

Effectiveness of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency in Achieving Their Functions on Awareness Programmes in Anambra State

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the effectiveness of national drug law enforcement agency in achieving their functions on awareness programmes in Anambra State. This paper examined the perception of NDLEA staff, youth and civil defense corps the effectiveness of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State. One research question and one null hypothesis were formulated. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in Anambra State. The population of this study comprises of 108 NDLEA staff who work in different office locations in Anambra State. The sample size for this study is 108 NDLEA staff; 346 civil defence and 360 youths, totaling 814 respondents. The instrument titled "Assessment of Awareness Programmes Questionnaire (AAPQ). The instrument was administered to three different respondents; one for NDLEA Staff, one for civil defence corps and for youths aged 18 – 35 years. The instrument was validated and was subjected to Cronbach Alpha Method to determine the internal consistency of the instrument, and a co-efficient of 0.88 was obtained. Arithmetic mean was used for determining average response of the study participants while standard deviation was used to determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' scores. Inferential Statistics (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis. The finding revealed that NDLEA staff, youths and civil defense agreed on the services of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes. The finding also revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of NDLEA staff, community

members and civil defense on the services of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was recommended amongst others that the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in collaboration with Anambra Ministry of Education must intensify their anti-drug campaigns and awareness programmes on illicit drugs in order to have a drug-free society with a special focus on both students and youths in the State.

Keywords: NDLEA, Youths, Awareness Programmes, Drugs

I. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as one of the developing countries in Africa has on a daily basis been besieged with news of young men and women arrested in an attempt to traffic hard drugs such as cocaine, heroin and cannabis both within and outside the shores of the country. The origin of Nigeria's drug trafficking problem can be traced to the period just after the Second World War. Nigerian soldiers who had served in Burma, India, came back with seeds of the cannabis sativa plant. They went ahead to experiment with its cultivation and discovered that the plant does very well in some parts of Nigeria, and this led to a rise in the cultivation of the plant (Chris, 2016). The cultivation became a national phenomenon which has exposed people to what is called drug trafficking.

According to United National Office on Drug and Crimes (UNODC, 2018), drug trafficking is the illicit global trade that deals with the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition

laws. A 2019 report by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), asserted that Nigeria tops the list of the countries with the highest trafficking and drug use in West Africa (Jelsma, 2019). This implies that there has been significant growth in the illicit trafficking of drugs in the country (Henry, 2007; Oshiomole, 2015).

The war against drug trafficking in Nigeria started with the establishment of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance in 1935. At that time this ordinance guided the Board of Customs and Excise and the Nigeria Police to tackle drugs trafficking locally (Nwannennaya & Abiodun, 2017). The Board of customs and Excise (now Nigeria Customs Service) and the Nigeria police were the major drug interdiction organs of government. Sequel to the high rate of drug trafficking reports, a decree No. 20 of 1984 on Nigeria's war drugs which proscribed the death penalty for all those involved in drugs trafficking was promulgated (Cressey, 2016). However, due to public outcry this law was adjusted to a penalty of between two years and life imprisonment, depending on the offence. The enactment of Decree 48 of 1989 saw the establishment of an independent body known as the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to tackle the menace of drugs abuse and trafficking. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) is a Federal agency in Nigeria charged with eliminating the growing, processing, manufacturing, selling, exporting, and trafficking of hard drugs (NDLEA, 2016).

The NDLEA is one of the surviving national agencies that protect the country from illicit drugs and drug related crimes. The agency commenced operations in 1990 and has the responsibility to enforce laws against the cultivation, processing, sale, trafficking and use of hard drugs. In addition, the agency is responsible for investigating persons suspected to have dealings in drugs and other related matters. Specifically, the functions of the agency as outlined in the NDLEA Act (2014) among others include the following: (1) the enforcement and the due administration of the provisions of this Act; (2) the coordination of all drug laws and enforcement functions conferred on any person or authority, including Ministers in the Government of the Federation, by any such law; (3) adoption of measures to identify, trace, freeze, confiscate or seize proceeds derived from drug-related offences or property whose value corresponds to such proceeds; (4) adoption of measures to eradicate illicit cultivation of narcotic plants and to eliminate illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic

substances with a view to reducing human suffering; (5) taking such measures which might require the taking of reasonable precautions to prevent the use of ordinary means of transport for illicit traffic in narcotic drugs including making special arrangements with transport owners; (6) adopting of measures which shall include coordinated preventive and repressive action; (7) adopting of measures to ease the effectiveness of eradication efforts; (8) the facilitation of rapid exchange of scientific and technical information and the conduct of research geared towards eradication of illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; (9) ensuring the effectiveness of law enforcement to suppress illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; (10) establishing, maintaining and securing communication to facilitate the rapid exchange of information concerning offices and improving international co-operation in the suppression of illicit traffic in narcotic drug and psychotropic substance by road, sea and air; (11) reinforcing and supplementing the measures provided in the convention of Narcotic Drugs 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention against illicit traffic of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; (12) taking such measures that may ensure the elimination and prevention of the root causes of the problems of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

In order to render the lofty services as encapsulated in the NDLEA act, the agency adopts several measures for curtailing illicit products. These measures are outlined in the NDLEA Act (2018). This paper explored one of the functions which is embarking on awareness programmes (Nwannennaya and Abiodun, 2017; Oshiomole, 2015). NDLEA embark on awareness programmes. According to Ude-Akpa (2017), awareness programmes is a programme which the agency has adopted for public enlightenment, public lectures in schools, in churches, mosques, markets, workplaces, motor parks and for-out-of-school youth groups. The NDLEA engages in radio and television programmes aimed at enlightening the masses on dangers of drug abuse. Community resources are mobilized by the agency towards prevention and social integration programmes.

Available records coupled with informal preliminary investigations by the researcher revealed that factors such as; porous routes/boarders, methods of concealment, modes of transportation and deception technique encourage higher number of illicit drugs. All these disturbing factors could be as a result of inadequate awareness programmes given to NDLEA staff. For instance,

from informal observations, youths revealed that NDLEA stakeholders hardly organize sensitization programmes either through media platforms or sensitizations. Some observations revealed that NDLEA stakeholders hardly campaign or orientate user about the adverse effect of drug abuse on radio, television and media platforms. This therefore calls for the need for the effectiveness of national drug law enforcement agency in achieving their functions on awareness programmes in Anambra State. This will expose gaps which need to be filled in the functioning of the agency for subsequent filling of such gaps and for necessary improvement. The purpose of this study determined from:

1. the perception of NDLEA staff, youth and civil defense corps the effectiveness of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State.

Research Questions

1. How effective is NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of NDLEA staff, community members and civil defense on the services of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

NDLEA in embarking in awareness programmes

Public awareness campaigns is one powerful tool drug fighting agencies use all over the world to campaign against drug abuse, illicit drug trafficking and the attended consequences. In Nigeria, the National drug law enforcement agency is charged with the responsibility of fighting drug crimes and creating awareness on drug related issues. To ensure efficiency in its awareness programmes, the NDLEA has a unit called the drug abuse preventive education (DAPE). According to NDLEA (2014), the duty of this unit is to sensitize and create awareness to the general populace on the dangers inherent in drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking in the society. NDLEA reported that in 2014 they delivered many public lecturer nationwide especially in secondary schools in order to catch them young. Awareness and sensitization programmes were carried out in churches, mosques, market places, workplaces and out of school youth groups. A lecture was delivered for the executive members of the Lagos state market men and women Association. Community based

programmes were also organised in collaboration with non-governmental organizations.

According to Ude-Akpeh (2017), NDLEA has been consistent in providing relevant information, showing the devastating consequences of drug abuse. It uses various approaches to combat the menace of drug abuse and drug trafficking. According to Oraka as cited in Ude-Akpeh (2017) public relation techniques is one of such approaches which the agency has adopted to deal with anti-drug campaign in Nigeria. The NDLEA in Anambra state has been up to the task in its awareness programmes in the communities and secondary schools in Anambra State. For example in 2018 the NDLEA with the first lady her Excellency Mrs. EbereObiano the wife of the Executive Governor of Anambra State toured the 181 communities in the state on sensitization campaign against drug abuse and drug trafficking. NDLEA also runs a phone-in programme titled "NDLEA and you" across different radio stations in the states (ABS, UNIZIK FM and WAZOBIA FM) where they enlightened the general public on the danger of drug trafficking among other things. The NDLEA have equally established drug free clubs in the 256 public secondary schools in Anambra state, where students are educated on issues relating to drug abuse, its effects and consequences through lectures, drama and peer group counseling. They equally conducted seminar for teachers in Anambra State. Two teachers from each school took part in the seminar (Thompson Chinwe principal officer drug demand reduction unit, Personal communication September 17, 2018).

Furthermore, according to NDLEA (2017), the agency sensitized and created awareness programme to the general populace on the dangers inherent in drug abuse and illicit trafficking in the society. They carried intensive anti-drug abuse education/awareness programmes in schools and community based programmes like churches, mosques, market and work places. The NDLEA went on to report that in 2017, the total number of programmes conducted for youths in school was 241 with 553,025 as participants. For community based 41 programmes were conducted with 14,995 as participants. Two (2) other programmes were carried out for prison inmates with 403 inmates in attendance. In the work place 32 programmes were conducted with 6,533 participants, paramilitary recorded 7 programmes with 201 personnel in attendance. Awareness programmes were also carried out in market places and 41 programmes were conducted for the media.

III. METHOD

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in Anambra State. The population of this study comprises of 108 NDLEA staff who work in different office locations in Anambra State. The sample size for this study is 108 NDLEA staff; 346 civil defence and 360 youths, totaling 814 respondents. The instrument titled “Assessment of Awareness Programmes Questionnaire (AAPQ). The instrument was administered to three different respondents; one for NDLEA Staff, one for civil

defence corps and for youths aged 18 – 35 years. The instrument was validated and was subjected to Cronbach Alpha Method to determine the internal consistency of the instrument, and a co-efficient of 0.88 was obtained. Descriptive Statistics was used to analyze data related to the research question. Arithmetic mean was used for determining average response of the study participants while standard deviation was used to determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents’ scores. Inferential Statistics (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses.

IV. RESULTS

Research Question 1

How does NDLEA perform the service of embarking on awareness programmes?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores on the services of NDLEA on embarking on awareness programmes

S/N	Items on embarking on awareness programmes. NDLEA:	Resp.	— X	SD	Remarks
1	Organizes radio awareness programmes on drug abuse	NS	3.38	0.61	Agree
		Y	3.39	0.58	Agree
		CD	3.43	0.57	Agree
2	Organizes radio awareness programmes on the dangers of drug abuse	NS	3.58	0.51	Agree
		Y	3.54	0.50	Agree
		CD	3.57	0.49	Agree
3	Sensitizes users of drugs to stay clear of friends who abuse drugs	NS	3.39	0.56	Agree
		Y	3.35	0.49	Agree
		CD	3.37	0.48	Agree
4	Orientates users of drugs to avoid places where they can be tempted to engage in drug abuse	NS	3.44	0.55	Agree
		Y	3.41	0.51	Agree
		CD	3.42	0.44	Agree
5	Organizes radio programme which informs that drug abuse does not help one to build self confidence	NS	3.29	0.63	Agree
		Y	3.31	0.56	Agree
		CD	3.33	0.55	Agree
6	Organizes awareness programmes on television which informs people to engage in healthy lifestyle	NS	3.65	0.54	Agree
		Y	3.62	0.50	Agree
		CD	3.66	0.47	Agree
7	Awareness programmes helps users of drugs to learn how to refute mass media information that support drug abuse	NS	3.54	0.54	Agree
		Y	3.53	0.51	Agree
		CD	3.58	0.49	Agree
8	Organizes awareness programmes which enables users of drugs to learn values that supports non use of drugs	NS	3.52	0.52	Agree
		Y	3.49	0.51	Agree
		CD	3.53	0.49	Agree
9	Organizes awareness programmes which help users of drugs to engage in productive life style	NS	3.49	0.56	Agree
		Y	3.53	0.52	Agree
		CD	3.52	0.50	Agree
10	Organizes awareness programmes which encourages users of drugs to stay away from environments that are drug abuse friendly	NS	3.48	0.50	Agree
		Y	3.47	0.53	Agree
		CD	3.50	0.45	Agree

11	Organizes awareness programmes which help users of drugs to understand that abusing drugs does not stop the stress of this world	NS	3.35	0.65	Agree
		Y	3.33	0.64	Agree
		CD	3.35	0.66	Agree
12	Organizes awareness programmes to stop people from committing drug related crimes	NS	3.47	0.52	Agree
		Y	3.42	0.50	Agree
		CD	3.43	0.49	Agree
		NS	3.46		Agree
		Y	3.44		Agree
		CD	3.18		Agree

Resp. = Respondents

NS = NDLEA staff

Y = Youths

CD = Civil defense

X = Mean

S.D = Standard Deviation

Data in Table 1 reveals the item by item analysis on the ratings of NDLEA staff, youths and civil defense on the services of NDLEA on embarking on awareness programmes. The result revealed that all the items (1 – 12) were agreed upon by the respondents. This means that the three respondents agreed that NDLEA organizes awareness programmes on drug abuse; organizes radio awareness programmes on the dangers of drug abuse; sensitizes users of drugs to stay clear of friends who use drugs; orientates users of drugs to avoid places where they can be tempted to engage in drug abuse; organizes radio programme which informs that drug abuse does not help to build self confidence; organizes awareness programmes on television which informs people to engage in healthy lifestyles; awareness programmes helps users of drugs to learn how to refute mass media information that support drug abuse; teaches people to engage in productive lifestyle; organizes awareness programmes which encourages users of drugs to stay away from

environments that are drug abuse friendly; organizes awareness programmes which help users of drugs to understand that abusing drugs does not stop the stress of this world; organizes awareness programmes to stop people from committing drug related crimes. Summarily, the cluster means of 3.46, 3.44 and 3.18 respectively means that the three respondents agreed on NDLEA services of embarking on awareness programmes. More so, standard deviation scores (0.50 – 0.63; 0.49 – 0.64; 0.44 – 0.66) show that NDLEA staff, community youths and civil defense corps do not vary too much in their ratings on NDLEA services in embarking on awareness programmes.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of NDLEA staff, community members and civil defense on the services of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State.

Table 2: ANOVA test of significant difference in the mean ratings of NDLEA staff, community members and civil defense on the services of NDLEA in embarking on awareness

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	18.014	2	9.007	.807	.447
Within Groups	9051.313	811	11.161		
Total	9069.327	813			

Data presented in Table 2 revealed the analysis of the significant difference in the mean ratings of NDLEA staff, community members and civil defense on the services of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State. The result revealed that p-value (0.447) is greater than the alpha level of 0.05, $p (0.447) > 0.05$. This means that the null hypothesis is not

rejected, thus, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of NDLEA staff, community members and civil defense on the services of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State.

V. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

Functions of NDLEA in Embarking on Awareness Programmes

The finding revealed that NDLEA staff, youths and civil defense agreed on the services of NDLEA on embarking on awareness programmes. Broadly speaking, the respondents jointly agreed that service of NDLEA in creating radio awareness programmes that; educates people on the dangers of drug abuse through radio programmes; informs people to avoid friends who use drugs; educates people to avoid places where they can be tempted to engage in drug abuse; educates that abusing drugs does not help one to build self-confidence; encourages people to engage in healthy lifestyles; teaches people how to refute mass media information that support drug abuse; teaches people to engage to engage in productive lifestyle; teaches people how to stay away from environments that are drug abuse friendly; organizes awareness programmes to stop people from committing drug related crimes. This finding supported the finding of Unde-Akpeh (2017) that more than half of the respondents of the youths were aware of the radio campaign on drug abuse by NDLEA. Such programmes educate people on the dangers on drug abuse; educates people to avoid gatherings which involve drug abuse and educates people about the consequences of drug abuse when caught. The finding also agreed with the finding of Jemima, Sam and Asara (2003) that there is high awareness among the youth of types of substances used and their general effects on the individual, family and community. According to the researcher's view, the finding illustrates that drug agencies embark on educating people to avoid friends who use illicit drugs; staying away from environment that are drug abuse friendly and also understanding that abuse of drug would keep pushing them into committing more dangerous crimes relating to drugs.

The finding in hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of NDLEA staff, youths and civil defense on the effectiveness of NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State. This finding supported the finding of Unde-Akpeh (2017) that NDLEA staff and community youths do not differ significantly on their mean ratings on radio campaign influence on drug abuse among youths in Onitsha metropolis. This means that NDLEA staff and community members are not influenced by their mean ratings on their effectiveness in embarking awareness programmes in Anambra State.

VI. CONCLUSION

It was concluded that NDLEA were effective in embarking on awareness programmes in Anambra State. However, a segment of the population used for this study; the youths; has a discenting voice with respect to NDLEA in embarking on awareness programmes.

Recommendations: The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in collaboration with Anambra Ministry of Education must intensify their anti-drug campaigns and awareness programmes on illicit drugs in order to have a drug-free society with a special focus on both students and youths in the State.

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