

HOW DRUGS CONTROL YOUR LIFE AND COMMUNITY: A CRIMINOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Drug abuse is one of the most serious problems in the world, starting from illegal drug using, which is not related to medical purpose, until illegal drug trafficking by transnational organized crime. Many people, that ironically are young generation, fall into this problem. When they become illegal drug consumers, other serious problems threat them. Since drug abuse creates a kind of dependency, it gives them very restricted choices. A person with drug dependency will do anything to get it. If there is not enough money to buy, it will lead them to do another serious criminal behavior.

Criminological perspectives consider this problem as a “spiral of evil”. Drug abuse is a milestone to other serious criminal behaviors. Some early theoretical frameworks in Juvenile Delinquency, such as Social Structure and Anomie by Robert Merton (1938) and Differential Opportunity Structure by Cloward and Ohlin (1960), give a simple explanation. Researches conducted by Richard Dembo, *et.al* (2007) and John Welte, *et.al.* (2001) confirm the link between Drug Use and Delinquent Behavior.

In a capitalist society, where everything becomes commodity, committing crime is a kind of social adaptation for illegal drug users. Crime is considered as a result of systematic losing in capitalist competition in order to get legal access to the economic power. This is the first stage of the “spiral of evil”, when illegal drug user enters the more serious criminal subculture. Merton named the step as *innovation*. Although the criminal subculture gives the chance to get more money and pleasure for drug abuse, not all the members have the same opportunity. Cloward and Ohlin in this context explain that some members of the criminal subculture which do not have the same opportunity to get illegal success will take a worse kind of social adaptation. This condition leads to the worse stage in the “spiral of evil”, named conflict and retreatist adaptation. In retreatist adaptation, drug abuse becomes the main purpose of life. The members do not think about anything that can make their life better in term of community values and legal system.

That is how drugs control our life. When someone starts to use drugs illegally, he or she is entering the first stage of the “spiral of evil”. There is no way out if he or she does not stop immediately. This “spiral of evil” never ends. Regarding the structural causes, poverty eradication is one important policy, beside the socialization agents that always try to make better association.

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Background

All countries, especially on Southeast Asia, have serious threat on drug abuse problem. Though it has occurred long before, some realities, e.g. statistics of police and other institutions having concern on drug abuse, show us how difficult to solve the problem effectively. Indonesia, for instance, a country which used to be a marketing target of narcotic and Psychotropics, now has a role as a producer. To anticipate these drug abuse and trafficking problems, the President of the Republic of Indonesia has specifically established National Narcotic Board (NNB), through Presidential Decree No. 17/2002. NNB has a duty to assist the President in preventing and fighting drug abuse and illegal distribution of narcotics, psychotropics and other addictive substances by forming task forces consisting of related government institutions.

Prevalence of drug abuse and trafficking in the world, and Indonesia as well, is amazing enough. During the last three years, Indonesia has grown fast in map of international illegal drug market and distribution. NNB data reveal that since 2005 Indonesia has been the three biggest of international drug distribution, especially on *crystal methamphetamine*, after China and United States of America (USA). It is still difficult to identify the exact number. Therefore, it is very possible that the *dark number* is higher. Based on NNB estimation (*Sadar*, Agustus 2006), 1.5% of total Indonesian population or approximately 3.26 million people are drug user. It becomes more apprehensive that the victims of the network come especially from young generation and productive age group. NNB Data also show tendency of increasing drug criminal case in Indonesia, from 3,617 cases in 2001 to 17,355 cases in 2006. Meanwhile, according to data of Indonesia correction institution (*Kompas*, April 21, 2007), around 30% or 32,000 of about 116,000 prisoner inmate are prisoners with cases of drugs related criminal behavior, and 72.5% is drug users. The following Table 1 is data on *Drugs Related Crime* from Indonesia NNB.

Table 1
Drugs Related Crime Based on Drugs Classification

No	Cases	Year						Total Amount
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
1	Narcotics	1,907	2,040	3,929	3,874	8,171	9,422	29,343
2	Psychotropic	1,648	1,632	2,590	3,887	6,733	5,658	22,148
3	Other Substance	62	79	621	648	1,348	2,275	5,033
	Amount	3,617	3,751	7,140	8,409	16,252	17,355	56,524
	% of increase	-	3.7	90.3	17.8	93.3	6.8	

Data Source: Dit IV/Narkoba, December 2006

The final consequence of drug abuse prevalence is increasing number of victims caused by drug use and dependency, which especially comes from young generation. In addition, drugs abuse also creates very serious problem in society, which is increasing number of crimes committed by users with serious dependency. It relates to difficulty of drug users, who have immersed themselves in the crime, to live normally in society. It just exactly makes them keeping a distance from society by forming certain subculture which is resistant with society value and norm. The subculture is where drug abuse becomes inherent activity or something united in every individual and group and where every crime and violence are considered as something normal, honored and even suggested. When someone begins to consume narcotics and psychotropics not for medical purposes, he/she could possibly be addictive to it. In this condition, he/she is entering the first stage of the spiral of evil. Drug dependency will make someone doing anything to get the drugs. It might not be a problem for those who come from rich family. But for those who do not have enough money, they will make it by committing crime. During the acute drug dependency, he/she tends to be involved in marketing or distribution of narcotics and psychotropics. Therefore, it totally figures how a trivial matter becomes bigger and harder.

People, including young generation, have extensively known how this drug abuse damages mental and physical health and potentially causes death. In Indonesia, government and non government organizations (NGOs) have socialized intensively the dangers of consuming narcotics and psychotropics without medical purposes, and it has been conducted globally. The workshop we have now is one of our concerns on dangers of drug abuse.

This paper is trying to explain criminologically what spiral of evil of drug abuse is and how drugs can control someone's life and community. In addition, it provides some alternatives of criminal policy to solve the drug abuse problem. In this context, two concerned sociological factors are structural aspect of poverty and association differentiation. And the context itself is for young generation.

Drug Abuse and Its Dependency: the first stage

I think I do not need to explain in this paper the types of narcotics and psychotropics and how they endanger physical and mental health because there have been researches, writings and papers discussing on dangers of drug abuse medically and psychologically. However, I will emphasize on how drug abuse creates bigger problems

and causes difficulty in releasing oneself from the problem. In other words, how drugs control someone's life and community. To explain how drugs control someone's life and community, criminological perspective is more appropriate. Criminology is a scientific discipline which has also a concern on narcotics and psychotropics abuses. However, further concern of criminology is toward social or sociologic consequence of drug abuse. In this case, criminology considers that drug abuse is the first stage of crime, as an alternative to fulfill needs of drug dependency. Special concern is given to young generation as an age group which is susceptible of drug abuse.

Demographically, many researches figure that young generation is the most age group as narcotics and psychotropics users. For this young age group, I do not think we should tightly refer to national and international regulations. Young generation is categorized as age group starting from child (under 18 years old) to teenager or pre-adult (18-24 years old). In Indonesia, according to regulation in 2003 on child protection, child or teenager is an age group of less than 18 years old. When the categorization is related to activity or work status, young age group is those are still in educational periods, starting from elementary to higher education, which range between 5-24 years old. In World Development Report 2007 titled *Development and the Next Generation*, though it does not describe explicitly, the next generation (young generation) is people aged less than 24 years old.

Main concern on involvement of young age group in this drugs abuse is basically related to long term consequence of child and teenager when they commit narcotics and psychotropics abuses. Once they become user and addicted, it is difficult to release their life from the situation. Drugs will really control their individual and social life. This age group is assumed still having long life that their involvement in spiral of evil of drug abuse will give bad effects to their future. Criminologically, dependency created by drug abuse is very potential to encourage them to more serious crime, so it develops criminal culture (criminal career) and retreatism culture. Development of both criminal and retreatism culture will be elaborated in the next part.

Many countries worldwide are faced up to general tendency of young age group active involvement in drugs abuse. Some official data and researches figure the tendency. Based on data of Indonesia NNB, young age group (<16 – 24 years old) is the most agent in drugs related crime, with amount of 29,286 or 34.3%. The following Table 2 will describe in detail.

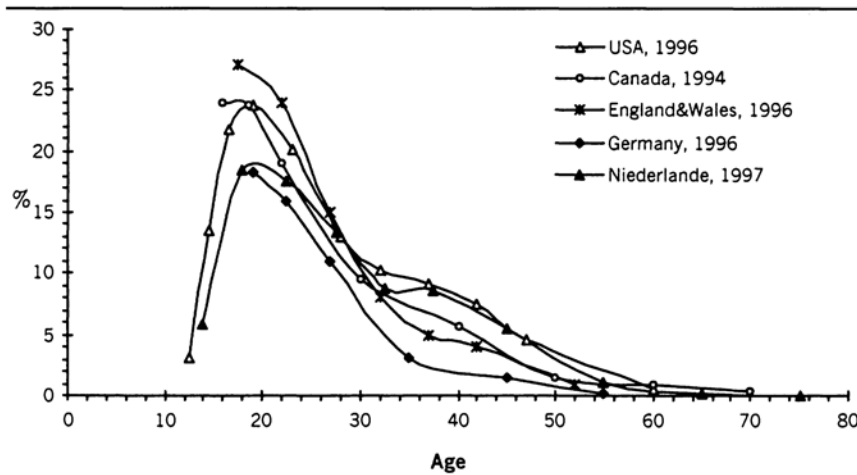
Table 2
Drugs Related Crime According to Age

No	Age	Year						Amount
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
1	< 16	25	23	87	71	127	175	508
2	16-19	501	494	500	763	1,668	2,447	6,373
3	20-24	1,428	1,755	2,457	2,879	5,503	8,383	22,405
4	25-29	1,366	1,386	2,417	2,888	6,442	8,105	22,604
5	> 29	1,604	1,652	4,256	4,722	9,040	12,525	33,799
Amount		4,924	5,310	9,717	11,323	22,780	31,635	85,689

Data Source: Dit IV/Narkoba, December 2006

A research by Eisner (2002) gives confirmation toward the tendency. Comparative research in many countries conducted by Eisner reveals that young age group is the most group of consuming narcotics. The detail is in Figure 3 below. According to Eisner, cannabis consumption rises rapidly from around the age of twelve. The highest prevalence of consumption is reached between the age of sixteen and twenty five. Though the data is not up-to-date and obtained in the context of European and American Societies, tendency of drug abuse prevalence in young age is still consistent by now.

FIGURE 3
CANNABIS CONSUMPTION WITHIN THE PAST YEAR, ACCORDING TO AGE



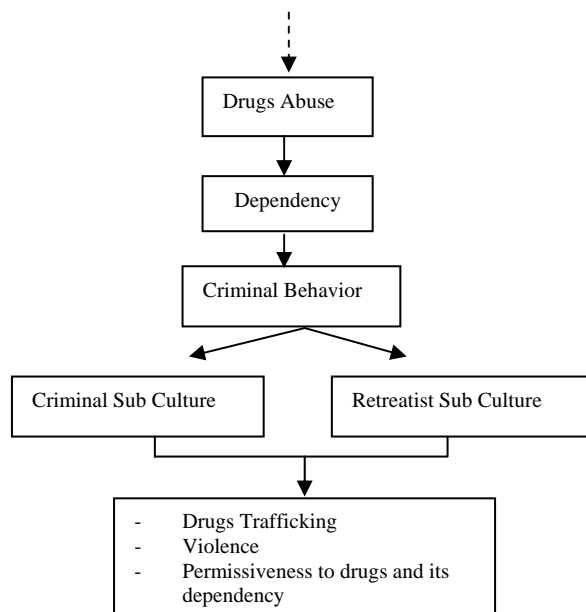
SOURCES: Australia—Makkai and McAllister (1998), the Netherlands—Abraham et al. (1998) (mean from Amsterdam, Tilburg, and Utrecht), United States—Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (1998), Canada—Health Canada (1997), Germany—Kraus and Bauernfeind (1998), England and Wales—Ramsay and Spiller (1997).

Status of young age as *the next generation*, mentioned by World Development Report 2007, makes drug dependency will give serious consequences. There are two main reasons why drug abuse in young age needs special concern. First, the dependency of drug and medical and psychological consequences will make the next generation lose their future. As it has been known, drug dependency will damage nerve system permanently and

on chronic level will cause death. Second, drug dependency causes the next generation having limited choice in enduring life. This limited choice will usually indicate to new crime and development of crime and retreatism subculture.

Drugs Abuse and Criminal Behavior: the next stage

Drug abuse on criminological perspective is emphasized on the sociological impact. There are many analyses to find tendency of correlation between drugs abuse and crime, especially in the context of Juvenile Delinquency. Some analyses that will be discussed in this paper are analyses by Eisner (2002), Dembo (2007) and Welte (2001). Common question which is occurred related to correlation between drug abuse and crime is about the way of it, whether the delinquency leads to drug abuse, or even the drug abuse leads to the delinquency. However, the question becomes not too crucial because those possibilities are still related to drugs abuse. Therefore, Figure 4 below will identify it schematically.



It illustrates drug abuse as the first stage for appearance of more serious problems. Dependency is not only a logic consequence of narcotics and psychotropics user but also a condition between drug using and occurrence of crime as an adaptation choice toward the dependency situation.

Theory of social structure and anomie by Robert Merton (Wolfgang, 1962) is the first theoretical framework describing correlation between crime occurrence and certain needs that must be fulfilled in society. Merton, in this case, describes one type of

adaptation called as innovation, where a crime is considered as the fastest and most rational way to fulfill the needs. This theoretical framework can explain why committing crime, such as stealing, robbing to drug trading, becomes a choice for someone with drug dependency.

Analysis of Eisner (2002) highlights some arguments on tendency of behavior problems in teenage or pre-adult. According to Eisner, age group of 10-18 years is where people tend to start alcohol consuming, cigarette smoking and risky driving as well as consumption of drugs to criminal activity. The rate reaches top position on age between sixteen and twenty-five. Though Eisner analysis does not specifically explain correlation and its direction between drug abuse and crime, his finding clearly indicates series of behavior leading to crime in young age group after committing drugs and other substance abuse.

Common sense suggests that substance abuse might promote criminal behavior and vice versa. According to Goldstein, 1985 (Welte, 2001) there are three classes of causal connection between substance use and crime. First, the short or long term effect of the drugs causes proneness to criminal behavior. Second, remunerative crimes are commonly committed to get money for drugs. Third, violent conflict and robbery are commonly among those involves with the drug trade. Based on Goldstein's second classification, there have been research data confirming dependency on heroin causes increasing property crimes to get money to support habit of consuming heroin. As a 10 years study to heroin users in Baltimore by Ball, 1981 (Welte, 2001), it figures that remunerative crimes is six times higher when user is in the very high dependency condition. Meanwhile, crimes of steal and violence are related to the existence as a trader or the involvement in illegal drug business.

Some studies regarded by Welte (2001), explain that the relationship between drug abuse and criminal behavior depends on the social context or is committed differently in different group. Furthermore, Welte explains at least three acceptable conclusions. First, there are inconsistent findings regarding the causal relationship between substance use and criminal behavior. Some studies have provided evidence for the relationship, whereas others have not. Second, these studies suggest that the causal relationship is dynamic and reciprocal rather than unidirectional. (In term of this) substance use may increase the probability of crime involvement, and crime may lead to substance abuse. Third, the causal

relationship may be contingent on the characteristic of population that is under study. For some groups, the relationship may be significant, but for others it may not be.

There are two things from Welte's review need to be highlighted. First, correlation between drugs abuse and juvenile delinquency tends to be reciprocal. As a cycle, drug abuse leads to juvenile delinquency, on the other side, juvenile delinquency can also lead to drug abuse. Second, correlation between drug abuse and delinquency may vary according to contextual characteristic, especially related to socio-economic and demographic conditions. There is no support for the assertion that substance abuse and crime significantly influence each other when the effects of demographic variables are maintained constant. Welte also formulates other conclusions that provide an explanation about what is the final consequence after drugs abuse and delinquency. For the late onset males, the data indicate several significant relationships between substance use and different types of delinquency. Drug use has impact on general delinquent offenses. Property offenses influence on drugs use. Engaging in minor offenses is likely to promote drug use by providing the entrée to a delinquent subculture in which drugs are more accessible and acceptable. Drug use in turn increase the probability of more serious delinquency in the form of general offenses. It is plausible that drug use may delay the maturing out from delinquency by rendering the young male less desirable to prospective employers or female partners, thus helping to ensnare him longer in the delinquency lifestyle.

Criminal Culture and Retreatism: Control over Society

Criminologically, the appearance of delinquency is the second stage of the spiral of evil, drug control over individual and society. It is categorized as second stage since, in this stage, crime is committed to fulfill individual need because of drug dependency. The final stage of drug control over society occurs in the form of criminal culture and retreatism. Criminal culture is a condition where crimes in certain society are committed as a career. Conflict and violence become a common value and, even, a necessity as symbolization for control over a society. It is simply that crime is a part of society normal life. This criminal culture can be considered as a collective adaptation of society toward needs occurred from their own behavior, such as drug abuse. Therefore, drug use behavior is usually followed by involvement in drug trade business.

Meanwhile, culture retreatism is a final condition of a society under drug control. A society with massive disorientation and indifference of a normal life's goals because of their defeat competes again in criminal culture. Robert Merton has explained that crime is an adaptation to reach general purpose in society. Unfortunately, not all people choosing to commit crime succeed to fulfill their need because they have to compete again with people who choose the same type of adaptation. Differential Opportunity Structure theory of Cloward and Ohlin (Shoemaker, 1984) can be referred to explain it. According to Cloward and Ohlin, those who fail in this criminal culture experience double failure that the last things they can do are submissive and getting rid of reality. In this retreatism culture, drug abuse exactly becomes a retreat of general normal life.

As the biggest city in Indonesia, some areas in Jakarta show tendency of this criminal and retreatism culture. Two of them are *Kampung Bali* in Central Jakarta and *Kampung Boncos* in West Jakarta. They are even called as *Drugs Village*. In these areas, drug abuse and crime have been normal part of society life. During 2002-2004, drug transaction in *Kampung Boncos* seems to be in a traditional market because it is open and gets support from people. Society members even show direct opposition to police (*Kompas*, January 8 and July 21, 2007). Condition of *Kampung Bali* is not too different, since those two areas have similarity, which is the low income. The characteristic of criminal and retreatism culture ironically is also established in the area which should be a place to run punishment and rehabilitate criminals, such as prison. In fact, prison in Indonesia is exactly the best place for drug abuse, including the trade. In spite of drug dependency of prisoners, prison as a retreatism culture which is permissive to drug abuse is supported by deviation of some prison officials. Indonesia Prisons ironically become the save place for drugs abuse and trafficking (*Kompas*, November 24, 2007).

Establishments of criminal and retreatism culture cause difficulty for law enforcement and prevention to drug abuse. Therefore, criminologically, society in this situation is really under drug control. Drug abuse by individuals of society gets the comfort and safe place. Pursuing no place for drugs will only be a dream.

Criminal Policy

Secretary General of United Nations, through his message on commemoration of International Day Against Drugs Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, June 26 2007, said that Drug Abuse is a problem which is preventable with two main approaches; that are reducing

supply with law enforcement and decreasing demand so that incentive of drugs trafficking is also decreased. In addition, UN Secretary General believes that drug abuse prevention needs cooperation from other sides than criminal justice system, such as family, school (teacher) and mass media. Furthermore on this crime prevention strategy, he said: “Our mission is to enable them to take control of their lives, rather than allowing their lives to be controlled by drugs. That means giving young people sound guidance, employment opportunities, and the chance to be involved in activities that help organize life and give it meaning and value. It means supporting parents’ efforts to provide love and leadership. It means reaching out to marginalized groups and ensuring they receive the care they need to cope with behavioral, psychological or medical problems. It means providing reasons to hope.”

The complexity of drug abuse causes criminal policy can not be handed over country instruments. Police tendency, especially NNB, in Indonesia emphasizes on law enforcement aspect, and it causes not enough concern on prevention policy. Prison, which is supposed to be behavior modification and rehabilitation, is a fun place for drug users. In term of this problem, law enforcement became important in responding drug trading or trafficking. For some extent, law enforcement is important to illegal drug using. However, to decrease drug demand, prevention programs will be more important. Therefore, active collaboration among government institutions and non governmental organization (NGO), which has capability to prevent drugs abuse, is needed. In context of drug abuse prevention in Indonesia, we should comprehend that Indonesia is a country with a very large area and population more than 220 millions. This condition causes difficulty to law enforcement institutions. Cooperation with society becomes a must.

Reformation of post economical and political crisis in 1998 has led changes of Indonesia to democratization. One context which occurred and has influenced the reformation in Indonesia is the good governance. It emphasizes on how important a collaborative governance involving stakeholders from foreign country in decision making process in order to develop policy effectiveness is. Criminal policy, as one public policy to respond crimes, can not be separated from governance context. Through increasing, complicated and various criminal offenses, law enforcement institution of government can not be the only stakeholder in criminal policy, especially in crime prevention. Government institutions that have functions to prevent crime have to collaborate with civilians and private sectors. As one problem, drug abuse has affected many levels in society. It has

characteristics of cross-area and even cross-country and is well-organized. Without effective strategy in preventing drug abuse and trafficking, national persistence will be threatened, especially, since the victims are mostly young generation.

In addition to develop intensive cooperation between government instruments and NGOs, criminal policy on drug abuse needs to concern on some structural problems as the background. A structural factor getting main concern is government investment in human development. World Development Report 2007 still indicates future threat of the next generation if government does not pay serious concern in human development, especially investment in poverty alleviation. Refer to Eisner (2002) analysis shows that distinctive types of problem behavior correlate with different contextual variables. Violence is found high in countries characterized by great social inequality, low levels of social control, and widespread material poverty. Drug use and alcohol abuse among young people, on the contrary, is frequent in highly urbanized, highly affluent contexts where lifestyles are leisure time oriented. Eisner also emphasizes that cross national differences in manifest problem behavior also depend on the structure of opportunities. The degree to which countries differ in behavior specific opportunities such as the availability of drugs or the easy access to unsupervised material goods is thus assumed to shape the specific configuration of manifest problem behaviors in a given countries. Furthermore, cultural and structural circumstances during the transition to adulthood, as well as stressful life events, are assumed to interact with problem behavior. The last is related to Social Control theories explanation, stressing in the roles of social institution.

How to make young people are able to control themselves and be free from drug very depend on how big or small chances they have. As explained by Amartya Sen (1999), development is the way to create freedom that means expanding human choices. Therefore, government needs to prioritize social investment for young people, especially in education and health. Poverty is one of important studies in criminology. It is not only as a factor causing someone chooses to commit crime, but poverty is also the crime itself when country cannot implement its responsibility in creating welfare. Muhammad Mustofa (2007), referring to Sack (1983), mentioned that welfare is a result of superstructure outside individual. Criminal policy, in this case, is a social policy to change social structure not into re-socialization or punishment. It is simply summarized that making people not to commit crime is by creating welfare.

Conclusion

This paper only brings us a general discourse about the danger of drugs abuse. Considering drugs abuse as a more complex problem, as a social science, criminology also has an important role in offering an alternative in public policy. Drugs abuse in this term is a problem of choice and opportunity. The “spiral of evil” that begins with drugs abuse is not necessary extent to become more serious problem in the form of criminal behavior, criminal sub culture and retreatism sub culture if government and community can create more choices and opportunities. Drug abuse is not only a matter of dependency that leads to death. Moreover, it is a matter of control over one’s life and the society. Therefore, the criminal policy dealing with the problem takes the prevention approach as the main effort, in addition to consistently in drug law enforcement. In order to create more opportunity as a positive adaptation, government and also the non governmental stakeholder need to increase the social investment in Human Development. The key to decrease crime is creating social welfare.

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