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THE RELATION BETWEEN ABUSE OF ILLICIT DRUGS AND THE BRAZILIAN PRISON SYSTEM: A SHORT ANALYSIS

¹Alessandra Siqueira Santos and ²Dr. Paulo Roberto Haidamus de Oliveira Bastos

¹Universidade Federal do Mato Grosso do Sul, Campo Grande - MS, Brasil

²Programa de Pós-Graduação em Saúde e Desenvolvimento na Região Centro-Oeste.
Campo Grande - MS, Brasil

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*Corresponding author:

Alessandra Siqueira Santos

ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to perform a critical analysis on public drug policy and treatment strategies in the Brazilian territory. The methodology used consisted of the construction of a short article, type view points. It was concluded that drug policy reformulation is necessary to implement viable treatment strategies for the prison population in Brazil.

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INTRODUCTION

Chemical dependence in the prison population in Brazil correlates with socio-historical and cultural problems (ADORNO, 1986; AMERICAN PSYCHIATRY ASSOCIATION, 2016; BRASIL, 2010 and BRASIL, 2006), that are difficult to clarify, either in the causes of development in the opposite patterns of consumption of illicit psychoactive substances or in the growth of chemical dependence in this specific population (DEGASPERI, 2013). Drug addiction or illicit drugs abuse has brought concern about prevention, treatment, control and its rise worldwide. The World Health Organization has expressed worries about it and has considered (SANTOS, 2017), the disease a public health problem. In Brazil, it is necessary to review the drug policy strategies structure, in accordance with the Brazilian Public Health System, so it can be accessible and applicable to the population deprived of liberty (LERMEN, 2014; LIMA, 2015; MARTINELLI, 2015; SANCHES, 2010; TORRES, 2005; TAVARES, 2010 and PRATES, 2016).

Statistically we have as a result around 76% of deaths related to illicit drug use in Brazilian territory (TAVARES, 2010). Conducting a short analysis of drug addiction or illicit drug abuse in Brazil's prison population (BRASIL, 2006; 2017; CARRANZA DVV, 2005; CAMPOS, 2015; DEGASPERI, 2013 AND FERREIRA, 2002) is primordial in order to develop new interventional practices that can be used in drug policy in order to make it more efficient to the inherent aspects of the disease and the affected individual, as recommended by OPAS/OMS performance parameters (BRASIL, 2006; 2017; CARRANZA DVV, 2005; CAMPOS, 2015; DEGASPERI, 2016; FERREIRA, 2002 IAMAMOTO, 2009; LARANJEIRA, 2010 and LEMGRUBER, 1989). The Brazilian legislation regarding the use of illicit drugs since 2006 demonstrates a mismatch between the action and the idealization of mental health care (LEMGRUBER, 1989) and exposes the lack of criteria with greater clarity, making its applicability difficult (TORRES, 2005; TAVARES, 2010; PRATES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2016; SAPORI LF, 2017; SANTOS, 2017; IPEA, 2015 and WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018). It happens because the Brazilian structure in prison population care

regarding the abuse of illicit drugs has shown the absence of effective actions and a potentially efficient care network, performing limited outpatient care, with no visible indications of change in care strategy in the Brazilian health system. The Brazilian prison population presents social epidemiological signs that lead to the understanding of the relationship among poverty, drugs and seclusion (PRATES, 2016). The vast majority of the prison population in Brazil is drug-dependent prisoners or abusive drug users who have committed crimes to maintain drug use, which sometimes cause the insertion or even returning the drug addict to the prison system (LIMA, 2015; MARTINELLI, 2015; SANCHES, 2010; TORRES, 2005; TAVARES, 2010; PRATES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2016 and SAPORI, 2017). There is a direct relation between criminal relapse and drug abuse in the prison population in Brazil and often these recidivists are involved in drug-related crimes (TORRES, 2005; TAVARES, 2010; PRATES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2016; SAPORI, 2017 and SANTOS, 2017). When we look back at the legal implications about drug use in Brazil's legal context, it is observed the punitive and criminalizing power for drug "traders", known as drug dealers, and the health dimension for those who use illicit psychoactive substances, without however showing any kind of efficiency in this matter.

Criminal judicial functionality rejects the possibility of misrepresenting the drug user as a criminal and sending him/her to the Brazilian public health system to make his/her withdrawal from prison system possible (BRASIL, 2006 & BRASIL, 2017). Brazil needs to discuss in a guided and consensual manner a viable policy formulation that is consistent with the legal and public health system which directly serves the prison population (FERREIRA, 2002; IAMAMOTO, 2009; LARANJEIRA, 2010 and LEMGRUBER, 1986). Regarding the possible legalization of illicit drug use, there should be examples and experiences basis with effective outcomes that move away from pro and con speech role (PRATES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2016; SAPORI, 2017; SANTOS, 2017; IPEA, 2015 and WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018). The abuse of illicit drugs brings social, emotional, economic and neuropsychiatric consequences (SANTOS, 2017; IPEA, 2015 and WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018), since the continued use of illicit drugs when acting in a systemic way in the central nervous system brings severe myelin lesions with behavioral changes. It is emphasized the straight brain and behavior relation which are altered by certain aspects presented by chemical dependence (SAPORI, 2017; SANTOS, 2017; IPEA, 2015 and WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018). Therefore the problem of illicit drug abuse in the Brazilian prison population must be evaluated beyond the numerical and statistical parameters, since there are differences from individual to individual and in the social and family environment (IPEA, 2015) relation and it becomes unreasonable to discuss treatment strategies or drug legalization in Brazil without analysis based on all inherent aspects of the disease and the person ill because of constant use of illicit drugs (SAPORI, 2017; WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018). It is necessary to develop a better understanding of sociological aspects, which are considerable epidemiological indicators as risk factors for the phenomenon of criminal incidence and recidivism in Brazil (TAVARES, 2010; PRATES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2016 and SAPORI, 2017), since the egresses most likely to commit crimes are precisely those who abuse illicit drugs with a low level of education (TORRES, 2005; TAVARES, 2010 and PRATES, 2016).

Brazil needs to treat drug addiction as a disease that effectively compromises the life of the individual affected by it and, especially if this individual is a member of the penitentiary system (TORRES, 2005 and WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018), public policies should be developed based on concrete and emerging basis for the proper confrontation of the phenomenon of abusive use of illicit drugs in the Brazilian prison system (TAVARES, 2010; PRATES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2016 and SAPORI, 2017). Therefore, both the abuse of illicit drugs and drug addiction should be considered national public health problems and be widely addressed in criminal law and the Brazilian public health system (WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018). The absence of the strategy of harm reduction in the prison environment is not considered a fundamental issue, given the illegality of the substances (RIBEIRO, 2016) and, in this sense, it is possible to evidence how much the perceptions of the incarcerated individual are ignored, in order to make prevail the understanding that the harm reduction strategy is the most viable (SAPORI, 2017; SANTOS, 2017; IPEA, 2015). Research and studies need to be developed that not address only chemical dependence, but also the reflexes of continued use of drugs in the central nervous system (CNS) and their relation with human behavior in Brazil (SAPORI, 2017; SANTOS, 2017 and IPEA, 2015). In this approach, it is necessary to discuss deeply about the disease, the individual and the environment complexities from which their experiences emerge and, to highlight the relation between the abuse of illicit drugs and violence (RIBEIRO, 2016; SAPORI, 2017; SANTOS, 2017 and IPEA, 2015), pointing out that there is a clear connection in this context with situations of imprisonment and recidivism as a derivation of criminal recidivism (PRATES, 2016; RIBEIRO, 2016). Therefore, the Brazilian scenario must modify its ideological discussions, which clearly reveals that the intention is more to know which position will prevail than exactly which strategy addresses the problem most positively: "the abusive use of illicit drugs in the prison system" (TORRES, 2005 and SAPORI, 2017). Research and initiatives should be undertaken, while not yet well-recognized to gain a voice in the political environment, propose public policy approaches and formulations and demonstrate how fundamental the issue of drug addiction and its relation to violence and imprisonment situation, and, this way, it can be considered a reflection of the Brazilian social issue (RIBEIRO, 2016; SAPORI, 2017; SANTOS, 2017; IPEA, 2015 and WORLD DRUG REPORT, 2018).

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