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Topic: An investigation on the challenges faced by parents living with children who abuse drugs. Case study of Chitungwiza Zimbabwe.

BY

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Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Acknowledgements | 5 |
| Abstract..... | 6 |
| Chapter 1: Introduction and Background..... | 8 |
| 1.0 Introduction..... | 8 |
| 1.1Background of Study | 8 |
| 1.2 Statement of Problem | 8 |
| 1.3Research Objective | 9 |
| 1.4. Research Questions..... | 9 |
| 1.5 Assumptions..... | 9 |
| 1.6 Limitations of the Study | 9 |
| 1.7 Delimitations of the Study | 10 |
| 1.8 Research Ethics | 10 |
| 1.8.1Informed Consent | 10 |
| 1.8.2 Privacy/Anonymity/Confidentiality | 10 |
| 1.9 Definition of Terms | 11 |
| 1.10 Chapter Summary | 11 |
| Chapter 2: Literature Review..... | 12 |
| 2.0 Introduction..... | 12 |
| 2.1 Theoretical Framework..... | 12 |
| 2.2 Global Overview of Substance Abuse | 14 |
| 2.3 Local Overview of Substance Abuse in Zimbabwe..... | 15 |
| 2.4 Challenges Faced by Parents living with Substance Abusing Adolescent | 16 |
| Global, Regional and Local Overview..... | 16 |
| 2.4.1 Vulnerability..... | 17 |
| 2.4.2 Shame | 17 |
| 2.4.3 Worry | 17 |
| 2.4.4 Violence..... | 17 |
| 2.4.5 Disengaged Family System | 18 |
| 2.4.6 Financial Problems | 18 |
| 2.4.7 Isolation..... | 18 |
| 2.5 Methods Put in Place to Assist Parents Affected By The Challenges Identified | 18 |
| 2.6 Chapter Summary | 19 |
| Chapter 3: Methodology..... | 20 |
| 3.0 Introduction..... | 20 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 3.1 Research Design | 20 |
| 3.2.1 Explorative Research | 20 |
| 3.2.2 Descriptive Research design | 20 |
| 3.3 Data Collection Instruments | 20 |
| 3.4 Population and Sampling | 21 |
| 3.5 Procedures for Data Collection | 21 |
| 3.6 Data Presentation and Analysis Procedure | 22 |
| 3.7 Chapter summary | 24 |
| Chapter 4: Presentation and Analysis and of Collected Data | 25 |
| 4.0 Introduction | 25 |
| 4:1 Statistical Information | 25 |
| 4.2 Study's Main Results Themes and Sub-Themes | 25 |
| 4.2.1 Changes in The Behaviour of Children as a Result of Drug Abuse | 25 |
| 4.2.2 Poor Grades in School | 28 |
| 4.3 Effects of Adolescent's Drug Abuse on Parents and Family | 29 |
| 4:3:1 Sour Relationships | 29 |
| 4:3:2 Financial Instability and Lack of Trust | 30 |
| 4:3:3 Hopelessness | 30 |
| 4.4 Mental Challenges Faced by Parents as a Result of Their Children's Abuse of Drugs | 31 |
| 4.4.1 Shame and Self Blame | 31 |
| 4.4.2 Worthless and Guilty | 32 |
| 4.5 Social and Economic Challenges Faced By Parents As A Result Of Their Children's Abuse of Drugs | 33 |
| 4.5.1 Discrimination | 33 |
| 4.5.2 Violence and Vulnerability | 34 |
| 4.5.3 Financial Challenges | 35 |
| 4.6 Parents' strategies to assist their adolescent's substance abuse problem | 35 |
| 4.6.1 Religious or spiritual help | 35 |
| 4.6.2 Professional help | 36 |
| 4.7 Solutions necessary for parents living with adolescents is abusing substances. | 37 |
| 4.7.1 Support from the Police | 37 |
| 4.7.2 Support from the community | 38 |
| 4.8 Chapter summary | 38 |
| Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations | 40 |
| 5.0 Introduction | 40 |
| 5.1 Summary | 40 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 5.2 Constraints of the study | 40 |
| 5.3 Conclusions | 41 |
| 5.4 Recommendations | 42 |
| References | 44 |
| Appendix A: Approval form | 48 |
| Appendix B: Contact Information Release Form | 49 |
| Appendix C: Informed consent form | 50 |
| Appendix D: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO ABUSE DRUGS | 52 |
| KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE | 53 |
| INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CHILDREN WHO ABUSE DRUGS | 54 |

Dedication

I dedicate this project to my grandmother, father and mother, who worked tirelessly to make my dream a reality. I would also like to thank my brother Tawana and the rest of the family for their encouragement and support as I have grown as a person.

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Abstract

Substance abuse in children has a huge impact not only on the children but the family as a whole and particularly the parents. This study looked at the challenges which parents face as a result of their children's use of drugs. The research design used is descriptive. The researcher used an in-depth interview to gather data. Thematic analysis was also implored in the study, and it yielded topics and subtopics. The study found that parents had trouble to find solutions to this problem and ended up turning to spirituality for comfort. Some of the challenges which parents reported include shame, guilty and humiliation because of their children's continuous use of drugs.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CCW-Community Child-Care Worker

DSW-Department of Social Welfare

NASW- National Association of Social Workers

UNODC-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

WHO-World Health Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.0 Introduction

Drug abuse is a big problem that is spreading globally as well as in Zimbabwe. Globalisation has resulted in a considerable increase in substance use. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs World Report (2019), it is estimated that between 350 and 425 million people abused drugs at-least once in the year of 2018. Most children and young adults in Zimbabwe are exposed to a variety of drugs, which include broncleer, marijuana, mangemba, crystal meth and many others.

1.1Background of Study

Zimbabwe shares its borders with South Africa and Mozambique, making it an attractive market for illicit drugs. Cannabis is a drug of choice in Africa, and in Southern Africa, its use by adolescents is significantly greater than that of adults (Dada et al.,2016). Cannabis is the most abused substance in Zimbabwe and is readily available to the general population.

Substance abuse is much more common in cities than in rural areas. The amount and choice of use are usually determined by the socio-economic state of the community (Moyo 2018), and poor communities have been found to be the most affected. Meanwhile, the abuse of drugs by adolescents does not have an impact on the user only but also their parents. When an adolescent begins abusing drugs, most issues which arise from their behaviour affects their parents. Nevertheless, little is known about the exact consequences which parents of those who abuse drugs face. Belete et al (2019) stipulated that parents shoulder the responsibility, and burden of managing this behaviour, and it is therefore essential to understand the experiences and challenges of parents living with an adolescent using and abusing substances.

Parents of children who abuse drugs come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Some of them are single parents, married couples, uncles and grandparents. Under this circumstance, the researcher had to acquire knowledge in order to gain an understanding of the experiences and coping methods of parents with children who abuse drugs.

1.2 Statement of Problem

According to African and Zimbabwean literature, substance addiction research has mostly concentrated on adolescents, while ignoring the significant impact it has on their parents (Myers, Carney, & Wechsberg, 2016). When children indulge in deviant behaviours such as drug abuse parents literally are the most affected as they generally are the bearers of all the

destructive behaviours which these children tend to have. Parents suffer emotionally, mentally and socially which leads them to face problems such as stress, guilt and financial strain just mentioning a few. Former research has given little detail on the experiences of parents with children who abuse drugs. To this end, the purpose of the current study seeks to literally shed light on these fundamental aspects which parents with children who abuse drugs face and experiences in their day to day lives.

1.3 Research Objective

- (1) To assess experiences of parents living with children who abuse drugs.
- (2) To identify the underlying core causes of substance abuse amongst adolescents in Chitungwiza.
- (3) To propose coping up strategies to parents who live with adolescents with the problem of substance abuse.

1.4. Research Questions

- (1) What are the experiences of parents living with children who abuse drugs?
- (2) What are the social and economic problems faced by parents living with children who abuse substances in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe?
- (3) What can be done to promote coping up strategies to parents who live with adolescent with the problem of substance abuse?

1.5 Assumptions

As a social work student, the researcher noticed that previous studies, particularly in Zimbabwe, had paid little attention to the challenges faced by parents in families where an adolescent abuses substance.

This piqued the researcher's interest in conducting a study to investigate the specific parents' challenges and to identify potential solutions for parents in relation to their adolescent's substance abuse problem in Chitungwiza.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

According to Marylin and Jim (2020), limitations are flaws in a study that are caused by the research design or technique. The current study will collect data through interviews, which may take more time than the researcher has available. The study was limited to a few participants

as a result of the covid regulations which were imposed by the Government as citizens were afraid of being exposed. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, travel restrictions made it difficult for the researcher to obtain permission letters to conduct the research.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study will concentrate on the experiences that parents encounter when their children abuse drugs. It will also offer coping skills to parents in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe, who have teenagers who are struggling with substance abuse.

1.8 Research Ethics

Research ethics refer to moral norms and professional codes of behavior to the collection, analysis, reporting, and publication of information concerning the study being conducted (Babbie,2016). Human beings deserve to be respected in studies involving human subjects, so the researcher will guarantee that ethics are followed. Before, during, and after the study, the following research ethics will be examined.

1.8. Informed Consent

According to Mark (1996:40), this is an agreement to take part in the study where the participant must be properly informed. This is a procedure in which consent paperwork are filled out (research documents which direct the purpose of the study, how it benefits the participants, time frame and possible risks). The researcher will ask for permission from the participants before beginning the interviews, thus participants so that they can agree or disagree before taking part in the study. The researcher will ensure that informed consent is obtained by providing informed consent forms for individuals to sign (Denscombe, 2017).

1.8.2 Privacy/Anonymity/Confidentiality

According to Marilyn & Jim (2020), confidentiality is the ability to ensure that no one other than research staff has access to information that could be used to link respondents to their responses. When carrying out a research, participants should feel secure that their information be safeguarded by the researcher. Participants should be notified that all study records would be kept anonymous, and that numbers rather than their names will be used to identify participants (Seidman, 2015). The researcher will maintain confidentiality by ensuring participants that the information they provide will be kept strictly confidential. Passwords will be used on the computer containing the research data. All documents will be kept in a secure location that is not easily accessible. The use of pseudonyms ensures that the participants' real names will not be revealed.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Some of the Key terms below are important to this research:

Child: A child means any person under the age of 18 years (Children's Act Chapter One (Act No 38) of 2005).

Addicted: Being physically dependent on a certain substance (Oxford South African Concise Dictionary, 2006).

Substance: Substance refer to chemical elements that are susceptible to be abused such as, alcohol, over the counter drugs and prescription drugs as defined in the Drug Trafficking Act (Act No.140).

Parent: The one who gives birth to or raises a child, or a relative who acts as a guardian. (<http://www.the free dictionary.com/parent>).

Needs: According the New Dictionary of Social Work (1995), needs are psychological, physical, spiritual, material, and social necessities for survival, wellbeing and self-actualization

Support: According to the New Dictionary of Social Work (1995), support is a social work approach used to help clients relax and gain self-confidence by using techniques such as acceptance, non-judgmental, and empathy.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter covered the study's history, problem description, aims, research questions, assumptions, constraints, delimitation, and description of key words.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.0 Introduction

The main aim of literature review is to find out crucial studies literature applicable to the topic under investigation in this study. According to Galvan (2015), the reason for literature review is to communicate with the reader the findings of different research which can be carefully related to the one being carried out and to identify gaps in the body of knowledge. There are sincerely few studies which investigate the specific challenges faced by parents who live with children who abuse drugs in Zimbabwe.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study will make use of the systems theory by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy's as its theoretical framework. Systems theory can be defined as the interdisciplinary study of systems i.e., cohesive groups of interrelated, interdependent parts that can be natural or human made. Every system is bounded by time and space, influenced by environment, defined by its structure and purpose and expressed through functioning. The theory defines a system as a collection of linked, organized parts that work together to achieve a common goal. The system is flexible as its components within interact with one another and it can also interact with other systems as well. This means that a change in one part of the system will cause a change in another part of the system. In this case if a child engages in substance abuse even the parents will be affected as they are a part of the system. The study considers a family as a system which interacts with other systems such as the environment and significant others as well as having its own internal interactions i.e., mother to father and children to parents. These interactions have consequences which will be looked at throughout the study.

Systems theory considers the system as a whole and that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Similarly, whilst learning on the challenges faced by parents who live with children who abuse drugs, it is important to look at the family as a whole rather than breaking it down into parts. Individual desires are not isolated, but rather holistic, due to the fact that the family is a system of mutually dependent individuals. According to Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901-1972), the theory proposes that inside every family, there may be underlying infrastructure of dynamic relationships and other sub-system relationships, consisting of members of, for example, the exact generation, the exact family, the exact sex, or function and so on. As a result, the child and parent's well-being is dependent on the operation of the family, each component of the family is interconnected to the other, studying the family as a whole provides an in-depth

analysis of the parent's challenges when their child engages in deviant behavior such as substance abuse.

According to systems theory, systems occur in a social environment. As a result, the family as a social system, should not be divorced from its socioeconomic situation. There is a cause-and-effect relationship between the family as a system and its socioeconomic situation. Thus, when studying the challenges faced by parents living with drug-abusing adolescents, the social and economic causes of the phenomenon should be explored. Unemployment, for instance, has a direct impact on the nature and make up of the family.

Adding on to the above, the theory also examines how a system responds to the demands and pressures of external forces and conditions under adaptation, and then looks at the coordination and orchestration of the system's internal components under integration. Anomie can make it difficult for a system to adapt, integrate, and achieve its goals. The study will highlight the anomies and, using the theory as a guide, give solutions for parents who live with drug-addicted children, referring to parents and children as a system (family). According to this research, a family is a system made up of individuals, such as parents and children, who are dependent on one another. As a result, if one member of the family system becomes addicted, the entire family system would be disrupted. When one family member consumes drugs, every family member suffers because it produces disruption and pressure within the family.

According to Bertalanffy (1968), verbal exchange aids within-side the definition and preservation of a system essential to homeostasis and interpersonal relationships. He goes on to mention that inside the systems theory, there is an open system with excreting waste inputs and outputs. Nothing may be defined by isolating a component of a system. In order to get to the lowest of a hassle, a system and its holistic properties must be analyzed and assessed. Systems theory seeks to elicit homeostasis or balance, which is a system's ability to adapt to change without disintegrating. As a result, the theory aids in identifying a problem, better divulging into a problem, and engaging in cause identification. Systems theory considers all potential sources of the problem and examines each one individually to determine what role they play in the system. A system is best defined as a collection of interconnected things or parts that together form a complex whole. As a result, all behavior conduct must be taken into consideration within the context of the larger system's complexity. The identification of

challenges faced by parents living with drug-addicted adolescents for this study will be based on systems theory, which gives a clear image of the root causes of the problem.

2.2 Global Overview of Substance Abuse

Drug abuse has turned out to be a major public health issue globally. The volume and nature of drug abuse in children has been significantly researched, with tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, inhalants, and stimulants being the most abused substances (World Health Organization, 2018). In 2017, 24 to 27 million Americans were estimated to be suffering with a drug or alcohol issue. Most of the people who have drug abuse problems are absolutely ignorant of their situation. According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2021), cannabis is the most abused drug in the global world.

Drug abuse studies have recently received attention in developing nations such as Burundi as a result of changing trends in the prevalence of substance use and the growing magnitude of the problem. Many adult abusers began using drugs in their teen ages. There is likewise a gradual decrease in the age at which people begin using drugs or alcohol. Early initiation is often related to a poor prognosis and a pattern of irresponsible behavior. Drug abuse in adolescents remains a major public health issue, affecting close to 15% of teenagers in the United States of America. A vast number of adolescents are in desperate need of treatment, far outnumbering the number (150,000, or roughly 8%) of children who are primarily placed in outpatient or inpatient treatment services (Burrow-Sanchez, et al, 2015). Substance abuse and addiction has become a growing concern in Australia as well. Drug abuse has and is still considered a deviant behavior in Australia, but evidence now points at how the intake is increasing of the years in modern day Australia (Hughes et al, 2017). There is close to enough evidence to suggest that the most of Australian adolescents have used at least one type of drug by the age of 17, with rising rates of substance experimentation among 14–18-year-olds (Hughes et al. 2017). In 2018, one out of every twenty people used drugs or alcohol (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2021). According to the UNODC, majority of drug users abuse more than one drug, and cannabis remains the most commonly used and trafficked drug in the world. Children who abuse drugs are most likely to contract communicable diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis. According to the 2018 global burden of disease study, drug abuse and related disorders accounted for almost 86.1 percent of early deaths and 20.5 percent of disabilities.

Perreira & Carrington (2016), state that most adolescent substance use in Australia begins with experimentation, which is a growing trend between the ages of 13-18 years. This deviant behavior is typically associated with the use or abuse of readily available drugs such as alcohol, nicotine, or inhalants. Adolescents abuse alcohol, marijuana, and, less frequently, opioids and amphetamines. Substance use can be consistent, happening on a daily or weekly basis, and is usually associated with social gatherings such as parties. Some adolescents go so far as to abuse drugs beyond recreational use and begin using them on a regular basis thus developing an addiction and this results in dependency syndrome and the burden falls on their parents.

2.3 Local Overview of Substance Abuse in Zimbabwe

Drug abuse is a global issue and is even becoming worse in Zimbabwe as a result of different factors including the economy of the nation. Parents are concerned about their children's academic performance. In Zimbabwe, most adolescents engage in substance abuse, which leads to problems related to their mental health and physical health. Drug abuse has spread rapidly and has infiltrated every corner of the nation; thus, it has reached both the rural and urban settlements. Drug abuse has a huge impact on the lives of adolescents in Zimbabwe. Evidently, the number of children abusing drugs has been increasing since the early 2000 up to this day, owing to issues of unemployment and failure to control the entry of illegal drugs, particularly through the South Africa and Mozambique borders to Zimbabwe. In schools, there is ample evidence that adolescents abuse various types of drugs, mainly alcohol and marijuana (Moyo, 2018). However, the only long-term solution to this issue of substance abuse is prevention. Most children have used their economic situation in order to gain too much freedom because they spend the much of their time at home alone while their parents spend more time at work trying to make ends meet. This leads to children trying to experiment on dangerous things such as drugs and end up becoming addicts.

Zimbabwe's financial situation has deteriorated in loads of ways. Financial problems cause significant problems on addressing certain issues that parents and children face (Moyo, 2018). Drug abuse has become a major problem in Zimbabwe. This is as a result of globalization, which allows trade between nations, access to neighboring countries, particularly South Africa and Mozambique which are the well-known markets for cannabis and illegal alcohol best known as “tumbwa” in Zimbabwe. Due to that fact, substance use, or abuse have skyrocketed in Zimbabwe (WHO 2014). Furthermore, poor legislation is another factor which has led to the spread of substance abuse (Ngwenya, 2019). Cannabis is the most abused drug in Zimbabwe. Urban people abuse more drugs than people in rural areas. Most urban streets are now being

run with drugs of all kinds, ranging from mbanje, broncleer, histalix, cocaine, musombodhiya and the now famous crystal meth known as “gukah or mutoriro”.

According to the Ministry of Health and Child Care, substance abuse is the cause of close to 60% of all psychiatric admissions in adolescents. Substance-abusing adolescents frequently abuse many drugs at one time thus causing danger to their general health as well as their mental health and in most cases the burden falls on the parents (Ngwenya, 2019). Mutoriro has become one of the favourites in the streets of Zimbabwe and causing much mental damages than any other drug in local markets. Marijuana and cough syrup-codeine known as “bronco” are the most often used drugs amongst Zimbabwean youths. An estimated 60% of adolescents who were reported to have used illegal drugs said they had used multiple drugs at one time (ZCLDN 2014).

The trouble with drug abuse in Zimbabwe is that a huge percentage of adolescents are experimenting with drugs at an early age, particularly addictive substances like crystal meth, better known as "mutoriro" and cannabis. Marijuana was already the most widely used substance among urban populations prior to the introduction of broncleer and crystal-meth, which are mostly trafficked from South Africa (Moyo, 2018). Recent studies have also found that teenagers react violently to crystal-meth and broncleer because they are cheap, easily and easily imported, making them the third most commonly reported primary illicit substances of abuse after cannabis.

2.4 Challenges Faced by Parents Living with Substance Abusing Adolescent

Global, Regional and Local Overview

Parents are caregivers and guardians for young people with substance abuse problems. Parents can range from biological parents to close relatives such as grandparents, aunties, and uncles. Substance abuse does not have negative impacts on the user only, but it affects the rest of the family particularly the parents. Family members and relatives rely on one another thus if any member of the circle engages in deviant behaviour such as substance abuse the whole will also be affected and the family may suffer the consequences (Moyo, 2018). According to applicable literature dwelling with a child who abuses drugs can cause emotional, social and economic challenges to parents. This study seeks to close gaps as it believes that available and existing literature has been ignoring the challenges that parents encounter when they have children who abuse drugs.

2.4.1 Vulnerability

It has become common that when parents or guardians become conscious of their child's deviant behaviour they start to experience a high level of stress and in some cases this results in a rise in their blood pressure which is not a good thing and a hazard to health. According to Moyo (2018), as a result of the fact that most parents have never been exposed to drug abuse when their adolescents start doing it they really get affected emotionally leading them to overthink and stress about it. This can be made extreme by the fact that parents may lack fail may fail on finding solutions to stop this problem.

2.4.2 Shame

As a result of their children becoming drug addicts, parents feel ashamed of the deviant behaviour as it affects even their reputation in the society. Parents start to develop a guilty conscience as they start to feel like their child's deviant behaviour is as a result of their own failure (Jackson, 2017). In Zimbabwe parents face problems in finding solutions due to several reasons which are economic and social, and this leads them into experiencing deep feelings of guilt as they think that they have failed to do their job well.

2.4.3 Worry

Parents of children who abuse drugs are forced to play a key role in-order to manage the day-to-day dealings of their child as well as to make sure that the siblings of the child do not copy the deviant behaviour as well. Parents will have a new task of keeping an eye on their child so as to limit his or her consumption of drugs. This causes parents to worry so much that it becomes a problem to their own lives and not only their children's lives. It is a well-known fact that most children who abuse drugs end up with mental problems and parents are worried that their children may never fully recover from it.

2.4.4 Violence

It is a common thing for drug abusers to be violent and aggressive and this becomes a problem for the family and particularly parents of a child who abuses drugs. McCann et al, (2017) notes that parents trying to correct their children to stop drug use are in most case victims of the violence which comes from their children. As a result of the drug taking control of the adolescent's behaviour, they will not be able to know what is wrong or right and in extreme cases they may use physical violence against their parents. Parents sometimes engage the law enforcement so as to stop their children from harming them or any other family member.

2.4.5 Disengaged Family System

The family is a system with its parts connected to each other thus if one part begins to abuse drugs the entire family will suffer. Quarrels start to emerge in the family as a result of the Child's use of drugs for instance a father may blame the mother for the children's deviant behaviour and at the same time the mother might also blame the father. There will be a damage to the family system as a result of this.

2.4.6 Financial Problems

Parents suffer financially as a result of their children behaviour of abusing drugs. Firstly, this is as a result of the fact that their children will start stealing from them or lying to them so as to get money to purchase drugs. Zimbabwe is a country which in recent years has been struggling economically thus Parents face difficulties to take care of the family and now if the child steals from the small they have it becomes a big problem. Parents might also have to compensate goods and commodities which their children steal from other people so as to protect them from going to jail thus this behaviour leads to financial constraints in the family.

2.4.7 Isolation

As shown above Parents tend to feel ashamed as a result of their children's behaviour and they end up isolating themselves from social gatherings and public events. Isolation leads to undesirable conditions such as high levels of blood pressure and stress which are harmful to the wellbeing of the parents. According to Mccann et al, (2017), substance abuse in adolescents tarnishes the image of the whole family thus making parents to withdraw and isolate themselves from the public setting and social gatherings.

2.5 Methods Put in Place to Assist Parents Affected By The Challenges Identified

Scholars have discovered that when Parents and guardians cut off contact with their substance abusing child, they improve in-terms of their negative emotional feelings. Research shows that if a child is taken away from their Parent's home to a rehabilitation facility the parents feel as if they have reclaimed their lives back and their dignity in the society has returned. In the case that the child ended up dying as a result of the drugs, the negative emotions in parents would also vanish thus reclaiming their normal lives back (Moyo, 2018).

Social workers play an important role in providing psycho-social support and providing information to parents who live with drug abusing adolescents. In Zimbabwe and South Africa there has been an increase in the number of rehabilitation services thus this does not only help the adolescent but also helps the parents to reclaim their old lives back again. The Government

of Zimbabwe is also increasing the number of social workers so as to improve interventions, education and access to rehabilitation services and some children are starting to desist from drug use. Parents hopes for change in their children's behaviour are being alleviated by these interventions.

Social workers also make use of methods such as support groups so as to help parents of adolescents with drug use problems. Parents are taught on how best they can support and maintain the functioning of the family. Support groups allow parents to share their experiences and cope up methods which one used in-order to fix some of the problems they were facing thus making it an important strategy to confront the drug abuse problem.

According to Ngwenya (2019), there has been a greater allocation of resources to the protection service department so as to curb issues of violence as a result of drug use. This has been a positive intervention by the government as Parents are now empowered to report their children to the police in case they start to become violent as a result of drug use. The resources are also helping in the tracking of drug dealers and quite a number of people have been caught thus if it continues like that people will desist from dealing drugs and find other nice ways of making money.

The church on the other hand continues to play an important role as it provides psycho-social support to both parents and adolescents with drug abuse problems. According to the church doctrine substance use is a sin and shameful act. Parents are taught to forgive and be patient with their children thus allowing them to have faith that their children will change there by reducing their stress levels.

2.6 Chapter Summary

The objective of this chapter was to discuss and evaluate the material, which is relevant to the study, that is the challenges encountered by parents who live with substance abusing adolescents. The study's theoretical perspective was also examined in this chapter taking into consideration the local and global literature reviews.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology utilized in this study to address the problem statement cited in chapter one. This research was qualitative in nature. It took a phenomenological approach to the study. Phenomenological research is fundamentally effective when it comes to conveying the specific experiences of people participating in the event under inquiry (Gokhale, 2016).

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy utilized to carry out research (Tobi et al, 2018). Research designs are also known as research strategies and methodologies, and they assess everything from broad assumptions to extensive data gathering and analysis approaches. The researcher used an explorative and descriptive research approach in this study to understand the experiences of parents with children who is abuse substances. The following description clarifies how the researcher used these research designs to achieve the study's objectives:

3.2.1 Explorative Research

Exploratory research aims to learn about people's perceptions of the situation, the consequences of their actions, and the types of challenges they confront (Marylin and Jim, 2020). Exploratory research is used to investigate a phenomenon about which little is known. In this study, little was known about the experiences of parents' living with children who abuse drugs.

3.2.2 Descriptive Research Design

Descriptive research entails a more in-depth examination of a phenomenon and its implications. Typically, descriptive research entails the gathering of facts (Marylin and Jim, 2020). In this study, qualitative descriptions were used to convey a strong sense of what it's like to be a parent with a substance-abusing child. The researcher also used a descriptive inquiry strategy to describe the experiences that parents face as a result of their children's substance abuse.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

Semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher as a data collection instrument. The interviewer guide ensures that all interviewers cover the same preset topics and problems while also allowing them to dig into unexpected conditions and responses.

As a social worker, the researcher employed simple and useful principles for conducting structured interviews, which also paralleled social work practice standards. These include being sensitive, nonjudgmental, allowing others to speak and paying attention.

The researcher engaged in active listening during the interviews. The researcher also used attentiveness in interacting with participants as a technique of physically and mentally orienting himself whilst interviewing Parents of children who abuse drugs so that they feel free to express their experiences, thoughts, and feelings (Grobler et al., 2017:128).

3.4 Population and Sampling

A study population is the collection of elements from which the sample is drawn, Tabachnick and Fidell (2018). The study's population consists of parents of children who abuse substances. The researcher employed purposive sampling to recruit six participants (aged 40 to 70) from Chitungwiza suburbs. The Community Child-Care Workers assisted in identifying and recruiting participants (CCWs). CCWs serve as eyes and ears of the Department of Social Welfare in wards, as well as community-based care providers in the delivery of child protection services. Parents who are aware of their child's substance use received invitations from CCWs as well as information about the nature of the study. The word was circulated in different locations around Chitungwiza and Parents who showed interest and volunteered to participate in the research gave CCWs their contact information; the researcher contacted them, and they were enrolled in the study. The interviews took place in the participants' homes, as this was the most convenient location for them. Phenomenological research, according to Wohlfart (2020), requires a small sample size to allow participants to articulate themselves about their lived experiences.

3.5 Procedures for Data Collection

This study's procedures section educates interested parties about the investigation basic steps. This section of the procedures should fully describe the steps so that other researchers can replicate the study. The investigation was carried out by administering a semi-structured interview to six parents or guardians of drug-addicted adolescents. On data collection, the investigator took the following steps:

1. Bindura University of Science Education approved the investigations for this study (BUSE). The investigator then forwarded the approval letter to the Chitungwiza Department of Social Welfare for additional permission to conduct research within the identified community.

2. After approval of the study, the Department of Social Welfare assigned the researcher to the CCWs who work within the proposed study area. These CCWs began sending open invitations to parents of youths who abuses drugs, to participate in the study.
3. Parents who showed concern in participating in the study signed the contact information release form (Appendix B), and the CCWs informed the researcher. The researcher contacted the participants, informed them of the study, and scheduled an appointment at their home.
4. Before commencing the interview, the researcher informed the parent/s of their rights to consent to participate, confidentiality, consent to tape recording and subsequent destruction of the interview tape as well as the purpose of the study. Upon agreement, the informed consent forms (see Appendix C) were administered to the participants.
5. The actual interview began after the participant signed the consent form. The participants were informed that the interview would be conducted anonymously and that no identifying information, such as names, addresses, or phone numbers, would be included in the study report. Participants were also informed that their data, including answers to interview questions, would be combined for analysis, preserving their anonymity. The researcher's interview questions (see Appendix D) were used to continue the interviews.
6. Following the interviews, each contributor was thanked for his or her time and a probing statement was distributed (see Appendix E). This statement acknowledged the importance of the participants' contributions to the study and provided instructions on how to obtain a copy of the findings after June 2022.

3.6 Data Presentation and Analysis Procedure

The researcher used thematic analysis to analyze data. Thematic analysis is defined by Delve and Limpaecher (2020) as a method of identifying, reporting, and analyzing themes. It is also a method for identifying data patterns that repeat. Nonetheless, thematic analysis identifies and interprets aspects of the research questions. Thematic analysis is also a versatile method that can be used in a variety of qualitative methods. This technique allows for the incorporation of participants' emotions, nonverbal cues, and subjective experiences.

Before carrying out thematic analysis, there are four significant decisions that the researcher should consider:

1. The researcher must first determine "what institutes a theme?" The researcher must outline the patterns that are critical to answering the research question (Delve & Limpaecher, 2020)
2. Second, the researcher must choose between providing a rich description of the entire data set and providing rich information about a specific aspect of the data set.
3. The researcher analyzed data to provide a detailed description of the entire data set in order to identify key themes.
4. The third decision is that the researcher has to decide between theoretical and inductive thematic analysis. According to Delve and Limpaecher (2020) the theoretical thematic analysis is used when data will be presenting the researcher's interest or theoretical framework. An inductive approach was chosen because it aligns well with the research question and the theoretical research framework. Inductive approach means that the themes are more likely to be representative of the raw data.
5. The fourth is to decide on how to report data between semantic and latent level. The researcher utilized a semantic style to report on the noticeable patterns. Delve and Limpaecher (2020) stipulated that, the latent approach goes further than just basing on what the participant has reported, for example, searches for detailed features such as the underlying reasoning. This approach was employed in this research to contribute a rich description of what the participants reported.

Delve and Limpaecher(2020) identified six phases of carrying out a thematic analysis.

1. The researcher needs to familiarize himself with research data (Delve & Limpaecher, 2020). The researcher utilized audio of verbal interview tapes to familiarize himself with the data.
2. The researcher then texted down the audio tapes as precisely as possible. Following that, the researcher read the texts several times to become acquainted with the data. This allowed the researcher to jot down some ideas for potential themes. The researcher manually composed final themes that seemed relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Delve & Limpaecher, 2020). The researcher wrote notes on the text. Thereafter, the researcher was able to come up with meaningful data.
3. In the third phase, the researcher analyzed the text and notes by categorizing them into potential themes (Delve & Limpaecher, 2020). The themes were divided into levels by the researcher. Every piece of data was used to develop broad themes, and the

researcher was able to identify relevant themes and sub-themes. The initially arranged themes were made possible by combining all six transcripts. The researcher also used a mind map to organize themes.

4. At this point in the analysis, candidate themes were reviewed and refined (Delve & Limpaecher, 2020). Themes were examined to see if they were clear and captured the essence of the themes. The researcher was convinced that the data was consistent with the themes and that they were distinct.
5. The researcher finalizes and name's suitable themes in the fifth stage (Delve & Limpaecher, 2020). In addition, the researcher wrote a detailed account of each theme to explain how it related to the research question.
6. Finally, the researcher included candidate themes. Finally, the researcher compiled a detailed report on all the themes.

3.7 Chapter Summary

The methods employed by the researcher to respond to the problem statement is described in this chapter. The researcher went to great lengths to describe every component of the process so that it might be replicated in other similar situations.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Analysis and of Collected Data

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the research methodology that was adopted to address the research problem. This chapter presents an analysis and discussion of findings of the challenges which parents face and suffer from as a result of their children's substance abuse. This chapter will give an in-depth analysis and presentation of the main findings. Similar findings will be presented in themes and sub-themes showing some of the major challenges faced by parents. The study sought to address the following research questions:

- What are the experiences of parents living with children who abuse drugs?
- What are the social and economic problems faced by parents living with children who abuse substances in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe?
- What can be done to promote coping up strategies to parents who live with adolescent with the problem of substance abuse?

4:1 Statistical Information

The research enlisted the participation of 6 parents. These parents are not necessarily biological parents rather they range from grandparents to uncles and aunties. In this research out of the 6 who were selected 2 were grandparents, 1 was a biological father, 1 biological mother, 1 uncle and 1 aunt. Of the 6 selected parents and guardians only 2 were formally employed the other 4 make a living through informal means. The children interviewed are all below the age of 24 and none of them goes to work. One of the children is still in school and is said to be very smart as he scores higher marks in exams. The children were picked based on willingness to add more information on the research study. Key informants are those who have positions in the surrounding neighbourhoods of Chitungwiza.

4.2 Study's Main Results Themes and Sub-Themes

4.2.1 Changes in The Behaviour of Children as a Result of Drug Abuse

The research paid much interest in how drug abuse started, and the way parents reacted after noticing some changes in their children's behaviour. During the covid 19 era many adolescents began using drugs as schools were closed most adolescents turned to drug use. The researcher grouped similar information into sub-themes which are listed below.

4.2.1.1 Disobedience and Rebellious Attitude

It was a common thing for all parents to mention disobedience and rebellious attitude as a major behavioural change in their children. Parents complained about how their children came home late and boasting about it. Reports were also made on how the adolescents avoid family gatherings and losing even respect towards family members. Parent 1 (P1) said that *“ever since she started hanging around the big boys her behaviour has changed, she doesn't listen to what anyone says to her, and she only thinks she is the one who knows everything”*. The same sentiments were supported by another parent who argued that their son isolates himself from family events and does not obey rules due to drug use. This parent 2 said: *“my son is now ashamed of himself, and he isolates himself from family events because of his continuous use of drugs, He comes home late and now he doesn't even spend time with his siblings”*. Supporting the effects of drug use on behaviour changes, another parent alluded that their child is now jumping over dura-walls and does not obey rules and instructions from the parents. The parent 5 said: *“I don't even know where he eats or spends his time, if we lock the gate he jumps the dura-wall and disobeys my rules”*. The key informants also supported that children are becoming disobedient because they abuse drugs. The key informant said: *“I have heard complaints about how boys disobey their parents by not following rules and instructions, they even speaking vulgar language and even body shaming elderly women as they pass by”*

The data above shows that children who abuse drugs experience behaviour changes in form of disobedience to their parents and other people. As shown above, children who abuse drugs were reported to jump over dura-walls going where they wish without parental approval, some use vulgar words on elders and some avoiding family events as they wish. These findings concord with those by Matutu & Mususa, (2019) in their study on Drug and Alcohol Abuse among Young People in Zimbabwe: A Crisis of Morality or Public Health Problem. They found that drug abuse leads to disobedience among the youth. The same was also supported by Richert (2020) who puts that Children who abuse drugs are in danger as this may pose a permanent threat to their mental health and in most cases these children are most likely to flee from their homes into the streets and disobeying their guardians. Behavioural change is inevitable because of the continuous use of drugs and in Zimbabwe most parents are concerned and fear that they may lose their children for good, some have even lost hope in their children. From the perspectives of the systems theory by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy's, the change in one area of child's life affects the whole life. The closures of schools during COVID 19 allowed

children time to use drugs. This drug use then caused behaviour changes; children have become disobedient to their parents.

4.2.1.2 Stealing and Poor Hygiene

It emerged from this study that children have behaviour changes due to drug abuse which leads them to stealing and practices of poor hygiene. Parent 3 reported that their child now has poor hygiene and is now good at stealing money to buy drugs which is making their life difficult as they survive on the little, they earn. Parent 3 said: *“my son does not bath like he used to, he now only thinks of drugs and that leads him to steal money, mobile phones and, computers so he can buy those harmful drugs, and this is eating me day and night”*. The other parent also gave a report that shows that even girls are abusing drugs and as a result they have poor hygiene and stealing habits. The parent 1 said: *“my daughter doesn't wash her clothes anymore and she sometimes urinates in her blankets and spends the whole day not smelling good, sometimes she even steals food because these drugs lead them to consume more food”*. Parent 6 also added that: *“my son withdraws from my Ecocash and deletes messages, he is now taking advantage of my old age”*. The key informant also provided the responses that shows lack of hygiene and stealing habits as a result of drug abuse. Before COVID 19 which led to school closing, these children were in good behaviours. The key informant said: *“there have been many cases of theft in this neighbourhood and the suspects are those children who take mutoriro (crystal meth) and marijuana, when they use those drugs, they steal and others lose their hygiene and risking diseases*

The data shows that participants commented on the hygiene of children who abuse drugs as a major effect, it is said that those adolescents have poor personal hygiene. They are said to go for days without even bathing and staying outside becoming street kids. Parents mentioned how their children can go for days with the same clothes and not even showing any remorse towards their deteriorating smartness. As a result of this street behaviour and poor personal hygiene most children who abuse drugs are said to be turning to stealing so as to be able to buy other drugs. Participants mentioned some of the products which these children steal and most common included gadgets such as mobile phones, computers and even money. According to Lawson (1992), adolescent drug abuse causes change in the hygiene and only in rare cases will one maintain their smartness after starting drugs. It is also important to note that parents at first were in denial that their children steal but when they saw behavioural changes, they realised how the children had changed completely. From the systems theoretical perspectives, stealing and poor hygiene are the effects of the changes in the system where the child lives. The closure

of schools and availability of substances have led to drug abuse which then led to stealing behaviours and poor hygiene.

4.2.2 Poor Grades in School

It emerged from this study that parents have noticed changes in academic performance. In the interviews, the participants gave the comments that supports this sentiment. In the interview, parent 4 said: *“he came home without his report book and lied that due to covid they did not get results back, I called the teacher because we go to the same church and that’s when I discovered how bad the situation was, he failed all subjects”*. The other parent gave the same complaints about their child who is using substances. The parent 6 said: *“He always ask for money to go and do lessons but when he is home he doesn’t even read, last term his position in class was not good, his performance has gone worse since he abused substances, he uses my hard-earned money to buy drugs”*. These sentiments were backed up by the data from the key informant. The key informant colluded with the parents when he agreed that the children who uses substances are not performing good in their academic areas. The key informant 2 commented that: *“I am a teacher at a local school here in Chitungwiza, and it is easy to know when adolescents are using drugs, they become bullies, they skip classes and their grades in school fall drastically”*

The above result of this study shows that parents have noticed a change in their children’s academic performance since they started substance abuse. Several reports indicate that the children would skip classes and in extreme cases even end up quitting school. Some parents indicated how it was hard for them to earn money during the COVID 19 pandemic but still sacrificed to pay for online lessons for their children to learn however the children would not attend any online classes. With the Economic hardships in the country parents hope for the best for their children but drugs are destroying their future, and this has affected parents so much. According to Knerich (2019), drug abuse is one of the major obstacles for adolescents still in school and affects their grades in a negative way. When adolescents start failing in school this causes their parents to feel hopeless and leads to stress which may result in health complications. In high density suburbs such as Chitungwiza, selling marijuana is a common business and this has put children at risk as most of them after getting exposed will become addicts. There has been an increase in the number of school dropouts as a result of children being involved in substance use issues. From the perspective of the systems theory, poor academic performance is a result of substance abuse in the life of an adolescent.

4.3 Effects of Adolescent's Drug Abuse on Parents and Family

The effects caused by adolescents' use of drugs is always negative and poses serious problems and dangers on their parents as well as the family as a whole. In some cases, these effects also affect the community. Below are some of the sub-themes derived from the information gathered by the research on the effects the behaviour has on parents, family, and community:

4:3:1 Sour Relationships

Most parents complained about how their relationship and others in the community has turned to be sour as a result of their children's bad behaviour cause by drug abuse. There is also bad relation between parents and their children as they clash on so many things, parents highlighted on the issue of conflicts on a daily basis as the children refuse to listen and give them attitude. Some parents beat their children and shout at them, but it has failed to bring the children back rather making the relationship between the two parties a bit tense. In an interview, parent 4 said: *"I have received news that people talk about me in this neighbourhood, they say I am the one responsible for my child's deeds and lately this has affected my relationship with others in the community"*. Parent 1 also concurred with the report from the parent four. He also complained of the effect of substance abuse on relationships. He said: *"since my daughter started taking drugs she fights with her mother on a daily basis, it's like she is a completely different person now"*. The child who was interviewed also confirmed that drug abuse has affected the parent child relationship. The child 1 said: *"since my father discovered that I am now taking drugs, he doesn't care about my wellbeing, if I greet him sometimes, he ignores. The community looks at me as if I am smelling and some people tell their children not to hang around with me"*

This data above shows that parents complained about how their relationship and others in the community has turned to be sour as a result of their children's bad behaviour cause by drug abuse. There is also bad relation between parents and their children as they clash on so many things, parents highlighted on the issue of conflicts on a daily basis as the children refuse to listen and give them attitude. Some parents beat their children and shout at them, but it has failed to bring the children back rather making the relationship between the two parties a bit tense. Drug use has always affected relationships in any case even if it's the parent who is taking drugs or if it's the child (Lipari et al, 2017). Knerich (2019) puts that, 80 % of Children who abuse drugs have sour relationships with their parents. According to systems theory, every part has an effect to the other parts thus we find out here how the behaviour of the child is

affecting the parents, family, and community as a whole. Parents end up regretting giving birth to someone like that.

4:3:2 Financial Instability and Lack of Trust

Financial instability and lack of trust has been reported as the effect of substance abuse. Parents reported that they lose trust on their children because they use substances. This substance use has caused financial instability amongst family members. Parent 5 said: *“I lock my bedroom and hide keys every-time I leave to go to my friend’s house or church because I no longer trust my son, he steals whenever he gets the opportunity and that has caused financial problems in the house”*. Parent 5 added that: *“these days I go and pay fees alone, I only send him to do things which does not involve money such as carrying water from the borehole otherwise the rest I do myself”*. The child who was interviewed confirmed these claims of the parents. The child 3 said: *“they lock everything in their bedroom and leave the keys next door because they no longer trust me. I last entered the bedroom when I was in form 3, which is last year”*

The data shows that parents highlighted on how they were failing to make ends meet as a result of their children’s use of addictive drugs. Children use money for fees or other important things to purchase drugs and putting a burden on their parents. Some parents are even scared to leave valuables in the sight of their children as they fear that they will steal. Stealing money from parents is a common case which parents mentioned. The levels of trust have decreased, and some parents even mentioned of how it now feels like they are living with a stranger in the house. The findings match with those of Carpenter (2017), that financial instability arises as a result of substance abuse in families. Trust is lost between parents and their children and the risk of loss of property increases as a result of such behaviours (Matutu & Mususa, 2019). From the perspective of the systems theory, any change in the system affect the whole system. This means that changes in the life of a child in this case substance use, it affects the whole life of the child. In this case, there is mistrust between the parent and the child because of substance use. Before the child abuses substances, the situation was different, there was trust.

4:3:3 Hopelessness

Parents suffer from loss of hope in their children as a result of their bad behaviour of drug abuse. Adolescents who abuse drugs sometimes get mad and leave their home for the streets, as a result when a parent discovers their child is abusing drugs, they tend to lose hope easily. Parent 2 said: *“when he started with alcohol I still had hope that he would stop or end there, I even suggested church but when he started taking (mutoriro and tumbwa) I lost all the hope I*

had in him". Parent 3 also said that: *"My child sometimes talks alone and if you try to make a conversation with him, he talks as if he is a mad man, he laughs on his own and its weird, there is no hope in him"*. Parent 6 also said that: *"My child always talks about leaving to South Africa if he gets money and how he doesn't even like school, what hope is there for a son like him"*

The results above testifies that parents suffer from loss of hope in their children as a result of their bad behaviour of drug abuse. Adolescents who abuse drugs sometimes get mad and leave their home for the streets, as a result when a parent discovers their child is abusing drugs they tend to lose hope easily. Sommer et al (2017) found that children in African culture are expected to inherit their parents' assets and continue with their legacy however as a result of drug abuse parents have lost hope in their children. Adolescent methamphetamine use and sexual risk behavior in secondary school students concluded that parents suffer a great loss as they see their children taking a wrong path and they know how this will affect even the lives of their siblings. From the perspective of the systems theory, the life of the individual is an interconnected system. Parents have hopes for their children to succeed, but when the children start using drugs, the system is disturbed, and that hope is lost.

4.4 Mental Challenges Faced by Parents as a Result of Their Children's Abuse of Drugs

According to WHO (2015), "mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realises their own abilities and can cope with everyday stresses of life ". Parents of children who abuse drugs go through a lot in their everyday lives and they end up thinking too much which affects their mental health. Mental health is a subject which has been ignored over the years but as a result of rising cases of suicide the people in Zimbabwe are now paying attention to it. Parents start facing psychological problems and below are some of the findings of the research pertaining the issue of mental health in parents of children who abuse drugs.

4.4.1 Shame and Self Blame

The parents reported to have faced a mental challenge of shame and self-blame after finding out that their children where abusing drugs. Some parents blamed themselves for putting their children in harm's way. The parent 6 said: *"One day he told me that if I had put him in boarding school all this wouldn't have happened"*. Parent 1 also added that: *"her mother is now a laughingstock, and she now fears walking in public places. Some of the comments from people are hurtful as they blame us saying we support our child's drug use behaviour and allow her to have many boyfriends, it's now shameful"*. The same sentiments were also reported by the

key informants. The key informant 3 said: *“In our African society Parents pay for the sins of their children and in some cases, parents end up dying as a result of this, mentally they won’t be stable due to shame, guilt and self-blame”*

The data above shows parents expressing how they feel ashamed in public places such as church or marketplaces. Some even expressed how they realise that the sins of the child are always put on the parent. Parents feel ashamed of their children’s behaviour and for some reason they end up blaming themselves thinking they are the cause of all of it thus this eats them up inside to an extent that even their mental health will be threatened. They get persecuted by the society for giving their children too much freedom and not teaching their children to be morally upright. Some parents feel bad as they think that it’s because they are poor that is the reason their children ended up drugs. These regrets and views of the society have cause parents to stress and feel ashamed to an extent that even their mental health is affected. According to Fuchshuber et al. (2018), drug abuse is a serious problem which causes in psychological trauma in children, and this also causes trauma in parents. Fear of what the society thinks of them has caused so much stress and shame in most parents thus posing a threat to their mental well-being.

4.4.2 Worthless and Guilty

Parents reported that they felt worthless and guilty for having a child that loses its future due to substance abuse. Parent 2 said: *“I used to drink in-front of him maybe that’s the reason why he also started to drink and ended up taking drugs. I blame-myself for not being a good role model to my son”*. Parent 5 also gave an agreeing report concerning worthless and guilty. The parent said: *“maybe if I had enough money, I could have hired a therapist for him because we tried churches, but the problem is still there”*. Parent 6 also added that: *“I am done I don't think I can do anything anymore I tried everything I can, but it seems like I am not doing enough, and I am tired now”*

Similar to self-blame Guilty is a feeling of being responsible for a wrongdoing thus becoming blameable. Parents expressed their regrets as they feel guilty of their children's abuse of drugs. On the on the other hand some parents expressed their guilty in a sense that they feel worthless as they lack the knowledge and resources to put their children in rehabilitation facilities so that they may get help and refrain from drug use. Parents usually feel worthless and guilty of their children’s deviant behaviours as they are seen as parental failure in societies (Bryan, 2019). In

this case some parents blame themselves as they feel their children's actions are as a result of their own actions and how they presented themselves to their children.

4.5 Social and Economic Challenges Faced By Parents As A Result Of Their Children's Abuse of Drugs

Parents of children who abuse drugs face so many challenges as shown above however it is also important to clarify on some of the major social and economic problems which they encounter as they are parenting drug abusing adolescents. In most cases the situation of these parents is very devastating and with severe consequences on their livelihoods. Themes were derived on the major social and economic challenges which parents face as a result of their children's use of drugs and are as follows:

4.5.1 Discrimination

Participants reported that they face discrimination because they have children who uses substances in the community. Parent 3 said: *"I submitted my name to be the chairman of Our Club Society known as The Good neighbours club and some of my peers laughed about it and told me to first chair my children before I chair them"*. Parent 4 also complained of discrimination. The parent said that: *"I don't even raise my hand for any position at church or what because people judge me for my child's deeds, they say we are parents of thieves"*. This sentiment was supported by the key informants. The key informant showed that parents spoke the truth about how they face discrimination due to their children's behaviour in the community. Key informant 2 said: *"in most school boards which have parents you find that only parents of well-behaved students have seats and those of ill-behaved are not found in such, so I am not surprised, and I cannot deny that there is some sort of discrimination which comes as a result of a child's deeds"*

Humans are social beings that means that they survive through socialising and interacting with others. It is through this interaction that people choose their leaders from whether it's a political position or it's a church position such as being a section leader. Whilst conducting this study the researcher found out that parents of children who abuse drugs face some sort of discrimination as they are excluded and not selected to hold any position in the society. People are so judgemental about it, and this has affected the Parents so much that it has become one of the social challenges which they face. Most participants agreed on the issue of being segregated in their communities as a result of their children's abuse of drugs. They say

neighbours fear to be associated with them as they think their children will influence theirs as well as steal their valuables.

4.5.2 Violence and Vulnerability

The parents also reported having suffered violence because their children use substances. In an interview, the parent 5 said: *“whenever he gets drunk or high, he becomes violent, he doesn't listen to me and even more so if it's his aunt he gets aggressive like he wants to fight with her”*. The parent 1 also suffered the same fate of violence from their own child due to substance abuse. The parent said: *“she knows we cannot send her away, so she takes advantage of that, every-time we mention throwing her out of the house she laughs”* Parent 2 also adds that: *“he doesn't know how to play with his siblings in a good way anymore, he beats them if they fail to do what he wants. He now sees himself as the head of the house.”* The key informant also supported this by claiming that: *“we hear of fights every day at the bases where these children take drugs and reports have been made on how this sort of behaviour also happens at their houses as they challenge their parents”*

As shown from the comments above, violence is another challenge which parents face as a result of their children's abuse of drugs. Drugs have always been a major attribute to violent behaviour in human beings. Violence is behaviour which involves physical force and with the intention to hurt or cause harm to something. Parents brought up the issue of violence as another problem which they face as a result of their children's use of drugs. Children who abuse drugs tend to be aggressive towards their siblings and parents especially when they are confronted about it or if they are contradicted on what they want. Female Participants highlighted on how they are sometimes scared that one day the child might hurt them as their aggressiveness turns to increase by each day and respect is totally lost by the child. Parents also mentioned on how vulnerable they have become as they cannot control their children anymore. They hear issues every day and they face major losses as their children take goods and valuables and sell but still the parents cannot do anything as they are now vulnerable. Most times these parents are summoned and asked to compensate for goods stolen in their community making them more vulnerable. Other parents fear for their other children's well-being as the one who abuses drugs tends to be hostile and violent towards the siblings. Addicts, according to Olff (2018), have a proneness to become angry, aggressive, and stubborn in their doing. This has resulted in an increase on the number of cases of violence as well as gender-based violence.

4.5.3 Financial Challenges

The parents faced financial challenges due to their children's use of substances. This is a major blow as families in Chitungwiza live on hand to mouth. Some of the comments made by parents concerning financial challenges are as follows: Parent 1” *we have wasted so much money in traditional healers and prophets trying to get help for her, but it is all in vain, now I don't even know where to get money for the family to feed since it all went towards her well-being*”. Parent 6 “*he is the oldest and sometimes when i am absent I expect him to take over at the market where I sell tomatoes and vegetables but due to his addiction problems, I doubt anything good will come out*” Parent 5” *you leave money on the table the next second it's gone, I have been facing difficulties lately as a result of him stealing from me*”

Chitungwiza is a high-density suburb and majority of its people are middle- and low-class people. Parents highlighted on how they were struggling to make ends meet and take care of their families and as a result of their children's deviant behaviour the situation has escalated from bad to worse. When Children abuse drugs, they put a burden on their parents as these parents would need money for assistance whether medical or spiritual. Some parents especially those who depend on the informal sector to make ends meet also complained that whenever they are not their business will be closed because they can no longer trust their children to run in their absence. According to Groenewald and Bhana (2017), there is a pattern of financial difficulties and drug abuse. Children who abuse drugs pose serious threats to their parents' financial well-being. It is always the Parents who bear the burden of the effects caused by their children. The comments above show how parents have suffered financially and how they have lost valuables and money because of their children's use of drugs.

4.6 Parents' strategies to assist their adolescent's substance abuse problem

The researcher will explore themes related to parents' strategies to help their children overcome substance addiction. Religious or spiritual, professional, and parental counsel are some of the themes that have evolved.

4.6.1 Religious or Spiritual help

It emerged from this study that the parents sought help from the religious leaders to help their children from substance abuse. Parents reported that this was a strategy at their disposal as they hoped that God will help them. The parent 3 said: “*we sought help from the church, our church members came to assist us in praying for him*” the other parent also gave the same report that they sought religious help because it is all they could think of. The parent 4 said: “*I took him*

to a white garment church in Chitungwiza, and the second day he ran away”. The other parent also puts that: *“I’ve done everything, including visiting to other churches, and I’m confident he’ll be healed.”*

The data above shows that following the discovery of their child's substance abuse, most parents reported that they seek religious assistance. Most parents said that, in addition to parental counsel, they sought help from religious churches such as Pentecostal and White Garment Churches for their children's treatment, particularly through prayers. The majority of participants did not specifically cite spiritual aid from other religions, such as traditional leaders, according to the study. According to the study, parents were apprehensive about discussing it. Parents, on the other hand, said they tried practically everything they could to help their adolescent overcome their addiction. Religious assistance was not limited to prayers, but also included counseling and funding from faith-based organizations, with a focus on economic and social issues. Masombuka (2018) confirms that religious help and comfort were provided to parents of drug-addicted children. As a result, parents took their children to churches and traditional healers in the hopes of being free of evil spirits and demons. Some parents stated that the situation remained the same whether or not they took their children to church. However, these data suggest that some parents have high hopes for their children and are willing to go to great lengths for them. From the systems theory perspective, religion is a part in the whole system of the life of the child.

4.6.2 Professional Help

The results shows that some parents sought professional help with the challenge of their children being engaged in substance abuse. The parent 3 reported that: *“We were directed to Social Welfare by the police to consult with a drug therapist, it helped our son, he is becoming better as he is taking his therapies”*. The parent 4 also supported that they used the help of a professional. The parent reported seeking help from a social worker in their area. The parent 4 said: *“luckily we got help from a social worker who lives in this area and our child is almost normal.”* The parent 6 also gave the same report that they sought professional help as a strategy to deal with the challenge. The parent said: *“we approached the social welfare and was given a professional person to help our child”*

When parents sought professional assistance, respondents said they frequently interacted with social workers from the Department of Social Welfare. They also stated that the police had

referred them because the DSW is the custodian of children. Another source of professional assistance came from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Catch, which helped people with transport faire, particularly for those children in conflict with the law. These findings contrast those of Hoeck and Van Hal (2020), who found that when parents are confronted with a substance-abusing adolescent, they contact their general practitioner (GP). In view of the findings, it is evident that the social work profession is misunderstood, and there are few organizations concerned with the well-being of parents who are caring for their adolescent who is abusing drugs, or there aren't enough organizations that focus on adolescents who abuse substances.

4.7 Solutions necessary for Parents living with Adolescents abusing substances.

The last section discussed how stressful and difficult it is for parents to deal with their adolescent's substance addiction behavior. As evidenced by the following, parents strongly believed that receiving support from police and community people would help them cope more effectively:

4.7.1 Support from the Police

Even though they were not fully satisfied with the work of the police, the parents did sought help from the police to reduce the substance abuse among their children. The parent 5 confirmed this in the interview when he claimed that: *“my son was once drug abuser to an extent that I involved the police myself, just to let them give him some discipline as they did, he became better, however, it is the police that is not doing their job to stop substance abuse”*. The parent 6 also said he had the police help in the case. The parent said: *“I called the police to bust the drug suppliers who supplied our children”*. The parent 5 added that: *“the police help use to control our children from abusing drugs, but they should do more, they should stop drug supply so that our children become safe”*

The data above shows that parents anticipate the police to play a significant role in their fight against adolescent substance abuse. The International Centre for Drug Policy (2010) notes that there is still a scarcity of systematic research on the link between drug law enforcement and adolescent substance abuse. The major authority in minimizing substance abuse, according to the study, should be the police. As a result, substance abuse is on the rise while few people get arrested for selling drugs (Swanepoel, Geyer & Crafford, 2017). This makes it clear that the police are supporting corruption at the expense of children; there is no excuse not to prosecute the perpetrators because the parents know who they are, therefore drug dealers will continue to

sell because they know they are untouchable thanks to their bribes (Swanepoel, Geyer, & Crafford, 2017). From the systematic point of view, the policy must do their work to stop drug supply to make the environment safer for children

4.7.2 Support from the community

The study found that parents sought support from the community members. The parent 4 said that: *“I pleaded with the community members to report when our children approach them with stolen property for sale.”* The parent 5 also said that: *“The community members have helped my son a lot, they counsel him and rebuke him when he does wrong, its better now”*. The parent 3 said that the community has helped in reducing substance abuse of their children. The parent said: *“the community members have pleaded with children not to use drugs; this has been done at a community level and has helped my son”*

Generally, the parents felt so strongly that community support was critical. Parents, on the other hand, claimed that the community was reacting poorly to their children's substance abuse. People in the community, for example, tend to support addicted children's criminal behavior by purchasing stolen products from them. As a result, the addicted adolescent can earn money to buy drugs. It's also worth noting that these drug dealers live in the same neighborhood as the dependent child. Furthermore, community members frequently place unfavorable labels on drug addicts' families, leading to parents withdrawing themselves to avoid the noises around their adolescent's substance abuse problem. It takes a village to raise a child (Department of Social Development, 2010:216). This means that it is the responsibility of all community members to engage and support the adolescent's future, not just biological parents, or family members. This reinforces cultural value of “ubuntu,” which states that everyone is responsible for protecting and providing opportunities for children, as well as supporting families within communities. From the systems theoretical view, the community is a part in the system of the life of the child

4.8 Chapter summary

This chapter included a thorough examination of the following: demographic data and a discussion of the outcomes of all participants' interviews. Themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews with the participants were identified using thematic analysis. The confidentiality principle was applied in such a way that participants' right to confidentiality was respected. In order to provide a description of the parents' psycho-social challenges, the

researcher also used direct words from the participants. Finally, the current study's findings are consistent with the majority of local and international studies.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This chapter encompasses the study's summary, conclusion, and recommendations, with a focus on the main findings. It recaps the entire project, including limitations, solutions, and proposals. It will also pay attention to the general assumptions, which will disclose the challenges and answers to the problems identified.

5.1 Summary

The first chapter enclosed the following topics: introduction, research aim, objectives, methodology used, key findings, background of research including purpose of study, statement of problem, research question, assumptions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of study, research ethics, and definition of terms. The second chapter concentrated on the theoretical framework and relevant literature review of the challenges faced by parents living with children who abuse drugs. The research methodology used in the study was described in the 3rd chapter. Chapter four presented data, analyzed it, and discussed the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis process. Chapter five will provide a brief overview of the whole research project, including limitations, explanations, and recommendations. It will also pay attention to the overall assumptions revealing the challenges faced by parents and will propose solutions to those parents.

5.2 Constraints of the Study

The research was limited to Chitungwiza Zimbabwe and focused on six parents with children who were addicted to substances. As a result, due to the distinctiveness of the setting, the study's findings cannot be applied to parents in other places especially rural and low-density areas.

More so, the study included a very small number of participants, indicating that the findings are limited in generalizability. Although the results of this study can only be applied to six parents, they do show several issues which parents face while parenting an adolescent with a substance addiction problem. These issues range from, economic to political and social problems.

Another limitation is the use of a semi-structured interview in this study. No formal back-translation was used during the semi-structured interview. The research would have been more

concrete if the interviews had been converted into Shona using a rigorous back-translation method.

The following are also limitations to the study:

1. The gender viewpoint was limited because most of the parents interviewed were women.
2. The researcher was unable to easily travel due to the devastating effects of Covid-19. This hampered the researcher's ability to complete the research investigation on time.
3. The research interviews were conducted at the participants' homes, the environment was not entirely conducive for parents, reducing the study's courtesy.

5.3 Conclusions

Drug addiction is on the rise among youths in Chitungwiza Harare Zimbabwe. As a result, this troubling behavior has a double impact on the parent(s). Parents are accountable for their children's welfare, and if a child begins taking substances, they must give care and participate in other family managing duties. Parents are faced with a variety of psycho-social issues because of their child's behavior, including feelings of shame, humiliation, vulnerability, gender-based violence, defeat, financial loss, and insignificance. Parents described how challenging it is to parent a child with a substance abuse problem while also dealing with financial loss, gender-based violence, and stealing from their own adolescent. Parents also stated that living with an adolescent with a substance addiction issue is challenging because the child becomes aggressive and violent, humiliates them, and destroys their connections with family members and the community. The adolescent's arrogant behavior, which their parents describe as "difficult," looks to be jeopardizing the parent-child relationship. As a result, the following conclusions can be drawn from findings of the study:

- In Zimbabwe, adolescent drug abuse is on the rise, and the streets are overrun with substances of all kinds. This is fast damaging the dreams and well-being of adolescents in Chitungwiza Zimbabwe.
- Parents who have an adolescent who is addicted to drugs lack the skills to manage their child's problematic conduct. They blame themselves for failing to carry out their parental responsibilities.
- Parents have a remarkable desire to help their adolescent conquer their addiction to substances.

- Parents as caregivers rearing an adolescent with drug abuse problem need professional assistance.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings of this research show that children's substance addiction has harmful consequences not just for the users themselves, but also for their parents, families, and communities. As a result, it is proposed that:

- Parents should be more worried about their children's involvement in substance abuse if they begin to display any of the following behavioral patterns.
 1. Poor grades in school
 2. Poor sanitation and hygiene
 3. hanging around strangers of different ages
 4. Devoting more time on the street
- Regardless of financial challenges or the effects of Covid-19, parents should strive to find a balance between their income-generating activities or vocations and their parental duties. This is because as parents spend less time at home fending for their families, their children are more likely to be exposed to drug abuse and other deviant behaviors because they know no one is watching them.
- Although this study was limited to Chitungwiza Zimbabwe, it is suggested that a larger study involving many places be conducted to evaluate developing patterns across various areas such rural and low density.
- Professional case management should be universal in character, with involvements extending to parents whose children are addicted to drugs. according to the Department of Social Welfare, these interventions should include the following:
 1. Psycho-social treatment for family members with an addicted adolescent
 2. Parenting skills training
 3. Social work evaluation of the support needed by parents
 4. Anger management
 5. Consider the role of spirituality

- The Department of Social Welfare should work together with NGOs that provide services to youths addicted to substances to provide awareness and educational campaigns in communities to avoid the scourge of substance addiction.
- Empowerment of parents and family members using life skills trainings, support groups and concretization.
- The government can help people thrive by providing scholarships and thus serving as role models for young people.
- Adequate law and policy execution in relation to substance abuse. This role should be carried out primarily by the police, so special agencies and social work professionals within the Zimbabwe Republic Police should be founded to monitor child welfare issues as well as the police's involvement in corrupt activities with drug dealers.
- Traditional and religious leaders' involvement in the fight against drug abuse should be reinforced by educating and encouraging them to get involved.
- Communities should be made aware of the risks of substance abuse. Most parents have not been exposed to substance abuse. This should include the following steps: de-stigmatization of adolescent substance abusers, parents, and families, community education about substance abuse, community watchfulness and reporting of drug dealers, re-instilling the value of Ubuntu, and the establishment of community forums against drug abuse.
- There is a need for support groups where people with different but nearly identical problems can come together and share their experiences, ideas, and advice about their substance-abusing adolescents.

The challenges experienced by parents living with an adolescent who abuses drugs are not well understood in Zimbabwe, according to study. More research and studies are needed to collect more qualitative data on the psychological, economic, and social effects of adolescent substance abuse on parents as well as family and community members at large.

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Appendix A: Approval form

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

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BINDURA, Zimbabwe
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Fax: 263 - 71 - 7534
socialwork@buse.ac.zw



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Date 10/12/21

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

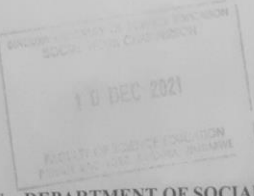
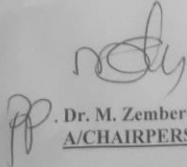
Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO UNDER TAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION

This serves to advise that...TANAKA J BUKITSANI... Registration No.
B...1850744... is a BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS
DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK student at Bindura University of Science Education who is
conducting a research project.

May you please assist the student to access data relevant to the study and where possible
conduct interviews as part of the data collection process.

Yours faithfully



Dr. M. Zembere
A/CHAIRPERSON - DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Appendix B: Contact Information Release Form

Please fill in the underlined spaces

Name of parent/guardian: _____

Phone Number: _____ Best time to call: _____

Address: _____

I give the CCW permission to give Tanaka J Bukitsani (fourth year student) my phone number so that he can contact me about volunteering to be interviewed for the research study. This study looks at the challenges that parents face when their adolescent child is a substance abuser. I understand that this information will not be shared with anyone else, including the CCWs, and that any information I provide during an interview will be treated as strictly confidential.

Appendix C: Informed consent form

Informed Consent for Parents' Participation in the Qualitative Study "An Investigation on the Challenges Faced by Parents living with children who abuse drugs. Case Study of Chitungwiza".

What is the purpose of this study?

The study's goal is to look at the challenges that parents face when their children abuse drugs. Much research has been conducted on adolescent substance abuse, but little information has attempted to capture the challenges faced by parents or guardians. I'm interested about what you have gone through as a parent as your son or daughter has dealt with this type of issue. As a result, the focus will be on you rather than your adolescent's challenges, and we hope to gather information so that professionals can better serve families like yours.

What will I have to do?

After signing a consent form, participate in a 30-minute in-depth interview, which will be tape recorded.

What are the benefits?

- ✓ Your assistance will enable researchers and professionals who work with parents/guardians and adolescents to gain a better understanding of the challenges that parents face when parenting an adolescent with a substance abuse problem.
- ✓ Professionals will be able to provide more effective services to these families based on what you and others share.
- ✓ You and the other parents will have access to the findings of this study.

What are the risks?

It is possible to feel uncomfortable at times discussing problems related to your adolescent's substance abuse. It is your right to decide what you want to share. If you are uncomfortable with the interview, you have the option to end it at any time for any reason.

Is it private?

- ✓ The researcher will interview about the challenges you faced as a parent of a child who abuses drugs. He will not disclose your specific responses to anyone associated with

the Department, including the CCWs. Your information will be kept completely private.

- ✓ When the study is finished, any material containing identifying information, including audiotapes and notes, will be destroyed. Furthermore, no personal information about you will ever be made public.

Can I quit if I want to?

This study's participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to leave at any time. There are no consequences for you or your adolescent if you choose to dismiss. Furthermore, your participation in or exclusion from the study has no bearing on your services with the Department of Social Welfare.

Are there any financial returns in participating?

Participation in the study is completely optional, and there are no monetary benefits; however, your input will benefit other families just like yours.

Approval of Research

This project has been approved by Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE). The Department of Social Welfare also further permitted the researcher to carry out investigations.

Participant's Permission and Responsibilities

I accept to participate in this research. This consent form has been reviewed in its entirety by me. All my questions have been answered. I willingly offer my agreement to engage in this project by marking and signing below. I am aware that I have the right to dismiss at any time I'm also aware that there are no monetary benefits to taking part in this study.

Appendix D: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO ABUSE DRUGS

My name is Tanaka Joseph Bukitsani, a final year student at Bindura University of Science Education studying Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Social Work. I am carrying out a research on " **An investigation on the challenges faced by parents living with children who abuse drugs. Case study of Chitungwiza**". Thank you for volunteering to take part in this in-depth interview.

Questions for the Parents 30-Minute Interview During the actual interview, this interview schedule served as a guide. The researcher asked these questions after briefly explaining the purpose of the study and reminding the participants that they had the right to refuse to answer any questions or to be dismissed from the interview at any time for any reason.

Opening prompt:

“I am interested in knowing about your experiences as a parent living with an adolescent abusing drugs.”

1. Age?
2. Sex?
3. Livelihood - how you manage to take care of the family and if you are employed or not?
4. Number of children?
5. Number of children on drugs?
6. How did it start and what was your reaction after finding out?
7. Did you notice changes in the behavior and attitude of your child? If yes, please tell me about that.
8. Concerning your child’s substance abuse problem how is the behavior affecting you as a parent, as well as your image in the community?
9. What strategies have you done accordingly so far to support your child as well as yourself to get rid the behavior and its negative impacts on your life?
10. What source of support do you think can assist parents and families like yours?

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is Tanaka Joseph Bukitsani, a final year student at Bindura University of Science Education studying Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Social Work. I am carrying out a research on " **An investigation on the challenges faced by parents living with children who abuse drugs. Case study of Chitungwiza**". Thank you for volunteering to take part in this in-depth interview.

Questions for the Key informant 30-Minute Interview During the actual interview, this interview schedule served as a guide. The researcher asked these questions after briefly explaining the purpose of the study and reminding the participants that they had the right to refuse to answer any questions or to be dismissed from the interview at any time for any reason.

Opening prompt:

“I am interested in knowing about your views on the use of drugs by adolescents and how it has affected parents.”

1. Age?
2. Sex?
3. Position in society?
4. Your take on the issue of adolescents who abuse drugs?
5. What do you think are some of the major problems faced by parents who live with children who abuse drugs?
6. What can be done to stop drug abuse in children and what can you propose as solutions to challenges faced by parents?
7. What source of support do you think can assist parents and families like that?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CHILDREN WHO ABUSE DRUGS

My name is Tanaka Joseph Bukitsani, a final year student at Bindura University of Science Education studying Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Social Work. I am carrying out a research on " **An investigation on the challenges faced by parents living with children who abuse drugs. Case study of Chitungwiza**". Thank you for volunteering to take part in this in-depth interview.

Questions for the Children who abuse drugs 30-Minute Interview During the actual interview, this interview schedule served as a guide. The researcher asked these questions after briefly explaining the purpose of the study and reminding the participants that they had the right to refuse to answer any questions or to be dismissed from the interview at any time for any reason.

Opening prompt:

“I am interested in knowing about your views on the use of drugs how it has affected you and your parents.”

1. Age?
2. Sex?
3. How did you get to start using drugs?
4. What changes have you noticed at home ever since you started using drugs?
5. What do you think are some of the major problems faced by your parents because of your use of drugs?
6. What can be done to stop you from taking drugs and restore your previous relationship with your parents before all this started?