Drug Abuse Among Adolescents

KUALA LUMPUR: Police stormed a house-party at a condominium in the city and detained 14 youths, including seven who were underaged. A secondary school student among nine boys and five girls, were caught in the 2.40am operation said Dang Wangi police chief Assistant Commissioner Mohd Fahmi Visuvanathan Abdullah. It was told that the teens were busy partying the night away when it was suddenly raided by the police team. Fahmi said initial investigations showed half of the 14 teens were underaged and this included five girls who tested positive for drugs.

Drug abuse has been a huge problem to battle nowadays. Those drug users can be dangerous because they can lose control of themselves and do many unexpected terrible things uch as beating their family members to ask for money to buy drugs and robbing when they are very desperate of money. But the most surprising thing is, not only adults and older people that are involved in drug abuse but 39% out of 12,352 drug users detected in Malaysia are teens and youths (National Drug Agency, 2008). This phenomenon should be a major concern as it affects the teens' future. Being a drug addict will cause them to face many shortcomings such as becoming school dropouts, harder chance of getting employed in the future, facing fatal health problem and worse come to worst, they might even have to spend their life in jail. As a result, they are most likely to be looked down and pushed away by the community. The major questions are, why and how do they get themselves involved in such a dangerous activity?

Based on the case, we could derive that the teens are most probably invited by their elder friends. So, peer pressure are the most likely answer to how does the youth started to take drugs. Peer influence are the prime contributory factors to drug abuse among Malaysians, (Dr. Tam Cai Lian, 2018). Adolescents specifically, are willing to risk and sacrifice anything in order to be accepted by their friends because they wanted to make friends to have someone to talk to and share their problems. However, choosing the wrong person to be friend with is what will ruin your life. This is because one's behaviour tend to be shaped according to their peers throughout the youth phase (Edwards, Oetting, Beauvais & Kelly, 1997). In other words, teens that are involved in a negative vibe group of friends tend to practise the same attitude just to fit in into the circle of friends and also attract attentions. They don't want to be the only one that is not doing the thing their friends do because they want to look cool and impress their friends. This includes activities such as smoking and taking drugs only because they friends do it too.

Next, it is also observed that teenagers are violently taking drugs to escape from their problems. Youths this day tend to bottle up their feelings because they do not want to look weak or they think that no one understands them. Some of them might be struggling with their family problems, financial difficulties, bad academic achievements and many more. They thought that it is the only way out from all their problems. Therefore, without thinking any further, they took the first step to get themselves involved in drug usage because they have heard somewhere that being on drugs can make a person feel strong, confident, and stress-free (The Partnership, 2017). That is what they thought drug can do. They don't care about the side effects that the stuff could give because all they ever wanted is to forget about life and live their own way. This results in drug abuse at last because they get addicted to it just because they wanted to live in their own fantasy.

Other than that, youth drug abuse is caused by their curiosity. Being teen means we are never going to be separated by our curios mind so the least we can do is to try as much things as we can to get experiences (Carl E Pickhardt, 2013). Some of the confusing advertisements on mass media with the pictures and visions of people taking drugs can be the booster to their curiosity to try the substance because they see that drugs can be fun cause it makes the users act differently. They might also have family members or people in their neighbourhood that are drug users. Being close to such people indirectly make them have the mindset that it is not that wrong to also try drugs because people around them are doing it too yet they are still living and breathing. They started to question about how does drugs really taste and is the stuff really that tremendously harmful towards its users? This is when they started to take that stuff with the intentions to just try it but unluckily, they got addicted to it.

In order to stop this problem from getting worse, the first and foremost effective action to be taken is parent's advisory and care. A simple step the parents can do is to be well aware of who their children are befriending with so that they could prevent their kids from mixing around with friends that has bad influence. In this way, they could eliminate any possibility that their children will be involved in any drug abuse too. They should also spend more time with their children to discuss about each other's problems. This can help teens to ease their minds and emotions and at least they know that their family still care. It also has higher chance to make the children withdraw their thoughts of doing something bad like doing drugs if there is any. Parents must always show good examples to their children by not being a drug addict themselves because children tend to follow their parents' footsteps (Elaine Hunter, 2018). So, parents should play their role to provide their kids with the knowledge of the virtues and shortcomings of drugs because a good practise starts from home.

Earlier last year, around 500 graduates from public and private universities that are trained by the National Anti- Drug Agency (AADK) were sent as representative to reach out to students at schools, colleges and universities all around Malaysia to talk about the dangers of drug abuse (Pulai MP Nur Jazlan, 2018). This is also a good move to confront the drug abuse issue among youths. Through campaigns, there are many knowledges that could be shared including the harm that drugs can do to us. As youth, they will be scared after knowing that taking drugs violently will ruin their life as it will be hard for them to get a job in the future. They will also feel struck by the fact that drug abusers tend to be pushed away by communities. Using drugs irresponsibly will also cause them to have unwanted disease and many more. They will then be more responsible and avoid drugs. Therefore, holding knowledgeable campaigns and talks will make them be more aware to never start taking drugs.

Last but not least increasing law enforcement and police manpower is also important in order to stop drug abuse among adolescents. The main reason how youth can start taking drug is because they have access to it. Drug distributor must strictly be banned everywhere because they are encouraging people to take drugs so that they will gain profit from supplying it. Authorities should also increase their raiding towards the potential spot to detain drug abusers. A tighter surveillance at the border of our country's are also encouraged so that there is no any illegal drug transfer from other country into Malaysia. A constant spot check of the things bought by foreigners must also be done so there is no chance for them to escape. When there is lesser access to buying drugs, there will certainly limit and possibly vanishes drug abuse among youth because it will block the accessibility of drugs from their reach.

As a conclusion base on this study, there are more and more cases of drug abuse in this era of

globalisation and it does not only cycles around the elderly but also among adolescents. It should be a very serious matter to look upon to because the teens are the future of this country. Without having a good youth, our country will lose its potential to develop further. Therefore, concrete, pragmatic and effective solutions must be taken immediately to vanish all the drug abuser. As to reflect this matter upon myself, I am thankful that I am not involved in any drug abuse activity as I am well aware of the bad effects it will bring to myself, my family, and the community. We should always take it to another level when it comes to providing the community with the right drug education so it will make us aware about consequences of taking drug and also evade us from getting involved in any drug activity.