

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF DRUG USE

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ABSTRACT: *The central concept of the study is communication, a symbolic communication due to the fact that although it is used by the same "paths" to communicate, it is actually about communicating a particular message through advertising posters. For extending to a certain extent of this study I built an interview guide. It helped to carry out an extensive analysis of the impact of drug campaigns analysed in this work among young people aged 18-30 years. In this regard, a random sample of 100 people with higher education who had direct or indirect contact with drug use and Anti-drug campaigns was conducted and seven interviews.*

KEY WORDS: *Communication; Drug use; Visual image.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *I12, I14, I18, I19.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Drug use has long been considered a "crime without victims" which harms only those who consume, becoming one of the most serious and complex social problems of the contemporary world. According to specialized studies, the phenomenon is based on psychological, social, economic and cultural causes, causing severe damage to drug users, as well as to the non-drug community. Moreover, I noticed that sometimes, advertising campaigns are part of the culture becoming tools for educating young people.

2. THEORETICAL ASPECTS

In defining the concept, several definitions are accepted to which I will refer to this work. The following examples are suggestive of the variety of meanings envisaged: The transmission of information, ideas and attitudes or emotions from one person to another person or from one group to another, essentially through symbols (Theodorsn, & Theodorsn, 1969, after McQuail & Windahl, 2001).

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In the most general sense, communication takes place whenever a system, source influences another system, recipient by using the various symbols transmitted through the channels binding the two systems (Osgood et. al., 1975, after McQuail & Windahl, 2001). The communication can be defined as social interaction through messages (Gerbner, 1967, after McQuail & Windahl, 2001).

Thus in general terms, communication involves an emitter, a channel, a message, a receiver, a relationship between the transmitter and receiver, an effect, a context in which the communication takes place and a number of things to which "messages" refer. Sometimes, but not always, there is an intention, a purpose of "communicating" and "receiving".

Ortigue (1962) remarks the symbolism related to the psychology of the imaginary but cannot be reduced to it because then any symbolic function would disappear, which is a function of communication, of sociality.

Secondly, sociological acts such as the institutions of the hierarchy are symbolic by excellence.

Thirdly, the symbolic function is inseparable from the speech because it involves all social rules, prohibitions, adhesions, representations or beliefs. The visual image cannot have a meta-linguistic or meta-communicative function, that is, to "speak" in their own codes about its own codes.

When analyzing the language or communication function of the image, a distinction must be made between its explicit and implicit functions, which can be completely different. For this we must observe the use of visual message analyzed and its socio-cultural role.

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1996) showed that, for example, the family photograph seems to have, at first glance, referential function, so explicit (it represents a person at the age of ... or his family's house). But it can also have a default function, in this case strengthening the cohesion of family group, so a fatiguing function. In conclusion, the explicit or implicit function of a visual message greatly determines its significance.

Kroeber-Riel, W. and P. Weinberg (2003) propose a working definition of the visual image: "An image is a reproduction of a real or fictional object, which is similar to the object and can therefore be perceived as the object".

As a communication phenomenon, advertising is analyzable, as the whole mass communication, from multiple angles: channels and media, language, medium-message relationship, reception, information fields (Dâncu, 2009).

Modern means of mass communication are a fundamental element of human relations with the surrounding world. If we refer to the acceptance that Serge Moscovici (in A Neculau, 1997, p. 30) gives to the social representation, namely "... specific phenomena related to a certain way of understanding and communication - a way that creates both reality, as well as common sense", then such an assertion is fully justified. The information transmitted through these important and permanent interventions of the formation of the spiritual universe of man today.

The development of mass media is, in fact, as John B. Thompson (2000) points out, a processing of the symbolic character of social life, a reorganization of the ways in which information and symbolic content are produced and changed in the social world and a restructuring of the ways in which individuals are linked to each other and to themselves.

The era of mass media is characterized, according to Charles Horton Cooley (1909), by the increased efficiency of the new means of communication due to factors such as: expressiveness, document permanence, speed and wide access or diffusion.

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology guides and emphasizes the methods used in the research process and it is important to understand that it is not limited to a simple collection of applied methods and techniques but also theory. It is even required to specify that the great paradigms (models, theories) in sociology (positivism, structuralism, holism, etc.) are at the same time methodologies (Septimiu K, Irinel S., 2007).

The hypothesis of the study aims to be one of exploration and description of the consumption of ethno-botanicals among young people and communication in anti-drug advertising campaigns.

The age category that makes up the sample is 18-30 years. The sample is randomly made up of young people with different levels of study.

Research limits:

- ✓ the sample is not representative - a number of 100 subjects were included in the study and 7 interviews;
- ✓ the study was carried out over a short period of time.

As future directions of research could be the following:

- given that the study undertaken is an exploratory one, this could be used as a starting step for a focus group;
- using a larger number of respondents, a larger study could be carried out for the type of campaigns.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The stage of processing is less interesting and exciting compared to the design and realization of research. It does not require superior intelligence, inspiration or subtlety, necessary for the phase of material interpretation. Although a bit of a routine and tedious, the processing is demanding rigor and meticulously from the one who performs it.

I also remembered that every stage of a research can be a source of error. As the best operator can make mistakes, and the one who processes information can make mistakes.

Following the analysis of the interviews, it is apparent that most of the people who participated in the interview say that they do not know the legislation in force regarding drug use and its effects. Also, most of the interviewed people do not know a specific campaign, but I assume that the effects of these campaigns are positive.

The message that these interviewed people are sending is also a very simple one: to inform themselves about drugs before consuming them.

The answers on to what defines "drug use" 47% have an addictive response and listed drugs such as cocaine, amphetamine; 26% associate drug use with forbidden, danger or death; 15% of respondents see it as a party, fun; 8% think it is a negative influence and 4% of them consider it foolish.

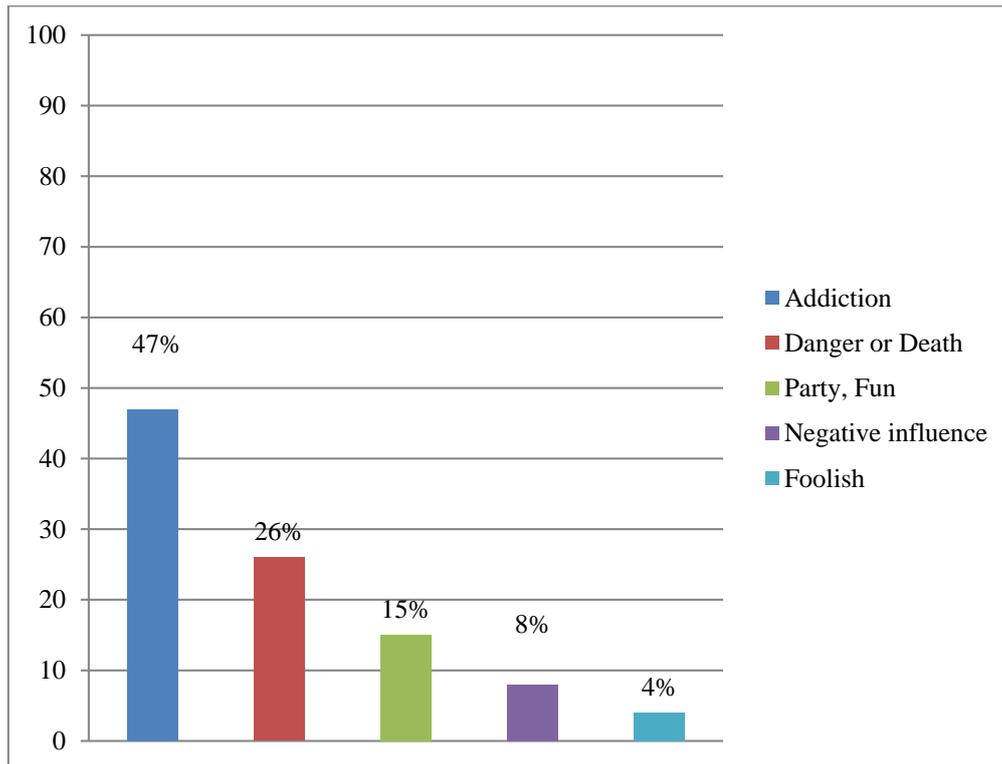


Figure 1. The word that defines drug consumption

Regarding the causes of drug use 40% of the respondents consider that Entourage is the main factor for which drugs are consumed; 28% consider it can consume drugs out of curiosity; 15% of the lack of communication and information; 10% of rebellious and 7% other reasons why young people consume drugs.

Regarding the knowledge of a certain number of people who consume drugs 60% of respondents know between 1-5 people who consume drugs; 19% say that between 6-10 people are drug users; 18% know more than 10 people and the remaining 3% of respondents know more than 20 people.

By drug (Dutch word "droog") is meant, in a broad sense, any substance used in therapeutics, due to its healing properties, but whose effect is sometimes uncertain and harmful to the human body. This definition is however too vague and may include generally all medicines. Defining the drug, we must also note the classic meaning of the term.

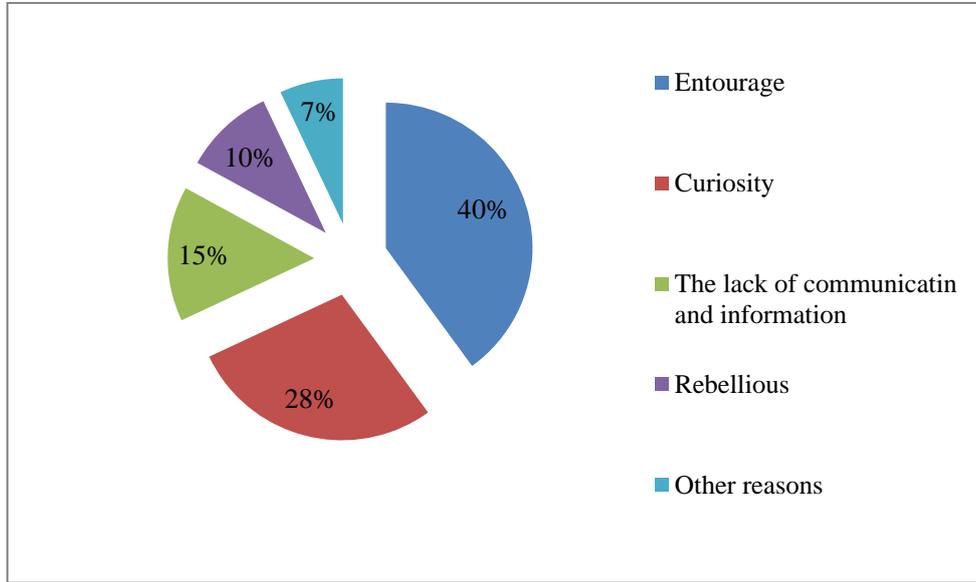


Figure 2. The causes of drug use

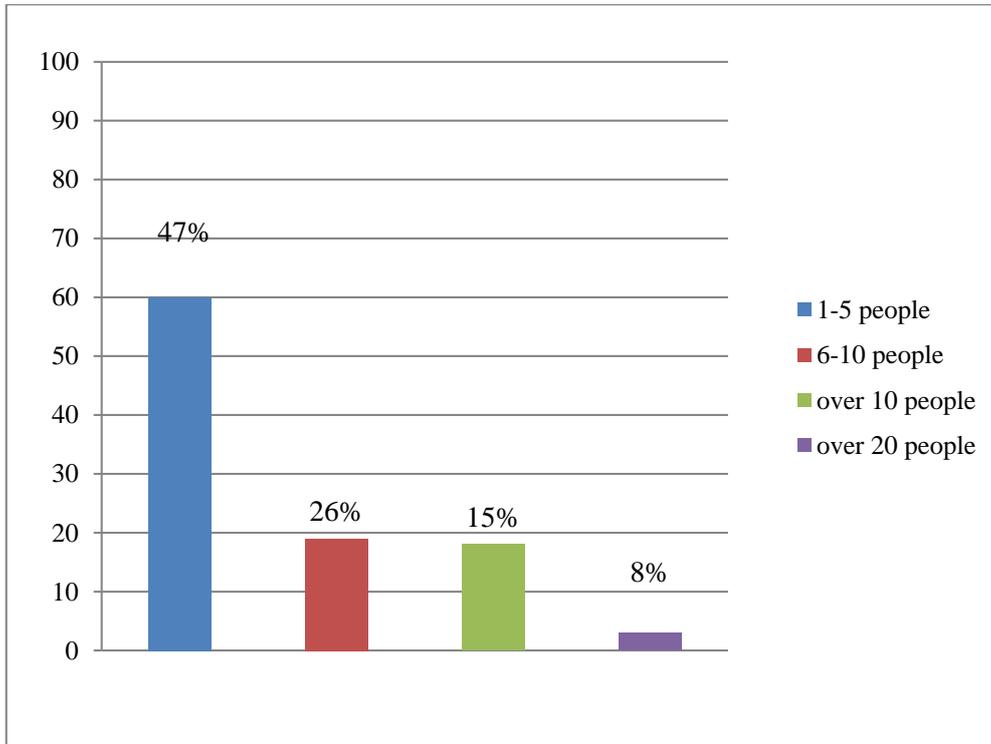


Figure 3. The number of known drug users

According to the definition given by the World Health Organization, the drug is that substance which, once absorbed by a living organism, can modify one or more functions of it. From a pharmacological point of view, the drug is the substance used in medicine, whose abusive administration (consumption) can create physical and mental dependence or serious disorders of mental activity, perception, behaviour.

There are currently several drug classifications, each of them presenting a particular interest. After their origin, the drugs are classified in:

- ✓ Natural - obtained directly from plants or shrubs: opium and opiates extracted from the bark of the opium poppy: cannabis and resin, products that can be made from the Cannabis sativa herb, the leaves of coca and their derivatives, other plants with hallucogenic properties.
- ✓ Semisintetic - made by chemical processes starting from a natural substance extracted from a plant product: heroin, L.S.D.
- ✓ Synthetic - developed entirely by chemical synthesis: hydromorfin, petidine, methadone, mescaline, Psylogine.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the obtained data, the hypothesis that the advertising campaign has an effect in terms of drug use in the young population is confirmed. Majority of respondents believe that drugs have negative effects and have identified the reasons why drugs being consumed.

In the case of perceived causes of drug use have been mentioned:

- Curiosity: Desire to try something new; there are so many other things; sensations of experimentation in life.
- Boredom: We live in a society that gives us multiple possibilities for spending time, from sports and music, to the internet and so on.
Do we keep so little of our lives that we stop at this temptation that does so much harm to both the consumer, the family and those around us?
- Rebellious: drug use can be considered challenging, precisely for the risks it involves. But you can stand out in a positive way, without consuming drugs!
- The pressure of the group of friends, the "gangs". It is important to know how to say "NO", proves that you are strong, try to be yourself, even if those around you have another opinion!
And do nothing just to impress "the head of the gang", be yourself and you will be much appreciated! Your friends are not the ones who urge you to do something that will hurt you!
- Problems (in family, school, friends): Some young people are tempted by drugs to escape/ forget about the existing problems (divorce of parents, abuses, poor school results, emotional problems).
But drugs do not solve problems, on the contrary, they aggravate them!
- Non-integration in the community and society: some consider drug use a response to loneliness, to the problems regarding the integration into the

community, but drugs only take you away from your family, your colleagues, your true friends, they it only helps to be more alone!

It is important to have friends who support you in difficult moments, to overcome problems without resorting to drugs.

Drug use is a real scourge that damages the health of millions of people, increasing the costs of healthcare and increasing other social problems, in this sense, as a number of specialists observe, drug use is not a crime without victims, but a crime that has a significant negative impact on society as a whole. To the question "what is the danger of drug addiction?" We can give the following answers:

In the advanced social "proliferation", in the "contagious" character, in the capacity of epidemic spread and of affecting considerable sections of the population, especially of the youth.

In serious medical consequences are expected obvious damage internal organs and central nervous system, psychiatric disorders manifested by acute and chronic psychosis.

In increased lethality among drug users, related to the overdose of the narcotic substance, with accidents occurring.

In a state of narcotic intoxication, with various conditions caused by chronic drug administration, with frequent suicides committed by drug addicts in a state of abstinence or in deep depression.

In the delinquent behaviour of drug users, conditioned both by the change of their personality and by the purpose of obtaining the drugs.

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