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**FACULTY OF COMMERCE DEPARTMENT OF INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY STUDIES**

**THE NEXUS BETWEEN DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR  
AMONG THE YOUTH. A CASE STUDY OF BINDURA TOWN 2022-2025.**

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## RELEASE FORM

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### APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student Everisto Kapenyani's dissertation entitled '*The nexus between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth. A case study of Bindura town 2022-2025.*' Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Bachelor of Business Administration Honours degree in police and security

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## **DEDICATION**

For my wife Dororis Jonasi and our team of girls. Thank you for the support. You were my pillars when all seemed insurmountable.

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## THE ABSTRACT

This study sought to establish the nexus between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth. The study was carried out in Bindura in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. In carrying out the enquiry the researcher adopted the Mixed Method Research Design which simultaneously collects both qualitative and quantitative data. The choice of this research method was informed by the need to collect the two sets of data in the enquiry to ensure that a comprehensive picture of the sought nexus could be gained from the enquiry. The subject of the enquiry were drawn from the police force, residents of the town mostly youth as well as drug survivors. From the population of Bindura which is estimated to be around 15000 from the 2022 census a sample of a 100 participants was drawn using purposive sampling and random sampling and to these questionnaires and interviews were conducted. Questionnaires, interviews and documentary analysis were used as means of data collection. Tables were used to present quantitative data collected while qualitative data was analysed qualitatively with citations from respondents being put in italics. The study established that there is a strong link between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among youths. It became clear that drug youths go against the law in a quest to lay hands upon extra cash to procure more drugs and when they ‘stoned’ or high on drugs they lose their mental prowess and go into conflict with the law. Statistics from Bindura also noted that a lot of cases between 2023 and 2024 by youths were drug induced. Recommendation to curb drug abuse as a crime curtailing measure were also given.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

It is without doubt that the drug problem has become a global pandemic. Zimbabwe has been battling the scourge of illicit drugs which are slowly gnawing the younger generation. While drug and substance abuse is a global problem, statistical evidence and research has shown that the problem is on an upward scale in sub Saharan Africa. (Muzuva et al 2023, Donnefield et al 2019, Zivira 2019). Denya, (2024) states that the problem is exacerbated by a host of other socio-economic conditions, including struggling health delivery systems thus diminishing the capacity to deal with the drug and substance abuse system. While both the adult and youth engage in drug and substance abuse, research has shown that the youth are the most users. (Dube 2023, Maraire et al 2020). Commonly abused drugs in Zimbabwe include Codeine, crystal meth *or Guka*, Broncleer, *Maragado*, Cannabis or *Mbanje*. This study seeks to establish whether or not there is a nexus between drug and substance abuse and criminal behavior among the youth. In this chapter or segment of the study, the researcher will provide background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions. Further down the chapter will give statement of hypothesis, significance of the study, assumptions of the enquiry and delimitation of the study. Limitations of the study and definitions of key terms in the enquiry will also be looked at.

### 1.1 Background to the study.

According to a 2023 research by the Ministry of Health and Child Care(MOHCC), the major drivers of drug and substance abuse include peer pressure, broken families, emotional and physical abuse and curiosity often resulting in addiction. The report also identified another major driver of drug and substance abuse which is American pop culture. Young people in Africa are hooked to television where film and music stars glorify drug use. This popular culture depicts drug usage as a positive thing, a key ingredient to having fun. Coupled with this there is violence and sex. The youth are more prone to drug and substance abuse due their inclination for experimentation curiosity and low self-esteem. (Dzinamarira et al 2023) There could be more danger looming if the legislation of Marijuana for industrial use is not handled well.

The 2023 report by the MOHCC further suggests that the United States has become the global capital of drug abuse and for over a century it has fought a drug war and lost dismally and it is believed that the biggest number of addicts are in America. This is supported by the XINHUANET report which suggest that 12 percent of global drug users are in the USA which is three times the proportion of the US population to that of the world making the drug problem. In 2021, the US national Centre for Drug Abuse Statistics found out that 19.4

percent of Americans have used illegal drugs at least once. The statistics were for the population of about 280 million people aged 12 and above and it was concluded that 31,9 million are drug users with 11.7 million on illegal substances and 19.4 percent having either taken illicit drugs or misused prescription drugs in 2020.

The Journal of American Medical Association(JAMA) also reported that between January 2021 and June 2021 about 1150 youngsters aged between 14 and 18 died from drug overdose which was a 20 percent increase from the 2020 statistics. The JAMA also reported that 47 percent of adolescence start consuming illicit drugs upon graduation from high school.

The above statistics gives a grim picture of the global problem of drug abuse which is now affecting countries like Zimbabwe where drug abuse has become a reflection of deep rooted social problems. The Zimbabwean government recently legalized the growing of cannabis for industrial and medicinal purposes. Although the government can generate substantial amounts of revenue from the licensing fees which are pegged at USD53 000.00, this can become an important driver of drug abuse. The legalization of Industrial hemp in Zimbabwe is shrouded in controversy as regards the purported benefits of industrial hemp. Information distortion about legalization of industrial hemp could lead to people making conclusions that the drug is now legal.

A research conducted by the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network, The National Aids Council and the MOHCC in 2023 found out that more than 53 percent of women and 28 percent men injected themselves with drugs. It was also established that those using crystal meth use the substance on a daily basis.

Drug and substance abuse among the youth comes with a host of psychological and other health issues such as poor academic performance, development of antisocial behavior, depression related health complications and unsafe sexual behavior (Mayanchi et al 2020, Volkow 2020). Statistics from the Sally Mugabe Hospital Psychiatric Unit indicate that there has been an increase in drug use related admissions. At Ngomahuru statistics show that 80 percent of admissions are juveniles and adult patients with drug induced psychosis. Disturbingly, a World Health Organization 2019 report, Zimbabwe has the highest rate of 15-19 year olds engaging in heavy episodic drinking in Africa and heavily involved. Worryingly, drug usage has been linked to HIV and AIDS a battle that was thought to be won by the government but could be fueled now by drugs. Youth who abuse drugs are likely to have more sexual partners, not using condoms, getting sexually transmitted diseases, misusing contraceptives and violence against intimate partners (Sridham et al 2013). It is also important to note that drug and substance abuse not only affects the individual addict but also the families, communities and nation at large (Maraire et al 2020).

This research concentrated much on the challenge of drug and substance abuse among the youth aged between 18 and 30 years in the town of Bindura a farming and mining town in Mashonaland Central Province. The research addresses a variety of issues that are not limited to the emerging trends in drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura, the contributory factors leading to the rise in drug and substance abuse among

the youth in Bindura and the effectiveness of the current measures being instituted by authorities to curtail the drug problem. This study aimed to address a contemporary social problem that has given authorities some sleepless nights. Given the magnitude of the problem, authorities see the drug and substance abuse scourge as a national security threat (Tshili 2023). The Zimbabwe Republic police has intensified campaigns and patrols on drug related issues as well as crafting the Zimbabwe Republic Police Drug Strategy. At national level, the authorities have come up with the National Drug Policy better known as the Zimbabwe Multi sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Plan 2024-2030 that seek to cement the authorities resolve to tame the menace. The study focused on statistics between 2022 and 2025 to come up with an up to date analysis of the somewhat global problem though zeroing in on Bindura town.

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

Drug and substance abuse has reached alarming levels. In Africa it is on a concerning upward trajectory with a projected 40 percent increase between 2018 and 2023 (Marandure et al 2023) marking the highest rise worldwide. Zimbabwe is also experiencing growing Drug and substance abuse which has serious implications on public health social and economic development. The Zimbabwe Multi Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Masterplan 2024-2030 provides that there is a growing challenge of Drug and substance abuse in Zimbabwe with approximately 60% of patients admitted to mental health facilities being affected by substance use disorders pointing to a strong intersection between drug and substance abuse and mental health issues.

Illicit drugs and substances that have flooded Bindura are crystal meth, *mutoriro*, broncleer, *tumbwa*, glue, marijuana, fermented mazoe and cerevita (Herald 07 October 2023). The issue of drug and substance abuse has become a major concern for the government as cases of people abusing drugs continue to grow.

Drug abuse is not just about people seeking a temporary high but a complex issue influenced by several factors such as socio economic pressures, death of parents, stress and past experiences of trauma. The impact of drug and substance abuse goes beyond the individual to families and societies as a whole straining relationships and placing burdens on the health care system and law enforcement agencies. The scourge has affected small towns like Bindura especially in the high density suburbs of Chipadze and Chiwaridzo where there has been an increase in illegal trading bases and the sophistication of criminal networks involved in this cycle of harm.

## **1.3 Purpose of the study/Objectives.**

1. To examine the prevalence and patterns of drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura town.
2. To investigate the relationship between drug and substance abuse and criminal behavior among the youth in Bindura town.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of the existing interventions in preventing and reducing drug and substance abuse and its associated criminal behavior among the youth in Bindura town.

4. To identify the risk factors and underlying causes of drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura town.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What are the patterns of drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura in terms of age, sex, frequency of use and commonly used drugs?
2. Do youth who abuse drugs and substances have a higher likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior as compared to those who do not abuse drugs and substances?
3. What evidence based interventions are most effective in addressing drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura town.
4. What are the primary risk factors that contribute to drug and substance abuse among the youth?

#### **1.5 Statement of Hypothesis**

There is a positive correlation between drug substance abuse and criminal behavior among the youth in Bindura.

#### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The rationale for carrying out this research is multi-dimensional as it provides valuable insights about the drug problem to the researcher, law enforcement, to the university, and the government of Zimbabwe. The outcome of the study will go a long way in shaping the various stakeholders' response to the drug problem. It seeks to draw attention to all sectors of the society so that a paradigm shift is adopted in response to the drug problem taking into cognisance the debilitating effects of the drug problem on the youth in Bindura. It is also hoped that from the various interactions made the research will come up with effective interventions to the problem.

##### **To the researcher.**

The research enables the researcher to explore the complex relationship between drug substance abuse and criminal behaviour, to identify patterns of drug and substance abuse and the correlations. The research enables the researcher to contribute new knowledge, address knowledge gaps and improve the understanding of the drug problem as well as the new trends of drug and substance abuse.

##### **To law enforcement**

The study will help to reduce crime and substance abuse by implementing some of the potential interventions and strategies to reduce crime and substance abuse, promoting public safety and community well-being The

study provides law enforcement with evidence based insights that inform strategies, improve strategies and create understanding of drug and substance abuse and its causes. The study can be used to measure the effectiveness of law enforcement policies and practices.

#### **To the university,**

The research will advance knowledge and research. It will contribute to the existing body of research on substance abuse and criminal behavior, identifying gaps in knowledge and areas of further study.

#### **To the government**

The research seeks to inform policy and practice by providing evidence based insight for law makers, law enforcement agencies and health services providers to develop effective strategies for prevention intervention and treatment. The research also aimed to inform the development of targeted treatment programmes and support services for individuals struggling with substance abuse and criminal behavior. The authorities here need to treat abusers of drugs as victims and not criminals.

### **1.7 Assumptions.**

1. The study assumes that drug and substance abuse is prevalent among the youth in Bindura town.
2. There is a correlation between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth in Bindura town.
3. The prevalence of drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura town is increasing.
4. The study assumes that the youth in Bindura town who engage in drug and substance abuse are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour than those who do not.
5. The criminal behaviour exhibited by the youth in Bindura town who engage in drug and substance abuse is more severe than those who do not.
6. Effective interventions and prevention programs can reduce the prevalence of drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth in Bindura town.
7. The study assumes that the sample of youth selected for the study represents the larger population of the youth who engage in drug and substance abuse in Bindura town.
8. The study assumes that the research instruments to be used in data collection will provide reliable and valid information about drug and substance abuse in Bindura town.
9. The study assumes that the necessary data on drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura town is available and accessible.
10. The study assumes that stakeholders such as community leaders will cooperate and provide support for the study.

## 1.8 Delimitations

The study focuses solely on Bindura town, excluding surrounding rural areas and farms. Rural-urban migration can lead to an influx of people from rural areas who may bring new substance abuse patterns. The study targets youth aged 18-30, excluding other age groups. They consist a greater part of the town's demography. The study employs quantitative and approaches. The time frame of the study covers a specific period of 3 years that is 2022-2025. Drug abuse trends may have changed over this period such that the research may not give a true picture of the drug and substance abuse trends. The study will sample specific number of participants who may not represent the entire population

## 1.9 Limitations

**Sampling bias.** Participants may not represent the entire youth population in Bindura. Focus on youth (18-30 years). This study concentrates on youth, excluding other age groups who may also be abusing drugs. It becomes a stereotype that youth abuse drugs. What may differ are the numbers but even adults have been abusing drugs.

**Data collection challenge.** It is difficult to access hard-to-reach groups (e.g., street children). Obtaining accurate and reliable data on drug and substance abuse among youth can be difficult due to stigma, privacy concerns, and underreporting. It is also difficult to access information on drug and substance abuse from relevant sources such as hospitals, police departments and the courts. Even the drug lords are not willing to be interviewed by anyone whom they don't know for fear of being exposed.

Participants may underreport substance abuse due to stigma. Information available mainly covers those who are arrested for abusing drugs and those taken to mental health institutions. The other information for other drug users is not available.

Limited resources and Insufficient funding, infrastructure, and trained personnel can hinder implementation and evaluation of interventions. The researcher faces a lot of challenges particularly lack of financial resources to fund the research hence most areas where crucial information is found may not be accessed.

Cultural and contextual differences have shown that what works in one setting may not work in another due to cultural, social, and environmental differences. Participants' responses may be inaccurate and there is limited access to records and obtaining official statistics or records from relevant sources.

Complexity of factors influencing abuse Multiple factors (social, economic, psychological) contribute to drug abuse, making it challenging to isolate variables and assess intervention effectiveness. Assessing intervention effectiveness can be limited by methodological constraints (e.g., sample size, study duration).

### **1.10 Definition of terms.**

#### **Criminal Behaviour**

This denotes delinquency or actions that go against the law.

#### **Drug abuse-**

The US National Cancer institute defined drug abuse as the use of illegal drugs or the use of prescriptions or over the counter drugs for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used or in excessive amounts. This inappropriate or excessive use of drugs, legal or otherwise, may result in issues with relationships, health, emotions, and employment. According to the 2020 substance abuse statistics from the National Centre for Drug Abuse Statistics (NCDAS), 59.277 million, or 21.4% of Americans aged 12 years and older have abused prescription medications or used illegal drugs within the past 12 months.

#### **Youth**

These are young people who are between 18 and 35 years of age according to the Zimbabwean law.

### **1.11 Summary**

This chapter highlights the extent to which the drug problem has become the world over. The statistics provided from different sources paints a grim picture of the extent to which drug and substance abuse is affecting the young generation despite concerted efforts by national governments to put an end to the scourge. Of major concern is the detrimental effects of drugs on the youth especially the rise in criminality and health issues which have necessitated this investigation. The study is solely focussed on the youth in Bindura town as the nerve centre of drug and substance abuse given its diverse demographic setup. The chapter also looks at the delimitations and limitations of the study and how this study will be of essence to various stakeholders such as community leaders and law enforcement. Challenges in accessing data have also been highlighted.

## **CHAPTER II**



# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the research focuses on the theories that have been used in the past to explain the causes of drug and substance abuse among the youth. The research seeks to establish whether these theories are still relevant and try to establish the knowledge gaps in the fight against drug and substance abuse. It is common knowledge that drug and substance abuse is constantly evolving with new trends being established by each passing day. As a result, studies or researches by other authors on the subject line were consulted to establish the knowledge gap and understand what other researchers came to conclude about drug and substance abuse. This chapter also seek to establish why the scourge still exist and rising to alarming levels despite similar studies having been carried out before.

## 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This section describes several related theories that specify common social processes that protect individuals from developing substance use disorders and may underlie effective psychosocial treatments for these disorders that is social control theory, behavioural economics and behavioural choice theory, social learning theory, and stress and coping theory.

The identified common components of effective treatment include support, goal direction, and structure; an emphasis on rewards that compete with substance use, a focus on abstinence-oriented norms and models, and attempts to develop self-efficacy and coping skills. Several issues that need to be addressed to enhance our understanding of the active ingredients involved in effective treatment are discussed, including how to develop measures of these ingredients, how well the ingredients predict outcomes and influence conceptually comparable aspects of clients' life contexts, and how much their influence varies depending upon clients' demographic and personal characteristics.

In this regard, theories have been applied to identify key social processes that, if present, protect individuals against the initiation and development of substance use problems and facilitate their resolution. The four theories identify comparable protective social processes in several life domains, including families, friendship networks, and the workplace (Moos, 2006).

The social control theory propounded by Travis Hirschi in 1969 proposes that individuals conform to societal norms due to external and internal controls. The major assumptions were that humans naturally tend towards deviance, social bonds and controls prevent deviance and weak social bonds lead to deviance. He further stated that an individual 's behaviour is bonded by society and the extent to which an individual feels the bond or commitment to society determines their deviance from conventional societal norms.

According to social control theory, strong bonds with family, friends, school, work, religion, and other aspects of traditional society motivate individuals to engage in responsible behaviour and refrain from substance use and other deviant pursuits. These bonds encompass monitoring or supervision and directing behaviour toward acceptable goals and pursuits. When such social bonds are weak or absent, individuals are less likely to adhere to conventional standards and tend to engage in undesirable behaviour, such as the misuse of alcohol and drugs.

The main cause of weak attachments to existing social standards is inadequate monitoring and shaping of behaviour, including families that lack cohesion and structure, friends who espouse deviant values and engage in disruptive behaviour, and lack of supervision and vigilance in school and work settings. Parents have a stronger bond with their child who needs support and control. this type of parenting is positively identified with social adjustment and negatively related to misconduct and delinquency. (Baumrind 1971)

The common conception is that when individuals feel a strong bond with society, they are less likely to commit a crime. As the social bonds become stronger, the cost of committing a crime also increase and when the individual 's bond to society weakens, delinquent behaviour surface. (Schreck et al ,2009).

Bindura is a society with people of diverse cultures whose values also differ. This disparity in culture can lead to a deviant behaviour since different cultures value different norms. What may be prohibited in one culture may not in another. The economic environment in Bindura does not allow for the strict enforcement of social controls. Most people do not spend much time at their homes as they work to bring food on the table. Some are formally employed while others spend the day vending in town and at the mining sites surrounding the town. Some are distant parents living in the diaspora. This absence of close monitoring means no one is there to ensure social norms and values are being adhered to. The high levels of crime and deviance including drug and substance abuse in the oldest suburb of Chipadze is clear testimony to this.

Behavioural economics or behavioural choice theory, which is closely related to the social control perspective, focuses specifically on involvement in protective activities. In behavioural choice theory the key element of the social context is the alternative rewards provided by activities other than substance use. These rewards can protect individuals from exposure to substances and opportunities to use them, as well as from escalating and maintaining substance use. The theory posits that the choice of one rewarding behaviour, such as substance use, depends in part on lack of effective access to alternative rewards through involvement in school and work pursuits, religious engagement, and participation in physical activity. For example, physical activity and substance use may both elevate mood and decrease anxiety, which may make them functionally similar and substitutable

According to social learning theory, substance use originates in the substance-specific attitudes and behaviours of the adults and peers who serve as an individual's role models. Modelling effects begin with observation

and imitation of substance-specific behaviours, continue with social reinforcement for and expectations of positive consequences from substance use, and culminate in substance use and misuse. In essence, this theory proposes that substance use is a function of positive norms and expectations about substances and family members and friends who engage in and model substance use (Bandura, 1977; Mailto et al., 1999).

Finally, stress and coping theory posits that stressful life circumstances emanating from family members and friends, school, and work, lead to distress and alienation and eventually to substance misuse. For example, the work stressors model suggests that employee substance use is a response to problems in the workplace, such as interpersonal conflict with supervisors and co-workers, unfair treatment, meaningless and low-level work, high work demands, and lack of participation in decision-making. Stressors are most likely to impel substance use among individuals who lack self-confidence and coping skills and who try to avoid facing problematic situations and escape from experiencing distress and alienation (Kaplan, 1996).

The key elements of social control theory involve bonding or support, structure or monitoring, and goal direction. The salient elements of behavioural economics and behavioural choice theory are fostering involvement in traditional activities that provide relevant rewards and protect individuals from temptation to use and misuse substances. The most important aspects of social learning theory are observation and imitation of family and social norms and models and the formation of expectations about substance use. Stress and coping theory focuses heavily on the development of self-confidence and coping skills to manage high-risk situations and general life stressors.

Dr Audrey Begun of the Ohio State University in his 2021 study states that there is the moral theory on drug and substance abuse which is based on the belief that using substances is a moral failing related only to individual and eventually lead to a path of self-destruction. The theory views people who use drugs as having a choice to use substances and judges them for using the substances and seeks to put blame on the person with the substance use disorder.

## **2.2 Empirical literature**

The drug and substance abuse problem is not a new phenomenon in most societies today. In an endeavour to establish the root cause of the problem or to examine its effects on societies, other researches have been carried out before. These seek to explain the existence of the problem and particular reference was made to them in coming up with this research.

This research aims to establish the factors contributing to drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura. It goes further to unearth the nature and extent of drug abuse and related issues among the youth. This framework also looks at how the demographic factors, social cultural factors and economic factors

influence drug and substance abuse, interrogates the challenges faced against the fight of drug abuse and seeks to come up with recommendations on how to curb the drug scourge.

Demographic factors such as age and education often influence the decision to indulge in drugs. Some teenagers may take drugs for the desire to be perceived or perceive themselves as adults. Socio cultural factors also play a major role in determining one's behavior

The social environment plays a huge role in influencing drug abuse ranging from the family environment to the peer group influence and the need to fit in a certain group. Therefore, in societies where such factors exist drug abuse may be at its peak.

As for Bindura town the area is highly populous and hive of mining activities which is a fertile ground for most vices including indulgence in drugs. Additionally, the area is home to two universities accommodating a youthful population. With few opportunities for employment the idle youth are likely to engage in drugs to pass time. The town has been chosen mainly for the reason that it carries a high population hence more likely to provide inclusive practical and tangible information on drug abuse.

Empirical evidence suggests an upward trend of substance use in the Zimbabwean population for example, between 2009–2019, alcohol use was up from 9th to 8th place, in the top 10 risk factors contributing to disability adjusted life years (DALYS) in Zimbabwe. Additionally, media reports paint a picture of an escalating and worrying situation of substance use, involving both licit and illicit substances. Moreover, the situation has been reported to be more complex, economic, and political, with clear signs of moving beyond teenage experimentation or chosen unhealthy behaviours. Substances of concern reported on include alcohol (including illicit 'moonshine' brews), methamphetamine (crystal meth locally known as *mutoriro*), cough syrups containing codeine, and *marijuana*. Reports of local youths identified to be in a drunken like stupor are widespread in the media, and colloquially referred to as '*ku sticker*' (in reference to the paralytic like stupor youths high on substances are often found in).

Anecdotal evidence also suggests a rise in substance use fuelled by the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant lockdowns, so much so that it has been labelled an 'impending public health disaster'. The ease of availability of substances, together with a lack of recreational activities for young people during lockdowns have both been cited as potential reasons for the increase. However, even prior to the pandemic, drug use, particularly among the youth in Zimbabwe, was already reported to be reaching crisis levels, with concerns around drug use in vulnerable populations such as children living on the streets. The authors assert that the significant socio-economic challenges experienced in the country are most likely linked to the observed substance use issues. Indeed, poverty is endemic in Zimbabwe, affecting 70% of the population, and has been identified as a risk factor for substance use. Socio economic challenges are also linked to increased rates of stress, trauma, and mental health challenges which are all risk factors for substance use.

Strategies for addressing the identified increases in substance use are hampered by the treatment gap for mental, neurological and substance use disorders, with sub-Saharan Africa having the largest gap globally. This is largely linked to the ‘brain drain’ due to mass emigration of mental health professionals and significant underfunding for mental health services due to resource constraints. For example, there is a paucity of drug and alcohol specialist treatment facilities in Zimbabwe. The situation for managing SUDs is also likely to be worsened by the emerging reports of the country becoming a hub for drug trafficking, whereby drug runners are reportedly compensated for their services using drugs, increasing availability of drugs in local communities.

In response to both increases in substance use and lack of specialist drug treatment provision, the country recently launched the Zimbabwe National Drug Master Plan (2020–2025) which aims to provide both a comprehensive and integrated approach to address the rise in substance use in the country. Within this key strategic document, the government of Zimbabwe reports that currently approximately 60% of patients admitted in mental health institutions experience substance induced disorders. However, significant challenges are evident in trying to ascertain a reliable picture of the nature of SUDs in the country, owing to the evolving complexity of the problem and the lack of a national monitoring system for substance use. Subsequently, most ‘evidence’ cited tends to be anecdotal in nature, and heavily reliant on secondary sources. Thus, it is imperative to gain an understanding of the primary evidence and policy landscape in Zimbabwe, to gauge what is known and what is being done about substance use and SUDs. This will also aid in identifying any gaps in knowledge and assist in development of culturally and locally appropriate and sustainable solutions to addressing SUDs. With these concerns in mind, the scoping review aims to develop a broad understanding of the nature of substance use and SUDs in the Zimbabwean context. The scoping review also seeks to understand interventions that have been developed and utilised in Zimbabwe, together with an analysis of the legislative and policy landscape in relation to substance use and SUDs.

According to a paper by Mususa (2019) on Drug and Alcohol Abuse Among Young People in Zimbabwe. It is more prevalent in urban areas. Despite growing evidence that drug and substance abuse are on the increase especially among young people, there is little being done in terms of interventions conducted by the government and its partners to reduce drug and substance abuse among the youth. The paper was based on research conducted in Zimbabwe with the aim of understanding drug and substance abuse among young people in Zimbabwe. The study focused on the driving forces or push factors for drug and substance abuse among young people, the sources of illicit drugs and substances, prevalence of drug and substance abuse among young people as well as the interventions being implemented to address the problem of drug and substance abuse. The key findings indicate that prevalence of drug abuse is at 57% among young people, the most commonly abused drugs and substances are marijuana and alcohol. Peer pressure, breakdown of the family support system, limited knowledge about the effects of drug abuse and stress were identified as the major factors that

drive substance and drug abuse among the youth. The criminalization of the drug and substance abuse continues to make it difficult for young people to seek help when they suffer from the effects of the drug abuse. The paper recommended an emphasis on shift from the legal approach to a public health approach in order to address the challenges and complications associated with drug and substance abuse among young people in Zimbabwe.

In a document titled, *The Emerging Trends and Response to Drug and Substance Abuse among the Youth in Zimbabwe* by Ishmael Mugari of Department of Social Sciences, Walter Sisulu University the researcher noted that drug and substance abuse is a contemporary problem among the youth and has reached crisis levels in the nation of Zimbabwe. The problem has been compounded by acute socio-economic challenges that have characterized the nation for the past decade. Despite efforts to curb the problem, new forms of drug and substance abuse are emerging. The study, explored the emerging trends in drug and substance abuse among youths in Zimbabwe, as well as evaluating the current measures to deal with the problem. While marijuana is viewed as the most abused drug, his study revealed some emerging trends such as the abuse of prescription drugs, use of home-made intoxicating substances, infusion of intoxicated people's blood, ingestion of drug laced foods and drinking sodium poly acrylate from boiled diapers. Acute socio-economic challenges, ease of access and porous borders are considered the major contributory factors for drug and substance abuse. Notwithstanding the efforts by the government and law enforcement agents to deal with the scourge, this study revealed that the current measures have not been as effective as expected.

The past two decades have witnessed an unprecedented increase in the rate of drug and substance abuse, threatening the moral fabric and development. This spike has been witnessed in almost every part of the globe, cutting across almost all races, religions and nationalities (Anderson-Carpenter et al. 2020; World Drug Report 2020). According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates, 3.5% to 5.7% of persons between the ages of 15 and 64 worldwide, or between 155 and 250 million people, used illicit drugs at least once in the year 2013 (Johnston et al. 2014). A World Health Organization (WHO) report notes that approximately 31 million persons have drug-use disorders throughout the world, and about 11 million are on opiate drugs (WHO 2019). In a related recent report in 2023, the UNODC reported a 23% global increase in people using illicit drugs, from 240 million in 2011 to 296 million in 2023 (UNODC 2023). The prevalence and impacts of the health-risky behaviors commonly associated with drug and substance abuse amongst youths has attracted growing international attention. It is important to note that drug and substance abuse not only affects the individual addicts but also the families, communities and nations at large. Whilst drug and substance abuse is a global problem, statistical evidence and research has shown that the problem is on an upward trend in Sub-Saharan Africa compared to other regions of the globe (Muzuva et al. 2023)

However, this is not only a Zimbabwean problem. SUDs are a global problem that affects everyone regardless of social-economic status and their effects are multi-faceted as they affect people in their social, psychological

and economic dimensions (Maraire and Chethiyar, 2020; Kurevakwesu et al., 2023). Adjei & Wilhite (2021) also posit that substance use is associated with countless problems that can range from physical, psychological, social, financial as well as legal issues.

According to the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drugs Network (ZCLDN), alarming statistics reveal that more than 43% of adolescents and young adults used drugs in 2017 alone. By 2018, this percentage had risen to nearly 45% and continued to increase to above 57% by 2019 (Maraire & Chethiyar, 2020). These concerning trends have negative impacts on youth the development, as substance use is known to have detrimental effects (Chineka & Kurevakwesu, 2021).

In Zimbabwe, as argued by Kurevakwesu et al. (2023) and Maraire & Chethiyar (2020) is that SUDs are highly prevalent among young people between the ages of 15 to 35 years. Despite statistics and evidence on the rising statistics of SUDs in the country, especially among the young generation, there seems to be little being done to curb this problem. Afrocentricity highlights the importance of understanding the cultural and spiritual significance of drugs and substances in traditional African societies. Traditional healers and spiritual leaders often tightly regulate and control the use of drugs and substances for spiritual, medicinal, and ritual purposes in many African cultures (Marandure et al., 2023; Nyashanu et al., 2024). However, the legacy of colonialism and Christianization has disrupted these traditional systems, leading to the loss of cultural knowledge and the devaluation of traditional healing practices.

Substance use in Africa is on the rise, with projections estimating a forty per cent increase in people who use them between 2018 and 2030. This represents the largest increase globally, with Sub-Saharan Africa projected to have the highest increase when compared to other regions, whilst West Africa is the main supplier of drugs in Sub-Saharan Africa (Marandure et al., 2023). In Africa, youth 3 represent the largest number of people being treated for drug-related disorders (UNODC World Drug Report, 2022)

The above empirical evidence is testimony enough that the drug problem is real and alive with mankind. This research seeks to establish whether its prevalence has a bearing on criminal behaviour among the youth of Bindura town. Drug consumption is believed to be rife in high density suburbs like those from the chosen locality. The above statistics paint a gloomy picture and if these statistics are anything to go by urgent action needs to be done to address the problem.

### **2.3 Drug and substance abuse and criminality**

Researchers world over have over years been fascinated by the possibility of a link between drug and substance consumption and criminality. The website [www.pmc.ncbi.nlm.gov](http://www.pmc.ncbi.nlm.gov) claims that most drug users commit crimes to pay for the daily supplies of the illicit substances. According to the website the majority of these people are

rendered useless by their continual consumption of drugs to point that the only possible way of earning a living for them is delinquency. Another scholar, Douglas (1978) says that there is quite a close relationship between drug and substance ingestion and criminal behaviour. According to the scholar drug intake makes one lose control of his or her mental faculties which then leads one to commit crime. Douglas (1978)'s view is also echoed by Rafaiee (2013) who says that there is definitely a close relationship between drug and crime and further says in 2020, over 70% of male prisoners in America were drug abusers. Rafaiee (2023) says according to a study conducted in America in 2020 alcohol has the highest number of aggressive crimes. The statistics by the scholars cited above suggest that to a large extent there is quite some link between drugs and crime.

O'Sullivan (2021) says that it is clear that the link between drug consumption and crime commission cannot be doubt. The scholar says that in a survey conducted by a Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in America in 2019 showed that 26.1% of offenders admitted to committing their crimes under the influences of drugs and other intoxicating substances. O'Sullivan (2021) says such a figure that surpasses a 25% of the felonies committed proves that there indeed is a link between criminality and drug use.

However, while the facts given by the scholars cited above could be true and reflective of the experiences of the American society and the BJS findings, this study seeks to establish whether what O'Sullivan (2021), Rafaiee (2013) and Douglas (1978) claim to have noted is indeed true and whether it does depict the experiences of young people in Bindura urban. The study sets to question whether it is true or not that criminal behaviour among the youth in Bindura urban is drug and substance induced or a by-product of other dynamics in the environment.

## **2.4 Possible interventions to arrest drug and substance abuse among the youth**

With the ever escalating cases of drug and substance abuse in the world, Marandure et al (2023) say that there are a number of possible interventions societies can get adopt to save people especially the youth from dying of drugs. According to the scholars one of such means is the establishment of rehabilitation centres where those severely affected by drugs can be housed and receive treatment from. The scholars opine that if these addicted or affected by drug and substance abuse are removed from the wider society where their dependences on drugs were generated they can be saved. This view is also supported by Hendershot (2024) who says drug affected persons require moments away from the contaminated world that led into the chambers of debauchery. This detachment of these people helps them get treatment and awards them moments to introspect and take journeys into the interiorities for their own restoration. Hendershot (2024) says that rehabilitation centres are homes where the drug affected can be 'sweet-talked' or counselled out of their predicament

The other possible intervention for people affected by drug and substance abuse is counselling which is a process of engaging and talking to the affected about their conditions and help them to navigate their way out



of the challenge (Blackman, 2004). According to the scholar counselling can be used to advise those in drugs and take them out of the habit.

Another possible intervention to curb and control the abuse of drugs in communities is implement and of deterrent laws for drug abuses and peddlers. Marandure et al (2023) says that one of the major factors that appears to be perpetuating the sell and abuse of drugs on the African continent is the laxity of the legal systems in dealing with the matters. The scholar cites China as an example of countries with strict laws where drug and substance sell or abuse is met with harsher penalties. He says in such a country the sell and use of drugs is minimal.

Miles and Scott (2017) avow that one of the major causes of drug and substance abuse among both the old and young is idleness and utter paucity which means that economic empowerment of drug survivors and skills training in another worthy intervention in fighting drug and substance abuse. According to the scholar empowering communities does provide would-be drug abusers with something to do stay away from drugs. This view is also supported Marandure et al (2023) who says that a lot of drug addicts get into drugs as a result of poverty and economic challenges that drive them to the fringes of the society. If what Miles and Scott (2017) and Marandure et al (2023) say is anything to go by then economic empowerment of communities and drug survivors as well as skills training are core to ending the drug pandemic.

The Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is another category of a talk-therapy that helps individuals identify and change negative qualities of themselves. According to Rafaiee (2013) CBT is another intervention that could be employed on people with drug problems to help them out of their quagmire. The scholar says by talking to them or counselling them to see the negativity of drugs and substance abuse could see a lot of them being saved from possible drug prompted demise. CBT according to Nyashanu et al (2024) is also an antidote to drug and substance abuse relapses for those survivors of drug and substance abuse.

Another intervention for drug and substance abuse is the Brief Intervention (BI) scheme. This is a planned, client centred and non-judgemental therapy in which counsellor engage the affected and probe them to find potential solutions to their problems (Blackman, 2004). According to the scholar in BI the therapist helps the affected find their way out of their drug challenge through one to five sessions of contact in which the therapist places a passive non-judgemental role of probing for solutions from the affected.

## **2.5 Summary**

This section of the study reviewed literature related to this study that was generated by other scholars prior to this enquiry. It set off by giving the theoretical framework guiding the study and then proceeded to look at the empirical literature on drug and substance abuse. The chapter further went on to look at drug and substance abuse and criminality before concluding by looking at possible interventions to curb drug and substance abuse.

## **CHAPTER III.**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed to investigate the complex relationship between drug substance abuse and criminal behaviour. The study aimed to explore the nexus between these two variables identifying potential links and correlations. A qualitative approach was used to give a clear understanding of the research problem. This chapter also chronicles the research design, sampling strategies used, data collection methods and data analysis procedures to ensure that the study's findings are reliable and valid. This chapter is crucial in order to provide an understanding of the study's results and their implications for policy formulation and practice.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted concurrent mixed method as the ideal design in the examination of drug and substance abuse trends in Bindura. In line with this, concurrent mixed method research design involves the simultaneous collection of qualitative and quantitative data and this is followed by the comparison of these two multiple data sources (Edmonds and Kennedy (2012). Thus, this approach involves the collection of different but complementary data on the same phenomena. Hence, it is used for the converging and subsequently interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data. By using concurrent mixed method design, the study is able to have a comprehensive understanding of the yoke between drug and substance abuse as criminality by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. In addition to this, the concurrent mixed research design allows for triangulation which is the process of comparing and contrasting different data sources or methods to enhance the validity and reliability of the study (McBride, MacMillan and Steiner; 2019). Thus, by combining both qualitative and quantitative data, the study was able to cross validate the results.

#### **3.2 Research subjects**

The main participants of this investigation were members of the Bindura community who were randomly chosen and participated in the investigation. A quantitative approach was used on the majority of them. Other

participants were victims of drug substance abuse who were survivors. A qualitative approach was used on them through in-depth interviews on their experiences during the time they were using drugs. This provided an opportunity for the researcher to get first-hand information from those who used drugs before the type of drugs that are prevalent in their domain, Bindura in this case, and their consumption trends. The subjects could not disclose their source of drugs.

Other participants were members of the law enforcement Drugs and Narcotics who gave an insight on the age groups that mainly consume illicit drugs, the illicit drugs that are most prevalent in Bindura area. A qualitative approach was adopted here through the use of interviews and official statistics from their records.

### **3.3 Research Population**

Saunders and Lewis (2018) describe the study population as the entire universe of people, units, programs, and things that the researcher is generally interested in gathering data and drawing conclusions. The overall population of Bindura Urban according to Zimstats Report (2022) is 51 394 people with an estimation of 15 190 being between 18 and 30 years old. The 15 190 then constitute the research population for this enquiry from which the same is drawn because they fall within the age bracket targeted by the enquiry for studies.

### **3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedures.**

Sampling is an important part of a research methodology and involves selecting a representative unit of the population on which to conduct the study, making statistical inferences about them, and estimating the characteristics of the whole population based on these inferences. Various scholars have various definitions of how big an apt sample for an enquiry should be. Kothari (2004) says the most apposite sample for a quantitative research should have between 30 to 500 subjects while Creswell (2013) holds that holds that a sample should be constituted by 15 to 30 persons. Rukuni-Makore says the most fitting sample should constitute at least between 10 and 15 percent of the total subjects in the population. While this debate on the number that founds the most apt same rolls on, this study does not seek to join it and establish the most suitable size of a sample but on the contrary the study seeks to establish the linkage between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour. In this study the researcher went by Kothari (2004)'s view of the same size and select 100 people from Bindura Urban as the sample for this study. The sample of a hundred respondents comprised of five police officers from the drug and narcotics unit, ten drug and substance survivors and 85 residents of Bindura who have seen and experienced crime in the area.

Sampling allows the researcher to conserve time and resources by limiting the amount of data to be collected by considering only a subgroup to represent the entire population (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). A sample, then, is a representative group chosen from the entire population, and a researcher can draw conclusions about

the entire population using the sample (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). In this study the researcher applied two sampling procedures which are purposive sampling and cluster sampling.

Kumar (2011) says that purposive sampling is a system of research respondent selection in which the researcher uses personal discretion in the selection of would-be participants. According to the scholar in selecting these participants in a research the researcher identified certain qualities in a potential research participant and then chooses those with those traits to participate in the enquiry. In this enquiry this sampling *modus operandi* was used to survivors of drug and substance abuse and police officers whose participation in this enquiry is seen as adding credibility and validity to the enquiry since they have a direct and first-hand information on whether or not there is a direct tie between the abuse of drugs and criminal behaviour. On the selection of other residents from Bindura Urban the researcher opted for cluster sampling. Walliman (2011) says that cluster sampling is a system of research participant selection in which the research population is allocated into clusters or categories based on either location, gender or certain identifiable traits linked to the study and then are randomly picked or selected for the study. Cochran (1977) says that this system of selection or sampling is that it makes it easier for the researcher to implement a study in a dispersed area. In the context of this study Bindura has five high density areas namely Chiwaridzo, Chipadze, Aerodrome, Progress and Chipindura Park. In implementing this study the researcher divided the remaining 85 respondents among the five residential locations which saw each area getting 17 participants who were randomly picked from these areas to participate in the study. The clusters used in this study are geographical locations from which the respondents were picked.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

In trying to gather data on the link between drug and substance abuse and criminality in youth, the researcher in this enquiry opted to use two instruments of enquiry which are questionnaires and in-depth interviews on all participants. Walliman (2011) says that adopting and using more than a single instrument of enquiry in a study provides quality, reliable and authentic data from the enquiry as well as enabling the researcher to easily triangulate gotten findings from a study.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

Following a quantitative approach to be adopted for this study, which seeks to identify scientific objective truth, the primary method of collecting data is using a structured questionnaire. Kervin (1999) assert that a questionnaire is a useful instrument for collecting data in quantitative surveys where respondents record their own answers. The questionnaire to be used in this study will consist of structured questions designed to solicit opinions and facts from research participants of the study. Using a questionnaire in research has the following advantages among others: (1) it is relatively less expensive since the same questionnaire is reproduced to be used over a large number of respondents; (2) it makes it simple to collect and process the data; (3) it is easier

to design; (4) it also produces a higher rate of response; and (5) close-ended questions are easier to respond to and to analyse (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). On the other hand, interview guide will be used to collect data from the Key Informants to the in-depth interviews to be conducted.

### **3.5.2 Interviews**

The study conducted key informant interviews in order to validate questionnaire survey data. In this regard, key informant interview is a method of research which is based on a series of qualitative questions (Few et al, 2019). Interviews take different formats where some can be contacted over the telephone, through e-mails or can be contacted on face to bases. The use of interviews has been eulogized by a number of research scholars like Creswell (2013), Rukuni-Makore (2010) and Cooper and Schindler (2014) who say that unlike questionnaires where respondents can lie or choose not answer to certain questions the verbal nature of the transaction between the interviewer and interviewee has some 'magic' it does which leads to open and honest communication between the two that provides a research with reliable responses. The other advantage of using interviews in social research as in this one interviews is that interviews are fast in getting responses from respondents as they get responses as and when they speak to respondent. The main disadvantage of using interviews in a study is that one respondents may not open up on what they know out of fear of reprisal for what they say to the interviews (Cochran, 1977). To guard against Cochran (1977)'s fears, this researcher in this enquiry gave a written undertaking to respondents assuring them their responses would only be used for this study alone and nothing more.

### **3.6 Data collection methods**

In trying to establish the correlation between drug and substance and the rise of delinquent or criminal behaviour in youths in Bindura Urban the researcher adopted questionnaires, in-depth interviews and content analysis as data collection methods. While questionnaires and interviews have been discussed in the section of this enquiry preceding this one. Content analysis has been defined by Cochran (1977) as denoting a system of research through which data is gathered by studying and analysing reports, documents of previous years on a topic under the microscope. This kind of study according to the provides the researcher with historical insight into the development of phenomena being studied as well as trajectories and trends of development. In this enquiry trends of criminality between 2022 and 2025 will be assessed and an evaluation of their links to drug and substance usage assessed.

### **3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) define data presentation and analysis as a process involving reducing data into summaries and making deductions through the application of statistical techniques. The findings to this study will be presented in tables, charts and graphs.

On the other hand, qualitative data obtained in this study will be analyzed using narrative analysis which is an interpretive way of analyzing qualitative data. Narrative analysis will be used to analyze content from the interviewees, where stories and experiences shared by the study participants will be used to address the research questions. Verbatim clauses from open-ended items on questionnaires and the follow up interviews will be captured.

The analysis of the findings will be done thematically.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

According to Cooper and Schindler (2014) ethics are the norms and standards that need be observed in a research in order to ensure that no one is harmed or suffers adversely consequential to participating in a research. The ethical issues that will be perceived and addressed in this study are confidentiality, informed consent and privacy.

The researcher using the self-introductory cover note will explain to the respondents of their need to participate in this study and their rights and protection thereof will be spelt out upfront. Consent to participate in this study will be sought prior to administering the questionnaire to respondents. This will be done to ensure that the respondents retained their right to be informed about their reason for participation in a study and their rights during and after the study be explained upfront.

To protect the best interests of the respondents, the researcher will assure respondents that the results of the study would not be linked to individual respondents and that the information they would supply would be used exclusively for academic purposes, and would not be released to anyone else without their prior consent. This will be done as a precautionary measure against threats to protect their identity which will remain anonymous during and after the research. This will be done to protect the privacy and identity of the study respondents.

### **3.9 Summary**

The chapter sought to provide a clear picture of the research methodology that was used in this enquiry. The chapter provided the research design, outlined the research subjects and then proceeded to give the research population. The chapter further moved to look at the sample and the sampling procedures employed in the study, explain the research instruments used as well as the data collection methods. Data analysis and presentation was also discussed. The chapter concluded by looking at the ethical considerations this study upholds.

## CHAPTER IV.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

#### 4.0 Introduction

In this section of the study the researcher will provide an analysis and interpretation of the data acquired through questionnaires and interviews. The information will be presented in form of tables, charts and graphs.

#### 4.1 Gender distribution of respondents

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Females	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Female	37	37.0	37.0	38.0
	Males	60	60.0	60.0	98.0
	Males	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
	Males	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

As is given in the table above, 60% of the respondents were male and 40% were females implying therefore that both males and females participated in the study. This kind of an arrangement means therefore that the views of respondent raised in this study are not gender skewed but reflect gender parity. This also implies that this enquiry is credible and reliable as it was able to measure issues of the link between criminality and drug and substance abuse among youth from the perspectives of both men and females.

## 4.2 Age Distribution of respondents

**Table 2: Age distribution of respondents**

### Age of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	19	5	5.0	5.0	9.0
	20	4	4.0	4.0	13.0
	21	10	10.0	10.0	23.0
	22	3	3.0	3.0	26.0
	23	13	13.0	13.0	39.0
	24	4	4.0	4.0	43.0
	25	6	6.0	6.0	49.0
	26	5	5.0	5.0	54.0
	27	5	5.0	5.0	59.0
	28	5	5.0	5.0	64.0
	29	4	4.0	4.0	68.0
	30	1	1.0	1.0	69.0
	31	2	2.0	2.0	71.0
	32	6	6.0	6.0	77.0
	33	4	4.0	4.0	81.0
	34	4	4.0	4.0	85.0
	35	2	2.0	2.0	87.0
	36	2	2.0	2.0	89.0
	37	1	1.0	1.0	90.0
	38	1	1.0	1.0	91.0
	40	1	1.0	1.0	92.0
	41	2	2.0	2.0	94.0
	42	2	2.0	2.0	96.0
	43	1	1.0	1.0	97.0
	45	1	1.0	1.0	98.0
	47	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
	51	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

As is shown in the table above a number of respondent participated in the enquiry and these were of varying age categories. The age ranges were from 18 years which is the official age of youths in Zimbabwe. And they



were also others who were post that age and those came principally from residents in the Bindura Community as well as member of the Law enforcement who participated in the study. The fact that the study espoused participants who were between 18 and 35 years of age and other who were above implies that the enquiry brought into it views from across diverse generations of humanity which enriched the findings of the study.

#### 4.3 Distribution of respondents by level of education

**Table 3: Distribution of respondents by educational qualification**

VAR00002					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	16.7	16.7	16.7
	A level 22	1	16.7	16.7	33.3
	Cert 13	1	16.7	16.7	50.0
	Degree 10	1	16.7	16.7	66.7
	Diploma 10	1	16.7	16.7	83.3
	O level 45	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

As is shown in the table above 22 of the respondents had Advance level as the highest qualification while 13 had certificates in some professional area. The other 10 had Diplomas in certain areas and the other 10 had degrees. The bulk of the respondents 45 had Ordinary level as the highest qualification. The fact that respondents in this study had diverse qualification renders the findings of this enquiry both credible and reliable as the participants in the study tap from diverse backgrounds of experiences and learning and have the proclivity to appreciate the nexus between criminal behaviour and drug and substance abuse. The fact that all participants in the study have some educational background means that they can understand the objective and aims of the study with ease and respond to the questions with total understanding of what is being sought by the question.

#### 4.4 Distribution of respondents by years of experience

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents by work experience**

		Percentages Years			
of experience		Fre que ncy	Percen t	Valid Percent	Cumulativ e Percent
Valid	1-5yrs	1	25.0		
	6-10yrs	1	25.0		
	11-15yrs	1	25.0		
	16-20yrs	1	25.0		
	Total	4	100.0		
Valid	10.0	1	25.0	25.0	25.0
	23.0	1	25.0	25.0	50.0
	24.0	1	25.0	25.0	75.0
	43.0	1	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	4	100.0	100.0	

The two tables juxtaposed above give a picture of the period of experience at work of the respondents. The first category of respondents has one to five years of experience and these constitute 10% of the population of respondents. The second category of respondent comprising of respondents with 6 to 10 years of experience comprise of 23% of the sample while the third category of respondents with respondent who have between 11 and 15 years of experience constitutes 24% of the sample. The last category of respondents with 16 to 20 years of experience constitute 43% of the sample. The fact that respondents in the study have different levels of experience implies that they have different levels of maturity and experience and therefore their responses in the study could be read for informed and credible as they are based on experience and different levels of exposure in life.

#### 4.5 Respondents with relatives affected by drug and substance abuse

**Table 5: Respondent with relatives affected by drug and substance abuse**

<i>No</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>11.0%</i>
<i>Yes</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>89.0%</i>

The table above shows that 89% of the respondents have had a relative or loved who has been affected by drug and substance abuse and this makes the majority of the respondents an informed lot who responses are informed by experience with those affected by drug and substance abuse. This personal experience of the majority of the respondent justifies the credibility of this study as participated in by people who have had firsthand experience with issues of drug and substance abuse. The fact that the other 11% claim not to have had relatives or loved ones who have been through drugs also helps in the enquiry in that those who have not had direct contacts with affected relations may have knowledge from other encounters in life which may help reduce emotional responses in the study.

#### 4.6 Most commonly used drugs in Bindura area

**Table 6: The most commonly used drugs in Bindura**

Most common drugs in Bindura	Percentages of respondents			Most common drugs in Bindura	Percentages of respondents
Broncleer	15.0	N	Valid	1	1
			Missing	0	0
Cannabis	20.0	N	Valid	1	1
			Missing	0	0
Cocaine	15.0	N	Valid	1	1
			Missing	0	0
Crystal Methamphetamine	25.0	N	Valid	1	1
			Missing	0	0
Glue	10.0	N	Valid	1	1
			Missing	0	0
Kachasu	5.0	N	Valid	1	1
			Missing	0	0
Musombodhiya/Mutoriro	15.0	N	Valid	1	1
			Missing	0	0

From the table above the most commonly used drugs in Bindura area are Crystal Methamphetamine commonly referred to as '*Crystal meth*' to which 25% of respondents agreed followed by Cannabis which had 20% of the

respondents agreeing to it. According to 15% Cocaine is rather more on the expensive side but is also consumed in the area. 15% of the respondent hold that Cocaine is also consumed in Bindura which is proof that drug consumption in the area cuts across all social strata from the poor to those with expensive tastes who can procure cocaine. Bronchclear, a medicinal cough syrup which is also consumed by drug users for its intoxicating properties in another is among the most used drugs in Bindura area with 15% of the respondents admitting is common among users. 10% of the respondents also hold that glue sniffing is another form of drug abuse rampant in Bindura while the other 15% say commercially produced illicit brews commonly referred to as *Mutoriro* and *Mushombodhiya*. The last 5% of the respondents say a traditional illicit brew *Kachasu* is another form of substance abused in Bindura. The noted drugs that are said to be most common in Bindura are in sync with the views raised earlier by Dube (2023) and Maraire et al (2020) who said that the commonly abused drugs in Zimbabwe include Codeine, crystal meth or *Guka*, Broncleer, *Maragado*, Cannabis or *Mbanje*. The fact that the drugs identified by the scholars earlier are the same as noted by the respondents proves that the Bindura like any other community is part to a larger drug menace bedeviling the country and that if there is a link between criminality and drug usage that those issue could also be possible in Bindura.

#### 4.7 Cause of drug and substance abuse in Bindura

**Table 7: Cause of drug abuse in Bindura**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Popular culture	1	20.0	16.7	16.7
	Poor Parenting	1	5.0	16.7	33.3
	Peer Pressure	1	15.0	16.7	50.0
	Lack of recreational facilities	1	10.0	16.7	66.7
	Lack of Economic opportunities	1	20.0	16.7	83.3
	Availability and access to drugs	1	30.0	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

As is reflected in the table above, 30% of the respondents opined that one of the major cause of drug and substance abuse in Bindura is the ready access of these drug. According to the respondents '*drugs in the town have become a common sight with peddlers stationed virtually at every corner and in every street which makes the consumption of these illicit substances so common.*' According to the respondent the widespread availability of drugs has increased even their usage among the youth.

The other 20% of the respondents hold that poor economic opportunities for the youth has increased the usage of drugs among the youth in communities. According to these respondents' idleness among the youth results

in the youths opting to use drugs. This view is in line with the one raised by Adjei & Wilhite (2021) who say that economic misery in communities is but one of the key drivers of drug and substance abuse in communities. According to the sages in situations where youths and even the old find themselves feeling economically asphyxiated leads them to seek hideaways of which drug and substance abuse becomes the easiest.

The other 20% of the respondents hold that exposure of youths to popular culture does lead to drug and substance abuse among the youths. According to these respondents in the study the global dominant American culture promotes drugs and their use through music and movies. The most prominent of American stars show off drugs as the best postern to recreation which then is adopted by youth world over including Bindura as the measure of modern trend. This view is supported by Johnston et al (2014) who posits that popular American culture has become a vehicle of marketing the proliferation of drug usage world over. In Zimbabwe musicians like *Kaflow* have joined the bandwagon of American musician and celebrities in promoting drug abuse like in his song *Zunza* where is sings of the ‘beauty’ of taking cannabis.

The other 15% of the respondents are of the view that peer pressure is but one of the course of drug and substance abuse among youths in Bindura, Zimbabwe. According to these respondents’ youth emulate friends and colleague who partake drug and end up hooked in the complicated web of decadence. The other 10% say that that lack of recreational facilities to entertain idle and unemployed youths is one cause of drug and substance abuse among the youth. The last 5% say that poor parenting and absent parenting are other causes of drug and substance abuse.

While the cause may be many with some explicitly spelt out in this section of the study it is not the core thrust of this study to interrogate this but to establish the nexus between drug usage and criminal behaviour among the youth.

#### **4.8 Possible links between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth**

On the possibility of links between the drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour 100% of the respondents claimed that the bond between the two is strong. According to the respondents *‘drug users mostly are addicted to the point that they cannot live without a supply of these illicit substance so to ensure that they have enough for now and tomorrow they steal, rob or commit crime to ensure they have enough.’* This idea is supported by Rafaiee (2013) who says that there is definitely a close relationship between drug and crime and further says in 2020, over 70% of male prisoners in America were drug abusers.

The other point raised by the 100% of the respondents is that *‘drugs take the better of one’s mental faculties to the point that when those who use drugs are high they can do anything without due consideration of the legal provisions of the land only to realize that they have erred when the law has taken it course.’* The fact that when one is high on drugs and lacks an appreciation of the consequences of his or her actions is also another indication that there is quite at link between drugs and criminality among the youth.

A documentary analysis of crimes committed in Bindura from June 2023 is also a reflection of the fact that there is a link between drugs and criminal behaviour. From June 2023 to the same month 2024 police records show that a total of 12356 cases were committed in Bindura urban with 7134 being committed youths who were between 18 and 35 years and of these 5423 where either drug influenced or those who committed were with the records of drug and substance abuse. This therefore is a testimony to the effect there is quite a link between criminal behaviour and drug and substance abuse in Bindura.

#### 4.9 Possible ways of curbing drug and substance abuse

**Table 8 Possible ways of curbing drug and substance abuse in Bindura.**

S		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Youth empowerment	1	22.0	16.7	16.7
	Inclusion of anti-drug education in curricula	1	10.0	16.7	33.3
	Heightened community policing	1	25.0	16.7	50.0
	Establishment of rehabilitation centres	1	15.0	16.7	66.7
	Drug and substance awareness's	1	10.0	16.7	83.3
	Deterrent sentences	1	18.0	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

The table above give some possible measure raised by the respondent as potential correctives to drug and substance abuse in Bindura. 22% of the respondent say compromised and sloppy community policing initiatives in the urban community of Bindura is one reason why drug and substance abuse have become rampant in the area. According to the respondent the police in the area are more on the reactive side of policing than proactive. They wait for crimes to be reported instead of instigating upbeat crime detection ingenuities that could sniff out drug peddlers and users before crimes are committed.

The other 22% of the respondents are of the view that youth empowerment and skills training are necessary measures of curbing drug and substance abuse which is said to have strong correlational relationship with criminal behaviour among the youth in Bindura. According to these respondents if youth are empowered then they can be able to be kept occupied and away from drugs that have proclivity of driving them to criminality. This view is in line with the suggestion given by Miles and Scott (2017) who hold that youth empowerment and skills training is one way out of the drug quagmire current razing societies.

The other 18% of the respondents were of the view that the legal pillar of Zimbabwe is probably to some extent increasing the drug challenge in the country through mating out tolerant sentences to drug offenders. According to the respondents there is need for the legislature in Zimbabwe to promulgate deterrent sentence on drug offenders and for the judiciary to mate these out. The respondents say that for as long as the laws of the land with regards appear lenient on either users or peddlers the drug challenge will perpetually haunt the country and communities in it like Bindura.

While the issue of drug and substance abuse has already affected a section of the population 15% of the respondent say that there is need to have district if not ward based rehabilitation centres to ensure that those affected can be brought back to sobriety. A situation where there are limited rehabilitation homes tends to affect communities and promotes criminal behaviour from among those affected by drugs.

10% of the respondents hold that awareness campaigns against drug and substance abuse should be held regularly and with serious intensity to ensure communities take the drug challenge seriously while the other 10% says that there is need to include the drug and substance problem into the national school curricula so that learners are caught young and are made are aware of the implications of the taking drugs in the days of their childhood.

#### **4.10 Summary**

The chapter analysed the data gotten from the respondent through questionnaire and interview. The data was analysed thematically and presented in tables. The next chapter will present the summary of the study finding and recommendations

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter will provide a summary of the study, findings and recommendations. Recommendations for further study will also be given.

## 5.1 Summary of the study

This study sought to establish the nexus between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth. The study was carried out in Bindura in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. In carrying out the enquiry the researcher adopted the Mixed Method Research Design which simultaneously collects both qualitative and quantitative data. The choice of this research method was informed by the need to collect the two sets of data in the enquiry to ensure that a comprehensive picture of the sought nexus could be gained from the enquiry. The subject of the enquiry were drawn from the police force, residents of the town mostly youth as well as drug survivors. From the population of Bindura which is estimated to be around 15000 from the 2022 census a sample of a 100 participants was drawn using purposive sampling and random sampling and to these questionnaires and interviews were conducted. Questionnaires, interviews and documentary analysis were used as means of data collection. Tables were used to present quantitative data collected while qualitative data was analysed qualitatively with citations from respondents being put in italics.

## 5.2 Conclusions drawn from the study

From the study the following were noted:

- Drug and substance abused are a challenge in Bindura urban among the youth.
- The youth who consume drugs do so as a result of a myriad of complications.
- Some of the complication resulting in drug and substance abuse include: ○ Unemployment ○ Peer pressure ○ Unlimited availability of drug supplies ○ Poor parenting ○ Lack of proactive community policing initiatives ○ Seemingly lenient laws for drug users and peddlers.
- The study also noted that there is a strong nexus between drug and substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth in Bindura.
- The link between the two according to the study are noted in that drug users commit crime to get money to procure more drugs or;
- When they consume drugs they cannot effectively control their mental faculties and they end up committing crimes or have a brush with the law because they act on the whims of the drugs.
- Statistics from June 2023 to June 2024 there evidence that criminality and drug abuse are linked through noting that a total of 12356 cases were committed with 7134 being committed youths who were between 18 and 35 years and of these 5423 were either drug influenced or those who committed were with the records of drug and substance abuse.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the researcher makes the following recommendations to ensure that drug abuse which is an ingredient to criminal behaviour among the youth can be curtailed:



- There is need for proactive and serious community policing if drug and substance abuse is to be controlled in Bindura.
- Drug and substance abuse awareness campaigns should not be just talk shows but serious projects that should include and engage all communities to ensure that both drug peddlers and users are not safe.
- There is need to include the drug and substance issues in the national educational curricula to ensure that learners are taught young to avoid drugs and consequently criminality born out of drug abuse.
- There is also need to strengthen the legal framework of the country to ensure that drug peddlers and users are dealt with in accordance with the laws of the land.
- Establishment of rehabilitation centres is also a necessity to ensure that those affected by drug and related criminality are helped.

#### **5.4 Recommendation for further studies**

It is the researcher's view that if this study is replicated using a larger sample and done on comparative basis, this study has but the proclivity to yield more comprehensive findings.

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## APPENDIX 1:

### LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Respondent.

My name is **Everisto Kapenyani** B221741B. I am a Bindura University of Science Education student studying towards a degree in Police and Security Studies. I am doing a research study entitled “***The nexus between drug substance abuse and criminal behaviour among the youth in Bindura town***”. Prior approval to conduct this study with the school as a case in point has been attained from the administration.

The researcher consequently requests that you voluntarily participate in this study and be as honest as possible in answering the questions. If you wish not to participate, you should not respond to the questionnaire. The researcher wishes to assure you that your identity will not be revealed to any

person(s) and your responses will be regarded as confidential. The information you provide will **not** be used outside its intended purpose.

In order to do justice to the said investigation, please complete the questionnaire to the best of your knowledge and ability. Please do not write your name on any part of the questionnaire. The questionnaire takes about ten minutes to complete.

### **Instructions**

For your answers, you are kindly asked to tick in the box resembling your response or simply fill in the spaces provided.

Disclaimer: I hereby consent to participate in this research, and I confirm that I have read the above information and agree with it.

Place: .....

Date: .....

Sign: .....

## **APPENDIX II:**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **Section A: Demographic profile**

1. Gender: Male [ ]                      Female [ ]

2. Age :

20 years or less [ ]

21-30 years old [ ]

31-40 years old [ ]

41- 50 years old [ ]

Above 50 years old [ ]

3. Please indicate your highest level of education:

O' Level [ ]

A' Level [ ]

Certificate [ ]

Diploma [ ]

Degree [ ]

4. Work experience:

Below 5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ] 11-15 years [ ] 16-20 years [ ] Above 20 years [ ]

5. Have you or someone close to you been affected by drug or substance abuse?

YES [ ] NO [ ]

### SECTION B: Types of drugs and substances commonly abused in Bindura town

For question 6, use the following key: (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-uncertain, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree)

6. What types of drugs or substances are commonly abused in your area:

	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>
	1	2	3	4	5
Cannabis / <i>Mbanje</i>					
Crystal methamphetamine/ <i>mutoriro</i>					
Cocaine					
Glue					
Bronclear					
<i>Musombodiya/mangemba</i>					
<i>Kachasu</i>					

### SECTION C: Causes of Drug and substance abuse.

For question 7, use the following key: (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-uncertain, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree)

7. Respondents' attitude on the causes of drug and substance abuse in Bindura town:

	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>
	1	2	3	4	5

Lack of economic opportunities					
Peer pressure					
Poor parental care					
Insufficient recreational facilities					
Availability and ease access of substances					

Any other (specify).....

#### **SECTION D: Consequences of drug and substance abuse.**

8. What do you think are the links between criminal behaviour and drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura town?

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#### **SECTION E: Strategies of combating drug and substance abuse among the youth**

9. Suggest strategies that can be used to combat drug and substance abuse among the youth.

.....

.....

.....

Thank you very much for taking time to complete the questionnaire. Kindly cross check to see if you have responded to all questions.

## APPENDIX II:

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How old are you?
2. What is your highest level of education?

]

3. Work experience:

Below 5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ] 11-15 years [ ] 16-20 years [ ] Above 20 years  
[ ]

4. Have you or someone close to you been affected by drug or substance abuse?

5. What types of drugs or substances are commonly abused in your area:

	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>
	1	2	3	4	5
Cannabis / <i>Mbanje</i>					
Crystal methamphetamine/ <i>mutoriro</i>					
Cocaine					
Glue					
Bronclear					

<i>Musombodiya/mangemba</i>					
<i>Kachasu</i>					

5. What do you think causes drug and substance abuse in Bindura?

	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>
	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of economic opportunities					
Peer pressure					
Poor parental care					
Insufficient recreational facilities					
Availability and ease access of substances					

Any other (specify).....

6. What do you think are the links between criminal behaviour and drug and substance abuse among the youth in Bindura town?

9. Suggest strategies that can be used to combat drug and substance abuse among the youth.

Thank you very much for taking time to complete the questionnaire. Kindly cross check to see if you have responded to all questions.



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