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EFFECT OF ILLICIT DRUG TRADE ON SECURITY IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of illicit drug trade on security in Anambra State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to examine the relationship between illicit drug trading and community violence, evaluate the relationship between illicit drug trading and crime and to examine the factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. To achieve the objectives of this study, data were collected from the respondents with the aid of a structured questionnaire. Data collected for the study were correlated and analyzed using descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented through mean and standard deviation while inferential statistics such Pearson correlation analyses was adopted in the test of hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted Rational Choice theory as propounded by Philosopher Adam Smith in the eighteenth century. It was specifically discovered that there is a significant relationship between illicit drug trade and community violence and that there is a significant relationship between illicit drug trade and crime. Based on this, Part of the recommendation includes that security agencies saddled with the responsibility of tackling illicit drug trading activities should be strengthened, adequately equipped, trained and motivated to discharge their duties effectively. Government must also formulate and implement policies capable of addressing the identified factors which encourage the trade and consumption of illicit drugs such as unemployment, unequal distribution of wealth and poverty.

***Key words:** Community violence, Crime, Illicit drug trade, Security.*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is almost becoming a norm for us to wake up to the stories of arrested drug traffickers and offenders. We are greeted almost on a daily basis with a series of news of young Nigerians who are arrested while attempting to traffic hard drugs such as cocaine and heroin both within and outside the country. Drug law offenses were a minor problem in Nigeria before the early 1980s. However, trafficking of heroin and cocaine has become a serious social problem in Nigeria in the last decade and is second only to politics as the country's most serious social problem. The Nigerian government has used many legal, social, and economic strategies to address the problem; none has effectively addressed its

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causes. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency has experienced some successes in the last few years but more work needs to be done to curb the ugly menace of drug trafficking in Nigeria.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2021), Nigeria is a transit point for heroin and cocaine intended for European, East Asian, and North American markets. Since 2004 drug traffickers have been increasingly using West African countries, including Nigeria, for smuggling large amounts of cocaine from South America into Europe and North America. The country has a relatively high rate of drug abuse due to the continued availability of illicitly manufactured and diverted pharmaceutical products containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances such as tramadol, codein etc. The most abused drug in West Africa is cannabis, mainly in its herbal form. Cannabis is locally produced all over the region and is therefore affordable.

Drug trafficking is a major source of revenue for organized crime groups, many of whom are involved in other forms of serious crime such as firearms, kidnapping, banditry and armed robbery. Action against drug trafficking therefore has a much wider disruptive impact on organized criminal activity and of course on national security.

Recently, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity. This according to Achumbar and Akpor (2013) has threatened national security and has prompted huge allocation of the national budget to security. Insecurity is one of the most critical problems Nigeria is facing. It has reached an alarming rate, showing its ugly head in virtually all facets of our national life. According to Ezeajughu, (2021), lives are lost on daily basis, population depleted, businesses in comatose, investments are nose-diving, multinationals closing shops and vacating the country, unemployment soaring and the populace in fears as a result of insecurity. Clearly, it poses a threat to governance, economic growth and development in a troubled nation as Nigeria.

Illicit Drugs and crime are related in several ways. Trafficking, possession and consumption (with some exceptions) of illicit drugs constitute criminal offences in most countries. Illicit Drug trading increase the likelihood of many kinds of criminal activities which posses a major threat to national security. A study carried out by Lindabeth (2018) indicated that drug-related crimes occur primarily in the form of trafficking, related activity, including violent conflicts among trafficking groups competing for increased market share. Despite the growth in awareness of the rising rate of illicit drug trading and abuse in Nigeria by relevant authorities, there is very little data to show the extent of the problem. Studies have shown an increase in the consumption of illegal drugs through data such as arrest records by relevant authorities such as the Nigeria Police and NDLEA, but capturing the effect on national security is much more difficult to ascertain. Not only is there poor reporting on illicit drug trafficking cases, there is also a high level of ignorance among the populace on the negative social impact of illicit drug trading and the need for adequate reporting of such cases to relevant authorities. More recently and as reports on drug use in the region increase, experts have highlighted the human security threats posed by drug trafficking, for which institutions and policy makers are particularly ill prepared to respond to.

In Anambra State, Onitsha, Nnewi and Awka zones seem to be the worst hit by acts of insecurity occasioned by drug trafficking. This may be partly as a result of

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the presence of major markets and high level of economic activities in these regions as observed by the researcher. According to Anwuloro (2009), the gravity of insecurity challenges is such that some inhabitants have to keep sleepless nights to protect themselves from non-state actors who perpetrate all manner of crimes at odd hours. Anwulora also stressed that drug abuse makes young people vulnerable to criminal activities. The gravity of insecurity challenges is such that some inhabitants had to keep sleepless nights to protect themselves from robbers who harass and dispossess them of their properties and sometimes kill innocent people. Drug abuse and the quest for quick money make the youths vulnerable to cult activities and its attendant acts of terror (Anwulora, 2009). Against this backdrop, the study intends to investigate the effect of illicit drug trading on security in Anambra State.

1.1 Objectives

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the effect of illicit drug trading on security in Anambra State, while the specific objectives include:

1. to examine the relationship between illicit drug trading and community violence.
2. to evaluate the relationship between illicit drug trading and crime.
3. to examine the factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria.

1.2 Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses which were stated in its null form were tested in this study:

H_{o1}: There is no significant relationship between illicit drug trafficking and community violence.

H_{o2}: There is no significant relationship between illicit drug trading and crime.
H_{o3}: There are no factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria.

2. LITERATYRE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Illicit Drug Trade and Nigeria

Drug trafficking is a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws. The United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) is continuously monitoring and researching global illicit drug markets in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their dynamics. Drug trading also know as drug trafficking in Nigeria is a major source of income for organized crime groups, many of whom are involved in other forms of crimes. Action against illicit drug trading therefore has a much wider impact on organized criminal activity. NDLEA Report as cited in Nwannennaya (2021) stressed that illicit drug trading remains a thriving business and a serious issue in Nigeria and strong concerted efforts are needed to be taken for the control. The report shows that NDLEA in 2014 arrested 8,843 suspected drug offenders. The total quantity of drugs seized stood at 339,968 kilograms. As appeared in the previous years, cannabis topped the list of drugs seized with a total of 205,373 kilograms. Psychotropic drugs followed at 133,920 kilograms, then methamphetamine (340.8kg), cocaine (290.2kg), heroin (24.53kg), amphetamine (19.297kg.) and ephedrine (0.28kg). The cultivation of cannabis is also well situated in some parts of Nigeria. For instance, in 2013, about 847.46 hectares of cannabis plantations nationwide were discovered and destroyed.

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There is significant, and often deadly, competition between rival organized crime groups at all stages of class A drugs production and supply. There is also corruption at every stage of the drug supply chain, including through the use of corrupt port and airport officials. There are also cases of corruption on the part of drug law enforcement agencies and the police who facilitate the illegal process of drug trading for drug traffickers.

Crime associated with drug trafficking is very often violent, with direct links to the criminal use of firearms and gang feud knife attacks, and traffickers frequently exploit young and vulnerable people. Cannabis gangs in particular are notorious for the trafficking and exploitation of young people and other vulnerable people in Nigeria to facilitate the dangerous cannabis business.Nweze (2020) noted that young people in the higher institutions are usually the soft spot for these illicit drug business merchants. They get recruited into the gangs to move these hard substances from one location to the other. Lindabeth (2018) believes that the NDLEA in collaboration with the Nigeria Police are working out new methods for prevention and treatment of substance abuse in Nigeria. In 2013, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on the other hand, initiated a program that focuses on fighting drug trafficking in Nigeria. Through the fight against criminal activity involved in the sale of illegal substances, the UNODC can reduce the availability of addictive substances in the country. This program also works toward ending addiction by gathering more accurate information on drug use, as well as improving treatment of addiction itself in hospitals and treatment centers.

2.1.2 Security and Insecurity

Human security according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1994) may be defined to include such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. Security means protection from hidden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life in homes, offices or the general community. It can be described as the state of being free from danger or threat. Essentially, security must be related to the presence of peace, safety, happiness and the protection of huan lives and physical resources or the absence of crises, threats to human, injury among others (Otto & Ukpere, 2012) According to Achumba and Ighomereho (2013), security can be described as stability and continuity of livelihood (stable and steady income), predictability of daily life (knowing what to expect), protection from crime (feeling safe), and freedom from psychological harm (safety or protection from emotional stress which results from the assurance or knowing that one is wanted, accepted, loved and protected in one's community or neighborhood and by people around.kuIt focuses on emotional and psychological sense of belonging to a social group which can offer one protection). It is generally argued that security is not the absence of threats or security issues, but the ability to rise to the challenges posed by these threats with expediency and expertise. Nwanegbo and Odigbo (2013) argued that the concept of 'security' is a crosscutting, and multi-dimensional concept which has, over the last century, been the subject of great debate.Zabadi (2005) argues that the state is the only institution with the primary responsibility and power for the safety of its territory and its people.Therefore the concept of security in this study is operationalised within the context of a nation.

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Aluta (2021), describes insecurity as "the state of fear or anxiety, stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection." It refers to a lack of or inadequate freedom from danger. This definition reflects physical insecurity which is the most visible form of insecurity, and it feeds into many other forms of insecurity such as economic security and social security.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Rational Choice Theory

The study is hinged on the Rational Choice theory as propounded by Philosopher Adam Smith in the eighteenth century. This theory states that individuals use their self interests to make choices that will provide them with the greatest benefits. It was however developed by the classical school of criminology through the writings of Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham. This school of thought views members of organized crime gangs as possessing free will and as being able to make logical decisions regarding their criminal activities.The classical school of thought was premised on the idea that people have free will in making decisions, and that punishment can be a deterrent for crime, so long as the punishment is proportional, fits the crime, and is carried out promptly.

Rational Choice theory suggests that people who commit crimes do so after considering the risks of detection and punishment for the crimes (risk assessment), as well as the rewards (personal, financial etc) of carrying their criminal activities successfully. On the flip side, Rational Choice Theory also suggests that persons who do not commit crime decide that completing the act successfully is too risky or not worth the benefits and rewards. It is worthy of note however, that crimes are committed based on several reasons which include: economic, psychological, physical, social and political motivations. According to a report by Channels tv as cited in Nwannennaya (2021), In the context of organized crime, financial incentives clearly play an important role in the person's decision to engage in crime.

2.3 Empirical Review

Nwadinobi (2019) examined the causes and counseling strategies that can remedy insecurity and kidnapping in Anambra State. Three research questions were answered and one mill hypothesis was tested. The researcher designed an instrument tagged 'Causes and Remedy to Kidnapping Questionnaire' (CRKQ) which consisted of 21 items. Data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. The findings revealed forms of insecurity in Anambra State to include among others robbery; bag snatching, burglary and kidnapping. Also, the findings indicated unemployment, drug abuse, poverty, and quest for fast money among others as the major causes of insecurity and kidnapping.

Ekpeyong (2016), conducted a study on Drug Trafficking and the threat to Nigeria's national security. He explained that, despite the efforts of national and international institutions, enormous amounts of drugs are produced, trafficked, consumed throughout the world and narco-corruption now undermines the rule of law and legitimate economic growth necessary for development and stability. He also identified the growing level of involvement by Nigerians—who initially served as facilitators but now appear to be taking a more proactive role—raises concerns that a new generation of drug traffickers is rising in the ranks.

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The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (1994), carried out a study on Illicit Drugs: Social Impacts and policy responses. The study examines the social consequences of illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption, as well as the factors contributing to the global drug problem. From an economic point of view, The UNRISD explained that People engage in drug production largely in response to economic incentives, which legal sanctions have been unable to counteract effectively. Peasant growers of drug crops can make from 10 to 50 times more in supplying the illegal drug market than they can in any other agricultural pursuit. Even where intense eradication efforts have managed to suppress drug production regionally, the shortfall in the drug market is quickly made up by increased production elsewhere. The paper concludes that no one policy option is going to solve the illicit drug problem. Given the severity of the current drug crisis, however, it is to be hoped that a balanced and more thorough examination of the advantages and limitations of all available policy options will lead to more imaginative and constructive policy formulations.

Nwannennaya and Abiodun (2021) conducted a study on Illicit Drug Trafficking in Nigeria: Obstacle to National Development and Security. The study interrogates the obstacles and threats posed by drug trafficking to human lives, state's development and national security; it assesses the concerted efforts of the Nigerian government aimed at combating the menace with a plan to proffer solutions on how to checkmate the disheartening phenomenon. The study concludes that, lack of adequate intelligence gathering, insecurity, bribery and corruption, poverty, civilization and porous borders stand as a cog in the wheel to appreciable efforts at arresting the menace in the country. It also submits that there is need for sound orientation/education, strong law and good governance, adequate intelligence gathering to solve the problem in addition to the imperative role of law enforcement agencies for sustenance of a drug-free society and state.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted survey design. The study made use of both primary and secondary data. The target population of this study is 189,049 comprising target respondents in Awka South Local Government Area. The sample size of 250 was determined using the Taro Yamanne Formula of 1964 while simple random sampling method was adopted in this study. Quantitative data collected using a questionnaire was analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented through mean and standard deviation while inferential statistics such Pearson correlation analyses was adopted in the test of hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.The standard mean score was 2.5; any value equal to or above the standard score was considered acceptable while any value less than the standard mean score was considered unacceptable in accordance with research rule

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4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Table 1: Effect of illicit drug trading on security y in Anambra State, Nigeria.

S/N	QUESTIONS	Σ fx	X	Decision
1	Illicit Drug traders in my community physically assault others	1184	3.4	Agree
2	Drug traders promote cultism activities through sales of illicit drugs	1213	3.5	Agree
3	Drug addicts and traders in my community are known for bullying others	1219	3.5	Agree
4	Young people steal to satisfy their addiction for illicit drugs	1234	3.6	Agree
5	Illicit drug traders promote physical and emotional abuse in my community	1307	3.8	Agree

Source: Field Survey (2021)

The table shows respondents response as regards Effect of illicit drug trading on security in Anambra State, Nigeria. The respondents agreed to the five items in the table. This implies that illicit drug trading has a significant effect on security in Anambra State.

Table 2: What is the relationship between illicit drug trading and crime?

S/N	QUESTIONS	Σ fx	X	Decision
1	People are injured or even killed during clashes between drug gangs	1198	3.5	Agree
2	Armed robbers are known to be drug addicts who patronize illicit drug traders	811	2.4	Agree
3	Kidnappers are known to be drug addicts who patronize illicit drug traders	1193	3.5	Agree
4	Young ladies are molested and raped by illicit drug traders	1203	3.5	Agree
5	Cyber criminals and online fraudsters are influenced by consumption of illicit drugs	1196	3.5	Agree

Source: Field Survey, (2021)

The table shows respondents response as regards relationship between illicit drug trading and crime. The respondents agreed to the five items in the table. This implies that there is significant relationship between illicit drug trading and crime.

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Table 3. What are the factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria?

S/N	QUESTIONS	Σ fx	X	Decision
1	Unemployment	1198	3.5	Agree
2	Quest for fast money	811	2.4	Agree
3	Poverty among citizens	1193	3.5	Agree
4	Lack of contentment with what one has	1203	3.5	Agree
5	Unequal distribution of resources	1196	3.5	Agree
6	Laziness and too much idleness	1190	3.4	Agree
7	Corrupt law enforcement officers	910	2.6	Disagree

Source: Field Survey (2021)

The table shows respondents response as regards factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria. The respondents agreed to the six items in the table and disagreed on one. This implies that there are factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

4.2.1 Hypotheses One

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between illicit drug trafficking and community violence.

Table 4: Correlations

		illicit drug trafficking	community violence
Illicit drug trafficking	Pearson Correlation	1	.411
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011
	N	343	343
. Community violence	Pearson Correlation	.411	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	
	N	343	343

The result of the correlation coefficient for hypothesis one, as displayed in Table 4 above using SPSS version 20 indicates that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is 0.411 showing that There is a significant relationship between illicit drug trafficking and community violence.

Decision Rule: From the computation above, the probability value at 0.011 is less than 0.05 significant level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that There is a significant relationship between illicit drug trafficking and community violence.

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4.2.2 Hypotheses Two

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between illicit drug trading and crime.

Table 5: Correlations

		illicit drug trading	Crime
illicit drug trading	Pearson Correlation	1	.558
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.034
	N	343	343
crime	Pearson Correlation	.558	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.034	
	N	343	343

The result of the correlation coefficient for hypothesis two, as displayed in Table 5 above using SPSS version 20 indicates that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is 0.558 showing that There is a significant relationship between illicit drug trading and crime

Decision Rule: From the computation above, the probability value at 0.034 is less than 0.05 significant level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that There is a significant relationship between illicit drug trading and crime.

4.2.3 Hypotheses Three

H_{03}: There are no factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria.

Table 6: Correlations

		illicit drug trading	Factors
illicit drug trading	Pearson Correlation	1	. 503
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	343	343
Factors	Pearson Correlation	.503	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	343	343

The result of the correlation coefficient for hypothesis three, as displayed using SPSS version 20 indicates that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is 0.503 showing that There are factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria

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Decision Rule: From the computation above, the probability value at 0.003 is less than 0.05 significant level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that There are no factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the hypotheses tested, the study concludes that there is a significant relationship between illicit drug trafficking and community violence; a significant relationship persist between illicit drug trading and crime. Finally, there are factors that encourage illicit drug trading in Nigeria.

In view these, the study recommends that security agencies such as the NDLEA and Nigeria Police Force which are saddled with the responsibility of tackling illicit drug trading activities should be strengthened, adequately equipped, trained and motivated to discharge their duties effectively. Adequate sensitization should be carried out about the negative and harmful effect of both consumption and trading of illicit drugs at the community level by necessary authorities. This is because a good number of young people only get to understand the negative effect of these substances on their health when it is already late. Relevant government must be proactive in dealing with illicit drug traders. Finally, the federal government must formulate and implement policies which are capable of addressing the identified factors which encourage the illicit trade of drugs such as unemployment, unequal distribution of wealth and poverty.

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