

Drug Dealing (misuse and trade) amongst African Asylum seekers in Görlitzer Park, Berlin

by: Mabel Njang Diangha

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine reasons for trade in illegal drugs among asylum seekers in the Berlin Görlitzer Park. The study was built on the social wellbeing frame work (Fig1) and looked at the reasons behind the use, misuse, and illegal trading of drugs, as well as the consequences of drug use and trade on the provision of social services to Asylum seekers in the park. In addition to secondary data from literature, In-depth in person interviews were carried out targeted respondents who supposedly hold a good understanding of the park and the activities of asylum seekers communities frequenting the park. Results showed that asylum seekers and undocumented migrants of African origin are involved in the use and trade of illegal drugs in the park. Drugs such as Cocaine, Marijuana, LSD, and MDMA-Ecstasy were identified as some of the drugs being used or traded. Pleasure, comfort, and means of income and subsistence, were identified as major reasons for the use and trade of illicit substances. Negative consequences on wellbeing such as poor health, inadequate security, limited individual means of income, no access to education, restricted family life, the sense of exclusion and rejection by the society, among others were noted. Though the use and misuse of drugs have direct risks on the users and their surroundings, this study observed that this group of people are deprived of their human rights because of their developed habits and behaviours involving the use of drugs. But according to the international drug policy consortium and social works perspectives, individual's wellbeing and not their actions should be prioritized in decision making. Therefore, actions, policies and opportunities tailored to improve the wellbeing of the asylum seekers communities using drugs in the Berlin Görlitzer Park are recommended.

Key words: Drug misuse, Illegal drug trade, asylum seeker, mental health, Human rights.