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Parent-child relationship is influenced by the role of social, cultural and contextual factors that determines child development. Drug addiction is very rampant in the society that involves both children and parents. This descriptive phenomenological study was conducted by utilizing 10 informants who are children with drug addict parents. Informants were selected using snowball method who possesses the following inclusion criteria: aged 18 years and above, living with their parents who were drug addict within one year or more, and who are not intoxicated during the data gathering. Individual in-depth interview was conducted after transactional consent was secured. The Colaizzi's method of data analysis was employed wherein 6 themes emerged: (1) Parental Hatred (2) Co-Dependency (3) Economic Distress (4) Fear of Aggression (5) Emotional Blocking (6) Longing for Situational Change; (Major Theme) The Complexity of the Scene. The lived experience of children with drug addict parents is much complicated. Three nursing implications were drawn: (1) there is a negative impact of living with drug addict parents. (2) Some children of drug addict parents strive to rationalize emotion. (3) Despite the circumstances the children have experienced, some have developed a positive outlook towards life.

Keywords: *Drug-Addict Parents, Abuse, Fear, Psychosocial, Stigma, Distress, Children, Phenomenology, Life*

INTRODUCTION

Drug addiction is a shocking outgrowth and effect of a deadly epidemic. The price of addiction manifests through lost productivity and other devastating ways. Child's development is influenced by parent-child relationship, which is affected by social, cultural and contextual factors (Laursen & DeLay, 2011). There are increasing evidences worldwide about substance abuse, delinquency, violence and other behaviors among parents (Toumbourou *et al.*, 2007; Weinberg, 2001). Based on the 2015 World Drug Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015), it is estimated that a total of 246 million people - slightly over 5 percent of those aged 15 to 64 years worldwide used illegal drugs in 2013. In the study of Mallett, Rosenthal & Keys, (2005), drug use is one biggest factor why individual would leave home and eventually lead them to become drug users. Family conflict is one main reason why Individual would go out of home. Thus, the undertaking explored the lived experiences of children with parents who are drugs addicts in order to

understand the phenomenon towards its implication to the lives of these children.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive phenomenology design was used and utilized in-depth individual interview with 10 informants who were selected using snowball method. The following are the Informants of the study:

A1: A 22-year-old male with 2 middle-aged siblings, his father started using illegal drugs at the age of 18.

A2: A 19-year-old with 5 siblings, second to the eldest, whose father started using such illegal drugs since teenage years.

A3: A 25 years old female with 1 younger sibling whose father started using illegal drugs at the time when her mother got pregnant.

A4: A 35-year-old male with 1 older sibling, whose father started using illegal drugs when he was a teenager.

A5: A 18-year-old with 2 older siblings whose father started using illegal drugs when he was still teenager.

A6: A 21-year-old with 7 siblings and, fourth to the oldest, whose mother started illegal drugs over 10 years ago.

A7: A 19-year-old with 4 siblings and the oldest in the family, whose father started using drugs when he was teenager under the influence of friends.

A8: A 23 year old male with five siblings, second to the oldest, whose father became addicted to illegal drugs even before their parents got married.

A9: A 35-year-old male with 3 siblings and the oldest, whose father became an addict at the age of 18. A

10: A 29-year-old female with 8 siblings and middle child in the family, whose father was using illegal drugs for more than 20 years.

Majority of the informants interviewed were male and all of the informants were living with their parents except those who were married.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Themes

Theme 1: Parental Hatred

Parenting is the aspect of raising a child; it is a process of promoting and supporting a child's development from infancy to adulthood. Parents have the ability to influence their children's development. It is especially important that parents should give love, care and support to their children. Parents must recognize their duties to their children because children will expect it from their parents to perform.

A1: "Sometimes, she doesn't take care of us" (thinking... teary-eyed, smiling)

A4: "I felt bad and hurt why my father is a drug addict" (making a fist)

A5: "I am not comfortable opening up to her, I don't like to be close to her, I don't like others would know about our situation" (shaking head many times)

A7: "I don't know how I would feel; sometimes I am mad about the situation why my mother is a drug addict. She is the one who is supposed to guide us, that is why I ask God why He has given me a mother like her. And I also blame myself of not telling her to stop doing such (pointing self) and I got disappointed why that of all people it is my mother who is a drug addict (leaning forward)".

A8: "I feel angry thinking about my mother's addiction to drugs, she shouldn't be like that because she is supposed to be our guide. I wish that I can be able to do something to prevent or stop her from becoming what she is now." (Mad-strong face)

Children of those parents who are drug addicts may dislike their parents for such vice, they may feel angry towards them because in the first place, their parents should be the one responsible for guiding them and teach them good values. It is a major challenge of these children with drug addict parents to deal with their situation. It is very clear that children who have experienced the phenomena have this mark of pain resembling the wounds that they go through. Children tend to have a strong feeling of hatred and angered feeling towards their parents who used or still using illegal drugs.

It is normal for children with drug addict parents to experience hatred towards their parents. Children of addicts are often to realize that anger was rooted in shame — shame not just for being related to a drug addict, but also for feeling that it is wrong to be upset and be hurt. The feeling can be disturbing and frustrating that eventually lead to anger. Anger can be the cause of behavioral changes that can possibly make these children alienated which is a problem in the society. In the study of Holt, Buckley & Whelan (2008), those children and adolescents who are living with domestic violence are at increased risk of experiencing emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Developing emotional and behavioral problems and of increased exposure to the presence of other adversities in their lives. A need for urgent attention is needed that would counteract such deleterious effects to the lives of these children.

Theme 2: Co-dependency

Co-dependency or "relationship addiction" is an emotional and behavioral condition that affects an individual's ability to have a healthy, mutually satisfying relationship. It is a type of dysfunctional helping relationship where one person supports or enables another person's drug addiction to avoid troubles.

A3: "We've already accepted our mother's fate because she feels weak when she suddenly stops. She is the only addict in the family and no one will follow her footsteps"

A8: "Even though our father is a drug addict, we still think that he is part of the family and I do not like the fact that my younger brothers and sister would grow up

without a father. That is why we just let him do whatever he likes to do”.

Children of drug addict parents still have respect for their parents. Despite their illegal act, they still understand the situation and accept their parents as part of the family to avoid problems. The children cannot do anything but deal with the situation because these children would rather maintain relationship that is one-sided even if it means depriving them of the opportunity to have a healthy, mutually satisfying relationship. There are children who grew up in a dysfunctional situation, who waited until they become old before they can seek help regarding the matter (Cruse & Cruse, 2012)

The co-dependent person typically sacrifices his or her needs to take care of a person who is addicted. Also, the social and mental stigma associated with problems almost certainly has multiple causes. This implies that children with drug addict parents are in some way 'different' from 'normally' functioning individuals because they are more likely to tolerate their parents' vice. These undesirable attributes cannot function properly in society and thus these children should be treated fairly (Swanson *et al.*, 1990). People under drug abuse may have a hard time quitting, and some may experience withdrawal. Signs of withdrawal may begin immediately, within hours, as the user starts craving along with feeling irritable and depressed. Furthermore, withdrawal symptoms come extremely slowly. This is the reason why it is not advisable to stop abruptly.

Theme 3: Economic Distress

Economic distress which is often termed as “financial distress” is a feeling that a person experiences whenever there is shortage on basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter.

A5: “We used to have business, but it has now been closed since he got into drugs”.

A6: “Whenever she needs money for her vice, she sometimes sells things from the house like cell phones and calculators”.

A9: “I myself would sell my things even my new clothes so I can have money to buy drugs for my father”. (Shaking head)

Economic Distress is one of the themes that emerged. This situation demonstrates that the children with drug addict parents experienced the state of impoverishment wherein they would borrow money to their neighbors to

buy food, sell their appliances and gadgets in order to sustain their vice. They often strive to support themselves to support their parents cannot provide.

Poverty and other adverse social determinants have negative effects to the child's health. It can lead to chronic health issue that is why knowledge is expanding regarding the neurobiological effects of poverty and related environmental stressors on the developing human brain as well as the life course of chronic illness (Duffee, Kuo & Gitterman, 2016).

Theme 4: Fear of Aggression

Fear causes someone to be frightened or to be afraid of. Aggression is the person's ability to fight and attack another individual physically and/or mentally. It means a person is afraid to feel physical or psychological pain.

A1: “I was already battered by my father”

A7: “Our mother hurts me and my siblings especially when she is not given money by our father. “She even sells our appliances for her to buy drugs”. (Straight face)

A8: (sarcastic smile) “I was chased with a knife when he was high on drugs I do not know how he could afford to do it to me. He cannot even give money to my mother to spend for the family because he would buy drugs first and I am afraid of what will happen to us every time he would hurt us”.

A9: “Whenever I use drugs and he cannot, he would hit and chase me with a dagger” “If only I use drugs and not he, he hits me and chases me with dagger”

Everyone knows what it feels to be afraid of something, but the type of fear that affects the person may differ from one to the other. Children whose parents are drug addicts tend to be nervous all the time, especially about what may happen to them or what may happen next. They often anticipate that their parents might hurt and abuse them. Because their parents can sometimes be violent, and this again will perpetuate the view that children with drug addict parents are more likely to experience anxiety disorder.

In an online Journal of the International and Youth Carenetworka common problem found in children who have been physically abused is disruptive disorders. They develop lifetime disruptive disorder diagnosis, such as oppositional defiant disorder or conduct disorder (Kaplan, Pelcovitz & Labruna, 1999). Individuals who were physically abused also showed higher aggressive

and delinquent behaviors (Kaplan, Pelcovitz & Labruna, 1999; Briere & Runtz, 1990). Anticipatory anxiety can be extremely life-limiting as you search for ways to avoid the experiences. It can put stress on your personal relationships because you're distracted and appear self-absorbed. You may also find that it compromises your ability to function competently at work if you are consistently distracted. Research has also indicated that physically abused children tend to be less popular and liked, had fewer friends, showed less intimacy and become more conflict prone and negative towards their close friends. Study after study shows that children of addicts develop anxiety, depression, issues with over-achievement and people-pleasing and psychosomatic illnesses at a higher rate than others who do not experience.

Theme 5: Emotional Blocking

A healthy emotional body attracts or ventilates its feelings. Emotional Blocking is a defense mechanism where individuals cover-up their feelings towards the other person, it might be undesirable feelings like hurt, anger and sadness. The reason a person uses this mechanism is to prevent themselves from getting hurt over again.

A3: "I don't care about him, if he enjoys what he is doing it is up to him we don't care especially my older sister, she really doesn't care about him".

A5: "I just let him be. Even if I tell him to stop, he still continues anyway because I believe he cannot stop the act already"

As the statements by the children whose parents are drug addicts they use this as a defense mechanism where they clear their emotional feelings towards their parents to deal with deep emotional pain experienced in traumatic, destructive, and dysfunctional situations ranging from the loss of a loved one, betrayal, abuse, and rejection. This action could give temporary relief of the negative experiences. However, it could have negative impacts to the live of these children that requires cognitive intervention. In negative emotional episode, person tends to reduce the experience and placing it in the dormant memory in which it would no longer return to the person's mind in order for the person's attention can be fully available for current task, (Gross, 2007).

Theme 6: Longing for Situational Change

A longing is a strong feeling of need or desire for

someone. Longing for situational change for someone or something is a situation that might be difficult but it is still longing to see positive changes to someone you love.

A5: "I use it as motivation to study harder and my mother said I must finish my studies, so I and my younger brother won't end up becoming like my father".

A7: "I must focus on my studies so that I will not be like my father (nodding head)".

Despite the circumstances, the children still strive hard to accomplish their goals and hope that their parents will change for the better. Every negative experience can lead to two outcomes. Some people consider adversity as a hindrance to success or a motivation to improve life. As the person becomes older, he/she can modify life's situation and make it favorable to him/her. Life from birth onward is a continuous self-testing of once capabilities that increases with age (Brim, 1992). Every person has the capacity to make life better if one chooses to.

MAJOR THEME: The Complexity of the Scene

Children must be nurtured with love and care from their parents. They need not only basic needs like food and shelter, rather love and affection that will make them better person according to Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). A home is where they feel secure with parents who will give them the necessary affection that will make them whole. The child is the product of the environment, whatever they see or experience will create an impact to their lives. Parents should be aware of their duties and responsibilities to their children. Every wrong action they do will affect the children. Children will become good or bad, depending on what is the impact of their experiences are with the people around them. Despite the negative experiences, they have with their parents, they still have the feeling of hope that somehow that situation would change towards the better.

In reality, drug addiction is a complex disease, and quitting usually takes more than good intentions or a strong will. Drugs change the brain in ways that make quitting hard. Treating an addicted family member is very challenging; hence, it needs to have support of the family. A serious attention is needed to these common, stressful and disturbing childhood experiences, because one half of the two-thirds serious problems

with drug use, progress in meeting the national goals for reducing drug (Dube *et al.*, 2003).

CONCLUSION

The study has showed a clearer picture of the phenomenon about children having lived with a drug addict parents. The children need further understanding and guidance from the responsible individuals or organization that will help them overcome such disastrous

experiences. The physiological and psychological aspects have to be given attention by looking for ways on how to appropriately reverse the negative impact of such experience in order to ensure that these children will not be drowned in a hopeless situation. Furthermore, they needed to be given hope that despite the current situation, that they still have that chance to have a safe and comfortable life that will motivate them to become better in order to achieve a good life.

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