

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**



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**DISSERTATION TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF CARE GIVERS LIVING  
WITH YOUTHS ABUSING DRUGS AND  
SUBSTANCES A CASE STUDY OF  
CHIPADZE AREA.**

## Declaration

I declare that ‘The experience of care gives living with the youths abusing drug and substances. A case study of Chipadze area, Bindura.’ is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

CRUCIAL NYANDORO..... DATE 20/06/2025

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE.....DATE 20/06/2025

## Release form

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this study to my family. My parents C. Nyandoro and C. Juziyere for their care and support during the course of the study. The Lord who granted me the strength and wisdom to conduct this study.

## **Plagrasim report**

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## **ACRONOMOMYS**

HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
NGO	Non -governmental organisations
NIDA	National Institute of Drug Abuse
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drug and Crime
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZMDAP	Zero Misuse of Drugs and Alcohol Policy

## ABSTRACT

*The focus of the study is having understanding of the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. The research approach used by the researcher in this study is the qualitative design approach. The researcher used snow balling sampling and purpose sampling for the research. On the participants snow balling sampling was applied and key informants purposive sampling was applied. The data collection methods used by the researcher are focus group discussion and in depth interviews. Focus group discussion was used to collect data from the participants and in-depth interviews were used to collect data from the participants. The findings of the study are causes of drug and substance abuse among the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances, challenges faced by the care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances and the strategies being used by the care givers of the abusing drug and substances to cope with the challenges of drug and substance abuse. From the findings the causes of drug and substance abuse among the youths of the care givers are lack of unemployment, peer pressure from friends and community, cultural beliefs and the increase of urbanization and migration. The findings of the study highlighted that the challenges of drug and substance abuse among the care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances are health implication, financial strain, and high rate of crime and family separation, disunity and violence. The findings also highlighted that the strategies to cope with the challenges of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances are providing education and awareness, building support network systems in the communities, harsh penalties and laws to the people who are found with illegal drugs and also providing open communication systems in the communities. The recommendations of the study are imposing policies that facilitate resources such as training, building supportive networks for caregivers, collaboration of stakeholders and training for social workers basing on drug and substance abuse handling.*

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter is going to focus on several aspects of the research study about the care givers living with the youths abusing drugs and substances. This chapter have several study topics that the writer is going to discuss about in this chapter. It compiles the background of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the study, objectives, justification of the study, definition of terms, dissertation outline and chapter summary.

### **1.2. Background of the study**

The issue of substance abuse is a major issue around the world. Several countries globally are facing the challenge of substance abuse. Substance abuse has profound effects on families and communities worldwide, influencing social, economic, and health outcomes of the people. Substance abuse causes disruption of relationships among families. Substance abuse often leads to strained relationships, increased conflict and breakdowns in communication among family members (Lander, 2013). Due to substance abuse families are facing emotional toll and economic strain. Substance abuse results in poor health among individuals with diseases such as cancer and TB which can cause families to spend more money in trying to deal with the diseases which results in economic strain. The financial burden of purchasing substances and healthcare costs can destabilize family units and lead to poverty (World Health Organization, 2021).

The community impact of substance abuse globally is that it increases crime rates and contributes to health issues. Most people who are committing crimes are victims of substance abuse. Many communities witness a rise in crime associated with substance abuse, including drug trafficking and violence (National Institute on Drug Abuse,

2020).Also the impact of substance abuse on economic level globally is loss of productivity. Substance abuse can lead to decreased productivity in the workforce. The global impact of substance abuse encompasses complex interrelations between individuals, families and communities.

Organizations like the World Health Organization (2021) emphasize the need for comprehensive strategies to address substance abuse, focusing on prevention, treatment and harm reduction. Substance abuse has significant and far-reaching impacts on families and communities worldwide. Families affected by substance abuse often experience higher rates of mental health disorders. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (2021) notes that children of substance-abusing parents are more likely to be placed in foster care. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), around 275 million people worldwide used drugs in 2020, representing about 5.6% of the global population aged 15-64. Substance use among adolescents is a growing concern, with the WHO reporting that around 13% of adolescents aged 15-19 have used illicit substances. The effects of substance abuse extend beyond individuals to families and communities, creating a cycle of impact that can hinder social cohesion and economic stability. Comprehensive approaches, including prevention, treatment, and community support, are essential to address these challenges effectively.

Substance abuse is a growing concern in various regions of Africa, affecting families and communities in significant ways. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2021 World Drug Report, around 5.7% of the population in Africa aged 15-64 used drugs in the year 2020. This is a notable increase compared to previous years. On alcohol consumption the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that alcohol consumption in Africa is rising, with an estimated 9.1 liters of

pure alcohol consumed per capital among adults in 2016. The impact of substance abuse in families is that , families affected by substance abuse often experience higher levels of conflict and instability.

Research indicates that children in these families are at increased risk of neglect and emotional disturbances. Substance abuse also contributes to various health issues, including mental health disorders. A study in South Africa found that about 20% of individuals seeking treatment for substance misuse also reported mental health issues. Substance abuse is linked to increased rates of crime and violence in communities. Reports indicate that drug trafficking and abuse contribute significantly to violence in certain regions, particularly in West and East Africa. The economic costs associated with substance abuse, including healthcare expenditures and lost productivity, are significant. Substance abuse continues to pose serious challenges for families and communities across Africa. It affects mental health, family stability, and public safety, highlighting the need for comprehensive prevention and treatment strategies tailored to the unique contexts of different regions.

Drug and substance abuse has become a major challenge in the communities of Zimbabwe. The problem of drug and substance abuse among the youths is growing concern in Zimbabwe. The youths are the ones who are more into drugs due to peer pressure, lack of unemployment. The care givers of the youths abusing drugs and substances are the ones facing difficult challenges due to the outcome of the drug and substance abuse.

Zimbabwe has several Acts on drug and substance abuse which works as a strategy to reduce drug and substance abuse in the country. The Dangerous Drugs Act (1956) and

the Medicines and Allied Substances Control Act (1969) are two of the pieces of legislation governing abuse of drugs and substances in Zimbabwe. The Acts control the importation, exportation, possession, sale, distribution and use of dangerous drugs in the country. The Dangerous Drugs Act states that, it is illegal to import, export, sell, offer or advertise for sale, distribute, deliver, transport or otherwise deal in dangerous drugs in all places of the nation. According to Dangerous Drugs Act there are penalties for offenses such as imprisonment and heavy fines for people who are found guilty. Medicines and Allied Substance Control Act regulates the manufacturing, distribution, sale and importation of medicines, drugs and substances. This act also requires registration of drugs before they can be marketed in Zimbabwe

### **1.2. Statement of the problem`**

Drug and substance abuse becomes a major challenge to care givers of the youths abusing drugs and substances in Chipadze, Bindura. Drug and substance abuse becomes a problem on health issues, economic issues and social issues. It poses significant challenges for care givers of the youths abusing drugs and substances, through emotional toll, social isolation and financial strain. These care givers often lack adequate resources and support, leading to significant impacts on their mental health and family dynamics. The cause of the problem stems from the increasing rates of substance abuse among youths, influenced by factors such as peer pressure, mental health issues and socio-economic challenges. The problem of drug and substance abuse affects caregivers of the youths struggling with substance abuse, including parents, guardians and relatives. Drug and substance abuse is a problem to care givers because it causes conflict and tension, financial strain through increasing expenses and reducing income rate, impact of families through neglect and abuse.

### **1.3. Research aim**

To understand the experience of care givers living with youths abusing drugs and substance abuse in Bindura, Zimbabwe.

### **1.3. Research objectives**

1. To investigate the underlying factors contributing to drug and substance abuse among youths by care givers.
2. To identify major challenges of drug and substance abuse in care givers of youths abusing drugs in Bindura.
3. To assess the strategies caregivers employ to cope with demand of care giving youth who abuse drugs and substances.

### **1.5 Research questions**

1. What are the causes of drug and substance abuse among youths?
2. What are the major challenges of drug and substance in care givers of youths abusing drug and substance?
3. What are the strategies you use to cope with the challenges you face as care givers living youths abuse drug and substances?

### **1.6. Justification of the study**

The study aims to help to overcome the challenges that the care givers face when giving care to the youths whom are abusing drugs and substances. The research serves to provides insights and support mechanism for the people whom are directly affected, helping them finding suitable coping strategies. The study also serves to identify the causes of drug and substance abuse among youths which can help people and care givers to find suitable solution for the causes. The importance of the study is that it aims

to inform government, ministry of health and child care and non-governmental organisations that work with youths about how they can support the department's initiatives to curb drug and substance abuse by pinpointing areas where they can contribute. Additionally, the research seeks to guide policymakers on the necessity of developing new drug laws to effectively address the widespread issue of drug abuse among youth in Zimbabwe, complementing the existing legislation.

The research helps health professionals to introduce treatment approaches and supporting systems which can stand for both care givers and youths abusing drugs and substances. The study is also vital to the community as that community organizations can utilize the research to create interventions and social networks on drug and substance abuse. The study may help educators grasping the dynamics of drug and alcohol abuse enables educators to develop more effective support systems within learning institutes.

### **1.7. Definition of key terms**

Care giver is a person who provides assistance to individuals in need, particularly those who are elderly, ill, or disabled, helping them with daily activities and emotional support (Schulz & Eden, 2015). According to Dixon (2015) care givers are individuals who provide physical, emotional and psychological support to individuals in need, fostering a nurturing environment that promotes health and wellbeing.

According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2015), a drug is typically a substance that causes a physiological or psychological change in the body when consumed, inhaled, injected or absorbed. According to National Institute on Drug Abuse (2022) a drug is a chemical substance that alters the way the body functions, including how the brain works, and can be used for medical or recreational purposes.

Drug abuse is the use of illegal drugs or the misuse of prescription or the over-the-counter drugs, leading to significant impairment or distress in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning (National Institute on Drug Abuse , 2022).According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2021) , drug abuse is a condition characterized by the compulsive use of a substance despite harmful consequences , leading to significant impairment in daily functioning. According to the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) , a youth is defined in section 20 as young people from the age of 15 and 35 years.

### **1.8. Dissertation Outline**

The dissertation is presented in the form of several different chapters with different unique topics of the study.

#### **Chapter 1**

Chapter 1 focuses with the background of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the study, objectives, justification of the study as well as definition of key terms.

#### **Chapter 2**

Chapter 2 focuses on the literature review of the study. On the literature review there is also theoretical frame work and all of them have several sub themes.

#### **Chapter 3**

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology of the study of the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances.

#### **Chapter 4**

The chapter focuses on the presentation of the researched data.

#### **Chapter 5**

This chapter is the last one which presents study conclusion and the recommendations of the study. It also combines the references and the appendices.



### **1.9. Chapter Summary**

This chapter helped setting the foundation of the study of drug and substance abuse from global level to regional level as well highlighting the major aim of the study of the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. This chapter also helped to gain insight on the causes, effects of drug and substance abuse. This is very fundamental for the study as starting point before getting the full study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter focus on major two aspects of the study of the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drugs and substances. The components of this chapter is the theoretical framework and the main literature. On theoretical framework there is the significance of the theories on the study. The components have some sub themes on the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. This chapter also aims to synthesize existing research and theoretical frameworks that illuminate the underlying causes, challenges and strategies on the issue of drug and substance abuse. Therefore this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the landscape of youth drug and substance abuse.

## **2.1 Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework of this study was informed by the social learning and the Biopsychosocial model .The researcher find it best to use both theories for the study because they both explains drug and substance abuse in a way that enhance the research. The social learning theory states that people with bad habits such as taking drugs and substances learnt it from the society through imitation, observation and modeling. Biopsychosocial model is comprehensive framework which states that drug and substance abuse caused by integrating biological, psychological and social factors.

### **Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1961)**

Social learning theory was introduced by Albert Bandura(1961) , proposed that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling and is influenced by factors such as attention, motivation, attitudes and emotions. According to Bandura (1961) The theory accounts for the interaction of environmental and cognitive elements that affect how people learn. Therefore, many drug and substance abuse victims are engaging into drugs through observing others in their families and communities so social learning

theory will help to understand the cause of drug and substance abuse as well as their impacts. People especially the youths often learn behaviors by observing peers, family members or community people who are famous. This theory helps on understanding inter-generational patterns. Social learning theory, as proposed by Bandura (1977), emphasizes the role of observational learning, imitation, and modeling in behavior acquisition, making it particularly relevant in understanding the dynamics of caregivers living with youths abusing drugs and substances. Recent studies have highlighted that caregivers often model behaviors that can either mitigate or exacerbate substance abuse issues (Watson et al., 2018; Thompson & Hurst, 2020). Thompson and Hurst (2020) found that caregivers who demonstrate positive coping strategies significantly influence the behavioral choices of youths, fostering resilience against substance abuse. Conversely, Watson et al. (2018) noted that negative modeling by caregivers, such as substance misuse or avoidance behaviors, can lead to increased risk of drug abuse among youths. Furthermore, the social learning theory underscores the importance of the social environment in shaping behaviors, suggesting that supportive networks for caregivers can enhance their effectiveness in managing the challenges posed by youths engaged in substance abuse (Smith & Lee, 2021). Thus, understanding these dynamics through the lens of social learning theory provides valuable insights into the complexities of care giving in the context of youth substance abuse.

### **Biopsychosocial model by Dr George L. Engel (1977)**

The Biopsychosocial model was introduced by Engel (1977), proposed that is a holistic framework for understanding health and illnesses by integrating biological, psychological and social factors to understanding the cause. Biopsychosocial model helps to understand the causes of drug and substance abuse among youths as it states that drug and substance abuse may be caused by biological factors such as genetics, physiology and physical health, psychological factors such as mental health, coping mechanisms, behavioral patterns and social factors such as environment, cultural systems and support systems.

The biopsychosocial model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors in health and illness, particularly in the context of caregivers dealing with youths abusing drugs and substances. This model posits that substance abuse is not solely a result of individual pathology but is influenced by a combination of genetic predispositions, psychological traits, and environmental contexts (Engel, 1977). Recent studies have illustrated how biological factors, such as genetic vulnerabilities, can interact with psychological stressors faced by caregivers, leading to maladaptive coping mechanisms (Johnson et al., 2020; Miller & Davis, 2021). Johnson (2020) found that caregivers with a history of mental health issues are more likely to experience heightened stress in response to their youths' substance abuse, which can perpetuate a cycle of dysfunction. Additionally, Miller and Davis (2021) emphasized the role of social factors, including family dynamics and socioeconomic status, in shaping both caregiver responses and youth behaviors. The biopsychosocial model thus underscores the necessity of adopting holistic interventions that address not only the individual needs of caregivers and youths but also the broader social contexts influencing their experiences (Smith et al., 2022).

This multifaceted approach is crucial for developing effective support systems that can mitigate the adverse effects of substance abuse on both caregivers and youths.

## **2.3 Literature Review**

The literature review in this study focused much understanding drugs, drug abuse and causes of drug and substances abuse among youths in Zimbabwe and the challenges that the care givers living with the youths abusing drugs and substance facing. The literature review also focused on revealing the strategies that are being used by the care givers of youths abusing and substances and Zimbabwe at large as a nation to cope with issues of drug and substance abuse.

WHO (1952) defined drug as any substances that can be taken into a living body causes reactions or sometimes modifies its psychological functioning. UNICEF (2006) states that drugs are substances that change the way the body or mind works. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (2000) also defines drug as the substances that change the way the body and brain works. Drug abuse. NIDA states that it encompasses the recurrent use of illegal drugs or misuse of prescription or over the counter medications.

## **CAUSES OF DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY THE YOUTHS LIVING WITH CARE GIVERS**

### **1. Biological Theories**

Biological theories highlight the significant role of genetic predisposition and neurobiology in substance abuse. Recent studies have shown that genetic factors can greatly influence an individual's vulnerability to addiction, with family history serving as a strong predictor (Verweij et al., 2018). Additionally, substances can alter brain

chemistry, particularly affecting neurotransmitters such as dopamine, which are essential for the brain's reward system. This alteration can lead to compulsive drug-seeking behavior, as individuals may seek to replicate the pleasurable effects of substances (Volkow et al., 2019).

## **2.Social Theories**

Social theories emphasize the impact of societal factors on substance abuse, including peer influence, family dynamics, and cultural norms. Research indicates that adolescents are more likely to engage in substance use if they are surrounded by peers who normalize such behaviors (Huang et al., 2020). Furthermore, marginalized communities often experience higher rates of substance abuse due to socioeconomic stressors, which can create environments where drug use is seen as a coping mechanism (Mason et al., 2021). High rate of unemployment and poverty are economic factors leading youths to engage in drug and alcohol abuse. Chitereka (2007) notes that economic despair often drives people, especially youth, towards drug as a coping mechanism. Unemployment is a critical factor contributing to drug and substance abuse as it can lead to psychological and social factors. Many unemployed youths experience heightened level of stress, depression and anxiety which make them to seek relief through drug and substance abuse. Young people mostly turn into drug and substance abuse as a coping mechanism in the face if economic instability . Hence the interplay between unemployment and substance abuse underscores the need for targeted interventions that address both economic and mental health issues to mitigate the risk of addiction.

The lack of education and awareness regard the risks of substance abuse. Chibanda (2016) argue that educational initiatives are crucial in raising awareness and reducing substances use rated. Lack of education is a critical factor contributing to drug and

substance abuse, as it often limits individuals' awareness of the risks associated with substance use and reduces their access to resources that promote healthy coping mechanisms. Individuals with lower educational attainment may not only be unaware of the long-term consequences of drug use but may also lack the skills needed to navigate stressors effectively, making them more susceptible to substance abuse as a coping strategy. Furthermore, educational deficits can hinder employment opportunities, perpetuating cycles of poverty and social dislocation that exacerbate the risk of addiction. Studies have shown that educational interventions can significantly reduce substance use by equipping individuals with knowledge and skills to make informed choices. Thus, addressing educational gaps is essential in combating drug and substance abuse, emphasizing the need for targeted programs that enhance educational access and promote awareness of substance-related issues.

Social factors which are leading to drug and substance abuse are urbanization and migration. Moyo (2014) emphasizes that the breakdown of social support systems contributes to increased substance use among vulnerable populations. The rapid movement of individuals from rural to urban areas often leads to dislocation and the breakdown of traditional support systems, leaving migration to the allure of substances as a coping mechanism for their new challenging environments. Moyo (2015) argues that urban settings frequently present increased availability of drugs and a culture that may normalize substance use. Additionally, the stresses associated with adapting to urban life such as economic competition, social isolation and exposure to crime can drive youths to drug and substance abuse as a means of escape. The link between migration and substance abuse reviews the need for targeted interventions that address the unique challenges faced by migrants in urban contexts as well as dealing with the economic factors contributing to drug and substance use.

### **3.Traditional Theories**

Traditional theories encompass cultural beliefs and practices that shape attitudes toward substance use. Many cultures employ traditional healing practices and community support systems to address addiction. These approaches can include rituals and the involvement of community elders, offering frameworks for understanding and combating substance abuse within specific cultural contexts (Kirmayer et al., 2019). There are also cultural factors leading to drug and substance abuse such as traditional practices and beliefs. There are some other cultures which normalize certain types of substance use. Mavundla (2018) highlights that traditional beliefs can influence attitudes towards alcohol and other substances, often leading to higher acceptance and use. Mental health challenges such as trauma may also influence drug and substance abuse. Cultural beliefs play a pivotal role in shaping attitudes toward drug and substance abuse, often influencing both the prevalence and acceptance of these behaviors within a community. Many cultures possess specific norms regarding substance use, which can either stigmatize or normalize the practice. For instance, in some societies, alcohol consumption is an integral part of social rituals, which may lead to higher rates of abuse among individuals who feel compelled to conform to these expectations. Additionally, cultural perceptions of mental health and addiction can hinder individuals from seeking help, fostering an environment where substance use becomes a coping mechanism for underlying issues. Research indicates that cultural narratives around masculinity, resilience, and community identity may further contribute to the normalization of substance use, particularly among youth. Understanding these cultural dimensions is essential for developing effective



prevention and intervention strategies that resonate with the values and beliefs of the affected populations.

#### **4. Psychological theory**

Psychological theories focus on individual mental health and behaviors contributing to substance abuse. Models such as the cognitive-behavioral model emphasize the role of learned behaviors and thought patterns in addiction. Recent research has highlighted the correlation between mental health disorders and substance use, suggesting that individuals may self-medicate to cope with psychological distress (Stone et al., 2020).

### **CHALLENGES OF DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

#### **1. Health implications**

The challenge of drug and substance abuse is that it causes health implication among people. According to ZMDAP (2024-2030) drug and substance abuse remains a growing concern given its impact on socioeconomic factors development and public health. Wilson(2023) states that the COVID 19 pandemic also fueled drug and substance abuse as it reshaped economic, social and recreational activities. These factors had socioeconomic and health implications including poverty which contribute to health issues ( non-communicable diseases, HIV, mental health). According to the study these factors are also risk factors of drug and substance abuse. Drug and substance abuse poses significant health challenges not only for the users but also for their families and care givers. According to National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) drug and substance abuse causes mental health disorders. Prolonged drug and substance abuse can result in structural changes in the brain, affecting areas of responsible decision making , impulse control and emotional regulation.

#### **2. Disunity among family members**

Family dynamics play a crucial role in the context of drug and substance abuse, influencing both the onset and progression of addiction. McMahon (2015) highlights that substance abuse can lead to significant emotional and financial strain within families, often resulting in increased rates of domestic violence and mental health issues among family members. Additionally, studies by Kumpfer (2015) explore the role of family resilience and protective factors, demonstrating that supportive family environments can mitigate the adverse effects of addiction. These findings underscore the importance of involving families in treatment processes, as noted by Orford (2016), who advocates for family-inclusive approaches to recovery that address relational dynamics and promote healthier interactions. Collectively, this body of research illustrates the critical interplay between substance abuse and family systems, emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies that consider the familial context in addiction recovery efforts.

Research indicates that dysfunctional family environments, characterized by poor communication, lack of support, and high levels of conflict, significantly increase the risk of substance abuse among family members. Moreover, families coping with addiction often experience strained relationships, leading to a cycle of co-dependency and enabling behaviors, which further perpetuate the problem. The interplay of familial factors, such as parental substance use, neglect, and abuse, can create a conducive environment for the development of maladaptive coping mechanisms in children and adolescents, thereby increasing their vulnerability to addiction. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing effective intervention strategies that address both individual and familial aspects of substance abuse.

### **3.Economic problems**

The economic challenges associated with drug and substance use have garnered significant attention in recent literature, revealing profound implications for individuals and broader society. According to Rehm (2016), the financial burden of substance abuse extends beyond healthcare costs, encompassing lost productivity, increased crime rates, and strained social services. A study by Degenhardt (2017) emphasizes that illicit drug use not only affects the economic stability of users but also imposes substantial costs on families and communities, exacerbating poverty and inequality. Furthermore, the work of Caulkins (2019) highlights how drug-related expenditures can divert critical resources away from essential services, hindering economic development. These findings underscore the necessity for policymakers to address the economic dimensions of substance use, integrating effective prevention and treatment strategies that mitigate the associated financial repercussions on individuals and society as a whole.

#### **4. Violence**

Violence is a significant challenge for care givers of youths abusing drugs and substances , often stemming from increased emotional stress , financial strain and mental health issues. McGovern et al. (2020) highlight that care givers face unpredictable behaviors from youths , leading to conflict and potential violence. The financial burdens associated with treatment can exacerbate tensions in the household, creating hostile environments. Additionally, the normalization of aggressive behavior in homes impacted by substance abuse perpetuates cycles of violence , as noted by Choi et al. (2019).

### **STRATEGIES TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES OF THE CARE GIVERS LIVING WITH THE YOUTH ABUSING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE**

## **1. Education and Awareness**

Education and awareness play crucial roles in addressing youth substance abuse, as numerous scholars emphasize the importance of informed intervention strategies. According to McNeely and Blum (2005), enhancing knowledge about the risks associated with substance use can empower both caregivers and youths, fostering a proactive approach to prevention. Similarly, McGreevy et al. (2018) highlight that educational programs tailored for families significantly increase awareness of substance abuse indicators, thereby enabling timely intervention. Furthermore, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) underscores that comprehensive education initiatives not only inform caregivers about the signs and consequences of substance use but also equip them with effective communication skills to engage in open dialogues with youths. This perspective is reinforced by the work of McCarthy et al. (2016), who argue that knowledge dissemination regarding local resources and support systems is essential for caregivers to navigate the complexities of substance abuse effectively. Collectively, these studies suggest that a strong foundation of education and awareness is vital for caregivers to mitigate the risks of substance abuse among youth, ultimately leading to healthier outcomes and more resilient family dynamics.

## **2. Open Communication**

Open communication is a critical factor in effectively addressing youth substance abuse, as highlighted by various scholars who emphasize its role in fostering trust and understanding. According to Harter (2012), creating a safe and open environment for dialogue allows youths to respond appropriately to their children's needs. The importance of this communication is also supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020), which suggests that encouraging honest discussions about substance use can lead to more informed decision-making among youths. In summary, the literature

consistently indicates that fostering open communication between caregivers and youths is vital for mitigating the risks associated with substance abuse and promoting healthier family dynamics.

### **3.Support networks**

Support networks are essential in addressing youth substance abuse, as they provide caregivers and youths with resources and emotional backing to navigate challenges effectively. According to Kumpfer and Alvarado (2003), strong social support systems can significantly reduce the likelihood of substance abuse among youths by offering guidance and fostering resilience. Similarly, Haller and Miles (2019) emphasize that engaging with community resources, such as counseling services and support groups, enhances caregivers' ability to manage substance-related issues. Research by Schwartz et al. (2018) indicates that peer support networks can also play a crucial role, as youths are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors when surrounded by peers who promote positive choices. Furthermore, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2021) highlights the importance of family involvement in treatment programs, suggesting that a collaborative approach fosters better outcomes for youths struggling with substance abuse. Overall, the literature underscores that establishing and utilizing support networks is vital for caregivers and youths alike, as these connections not only provide practical assistance but also contribute to emotional well-being and recovery.

### **4.Setting curfews**

Setting boundaries is a pivotal strategy in managing youth substance abuse, as it establishes clear expectations and promotes a sense of safety within the family environment. Research by Steinberg (2001) indicates that adolescents thrive in structured environments, where defined limits help them navigate their choices and

behaviors more effectively. Similarly, Kauffman and Sweeney (2019) argue that consistent enforcement of boundaries can deter risky behaviors, as youths are more likely to respect rules when they understand the rationale behind them. Moreover, a study by Crouter and McHale (2005) found that clear parental boundaries are associated with improved emotional regulation and decision-making skills in youths, which are crucial in preventing substance abuse. Additionally, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) emphasizes that setting and maintaining boundaries not only protects youths from the dangers of substance use but also fosters open communication, allowing for discussions about the consequences of their actions. Collectively, these studies highlight the importance of establishing and maintaining boundaries as a fundamental strategy for caregivers in addressing and preventing youth substance abuse.

#### **5.encouraging health activities**

Encouraging healthy activities is a crucial strategy for reducing youth substance abuse, as it provides constructive outlets for energy and fosters positive engagement. Research by O'Brien et al. (2015) highlights that participation in extracurricular activities, such as sports and the arts, is associated with lower rates of substance use among adolescents, as these activities promote social connections and a sense of belonging. Similarly, a study by Durlak et al. (2015) found that engaging youths in structured programs not only occupies their time but also enhances their self-esteem and resilience, which are critical in resisting peer pressure related to substance use. Furthermore, the work of McNeely and Blum (2015) emphasizes that supportive environments, created by caregivers who actively promote healthy activities, can significantly buffer against the risks of substance abuse, strengthening family ties in the process. Additionally, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2020) underscores the importance of incorporating physical and mental health activities into prevention

strategies, as holistic approaches address underlying factors that contribute to substance use behaviors. Overall, the literature from recent years consistently supports the notion that fostering engagement in healthy activities is essential for caregivers in preventing youth substance abuse and promoting overall well-being.

## **6.Developing a safety plan**

Developing a safety plan is an essential strategy in addressing youth substance abuse, as it equips caregivers and youths with proactive measures to mitigate risks and respond effectively to potential crises. According to the work of Abar and Lanza (2015), creating a structured safety plan that includes clear guidelines and emergency contacts fosters a sense of security and preparedness among youths, enabling them to navigate challenging situations more effectively. Similarly, a study by McKay et al. (2016) emphasizes the importance of collaborative planning between caregivers and youths, as involving adolescents in the development of safety strategies enhances their ownership and commitment to adhering to the plan. Furthermore, research by Kearney et al. (2018) illustrates that having a well-defined safety plan not only reduces the likelihood of substance use but also promotes open communication within the family, allowing for discussions about boundaries and expectations. Additionally, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2020) highlights that safety plans should be dynamic and adaptable, ensuring they remain relevant to the changing needs of youths as they grow. Overall, the literature indicates that developing a comprehensive safety plan is a vital component in preventing youth substance abuse and fostering a supportive environment for healthy decision-making.

## **7.Empathy and Understanding**

Empathy and understanding play a crucial role in addressing youth substance abuse, as they foster supportive relationships between caregivers and adolescents. Research by

Cummings et al. (2015) highlights that empathetic communication can significantly enhance trust and openness, allowing youths to feel safe when discussing their challenges and experiences with substance use. Similarly, a study by Miller and Rollnick (2016) emphasizes that understanding the underlying emotional and social factors contributing to substance abuse enables caregivers to respond more effectively to their children's needs. Furthermore, the work of Allen et al. (2017) illustrates that when caregivers demonstrate genuine empathy, it not only strengthens family bonds but also encourages youths to develop healthier coping mechanisms in response to stressors. Additionally, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) asserts that fostering an environment of empathy and understanding is essential for promoting resilience, as it empowers youths to seek help and make informed decisions regarding substance use. Collectively, the literature underscores that cultivating empathy and understanding is vital for caregivers in preventing and addressing youth substance abuse, ultimately leading to healthier and more supportive family dynamics.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter of the study of the care givers living with the youths abusing drugs and substances delves in the methodology employed to explore the experience and the challenges faced by caregivers of the youths grappling with drug and substance abuse. This chapter outlines the the research philosophy, research approach, research design, study setting, target population, sampling technique , data collection tools, research procedure, validity and reliability/ Trustworthiness ,data analysis, limitations



and chapter summary. By focusing on the caregivers' perspectives, the study seeks to illuminate the emotional, social and economic impacts of youth abusing drugs and substances on families, thereby contributing valuable insights into support systems and intervention strategies.

### **3.1 Research Philosophy**

The research philosophy guiding this study on the experiences of caregivers living with youths abusing drugs and substances is primarily interpretative. This approach emphasizes understanding the subjective experiences and meanings that caregivers attach to their roles and challenges. By recognizing that each caregiver's perspective is influenced by their unique social, cultural, and emotional contexts, the study aims to capture the complexities of their realities. Through qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, the research seeks to generate rich, detailed insights that highlight the nuances of care giving in the face of youth substance abuse. This interpretative lens allows for a deeper exploration of the emotional and psychological impacts on caregivers, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of their lived experiences.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

According to Creswell (2015) research approach refers to the strategy or plan that guides a research study, encompassing the methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. The research approach used by the researcher in this study is the qualitative design approach. Qualitative approach is an exploratory research method that seeks to understand social phenomena from the perspectives of the participants involved, emphasizing their experiences and the meanings they attach to them (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning

(Marshall & Rossman, 2016).The researcher used qualitative design approach in the research of the experience of the care givers living with youths abusing drug and substances in Bindura .Qualitative approach is important on the research of the experience of care givers living with youths abusing drug and substances because it helps to have well interpreted information about drug and substance abuse as that it focuses on the meanings and experiences of participants.Qualitative approach is particularly crucial on drug and substance abuse issues because it helps on understanding human behavior and social dynamics.

The researcher implemented qualitative approach through conducting interviews

### **.3.3 Research Design**

According to Creswell (2014) research design is a plan or strategy that outlines how to collect and analyze data in order to answer research questions or test hypothesis, it encompasses the overall structure of research study, including the methods for data collection and analysis, as well as considerations for validity and reliability. Research design is the framework or blueprint for conducting the research project, it details the procedures for collecting and measuring and analyzing data and it ensures that the research questions are adequately through appropriate methods( Robson, 2011).

The research design that the researcher used in this study of the experience of care givers living with youths abusing drugs and substances is narrative biography. According to Creswell (2013) Narrative biography is a form of qualitative research that focuses on the life stories of individuals and narrative biographies are constructed from the personal accounts and experiences of subjects often gathered through interviews and other qualitative methods.Narrative biography qualitative research design is very important in researching on the experience of care givers living with youths abusing

drugs and substances because it helps on understanding one's experience through providing deep understanding of individuals lives including challenges and transformation. Narrative biography is also fundamental on gaining accurate information through direct conduct of the researcher and participants through interviews. Researcher can have personal insights through interviews because interviews can provide direct access to the subject's feelings, thoughts and personal experiences which enhance the biography gain depth.

### **3.4 Study setting**

The study was conducted in a community setting in Chipadze, Bindura focusing on caregivers of youths aged 15 to 35 who are experiencing drug and substance abuse. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions held in local community centers and support group meetings, providing a comfortable and familiar environment for participants. The setting allowed for open dialogue among caregivers, fostering a supportive atmosphere that encouraged the sharing of personal experiences and challenges. This context was vital in understanding the emotional, social, and economic impacts on caregivers, as well as the coping strategies they employ in response to the complex dynamics of living with youths struggling with substance abuse.

### **3.5 Target population**

Target population refers to the specific group of individuals or subjects that a researcher aims to study and make reference about (Creswell, 2014). According to Babbie (2016) target population refers to the entire group of individuals or items that a researcher intends to study, characterized by specific attributes relevant to the research question. The target population on this research are the care givers living with the youths abusing drugs and substances. The care givers of the the youths abusing drug and

substances are the people which are mostly involved on this study. Care givers of the youths abusing drugs and substances are people who are responsible for the needs of the youths and are closely associated with them. The key informants are social workers worked with care givers and drug addicts. Primary participants are care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances..

### **3. 6 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE**

Sample is a subset of individuals selected from a larger population that is intended to represent that population in a study (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), sample size refers to the number of participants or observations included in the study. On primary participants the researcher is having 10 care givers as the sample size and two key informants.

#### **SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a subset of individuals from a larger population to participate in a research study (Creswell, 2014). Sampling for the care givers on the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drugs and substances is snow balling sampling.

##### **3.6.1 Snow balling sampling**

Snow balling sampling is a non-probability sampling technique often used in qualitative method, after interviewing the initial participants, researchers ask them to refer other individuals who may also have relevant information or experience( Creswell, 2014). The researcher used snow balling sampling technique to the participants of the study which are the care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances to collect the information of the research. The importance of snowballing technique is that it is vital in building trust from the participants, when initial participants make reference to others

it enhance trust and credibility. The other significance of the snowballing is that it is flexible. Snowballing sampling technique give a room for researchers to adapt to the dynamics of the participators. It also fundamental in having a variety of experiences from several participants.

### **3.6.2 purposive sampling**

The researcher used purposive sampling for the key informants who are social workers on the research of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances to acquire more information about issues of drug and substance abuse. According to Creswell (2016), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique used primarily in qualitative research, it involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics or criteria that align with the research objectives. The significance of the purposive sampling is that it helps the researcher to focus on specific individuals with relevant knowledge and experience about the research which helps to acquire relevant information.

## **3.7 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE AND TOOLS**

Data collection method is the systematic approaches used to gather information for research purposes from different sources in order to help the researcher to answer relevant questions and to assess the results in the study (Creswell, 2014). The research used data collection methods techniques to gather information from participants and key informants which include in-depth interviews and focus group discussion.

### **3.7.1 key informant interview method**

The research adopt in-depth interviews to collect data from the key informants of the study of the experience of the care givers living with youths abusing drug and substances. In-depth interviews are a qualitative data collection method that involves conducting detailed and open-ended conversations with individuals to gain a deeper

understanding of their experiences, perceptions and motivation (Creswell,2014). This method is important because it allows the researcher to explore complex issues on a flexible and interactive manner. In-depth interviews allow researcher to gather detailed and nuanced information about participants' thoughts , feelings and experiences of handling youths abusing drugs and substances.This method also fosters a personal connection with key informants of the youths abusing drug and substances through encouraging openness and honesty.

### **3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion Method**

The study applied focus group discussion as the data collection method for the participants of the research who are the care givers of youths abusing drug and substances in Bindura. According to Creswell (2020) focus group are a method for collecting data through open discussions among a group of individuals who share a common characteristic.The researcher conducted five groups each group with two participants and total number of participants are ten who selected according to their experience with the youths abusing drug and substances.A semi structured interview guide was used to facilitate the group discussion. Focus group plays a fundamental role in studying the experiences of care givers living with youths who abuse drugs and substances through exploration of complex emotions. Care givers often experience a range of emotions , including stress, frustration and helplessness. Focus groups provide a supportive environment for caregivers to share their feelings, fostering open dialogue about their challenges. The importance of focus groups facilitate discussions where participants can relate their stories , providing insights into common challenges and coping strategies.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability/ Trustworthiness**

According to Creswell & Roth (2018) credibility refers to the confidence in the truth of the findings.

### **3.8.1Credibility**

Credibility , as a dimension of trustworthiness in qualitative research is essential for ensuring that findings accurately reflect the experiences of caregivers living with youths who abuse drugs and substances. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility involves establishing the truth of the findings through various strategies, such as member checks and prolonged engagement. The researcher applied triangulation as credibility by collecting data of the experience of the care givers living with youths abusing drug and substance in Bindura from different sources through interviews and focus group discussions. This helped the researcher to verify the findings , increasing the credibility of the study. Hays and Singh (2012) argue that credibility is built through transparency in the research process and reflexivity on the part of the researcher. Therefore, employing these strategies significantly enhanced the credibility of research focused on the nuanced experiences of caregivers in this challenging context.

### **3.8.2Transferability**

Transferability is a key aspect of trustworthiness in qualitative research, particularly when exploring the experiences of caregivers living with youths who abuse drugs and substances. It pertains to the degree to which research findings can be applied to other contexts or populations. To enhance transferability the researcher provided a detailed description of the study context , participants and methodology on the experience of the care givers living with youths abusing drug and substances. O'Brien et al. (2020) advocate for detailed reporting of the research context and methodology, which facilitates comparisons across different settings.

### **3.8.3Dependability**

Dependability is a critical dimension of trustworthiness in qualitative research, particularly when investigating the experiences of caregivers living with youths who abuse drugs and substances. Dependability refers to the stability and consistency of the research findings over time and across various conditions (Lincoln & Guba ,1985). To enhance dependability, researcher employed systematic and transparent methods throughout the research process, including thorough documentation of data collection and analysis procedures of the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. Additionally the researcher also applied peer debriefing and member checking as strategies to validate interpretations and ensure that the findings accurately reflect participants' experiences. By implementing these practices, the researcher strengthened the dependability of the study, providing a solid foundation for understanding the complex realities faced by caregivers.

#### **3.8.4Confirmability**

Confirmability is a fundamental aspect of trustworthiness in qualitative research, particularly when examining the experiences of caregivers living with youths who abuse drugs and substances. Dependability refers to the degree to which the findings of a study can be confirmed or corroborated by others, thus ensuring that the results are shaped by the participants' experiences rather than the researcher's biases or preconceptions (Lincoln & Guba ,1985). To enhance confirmability, the researcher maintained a clear audit trail that documents the research process, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the experience of the care givers living with youths abusing drug and substances. By implementing these practices, the researcher c bolster the confirmability of the study providing a more reliable understanding of the complex issues faced by caregivers in this context.

#### **3.9Data presentation and analysis**



Data presentation is systematic organization and display of research findings ,using tables, figures and narrative descriptions to facilitate understanding and narrative descriptions to facilitate understanding and interpretation of the data by the audience (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), data analysis is a critical component of research that involves systematically examining data to extract meaningful insights and conclusions. The data analysis method applied in this study of the experience of the care givers living with youths abusing drug and substance in Bindura is the thematic analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2014) thematic analysis is a flexible approach that allows researchers to interpret various aspects of the research topic.The researcher employed thematic analysis to explore the experience of care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. The procedure followed six key steps below:

### **1.Familiarization**

The researcher immersed in the data collection through semi-structured interviews of focus group discussion with care givers of the youths abusing drug and substance.The researcher read and re-read the the transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of their experiences and challenges.In this step, the researcher detailed notes on initial impressions and recurring themes that emerged from the narratives.

### **2.Generating initial codes**

The researcher systematically coded the data by identifying meaningful segments that highlighted key aspects of caregivers' experiences. The researcher developed codes such as emotional distress, support networks and coping strategies.This coding process

facilitated the categorization of various dimensions of the caregivers' experiences, allowing for a nuanced analysis.

### **3.Searching for themes**

After coding , the researcher organized the initial codes into potential themes that captured broader patterns in the data. Themes such as family dynamics and access to resources emerged. The researcher grouped related codes under these themes , which helped in developing a coherent framework for analysis.

### **4.Reviewing themes**

The researcher refined the identified themes by revisiting the coded data. The researcher ensured that each theme accurately represented the caregivers' experiences and made sense in the context of the overall findings. This involved merging similar themes and discarding those lacking sufficient significance.

### **5.Defining and naming themes**

The researcher clearly defined each theme, specifying what is encapsulated regarding the caregivers' experiences. For example , the theme emotional distress encompassed feeling of anxiety , helplessness and sadness. This is beneficial for situating the findings within the broader context of the existing literature, making it simpler to draw connections and identify patterns across different patterns.

### **6.Writing up**

Finally, the researcher presented the analysis by weaving together the identified themes, using direct quotes and data extracts from the caregivers to illustrate their experiences vividly. In this discussion, the researcher related these themes to existing literature on care giving and substance abuse, highlighting the unique challenges faced by caregivers in this context. This analysis offers valuable insights into the needs and difficulties of

care givers supporting youths who abuse drugs and substances, emphasizing the importance of targeted support services and interventions.

### **3.10 Limitations**

- The informed consent as ethical considerations can be as challenge as that it is difficult to ensure the participants fully understand the implications and the purpose of the study. However the solutions for the limitation is community engagement with simplified forms and clear language in consent forms to enhance understanding.
- Different cultural beliefs and religious beliefs regarding drugs and substances and care giving roles of the people in the community limit the applicability of the researched information. Hence tailored communication used to overcome the limitation through adapting messaging by using culturally appropriate language when discussing the study.

Care givers experiences may be influenced by their emotional states , which can affect the reliability of the information. However this limitations can be solved through the use of structured interviews, guided questions with clear and specific questions can help care givers to focus on the information needed while minimizing emotional distress.

### **3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethics in research refers to the moral principles and guidelines that govern the conduct of researchers (Creswell, 2018). The researcher applied several ethics to ensure the integrity of the research. The research is guided by several ethics as the researcher is acquiring data from the participants.

#### **3.11.1 Informed consent**

Informed consent is described as the process of ensuring that the participants understand the nature of the research ,including its purpose, risks, benefits , and their

rights regarding participation( Creswell & Roth, 2018).The researcher has to inform the participants the purpose of the interviews to ensure that they are aware about the participation before they took part on the study.Informed consent plays a vital role on research as that its helps on respecting the participants decision making as well as give a room for participants to participate freely.The that none of the participants are bribed or forced to participate on the research.

### **3.11.2Confidentiality**

Confidentiality involves protecting confidential communications, such as papers or grants submitted fro publications, personnel records, trade or military secrets and patient records (David B. Resnik, 2020).The researcher ensures confidentiality and secrecy of all the participants by not sharing some private information of the participants in the study

### **3.12Chapter Summary**

This chapter looks on the The chapter acknowledges limitations, such as the subjective nature of qualitative data, but emphasizes the depth of insight gained from this approach, aiming to inform better support for caregivers.

## **CHARPTER FOUR :DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.0** This chapter has delved into the methodological procedures and the process underpinned the study.It provides the presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings of the study of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances in line with its key objectives.It also made use of data collection tools which

include in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The data that was collected from the participants was analyzed through the thematic content analysis which is mostly applied on qualitative research. Therefore, the data was organized in line with the objectives of the study.

#### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

<b>PARTICIPANT TITLE</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>EXPERIENCE IN CAREGIVING</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 1</b>	<b>38 years</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>9 years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 2</b>	<b>26 years</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>4 years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 3</b>	<b>43years</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>6years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 4</b>	<b>58years</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>Over 10 years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 5</b>	<b>54years</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>Over 10 years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 6</b>	<b>36years</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>7 years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 7</b>	<b>46years</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>9years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 8</b>	<b>42years</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>8 years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 9</b>	<b>34years</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>6 years</b>
<b>CAREGIVER 10</b>	<b>33 years</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>4 years</b>

The study involves 10 participants who are the care givers of the youths living with drug and substance abuse. The care givers are both male and female with different age groups.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR KEY INFORMANTS

<b>PARTICIPATE TITLE</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>EXPERIENCE IN CAREGIVING</b>
<b>psychologist</b>	<b>54years</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>9years</b>
<b>Social worker</b>	<b>33years</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>4yeays</b>

## **4.2 Causes of drug and substances abuse among youths by care givers in Chipadze , Bindura.**

### **4.2.1 High rate of unemployment**

High unemployment and poverty create desperation , leading to substance use among the youths as a coping mechanism. Thus most care givers during focus group discussions emphasize that lack of employment is causing youths to indulge in drug and substance abuse. One of the participant during focus group discussion point out that:

*‘Due to lack of employment youths don’t have thing to do thus they most of the time they may be in drug and substance abuse due absence of occupation and also a stress mechanism way’ CARE GIVER 5*

In addition , during focus group discussions participants attested that:

*“the stress of not having a job can lead to mental health issues such as mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, which are often alleviated through substance use.” (CARE GIVER 10)*

similarly key informant pointed on that:

*‘Scarcity of jobs in our country is causing a lot of young men and women to indulge in drug and substance abuse due to stress of economic burdens such as bills.’*

The findings are showing that high rate of unemployment among the youths is the cause of drug and substance abuse. Lack of jobs in the communities is leading youths to indulge in drug and substance abuse. This aligns with the literature of Chitereka (2007)

which notes that economic despair often drives people, especially youths towards drug and substance abuse as a coping mechanism. Through in-depth interviews and focus groups care givers and key informants articulated their observations that unemployment fosters a sense of hopelessness and lack of direction in young people, which often leads to substance use as a coping mechanism. Many care givers shared personal anecdotes illustrating their emotional turmoil and the financial strain of managing a youth struggling with addiction. The narratives collected highlight a pervasive sentiment that addressing unemployment is crucial to mitigating substance abuse. Consequently, caregivers advocate for targeted vocational training programs and support services that not only empower youths but also provide much-needed relief for families grappling with the dual challenges of unemployment and addiction.

#### **4.2.2 Peer pressure**

Peer pressure is the other factor that is causing drug and substance abuse among the youths. Hence during the research most care givers of the youths abusing drug and substance emphasize peer pressure as a pushing factor of the rise of drug and substance abuse among the youths. One of the participants during focus group discussions stated that:

*“Peer pressure is influencing drug and substance abuse in young men and women due to the desire to fit in the peer groups, gain acceptance and as a way of impressing friends often drives individuals to experiment with drugs, even if they are aware of certain risks that they can face after taking the drug and some times illegal substances.”* CARE GIVER 3

The other participant added that :

*(‘Some other youths are involved in drug and substance abuse due to fear of rejection in societal groups, some also think that if they refuse to take drug and substances they might not have friends since all the friends might be in drug and substance abuse.’)*

#### CARE GIVER 4

In addition one of the key informants in an interview attested that:

*‘In some cases, young people may lack strong family support systems, making them more reliant on peers for emotional and social fulfillment and those other peers may lead them to drug and substance abuse.’*

The provided information shows that peer pressure is the cause of drug and substance abuse in Zimbabwe. This is in line with the literature, Huang(2020) states that adolescents are more likely to engage in substance use if they are surrounded by peers who normalize such behaviors. This statement shows that peer pressure is the pushing factor on the abuse of drug and substances among the youths. In exploring the experiences of care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances, peer pressure emerges as a significant factor influencing substance use behaviors. Peer pressure is a potent catalyst for adolescent drug experimentation, as noted by Brown et al.(2015), who highlight that youths often feel compelled to conform to group norms that glorify substance use. Interviews with care givers reveal that many perceive these peer relationships as critical in shaping their children’s choices, leading to a conflict between the desire for acceptance and risks of addiction. Care givers frequently describe scenarios where their youths engage in drug-related activities to maintain social status. This pressure creates feelings of helplessness among care givers, as they



witness their children navigating these complex interactions, which can lead to strained family relationships..

The social learning theory also states that some youths can learn behaviors through learning from other peers and families. So the view from the participants that the cause of drug and substance abuse is peer pressure is aligning with the social learning theory which clearly gives valid that peer pressure is one of the causes of drug and substance use among the youths. Hence, these narratives underscore the need for interventions that address peer influence, as care givers seek effective strategies to support their youths while counteracting the pervasive impact of peer expectations.

#### **4.2.3 Cultural beliefs**

The findings on the causes of drug and substance abuse among youths elaborated that cultural and traditional factors are also the causes of drug and substance use among the youths. Participants of the research shared several views on cultural belief and traditional issues as the causes of drug and substance abuse among the youths.

One of the participants on the focus group discussion noted that:

*‘Sometimes the kind of drug and substance abuse it shows that evil spirits are the ones which are causing misfortune and emotional distress and youths may turn to substances and drugs as a means of coping or seeking relief these perceived spiritual afflictions.’* CARE GIVER 9

The other participant added

*‘The drunkenness among youths is being caused by evil spirits because it’s now too much, the evil wants the youths to spend all their money in buying drug and substances.’* CARE GIVER 7

The key informant also acknowledge the cultural and traditional issues on drug and substance abuse:

*'Many cultures believe that spirits can influence behavior and emotions and they also belief that evil spirits are involved in the abuse of drug and substance abuse. Most of the parents might even take their children to churches to be prayed for believing that is being caused by evil spirits.'*

The group discussions revealed that cultural and traditional beliefs , particularly the notion of evil spirits , significantly contribute to drug and substance abuse among youths. Hence the discussions highlighted that these cultural narratives create a stigma around seeking help, as admitting to substance abuse may be seen as a sign of weakness or a failure to manage spiritual challenges. The belief in evil spirits as a driving force behind drug and substance abuse among youths is deeply rooted in cultural narratives that frame addiction as a spiritual affliction.

. Mavundla (2018) highlights that traditional beliefs can influence attitudes towards alcohol and other substances, often leading to higher acceptance and use. These views shows that cultural beliefs plays a role on drug and substance abuse. McGowan (2015) argue that in many cultures substance abuse is viewed as a response to perceived spiritual attacks, where individuals believe that evil spirits are responsible for their emotional and psychological struggles. Furthermore , the normalization of substance use within ritualistic practices reinforces this belief, creating a social environment where drug and alcohol consumption is accepted as a means of coping with spiritual challenges (Brown, 2020).

On the theoretical framework of this study the Social Learning theory emphasize that people get some habits through learning, thus some youths who are victims of drug and substance abuse might got through imitating their cultural life.

#### 4.2.4 Urbanization

The findings from the research indicates that urbanization is the pushing factor of drug and substance abuse among the youths . One of the care givers of the study stated that :  
*“The growing of urban locations , is causing high population in towns which is causing more youths who are not employed to engage in drug and substance abuse. If we look most of the drug addicts are from the locations (High density) where there is higher population of people.”* CARE GIVER 6

The other care giver of the study also added that:

*‘Most youths are from rural areas they are coming here in towns looking for jobs and most of them end up being small scale miner. Look here in Bindura we have small scale miners who migrated from different places and most of them are into drug and substance abuse and its influencing more youths in the community admiring that life .’*  
care giver 8

Similarly key informant of the research articulated that ;

*‘High population in the mining town like Bindura is causing more youths to indulge in drug and substance abuse. High population full of small scale miners creates an environment of drug and substance abuse as that even businessmen the invest more in beer-halls.’*

The research identified urbanization as the cause of drug and substance abuse among the youths abusing drug and substances. The responses resonate with the literature of Moyo (2014) , who emphasizes that the breakdown of social support systems contributes to increased substance use among vulnerable populations. The rapid

movement of individuals from to urban areas often leads to dislocation and the breakdown of traditional support systems, leaving migration to the allure of substances as a coping mechanism for their new challenging environments. Moyo (2015) argues that urban settings frequently present increased availability of drugs and a culture that may normalize substance use.

### **4.3. CHALLENGES OF DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN CARE GIVERS OF THE YOUTHS ABUSING DRUG AND SUBSTANCES IN BINDURA**

#### **4.3.1 Financial strain**

Most of the participants during focus group discussion emphasize that financial is the greatest challenge faced by the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. One of the care givers explained about how the drug and substance abuse led to financial strain:

*“These drugs and substances that the youths are taking they need money whereby some of youths are not going to work and they end up stealing our money so that they can buy drugs, they even reach an extent that if they don’t have money they can even sell our properties in a way to acquire money for drugs and these becomes a great economic burden to us.”* CARE GIVER 2

Another care giver also elaborated further on this challenge of financial strain:

*‘Financial strain comes through many ways such as cost of medical treatments, therapy and all emergence care of these youths struggling with drug and substance abuse. Sometimes they also need legal assistance after being in fights and stole other people’s property in order to buy drugs. This financial burden not only affects my resources but also impacts my emotional well being .’* CARE GIVER 9

The key informant also similarly added on that:

*‘Many of the parents come to us complaining about how these youths are into drug and substance abuse are causing financial toil due to stealing their properties and money so that they can buy drugs .’*

The above mentioned findings shows that financial strain is the challenge of the care givers living with youths abusing drug and substances. The findings are in context of the reviewed literature as (Rehm, 2016) states that the financial burden of substance abuse extends beyond healthcare costs, encompassing lost productivity, increased crime rates, and strained social services. Many participants reported that the costs for associated with treatment, rehabilitation and ongoing support for the affected youths placed considerable stress on their financial resources. This strain not only exacerbated their emotional and psychological burdens but also limited their ability to seek effective interventions. Caregivers often found themselves navigating a complex landscape of increased expenses, including medical bills and potential loss of income due to care giving responsibilities. As a result, financial strain emerged as a critical barrier hindering the overall capacity of caregivers to provide the necessary support and care for their loved ones, thereby perpetuating the cycle of substance abuse within the community.

Therefore, financial strain is the caregivers living with the youths abusing drug and substances.

#### **4.3.2 Health problems on youths taking drug and substances**

The findings about the challenges of drug and substance abuse to the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances shows that health problems to the youths taking drug and substances is a challenge. As the one of the participants explained :

*'Drugs and substance abuse are causing sickness to the youths because some drugs are causing them not to eat. Some drugs are causing them not sleep which is also affecting their health, if person can not eat and sleep can he or she be health? These things are causing youths who are taking drugs to have health challenges.'* CARE GIVER 4

To further support the issue of health problems one of the participants added that:

*'Drug and substance abuse is causing many health challenges to our children after both physical and mental well-being. Physically drug users are suffering from respiratory issue and others lung diseases due to smoking , mentally a lot of them are suffering from anxiety and depression and also us we facing depression.'* CARE GIVER 10

Similarly key informants also alluded that:

*"These drugs and the substances these youths are taking especially these days a lot of them are affecting their mental health. A lot of them are suffering from anxiety depression and severe mental disturbances including hallucinations and delusions"*

Following the information provided by the participants and the key informants of the study it clearly shows that health problems is the challenge of drug and substance abuse among the youths. This aligns with the literature by National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) which stated that drug and substance abuse causes mental health disorders. Prolonged drug and substance abuse can result in structural changes in the brain, affecting areas of responsible decision making , impulse control and emotional regulation. It also aligns with the Biopsychosocial model which emphasize that

conditions such as depression , anxiety, or PTSD can lead to self-medication through substance use.NIDA (2020) asserts that addiction is a complex disease that disrupts the brain's natural balance, making recovery a significant challenge for individuals. Furthermore, NIDA (2020) emphasize the necessity of comprehensive treatment approaches that integrate behavioral therapies and robust support systems. Johnson et al. (2020) found that caregivers with a history of mental health issues are more likely to experience heightened stress in response to their youths' substance abuse, which can perpetuate a cycle of dysfunction.Thus, the health implications for caregivers are not only a direct consequence of their care giving role but also a reflection of the broader societal issues surrounding substance abuse.

#### **4.3.3 Fights in the family**

Most of the participants of the study highlights that fights in the family is the challenge caused by drug and substance abuse among the youths.The participant alluded that:

*‘Substance abuse often leads to misunderstanding in communication which results in fights and arguments. Drugs and substances affects mental health whereby youths end up having no respect to the elders due to influence of drug and substance abuse which may results in fight in families’* CARE GIVER 6

The other participant also added that:

*‘Most youths who are in drug and substance abuse they cause financial strain in the family through mismanagement of the finances through theft related issues which causes disunity and arguments in the family.’* CARE GIVER 2

The key informant also supported the finding information by saying that:

*“Most care givers of the youths abusing drug and substance abuse who come to us always complain how drug and substance in causing disunity and fights , some other parents always say that drug are causing youths to be violent.’*

The above mentioned findings shows that fights and disunity is the challenge of drug and substance abuse. This information aligns with the literature which suggests that substance abuse can lead to significant emotional and financial strain within families, often resulting in increased rates of domestic violence and mental health issues among family members (McMahon, 2015). Most youths who are into drug and substance abuse turn to be violence due to imitating the behavior of other addicts whom they have seen. This also aligns with Social learning theory that emphasizes that behavior, including drug and substance abuse, is learned through observation and imitation of others particularly family and social context. It suggest that individuals may adopt harmful behaviors such as fighting family members or being violent. Hence , while social learning theory does not directly claim that substance abuse causes family disunity, it supports the idea that such behaviors can contribute to conflict and disunity within family structures.

#### **4..4 STRATEGIES TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES OF THE CARE GIVERS LIVING WITH THE YOUTH ABUSING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE**

##### **4.4.1 Providing education to aware about consequences and dangers of drug and substance abuse.**

The information from the findings highlights that providing education and awareness about the dangers of drug and substance abuse is a strategy that can be used to cope



with the challenges of drug and substances. One of the participants of the study highlights that:

*'I think the strategy that can be taken to deal with the challenge of drug and substance abuse among youths is providing education and awareness about dangers of drugs and substances. This might help as that if they know the dangers of drug and substance abuse they might fear to consume drugs.'* CARE GIVER 4

The other participant on focus group discussion added that:

*"Providing education to youths who are growing about how drug and substance abuse affects their mental health, physical health and their social life helps them to stay away from drug and substance abuse."* CARE GIVER 7

The social worker who is a key informant of this study added that:

*"Education and awareness plays a fundamental role in addressing drug and substance abuse through organizing workshops that caregivers, youths who are into drug and the community about dangers of drug use and how to promote health lifestyles."*

The findings from the research study shows that providing education and awareness is a strategy that can be used to deal with the challenge of drug and substance abuse among the youths. This aligns with the literature of McNeely and Blum (2005), which states that enhancing knowledge about the risks associated with substance use can empower both caregivers and youths, fostering a proactive approach to prevention. Similarly, McGreevy et al. (2018) highlight that educational programs tailored for families significantly increase awareness of substance abuse indicators, thereby enabling timely intervention. Furthermore, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) underscores

that comprehensive education initiatives not only inform caregivers about the signs and consequences of substance use but also equip them with effective communication skills to engage in open dialogues with youths. So this information of the literature gives credit that education and awareness is strategy to deal with challenge drug and substance abuse .

Social learning theory also supports the idea of education and awareness as a strategy to deal with the challenge of drug and substance abuse. The theory states that people learn behaviors through observation and imitation, hence education can play a crucial role by highlighting stories of recovery and healthy choices can inspire individuals to make better decisions. Also educating peers to support one another in resisting substance use can create a positive social environment. Hence the social learning theory underscore the importance of education and awareness in preventing substance abuse by addressing the underlying factors that contribute to drug use.

#### **4.4.2 Providing support networks systems**

The findings alluded that the other strategy to help to deal with the challenge of drug and substance use is providing support network systems. The other participant stated that:

*‘Having a good support system of the youths abusing drug and substances can help youths who are into drug and substance abuse to recover from the addictions and living without drug and substance.’ CARE GIVER 6*

The other participate of the study highlights that:

*“Sometimes encouragement and provision of support to the victims of drug and substance abuse may help to deal with the challenge of drug and substance abuse.*

*Positive reinforcement helps individuals stay motivated in their recovery journey .”*

#### CARE GIVER 10

Similarly key informants states that:

*‘Providing support systems helps individuals to recover from being the victims of drug and substance abuse.Support systems provides wellness programs such as exercise and nutrition which address pushing factors of substance use such as mental health disorders and trauma.’*

The findings above shows that support systems can be a strategy to deal with the challenges of drug and substance abuse. This align with the literature of Kumpfer and Alvarado (2003), strong social support systems can significantly reduce the likelihood of substance abuse among youths by offering guidance and fostering resilience. Similarly, Haller and Miles (2019) emphasize that engaging with community resources, such as counseling services and support groups, enhances caregivers' ability to manage substance-related issues. Research by Schwartz et al. (2018) indicates that peer support networks can also play a crucial role, as youths are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors when surrounded by peers who promote positive choices. The information from the findings of the study and the information from the literature review shows that support systems plays a fundamental role as a strategy to cope with the challenge of drug and substance abuse.

The Biopsychosocial theory supports the verdict that support systems helps to cope with the challenges of drug and substance abuse.Biopsychosocial theory states psychological factors can influence drug and substance abuse. Hence it also supports that therapy and counselling within support systems can address underlying psychological issues , helping individuals develop better coping mechanisms and emotional regulations. Thus, the information from the findings, literature review and

Biopsychosocial support shows that support system is a strategy to cope with the challenges of drug and substance abuse.

#### **4.4.3 Imposing harsh laws to minimize availability of illegal drugs and substances.**

The findings of the study mentioned that imposing harsh laws and regulations to minimize the availability of drugs and substances is the strategy to cope with the challenge of drug and substance abuse. The participants point out that:

*‘ Putting harsh laws can help to deal with the issue of drug and substance abuse as that the sellers of drug and substance if they face harsh charges they might fear to sell drug to our youths in the community’ CARE GIVER 8*

Another care giver also added that:

*‘If the police conduct operation in the streets and set curfews it may reduce unnecessary youths gatherings that lead to drug and substance abuse . Especially in the high density suburbs like this if they punish the suppliers of drug and substances as well as drug addictions it reduce the challenges of drug and substance abuse’ CARE GIVER 1*

The key informant also added that :

*‘Strictly enforcement of laws and regulations might help to reduce the availability of drug and substance as marijuana (mbanje), crystal myth making them less accessible to the population’*

The findings from the study gives a clue that imposing harsh laws and regulations to minimize the availability of illegal drugs and substances. This aligns with the literature of the research Steinberg (2001) indicates that adolescents thrive in structured environments, where defined limits help them navigate their choices and behaviors more effectively. Similarly, Kauffman and Sweeney (2019) argue that consistent enforcement of boundaries can deter risky behaviors, as youths are more likely to

respect rules when they understand the rationale behind them. Moreover, a study by Crouter and McHale (2005) found that clear parental boundaries are associated with improved emotional regulation and decision-making skills in youths, which are crucial in preventing substance abuse. Additionally, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020) emphasizes that setting and maintaining boundaries not only protects youths from the dangers of substance use but also fosters open communication, allowing for discussions about the consequences of their actions.

Thus from the information from the participants of the study and the literature review of the study, the point of imposing and enforcing harsh laws , rules and regulations can be a strategy to cope with the challenge of drug and substance abuse. Rules and regulations protects the youths from the environments that can expose them to drug and substance abuse. Also enforcing strict laws can help to shift societal views on drug use , promoting a culture that discourages drug and substance abuse.

#### **4.4.4 Open communication**

The information from the research indicates that open communication in families and communities can be a strategy to cope with the issue of drug and substance abuse among the youths. One of the care givers on focus group alluded that:

*‘ Open communication can help to reduce drug and substance abuse because it encourages individuals to share their feelings and struggles without fear or judgement and openness can help one to accept advises.’* care giver 5

The other care givers also mentioned that;

*“If parents and youths have open communication it can help in educating individuals and families about the risks and effects of substance abuse”* care giver 4

The key informant also supported by saying that:

*‘Open communication strengthens relationships as that it enhances connections between individuals and their support networks, including family and friends, which can aid recovery.’*

The findings from the research shows that the other strategy to cope with the challenge of drug and substance abuse is open communication. This view from the participants aligns with the literature of the study by Harter (2012), which states that creating a safe and open environment for dialogue allows youths to respond appropriately to their children's needs. The importance of this communication is also supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (2020), which suggests that encouraging honest discussions about substance use can lead to more informed decision-making among youths. This finding indicates that open communication plays a crucial role in addressing drug and substance abuse by fostering an environment of trust and support which can lead to better outcomes in prevention and recovery efforts.

#### **4.5 Chapter summary**

This chapter provided an illustration on the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings that were attained during the study. The chapter presented the causes of drug and substances abuse among the youths. It also articulated the challenges of drug and substance abuse to the care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances. The chapter also revealed the strategies that can be adopted to cope with the challenge of

drug and substance abuse among the youths which includes support systems, open communication, imposing harsh laws and regulations that stands against drug and substance abuse. However , the information from the participants aligned with the literature review and theoretical framework of the study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter involves the summary of this study. The chapter also contains the conclusions on the main findings of the project. There are also recommendations of the study that can help the government, non-governmental organisation who are into drug and substance abuse projects .

### **5.2 Summary**

The aim of the study is was to understand the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. The objectives of this study were to identify the causes of drug and substance abuse among the youths, examining the challenges of drug and substance abuse among the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances and identifying the strategies that can be used to cope with the challenges of drug and substance abuse. The research was guided Social learning theory and Biopsychosocial theory. Qualitative methodology used to explore the experiences of caregivers living with youths who abuse drugs and substances. The research employs purposeful sampling to select participants who have direct care giving experience,

ensuring rich and relevant data. Data collection primarily involves semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify patterns and themes within the data, enhancing understanding of caregivers' challenges. Ethical considerations were prioritized, ensuring informed consent and confidentiality. The study was conducted with care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances in Chipadze, Bindura.10 care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances participated in the study.Two key informants also participated .

### **5.2.1 Causes of drug and substance abuse among the youths by care givers**

The study provided the causes of drug and substance abuse among the youths . The causes of drug and substance abuse that were drawn from the study are biological factors such as genetic factors . There are also social factors that cause drug and substance abuse among the youths which are peer pressure, family dynamics, and cultural and societal norms.Lack of education migration from rural areas to cities are also other pushing factors of drug and substance abuse. Economic factors such as high rate of unemployment is also the cause of drug and substance abuse among the youths.

### **5.2.2 Challenges of drug and substance abuse among the care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances**

The research provided the challenges of drug and sub stance ab use among the care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances. Health implications on both care givers and the youths abusing drug and substances is another challenge of drug and substance abuse.Care givers might face mental health issues where by the victims of drug and substance abuse might face psychological disorders such as psychosis.The other challenge of drug and substance abuse to the care givers of the youths abusing



drug and substances is disunity among family members. The other economic challenges of drug and substance abuse among the care givers of the youths abusing drug and substances is financial strain and high crime rate issues.

### **5.2.3 Strategies to cope with the challenges of the care givers living with the youth abusing drug and substances**

The research provided the strategies to cope with the challenges of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances. The strategies are education and awareness, open communication, support networks, setting of curfews, encouraging health activities, developing safety plan and empathy and understanding.

## **5.3 Conclusions**

The study set out to explore and understand the lived experiences of caregivers residing with youths engaged in drug and substance abuse. Through the findings, it has become evident that these caregivers endure a complex and often painful journey marked by emotional distress, financial burden, social stigma and strained family relationships. This has been supported by the literature of McMahon (2015) which states that substance abuse can lead to significant emotional and financial strain within families, often resulting in increased rates of domestic violence and mental health issues among family members.

The findings revealed that caregivers face significant psychological challenges, including anxiety, depression, guilt and helplessness as they struggle to support their loved ones. Financial burden was another recurring theme, with many care givers bearing the cost of treatment, legal issues, and property damaged caused by youth's behavior. Furthermore, the research highlighted disunity and family separation experienced by care givers. Research indicates that dysfunctional family environments, characterized by poor communication, lack of support, and high levels of conflict,

significantly increase the risk of substance abuse among family members. Moreover, families coping with addiction often experience strained relationships, leading to a cycle of co-dependency and enabling behaviors, which further perpetuate the problem. The interplay of familial factors, such as parental substance use, neglect, and abuse, can create a conducive environment for the development of maladaptive coping mechanisms in children and adolescents, thereby increasing their vulnerability to addiction. Despite these hardships, caregivers demonstrated remarkable resilience. Many relied on coping strategies such as support networks, education and awareness. This highlighted the literature of Haller and Miles (2019) emphasize that engaging with community resources, such as counseling services and support groups, enhances caregivers' ability to manage substance-related issues. Research by Schwartz et al. (2018) indicates that peer support networks can also play a crucial role, as youths are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors when surrounded by peers who promote positive choices. The study underscores the urgent need for holistic interventions that not only address drug and substance abuse youths but also well-being of the caregivers.

#### **5.4 Implications of social work**

Implications of social work on the study of caregivers living with youths who abuse drugs and substances are multifaceted and significant. Understanding caregiver stress is crucial, as caregivers often experience high levels of emotional burden, including stress, anxiety, and depression. Social work can play a vital role in identifying these feelings and providing necessary support. By facilitating support groups, social workers help caregivers connect with others facing similar challenges, creating a community of understanding and mutual assistance.

Advocacy and resource access are other important aspects of social work. Social workers can assist caregivers in navigating available resources, such as counseling, financial aid, and educational programs. Additionally, they advocate for policies that support caregivers, ensuring they receive the assistance they need to cope with the challenges of caring for a youth involved in substance abuse. Education and training are essential components of social work that can significantly benefit caregivers. Social workers can provide training on effective communication and coping strategies, empowering caregivers to respond more effectively to their youths' needs. Awareness programs that educate caregivers about addiction and available treatment options can further enhance their ability to support their loved ones.

A holistic approach is fundamental in social work, emphasizing the importance of understanding family dynamics and how they affect both caregivers and youths. By addressing the mental health issues of both parties, social work can lead to more effective interventions and better overall outcomes. Research and data collection are also critical areas where social work can make a difference. Social work research can provide valuable qualitative insights into the experiences of caregivers, informing better practices and policies. Longitudinal studies can track changes in caregiver experiences over time, helping to identify effective interventions and support systems.

Finally, crisis intervention is a vital role for social workers. They are trained to intervene in crises, providing immediate support to caregivers and youths in distress. By developing safety plans, social workers can help caregivers manage potential crises related to substance abuse, ensuring a safer environment for both the caregiver and the youth.

In conclusion, the involvement of social work in understanding and addressing the challenges faced by caregivers of youths abusing drugs is crucial. It not only aids in the emotional and psychological well-being of caregivers but also enhances overall family dynamics, contributing to more effective outcomes in treatment and recovery processes.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

### **5.5.1 Policy/Programmatic Recommendations**

- To effectively support caregivers of youths struggling with drug and substance abuse, policymakers should prioritize the development of comprehensive support programs. This includes increasing funding for mental health services and counseling specifically tailored for caregivers.
- Policies that facilitate access to resources such as training programs on coping strategies and resilience-building can significantly alleviate the emotional burden faced by caregivers. Additionally, integrating substance abuse education into existing health programs can empower caregivers with knowledge about prevention and intervention strategies.
- Establishing a national framework for caregiver support, including respite care options, will further enhance their well-being and capacity to provide care.

### **5.5.2 Stakeholder/ partners based recommendations**

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- It is crucial for stakeholders, including healthcare providers, educational institutions, and community organizations, to collaborate in creating a unified approach to support caregivers. Stakeholders should engage in regular dialogue to identify shared challenges and resources.
- Training programs for healthcare professionals on the unique needs of caregivers can foster a more empathetic approach in treatment settings. Furthermore, schools should implement preventative education programs that involve caregivers, helping them to recognize early signs of substance abuse in youths. By forming alliances with local non-profits, stakeholders can create a network of support services that are accessible and responsive to the needs of caregivers.

### **5.5.3 Community Research participation based Recommendations**

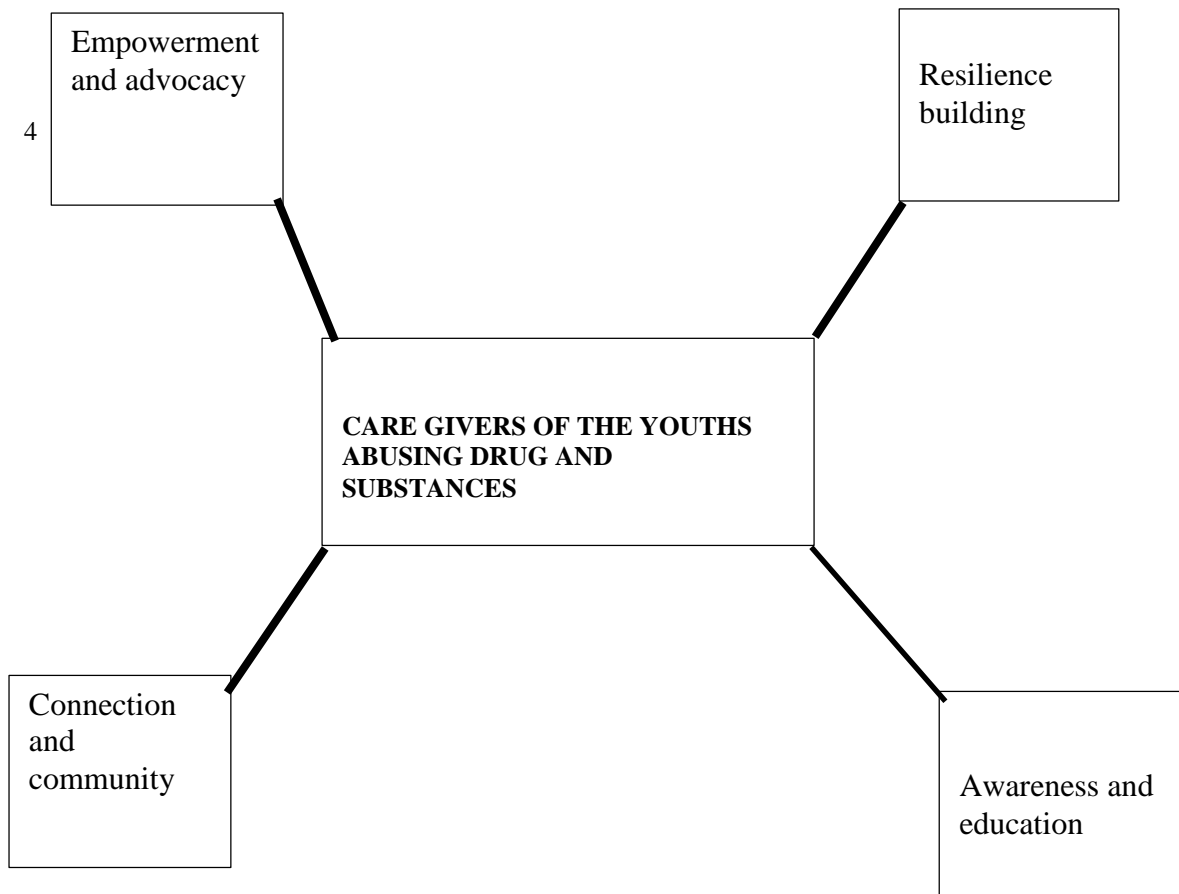
- Community-based initiatives should focus on building supportive networks for caregivers. Organizing support groups where caregivers can share experiences and coping strategies will help reduce feelings of isolation. Research should be conducted to explore the long-term impacts of care giving on mental health, allowing for the development of tailored interventions.
- Community workshops that educate on substance abuse issues and available resources can empower caregivers and foster a sense of community resilience. Additionally, involving caregivers in research processes can ensure their voices are heard, leading to more effective and relevant program designs.

### **5.5.4 Social Work-Based Recommendations**

- Social workers play a vital role in supporting caregivers of youths with substance abuse issues. Therefore, it is essential to enhance training for social workers focused on the dynamics of substance abuse and its impact on families.
- Implementing case management services that connect caregivers with necessary resources such as counseling, legal aid, and financial support will improve their overall quality of life.
- Social workers should also advocate for policies that recognize and validate the experiences of caregivers, ensuring their needs are prioritized in service provision. Finally, creating awareness campaigns that go against drug abuse and highlight the challenges faced by caregivers can foster greater community understanding and support.

### 5.5.5 CARE (Caregiver Awareness and Resilience Enhancement) model.

#### CARE Model



#### 1. Connection and Community

Building a strong sense of community is essential for caregivers facing the challenges of youth substance abuse. Local support groups can facilitate open discussions, where caregivers can share their struggles, successes, and coping strategies. Additionally, creating online forums provides an accessible platform for caregivers to seek advice, share resources, and offer emotional support, regardless of geographical limitations.

This connection helps reduce feelings of isolation and empowers caregivers through shared experiences.

## **2. Awareness and Education**

Education is a cornerstone of the CARE model, as it equips caregivers with the knowledge necessary to understand substance abuse and its effects. Additionally, creating comprehensive resource guides that compile information about local services, support networks, and coping strategies can be invaluable. By enhancing awareness, caregivers can feel more confident in their ability to support their loved ones and manage their own well-being.

## **3. Resilience Building**

Developing resilience is crucial for caregivers as they navigate the challenges of supporting youths with substance abuse issues. The CARE model emphasizes teaching coping strategies such as mindfulness, stress management, and self-care practices. These tools help caregivers maintain their mental health and emotional stability on the difficulties they face. Furthermore, adopting a strengths-based approach encourages caregivers to identify and leverage their unique strengths, enhancing their capacity to cope effectively. This focus on resilience not only benefits the caregivers but also positively impacts their relationships with the youths in their care.

## **4. Empowerment and Advocacy**

Empowerment is a key component of the CARE model, enabling caregivers to become effective advocates for their needs and the needs of their loved ones. Providing training in advocacy skills equips caregivers to communicate their concerns and suggestions to



policymakers and community leaders. This advocacy can lead to improved resources and support systems for both caregivers and youths. Additionally, encouraging caregivers to engage in community initiatives aimed at reducing stigma surrounding substance abuse fosters a culture of awareness and support. By empowering caregivers, the model promotes a proactive approach to addressing substance abuse challenges.

## **Implementation Steps**

### **1. Needs Assessment**

The first step in implementing the CARE model is to conduct a thorough needs assessment within the target community. This involves gathering data through surveys and focus groups to identify the specific challenges and needs faced by caregivers. Understanding these nuances is crucial for tailoring the program effectively, ensuring that it addresses the unique circumstances of the caregivers involved. This foundational step sets the stage for developing relevant and impact interventions.

### **2. Program Development**

Once the needs are identified, the next step is to design and implement programs that meet those needs. This includes organizing workshops, support groups, and creating resource materials tailored to the caregivers' experiences. Collaborating with mental health professionals and local organizations can enhance the effectiveness of these programs, ensuring that caregivers receive comprehensive support. The goal is to create a structured yet flexible program that can adapt to the evolving needs of the caregivers.

### **3. Partnerships**

Building strong partnerships is vital for the sustainability and reach of the CARE model. Collaborating with local organizations, educational institutions, and mental health services can significantly enhance resource availability and outreach efforts. These partnerships can provide additional expertise, funding opportunities, and a broader network of support for caregivers.

#### **4. Evaluation**

To ensure the effectiveness of the CARE model, it's important to develop metrics for evaluation. This involves regularly collecting feedback from participants to assess the program's impact on caregiver well-being and youth outcomes. Implementing a continuous improvement process allows for adjustments based on this feedback, ensuring that the program remains relevant and effective. Evaluating the program not only highlights successes but also identifies areas for growth and enhancement.

#### **5. Sustainability**

Finally, ensuring the sustainability of the CARE model is essential for its long-term success. This can be achieved through ongoing funding efforts, including seeking grants, community donations, and establishing partnerships with local businesses. Creating a robust network of support and resources will help maintain the program's operations over time. By focusing on sustainability, the CARE model can provide lasting support to caregivers and contribute to a healthier community environment.

#### **Conclusion**

The **CARE Model** offers a comprehensive approach to supporting caregivers of youths struggling with substance abuse. By fostering connection, enhancing awareness,

building resilience, and empowering caregivers, this model aims to create a supportive environment that addresses the complex challenges they face. Through careful implementation and evaluation, the CARE model can make a meaningful difference in the lives of caregivers and the youths in their care.

## **5.6 Areas for future study:**

### **1. Cultural Perspectives on Care giving**

Exploring how cultural beliefs and values shape the experiences of caregivers can reveal significant insights. Different cultures may have unique approaches to family support, stigma around substance abuse, and coping mechanisms. Understanding these cultural dynamics can lead to more tailored and effective support programs that resonate with diverse populations.

### **2. Effectiveness of Support Programs**

Researching existing programs designed to assist caregivers can help evaluate their impact and identify successful practices. This could involve surveying caregivers about their experiences with support services, analyzing program outcomes, and highlighting effective models that can be replicated or improved upon.

### **3. Role of Technology in Support**

With the rise of digital communication, studying how technology can aid caregivers is crucial. This includes examining online support groups, mobile apps for mental health, and tele health services. Research could evaluate the accessibility, effectiveness, and user satisfaction of these digital resources in providing support and information.

## **5.7 Chapter summary**

This chapter highlights the summary of the findings. It provided a summary of the findings on each main objective. It also combines the conclusions and recommendations to the study. The recommendations should be considered as they help to deal with the challenge of drug and substance abuse among the youths. The chapter also provided implications for social work practice as well as areas for the future study. The researcher also crafted a CARE model on this chapter.

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## **APPENDIX A**

Focus group discussion guide for participants

Introduction letter to the participants and consent form.

My name is Crucial Nyandoro . I am a 4<sup>TH</sup> year student at Bindura University Science of Education studying Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Social Work. I am doing my research titled “ The experience of care givers living with the Youths abusing drug and substances. A case study of Chipadze, Bindura. Your consent in this research is much respected , and if you feel to withdraw from the participation your decision is greatly respected. The researcher is using focus group discussion as a method of collecting data.The focus group discussion shall not take more that 30 minutes.

Ethical considerrations

- Voluntary participation
- Confidentiality
- No risk involved

Date.....

Participant Signature.....

1. Age.....

2. Sex.....

1. What are the causes of drug and substance abuse among the youths with care givers ?
2. What are the challenges of drug and substance abuse you face as care givers of the youth struggling with drug and substance abuse?
3. What are the strategies you use to cope with the youths abusing drug and substances.

4. What type of support networks have you utilized?

5. What strategies do you use to foster open communication with the youths about drug and substance abuse use?

**Thank you for your participation**

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## **APPENDIX B**

Interview guide for key informants

Introduction letter to the participants and consent form.

My name is Crucial Nyandoro . I am a 4<sup>TH</sup> year student at Bindura University Science of Education studying Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Social Work. I am doing my research titled “ The experience of care givers living with the Youths abusing drug and substances. A case study of Chipadze, Bindura. Your consent in this research is much respected , and if you feel to withdraw from the participation your decision is greatly respected. The researcher is using focus group discussion as a method of collecting data.The focus group discussion shall not take more that 30 minutes .

Ethical considerrations

- Voluntary participation

- Confidentiality
- No risk involved

Date.....

Participant Signature.....

Age.....

Sex.....

Designation.....

Religion.....

Marital status.....

- 1.What are the causes of drug and substance abuse among the youths with care givers ?
- 2.What are the challenges of drug and substance abuse you face as care givers of the youth struggling with drug and substance abuse?
- 3.What are the strategies you use to cope with the youths abusing drug and substances.
- 4.What type of support networks have you utilized?
- 5.What strategies do you use to foster open communication with the youths about drug and substance abuse use?

**Thank you for your participation**

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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

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BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Date: 21 May 2025

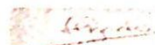
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION

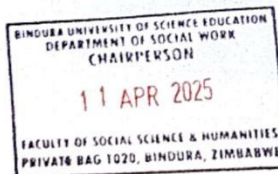
This serves to introduce the bearer, CRUCIAL NYAKIDORO, Student Registration Number B213413B, who is a BSc Social Work student at Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out a research project in your area/institution.

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

Yours faithfully



E.E. CHIGONDO  
CHAIRPERSON



1117 Rujeko

Glendale

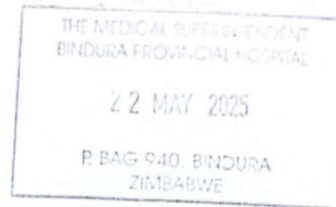
21 May 2025


The Human Resource Manager

Bindura Hospital

Mashonaland Central Province

Bindura



Approved 

Dear Sir/Madam

REF. APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH ON YOUR REHABILITATION CENTER IN CHIPADZE BINDURA ON A RESEARCH TOPIC ON THE EXPERIENCE OF CARE GIVERS LIVING WITH THE YOUTHS ABUSING DRUG AND SUBSTANCES

My name is Crucial Nyandoro . I am a fourth year at Bindura University of Science Education studying Degree in Social Work. My Student Identification number is B213413B .I am kindly seeking for permission at your rehabilitation centre to conduct research on the experience of the care givers living with the youths abusing drug and substances.

There are several reasons why I want to conduct the research. The reason is that researchers have discovered that there is a rise in drug and substance abuse among the youths hence this research seeks to inform the factors leading to drug and substance abuse , challenges facing the care givers living with youths abusing drugs and strategies being applied to overcome the problem of drug and substance abuse in Bindura. Another reason is that policy makers and legislators in Zimbabwe can be able to utilize the findings I will find to get to come up with strategies to reduce drug and substance abuse among the youths.

Thank for taking time to consider my application. I kindly look forward for your hearing from you. I can be reached at [crucialnyandoro@gmail.com](mailto:crucialnyandoro@gmail.com) contact number 0784 517 549

Yours Sincerely

Crucial Nyandoro

## B2134123B Crucial Nyandoro.docx

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