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CASE STUDY OF EMPUMALANGA HIGH-DENSITY SUBURB  
IN HWANGE DISTRICT.

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE  
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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN  
SOCIAL WORK

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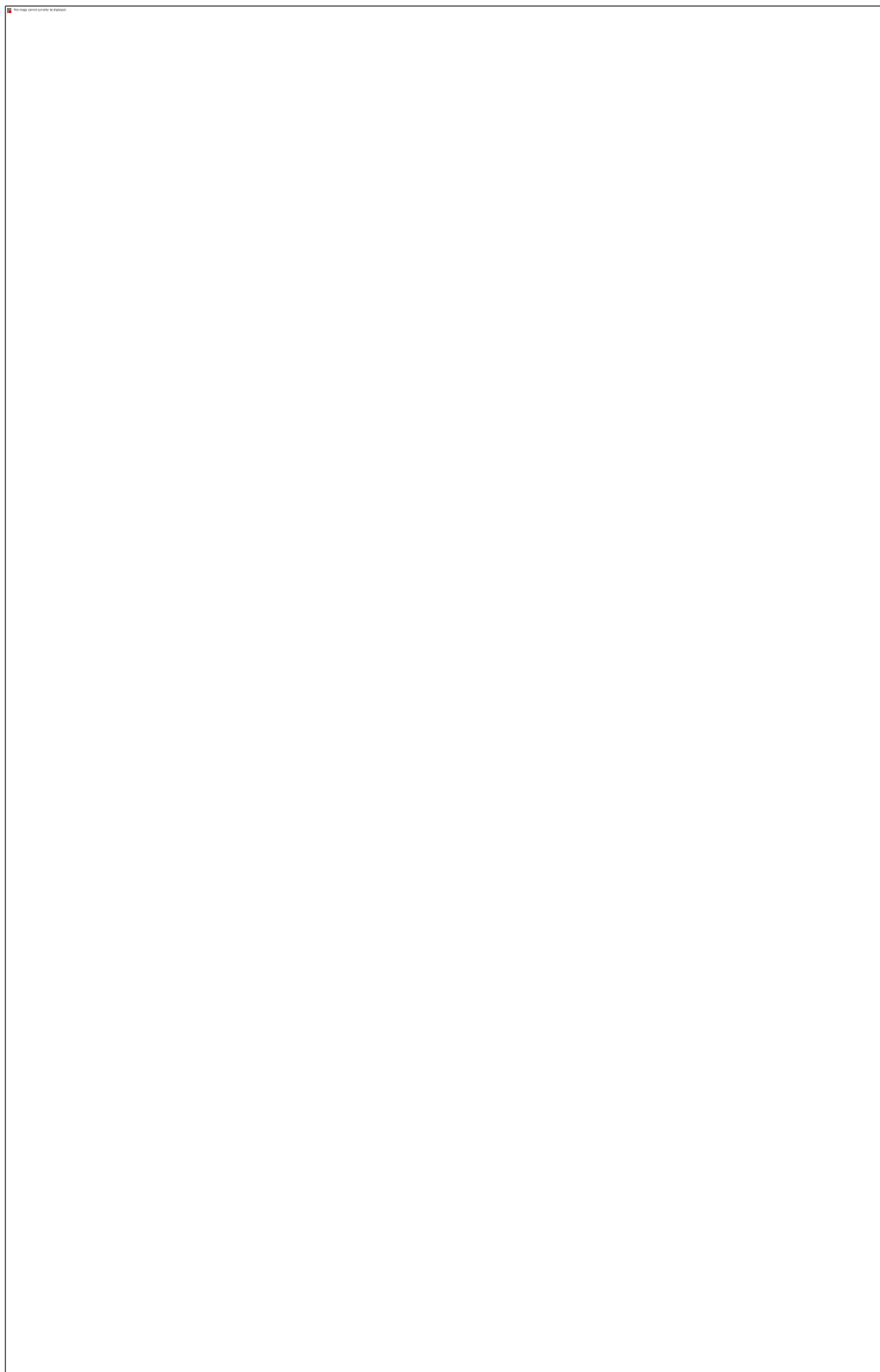
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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated in particular to my parents and siblings, who have provided unwavering moral support.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost I would like to thank the Almighty God, Jehovah, for giving me this opportunity to gain knowledge. My utmost acknowledgement goes to my supervisor Mr Njovu whose astute and informed guidance saw this dissertation chock-full with logical reasoning and cohesion. I am truly grateful. I also want to acknowledge the unwavering support and cooperation I received from the study participants. Their participation and cooperation made this noble enterprise a success.

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May the Almighty God bless you all.

## ABSTRACT

*The study explores the community perceptions on former drug addicts with a special focus on Empumalanga high density- suburb in Hwange, Zimbabwe. This qualitative study was informed by the theory of stigma by Elving Goshman (1963). in order to gather data, the study engaged qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and focus groups. A sample of forty participants were purposively sampled was used. The study found out that some members of the community showed empathy, compassion, and support for people going through recovery, while others showed stigmatizing attitudes and a reluctance to interact or put their trust in former drug addicts. The study show critical it is to close information gaps, confront stigmatizing beliefs, and remove obstacles to reintegration. The study concludes that people in recovery can live in more compassionate and welcoming communities by putting targeted education campaigns into action, spreading uplifting stories, and improving support networks. The study recommends that to guarantee successful interventions and long-lasting change, cooperation between legislators, medical professionals, community organizations, and other stakeholders is necessary for these initiatives*

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# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

## **1:0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, limitations of the study, definition of key terms, dissertation outline and the chapter summary.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Substance and drug misuse has spread all over the world, affecting people of practically all racial backgrounds, religious beliefs, and countries (Anderson Anderson, Beckerleg, Hailu, & Klein, 2020). Drug and substance misuse is so destructive such that its effects extend beyond the person who chooses to pursue that risky course (Padilla, 2020). Families, communities and even countries are all negatively impacted by drug and substance addiction. Approximately 31 million people worldwide suffer from drug use problems, and 11 million of those people use opiate drugs; of them, 1.3 million have HIV, 5.5 million have hepatitis C, and 1 million have both HIV and hepatitis C (World Health Organization, 2019). Adult recovering drug users may find it challenging to reintegrate, particularly if they are more likely to relapse. After being released from prison or rehabilitation facilities, ex-offenders in this case, former drug addicts are likely to relapse within three years (National Institute of Justice, 2019). Former drug addicts often encounter negative perceptions and social stigmatization from the community, hindering their successful

reintegration into society. As a harmful coping strategy, ex-drug addicts misuse drugs and alcohol to self-medicate their experiences, emotions and ideas. Their substance abuse as a stress reliever is indicative of a larger trend in American society. As stated by Church (2018), 100 million American families suffer from an alcohol and drug problem as a result of stress in their lives. According to Martin et al. (2019), family stressors include; financial difficulties, emotional distressing confrontations between parents, intimate partner violence, and inadequate parenting practices all contribute to increased substance use in families by increasing the use, abuse, and misuse of drugs and alcohol. Uncertainty factors that contribute to alcohol use disorders among ex-drug addicts include homelessness; financial difficulties; and ongoing anxiety that exacerbates behaviour issues, physical and mental health issues, and behavioral disorders.

Sub-Saharan is also affected by the drug abuse problem. With an average annual alcohol consumption of 11 liters, South Africa has the highest rate of alcohol consumption in Africa and the sixth highest global per capita intake. South Africans who use alcohol consume more than the typical individual in other countries, even though their country has fewer alcohol consumers than other European nations. When children witness alcohol consumption in the family, it may lead to addictive behaviour as an adult. Epstein et al. (2013) discovered that exposure to risky sexual activity, parental maltreatment, and living in single-parent households were the main factors contributing to alcohol and tobacco dependence in children aged 10 to 18. According to Joyner et al. (2018), there is a negative correlation between family members encouraging their children to drink beer while they are young. According to Ystrom, Kendler, and Reichborn (2014), the development of behavior, traits, and

disorders associated with alcohol consumption first begins at the onset stage, which is influenced by hereditary variables and shared environmental conditions among family members. According to research by Sullivan et al. (2016), a mother's alcoholism or drug misuse can have an impact on a baby's brain genetics, which can alter the behavior patterns of family members with alcohol or drug disorders. Due to the negative effects of drug addiction, negative perceptions on drug users or former drug users will continue to enforce the social norms in a given society.

The extent of drug and alcohol abuse among Zambian students is far more alarming than has been reported (Masiye and Ndhlovu 2016). Reports from the Zambia Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) showed an increase in drug and alcohol abuse, and figures from the 2013 annual reports showed that out of 288 people involved, 159 were students, compared to 302 in 2014. There were 176 students, and out of the 415 people who participated in 2015, 271 were students. Another study in Zambia that looked at factors related to student alcohol use found that 60% of students abused alcohol (Munalula-Nkandu et al. 2020). Increased rates of drug abuse were also observed in the 2004 Zambia Global School Health Survey, where data from nine provinces showed that 42.6% of students had consumed alcohol in the 30 days prior to the survey (Masiye and Ndhlovu 2016). Based on such information, there was a need to conduct this type of research to document how students perceive drugs and alcohol in educational institutions. Another study conducted by Kusanthani (2014) showed the prevalence of drug trafficking in Zambia. Lusaka had 87%, followed by Copperbelt 58%, Eastern 44%, Southern 34% and Muchinga 33%, Central 26% and least traffickers. Northwest-20%. It shows the availability of psychoactive substances in different regions. Masiye (2016) posits that drug and alcohol abuse has had a huge

negative impact on individuals, families, schools and communities. Such information and evidence from research and stakeholders show that drugs are being used and abused among students. This study was based on the observed increase in drug abuse among students, so it investigated and documented students and perspectives on youth drug and alcohol abuse and the likely development of student-led intervention strategies.

There has been an alarming increase in drug addiction cases in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Zimbabwe's Hwange District in recent years. The Zimbabwean Second Republic has established medical facilities to cater to the needs of individuals who have survived drug and substance abuse, acknowledging the seriousness of the matter. Nevertheless, the incident involving F. Moyo's drug-induced stabbing of E. Muyambo in 2023 has had a lasting effect on the people of Hwange, despite these efforts. Former drug users will eventually return to their communities, according to research by James (2015). The local population now has unfavorable opinions about drug users as a result of this incidence and numerous comparable ones. Even after receiving expert care and support, these views could endure. Addiction to drugs has repercussions that go beyond the addicts themselves; it also affects families and the larger community. Reintegration is significantly hampered by stigmatization and unfavorable attitudes around drug addiction and recovery, which also raises the risk of relapse. Therefore, in order to create policies that might successfully lessen stigma and promote a supportive atmosphere, it is essential to investigate and comprehend how the community views and feels about those who have previously struggled with drug addiction.

According to the former president of Switzerland, Ruth Dreifuss it is the responsibility of governments to dispel myths about drugs and drug users by disseminating easily accessible, evidence-based information. He further suggests that religious and political leaders must uphold the rights and dignity of all people, especially the weakest and those who are the targets of societal stigma, in their words and by their whole demeanor. Understanding community perceptions of former drug addicts is crucial for developing effective interventions and promoting social inclusion. Hence, this study aims to explore and analyze community perceptions of former drug addicts in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The stigmatization of former drug addicts by the community in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb presents significant obstacles to their smooth reintegration into the community. Former drug users who are unemployed find it difficult to reintegrate and end up engaging in behaviors that increase their risk of relapsing. Other obstacles, according to Tyler and Brockmann (2017), include problems with parenting, problems with self-esteem, and moral dilemmas. Social exclusion and unfavorable opinions may make it more difficult for them to get support services, housing, work, and medical treatment. It is difficult for ex-drug users to effectively reintegrate without support from their family, friends, and even communities, claim Tyler and Brockmann (2017). The perspectives and attitudes of the communities that ex-drug addicts wish to reintegrate into are just as important as their own efforts in ensuring their successful reintegration. Therefore, by examining how the community

views former drug addicts and illuminating the causes impacting these attitudes, this study seeks to close the information gap.

### **1.3: Aim of the Study**

The aim of this research is to investigate the community perceptions on former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Hwange District.

### **1.4: Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- a) To assess the community's knowledge on the effects of drug abuse on individuals.
- b) To explore community attitudes towards former drug addicts.
- c) To investigate the perceived barriers hindering the reintegration of by former drug addicts.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the investigation:

1. How do community members perceive former drug addicts in terms of trustworthiness?
2. What factors influence community members' perceptions of former drug addicts?
3. What are the perceived barriers that prevent the successful reintegration of former drug addicts into the community?

## **1.6 Significance of the Research**

This research holds significant implications for various stakeholders, including policymakers, healthcare professionals, community organizations, and former drug addicts themselves. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of community perceptions and inform the development of targeted interventions and support services. By addressing the social stigma surrounding former drug addicts, this research aims to foster a more inclusive and supportive community environment. In the subsequent chapters, this dissertation will delve into the relevant literature, present the research methodology, analyze the collected data, and provide conclusions and recommendations based on the findings. The ultimate goal of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge on community perceptions of former drug addicts and promote social inclusion in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

This study's boundaries are the Empumalanga High-Density Subdivision in Zimbabwe's Hwange District. The study intends to obtain a comprehensive grasp of the community's views and attitudes regarding former drug users in this specific setting by concentrating on this particular locality. Residents of the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb, past drug users, strangers, and local authorities will all be involved in the study.

There were restrictions on the research. Research studies with limitations are characterized by problems that are beyond the control of the researcher (Simon & Goes, 2013). However, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations that may



impact the study such as potential respondent bias. Participants may exhibit bias or reluctance to discuss sensitive topics related to drug addiction and social stigma. This can affect the accuracy and completeness of the data collected. Efforts will be made to create a safe and non-judgmental environment to encourage honest and open responses, but some level of bias may still be present. Due to the specific focus on the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb, the findings of this study may not be directly generalizable to other regions or communities in Zimbabwe. The unique social, cultural, and economic factors at play within the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb may influence the perceptions and attitudes towards former drug addicts in ways that differ from other areas. To determine whether the results may be applied generally, more investigation is required. There may be limitations to the scope and depth of data that can be gathered due to the study's time constraints. It is crucial to recognize that views and perceptions of former drug addicts might change over time, and the results of the study might just provide a snapshot of what the community thought at the time the data was collected. During the data collection process, I will employ memoing to assist remove any preconceptions. Memoring is the act of reflecting and taking notes when conducting research (Hope et al., 2019).

Despite these limitations, the research will provide valuable insights into the community perceptions and attitudes towards former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb. The findings can serve as a foundation for future research and inform targeted interventions and strategies that address stigma, support reintegration, and improve the overall well-being of former drug addicts in the study area.

## **1.8 Dissertation Outline**

### **1.8.1 Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study**

In this chapter, the background of the study will be presented, highlighting the significance of understanding community perceptions of former drug addicts. The problem statement will be clearly articulated, focusing on the need to address stigma and promote social inclusion. The purpose of the study will be stated, along with research objectives that aim to explore and analyze community perceptions in the specific context of Empumalanga High-Density Suburb. The delimitations of the study and its limitations will be acknowledged to provide a clear scope for the research. Key terms will be defined, ethical considerations will be discussed, and an overview of the dissertation structure will be provided.

### **1.8.2 Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The literature on how the public views former drug addicts will be reviewed in this chapter, with an emphasis on how stigmatization of these individuals is perceived. We'll present and talk about Elving Goffman's theory of stigma's theoretical underpinnings in connection to the research question. The literature review will emphasize how Goffman's theory is applicable to the analysis and understanding of community perceptions. In order to find gaps in the literature and demonstrate the necessity of the current research, the review will also look at studies done in related settings.

### **1.8.3 Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

The research approach used for the study will be described in this chapter. We shall choose a qualitative research design since it enables a thorough investigation of community perceptions. Along with the sample strategies utilized to choose participants from the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb, the target population will be discussed. Comprehensive details regarding the data collection techniques, encompassing focus groups, observations, and interviews, will be supplied. We'll talk about ethical issues including informed consent and confidentiality. The chapter will also discuss data analysis techniques, such as thematic analysis, to derive meaningful insights from the collected data.

### **1.8.4 Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis**

The gathered data will be shown and examined in this chapter. Using suitable qualitative data presentation strategies, such as direct quotes, theme narratives, or snippets from focus groups or interviews, the findings will be arranged and presented. In order to discover themes and patterns in the community's perceptions of former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb, the data will be evaluated in the framework of Goffman's theory of stigma. The significance of the findings will be discussed, providing a comprehensive understanding of the community's perspectives.

### **1.8.5 Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

This concluding chapter will summarize the research objectives and findings. It will provide a concise overview of the key insights gained from the study. The conclusions

will explain the implications of the findings, emphasizing how they contribute to the existing knowledge on community perceptions of former drug addicts. The chapter will also discuss the alignment of the findings with Goffman's theory of stigma. Finally, practical recommendations will be provided to address stigma and promote social inclusion of former drug addicts in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb. These recommendations will be based on the research's findings and their potential to inform interventions and policies.

## **1.9 Chapter summary**

The dissertation's first chapter provides an overview of drug addiction and its effects on both individuals and communities. It specifically focuses on the drug addiction issue in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Hwange District. The chapter introduces the research questions and objectives, emphasizing their importance in addressing the research gap and influencing policy and practice. The study is justified by its alignment with broader goals of reducing addiction rates, promoting social inclusion, and enhancing community well-being. The chapter covers the study's objectives, constraints, research design, techniques for gathering data, and ethical issues. Finally, it offers a synopsis of the dissertation's organization, including an outline of the upcoming chapters and their contents.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

The chapter provides a succinct overview of relevant research on how people in a particular community see former drug addicts. The chapter discusses the community perceptions on former drug addicts as well as a theoretical framework upon which the study is premised.

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

A model or group of techniques used to analyze and assess data acquired for a research project is called a theoretical framework, according to Barbour (2014). In the theoretical framework, a theory is used because it helps provide a contextual explanation and understanding of the study results.

#### **2.1.2 Goffman's theory of stigma**

Erving Goffman first proposed the stigmatization theory in 1963. According to Goffman (1963), stigma is any quality that a person may have that is seen negatively by society. The Greeks, who marked criminals, slaves, and traitors with cuts or burns on their flesh to denote that they were polluted or immoral individuals to be avoided, are credited with coining the term stigma (Goffman, 1963). He points out that social deviation, or just having a characteristic that not only makes one stand out from others but also has a high degree of negative value, is the fundamental cause of stigma. A

person and a social context with established expectations are said to be connected by the stigma link (Goffman, 1963). Consequently, everyone will periodically play the roles of the stigmatized and the stigmatizer (or, in his words, "normal").

Goffman's concept of stigma is rooted in sociological ideas of labelling and deviance, which are central to the perspective of social interactionists. Labelling theory focuses on how labels are created and applied to certain individuals or groups to restrict or devalue their actions. It examines how society constructs and controls deviance. Stigma, as a crucial element in the post-labelling phase, influences the social reactions faced by individuals who have been labelled as deviant, ranging from ostracism and ridicule to pity or anger.

Labelling theory emphasizes that deviance is subjective and dependent on who, what, and how an act or individual is defined as deviant. Deviance is seen as a relative condition, varying according to different groups or individuals and the standards they hold. What may be considered deviant by one group may not be seen as deviant by others. Thus, labelling theory recognizes that individuals may act rationally based on their own standards, even if their actions deviate from broader societal norms. Interactionists seek to understand the meaning behind individual actions and behaviors, shedding light on power dynamics and control within society and social situations.

Based on symbolic interactionism and dramaturgical analysis, Goffman's theory of stigma provides important insights into how deviant identities are socially constructed and how people navigate and negotiate them in daily interactions. Goffman says that stigma develops when an individual has a quality that is highly disparaging and goes against societal standards or expectations. This characteristic serves as the foundation

for classifying the person as "different" or "deviant," which results in unfavorable social assessments and unfair treatment.

The theory emphasizes the importance of social contact and the formation of social identities in explaining the mechanisms via which stigmatization happens. Goffman presents the idea of "spoiled" and "normative" identities, in which marginalized people struggle to control how they portray themselves to others in order to prevent being ignored or rejected. He emphasizes the methods used by those who are stigmatized, like "passing" (hiding their stigmatized characteristics) and "stigma management" (using techniques to uphold one's self-worth and negotiate social situations).

My research project uses Goffman's theory as a theoretical framework to investigate how stigmatized people negotiate their identities in different social circumstances. It also looks at the tactics they use to cope with stigma and keep a positive self-image. The theory offers a comprehensive conceptual framework for examining the social dynamics and repercussions linked to deviant identities. It also sheds light on the difficulties in managing one's identity and the detrimental effects of stigma on people's wellbeing.

Today's definition of stigma includes characteristics that elicit broad social criticism in addition to physical marks, culminating in a "spoiled social identity," as defined by Goffman. Dovidio, Major, and Crocker (2000) and other academics highlight two essential elements of stigma: the identification of difference and the ensuing devaluation. It is crucial to remember that stigma exists in the social environment and

is not a personal trait (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Hebl & Dovidio, 2005). Social interactions are the source of stigmatization, and what is deemed stigmatizing in one setting may not be in another (Crocker et al., 1998). Aversion, avoidance, social rejection, discounting, discrediting, dehumanizing, and depersonalizing stigmatized people are some of the overt manifestations of stigma (Dovidio et al., 2000; Herek, 1999). Furthermore, stigma can also appear discreetly in nonverbal cues such as averted eyes, which can lead to uncomfortable social encounters between stigmatized and non-stigmatized people (Hebl, Tickle, & Heatherton, 2000).

Moreover, Goffman's theory operates at the micro-level of social interaction, focusing on everyday encounters and face-to-face contacts where stigma is likely to be perceived. This micro-level perspective facilitates an understanding of the subjective experiences of stigmatized individuals and the ways in which stigma impacts their sense of self, social interactions, and overall well-being. My research study offers a thorough and in-depth understanding of the social dynamics and repercussions of deviant identities by using a micro-level strategy to capture the intricacies and complexity of stigmatization in real-life scenarios.

In addition, the Goffman theory's theoretical framework aids in placing my study project in the larger context of stigma and labeling. Based on a well-established theoretical framework, my research adds to the theory's continuous evolution and improvement. It enables me to critically engage with the shortcomings and debates around Goffman's understanding of stigma and labeling while also expanding on my knowledge base and empirical data.

Former drug addicts often face a significant stigma due to the negative stereotypes associated with drug addiction. This stigma can persist even after individuals have fully



recovered from addiction. Goffman (1963) himself characterizes stigma as stemming from an identity conflict. Occurring when “the stranger is put before us, evidence can arise of his possessing an attribute that makes him different from others in the category of persons available for him to be, and of a less desirable kind- in the extreme, a person who is quite thoroughly bad, or dangerous, or weak” (Goffman, 1963, p. 3). This is a crucial component of Goffman's theory of stigma, which describes stigma as the result of conflict between an individual's actual self and what society discourse expects of them. When someone is socially stigmatized by another person or people, they are not only assigned a disparaging characteristic but also are placed into a socially formed category of person. Stated differently, an individual is classified as a particular type of person due in part to the quality they possess, rather than just having it.

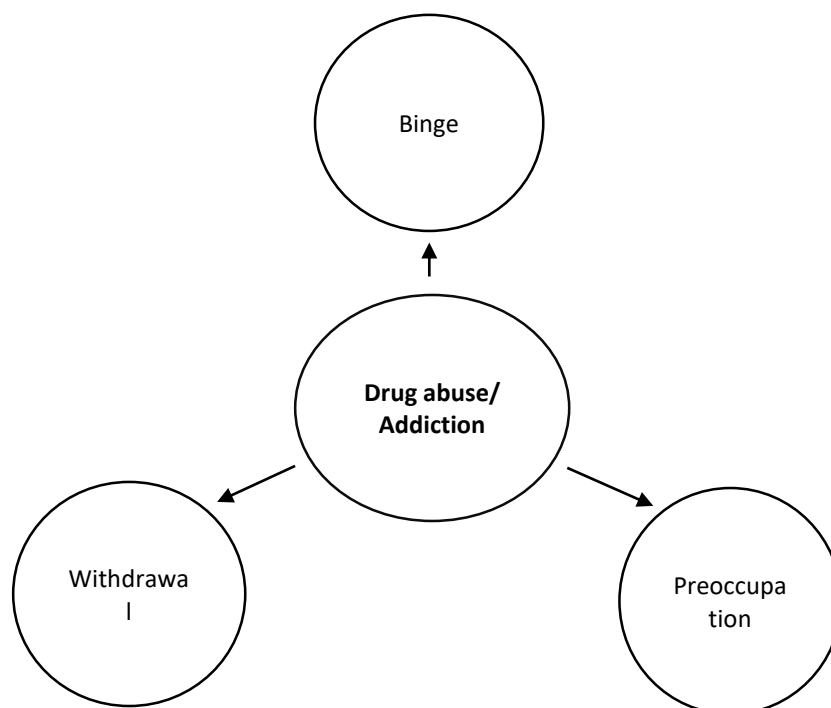
Overall, my research topic acquires a strong basis founded in recognized scholarship by using Goffman's theory of stigma and labeling as the theoretical framework. It makes it possible to conduct a methodical analysis of the social dynamics and outcomes connected to deviant identities and situates the research within the larger theoretical and empirical framework of stigma and labeling studies. As such, the theoretical framework contributes to the study project's rigor and validity, enabling a thorough and nuanced investigation of the intricate processes of stigma and labeling in society.

To our knowledge, there are no studies utilizing the theory of Stigma by Goffman in regarding community perceptions on former drug addicts in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Hwange District. There is need for such research given the

negative perceptions on former drug addicts by the community and how it affects them in the reintegration process. The current study reveals the role of the theory of Stigma by Goffman can play in understanding community perceptions on former drug addicts. The findings will further inform the development of interventions and strategies that address stigma and enhance successful reintegration.

## 2.2 Conceptualization of drug abuse

This section reviews literature on the conceptual meaning of major components of drug abuse using the stages of addiction. These stages are the binge, withdrawal and preoccupation stage.



### **2.2.1 The Binge/Intoxication Stage**

During the initial stage of addiction, individuals enter into the addictive cycle by consuming an addictive substance or engaging in an addictive behavior. This stage is characterized by the experience of pleasurable or rewarding effects. These pleasurable effects reinforce the individual's desire to continue using the substance or engaging in the behavior. As a result, there is an increased tendency to consume larger quantities of the substance or engage in the behavior more frequently. This escalation is driven by the pursuit of recreating the euphoric or pleasurable feelings initially experienced. The brain's reward system, particularly the release of dopamine, plays a significant role in reinforcing this desire. It is important to recognize that not everyone who experiments with an addictive substance or behavior will progress to addiction, as individual factors and susceptibility also come into play. Understanding the initial stage of addiction is crucial as it allows for the identification of potential intervention points and the development of prevention and early intervention strategies.

### **2.2.2 The Withdrawal/Negative Affect Stage**

As individuals progress in their addiction, their bodies adapt to the addictive substance or behavior, resulting in the development of tolerance. This means that larger quantities of the substance or more frequent engagement in the behavior are needed to achieve the same pleasurable effects that were initially experienced. Tolerance arises as the body's physiological systems adjust to the continuous presence of the substance or behavior. For instance, with substance abuse, the body may become less responsive to the substance, leading to a diminished impact.

Consequently, individuals may feel compelled to escalate their consumption or engagement to compensate for this reduced effect. Nonetheless, when the substance is unavailable or its effects wear off, individuals often encounter withdrawal symptoms. These symptoms can manifest in various ways, depending on the specific substance or behavior. Commonly, they include physical discomfort, psychological distress, and negative emotions such as anxiety, irritability, and depression. The experience of withdrawal symptoms can be distressing and can intensify the urge to utilize the substance or engage in the behavior in order to alleviate the discomfort. In addition to the physical symptoms, individuals may also face negative emotions and psychological distress during the withdrawal phase. The fear of confronting these negative feelings and the discomfort associated with withdrawal can contribute to a cycle of continued substance use or engagement in the addictive behavior, even when individuals are cognizant of the adverse consequences. This cycle of tolerance, withdrawal, and the fear of negative emotions creates a potent drive to sustain the addictive pattern. Individuals may find themselves trapped in a cycle of substance use or addictive behavior, despite being aware of the detrimental effects and the negative impact on their physical and mental well-being. Comprehending the development of tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, and the fear of negative emotions is pivotal in understanding the challenges individuals face in breaking free from addiction. It underscores the intricate interplay between physiological adaptations, psychological factors, and the emotional aspects of addiction. Effective treatment and intervention approaches need to address these factors comprehensively in order to support individuals in overcoming addiction and achieving long-lasting recovery.

### **2.2.3 The Preoccupation/Anticipation Stage**

During this phase, individuals become fixated on acquiring the addictive substance or engaging in the addictive behavior. They experience strong cravings and persistent thoughts centered around the substance or behavior. These preoccupations can lead to impulsive and compulsive actions aimed at satisfying the cravings, often disregarding rational decision-making and the potential negative consequences. This stage establishes a cycle of desire, pursuit, consumption, and negative aftermath, which perpetuates the addictive behavior. In this stage, individuals develop an intense preoccupation with obtaining the addictive substance or engaging in the addictive behavior. Cravings and obsessive thoughts about the substance or behavior become prevalent and all-consuming. As a result, individuals may engage in impulsive and compulsive behaviors in order to fulfill their cravings, even if it means ignoring the potential negative outcomes. This stage is characterized by a continuous cycle. The desire for the substance or behavior drives individuals to actively pursue it, leading to consumption or engagement. However, the aftermath of consumption often results in negative consequences such as guilt, shame, physical discomfort, and impaired functioning. Despite these negative outcomes, the cravings and preoccupation persist, leading to a repetition of the cycle as individuals seek relief or escape through further consumption or engagement. This ongoing reinforcement of the addictive behavior strengthens the neural pathways associated with addiction, making it increasingly challenging for individuals to break free from the cycle. The preoccupation, cravings, and impulsive behaviors become deeply ingrained, contributing to the chronic and relapsing nature of addiction. Understanding this stage is crucial for recognizing the powerful hold of addiction and the difficulties individuals face in overcoming it. Effective treatment approaches should address the preoccupation, cravings, and

impulsive behaviors, providing individuals with strategies to manage and cope with these aspects. Additionally, interventions should focus on helping individuals develop healthier coping mechanisms and alternative sources of reward to break the cycle of desire and consumption.

## **2.3 Effects of Drugs and Substance Abuse**

Unchecked and continuous drug use is considered to be a contributing cause to health problems in the short- and long-term. Furthermore, it has been shown that substance abuse either contributes to or intensifies risky social behavior.

Given that alcohol is one of the drugs that people use the most frequently in the country, numerous efforts have been started to raise awareness of the negative effects of alcoholism. Child neglect is simply one of the negative effects of alcoholism. Neglected children experience long-term effects that hinder their emotional development. In the end, these kids might start abusing alcohol or other substances on their own, which would further prolong the cycle (Berman, 2017). In addition to abusing drugs, these children may feel inadequate for not being able to rescue their parents from what appears to be an insurmountable circumstance. But in contemporary Africa, alcoholism is more than just a social and economic issue. Kenya's Laikipia East is not an exception, considering how common alcohol abuse is there. Alcoholism is a common issue in this place. Alcoholism has an impact on the family, which is felt. In Laikipia East, the widespread habit of young people drinking alcohol practically daily transcends socioeconomic, religious, and cultural boundaries (Cotran, 2008).

Adolescents raised in households with one or both alcoholic parents may wind up adopting the same behavioral tendencies as their parents. It is well known that boys who grow up with alcoholic parents often turn into alcoholics themselves, and that traumatized girls either marry alcoholics later on in life or choose not to marry at all. Children from these kinds of families grow up in dysfunctional households, where their emotional needs are disregarded. Children from these households are therefore frequently drawn to circumstances that are, at most, emotionally distressing (Barrow, 2018).

Having to deal with an alcoholic can have many detrimental impacts on a spouse who is married to an alcoholic. For instance, among the difficulties they must face are thoughts of anger, self-pity, and mental anguish. In situations where one parent struggles with alcoholism, the other partner is left to care for the family by themselves (Berger, 2015). Over time, as the alcoholic parent becomes more of a burden due to struggles with unemployment and the significant amounts of money spent on alcohol, financial difficulties ensue. In addition, some benefits are also forfeited since a larger portion of the family's income is allocated to the afflicted spouse's rehabilitation.

A 1998 study titled "Exposure to Alcoholism in the Family" found that substance misuse and alcoholism are major causes of early widowhood. Furthermore, among the primary causes of divorce, alcohol ranks highly. Berg (2015) reports that researchers looking at families with alcohol problems have found that alcoholism is the primary cause of most marital issues. Remarkably, the same specialists came to the conclusion that the alcoholic's spouse and kids can exacerbate their drinking behavior in addition to contributing to it (Berg, 2015).

Adolescent drug addiction is unaffected by background or class (Thorne & De Blassie, 2017). Individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and social classes are vulnerable to the vicious cycle of drug abuse. To put this in perspective, Chege, Mungai, and Oresi (2017) found that nearly one in six adolescents in today's culture suffer from chemical dependency. Drug addiction does not discriminate, albeit young people are usually the most affected group in any given nation. Kenyan youth suffer from unemployment and are idle most of the time. Eventually, as a way to pass the time, they turn to drugs and other unsuitable social activities. When the most productive part of the population is enslaved by drug abuse, the economy suffers in two ways. First, there are the costs related to the process of rehabilitation and the absence of a significant contribution to the manufacturing process (Chege, Mungai & Orese, 2017). Moreover, drug addiction is defined as a long-term brain disorder that might cause relapses. Because of this, drug abuse is viewed as being very detrimental, affecting not only the addict but also everyone around them.

Alcohol is known to cause physical damage and have a negative effect on a person's wellness as well as the wellbeing of people around them (Barrows, 2014). The detrimental effects of drinking are evident in the Laikipia East sub-county, where dysfunctional and emotionally repressed families are the norm (Berman, 2019). In their book "Alcoholism is a Serious Illness," Neil Kessel and Henry Walton claim that alcoholism shortens life and harms the body. Socially, it is extremely damaging to the victim's family as well as to the suffering. The requirements of the drinker come first and their welfare takes precedence over those of their family (Cotran, 2008).



Researchers that look into families with alcohol abuse have found that teenagers reared in these kinds of homes are more likely to have phobias. Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that drunkenness and aggression are related. Because of this, it is not unusual to discover that crime and battery are prevalent in families with alcoholism. According to Berger (2015), there are approximately 30% of father-daughter incest cases and approximately 75% of domestic violence cases involving one or more alcoholic family members. It is alarming to learn, though, that sometimes victims of incest and domestic abuse come to blame themselves for everything that happens to them.

Normal offspring of alcoholics are affected by their parents' alcoholism. Common symptoms among many of those kids include low self-esteem, loneliness, guilt, helplessness, abandonment worries, and persistent sadness (Berger, 2015). Children of alcoholics may suffer significant levels of tension and stress because they may believe they are to blame for their parent's issues and feel accountable for the alcoholic's actions (Doyle, 2011).

Research has also revealed that children of alcoholics form a negative self-image in which they closely resemble their alcoholic parents because they believe that they are unique from other individuals (Silverstein, 2012).

Adolescent offspring of drinkers may also experience phobias. Since alcoholism is linked to crime and violence, battering and incest are prevalent in alcoholic households. A family member who is an alcoholic is involved in 75% of domestic violence cases and over 30% of father-daughter incest instances, according to Berger.

Victims of incest and abuse frequently hold themselves responsible for their experiences. Drinking may be their go-to method to cope with their feelings of guilt, shame, and powerlessness.

According to a nationwide poll carried out by the National Agency for Campaign against Drug Abuse (NACADA), young people in Kenya are becoming erratic and irrational, like inebriated zombies with declining IQs. Numerous studies show a clear connection between drug misuse and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. The frequency of the virus among Kenyans who inject drugs has increased over the previous ten years and is currently 79%, according to a 2016 UNODC East Africa study (Chege, Mungai & Orese, 2017).

Determining the community's level of awareness about the consequences of drug abuse is essential to creating programs for prevention and treatment that work. carried out a thorough survey in metropolitan areas and discovered a correlation between more support for drug addiction prevention programs and understanding of drug misuse. This implies that informed communities are more likely to understand the significance of tackling drug misuse and provide funding for initiatives aimed at prevention.

## **2.4 Community attitudes towards former drug addicts**

### **2.4.1 Personal Experiences and Interactions**

When discussing or referring to drug users or former addicts, the language employed has a significant impact on how these individuals see themselves and are perceived by

others (Boekel, 2013). The public's perception and media representations reinforce each other while also fostering and maintaining the stigma associated with using pills and drugs. "Addiction" is the most stigmatized medical problem (Üstün, 2001). The prevailing public opinion, as seen above, is that drug usage, including complicated drug use, is a desire and that people choose to continue using drugs rather than to control it. Consequently, the public typically does not permit the existence of any mitigating variables. Phrases like "junkie," "drug abuser," or "crackhead" are dehumanizing because they characterize people who take pills primarily as a result of consuming a certain substance and label them as "others"—those who are either morally or physically deficient. The use of derogatory terminology also affects people who are receiving treatment and are referred to as "clean," which implies they were previously unclean or dirty. Additionally, the phrase "drug abuse" can evoke establishments that engage in heinous behavior, such as abusing infants. The incorrect language and terminology being used stigmatizes people who take drugs. Additionally, discrimination—which can be overt or systemic—is a byproduct of stigma.

#### **2.4.2 Empathy and Understanding**

Drug users in Nigeria have reported experiencing rejection from friends and family, as well as a severe social isolation where their social circle consists only of other drug users. As a result, it is nearly hard to communicate with people in the main community (NSRP and International Alert, 2017). In Tanzania, reports of similar incidents have been made. When asked about their experiences, many drug users mentioned stigma and the discrimination that followed. One person observed, "You become a pariah because you completely violate society's norms." "I lost my value as

a human being," exclaimed another. According to one woman (Zamudio-Haas, 2016), "being a junkie is the reason you lose all dignity." Discrimination and stigmatization of drug users affect not only the general population but also therapeutic care (Wakeman, 2016). Researchers in the US sent mental health professionals identical case studies about people in court-ordered drug treatment programs as part of a randomized study (Westerhoff, 2010). Either "a substance abuser" or "someone with a substance use disorder" were used to describe the person. When qualified mental health experts read about a "abuser," they were more likely to concur that the person in question was, in my opinion, responsible for their current situation and that corrective action should be done.

### **2.4.3 Stigma and Stereotypes**

Therefore, stigmatization has a bizarre double effect: stigmatizes and rejects drug users more, which reduces the availability of treatment options; at the same time, stigma pushes those in need of assistance away from existing resources. In fact, barely one in six people with serious drug use obtains treatment, according to UNODC (2014). According to a 2015 report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, drug users' human rights are being violated by stigma, discrimination, and the criminalization of drug use. The study provides numerous instances of blatant breaches of human rights, including the denial of methadone or other medical care to drug-using criminals in order to coerce them into making confessions (OHCHR, 2015). Similarly, extrajudicial killings and the application of the death sentence for drug-related crimes have infringed upon people's right to life (OHCHR, 2015). More women than men are incarcerated for drug-related offenses, making them the target of

discrimination (OHCHR, 2015). The only reason drug-using women, who are viewed by society as unfit to be mothers, risk losing custody of their kids is their drug usage; there is no proof of abuse other than this. In addition, they may face criminal penalties for drug use during pregnancy, forced or coerced sterilization, or abortion (OHCHR, 2015).

#### **2.4.4 Awareness**

There are several psychological and moral arguments for why someone could use drugs; these mostly center on the notion that the user is "weak" or "immoral." Because of this, the general public frequently views problematic drug use as a personal issue rather than one that needs to be addressed by society. Another prevalent misconception about drug users is that they are outcasts who don't belong in society or have the same rights as other people. These misconceptions and preconceptions go counter to what scientists believe to be the main motivations behind drug use. These include experimenting when young, seeking pleasure, interacting with others, improving performance, and using medication to treat physical discomfort and emotional swings.

## **2.5 Barriers faced by former drug addicts**

### **2.5.1 Culture**

The way that the community views former drug addicts can be influenced by cultural ideas and societal attitudes on drug addiction. Drug addiction may be stigmatized, discriminated against, and negatively stereotyped, which makes it difficult for those in recovery to reintegrate into society. Cultural expectations and standards about conduct and social duties may have an additional effect on how the community is seen. Gender norms are facilitated by community perceptions on former drug addicts.

The stigma that ex-drug addicts face is largely influenced by their gender. Studies have indicated that stigmatization of female ex-drug addicts is frequently based on their gender and is associated with society norms, assumptions, and expectations. When researchers examined the experiences of female ex-users of drugs, they discovered that they faced particular difficulties, such as the stigma associated with drug addiction and discrimination based on gender. These difficulties may exacerbate the marginalization and isolation of women who are in recovery.

In a study with diverse populations, women were expected to be primary caregivers, domesticated, strong and sexually pure (Guarino, 2016). Drug-using women were viewed as sexually promiscuous, deviant, and incapable of being married, defying the expectations of womanhood. This suggests that stigma associated with drug use

perpetuates ideas of feminine virtue and promotes patriarchal norms (Barnett, 2016).

"It would not count what boys do; they are able to do something they want.

If a female commits something, no guy will marry her since she has been homeless and drugged up, therefore no one will want to accept her. She's wrecked. (Bengali Muslim woman in the UK who is addicted to drugs) [52, p. (Cottew, 2005). Religious norms and beliefs also facilitated alcohol and other drugs (AOD) related stigma (Cottew, 2005). Muslim imams described intoxication as haram (forbidden), sinful and a barrier to spiritual connection (Malik, 2021 ). This finding was also echoed by Muslim Bengali women recruited from drug treatment settings who believed their heroin use defied religious and cultural norms (Cottew, 2005). These perceptions instituted a social truth in which Muslims have been taken into consideration valid in the event that they attended mosque and finished suitable deeds however located as outsiders for AOD use. Stigma was also facilitated by social and cultural norms (Horyniak, 2014). In some communities, individual behaviour explicitly reflected upon family (Samu, 2012). Young people from Pacific Islander backgrounds who consumed alcohol and Vietnamese people who injected drugs acknowledged the importance of carrying their family name and maintaining face to protect their families and communities from shame (Pulford, 2012). This risk of damaging family and community reputations likely shaped preferences for solving problems within immediate families or trusted networks rather than professional services (McCann, 2018).

The impact of cultural norms and expectations on the stigmatization process is recognized by Goffman's theory of stigma. Stigmatization and gender interact to

influence opinions in the community as well as the experiences of former drug addicts. Comprehending the gender dynamics of stigma is crucial in order to formulate gender-responsive therapies that cater to the unique requirements and obstacles encountered by women undergoing rehabilitation. Gender stereotypes should be dispelled, women in recovery should feel empowered, and community connections that are cognizant of gender-related concerns should be encouraged.

### **2.5.2 Media influence**

Media has a strong influence on how the community perceives drug or former drug addicts. Negative coverage may reinforce stereotypes and stigmatize former drug addicts. They may be depicted as criminals, deviants, or morally corrupt individuals, reinforcing negative perceptions and biases within the community. These portrayals not only perpetuate stigma but also fail to capture the complexity of addiction and the recovery process. The influence of media on community perceptions of former drug addicts has been widely acknowledged in the literature. One prominent aspect of media influence is the tendency towards sensationalism and the disproportionate focus on negative stories. Media outlets often prioritize extreme cases, emphasizing relapses, overdoses, and criminal activities associated with drug addiction and recovery. This selective reporting not only distorts the overall image of former drug addicts but also perpetuates negative stereotypes and stigmatization.

The amplification of extreme cases contributes to a distorted perception of the entire population of former drug addicts within the community. By emphasizing these stories, the media fails to capture the diversity of experiences and the potential for



successful recovery. This skewed representation can lead to the belief that relapse is inevitable and that individuals in recovery pose a constant threat to the community.

Also, the media's misrepresentation of recovery can undermine the understanding of the complications of the recovery process. By fastening primarily on negative aspects, the media neglects to punctuate stories of successful recovery, particular growth, and adaptability. This imbalance perpetuates the misconception that sobriety is unattainable or short-lived, further fueling negative understandings and discouraging community support for individuals in recovery.

In addition to contributing to stigmatization, the media's sensationalism and emphasis on unfavorable stories impede the growth of empathy and understanding among the community. The media's emphasis on dramatic and startling stories overconveys the depth and context required to promote a thorough knowledge of addiction and treatment. This constrained representation perpetuates oversimplified explanations that link addiction exclusively to moral faults or criminal activity, thus marginalizing and isolating those who are in recovery.

Investigations by Young (1988) asserts that in the US community's perceptions are largely shaped by the content and magnitude of media coverage on the issue. Unfortunately, drug stories in newspapers and magazines, movies and television dramas, and talk shows frequently portray drugs as instantly addictive, impossible to resist, and sure to bring violence, insanity, or economic and social ruin (Speaker S. L, 2004). Smith (2011) says that even TV shows that ostensibly want to help drug addicts often perpetuate common beliefs such as the need for tough love in a

confrontational family intervention, or that an individual needs to hit rock bottom in order to accept treatment. The effects of drugs, when reported either for an individual or for society, are portrayed as overwhelmingly negative (UK Drug Policy Commission, 2010).

It is imperative that media professionals, community leaders, and advocacy groups work together to promote responsible reporting and truthful portrayals of former drug addicts in order to solve these concerns. People who use drugs in many countries face human rights violations that are directly linked to this stigma and discrimination as well as the prohibition of drug usage. Therefore, we need to modify our perceptions in order to affect how drug users are treated and how drug consumption is viewed, and changing the way we speak is the first step in this process. A more comprehensive understanding of addiction and the treatment process should be provided, along with stories of successful recovery and personal changes. The media may significantly contribute to the development of empathy, the reduction of stigma, and the promotion of community support for those in recovery by dispelling misconceptions and offering fair coverage.

### **2.5.3 perceived as untrustworthy**

There is a enormous belief that folks who use drugs, and in particular people with drug use disorders, engage in criminal activities. There is, of course, an inbuilt circularity to linking crime and drug use. When certain drugs are illegal and their use and/ or possession for personal use is a crime, people who use these drugs will by definition be committing crimes. There are further linkages between drugs and crime,

however they are also more a result of a prohibition framework than from drug use itself. The US government conducted a study in the early twentieth century, before opiates and cocaine-based drugs became illegal, of people with problematic drug use.

Three quarters of self-described “addicts” had steady and respectable jobs.<sup>60</sup> Yet in the months and years after the crackdown, these figures changed and many resorted to other means of subsistence: property crime significantly increased among men, and sex work significantly increased among women (Reuter, 1986) This was due to a range of mechanisms. When the supply of drugs is transferred from licensed doctors and pharmacies to criminal organizations, the price increases because criminal organizations charge a “risk premium for illegality.”<sup>62</sup> Individuals with problematic drug use often cannot afford these inflated prices without resorting to crime themselves. In addition, folks who use tablets are frequently compelled out of the mainstream and into marginalized subcultures in which crime is rife. Once they've a crook record, they discover it a good deal tougher to discover employment, hence making the unlawful marketplace and crook hobby amongst their handiest method of survival.

In many countries, the demise penalty is carried out to a few non-violent drug offenses. This severe punishment reinforces the idea that drug taking is “evil,” morally wrong, and should be punished with sentences equivalent to those for the most serious and violent crimes. In Malaysia, capital punishment is obligatory and automated for drug trafficking offenses. The other crimes for which this is the case are murder and discharging a firearm with intent to cause death or injury, both crimes where death or injury to another is the intention. However, in Malaysia the tide of

public opinion seems to be turning against the enforcement of the mandatory death penalty for non-violent drug crimes, and against the death penalty more generally.

A 2012 study reported that the press was supportive of the abolition of the death penalty for drug courier (Hood, 2013). While a majority of respondents approved of mandatory death sentences for murder, only 25% approved of it for heroin trafficking. In many countries, the use of the mandatory death penalty – which deprives judges of considering mitigating factors – for drug possession is triggered by very low thresholds. In Singapore, the mandatory death penalty is enforced for possession of 500 grams of cannabis, 15 grams of heroin, or 30 grams of cocaine ( Misuse of Drugs Act, No. 5 of 1973, Rev. 2008). This shows that community perceptions on drug addicts and former drug addicts are largely negative and the community views them as a social evil that must be eliminated.

Another widely held belief is that drug users, especially those with problematic drug usage, are involved in criminal activity. However, aside from breaking drug prohibitions, the great majority of drug users do not commit any other crimes. Problematic drug users frequently turn to criminality as a means of obtaining the substances they require. Furthermore, drug users are frequently driven into marginalized subcultures where crime is rampant and away from the mainstream. Having a criminal record makes it considerably more difficult for them to get work, leaving the black market and criminal activity as their main sources of support.

#### **2.5.4 Mental health**

Former drug addicts face additional challenges when it comes to reintegrating into society, including mental health issues and substance abuse problems. These challenges can be exacerbated by a lack of necessary support and access to proper mental health assistance. In fact, the difficulties associated with reintegrating can lead some individuals to self-medicate and develop further problems. Research conducted by Begun, Early, and Hodge (2016) highlights the correlation between former drug addicts and mental health and substance abuse issues. It emphasizes that the challenges of reintegrating into society can push individuals towards self-medication as a means of coping. Without the necessary support and treatment for their mental health issues, they may find themselves in a cycle of substance abuse and worsening mental well-being. Furthermore, Frazier, Sung, Gideon, and Alfaro (2015) suggest that newly released former drug addicts are particularly vulnerable to relapse. This vulnerability underscores the negative relationship between substance abuse and successful reintegration. To effectively reintegrate into society, former drug addicts require access to substance abuse treatment programs. Connolly and Granfield (2017) stress the importance of ongoing assistance in battling substance abuse and receiving mental health treatment for former drug addicts.

#### **2.5.5 Getting employment**

Once former drug addicts are released from rehabilitation homes, they face numerous challenges, including difficulties in securing employment and lack of transportation. Obtaining employment is often a priority for these individuals, as it is crucial for their

successful reintegration into society. However, they often encounter discrimination from employers due to their past addiction problems, even before the interview stage (Ethridge et al., 2014). This discrimination can be detrimental, as individuals who possess the necessary qualifications for a job may be rejected solely based on their past convictions. The negative perception of hiring individuals with records of drug addiction held by many employers further exacerbates the problem. This situation not only limits employment opportunities for former drug addicts but also undermines their ability to provide for themselves and their families. According to Harley (2014), gaining employment is crucial for ex-drug addicts as it ensures a reliable source of income to meet their basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Without a job, meeting these fundamental necessities becomes a significant challenge. In addition to employment barriers, former drug addicts also struggle with finding reliable transportation. The lack of transportation makes it difficult for them to report to work on a daily basis, further hindering their ability to maintain employment and lead stable lives. Discrimination from employers based on criminal records restricts their access to job opportunities, impacting their ability to provide for themselves and their families. Additionally, the lack of transportation further impedes their chances of maintaining employment and overall successful reintegration into society.

### **2.5.6 Receiving welfare**

Former drug addicts face significant challenges in securing stable housing due to their criminal convictions. Unfortunately, their criminal backgrounds often disqualify them from receiving government assistance programs, including housing support (Wesley

& Dewey, 2018). For example, individuals convicted of drug offenses are ineligible for benefits such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps), federally subsidized housing, and higher education benefits. This exclusion from government assistance can be frustrating, as it makes it difficult for former drug addicts to meet their financial obligations and find suitable housing options. Moreover, the housing challenges faced by former drug addicts extend beyond the inability to access government assistance. They may also encounter difficulties when trying to rent houses or secure federally insured mortgages. Landlords and mortgage lenders often consider criminal records as a factor in their decision-making process, leading to potential disqualification or facing significant barriers in obtaining housing. Consequently, these obstacles increase the risk of homelessness for former drug addicts, which can further complicate their reintegration process and potentially violate the conditions of their parole. Ineligibility for government housing assistance programs and potential discrimination from landlords and mortgage lenders restrict their access to affordable housing options. This exclusion and lack of housing support increase the risk of homelessness, posing further obstacles to their successful reintegration into society.

## **2.6 Gaps in Literature**

The available literature on community perceptions of former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb of the Hwange District is significantly lacking. There is a clear research gap in understanding the specific dynamics within this community and how they shape perceptions of individuals in recovery from drug

addiction. While studies examining community attitudes towards addiction exist in other contexts, such as urban areas or different regions, there is a need for focused research on the unique perceptions within this particular community.

Cultural influences on community perceptions of former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb have not been extensively explored in the existing literature. Investigating how cultural norms, values, and traditions impact attitudes towards individuals in recovery will provide valuable insights into the cultural barriers or facilitators to successful reintegration.

Socio-economic factors also play a crucial role in shaping community perceptions. However, there is a lack of research on how socio-economic conditions, such as poverty, unemployment rates, and access to resources, interact with community attitudes towards former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb. Understanding this relationship will help identify potential barriers or opportunities for supporting the reintegration process. The existing literature gap in community perceptions of former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb suggests a corresponding lack of targeted interventions and support programs. Filling this research gap is critical for the development of effective initiatives that address stigma, enhance community support, and promote successful reintegration. The existing studies do not adequately capture the unique dynamics, cultural influences, socio-economic impacts, and the absence of targeted interventions and support programs in this specific context. Addressing these gaps will provide valuable insights for policymakers, community leaders, and organizations working towards reducing stigma, improving community support, and facilitating successful reintegration of former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb.



## **2.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter examines public perceptions of ex-drug addicts, the obstacles they face in recovery, and the role of gender in stigmatization. The first section explores prevalent stigmatizing views, including social exclusion, discrimination, and limited resources that hinder efforts towards rehabilitation. Goffman's theory of stigma provides the theoretical framework to understand the underlying social processes. Extensive research identifies barriers to successful reintegration, including social stigma, limited job opportunities, inadequate housing and healthcare, strained family relationships, and the enduring impact of criminal records. Goffman's theory sheds light on how social interaction and societal reactions contribute to these obstacles. Removing these barriers is crucial to support the well-being and social inclusion of individuals in recovery. The chapter also addresses gender's influence on stigmatization, specifically focusing on the unique challenges faced by women who have overcome drug addiction. It highlights the stigma associated with drug addiction and gender-based prejudice. Gender-responsive interventions are essential to acknowledge and address the specific experiences and obstacles encountered by women in recovery. Goffman's theory of stigma helps understand how gender dynamics intersect with societal norms, expectations, and stereotypes, shaping experiences of stigmatization.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

The chapter discusses research methodologies and design, the target population of interest, sampling approaches, data collection instruments and analysis methods used thereof. Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were used as the main instruments of data collection, and they are expansively discussed in this chapter. The chapter further discusses validity and reliability aspects of the study as well as ethical considerations which underpinned this study.

### **3.1 Research design**

This study employed a qualitative case study design, which offers insights into occurrences by interpreting participants' actual experiences. Creswell (2013) defines qualitative research as an interpretive inquiry method where researchers attempt to make sense of what they observe, hear, and comprehend. Creating a comprehensive, multifaceted image of the topic or situation being studied is the aim. According to Trochim and Donnelly (2014), qualitative research produces in-depth data that can be used to tell the stories underlying occurrences. A researcher conducting qualitative research should be able to explain the study phenomenon using the participants' own words.

To obtain a thorough understanding of the phenomena under study, the researcher drew on in-person interviews and secondary data that was already available. If one wishes to discover the specifics of how something happened and possibly why it did,

Bloomberg (2015) recommended using a case study research technique. According to Mamdani (2016), qualitative research is an umbrella term for a variety of investigative techniques that aid in the comprehension and interpretation of social phenomena by limiting the amount of information about the natural environment. The researcher and participants have the chance to validate and elucidate information supplied during in-depth interviews thanks to the qualitative tradition (Creswell, 2013). A qualitative case study, according to Yin (2019), is an investigation technique that delves deeply into a current event in order to shed light on it. When gathering open-ended data from participants in a collaborative manner that allows for meaningful data interpretation, the qualitative case study approach works well. For a case study design to be as good as possible, it needs to fulfill four requirements. According to Yin (2019), these are construct validity (a), reliability (b), internal validity (c), and external validity (d). As a result, the research design for the study was a qualitative case study.

### **3.2 Study population**

The collection of components from which the sample is drawn is known as the study population. According to Trochim et al. (2016) and Bryman (2016), a study's population is the full set of units from which a sample is taken and to which the researcher hopes to generalize. The target population is specifically defined as “the entire collection of people or things you are interested in” by Wa Teresa (2011:50). According to these definitions, every group of individuals, organizations, and other things that a researcher is interested in and wishes to select a sample from is considered the population in research. For the respondents of this study, the researcher

chose key informants consisting of both genders based on their expertise and experience on the impact of community perceptions on former drug addicts in Empumalanga high density suburb in Hwange district. These included, community leaders, parent, social workers and former drug addicts in Hwange.

### **3.3 Sample**

In order to represent the specific population, sampling is defined as "selection of a subset of persons or things from a larger population, also known as a sampling frame" (Scott and Morrison, 2017:219) (Strauss, 2016:246). Sampling is an extremely challenging and controversial component of qualitative research; it is by no means straightforward. The subjectivity and lack of representativeness of qualitative sampling techniques have drawn a lot of criticism. According to Etikan et al. (2016), "samples are gathered in a process that does not give all the participants or units in the population equal chances of being included," which means that the sampling methods used in the qualitative design are considered non-probability. According to Rauss (2019), non-probability sampling means that there is no probability associated with any of the population's constituents being selected as sample subjects. According to Barges (2018), non-probability sampling involves the researcher creating a sort of quasi-random sample and having a clear understanding of what broader groups the sample reflects rather than basing sample selection on probability theory. Purposive sampling, sometimes referred to as judging, selective, or subjective sampling, is a crucial screening procedure that doesn't require a predetermined participant count or underlying theories (Etikan, 2016). In purposive sampling the researcher decided what needed to be known and pick participants from individuals who the researcher knew

would give accurate information needed in assessing the impact of community perception on former drug addicts in Empumalanga high density suburb. As per the dictates of purposive sampling, identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well informed on the impact of community perception on former drug addicts. Purposive sampling was used to sample key informants in order to collect data from community leaders and parents as the study was focusing on community perceptions on former drug addicts. The selected participants were contacted by telephone, WhatsApp and random people met on the road who belonged to the Empumalanga community for interviews and focus group discussions.

### **3.4 Data collection**

The investigator gathered information in an organic environment, such as the participants' homes and workplaces (Corbin and Strauss, 2017). The researcher chose to conduct in-depth interviews using structured, open-ended, and thought-provoking questions as part of their data gathering method. Additionally, the researcher conducted focus groups and categorized the participants' answers.

#### **3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi structured in-depth interviews were employed to gather data from all the respondents who were samples for this study in Empumalanga in Hwange. The rationale for using an in-depth interview was that it helped to promote a situation whereby there was carefully listening to responses, experiences and feelings of

participants to understand the meaning being conveyed. Semi structured interviews involve a series of open-ended questions that relate to the topic of interest to the researcher (Hancock, 2019:9). Normally these forms of interviews produce in research literature what Patton (2014: 453) calls “thick descriptions.” They allow further probing and pursuance of interesting emerging themes for each interviewee (Knox and Burkard, 2016: 567).

Interviewing as a data gathering instrument in qualitative research is very ideal because it helps the researcher to seek clarification on vague statements; permit exploration of topics and yield a deeply experimental account of the impact of community perceptions on former drug addicts. Interviews yield large volumes of data which no any other way of data collection can do. When this data is supported by other forms of from focus group discussions, they produced a complete account of the phenomenon under investigation. The interviews afforded the researcher an opportunity to obtain the impact of community perceptions on former drug addicts.

### **3.4.2 Focus group discussions**

Focus group discussions were conducted with all the participants in a discursive forum. The key informants formed one group where the impact of community perceptions on former drug addicts was expansively dissected. They were done face to face and virtual, that, were conducted through WhatsApp on a few occasions. Kabir (2016) asserts that focus group discussions are an in-depth field method that aligns together a small homogeneous group to discuss topics on a study agenda and the purpose of the discussion was to use the social dynamics of the group to stimulate

participants to reveal underlying opinions, experiences and attitudes. Focus group discussions in research are fundamental because they are useful in obtaining detailed information about personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions (Redmond, 2017). Focus group discussions were also useful in exploring the impact of community perceptions on former drug addicts, and they leave room for the researcher to seek clarification. It is important to note that the focus group discussions required interpreters to be present to interpret the researcher's questions to the participants and then responses back to the researcher.

### **3.5 Data collection procedure/plan**

A digital voice recorder and backup recorder were employed to capture the participant responses in order to guarantee that they were captured. The researcher ensured that all of the interviews took place in locations that were convenient for the participants. Focus group conversation were held electronically via WhatsApp or in person because all of the important informants had access to the internet and smartphones. Each interviewee and discussant received a copy of the schedule for the focus group and interview discussions, along with the researcher's contact information in case they had any more questions. In order to provide explanation, several participants underwent phone follow-ups.

### **3.6 Data presentation**

Anderson (2019) defines data presentation as the process of organizing data into digestible, easily understood themes. Reading into participant perspectives and opinions to find "corresponding patterns, themes, categories, and regular similarities"

is the process of analyzing qualitative data (Cohen et al., 2017:461). Anderson (2019:99–100) offers a definition that serves as a working definition for this investigation. "...an ongoing and iterative process, implying that data collection, processing, analysis, and reporting are intertwined, and not necessarily a successive process," is the definition of data analysis. Through the use of analytical techniques, qualitative data analysis turns gathered qualitative data into a clear, intelligible, reliable, and even creative analysis (Gibson and Brown, 2017:1). Looking at the significance of events and conditions is better done with qualitative data analysis techniques (Muijs, 2014:9). Creswell (2013:44) describes this interpretation as the original author's aim and adds that data analysis establishes patterns or themes and is both inductive and deductive. Investigating the transcribed material is a continual, cyclical, and repetitive activity that is the search for patterns and themes. Building an interpretive story from the data and capturing the intricacy of the phenomenon being studied are the two main goals of qualitative data analysis (Leedy and Ormord, 2014:135).

A popular strategy for interpreting meaning from textual data is qualitative theme analysis, which is the analysis approach selected for this study. According to Braun and Clarke (2016), the fundamental method for analyzing qualitative data is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a popular qualitative method for analyzing interviews, despite having a poorly defined framework (Jugder, 2016). Thematic analysis is "possibly the most widely used method of data analysis, but not "branded" as a specific method until recently," according to Braun and Clarke (2013:175). This type of research comprises the analysis of qualitative data to pinpoint new attitudes and views (Muchemwa, 2015). Thematic analysis in qualitative research aims to represent



reality by extracting meanings from the textual material (Silverman, 2015). Thematic qualitative analysis is a common method used to analyze interviews. According to Morgan's (2016) theoretical stances, my qualitative interviews will follow a thematic analysis framework. According to them, "identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data" is the purpose of thematic analysis (Morgan, 2016: 79). Braun and Clarke's (2018) rationale was the basis for selecting this approach. They contend that the thematic method can yield a perceptive analysis that addresses specific research issues (Braun and Clarke, 2016:97). Since thematic analysis is produces insightful answers to research questions, it is fit for the qualitative strand of this present study.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

#### **3.7.1 Confidentiality**

Bloomberg (2015), asserts that maintaining confidentiality in research entails the researcher gathering the replies of a particular participant in a private setting and ensuring that the information gathered is kept confidential. Maintaining the privacy of the in-person interviews was one of the study's ethical concerns. The interviewing process and how their information would be used for this study's purposes were explained to the research participants. When disclosing the research findings to governments or other interested parties, the information given during the interview sessions was handled in a discreet manner. Sufficient safeguards were implemented to preserve the confidentiality of the study participants' personal data and identities.

### **3.7.2 Concept of right and wrong**

According to Marrion and David (2018), research ethics are primarily centered around the concepts of right and wrong. According to Burrell and Morgan (2017), everyone conducting social research should be aware of the widespread consensus among researchers regarding appropriate and inappropriate behavior. He listed five crucial ethical commitments that a researcher must uphold when conducting social research: getting participants' consent, not hurting them, protecting participant anonymity and confidentiality, disclosing the researcher's identity, and making sure the code of professional ethics is followed when analyzing data and disseminating research findings. In this investigation, these ethical agreements were followed.

### **3.8 Limitations**

The study was limited by factors such as refusal by some former drug addicts to participate in the research and issues of confidentiality. Mostly community leaders refused to be audio recorded due to fear of privacy. This was a challenge as some of the crucial information could not be recorded for use in assessing the data.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

The chapter provides an overview of the many methodological strategies used in the study, the data sources that were consulted, and the techniques the researcher used to acquire the data. The research design employed in the study was also described in this chapter. In addition, it described and clarified the study's target population, sampling

strategy, and operational guidelines. This chapter provides an explanation of the data processing and analysis methods employed in the study. The ethical considerations that served as the foundation for the current investigation were described in the chapter's conclusion. The study's results will be presented, examined, and discussed in the upcoming chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on analyzing community perceptions on drug addicts. The researcher used interviews as a way of collecting data. The research objectives were to assess knowledge on the effect of drug abuse on individual, to explore community attitudes towards former drug addicts, to investigate the perceived barriers hindering the re integration of former drug addicts. The data was collected from 40 research participants 15 male participants and 25 female participants living In Empumalanga High density suburb in Hwange. In depth interviews and a focus group discussion were administered. Data was presented and analyzed through thematic analysis.

### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Understanding the demographic characteristics of participants helps in analyzing data and enables the researcher to draw conclusions that are attributable to specific genders or age groups of respondents. Demographic characteristics are classifiable features of a population (Sharma, 2017). The demographic characteristics of the respondents were explored as follows:

The findings are summarized in table:

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	15	37

Female	25	63
<b>Age</b>		
14-20	5	13
21-25	15	36
26-35	10	25
35-45	5	13
45+	5	13
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Degree	11	27
Certificate	5	13
A level	10	25
Secondary	5	13
Primary	9	22
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Employed	15	37
Unemployed	25	63

#### 4.1.1 Distribution of respondents by age

The sample of the study comprised 40 respondent and from the sample size of the study participants were 15 of the study participants were male and 25 participants

were female. This is a clear indicator that female counterparts played a major contribution in the findings of the study. The research findings were similar with those made by Oruanu( 2015 ). According to the research findings higher percentage of female participated in the research study.

In the ages 21-25 years 3 were graduate and 1 reached A level and the other one had a certificate. The respondents who were 14-20 all 5 of them reached O-level. The participants that were 26-35 all 10 of them had certificates and those who were 35-45 , 5 of them had reached only primary level and also respondents and those with 45 years and over were five and they reached ordinary level.

#### **4.1.2 Distribution of respondents by Educational level**

The researcher collected information on educational level of the study participants from the information collected 27% are degree holders, 13% have certificates, 25% have A level certificates and reached secondary and also 22% reached ordinary level only. This clearly indicates majority of study participants were educated as they are able to read and write.

#### **4.1.3 Distributions of respondents by Employment Level**

From the information collected concerning employment status of respondents it clearly shows that 63% of participants were not employed and 37 % were employed. This is because there is high unemployment.

## 4.2 Community knowledge on drug abuse on individuals

### 4.2.1 Physical health

From the information collected by the researcher concerning community knowledge on the effects of drug abuse on individual its clearly indicates that individuals are much aware that drug abuse have a negative effect on physical health.

One of the participant indicated that *"drug abuse can contribute to chronic diseases such as tuberculosis and this in turn decreases ones life's span."* This clearly indicates that drug abuse significantly attributes to chronic diseases there by in turn affecting ones life span.

Another respondent indicated that drug abuse *"can contribute to diseases such as Lung cancer "* that is excessive use of drugs by one can attribute to lung cancer hence affecting the ability of a person to stay health.

The researcher also interviewed one of the study participant who was aged 21 to 25. The participant indicated that the use of drugs in Zimbabwe has been a major contributing factor to kidney problems among the country citizens especially to the youth as majority of the youth have been participating into drugs particularly caused depression and unemployment which is high with in the country.

Another participant interviewed by the researcher indicated that *"drug abuse has been primarily causing lung cancer , kidney problems to the majority of population hence affection the lifespan of the population."*

The participant's observation that drug abuse has primarily caused lung cancer and kidney problems among the majority of the population, thereby affecting their lifespan, aligns closely with the findings from the Usiyo (2011) study. Usiyo's research, which examined the effects of drug abuse on individuals, concluded that

substance use has contributed to the development of various chronic diseases, including tuberculosis, lung cancer, liver cirrhosis, and kidney problems. These findings are strikingly similar to the insights provided by the participant in the current research, underscoring the deleterious physical health consequences associated with drug abuse.

The convergence of these research findings suggests that the detrimental impact of drug use on an individual's long-term physical wellbeing and lifespan is a well-documented phenomenon. Excessive or prolonged drug use appears to be a significant risk factor for the emergence of severe, life-threatening medical conditions, such as the lung cancer and kidney problems highlighted by the participant. This evidence reinforces the need for comprehensive, multi-pronged approaches to address the public health implications of drug abuse within the studied population. Interventions targeting prevention, harm reduction, early detection, and effective treatment of substance use disorders and their associated physical health complications may be crucial in mitigating the far-reaching impacts described in the research.

Furthermore, the alignment of findings between the current study and Usiyo's (2011) work suggests the possibility of broader applicability and generalizability of these insights, which could inform policy decisions and resource allocation to combat the pervasive challenges of drug abuse and its consequences on individual and community health outcomes.

#### **4.2.2 Mental Health**

The study findings it was also indicated that drug abuse contribute to mental health problems. The researcher interviewed one of the study participants concerning effect



of drug abuse among the people. The study participants opined that drug abuse has attributed to psychological problems hence increasing the numbers of mentally challenged people in the society. This is because excessive use of alcohol attribute to mental disorders .

Another participant opined that *"drug abuse with the country has contributed to mental problems such and depressions and majority of people have failed to escape from such mental issues hence contributing to suicidal thoughts. That is depression contribute to suicidal thoughts and most of people end up taking their lives thus resulting unnecessary loss of lives."*

The researcher also interviewed another participant concerning the effect of drug abuse on the mental health of ones person . The respondent opined that *"drug abuse or the use of drugs such as mutoriro or crystal-met in Zimbabwe has contributed to mental health problems among the youth such as hallucinations and anti-social behaviour which in turn result in depression among the citizens."*

The respondent's observation that drug abuse, specifically the use of drugs like "mutoriro or crystal-met" in Zimbabwe, has contributed to mental health problems among the youth is an important finding. The mention of hallucinations and anti-social behavior as consequences aligns with the well-documented impacts of certain drugs on cognitive function and social development. The study findings made by the researcher are similar with the ones made by Usiyo(2022) concerning effects of drug abuse on ones life span. The researcher's conclusion that drug abuse can be a "major contributing factor" to mental health problems, and in some cases even lead to suicidal thoughts, underscores the significant toll that substance abuse can take on an individual's psychological well-being and lifespan.

These findings highlight the critical need for comprehensive approaches to address drug abuse, particularly among vulnerable populations like the youth. Interventions that combine mental health support, addiction treatment, and community-based prevention efforts may be most effective in mitigating the detrimental effects described in the research.

#### **4.2.3 Addiction**

Researcher also collected information concerning the effect of drug abuse on one's life span. Therefore from the information collected by the researcher it clearly signifies that drug abuse has contributed to risk of addiction.

One of the study participants indicated that "*drug abuse can result in addiction and majority of the people end up not able to live without such drugs hence requiring the need for rehabilitation*" This clearly implies that drug abuse can attribute to addiction among the people.

The researcher also interviewed another participant concerning the effect of drug abuse on one's life span. The interviewee indicated that "*drug addiction has been the prime result for drug abuse and has resulted in death of people as most of the people end up failing to live without use of drugs.*"

Another participant indicated that drug abuse has resulted in "*in severe addiction primarily among the youth hence contributing to depression.*"

The additional insights provided by the research participants offer further evidence of the debilitating effects of drug abuse, particularly its impact on lifespan and mental health outcomes. The first interviewee's observation that drug addiction is a "prime result of drug abuse" and has led to the death of people who are unable to live without

the use of drugs is a concerning finding. This directly links substance use disorders to premature mortality, underscoring the grave consequences of uncontrolled drug addiction. The second participant's statement that drug abuse has resulted in "severe addiction primarily among the youth" and has contributed to depression is also a crucial discovery. The vulnerability of young people to the detrimental mental health impacts of drug use is well-documented, as substance abuse can disrupt cognitive development, emotional regulation, and social functioning, ultimately leading to conditions like depression.

These insights align with the findings from the Huranga (2017) study, which also concluded that drug abuse can attribute to addiction and mental health issues, particularly among the youth, ultimately contributing to loss of life. The convergence of these research findings from multiple sources reinforces the urgent need to prioritize prevention, early intervention, and comprehensive treatment approaches to address the multifaceted challenges posed by drug abuse.

#### **4.2.4 Decreased work and academic performance**

The researcher also collection information concerning effect of drug abuse and the participants opined that drug abuse has contributed to "*decreased work and academic performance as it results in memory loss*". The participant expressed that majority of students failed to excel during secondary school due to drug abuse as it results in memory loss thus affecting the academic performance of students.

Another participant indicated "*one of my friends failed ordinary level due to excessive use of drugs and he ended up being dull*" this implies that drug abuse has attributed to decreased academic performance.

Another participant indicated that "*most Wizkids failed to proceed to university level due to drugs as they significantly affect the memory of a person.*" Therefore, this implies that drug abuse has been a major contributing factor in decreased lifespan of people.

The participant's observation that "most Wizkids failed to proceed to university level due to drugs" as they "significantly affect the memory of a person" provides valuable insight into the impact of substance abuse on educational attainment and, by extension, lifespan. This finding suggests that drug use can have detrimental cognitive effects, impairing memory and potentially inhibiting an individual's ability to successfully navigate the academic demands of higher education. The implication that drug abuse has been a "major contributing factor in decreased lifespan of people" further underscores the far-reaching consequences of substance use disorders.

These insights align with the findings from the Ozonye (2017) study, which concluded that drug abuse resulted in decreased work performance of students, especially at the university level. The convergence of these research findings highlights the significant educational and developmental challenges faced by individuals grappling with substance use issues. The inability to progress to university-level education due to the cognitive impacts of drug abuse can have long-term implications for an individual's social, economic, and overall well-being. This, in turn, can contribute to a decreased lifespan, as educational attainment and socioeconomic status are closely linked to various health outcomes. These findings underscore the importance of implementing comprehensive interventions that address the multifaceted consequences of drug abuse, particularly among young people. Strategies that combine academic support, mental health services, and substance use

treatment may be crucial in helping individuals overcome the barriers posed by drug use and achieve their full potential.

Furthermore, the alignment of these research findings suggests the need for a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach to address the complex interplay between drug abuse, educational outcomes, and long-term health and wellness. Policymakers, educators, healthcare providers, and community organizations must work together to develop and implement evidence-based solutions that prioritize the needs of those affected by substance use disorders.

## **4.3 Community perceptions on former drug addicts**

### **4.3.1 Supportive**

The researcher collection information on common perceptions towards former addicts . Majority of the participants indicated that majority are very supportive.

One of the participants indicated that "*i am very supportive when it comes to former drug addicts and in most cases i try by all means to encourage them not to resort to drug abuse again as they are very dangerous and some of them i support them by giving them capital to start a business* " This clearly indicates that participants are supportive when it comes to former drug addicts.

Another participant opined that "*In our community former drug addicts are given piece jobs so that they get enough money to buy and sustain themselves rather than to resort to drug abuse as a way to earn a living* " This clearly implies that most former drug addicts they get support from the community so that they do not resort to drug abuse.

Another participant opined that *“most drug addicts we give them basic food and necessities in return of labour as some of them take drugs to escape from major challenges in this country such as unemployment and lack of funds to earn a living.”*

The participant's observation that "most drug addicts we give them basic food and necessities in return of labour" as they "take drugs to escape from major challenges in this country such as unemployment and lack of funds to earn a living" provides an important perspective on the socioeconomic factors contributing to substance abuse.

This insight suggests that some individuals may turn to drug use as a coping mechanism in response to pressing challenges, such as unemployment and financial instability. The participant's description of community efforts to assist these drug addicts by providing food, necessities, and jobs in exchange for labor aligns with the findings of the Cole (2019) study in Ghana.

The Cole study found that communities have resorted to supporting drug addicts by offering them food, money, and jobs, with the aim of deterring them from engaging in drug-related criminal behavior. This approach reflects an understanding that addressing the underlying socioeconomic needs of individuals with substance use disorders can be an effective strategy for mitigating the negative consequences of drug abuse. The similarity between the current study's findings and the insights from Cole's (2019) research underscores the importance of taking a holistic, community-based approach to addressing the complex issue of drug abuse. By recognizing the role that socioeconomic factors play in driving substance use, and responding with compassionate, harm-reduction-oriented interventions, communities can better support individuals struggling with addiction and help prevent the perpetuation of drug-related criminal activities. This aligned perspective highlights the need for policymakers and service providers to prioritize the development of comprehensive

programs that combine social support, job training, and access to addiction treatment. Such multifaceted approaches can help address the root causes of drug abuse while empowering individuals to overcome the challenges that may have led them to substance use in the first place.

Overall, the convergence of these research findings emphasizes the importance of understanding and addressing the socioeconomic context in which drug abuse occurs, in order to implement effective, community-driven solutions that promote long-term recovery and well-being.

#### **4.3.2 Stigmatization**

The respondent also interviewed another participant concerning community perceptions towards drug addicts

Another participant indicated that *" most drug addicts are stigmatized in this community and a lot of people try not to associate with them and because of this , this has resulted in depression in most drug addicts hence contributing to suicidal thoughts among the drug addicts and most of them tend to kill themselves"*

Another participant indicated that *"there is high rate of stigmatization among the youth especially those partaking mbanje & mutoriro as most people in the community regard them as thieves and unfocused people roaming around the community stealing valuables from the people."*

The participant's observation regarding the "high rate of stigmatization among the youth" who use drugs like "mbanje & mutoriro" is an important finding that aligns with the insights from the Ozonye (2017) study. The participant's statement that "most people in the community regard them as thieves and unfocused people roaming

around the community stealing valuables" highlights the pervasive stigma and negative perceptions that individuals with substance use disorders often face within their communities.

The similarity between this finding and the conclusions drawn by Ozonye (2017) further underscores the unfortunate reality that former drug addicts tend to suffer from significant stigmatization, as they are often viewed by community members as criminals or untrustworthy individuals. This stigma can have far-reaching consequences, as it can create barriers to accessing support, employment, and reintegration into the community, thereby exacerbating the challenges faced by those in recovery. The combination of substance use issues and societal discrimination can compound the difficulties for young people, making it even harder for them to overcome their addictions and rebuild their lives.

The alignment of these research findings emphasizes the critical need to address the issue of stigma and negative perceptions towards individuals with substance use disorders. Awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, and the promotion of empathy and understanding within communities can help to challenge the harmful stereotypes and biases that perpetuate the marginalization of this population. Additionally, the development of comprehensive, stigma-free support systems and rehabilitation programs can provide a crucial lifeline for young people struggling with addiction, allowing them to access the resources and social support they need to achieve long-term recovery and reintegration.

By addressing the stigma and fostering a more compassionate, community-based approach to supporting those affected by substance use, policymakers and service providers can work towards creating an environment that enables individuals to overcome their addictions and reclaim their place in society with dignity and hope.



### 4.3.3 Preventive

The researcher also collected information concerning community perceptions on former drug addicts

A participant indicated that " *every time i am passing through former drug addicts i have to be very cautious as drug abuse contribute to mental challenge hence most of them are violent therefore whenever i am passing through such people i have to be cautious to avoid being attacked* " Therefore this implies that most people try to avoid associating with drug abusers as they are violent

Another participant also indicated that " *most drug abusers are very violent therefore interacting with such people you have to be alert to minimize chances of being attacked since drug abuse affect the cognitive of the person.*"

The participant's statement that "most drug abusers are very violent" and that one must "be alert to minimize chances of being attacked" reflects a common societal perception and stigma surrounding individuals with substance use disorders. This perspective aligns with the notion that drug abuse can adversely impact cognitive function and lead to unpredictable or aggressive behavior. While it is important to acknowledge that substance use disorders can potentially increase the risk of violent conduct in some cases, the generalization of all drug abusers as inherently dangerous is an oversimplification that requires nuanced consideration. The relationship between substance use and violence is complex, with various social, psychological, and environmental factors playing a role.

Individuals struggling with addiction often face co-occurring mental health issues, trauma, and socioeconomic challenges that can contribute to increased risk-taking or

aggressive behavior. However, it is crucial to recognize that the majority of people with substance use disorders do not engage in violent or criminal activities. Perpetuating the stereotype of drug abusers as inherently violent can lead to further stigmatization and marginalization, which can impede efforts to provide effective support and rehabilitation services. A more holistic, evidence-based approach is necessary to address the multifaceted nature of substance use disorders and promote community reintegration in a safe and compassionate manner.

The participant's perspective, while understandable from a personal safety standpoint, highlights the need for greater education, empathy, and a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding substance use and its impact on individuals and communities. Advocating for and implementing interventions that address the root causes of addiction, provide comprehensive support services, and foster community-based rehabilitation programs can be more effective in addressing the perceived threats and concerns, while upholding the dignity and humanity of those affected by substance use issues.

#### **4.3.4 Empowerment**

Another participant opined that *"there is need for empowerment particularly to drug addicts as this significantly minimize chances of taking drugs because most of them take drugs due to unemployment."* Therefore, empowerment significantly minimizes rate of drug abusers especially through employment

Another participant also indicated that *"drug abusers or former drug addicts needs to be employed so that they dont resort to taking drugs and they have to be educated on financial planning so that what they plan effectively."*

The participants' perspectives on the importance of employment and financial planning for drug abusers and former addicts are insightful and aligned with existing research on this topic. The notion that drug abusers and former addicts need to be employed to deter them from resorting to drug use and criminal activities, such as theft and robbery, highlights the crucial role of economic stability and meaningful engagement in the rehabilitation and reintegration process. This view is supported by studies, such as the one conducted by Orosi (2019), which have found that providing employment opportunities and financial literacy training can be effective strategies in addressing substance use disorders and related societal concerns.

The participants' suggestions of empowering drug abusers through skills-based initiatives, such as farming and poultry projects, align with the concept of vocational rehabilitation. This approach aims to equip individuals in recovery with practical skills and job-readiness, thereby increasing their chances of securing stable employment and financial independence. By engaging in productive, community-based activities, drug abusers and former addicts can potentially find alternative sources of fulfillment and purpose, reducing the likelihood of relapse and involvement in criminal behavior. The emphasis on financial planning and effective resource management is also a crucial component in the holistic rehabilitation of individuals with substance use disorders. Providing access to financial literacy education and budgeting skills can help address the financial instability and resource management challenges that often accompany addiction, further enhancing the individual's ability to maintain long-term recovery and reintegrate successfully into the community.

Overall, the participants' perspectives highlight the multifaceted nature of addressing substance use disorders, underscoring the importance of a comprehensive approach that combines employment opportunities, skills development, and financial education.

By addressing the economic and social determinants that can contribute to and perpetuate substance abuse, these strategies can help empower drug abusers and former addicts, foster their reintegration, and mitigate the associated societal concerns, such as theft and robbery.

#### **4.4 Perceived barriers hindering the reintegration of former drug addicts**

The researcher conducted a study concerning perceived barriers hindering the reintegration of former drug addicts.

The respondents indicated that "*most employers are not keen to employ drug addicts at their work place*" therefore, this has resulted in employment discrimination because most drug addicts are perceived as thieves.

Another participant indicated that most drug addicts get lower jobs with low salaries not enough to cater for basic necessities therefore use of drugs has resulted in discrimination hence affecting the life style of most youth.

Another participant also indicated that "*most drug abusers they are not even paid their wages in time by their employers due to discrimination.*"

These barriers have a significant impact on the successful reintegration process, affecting various aspects of individuals' lives post-recovery. The participant's observation that "most drug abusers they are not even paid their wages in time by their employers due to discrimination" is an important concern. It highlights the significant barriers and challenges that individuals in recovery face in the workforce, including unfair treatment and stigma from employers. This issue of delayed or withheld wages due to discrimination can have serious consequences for the economic stability and successful reintegration of those overcoming substance use

disorders. It undermines their efforts to achieve financial independence and rebuild their lives post-recovery. To address this, potential solutions may include strengthening anti-discrimination policies, providing employer education to reduce stigma, and facilitating partnerships between rehabilitation programs and employers to support smooth transitions into the workforce.

Ensuring fair employment practices and economic opportunities for those in recovery is crucial for enabling their long-term success and community reintegration. The participant's perspective underscores the need for a multifaceted approach to tackle this systemic problem.

#### **4.4.1 Mental and health challenges**

Another participant opined that drug abuse with the country has contributed to mental problems such as depressions and majority of people have failed to escape from such mental issues hence contributing to suicidal thoughts. That is depression contribute to suicidal thoughts and most of people end up taking their lives thus resulting unnecessary loss of lives.

The researcher also interviewed another participant concerning the effect of drug abuse on the mental health of one's person. The respondent opined that "*drug abuse or the use of drugs such as mutoriro or crystal-met in Zimbabwe has contributed to mental health problems among the youth such as hallucinations and anti-social behaviour which in turn result in depression among the citizens.*" The study findings made by the researcher are similar with the ones made by Usiyo(2022) concerning effects of drug abuse on one's life span. Usiyo (2022) indicated that drug abuse has been a major contributing factor in mental health of people and in some cases it has

resulted in depression and suicidal thought there by affecting the lifespan of the people

#### **4.4.2 stigmatization and discrimination**

The two biggest barriers to reintegration were found to be stigmatization and discrimination. Participants said that because of the stigma associated with being a former drug addict, they had experienced rejection, criticism, and isolation from their communities. In addition to impairing their confidence and sense of self, this stigma made it difficult for them to get work and make new friends. In order to address this problem, coordinated efforts are needed to reduce stigma, raise awareness, and encourage an environment that is more accepting and encouraging for those who are recovering.

Another participant opined that, *"I feel like people look at me differently when they find out about my past. It's hard to find a job or make new friends because of the stigma attached to being a former drug addict."*

The results of the in-depth interviews showed that prejudice and stigmatization posed serious obstacles to the reintegration of former drug addicts. Participants talked about how it was hard for them to reconstruct their lives and reintegrate into society since they felt judged, rejected, and alone in their communities. The public's beliefs and preconceptions about drug addiction were frequently the source of this stigmatization. The participant serves as an example of how stigmatization affects the process of reintegration. They raised awareness of the difficulties faced by those in recovery by talking about how they felt stigmatized and treated differently as a result of their previous drug use. This research highlights the urgent need to correct society

perceptions and attitudes toward addiction, encouraging awareness-raising and education to foster a more accepting and helpful environment for those who are in recovery.

It's important to take into account the viewpoint of a community member. They voiced worries about safety and the possibility of relapse in a different interview with a community member, which added to the stigma associated with former drug addicts. They said that these worries can result in bias and social marginalization towards people who are recovering. This emphasizes how crucial it is to run community education and awareness programs to clear the air, foster understanding, and rally support.

#### **4.4.3 Lack of employment opportunities**

Another major obstacle mentioned by the participants was the lack of work options. Many said they experienced discrimination in job interviews and had trouble finding companies that would consider them. Employers were frequently reluctant to hire them because of the stigma attached to their previous drug use, which continued a cycle of unemployment and poor economic opportunities. Promoting inclusive employment procedures that place more emphasis on a candidate's current skills and dedication to recovery than just their background is necessary to break down this barrier. Employer education and training initiatives can be quite effective in clearing up misunderstandings and creating a supportive atmosphere for the successful reintegration of recovering individuals.

One participant was of the view that, *"Even though I have turned my life around, finding a job has been incredibly difficult. Employers don't seem to trust me because of my history, even though I am committed to my recovery."*

The dearth of work prospects was cited by the participants as a major obstacle to their reintegration. Many claimed to have encountered prejudice in the workplace or to have had difficulty finding companies that would consider them for open positions. Employers were frequently reluctant to hire them because of the stigma attached to their previous drug use, which continued a cycle of unemployment and poor economic opportunities. The participant's comment adds more weight to the difficulties people have finding work because of their past drug use. By disclosing their difficulties in finding employment in spite of their dedication to rehabilitation, they illuminated the obstacles brought about by employers' mistrust. This research emphasizes the necessity for companies to implement more inclusive recruiting procedures, offer chances to people in recovery, and concentrate on an applicant's current skills and level of commitment to recovery rather than just their history.

A community member's viewpoint on this matter may also include worries about productivity and worker safety. Companies may voice concerns about employing people in recovery because they are afraid of relapses and possible disturbances to the workplace. In order to address these issues, employers would need to participate in education and training initiatives that highlight the value of offering support and establishing a positive work environment that facilitates the effective reintegration of people in recovery. The absence of social support was cited by the participants as a hindrance to their reintegration. Due to their past drug usage, several reported having damaged relationships with friends and family, while others found it difficult to make new friends. Their smooth reintegration into the community was hampered by their inability to locate homes, access resources, and maintain strong social interactions due to a lack of support networks.



#### 4.4.4 Limited social support

Inadequate social support was mentioned as another difficulty. Due to their prior drug usage, participants reported having strained relationships with friends and family and having trouble making new friends. People found it difficult to locate homes, access resources, and maintain healthy social interactions when they lacked support networks. The establishment of community-based support systems, like mentorship programs and peer support groups, can aid in the development of strong social networks and increase the likelihood of successful reintegration for those in recovery.

Another participant opined that, *"When I came out of rehab, I realized that I had lost most of my friends. It's been hard to find new ones who understand my journey and support my recovery."*

The participant quote highlights how lonely and challenging it can be for people in recovery to make new social ties. They highlight the breakdown of past connections and the difficulties in finding friends who are sympathetic and understanding, which highlights the negative effects of insufficient social support for a successful reintegration. This research highlights the necessity of peer support groups and mentorship programs, among other community-based support systems, in helping people form healthy social networks and gain access to necessary resources. Taking into account the viewpoint of a member of the community, they could voice worries about relapse and the possible harm it could bring to both the recovering person and the community as a whole.

Community members' reluctance to interact with or assist someone in recovery may be influenced by their fear of relapsing. In order to address these issues, community education campaigns emphasizing the value of support, acknowledging relapse as a

necessary component of the healing process, and offering tools for relapse prevention and intervention should be implemented.

The results draw attention to the perceived obstacles that impede the reintegration of former drug addicts, such as prejudice and stigmatization, a dearth of job prospects, a lack of social support, and the fear of relapsing. These obstacles add to the difficulties people encounter when attempting to start anew after their recovery. In order to overcome these obstacles, initiatives must be made to fight stigma, advance inclusive hiring practices, create receptive social situations, and offer relapse prevention resources and education. Communities can facilitate the effective reintegration of individuals with a history of drug addiction and aid in their long-term recovery by tackling these issues jointly.

## **4 .5 Chapter summary**

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study. In this chapter responses made by respondents were analyzed and the next chapter focuses on conclusion and recommendation in relation to perceptions of drug addicts by community

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents a concise conclusion of the study in which a summary of the study is given. The chapter also presents the major conclusions that the current study has put in place. The chapter further gives recommendations to the on the data analyzed and presented on community perceptions on former drug addicts in Empumalanga.

#### **5.1 Summary**

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the findings from the study on community perceptions of former drug addicts. The research objectives were to assess the community's knowledge on the effects of drug abuse on individuals, explore community attitudes towards former drug addicts, and investigate the perceived barriers hindering the reintegration of former drug addicts.

In reference to the first objective, the results suggest that there is a moderate degree of community awareness regarding the consequences of drug addiction on individuals. The repercussions of drug addiction, both psychological and physical, such as deteriorating health, impaired cognitive function, and strained relationships, were acknowledged by the respondents. However, it was also noted that there were misconceptions and knowledge gaps about several topics, such the intricacies of addiction and the possibility of recovery. This indicates that in order to close these

knowledge gaps and provide accurate information about drug addiction and its repercussions, specific educational campaigns and community outreach initiatives are needed.

The research found a wide range of perceptions in the community toward former drug addicts. Some members of the community showed empathy, compassion, and support for people going through recovery, while others showed stigmatizing attitudes and a reluctance to interact or put their trust in former drug addicts. These beliefs were influenced by a number of factors, such as a lack of exposure to positive recovery stories, worries about community safety, and fear of relapsing. It is clear that in order to create a more welcoming and encouraging community, stigmatizing ideas must be refuted and good recovery narratives must be promoted.

Several significant obstacles were found when examining the perceived obstacles preventing former drug addicts from reintegrating into society. The persistent stigma attached to drug addiction, which led to social marginalization and constrained options for housing and work, was one major obstacle. The stigma frequently kept people in recovery from gaining access to the services and support networks required for a smooth reintegration. The absence of reasonably priced and easily available rehabilitation options also presented a major barrier to the healing process. Reintegration hurdles were also found to include inadequate community support systems and a lack of educational programs targeting drug addiction. The aforementioned results underscore the necessity of all-encompassing measures that tackle stigma, strengthen support networks, and facilitate the availability of rehabilitation programs.

The study's overall findings emphasize the significance of focused interventions to close information gaps in the community, lessen stigma, and improve the support

networks for former drug users. It is feasible to support effective reintegration and enhance the general well-being of people in recovery by raising awareness and understanding of the complexity of addiction, putting community education initiatives into place, and creating inclusive environments. Policymakers, medical experts, community organizations, and other stakeholders interested in tackling drug addiction and assisting persons in recovery should take note of the study's findings. The research findings' conclusions are presented in the next section, which is followed by helpful suggestions for different parties involved in changing the way the public views former drug addicts.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The study draws several important conclusions. The study comes to the conclusion that lying is a frequent belief among former drug users in the Empumalanga community. The study's conclusions throw light on how the general public views ex-drug users and offer insightful information about the attitudes, knowledge, and obstacles that stand in the way of their successful reintegration. The evaluation of community knowledge regarding the effects of drug abuse revealed misconceptions and gaps in understanding regarding the complexities of addiction and the possibility of recovery, even though there is a moderate level of awareness regarding the physical and psychological effects of drug addiction. Therefore, in order to close these knowledge gaps and provide correct information about community education and awareness programs, it is imperative that efforts be made to improve drug addiction. A wide range of perceptions were found when the community's sentiments toward former drug addicts were investigated. Some members of the community showed

compassion, understanding, and support for people going through recovery, while others showed stigmatizing attitudes and a lack of willingness to interact or put their trust in former drug addicts. It was determined that the following factors influenced these attitudes: limited exposure to positive recovery tales, fears of relapse, and worries about community safety. In order to cultivate a more welcoming and encouraging community, it is critical to dispel stigmatizing myths, advance uplifting stories about recovery, and give community members chances to engage with and gain knowledge from others who have effectively recovered.

The study aimed at identifying the perceived impediments to the reintegration of ex-drug addicts revealed that one of the main challenges is the ongoing stigma attached to drug addiction. Social marginalization, a lack of housing and job options, and insufficient access to support networks are all caused by this stigma. The reintegration process is further hampered by the absence of easily available and reasonably priced recovery treatments, as well as by insufficient community support networks and drug addiction education initiatives. Comprehensive interventions, including as destigmatization campaigns, the creation of easily accessible rehabilitation services, and the bolstering of community support networks, are required to address these barriers.

In conclusion, this study has shed important light on how the public views people who have previously struggled with drug addiction. The results highlight how critical it is to close information gaps, confront stigmatizing beliefs, and remove obstacles to reintegration. People in recovery can live in more compassionate and welcoming communities by putting targeted education campaigns into action, spreading uplifting stories, and improving support networks. To guarantee successful interventions and

long-lasting change, cooperation between legislators, medical professionals, community organizations, and other stakeholders is necessary for these initiatives.

It is critical to recognize the study's limitations. Since the study was carried out in a particular region, it's possible that the conclusions cannot be applied in their entirety to other groups or cultural settings. Furthermore, self-reported data, which is prone to biases and social desirability effects, was used in the study. For a more thorough knowledge of community perspectives and the reintegration process, future research should think about utilizing mixed-method approaches and delving into the experiences of former drug addicts.

All things considered, this study adds to the body of knowledge regarding how the public views those who have previously struggled with drug addiction and lays the groundwork for future investigations and treatments targeted at lowering stigma, strengthening support networks, and encouraging successful reintegration. We can support the rehabilitation process and general well-being of those who have conquered drug addiction by creating a caring and understanding group.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

In light of the research findings on community perceptions of former drug addicts, several recommendations are proposed to address the identified issues and promote positive change. These recommendations are divided into subsections addressing different stakeholders, including the government, community, former drug addicts, stakeholders, and rehabilitation centers.

### **5.3.1 Recommendations to the Government:**

- Increase funding for comprehensive drug education and awareness programs that target the general population. These programs should provide accurate information about the effects of drug abuse, the complexities of addiction, and the potential for recovery.
- Develop and implement destigmatization campaigns and policies that challenge negative stereotypes associated with drug addiction and promote a more compassionate understanding of individuals in recovery.
- Improve access to affordable and quality rehabilitation services by expanding the availability of treatment centers, increasing the number of trained professionals, and ensuring that financial barriers do not hinder individuals from seeking help.
- Establish supportive policies and programs that facilitate the reintegration of former drug addicts into society, including initiatives that promote employment opportunities, housing assistance, and access to education and vocational training.

### **5.3.2 Recommendations to the Community:**

- Foster a culture of empathy, understanding, and support for individuals in recovery by promoting positive narratives and success stories.
- Encourage community engagement and interaction with former drug addicts through educational events, support groups, and collaboration with local organizations.
- Develop community-based initiatives that provide opportunities for skill-building, employment, and social integration for individuals in recovery.
- Establish peer support networks and mentorship programs to provide ongoing support and guidance to former drug addicts during their reintegration process.

### **5.3.3 Recommendations to Former Drug Addicts:**



- Encourage individuals in recovery to become advocates and share their personal stories to challenge stigmatizing beliefs and inspire others.
- Promote self-care and holistic well-being by providing resources and guidance on maintaining physical and mental health during the recovery journey.
- Facilitate access to ongoing support services, such as counseling, therapy, and support groups, to assist in maintaining long-term recovery and reintegration.

#### **5.3.4 Recommendations to Stakeholders:**

- Foster collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, community organizations, healthcare providers, and law enforcement, to develop comprehensive and coordinated approaches to address drug addiction and support individuals in recovery.
- Establish partnerships with employers and businesses to create inclusive hiring practices and employment opportunities for individuals in recovery.
- Support research initiatives that further explore community perceptions of former drug addicts and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing stigma and promoting successful reintegration.

#### **5.3.5 Recommendations to Rehabilitation Centers:**

- Enhance the quality and accessibility of rehabilitation services by providing evidence-based treatment modalities, personalized care plans, and comprehensive aftercare programs.
- Develop partnerships with community organizations and support networks to ensure a smooth transition and continued support for individuals leaving rehabilitation centers.
- Provide training and education for staff members to address stigma and enhance their understanding of the challenges faced by individuals in recovery.

## **5.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the results, conclusions, and recommendations for filling in the identified research gaps. The recommendations were on ways that should be adopted to contribute to the body of knowledge on community perceptions of former drug addicts and promote social inclusion in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: IN DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE**



**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**  
**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

#### **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM**

##### **Introduction**

Dear Participant,

Darlington Andy Dzama is my name. At Bindura University of Science Education, I am a fourth-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Science Honors in Social Work. B1954201 is my student identification number. The student must complete a research project as part of the degree requirements, and I cordially welcome you to take part in it. You are welcome to discuss the research with whomever you feel comfortable talking to before deciding to take part in it. You are welcome to inquire if there are any terms that you are unclear about, and I will be happy to clarify. For this reason, I humbly request that you please spend a few minutes answering the following questions as honestly and freely as you can in order to assist me in doing my research. I sincerely appreciate your assistance and collaboration.

**Title of the study**

Community perceptions on former drug addicts: A case study of Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Hwange District.

**Purpose of the study**

To examine community perceptions on former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Hwange District.

**Ethical considerations; privacy, confidentiality and voluntary participation**

Please remember that your participation in this interview and study is private. Your answers will only be utilized for this research and will be handled in a private manner. Your involvement is entirely voluntary. As a result, you are free to choose whether or not an interview makes you feel comfortable. You have the right to end the interview at any time.

**Contact details**

If you have any other questions you can contact me on the following details

Email; dzamadee430@gmail.com

Phone number; +263785361949

Please fill up the following forms with your information if you are willing to participate in and contribute to the study.

Signed by a participant under alias.....

Signature of researcher.....

Date.....

With thanks

Darlington Dzama



## **In depth Interview Guide**

### 1. Information

a) Age:

b) Gender:

c) Occupation:

d) Length of residency in Empumalanga High-Density Suburb:

### 2.

a. Can you describe the general perception of the community towards former drug addicts regarding trustworthiness?

b. Do community members differentiate between different types of former drug addicts when it comes to trustworthiness? If yes, what factors influence this differentiation?

c. Have there been any instances where community members have changed their perception of a former drug addict's trustworthiness? If yes, what were the reasons behind this change?

### 3.

a. What are the most common factors that shape the community's perception of former drug addicts?

b. Are there any specific personal characteristics or behaviors that community members associate with former drug addicts?

c. How do media portrayals or societal stereotypes affect the community's perception of former drug addicts?

4.

a. In your opinion, what are the main barriers faced by former drug addicts when attempting to reintegrate into the community?

b. Are there any specific social or cultural factors that contribute to these barriers?

c. What kinds of support or resources do community members believe are necessary to facilitate the successful reintegration of former drug addicts?

## **APPENDIX 2: Focus Group Discussions Guide**



**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

### **INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM**

#### **Introduction**

Dear Participant,

My name is Darlington Andy Dzama. I am a fourth-year student at Bindura University of Science Education pursuing a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Social Work. My student identification number is B1954201. As part of the requirements of the degree, the student is required to carry out a research project, which I kindly invite you to participate in. Before you decide to participate in the research, you are free to talk to anyone you feel comfortable about the research. If there may be some words, you do not understand you are free to ask, and I will explain. I am therefore kindly asking you to help me in carrying out my research by taking a few minutes of your time to respond to the following questions as openly and freely as you can. Your cooperation and support are greatly appreciated.

#### **Title of the study**

Community perceptions on former drug addicts: A case study of Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Hwange District.

**Purpose of the study**

To examine community perceptions on former drug addicts in the Empumalanga High-Density Suburb in Hwange District.

**Ethical considerations; privacy, confidentiality and voluntary participation**

Be reminded that your participation in this study and in this interview is confidential. Your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will **ONLY** be used for the purposes of this research. Your participation is based on voluntary basis. Therefore, you have the power to decide whether you feel comfortable or not to be interviewed. You may decide to withdraw from the interview at any moment.

**Contact details**

If you have any other questions you can contact me on the following details

Email; dzamadee430@gmail.com

Phone number; +263785361949

If you are willing to partake and contribute to and in the study, you can kindly fill your details in the spaces below.

Participant signature (pseudonym) .....

Signature of researcher.....

Date.....

With thanks

Darlington Dzama

**Focus group discussion questions**

1. How would you describe the general perceptions or attitudes of the community towards former drug addicts?
2. What factors do you believe influence community members' perceptions of former drug addicts?
3. In your opinion, what are the main implications of community members' negative perceptions for the social reintegration of former drug addicts?
4. Are there any existing support systems or initiatives in place to facilitate the reintegration of former drug addicts into the community? If yes, please describe.
5. Based on the community's perceptions, what do you think would be an effective approach or model to address the barriers faced by former drug addicts in reintegrating into the community?
6. Based on the responses shared, do you notice any common themes or patterns in the community's perceptions of former drug addicts?
7. Are there any additional thoughts or perspectives you would like to share on this topic?

## APPENDIX 3: APPROVAL LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION

