

Chapter 1: The Context of Drugs and Substance Abuse

Countries throughout the world rely on the valuable youth potential that drugs and substance abuse are robbing, hence these are widespread issues that have increased among young people. The prevalence of drugs and substance abuse among young people has not decreased across the globe (Namada & Karimi, 2021:4). Approximately 31 million people have suffered from drugs and substance abuse disorders globally (World Health Organisation, 2019). Drugs and substance abuse is a global challenge with harmful effects on health, wealth and wellbeing of nations. University students report more habitual use of marijuana, cocaine, hallucinogens and illicit drugs, (Kabbash, Zidan, & Saed, 2021). Annually, 5% of the world population (200 million people) aged 15–64 years report using at least a single illicit drug. Marijuana is the most broadly used, with a prevalence of 3.8%, compared to 0.6% for amphetamines and opiates, 0.3% for cocaine and heroin and 0.2% for ecstasy, (Kabbash *et al.*, 2021). In 2011, the United States Monitoring the Future Survey revealed that 49% of university students had consumed an illicit drug at least once in their lifetime and 21% had abused an illicit drug in the last 30 days. The most abused drug was marijuana, which was reported by 47% of university students throughout their lifetime and 19% of university students had abused marijuana in the previous month. Other most abused drugs by university students in the previous 30 days were amphetamines (4.5%), opioids (2.1%), cocaine (1.2%) and hallucinogens (1.2%) (Kabbash *et al.*, 2021).

The use of alcohol, *mbanje*, crystal meth (*guka*) and bronclear has increased, particularly among university students globally. According to Musyoka *et al.* (2020) alcohol and drug consumption is consistent across all countries. In addition, 275 million people used a

psychoactive substance at least once in 2016 across the entire world's population (Musyoka *et al.*, 2020). The rate of substance use is increasing in the United States of America among those between the ages of 18 and 25, with many of them being first-time users. The three most abused substances that Americans abuse between the ages of 18 and 25 were found to be alcohol, marijuana, and opioids hence, 2.6 million users reported using marijuana every day, whereas 3.4 million (10%) reported having alcohol abuse disorders (Musyoka *et al.*, 2020). An estimated 19.1 million young individuals (15-34) in Europe abused drugs and substances in the year 2018. Males were found to be abusing drugs and substances more frequently than females, with cannabis being the most abused drug (Musyoka *et al.*, 2020).

Several youths worldwide experience mental, physical, social and emotional health problems either temporary or for a long period due to drugs and substance abuse (Ungar *et al.*, 2014). In addition, young people are becoming the largest hostage of the threat of drugs and substance abuse and their vulnerability is increasing gradually. In a study done by (Sahu & Sahu, 2012) they found that commonly abused drugs and substances by youths globally are marijuana (*mbanje*), alcohol, broncho, weed cakes, dragon, tobacco, crystal meth (*guka*) and many other various drugs and substances. Sahu and Sahu (2012) found that drugs and substance abuse is increasing at an alarming rate, causing serious threat to every nation by deteriorating health, increasing crimes, and hampering productivity, destroying social relations, eroding social and moral values and impeding the overall progress of communities. In research carried out in Nigeria, the majority of drug abusers among medical students at a Nigerian university were men (81%), followed by women (19%), and the most commonly abused drugs and substances were found to be alcohol (60%), tobacco (35%) minor tranquilizers (48%) narcotics (29%), codeine and cannabis (11%); (Aguocha & Nwefoh, 2021). Between 27.5% and 62% of African students in South Africa, Nigeria, Uganda,

and Ethiopia reported using alcohol and other drugs at some point in their lives. One institution in Nigeria found that 27.5% of undergraduate students used drugs or alcohol (Aguocha & Nwefoh, 2021). Another study carried out in South Africa, cannabis was found to be the most abused illicit drug among South African university students, and 12% have ever tried at least one illegal drug such as heroin, mandrax and cocaine; (Kabbash *et al.*, 2021).

Kabbash *et al.* (2021) found that 22.5% Egyptian university students in the year 2018 reported the lifetime prevalence of drugs and substance abuse. In addition, among Mansoura University students in the year 2016, 88 university students were found to have been abusing heroin (Kabbash *et al.*, 2021). Another research conducted at Zagazig University in the year 2018 reported alcohol and sedative abuse prevalence as 10.29% and 5.2%, respectively. Drugs and substance abuse was considered an important problem in Egypt that is of concern both to the community and government. Peer pressure and negative life events are mentioned as the most common reasons for drugs and substance abuse (Kabbash *et al.*, 2021). Conversely, rigorous parenting and religions were found to be among the factors perceived to prevent and control drugs and substance abuse. Different reports have indicated a progressive rise in drug abuse among Egyptian university students over time (Kabbash *et al.*, 2021). Cigarette smoking was found to be more prevalent among university students in practical faculties (10.6%) than among university students in academic faculties (9.9%) and medical faculties (3.75%) (Kabbash *et al.*, 2021).

According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), (2018) report on drugs and substance use in Nigeria, there were 14.3 million (14.4%) cases in the previous year. Despite being used across all age groups, cannabis was the most often abused substance, with an average age of introduction of 19 years; amphetamine and ecstasy abused among young people was also

recorded. In addition, widely abused drugs were prescription opioids, primarily tramadol, morphine, and codeine.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly worsened Zimbabwe's problem with illicit drugs consumption. The rising trend in teenage and young, drugs and substance usage are particularly concerning (Mukwenha *et al.*, 2022). In addition, drugs and substances commonly abused in Zimbabwe include, glue, bronclear, *mbanje*, cane spirit, codeine, methamphetamine, crystal meth (*guka*) (Mukwenha *et al.*, 2022). Drugs and substance abuse or the rise in drug users had become widespread in Zimbabwe, and even the dancehall music had sped up drugs and substance use (Nyahuma, 2021).

In Zimbabwe, universities were observed to be partaking in illicit activities, such as the smuggling, purchase, and sale of broncho, a famous cough syrup that has become popular in Zimbabwe and is utilized as a narcotic with enhanced psychological effects (Nyahuma, 2021). In addition, drugs and substance abuse have significant impact on many students at Zimbabwe's higher and tertiary institutions, and little was done to stop the flow of drugs and substances onto university grounds. According to data from the Anti-Drug Misuse Association of Zimbabwe, that was reported by GAPA on March 19, 2015, the number of students being admitted to hospitals with mental health issues connected to drugs and substance abuse have risen to alarming levels in Zimbabwe.

According to research drugs and substance abuse continues to be on the increase and especially among youth in Zimbabwe and there is little being done in terms of interventions conducted by government and its partners to reduce drugs and substance abuse (Matutu & Mususa, 2019). Zimbabwe has the highest number of 15 – 19-year-olds in Africa who engage in heavy episode drinking at 70.7% among males and 55.5% among females (WHO, 2022). Prevalence of drugs and

substance abuse were observed to be at 57% among university students and the most commonly abused drugs and substances were found to be marijuana, alcohol, heroine, glue, cough mixtures such as histalix and bronclear (Matutu & Mususa, 2019).

In a different view, peer pressure, breakdown of the family support system, limited knowledge about the negative effects of drugs and substance abuse and stress were identified as the major contributing factors of drugs and substances abuse among university students in Zimbabwe, (Matutu & Mususa, 2019). In addition, Matutu and Mususa (2019) also found that criminalisation of drugs and substance abuse continues to make it difficult for university students to seek help when they suffer from the negative effects of drugs and substance abuse.

The findings by Johnson *et al.* (2011), drugs and substance abuse represent a hidden obstacle to economic and social development. In addition, they undermine the substance abusers' confidence and compromising their health. In a different view (Johnson *et al.*, 2011), also found that drugs and substance abuse deprive the drugs and substance abusers to full participation of the economic growth and cannot tend to innovative and creative ideas fully if burdened with physical and psychological scars of drugs and substance abuse.

According to UNODC (2020), additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse is working with families, universities, schools and communities to prevent and control drugs and substance abuse. In addition, the university students will be able to grow, stay healthy and safe into adulthood. For every dollar spent on prevention, at least ten students can be saved in future health, social and crime cost. Thus, academic institutions are responsible to prepare citizens on how to fight the current hurdles of drugs and substance abuse and overcome tomorrow's challenges. In their responsibility, universities are expected to prepare students to guard

themselves from engaging in any undesirable behaviour and activities that spoil their academic activities (Likisa, 2021:4). In addition, universities are also expected to provide supportive environment and protect their students from behaviours that interfere with their academic, career, personal and social development (Likisa, 2021:4).

Prevention strategies based on scientific evidence working with families, schools, and communities can ensure that university students, especially the most marginalized and poor should be prioritised (UNODC, 2020).

Environmental strategies such as drugs and substance abuse university policies set up written and unwritten community standards, code, and attitudes influencing incidence and prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and substance abuse problems for example on and off campus. Included are laws to restrict availability and access, price increases, and community-wide action for example ordinance number 6 used at universities (UNODC, (2020).

Information dissemination for example through the use of on campus and off campus talk shows and awareness campaigns against drugs and substance abuse provides awareness and knowledge of the nature and extent of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and substance abuse, their effects on individuals, families, and communities, as well as information to increase perceptions of risk. It provides knowledge and awareness of prevention policies, programs, and services. It helps set and reinforce norms (for example, underage drinking and drug dealers will not be tolerated in this neighbourhood (UNODC, 2020)).

District officials and district-based support teams should ensure the implementation of policies of drugs and substance abuse and programmes to combat alcohol and drug abuse in universities, ensure that life skills training forms an integral part of the university

curriculum, implement co-curricular activities including sport, peer education and safety interventions, assist with the training of peer educators, and establish links with lobby groups and stakeholders in the community. In addition, implementing drugs testing in universities, where there is reasonable suspicion that university students are abusing drugs and substances (Marais & Petersen, 2015). The best strategy to combat drugs and substance abuse is to attack the root causes of the problem, in addition treating the symptoms, counselling the victim and rehabilitation. The management of drugs and substance abuse does not depend only on medication (Murphy *et al.*, 2007). It also requires co-operation of the family, community, friends, community health workers, substance abuse and life skills officers, and the district administrators for employment when the drug addiction is controlled therefore there is need to reassure the clients giving them psychological, social, emotional, physical and spiritual support (Murphy *et al.*, 2007).

The purpose of the study was to explore the additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology Students in Zimbabwe.

The primary research question was: What are the additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe? The Sub research questions were:

1. What are the predisposing factors of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe?
2. How are Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe affected by drugs and substance abuse?
3. Why is there continued drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe, despite the strategies being implemented?

4. What are the additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe?

The research objectives were:

1. To determine the predisposing factors of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe.
2. To describe how Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe are affected by drugs and substance abuse.
3. To determine why there is continued drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students, despite the strategies being implemented.
4. To explore the additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe.

The study examined the additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe. This study will assist the substance abuse and life skills officer to identify effective additional strategies on the prevention and control of drug and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students. The knowledge gained will be used to guide the substance abuse and life skills officer's practice. The study will increase understanding of drugs and substance abuse and uncover ways to decrease its prevalence at Chinhoyi University of Technology and in Zimbabwe, by targeting the university students.

The knowledge gained will also be used as a base for further research studies for improved quality of care for Chinhoyi University of Technology students abusing drugs. The study will establish special training needs of both the university students and university staff

members of different faculties for them to contribute effectively on solving the problem of drug and substance abuse at Chinhoyi University of Technology and in Zimbabwe. The study will also help in addressing to the prevention and control of mental health problems among university students at Chinhoyi University of Technology and in Zimbabwe.

In carrying out this study, the research will be guided by the following assumptions:

- Participants will answer truthfully and accurately to the interview questions based on their observations and personal experiences.
- Drugs and substance abuse in Zimbabwe continues to be a problem affecting Chinhoyi University of Technology students due to peer pressure, excessive autonomy on campus, availability of funds in their pockets and some students want to experiment.
- Some cultural practices are major factors contributing to drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe.
- Some of the students suffer from mental illness due to drugs and substance abuse both on campus and off campus. Educating communities, on campus and off-campus students will prevent drugs and substance abuse in Zimbabwe.

The research was conducted at Chinhoyi University of Technology. Population of the study were Chinhoyi University of Technology students and staff members of Chinhoyi University of Technology from different faculties. This study explored the additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe. The researcher conducted the study at Chinhoyi University of Technology. The population of the study were Chinhoyi University of Technology students and Chinhoyi University staff members from different faculties. They participated voluntarily as no incentives were awarded

for participating in the study. The researcher used questionnaires and structured interviews as instruments to collect data.

The key terms defined are:

- Substance abuse is the excessive and ongoing administration of drugs and substances by oneself that disregards the socially or medically acceptable pattern (Soremekun *et al.*, 2020). University student is a person who is formally enrolled in university education (Spassiani *et al.*, 2021).

Strategy: A method or plan chosen to bring about a desired future, such as achievement of a goal or solution to a problem (Akiola, 2014:12).

The study is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: focused on introduction about drugs and substance abuse, background of the study including global statistics, regional and national. It also focused on the statement of the research problem, research questions and objectives of the research. Significance of the study, assumptions of the study were also highlighted. Delimitations and limitations of the study were also indicated together with the defining of key terms.

Chapter 2: This Chapter provides the contextual background to the study inclusive the additional strategies for educating Chinhoyi University of Technology students on the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 3: This chapter discusses the methods used in the study. The study will collect data from a purposive sampling of fifty-five participants, consisting of forty Chinhoyi University of Technology students aged 18 to 45 and 15 Chinhoyi University of Technology staff members. The qualitative approach design was used to collect data

through face-to-face interviews and structured questionnaires. The chapter provides comprehensive quality description of the research design and the methods used to achieve the purpose and objectives of the study and to answer the research questions. The study was based on the collection of empirical data to understand the additional strategies for the prevention and control of drugs and substance abuse among Chinhoyi University of Technology students in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 4: This chapter presented the analysis of data and findings from the research study. Qualitative data was obtained from two sets of respondents, namely Chinhoyi University of Technology students aged 19–45 years and Chinhoyi University of Technology staff members from different faculties.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents the summary, discussions based on the major findings of the study, recommendations of the study.