, mental, safety and economics of society. Substance abuse aside being a medical concern is also a social canker (Hellman, 2010).

2.2.6 Determinants of Substance Abuse among the Youth

There are a litany of risk factors that lead to substance abuse among youth and they include age and gender, poverty, peer pressure, family structure and relations, education, family, availability and accessibility of drugs and community. Abusing substances is a threat to the health and safety of the youth, their family and society as a whole. Understanding these risk factors will be of immense help to health professionals and the community in addressing the increasing use and abuse of substances among the youth.

2.2.6.1 Age and Gender

Underage abusing substance has become prevalent across the globe and this affects the growth and development of the youth (Stoolmiller, Wills, McClure, Tanski & Worth, 2012). In the United States, the median age for alcohol use is 14 years (Swendsen, Burstein, Case, Conway &, 2012). Moreover, 43% of adolescents aged between 13 and 14 had used alcohol and 78% of individuals aged between 17 and 18 years had also used alcohol. In the United States, the males abuse alcohol more than the females (Swendsen et al., 2012). In Kenya, close to 43% of male youth smoke cigarettes whereas 37% of female youth smoke cigarettes (Atwoli, Mungla, Ndung'u, Kinoti & Ogot, 2011). A study conducted in the United States revealed that parents provide intense supervision and monitoring to the girls compared to the boys. In some Asian nations, parents provide more supervision to the girls and this could be the reason female numbers are less when it comes to abuse of substances (Hemovich, Lac & Crano, 2012).

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

2.2.6.2 Poverty

Substance abuse is prevalent among lower and middle socioeconomic sectors of youth. Moreover it is prevalent in poorer parts of the world (Blas & Kurup, 2010). Poverty has an effect on the wellbeing of individuals. Also, it has both physical and psychological ramifications. People who are poor abuse substances in order to deal with a significant number of issues such as unemployment, social indifference, lack of affordable care and inadequate housing (Niazi, Zaman & Ikram, 2009). In Pakistan, 24% of the population are living below the poverty line particularly in the rural settlements. 74% of children and young adults who are residing on the streets are substance abusers. Substances such as hashish, opiates, cannabis and cocaine are mostly used by poor people especially those who are unemployed and also have low education (Niazi et al., 2009).

2.2.6.3 Peer Pressure

The amalgamation of peer pressure and low self-confidence are strong during the youthful days. A friend can be influenced to be a substance addict if he or she mingles with groups that are already into substance abuse (Sherman, 2007). One may want to test a substance for fun and end up becoming addicted to the substance. Conversely, getting addicted to a particular substance is a gradual process that will reach a pinnacle. Due to the peer pressure, the usage of marijuana, inhalants and cocaine is on the ascendancy. This affects the attitude of the youth as well as their health leading to frustration, poor academic performance and dropping out of school. This in turn leads to an upsurge in crimes, lawlessness and sexual assaults among the group (Denise, 2006).

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

2.2.6.4 Family

According to WHO (2004), family problems such as broken homes, cultural influence, lack of parental affection, poverty, parental neglect and not meeting up responsibility could be major determinants of substance abuse. The youth abusing drugs get themselves involved in criminal and violent activities. Moreover they become social miscreants, armed robbers etc. A study in Bishkek Kyrgyzstan revealed that poor relationship between parents and children led to excessive alcohol consumption among the youth (Aliiaskarov & Bakiev, 2013). In Pakistan, close to 35% of the youth who abuse substances indicated that their parents are on same trajectory (Niaz, Siddiqui, Hassan, Husain & Ahmed, 2005).

2.2.6.5 Availability and Accessibility of Substances

Adolescents in Kyrgyzstan and other post-soviet countries are allowed to drink alcoholic beverages during celebrations. This behaviour can lead to early alcohol use and later substance abuse (Aliiaskarov & Bakiev, 2013). In some countries, there are not enough restrictions hence drugs can freely be bought from a pharmacy or chemist without any prescription. It is imperative to tackle the issue of substance demand and its supply with a lot of resources to prevent this canker (Somani & Meghani, 2016).

2.2.6.6 Community

Communities that have a penchant for producing and distributing illicit substances are bound to have abusers among them with most of them being the youth. Such communities face a litany of insecurity issues such as social violence among the youth, mental disorder, teen pregnancy, criminal activities such as fraud, robbery and rape (United Nation, 2009). Communities with

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

substance abusers are more likely to be in low socioeconomic status. This is simply because the youth who are the majority of substance abusers would not be able to work. This in turn results in poor quality education, low production and poor social services (Ibid).

2.2.7 Effects of Substance Abuse

2.2.7.1 Social Effects of Substances

Over reliance on any substance is inimical to individuals and society as a whole (Butcher, Mineka, S., Hooley, J. M. & Carson, 2004). Aside from substance abuse affecting individuals, it also affects family, friends, teachers and other members of the society. Youth who constantly abuse substances may become moody, aggressive and irritable. This deteriorates relationships with family, peers among others (Parrot et al., 2004). Substance abuse heightens the rates of crimes, morbidity and mortality across the globe. It was estimated that in 2011, 200,000 people lost their lives due to substance abuse. Hepatitis C is also prevalent among substance users who inject substances into their bodies. In 2011, close to 7.2 million people were diagnosed with Hepatitis C, 1.2 million people were diagnosed with Hepatitis B and 1.6 million people contracted HIV due to the use of injected substances (UNODC, 2013).

Moreover students abusing substances become truants and also perform poorly when it comes to academics (Burger, 2008). Moreover, on the back of the truancy, they often get expelled from their institutions (Donald, Lazarus & Peliwe, 2007). Students who abuse substances many times suffer from short-term memory, impaired tracking ability in sensory and perceptual functions and adverse emotional and social development. When their academic performance is poor, it leads to a decline in self-esteem and they may drop out of school. This further leads to excessive substance use

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

creating a rancorous circle (Lakhanpal & Agnihotri, 2007). The more students adhere to tobacco, cocaine, alcohol among others, the more they perform poorly, drop out of school and also not further their education (Berk, 2007).

In addition, some of the substances are very expensive, hence in order to continue using them one may resort to petty theft, engage in violence and also organize drug-related crimes. A significant number of studies have revealed that there is a correlation between substance abuse and criminal activities (Donald et al., 2007). There is a belief that more than half of the murders are done under the influence of substances as well as other criminal and other violent activities such as rape, assault and family violence (Parrot et al., 2004). This contributes to the threats posed to the youth, adolescents and others (Donald et al., 2007). Issues pertaining to substance abuse are met at all levels of the criminal justice system, thus from the international trade in substances and using it proceeds for corrupt activities to driving under the influence of alcohol or any other substance. Substance abuse has an effect on the criminal justice system with empirical evidence of nexus between excessive drinking, committing crime or being a victim of a crime (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008).

Substance-related crimes are as a result of a plethora of factors. They can be personal, cultural, economic and situational. When the youth resort to substances to deal with stress, they do not acquire decision making skills as well as coping mechanisms. Moreover they begin to develop grave adjustment problems such as chronic anxiety, depression and anti-social behaviour (Berk, 2007).

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

2.2.7.2 Economic Effects of Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is inimical to the economy of a country. Substance abuse leads to a litany of problems such as impaired work performance, inefficiency, accidents and absenteeism at a cost to both the industry and society as a whole (Parrot et al., 2004). According to the Department of Social Development (2006), 2.5 million working days are lost because of absenteeism emanating from substance-related ailment. Substance abuse negatively affects the health care system and one of the effects is depletion of scarce resources made available to ameliorate people's health (Department of Health, 2007). Moreover, medical resources are misused and also people lose their lives in substance-related calamities. Huge sums of money are invested in hospitals to cater for the health of people and also on prevention campaigns and therapies. Other expenses include repairs to damaged properties perpetrated by substance abusers, food and accommodation in state penitentiaries and transporting substance abusers to court (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008). The medications used in treating people suffering from substance abuse disorders is very expensive. Substance abuse is a financial burden for every country. Aside from adolescents suffering progressive and psychological deterioration, they also lose their psychological, social and economic statuses and abilities due to their cycle of substance abuse (Donald et al., 2007). Lastly, the socio-economic cost of smoking is astounding. Annually, smokers compile more than 80 million lost days and 145 million days of disability (Davison, Neale & Kring, 2004).

2.3 Empirical Literature

Allara, Ferri, Bo, Gasparriani & Faggiano (2015) in their study sought to determine whether there was evidence that mass-media campaigns could be effective in reducing illicit drug consumption and the intent to consume. They searched 4 electronic databases, thus MEDLINE, ProQuest

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

Dissertations & Theses, EMBASE, A & I and CENTRAL). They also made a conscious effort to explore 7 other resources in order to get both published and unpublished materials. They conducted a meta-analysis of randomized control trials as well as a pooled analysis of interrupted time series. They identified 19 studies which comprised 184,811 respondents. Pooled analysis and narrative synthesis revealed diverse evidence of effectiveness. 8 interventions assessed with randomized controlled trials led to no evidence of an effect, both on the use of drugs (standardised mean difference (SMD) -0.02 ; 95% CI -0.15 to 0.12) and the intention to use drugs (SMD -0.07 ; 95% CI -0.19 to 0.04). Furthermore 4 mass media campaigns provided evidence of positive effects in drug use prevention and 2 interventions also provided evidence of iatrogenic effects.

Hughes, Spicer, Lancaster & Matthew-Simmons (2010) conducted a study on media reporting on illicit drugs in Australia: trends and impacts in youth attitudes to illicit drug use. The study revealed that most of the coverage on illicit drug use or issues in the Australian print media focused more on heroin (27%) and cannabis (24.5%). However a few of the reports centered on ecstasy (4.9%). Articles that focused on a good moral evaluation of drugs accounted for a meagre 1.9%. 83.5% of the articles were written with a neutral tone. Hughes et al. (2010) also revealed that the dominant effect of illicit drugs/use covered in the print media was legal problems which accounted for 59.9% of the articles, followed by health problems (14.2%), social problems (10.1%) and cost to society (10.1%). The framing of illicit drugs differed between drugs. Greater emphasis for heroin articles was on legal problems, amphetamine articles were on crisis and bad moral evaluation of drugs and ecstasy articles was on negative health ramifications and risks from their use.

In the same study Hughes et al. (2010), conducted a survey analysis and focus group analysis. With regards to the survey analysis, they found out that the illicit drugs portrayed by the media

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

influenced the youth attitudes to drugs. The coverage by the media had an effect on the youth sampled for the study in an anti-drug manner, thus, they heightened perceptions of risk, minimized perceptions of acceptability as well as the reported likelihood of drug use in the future. They also found out that the media effects were not monotonous. The people affected the most were females, non-users (compared to recent and non-recent users) as well as people who portrayed themselves as less interested in the use of drugs (on the back of a screening tool that measured attitudes to drugs, drug use and life). Media portrayals that endorsed the use of drugs had the tendency to heighten pro-drug attitudes whereas negative portrayals had the tendency to minimize pro-drug attitudes. Among all the portrayals, the most effective for reducing pro-drug attitudes were the negative health and social repercussions portrayals, thus articles regarding cannabis and mental health problems, ecstasy and pill taking etc. With regards to the focus group analysis, they found out that people knew the media have diverse impacts on the youth attitudes to drugs. Moreover, they found out that some of the youth were more inclined to be affected whereas others were more likely to shun the messages. Four vital factors shape how the youth interpret messages. They are media literacy skills, media framing, frequency of the media message and lastly, pre-existing knowledge and belief systems (including beliefs about drugs). The study also revealed that the youth are more likely to accept messages that are credible and meaningful. Health and social portrayals are more powerful in the sense that they depict a more persuasive risk message.

Patjhak & Pokharel (2017) conducted a study on the causes of drug abuse among the youth in Mid-Western Region of Nepal. Simple random sampling technique was utilized in selecting 252 respondents from various rehabilitation centers of Surkhet, Banke and Dang District. Quantitative research method was utilized to gather data from the respondents. The analytical tool used for the

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

study was chi-square. They found out that the causes of drug were psychological, socio cultural peer pressure, mass media and school/college. An overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated that the cause of drug abuse is bad relationships with family, to feel relaxed and celebrities which are shown on television.

Kembo (2012) in a study investigated the factors influencing drug use among boys in high school within Nakuru North Sub – County. The study revealed that drug use among boys in high school is triggered by peer pressure, influence from family members as well as celebrities, curiosity, inkling regarding dangers of drug abuse, excessive pocket money, inadequate good role models in teachers and parents, low cost of drugs and availability and accessibility of drugs.

Kiragu (2010) in a study investigated the extent to which selected factors contribute to alcohol and cigarette use among male students in public day schools in Nakuru Municipality. The study revealed that the influence of peer groups had the highest contribution to high school students' use of cigarettes followed by family factors. Moreover the study revealed that mass media content contributed to the use of alcohol and cigarettes. 52% of low substance users reported low mass media exposure whereas 9.3% of them reported high mass media exposure. Furthermore, 58.2% of high substance users were exposed to mass media. Lastly, 15.7% of the respondents either saw or heard about pro-alcohol and cigarettes via the internet.

Mohasoa (2010) in a study explored substance abuse among male adolescents in the rural areas of Zeerust, North West province of South Africa. The study sampled 12 males adolescents aged between 12 years and 15 years. The research approach was qualitative and the research design was exploratory. Semi-structured interviews, genograms and observations were used in the collection of data. Thematic analysis was used to analyze audio-taped data. The study revealed that

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

substances abused by the respondents entailed nicotine, heroin, cannabis and alcohol. The motive behind the abuse of substances include individual, family and environmental factors however the basic factor that lead to adolescent substance abuse was peer group pressure. The study recommended that all stakeholders had to come together to address the conundrum of substance abuse.

2.3.2 Discussion of Empirical Studies

Six empirical studies were reviewed in this study and out of the six, two related substance abuse issues to the media and the remaining four focused on the causes of substance abuse in their respective locations.

Allara et al (2015) out of interest wanted to ascertain whether there is evidence that mass media campaigns help curb illicit drug use. In view of this, they searched four electronic databases and they were MEDLINE, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, EMBASE, A & I and CENTRAL. In addition to the four electronic databases, they explored 7 resources to obtain published and unpublished materials. Allara et al (2015) did well by exploring more databases because it showed that they were eager to establish whether evidence on mass media campaigns reducing illicit drug use exists. On the path of seeking evidence, they conducted both meta-analysis and pooled analysis. They found out that 8 interventions had no effect however 2 interventions provided evidence of iatrogenic effects. Moreover 4 media campaigns provided evidence of positive effects in drug use prevention. Hughes et al (2015) in their study focused on drug use and abuse as well as the media. Basically, their study centered on media reporting on illicit drugs in Australia. They looked at trends and impacts in youth attitudes to illicit drug use. In reaching their objectives, they decided to focus on the media, conducted a survey and focused group discussions. In view of this,

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

their analysis was in three parts media analysis, survey analysis and focus group analysis. Focusing on these target populations was good because they got to know their perspectives regarding the effect the media has had on them. Hughes et al (2015) chose print media over any type of media. They found out that most of the reports were on heroin, cannabis and ecstasy. Most of the effects of drug use that were dominant in the print media included legal problems, health problems, social problems and cost to society. With regards to the survey analysis, they found out that the illicit drugs portrayed by the media influenced the youth attitudes to drugs. With regards to the focus group analysis, they found out that some of the youth were more inclined to be affected whereas others were more likely to shun the messages.

The studies of Patjhak & Pokharel (2017), Kembo (2012), Kiragu (2010) and Mohasoa (2010) focused on the causes of substance abuse among the youth/adolescents. Kembo (2012), Kiragu (2010) and Mohasoa (2010) focused on only male respondents in the localities whereas the studies of Patjhak & Pokharel (2017) focused on both sexes. Furthermore, the male respondents Kembo (2012) and Kiragu (2010) used for their studies were students. Patjhak & Pokharel (2017) conducted their study in Mid-Western Region of Nepal. Their study was quantitative in nature. They found out that the factors that lead to drug abuse were psychological, socio cultural, peer pressure, mass media and school/college. Kembo (2012) conducted the study in a high school within Nakuru North Sub – County. The study revealed that drug use among boys in high school is triggered by peer pressure, influence from family members as well as celebrities, curiosity, inkling regarding dangers of drug abuse, excessive pocket money, inadequate good role models in teachers and parents, low cost of drugs and availability and accessibility of drugs. Kiragu (2010) whose study also focused on public day schools in Nakuru Municipality found out that peer

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

pressure and exposure to mass media were causes of substance abuse. Mohasoa (2010) conducted the study in the rural areas of Zeerust, North West province of South Africa. The study was qualitative hence the research instruments were semi-structured interviews, genograms and observations. Mohasoa (2010) found out that students abuse substances such as alcohol, heroin, cannabis and nicotine. Individual, family and environmental factors influenced the students to resort to substances. Both Mohasoa (2010) and Kiragu (2010) found out that the primary cause of substance abuse among the youth is peer pressure.

Previous literature is salient because it helps ascertain what other researchers have done in the area of study. The gaps in the previous literature will help in creating specific objectives for the study. Moreover the previous literature will help in choosing the appropriate research approach, media and the type of analysis to conduct.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter primarily focuses on the systematic body of methods or procedures the researcher will utilize to achieve the objectives of the study. The research methodology comprises research design, target population, sampling technique and sample size, data sources, instrumentation, data analysis and limitations.

3.2 Research Design

There are three research approaches namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. According to Creswell (2014), before selecting a research approach for a study, one must take into consideration the nature of the research problem, personal experience and audience. Taking into consideration the three vital elements, a researcher will gravitate towards the qualitative approach. In other words, the study will be purely qualitative. Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals and groups ascribe to a social or human problem. This process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data collected in the setting of the participants, data analysis building from particulars to general themes and making interpretations of the meaning to the data collected (Creswell, 2014). The qualitative research design that will be adopted for the study will be exploratory research. Exploratory research is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations. Moreover, exploratory research design provides insight into the problem or helps to develop ideas for a potential qualitative research.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

3.3 Population and Sampling

3.3.1 Target Population

First and foremost, the study will target both electronic media (radio and TV) and print media. Secondly, the study will target general managers of the TV stations, programme managers of the radio stations and a print media manager. They are the right people who can give the appropriate answers to the questions that will be asked.

3.3.2 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

There are a lot of media outlets in Ghana therefore there is the need to draw a sample out of the entire population. In view of this, purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling will be used to select the media outlets for the study. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique whereby researchers rely on their judgment when selecting members of the population to participate in the study. Purposive sampling will be used because it helps save time and money while collecting data. Additionally, it helps target niche demographics to obtain specific data points. Purposive sampling will be used to select TV3, UTV, Peace Fm, Joy Fm and Graphic Communications Limited. Purposive sampling will be used to select a manager each from the selected media outlets. In a nutshell, the sample size of the study will be 5.

3.4 Data Sources

The study will make use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source of data will be interviews whereas the secondary source of data will be journals, books, websites, articles etc.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

3.5 Research Instrument

The research instrument that will be used to collect data from the respondents will be interviews. Unlike questionnaires, interviews provide possibilities of obtaining detailed information regarding the research questions. Studies have shown that there are three types of interviews namely structured interview, semi-structured interview and unstructured interview. Among the three types of interviews in research, semi-structured interviews will be employed to collect data from the respondents. The researcher will gravitate towards semi-structured interviews because they are open and allow new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewees say. Semi-structured interviews are flexible and will help the researcher obtain detailed information on the research topic. Besides, an interview guide will be prepared in accordance with the research objectives. The interview guide will help the researcher to focus the interviews on the topic at hand.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected will be analyzed and presented in a narrative form. Narrative analysis is one of the popular methods of analyzing interview data. Narrative analysis will be used because it gives proper understanding to the data collected. The data will be analyzed under themes to give meaning to the study and to put the data collected into perspective. The themes will be centered on the research objectives.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

3.7 Limitations of the Study

1. The study will be limited to 5 media outlets hence the findings of the study cannot be generalized.
2. The respondents might not be accurate or truthful with every information or answer. This will therefore have an effect on the findings of the study.
3. There are inadequate studies done in this area therefore relating the individual findings of this study to the findings of previous studies will be difficult.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Substance abuse has been in existence since time immemorial however the situation has exacerbated in recent times in the sense that the youth who are regarded to be the future have been abusing drugs on a daily basis. The current situation in other countries is not different from that of Ghana. Abusing substances in the country has become a norm for users as they abuse the substances on a daily basis. The substances abused include alcohol, heroin, cocaine, cannabis, codeine, glue etc. One may ask how did we get here as a country with regards to the incessant substance abuse? There are a compendium of factors that trigger the abuse of substances in the country. Some of the factors include peer pressure, poverty, availability and accessibility of the substances, community, family among many others.

Substance abuse has two specific effects, thus social effect and economic effect. Substance abuse affects individuals, families, friends and members of the society. Individuals who abuse substance become very moody and aggressive. Moreover, since they are addicted, they engage in theft to be able to buy the substances. The abuse of substance leads to high rates of crimes and deaths. With regards to economic effects, substance abuse results in impaired work performance, inefficiency, accidents and absenteeism which is a cost to organizations and society. Lots of money is invested in hospitals to take care of people. Again, the medication or treatment for people suffering from substance abuse disorders is very expensive. Substance abuse is a burden on every country.

The media are of paramount importance to society because they inform, educate and entertain. On the back of these fundamental cardinal responsibilities, society holds them in high esteem. Society is heavily dependent on the information communicated by the media. The media in Ghana have

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

made some reportage on substance abuse. Aside from the reportage, it is prudent to ascertain the other roles the media play in curbing substance in Ghana. Specifically, the study seeks to ascertain the strategies mapped up by the media to curb substance abuse, the level of effectiveness of these strategies, challenges faced in their campaigns as well as the impact of their campaigns.

The study area is not new however little research has been done in this area in Ghana. Therefore, finding empirical findings was difficult. This research is innovative and original due to the specific objectives. The objectives are different from the other research works. Secondly, the study will be purely qualitative and will be targeting both electronic media and print media. Managers of reputable media houses will be interviewed to ascertain the true nature of substance abuse in Ghana, their campaigns used to fight substance abuse in Ghana as well as the impact of the campaigns. These areas have rarely been touched by some research works. This makes this study more innovative.

The research will help the both government and society know the state of substance abuse in Ghana, the substances abused by people, causes of the abuse as well as the effects of substance on individuals, economy and society as a whole. The findings of the research will also help society know the media campaigns on substance abuse, the impact of the campaigns as well as the challenges the media go through with regards to their campaigns.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

REFERENCES

- Akyeampong, E. (2005). Diaspora and drug trafficking in West Africa: A case study of Ghana. *African Affairs*, 104(416), 429–447.
- Allara, E., Ferri, M., & Bo, A. (2015.) Are mass-media campaigns effective in preventing drug use? A Cochrane systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMJ Open*, 5.
- Aliiaskarov, B., & Bakiev, E. (2013). The social learning and social control determinants of alcohol use among youth in Kyrgyzstan. *Drugs: Education Prevention and Policy*, 21, 1-6.
- Atwoli, L., Mungla, P. A., Ndung'u, M. N., Kinoti, K. C., & Ogot, E. M. (2011). Prevalence of substance use among college students in Eldoret, Western Kenya. *BMC Psychiatry*, 11, 34.
- Ayres, T. C., & Jewkes, Y. (2012). The haunting spectacle of crystal meth: A media-created mythology? *Crime, Media, Culture*, 3(8), 315–332. doi:10.1177/1741659012443234
- BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport (2009). Model core program paper: prevention of harms associated with substances. Available at: http://www.phabc.org/pdfcore/Prevention_of_Harms_Associated_with_Substances-Model_Core_Program_Paper.pdf. (Accessed on March 23, 2020).
- Beckett, K. (1994). Setting the public agenda: 'Street crime' and drug use in American politics. *Social Problems*, 41(3), 425-447.
- Berk, L. E. (2007). *Development through the lifespan*. (4th ed.). Boston, USA: Pearson Education Inc.
- Blas, E., & Kurup, A. S. (2010). *Equity social determinants and public health programmes*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.
- Boothroyd, D. (2006). *Culture on drugs. Narco-cultural studies of high modernity*. New York, USA: Manchester University Press.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2004). *Drug and crime facts. Office of Justice Programs*. Available at <http://www.bjs.gov> (Accessed on March 26, 2020).
- Burger, J. M. (2008). *Personality* (7th ed.). Belmont, USA: Thompson Wadsworth.
- Butcher, J. N., Mineka, S., Hooley, J. M., & Carson, R. C. (2004). *Abnormal psychology*. (12th ed.). New York, USA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Chebukaka, R. N. (2014). Drug abuse among students in public secondary schools in Kenya, The Case of Vihiga County. *International Journal of Social Science & Education* (4), 2223-4934.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

Chen, S., & Biswas, B. (2012). Behavioral correlates of dual diagnosis among women in treatment for substance abuse. *Mental Health & Substance Use: Dual Diagnosis*, 5(3), 217-227. doi:10.1080/17523281.2011.631933

Clegg Smith, K., Wakefield, M., Siebel, C., Szczypka, G., Slater, S., & Terry-McElrath, Y. (2002). *Coding the news: The development of a methodological framework for coding and analyzing newspaper coverage of tobacco issues*. Chicago, USA: Impact Teen.

Cohen, B. (1963). *The press and foreign policy*. Princeton, USA: Princeton University Press.

Corkery, J., Claridge, H., Loi, B., Goodair, C., & Schifano F. (2014). Drug related deaths in the UK: January-December. 2012. Annual Report 2013. National Programme on Substance Abuse Deaths (NPSAD).

Country Coordinating Committee. (2012). UNGASS Country Progress Report Kyrgyz Republic (January 2010 –December 2011). Bishkek: Ministry of Health, Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Davison, G. C., Neale, J. M., & Kring, A. M. (2004). *Abnormal psychology*. (9th ed.). New York, USA: John Wiley & Sons.

Denise, W. (2006). The difference of negative and positive peer pressure. Available at http://www.parentingteens.about.com/od/peer_pressure/a/handle-peer.htm. (Accessed on April 20, 2020).

Department of Health. (2007). Madlala-Routledge: Tobacco products amendment bill. Available at <http://www.polity.org.za/article/madlalaroutledge-tobacco-products-control-amendmentbill-29032007-2007-03-29>. (Accessed on April 20, 2020).

Department of Social Development. (2006). *National Drug Master Plan*. Pretoria, South Africa: DSD.

Donald, D., Lazarus, S. & Peliwe, L. (2007). *Educational psychology in social context*. (3rd ed.). Oxford, USA: Oxford University Press.

Drugscope (2005). *Media Messages: A review of drug related messages reaching young people*. London, United Kingdom: Drugscope.

Entman, R. (1989). How the media affect what people think: An information processing approach. *The Journal of Politics*, 51(2), 347-370.

Entman, R. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

Eun-Ho, Y., Kyung-Woo, P., & Afif, A. (2007). News framing West Nile virus: An outbreak of New Health Hazard. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(2): 1-14.

Eveland, W. (2003). A "mix of attributes" approach to the study of media effects and new communication technologies. *Journal of Communication*, 53(3), 395-410.

Hansen, A., Cottle, S., Negrine, R., & Newbold, C. (1998). *Mass communication research methods*. London, United Kingdom: Macmillan.

Hellman, M. (2010). From myth of marginality to portrayals of an addictive society: Reporting on addictions in the Finnish press (1968–2006). *Addiction Research & Theory*, 18(2), 224–242. doi:10.3109/16066350902836382

Hemovich, V., Lac, A., & Crano, W. D. (2011). Understanding early onset drug and alcohol outcomes among youth: The role of family structure social factors and interpersonal perceptions of use. *Psychology health & medicine*, 16: 249-267.

Hersey, B. Y. C. (2005). Script(ing) treatment: Representations of recovery from addiction in Hollywood film. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 3(23), 467–494.

Hughes, C. E., Lancaster, K., & Spicer, B. (2011). How do Australian news media depict illicit drug issues? An analysis of print media reporting across and between illicit drugs, 2003-2008. *The International Journal on Drug Policy*, 4(22), 285–291. doi:10.1016/j.drugpo.2011.05.008.

Hughes, C., Spicer, B., Lancaster, K., Matthew-Simmons, F., & Dillon, P. (2010). *Monograph No. 19: Media reporting on illicit drugs in Australia: Trends and impacts on youth attitudes to illicit drug use. DPMP Monograph Series*. Sydney, Australia: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre.

Ivengar, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible? How television frames political issues*. Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press.

Japhet, G. (2013). *Edutainment: Using stories and media for social action and behaviour change*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication.

Johnston, J. (2002). Values, culture, and the effective school. *NASSP Bulletin*, 71(497). pp. 79-88.

Kembo, E. (2012). *The factors associated with drug use among standard eight primary school pupils in Mathare Division, Nairobi Province*. Master Degree Thesis, Kenyatta University.

Kiousis, S., & Wu, X. (2008). International agenda-building and agenda-setting: Exploring the influence of public relations counsel on US news media and public perception of foreign nations. *International Communication Gazette*, 70(1): 58-75.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

Kiragu, K (2010). *Factors associated with sexual and contraceptive behavior in Kenya: Report of Nakuru Sub- County adolescents' fertility survey 1988*. Baltimore, USA: The John Hopkins University.

Kohring, M., & Matthes, J. (2002). The face(t)s of biotech in the nineties: How the German press framed modern biotechnology. *Public Understanding of Science, 11*, 143-154.

Lakhanpal, P., & Agnihotri, A. K. (2007). Drug abuse an international problem: A short review with special reference to African continent. *Indian Journal of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, 1*, 1.

Lancaster, K., Hughes, C. E., Spicer, B., Mathew-Simmons, F., & Dillon, P. (2011). Illicit drugs and the media: Models of media effects for use in drug policy research. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 30*, 397-402. doi:10.1111/j.1465-3362.2010.00239.x.

Lasorsa, D. L. (2008). *Agenda setting. Encyclopedia of political communication*. Available at http://sageereference.com/politicalcommunication/Article_n11.html. (Accessed on May 29, 2020).

Lawhon, M., & Herrick, C. (2013). Alcohol control in the news: The politics of media representations of alcohol policy in South Africa. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law, 38*(5), 987-1021. doi10.1215/03616878-2334683.

McCombs, M. (1997). Building consensus: The news media's agenda-setting roles. *Political Communication, 14*, 433-443.

McCombs, M., & Shaw, D. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 36*, 176-187.

McLeod, J., Kosicki, G., & Pan, Z. (1991). On understanding and misunderstanding media effects. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.) New York, USA: Edward Arnold.

McQuail, D. (2005). *Mass communication theory* (5th ed.). London, United Kingdom: Sage Publications.

McQuail, D. (2007). *Mass communication theory*. Los Angeles, USA: SAGE Publications

Narcotics Control Board. (2014). *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board*, New York, USA: United Nations Publications.

Nesbitt-Larkinc, P. W. (2008). *Agenda setting. Encyclopedia of US Campaign, and electoral behavior*. Available at http://sageereference.com/campaigns/Article_n7.html. (Accessed on April 12, 2020).

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

Ngesu, L. M., Ndiku, J., & Masese, A. (2008). Drug dependence and abuse in Kenyan secondary schools: Strategies for intervention. *Educational Research and Review*, 3(10), 304-308.

Niazi, M. R., Zaman, K., & Ikram, W. (2009). Is poverty to be blamed for narcotic use? A case study of Pakistan. *International Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 9, 96-101.

Niaz, U, Siddiqui, S. S., Hassan, S., Husain, H., & Ahmed, S. (2005.) A survey of psychosocial correlates of drug abuse in young adults aged 16-21 in Karachi. *Pak Journal of Med Science*, 21, 271-277.

Nicholas, R. (2002). The Role of Mass Media Campaigns in Preventing the Uptake of Illicit Drug in Australia. *A Discussion Paper Prepared for the Commissioners' Drugs Committee of the Conference of Police Commissioners of Australasia and the South West Pacific Region*, by the Australasian Centre for Policing Research, August, 2002.

Nicholls, J. (2011). UK news reporting of alcohol: An analysis of television and newspaper coverage. *Drugs: Education, Prevention, and Policy*, 3(18), 200–206. doi:10.3109/09687631003796453.

NIDA. (2008). *Friends of NIDA*. Available at <http://www.drugabuse.gov>. (Accessed on April 12, 2020).

NSDUH. (2010). *National Survey on Drug Use Health*. Available at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov>. (Accessed on April 12, 2020).

Parrott, A., Morinan, A., Moss, A., & Scholey, A. (2004). *Understanding drugs and behaviour*. London, United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons.

Otieno, A. O., & Ofulla, A. V. O. (2009). Drug abuse in Kisumu town, Western Kenya, Nairobi, *African Journal of Food Agriculture Nutrition and Development*, 6, 327-3.

Okon, G. B. (2013). War against illicit drugs in Nigeria: The need for effective media/security agencies collaboration. *Paripex - Indian Journal of Research*, 3(5), 35-37.

Pathak, D. C., & Pokharel, B. (2017). Causes of drug abuse in youth: Case of Mid-Western Region of Nepal. *Journal of Advanced Academic Research*, 4(2). 2362-1311.

Psychonaut. (2010). *UN anti-drug chief sounds alarm on possible 'health disaster' in developing world*. Available at <http://www.psychonaut.com/psychonautic-news/35744-un-anti-drug-chief-soundsalarm-possible-health-disaster.html>. (Accessed on April 12, 2020).

Ojebuyi, B. R., & Salawu, A. (2015). Decongesting the Dodgy Hub: The role of mass media in curtailing illicit drug trafficking and use in Nigeria. *Journal of Communication*, 6(1), 219-228.

Scheufele, D. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), 103-122.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

Sherman, C. (2007). The science of drug abuse and addiction. Available at www.hbo.com/addiction/ (Accessed on March 12, 2020).

Somani, S., & Meghani, S. (2016). Substance Abuse among Youth: A Harsh Reality. *Emerg Med*, 6, 330. doi:10.4172/2165-7548.1000330.

Statistics Canada (2007). Health indicator profile, annual estimates, by age group and sex, Canada, provinces, territories, health regions and peer groups, occasional. Available at <http://www.cansim2.statcan.ca/cgi-win/CNSMCGI.PGM>. (Accessed on March 12, 2020).

Stoolmiller, M., Wills, T. A., McClure, A. C, Tanski, S. E., & Worth, K. A. (2012) Comparing media and family predictors of alcohol use: a cohort study of US adolescents. *BMJ Open*, 2.

Swendsen, J., Burstein, M., Case, B., Conway, K. P., & Dierker, L. (2012). Use and abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs in US adolescents: results of the National Comorbidity Survey-Adolescent Supplement. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*, 69, 390-398.

Taylor, S. (2008). Outside the outsiders: Media representations of drug use. *Probation Journal*, 55(4), 369–387.

Teece, M., & Makkai, T. (2000). *Print media reporting on drugs and crime, 1995-1998 (Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice No. 158)*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Institute of Criminology.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2008). *Annual Report*. Available at [http://www.unodc.org/documents/about-unodc/AR08 WEB.PDF](http://www.unodc.org/documents/about-unodc/AR08_WEB.PDF). (Accessed on March 12, 2020).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2009). Project in Nigeria. Available at <http://www.undcp.org/nigeria/en/ptjects.html>. (Accessed on March 12, 2020).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2012). *World Drug Report 2012*. New York, USA: United Nations.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2015). *World Drug Report 2012*. New York, USA: United Nations.

University of Maryland Medical Center. (2013). *Drug abuse*. Maryland, USA: UMMC.

World Health Organization. (2003). *World health report 2003*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO.

World Health Organization. (2004). *World health report 2004*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CURBING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GHANA

World Health Organization. (2006). *World health report 2006*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO