

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

A UNITED METHODIST RELATED- INSTITUTION

IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY INTERVENTIONS TO CONTROL  
OF ILLICIT SUBSTANCES IN MANICALAND; THE CASE OF  
SAKUBVA, MUTARE, ZIMBABWE (2017-2025)

BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY AND  
GOVERNANCE IN THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT  
SCIENCES

2025

### **Abstract**

The study focus was on the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, the case of Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe (2017-2025). The objectives of the study were to assess the effectiveness and reach of policy interventions in reducing illicit substance use in Sakubva, Mutare, from 2017 to 2025, to analyze the specific policy interventions, programs, and strategies implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, between 2017, to evaluate the effectiveness of existing policy measures in reducing illicit substance prevalence among youth in Sakubva, Mutare, to identify barriers and facilitators to the successful implementation of drug policies in the Sakubva, Mutare and 2025 and to provide recommendations to improve policy interventions and their implementation. The study was informed by the self-control theory, which proposes that weak ties to commitment, religion, attachment and involvement can lead to drug abuse and crime. The study applied qualitative research approach and used purposive sampling to select participants for in-depth exploration of policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Manicaland. The selection criteria involved selecting various groups of officials who have the required information for the researcher to use in the study. The study utilized in-depth interviews as data collection tools. The study findings indicated that policy interventions implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva have been multifaceted, including law enforcement, public health, and community-based initiatives, with law enforcement efforts being crucial in disrupting the supply of illicit substances. However, the study also highlighted challenges faced by stakeholders, including lack of resources, corruption, and inadequate community involvement. The study recommends among other things, policymakers and practitioners should prioritize community involvement and participation in policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Sakubva and policy interventions should be tailored to the specific needs of a specific area such as Sakubva.

**KEY WORDS:** Illicit Substances, Policy Interventions, Drug Abuse, Implementation.

## Declaration Page

I declare that this dissertation is my original work except where sources have been cited and acknowledged. The work has never been submitted, nor will it ever be submitted to another university for the award of a degree.

VICTORINO DE ALMEIDA GARCIA

Student's Full name



Student's Signature



**Dr Kenneth C Maregere**

Main Supervisor's Name

Main Supervisor's Signature

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## **Acknowledgements**

I am sincerely grateful to my Supervisor, Doctor Kenneth Maregere, who assisted me to attain this milestone in my endeavour to complete my studies. Doc. Kenneth's expertise and dedication made this study a success. I appreciate his immense contribution and guidance rendered until the completion of all stages of this dissertation. It was such an honour working with someone whose commitment is unparalleled and excellent. I am thankful for managing to tap from his wealth of knowledge and experience, otherwise, this study could have remained in the pipeline had I not worked under her supervision.

I also wish to extend my gratitude to my research respondents, my fellow classmates and most importantly, all my lecturers who have been with me throughout my studies, because if they had not participated, this study would have not come to fruition. They took time off their very busy schedules to participate in this study. The Key Informants who participated in this study are also worthy of being mentioned and appreciated for their efforts that made me achieve this milestone.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my lovely parents who have been giving me the strength to persevere in refining and educating myself. To my girlfriend, I strongly feel that you have guided me this far to continue upgrading myself and attaining higher levels in terms of educational qualifications. I also dedicate this to my siblings, friends and relatives, I bear true allegiance to your support, your assistance has culminated in the success of my educational journey as I complete and attain this academic milestone.

## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

AU	Africa Union
AUREC	Africa University Research Ethics and Committee
ADAAZ	Anti Drug Abuse Association of Zimbabwe
CBT	Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
CM	Contingency Management
MAT	Medication Assisted Treatment
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
SADC	Southern African Development Community
WHO	World Health Organization
UNCND	United Nation Commission on Narcotic Drugs
UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergence Fund
ZCLDN	Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network

## **Definition of Key Terms**

**Illicit Substances:** Are normally defined as substances that are prohibited or restricted by law, including narcotics, psychotropics, and other substances that have a high potential for abuse and dependence (United Nations on Drug and Crime, 2018).

**Policy Interventions:** It can be understood as the actions taken by governments or other organizations to address a specific problem or issue, often through the use of policy instruments, such as laws, regulations and programs (Sabatier, 2007).

**Drug Abuse:** Is the use of a substance in a way that is likely to cause harm to the individual, others, or society, including physical, psychological, social, or economic harm (World Health Organization, 2019).

**Implementation:** It's the process of translating policy into action, involving the mobilization of resources, the coordination of activities, and the management of personnel (Sebatier, 2007)

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## **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Illicit substance abuse poses significant health, social, and economic challenges worldwide. In Zimbabwe, particularly in Manicaland, the issue necessitates effective policy interventions. This study investigates the implementation of policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Manicaland. This chapter unveils the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions, scope and limitations of the study

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

Drug Abuse is a public concern in all age groups and sectors .Much has been written about it worldwide by scholars such as, Frischer, Crome & Macleod, (2005);Frischer, Rehm, Brissette & Brochu, (2005);Kuria, (1996) ; Kasuja,2016; Roe & Martin,(2006);Volkow and Li (2005); Walter, 2006 and Wilson ,Compton, Nora and Volkow,(2006); . The mentioned authors have written about drug abuse in different areas especially schools, workplace, colleges and universities. Drug abuse has been conceptualised in many ways as said below. The World Health Organisation, WHO (1969) defines drug abuse as the persistent or sporadic excessive drug use inconsistent with or unrelated to acceptable medical practice. Drug Abuse can also be called drug misuse, maltreatment or excessive use of the drugs (Thesaurus Dictionary, 2013).

Drug abuse/misuse is defined as habitual use of drugs not needed for therapeutic purposes, solely to alter ones mood, or affect state of consciousness (Fartex, Partner

Medical Dictionary, 2012; The American Heritage Medical Dictionary, 2007). The University of Maryland Medical Centre concurs with the above definitions that drug abuse is the recurrent use of illegal drugs or the misuse of prescriptions or over the counter drugs with negative consequences. These consequences may involve problems at work, school, and home or in interpersonal relationships. Drug misuse can also be known as the disease model of drug misuse (Volkow & Li, 2005). In this study drug abuse, drug misuse or substance abuse will be used interchangeably

The SADC Region has not been spared from drug abuse and drug trafficking. The SADC Region is made up of 14 member states with a combined population of 200 million people. In the 1997 SADC Drug Control Database key findings were that alcohol is the most abused drug that causes the most problems seconded by cannabis/ marijuana/mbanje most damaging. Zimbabwe has more than 2158 hectares of land which is used for cannabis cultivation. Heroin is a serious problem in Mauritius, Botswana, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Zambia whilst Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe reported an increase in Opiate abuse among all age groups. Methaqualone (Mandrax) is a problem for Namibia and South Africa and 29 drug control projects are being implemented. Rudatsika, Maposa, Mukandavire, Muula and Siziva, (2009) conducted a study on the Prevalence and predictors of illicit drug use among school-going adolescents in Harare Zimbabwe. There were 1984 adolescent participants in the study of which 50.7% were females; 15 years olds were 30.3% non- smokers and non- alcoholic drinkers. Nine per cent of the subjects (13.4 males and 4.9% females) reported having used marijuana or glue. The results showed that marijuana or glue use was positively associated with cigarette smoking,

alcohol drinking and sexual intercourse and males were more likely to have used marijuana or glue than females.

According to a Zimbabwean Herald Article on the 6th of February 2014 a teenage Joshua Merrick 19years old died in his sleep after taking a tin of high-caffeine energy drink called Animal Rage to boost his work-outs stated that the caffeine energy drink is popular among children and teenagers. Some tins of high energy drinks contain 13 teaspoons of sugar and two cups of coffee. These drinks are accessible to anyone as they are sold over the counter just like any ordinary drink. Dr Jack James once commented in a paper that all energy drinks need to be controlled just like alcohol and cigarettes. The caffeine content drinks include coffee, energy drinks, soda, tea and shots. Statistics from the Anti-Drug Abuse Association of Zimbabwe as reported by Tatenda Gapa on 19th March 2015 show that school children are being admitted to medical institutions suffering from mental problems related to drug abuse and this has reached alarming levels in Zimbabwe. The mostly abused drugs include cannabis (marijuana), Broncleer commonly known as “bronco” .The later drug is a bronchodilator which contains codeine and alcohol. This is a cause of concern, more than 100 cases of drug and alcohol abuse are reported monthly only in Harare and this involves both boys and girls.

Senior Assistant Commissioner Charity Charamba, (2015 ) said that some girls in Mutare had been detained for possessing illegal drugs and seven other school girls from Dangamvura were caught in possession of illegal drugs and arrested. These reports imply that drug abuse is in existence in high schools. Therefore these reports motivated the researchers to do a study on Drug Abuse among High school boarding candidates in Mutare urban and peri urban.

There have been various policy initiatives to curb drug substance abuse in Zimbabwe. This research focuses on policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances. These interventions likely include legislation, law enforcement, education, and rehabilitation programs. In April 2024, Cabinet approved the Zimbabwe Multi- Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Plan 2024-2030. The plan provides strategic direction to the nation's response to the drug and substance abuse challenge and ensures that all communities, families and individuals are fully supported as the country moves towards Vision 2030 leaving no one and no place behind.

The implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, specifically in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe, between 2017 and 2025, is a critical area of study. The common illicit substances in Zimbabwe and Mutare that this study is focusing on include Codeine; Methamphetamine (crystal meth, commonly known as meth, speed, mutoriro, Chalk, Ice, Crank, Guka; Glue; Broncleer (Bronco); Solvents Fembo and Genkem; Chlorpromazine Maragado; Mangemba; Cane spirit; Cocaine, Cannabis/Marijuana/Mbanje and illicit alcohol. Policy interventions can take various forms, such as legislative measures, law enforcement as well as education and awareness. To understand the background of this research, let's break down the essential elements. The period between 2017 and 2025 is crucial in understanding the timeline of policy interventions implemented in Zimbabwe. This timeframe coincides with the country's efforts to address the rising substance abuse problem, projected to increase by 40% between 2018 and 2030.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

The implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, Zimbabwe, particularly in Sakubva, Mutare, poses a significant challenge. Despite the existence of national policies and laws aimed at reducing substance abuse, the prevalence of illicit substance use remains high in the region. Statistics report from Anti-Drug Abuse Association of Zimbabwe on 19 March, 2015 reported that high school children are being admitted to medical institutions suffering from mental problems related to drug abuse in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean police Senior Assistant Commissioner Charity Charamba,(2015) also reported that school girls in Mutare urban /Dangamvura were caught in possession of illegal drugs and were arrested. The Zimbabwean government has implemented various policies to control illicit substance abuse, including the National Drug Master Plan (2020-2025), National Substance Abuse Policy (2019), and the Zimbabwe National Alcohol Policy (2012). Additionally, the Zimbabwe Multi-Sectoral Drug and Substance Abuse Plan (2024-2030) was approved by Cabinet in April 2024. However, the effectiveness of these policies in addressing substance abuse in Manicaland, particularly in Sakubva, Mutare, remains uncertain. Research has shown that substance abuse in Sakubva is influenced by factors such as peer associations, unemployment, and social pressures. A study by Mashamba (2023) on Commonly Abused Substances by Youths in Sakubva Suburb established that there is rampant abuse of illicit substances in the area. The lack of effective implementation of policy interventions at the local level exacerbates the problem. The problem statement for this research can be defined as: Despite the existence of policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substance abuse in Zimbabwe, the prevalence of substance abuse remains high in Manicaland, particularly in Sakubva, Mutare. The lack of effective implementation of these policies at the local level hinders efforts to address the issue

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

- a) to assess the effectiveness and reach of policy interventions in reducing illicit substance use in Sakubva, Mutare, from 2017 to 2025
- b) to analyze the specific policy interventions, programs, and strategies implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, between 2017 and 2025
- c) to evaluate the effectiveness of existing policy measures in reducing illicit substance prevalence among youth in Sakubva, Mutare
- d) to identify barriers and facilitators to the successful implementation of drug policies in the Sakubva, Mutare
- e) to provide recommendations to improve policy interventions and their implementation.

#### **1.5 The Research Questions**

1. Which policy interventions have been in place to reduce illicit substance abuse in Manicaland, Sakubva, Mutare?
2. How successful have been the key policy interventions to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva?
3. What are the challenges faced by stakeholders in implementing policies to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva?
4. What factors influence the abuse of illicit substances abuse in Sakubva?
5. What can be done to control the abuse of illicit substance abuse in Manicaland, Sakubva?

## **1.6 Assumptions**

This study assumes that policy interventions play a crucial role in controlling illicit substance abuse. It also assumes that stakeholders, including policymakers, law enforcement officials, healthcare providers, community leaders, and individuals recovering from substance abuse, have valuable insights into policy implementation. Lastly, it assumes that the study's findings will contribute to improving policy interventions.

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform evidence-based policy decisions and practice. Through exploring the implementation of policy interventions, the study identifies challenges, successes, and areas for improvement. This information enables policymakers and stakeholders to develop targeted strategies, enhancing the effectiveness of policy interventions. Furthermore, the study's findings contribute to the broader understanding of substance abuse control, informing regional and national policy discussions.

## **1.8 Delimitations**

This study has delimitations. Geographically, the study focuses on Manicaland, specifically Sakubva, Mutare. This delimitation allows for in-depth exploration of policy implementation in a specific context. Additionally, the study concentrates on policymakers, law enforcement officials, healthcare providers, community leaders, and individuals recovering from substance abuse, excluding other stakeholders.

### **1.9 limitations**

Despite its significance, this study faces limitations. Firstly, the study's reliance on self-reported data may introduce social desirability bias. Secondly, the sample size may not be representative of the entire population. Thirdly, the study's focus on Manicaland limits generalizability to other regions. Lastly, the study's timeframe may not capture long-term policy implementation outcomes.

To mitigate these limitations, the study employs rigorous data collection and analysis methods. Triangulation of data sources and member checking enhance data validity. The study's findings are contextualized within the existing literature, acknowledging potential limitations. Future studies can build upon this research, addressing gaps and expanding the scope.

## **CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the existing research on policy interventions to control illicit substances, with a focus on the Zimbabwean context. It will explore the challenges and barriers to effective policy implementation, including the role of socioeconomic factors, peer influence, and community involvement. The review also examines the impact of policy interventions on substance abuse rates and related problems in Sakubva, Mutare. By synthesizing the existing research, this literature review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, Zimbabwe. The findings will inform the development of more effective policies and strategies to address substance abuse in the region.

### **2.2 Drug and substance abuse in Zimbabwe**

Drug and substance abuse has become a global pandemic that has cut across almost all races, religions and nationalities (Anderson et al., 2020). So devastating is the issue of drug and substance abuse that it does not affect the individual alone who decides to take that dangerous root, (Padilla, 2020), rather, the negative effects of drug and substance abuse are even felt by the families, community and nations at large. Currently, approximately 31 million persons have drug use disorders, throughout the world and about 11 million are on opiate drugs, of which 1.3 million are living with HIV, 5.5 million with hepatitis C, and 1 million with both HIV and hepatitis C (World Health Organisation, 2019).

In the African continent, drug and substance abuse is also a worrisome pandemic where the prevalence rate is 5.2% to 13.5% of the total population (WHO, 2018). Cannabis is the most abused illicit substance in Africa followed by amphetamine-type stimulants such as “ecstasy” (WHO, Africa, 2018). Other substances abused across the African continent include benzodiazepines such as diazepam, chlorpromazine and different inhalants, while 3.7% use injection drugs (Ndasuka et al 2019). The abuse of these illicit drugs has a notable impact to the African continent, in terms of negative health consequences to the abusers themselves, emotional stress to abusers’ beloved ones, heavy financial burden on individuals, families and society (Ndasuka et al 2019).

Like some other country in Africa, Zimbabwe experiences drug abuse problems. Zimbabwe has struggled with illicit substance abuse, particularly cannabis, cocaine, and heroin, for decades (UNODC, 2019). The country's geographic location makes it a transit point for international drug trafficking (WOLA, 2020). The negative effects of this problem have been felt by the drug abusers, their families, communities and nation at large (Chikoko, 2019). Zimbabwean youth (10-35 years) are the most affected age group by drug abuse (Nhunzvi et al, 2019; Rwafa, 2019; Nhapi, 2019) and this age group constitutes 67.7% of the total population (Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, 2018). Zimbabwe’s population is generally young (Zimstat, 2012). In the 2012 Census, 41% of the Zimbabwean population was below the age of 15, 55 per cent was between the ages of 15 and 64 whilst only 4% was aged 65 and above (Zimstat, 2012).

Of concern is that, the situation of drug abuse by the Zimbabwean youth is not getting any better, rather it is worsening by the day (Jakaza et al 2018). The statistics on youth drug abuse in Zimbabwe increase yearly despite measures implemented by various

stakeholders to fight the pandemic (Chikoko et al., 2016; Matutu & Mususa, 2019). In commenting about drug and substances abuse statistics in Zimbabwe, Makande (2017) highlights that there is no accurate information on the magnitude of drug abuse by the youth in Zimbabwe, hence the country relies on calculated estimates. Manayiti (2016) citing Deputy Director of mental health services and substance abuse in the Ministry of Health of Zimbabwe highlights that, it is a mammoth task to establish the exact figure of drug abusers in Zimbabwe.

Although there may be a short of exact statistics, this does not negate the existence of the problem of drug abuse by the youth in Zimbabwe (Mazuru, 2018). There is a notable increase in youth drug abuse statistics in Zimbabwe from approximately 43% youths engaging in drug abuse in Zimbabwe in 2017 (Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network, ZCLDN, 2018), to approximately 45% in 2018 (ZCLDN, 2019) and further increased to approximately 57% in 2019 (ZCLDN, 2020).

There have been rehabilitation programs for the affected persons, which is a crucial aspect of addressing the issue of illicit substance abuse. Rehabilitation programs for illicit substance abuse aim to provide individuals with the skills and support necessary to overcome their addiction and reintegrate into society. These programs typically involve a combination of counseling, medication, and social support (WHO, 2014). The most effective rehabilitation programs are those that are tailored to the individual's specific needs and circumstances (UNODC, 2014). One approach to rehabilitation is the use of medication-assisted treatment (MAT). MAT involves the use of medications such as methadone or buprenorphine to manage withdrawal symptoms and cravings (WHO,

2014). Studies have shown that MAT can be effective in reducing illicit substance use and improving overall health outcomes (Amato et al., 2011).

Another approach to rehabilitation is the use of behavioral therapies such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and contingency management (CM). CBT involves helping individuals to identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors associated with their addiction (WHO, 2014). CM involves providing individuals with rewards for achieving specific goals related to their recovery (Higgins et al., 2017).

In addition to these approaches, family-based interventions can also play an important role in rehabilitation. Family-based interventions involve working with the individual's family members to provide support and guidance throughout the recovery process (WHO, 2014). Studies have shown that family-based interventions can be effective in improving treatment outcomes and reducing relapse rates (Stanton & Shadish, 1997). In the context of Zimbabwe, the government has established several rehabilitation programs for individuals affected by illicit substance abuse. The Zimbabwe National Substance Abuse Policy, launched in 2019, outlines a comprehensive approach to addressing substance abuse, including rehabilitation (Government of Zimbabwe, 2019). The policy emphasizes the need for a multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation, involving healthcare professionals, social workers, and community leaders

## **2.2 ( i) Measure of success and effectiveness**

Evaluating the success and effectiveness of policy interventions to control illicit requires a comprehensive approach. Researchers have identified several key measures to assess the effectiveness of policy implementation, including Policy Implementation Fidelity, the

extent to which policy interventions are implemented as intended. This involves assessing whether the policy is being executed according to its original plan and design. Outcome-Based Evaluation, focusing on achieving specific outcomes and measuring progress towards these goals. This approach helps to determine whether the policy interventions are having the desired impact. Quantitative Measure, utilizing numerical data to assess the impact of policy interventions. This can include metrics such as the number of people accessing treatment services or the reduction in substance-related crimes.

Some potential indicators to measure the effectiveness of policy interventions in controlling illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe, include Incidence of Substance-Related Crimes, a decrease in the number of crimes related to illicit substance use. Substance Use Treatment Admissions, an increase in the number of people admitted to treatment programs for substance use disorders. Community Perceptions and Attitudes, improved perceptions and attitudes towards substance use and policy interventions among community members.

The Game theory can also be applied to enhance policy implementation success by promoting cooperation among stakeholders. According to Signé (2017), the degree of discretion among front-line implementers determines the success of policy implementation. By understanding these factors, policymakers can design more effective policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe

Advocacy organizations can play a crucial role in evaluating policy effectiveness by supporting robust public policy implementation and outcome evaluation. The American Heart Association's framework for effective evaluation provides a useful model for assessing policy impact. Through understanding the complexities of policy

implementation and utilizing robust evaluation methods, policymakers can develop more effective interventions to reduce the harm caused by illicit substances

### **2.3 Nature of Drug and Substance Abuse**

There has been a general consensus that illegal drug and substance uptake in Zimbabwe has reached crisis levels, especially in the post-COVID-19 era (Banda 2023; Dzinamarira et al. 2023; Muzuva et al. 2023; Mandura 2023). So dire is the situation that more than half of the youths' population, approximately 57%, in Zimbabwe abuse drugs (Maraire and Chethiyar 2020). Noting the significant impacts of drug and substance abuse on the nation, the problem has since been considered a national security threat (Tshili 2023), culminating in the setting up of an inter-ministerial committee by the President in 2021 to deal with the problem. In 2023, the drug- and substance-abuse problem was declared a state of national disaster, with the government noting that the problem had reached alarming levels, jeopardizing not only the present but also the future (Moyo and Mpofu 2023).

There is a general consensus that the drug- and substance-abuse problem can lead to catastrophic results on the country's development agenda if it is not urgently addressed (Chikova 2023; Moyo and Mpofu 2023). Statistics compiled by the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network revealed that 60% of psychiatry admissions were due to drug abuse, with 80% of those admitted aged 16 to 25 years, including school children (Mandura 2023). Reports in other online media platforms have revealed that public health facilities are struggling to deal with the swelling numbers of hospitalizations due to drug and substance abuse, and, in most cases, patients are being turned away due to shortage

of human resources and hospital capacity to accommodate the patients (Gwarisa 2023; Pembere 2021).

Reports also reveal that, by the end of 2023, drug rehabilitation centres in Zimbabwe were full and unable to cope with rising demand to accommodate new patients. The centres are estimated to be holding or treating about 5000 people at any time, with tens of thousands of others either not coming forward for or not receiving any assistance (Dzenga 2023). Statistics in early 2024 also revealed that 50% of the new admissions at Ingutsheni Mental Hospital, one of the leading mental health institutions located in Bulawayo, were drug abusers (Gonye and Chikandiwa 2024). Reports of local youths identified to be in a drunken like stupor, colloquially referred to as ‘ku sticker’ (in reference to the paralytic-like stupor youths high on substances are often found in) are widespread in the media (Marandure et al. 2023; Factsheet 2021). Across the country, especially in urban areas, hardly a day passes without news of loss of life, violence and crime owing to drug abuse (Matsikiti 2023).

In an incident that made headlines in Zimbabwe’s media outlets, eight schoolgirls were expelled from one of Harare’s leading elite girls’ high schools over alleged drug abuse in January 2023. Sources close to the school indicated that the girls were caught red-handed using drugs, while other drugs were found packed in their bags (Freddy 2023). This development shows that even young girls are also engaging in drug and substance abuse like their male counterparts. There are various drugs and substances that are abused by the youth. Notwithstanding the challenge of having actual percentages on the extent of the drug abuse problem, cannabis, known in the native language as “mbanje”, has been found

to be the most abused drug in Zimbabwe (Matsikiti 2023; Zimbabwe Civil liberties and Drug Network 2022; Maraire and Chethiyar 2020).

Cannabis, which is smoked or inhaled, is considered a recreational drug which can enhance excitement and pleasure. The drug is usually readily available and affordable to the youth, especially given that some people grow cannabis in their backyards. Other youths have also turned to harder drugs such as heroin, cocaine and crystal methamphetamine (locally known as mutoriro) (Mandura 2023; Voice of Africa 2022), and these drugs are mainly imported. Apart from imported drugs, locals are also flooding the market with cheap, highly intoxicating substitutes such as musombodiya, a colourless drink made from ethanol, which is mainly manufactured and distributed in high-density suburbs and bus termini (Mandura 2023). There is also a growing trend towards abuse of cough syrups such as bronclear, commonly known as “bronco”, and histalix (Maraire et al. 2020). These cough syrups contain alcohol and codeine, with codeine being an opiate containing morphine-like substances. These two ingredients are central nervous system stimulants, and they cause drowsiness, apathy and euphoria if they are taken in larger quantities than the prescribed measures (Maraire et al. 2020).

Similarly, there has also been reported abuse of diazepam a prescription drug commonly known as “mangemba” (Makwanise 2023). Diazepam addresses anxiety, seizures and alcohol withdrawal, and, when taken in excess, it results in diminished physical activity and drowsiness (Maraire et al. 2020). Other prescription drugs that have been reportedly abused by the youth include ketamine, pethidine, morphine and fentanyl (Mandura 2023). Another unorthodox new method, popularly known as ‘Bluetooth’ entails infusion of an intoxicated person’s blood into an unintoxicated person using syringes (Matsikiti 2023).

Apart from the danger of intoxication, this also comes with risks of transmission of other diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

There has also been a trend towards ingestion of confectionary products such as scones, popcorn and muffins laced with drugs (Matsikiti 2023). There have also been reports that young addicts are even dipping diapers and bleach products into boiling water and inhaling the vapours as an intoxicant (Mandura 2023; Manika 2022). Sodium polyacrylate is the absorbent for blood on sanitary pads and urine on diapers and dissolves once boiled. The youth then drink the water after boiling to get intoxicated (Manika 2022). Ironically, most youths prefer used diapers as, having been discarded, they are cheaper to find or procure.

#### **2.4 Contributory Factors to Drug and Substance**

**Abuse among the Youth** Anecdotal and empirical evidence also suggests a rise in substance use fueled by the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant lockdowns (Mhizha and Maunganidze 2022; Mutsaka 2022; Factsheet 2021; Mukwenha et al. 2021). The ease of availability of substances, together with a lack of recreational activities for young people during COVID-19-induced lockdowns, have both been cited as potential reasons for the increase in drug and substance abuse (Mukwenha et al. 2021). The significant socio-economic challenges that have been experienced in the nation for over a decade have been regarded as the major contributory factor to drug and substance abuse among Zimbabwean youths (Marandure et al. 2023; Muswerakuenda et al. 2023).

The rise in poverty and dwindling economic opportunities have left many young people idle and depressed, only to find solace in illicit substance use. Banda (2023) also contends

that poverty intensification in a context of limited approved alternatives may lead the youth to illegal activities, including drug and substance dealing and abuse. Thus, an increasing number of youths are engaging in drug and substance abuse as a form of entertainment in a nation that has been characterised by extremely high unemployment rates, poverty and despair (Dzinamarira et al. 2023; Factsheet 2021). Socio-economic challenges are also linked to increased rates of stress, trauma and mental health challenges, which are all risk factors for substance use (Dube 2023; Kundwei and Mbwirire 2020).

In a country characterised by financial challenges, the low cost of drugs has also been regarded as another contributory factor, with a report by the United Nations International Children's Emergence Fund (UNICEF 2023) indicating that users spend an average of US\$2 to satisfy their needs. The ease of acquiring illicit brews such as musombodhiya and kachasu has also raised the chances of youths engaging in drug and substance abuse, as these cheap illicit brews are easily manufactured in backyards within high-density residential areas (Dzinamarira et al. 2023). Apart from ease of accessibility, lack of supervision, peer influence and having family or relatives who abuse drugs have also been regarded as risk factors for drug and substance abuse by the youth in Zimbabwe (Madzamba 2023). Porous borders, coupled with corruption at border entry points, have also been touted as the reason for the rise in abuse of prescription drugs such as bonclear (Mukwenha et al. 2021), as these drugs are finding their way illegally into the country in huge volumes.

Muswerakuenda et al. (2023) also report that illicit drugs from neighbouring countries are being smuggled through porous entry points and well-organised syndicates at the official border posts. Neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Mozambique and Zambia

have emerged as the major sources for both prescription and hard drugs (Mandura 2023). While cannabis is mainly grown locally, research has shown that youths in Harare are preferring cannabis from Malawi, which has been considered to be stronger than the locally grown cannabis (Mhizha and Maunganidze 2022). Porous borders, coupled with corruption at border posts, could be the possible reason for the proliferation of Malawian cannabis among the youth in Harare.

## **2.5 Current Prescriptive Measures and Attendant Challenges**

The government of Zimbabwe has taken the leading role in fighting drug and substance abuse, with the major highlight being the launch of the National Drug Control Master Plan (2020–2025) (Kwaramba et al. 2024; Muzuva et al. 2023) as well as the Treatment and Rehabilitation Guidelines of Drug and Substance Abuse Disorder of Zimbabwe (Mandura 2023). The launch was preceded by the setting up of an inter-ministerial committee to deal with the rising cases of drug and substance abuse in Zimbabwe. The National Drug Control Master Plan is underpinned by five pillars: supply reduction; demand reduction; harm reduction treatment and rehabilitation; community reintegration; and media and communications (Kwaramba et al. 2024; UNICEF 2023).

In resonance with the master plan, non-governmental organisations and embassies have also been engaged in anti-drug awareness campaigns, with some of them contributing with financial resources (Gonye and Chikandiwa 2024). However, there have been concerns that the progress and achievements made under the plan have not been made public (Mandura 2023), thus calling the efficacy of this noble initiative into question. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) have also been instrumental in the fight against drug and substance abuse, mainly through enforcement and awareness campaigns.

In early 2023, the ZRP launched a nationwide operation targeting drug peddlers and drug addicts, culminating in the arrest of 1903 drug peddlers and addicts as of February 2023 (Mandura 2023). In October 2023, the government revealed that 468 drug and substance abuse offenders and 36 suppliers had been arrested over the previous few months (Moyo and Mpofo 2023). The police conducted raids, confiscating drugs and destroying a total of four bases in three provinces, “two in Harare Metropolitan (Mbare and Epworth), one in Midlands (Gweru CBD), and one in Mashonaland West (Gwayagwaya Shopping Centre)” (Moyo and Mpofo 2023). Most of the drug abusers were released after paying fines.

There have also been plans by the Zimbabwean government to enact legislation for establishing a national drug elimination agency, which will pave the way for the establishment of an additional security service and a specialised drug and substance elimination agency (Xinhua 2024). Enforcement has, however, been hampered by obstacles, chief among them being the involvement of police officers and politicians in the illicit drug and substance trade a fact which was confirmed by the Minister of Home Affairs in a 2023 media briefing (Mandura 2023). This challenge will make it difficult to stop the supply side for illicit drugs and substances. For it to be effective, law enforcement should also be accompanied by stiffer penalties for drug peddlers, coupled with mandatory jail sentences for repeat offenders. The ZRP also continues to conduct awareness campaigns on the rise of drug and substance abuse, emphasising the need for the youth to refrain from illicit and health-threatening substances (Muzuva et al. 2023).

In addition to the law enforcement efforts, the Zimbabwean government also introduced a toll-free number for assistance with drug- and substance-related issues in November

2023. Citizens are able to report drug-related offences through the toll-free number, and the relevant authorities will also be able to attend to citizens who are facing challenges with substance abuse (Ndlovu 2023). This is crucial in promoting anonymous reporting whenever incidents of drug and substance abuse are suspected or have occurred. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, together with the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, are also carrying out drug and substance abuse awareness campaigns (Moyo and Mpofo 2023).

As a response, drug and illicit substance addicts have also been admitted to various health institutions. One major challenge has been the limited capacity of public health institutions to deal with drug and substance abuse, with reports that the available institutions have been overwhelmed. Some patients are now being sent to prison for three months to “cool off” instead of being treated at hospitals, as the relevant institutions do not have capacity for long-term rehabilitation (Nyathi 2022). This usually happens when the drug addicted individuals are repeatedly violent. While there are also some private centres which take in drug and substance abuse patients, the charges are exorbitant (Mutsaka 2022), leaving the patients to scramble for the overstretched public institutions. Late identification of drug and substance abuse cases has also made it difficult to deal with the problem, with research indicating that community members are not aware of some of the signs and symptoms of drug and substance abuse (Dzinamarira et al. 2023). This scenario is compounded by belief among most African communities that mental illness is associated with witchcraft (Dzinamarira et al. 2023); hence, they would least expect mental illnesses to be drug- and substance-abuse-related.

Similarly, there has been limited knowledge on the mechanisms to deal with addiction among the relatives of drug- and substance-addicted individuals (Kwaramba et al. 2024).

## **2.6 Youth, Drug and Substance Abuse and Policy in Zimbabwe**

Drug and substance abuse is a persistent immolating pandemic especially among the young generation (Nhapi, 2019; Nhunzvi & Galvan, 2019). The problem has diverse socioeconomic implications to individuals and society (Muwanzi & Mafumbate, 2018). In Zimbabwe, abuse of drugs and substances is a problem of high concern particularly due to escalating prevalence among adolescents and youth (Maraire et al., 2020; Matutu & Mususa, 2019), referred to in this article as the young generation and the socioeconomic consequences. This generation anchors the future of society through both productive and reproductive roles.

Accordingly, the decimating effect on this generation is a direct threat to society. Signifying the importance of abating drug and substance abuse among the young generation in Zimbabwe, the theme for the 2022 National Youth Day was ‘Alleviate Substance and Drug Abuse by the Youth.’ This youth day is held on the 21 February of each year and is hosted by the Ministry of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation. Regional and global youth frameworks for example, the African Youth Charter and United Nations Youth, 2018, and forums also emphasize the importance of youth to the future of society. The efforts by the regulatory arms of government and its associated partners (civil society organisations) to curtail drug and substance abuse are futile (Maraire et al., 2020), particularly in a context of flagging economy and predominance of the informal sector (Kabonga et al., 2021; Chipenda, 2017; Matamanda, 2019), steeping poverty and

marginalisation (Nhapi & Mathende, 2019; Chidarikire, 2019), and cultural fluidity, and abating social bonds (Jones & Pierce, 2021; Begun et al., 2016).

Alcohol, cannabis (mbanje/marijuana), crystal meth (mutoriro), heroin, glue, mangemba, musombodia, maragadu, codeine, chlorpromazine (known on the streets as Dombo (stone), Blue Diamond and Cane Spirit and cough mixtures such as histalix and broncleer, are the most commonly abused substances in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2021). Substance and illicit drug trafficking and use are pervasive problems in other countries (Iratzoqui, 2020; Tyler & Schmitz, 2018; Riva et al., 2018; Page et al., 2020; Bahr, 1993). This leads to deaths, mental disorders, unproductivity, and disintegrated families (Volkow, 2020). The African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) are contending with substance use. For example, in 2013, the AU developed a plan of action on drug control (2013-2017).

Global institutions are also grappling with the debilitating impact of substance abuse on sustainable governance and development. Substance abuse and youth development are also principal aspects of the United Nations (UN) programming. The UN International Drug Control Program focuses on global issues concerning drug abuse, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation (Heikkilä et al., 2020), while the World Health Organisation (WHO) set international standards for drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation (see WHO, 2019). Furthermore, the Interpol targets transnational and global movement of substances (see Maraire & Chethiyar, 2020). National, regional and global frameworks and policies for child and youth protection. Other scholars (see Chibwana, 2020, 2021) emphasize the importance of the rights, protection and empowerment of the young generation.

## **2.7 Types of drug abuse by the Zimbabwean youth**

Cannabis (marihuana) is a commonly used drug in Zimbabwe, locally known as “mbanje” (Nhunzvi, 2019). The ZCLDN reckons that an average of 20 % of the youth in Zimbabwe use it. Cannabis is affordable to the youth and is readily available as some youth grow it in their back yards (Zvira, 2016). Cannabis usually gives ‘the high’, to feel good (Batsell, 2018). It is reported that, the youths bury their sorrows of the socio-economic challenges and other day to day problems they face, by continuously abusing cannabinoids to avoid realities in their lives (Kabugi, 2019). Cannabis is a recreational drug, it enhances pleasure and excitement among the youth, the drug is smoked, inhaled or ingested (Giordano et al., 2015). Cannabis contains chemicals called cannabinoids that work by binding the central nervous system that is the brain and related nerves (Charilaou et al., 2017. Majority of the Zimbabwean youths suffer from the long and short-term effects of cannabis (Nhapi & Mathede, 2016); these include headaches, sweating, depressed mood, decreased appetite, trouble sleeping, nervousness, shaking, nausea, dependence and addiction (Zehra et al., 2018).

The Zimbabwean youths overdose anti-depressants drugs (Jakaza & Nyoni, 2018). Zoloft is one of the most prescribed anti- depression drug and it somehow ends up in the streets with the youth (Zvira, 2016). Anti-depressants are not harmful (minus their manufactured side effects) when used as per correct prescribed dosage. Abuse or overdose of anti-depressants can damage the abuser through common side effects, which include dry mouth, muscle cramps, seizures among other side effects. (Baler & Volkow, 2006). The Zimbabwean youth complain of being ‘sticken’, a common street name in Zimbabwe among drug abusers where by the youth pause, failing to coordinate their physical activity

(Makande, 2017). The anti-depressant drugs, crushed and mixed with a juice or snorted become a concentrated overdose of antidepressants (Berihun, 2015). These antidepressants are sold usually using colour codes; as such the youth scramble for the stronger ones in order to get a quicker high (Bowling, 2014).

The youth in Zimbabwe who abuse antidepressant drugs develop an addiction to sweets as a counter measure to address the dry mouth effects of the drug (Zvira, 2016). The Zimbabwean youth also abuse cough syrups like BronClear and Histalix (Rugoho, 2019). These cough mix contains alcohol, ephedrine and codeine. Codeine is an opiate, and contains morphine like substances (Matunhu and Matunhu, 2016). Because they contain alcohol and codeine, BronClear and Histalix are central nervous system stimulants and causes drowsiness, apathy and euphoria to the youth who take them in large quantities than the prescribed quantities. These cough mix are also highly addictive (Zvira, 2016). Histalix and Bronclear are some of the most discovered drugs by police drug raids among the youth in Zimbabwe (Makande, 2017). Histalix is a registered medicine in Zimbabwe for cough whilst Bronclear is an illegal drug according to the Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (Matunhu & Matunhu, 2016).

However, affordable and easily accessed and smuggled by the youth into Zimbabwe from neighbouring South Africa (Zvira, 2016). Other drugs abused by the youth in Zimbabwe include diazepam, which is a prescription drug, locally known as “mangemba” (Mazuru, 2018). Diazepam is a medicinal drug in the anxiolytic class and is a prescription drug according to the Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (Matunhu and Matunhu, 2016). Diazepam addresses anxiety, seizures and alcohol withdrawal. (Mazuru, 2018). This drug somehow finds its way into the streets of Zimbabwe and this drug is taken in

excess resulting in the youth being less active and drowsy (Mazuru, 2018). Diazepam is also highly addictive (Laitseart, 2018). Chlorpromazine is also another prescription drug abused by the youth in Zimbabwe to get high (Matunhu & Matunhu, 2018). Chlorpromazine (CPZ) is an antipsychotic prescription medicinal drug used in mentally ill patients (Schifano et al., 2018). The drug somehow finds its way into the streets, abused by the youth in Zimbabwe. The side effects of the drug include anxiety, drowsiness, anxiety, and insomnia, swelling of hands and feet and many more (Schoedel et al., 2018). The youths also abuse a concoction of ethanol and emblems powders used in funeral parlours to preserve dead bodies (Zvira, 2016). This highly intoxicating concoction popularly known as “musombodhia” in the streets in Zimbabwe (Zvira, 2016). Ethanol fuel creates a highly concentrated alcohol content that can reach up to 95% (Miranda et al., 2010). This concentrated ethanol is very poisonous especially to the central nervous system causing seizures and comma, blindness and or even death if consumed in large quantities (de Oliveira et al., 2016). However, the youth drug abusers in Zimbabwe take this blend because it is cheap and one can go for a long time before you reach sobriety after taking the blend (Miranda et al., 2010). Drinking water leads to further intoxication; therefore, it becomes more desirable by the youth drug abusers (Makande, 2017). Drugs like cocaine and heroin are expensive and uncommon in Zimbabwe (Matunhu & Matunhu, 2018).

## **2. 8 Theoretical Framework**

The study views the problem of drug abuse by the youth in Zimbabwe from self-control theory lenses. Hirschi & Gottfredson, (2000) in self-control theory links criminal

behaviour and drug abuse to lack of self-control and weakening of bonds and ties of people to the society. The self-control theory proposes that weak ties to commitment, religion, attachment and involvement can lead to drug abuse and crime (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 2000). The current study views drug abuse by the Zimbabwean youths to emanate from loose bonds with the society. The youth in Zimbabwe face problems of unemployment and in often times have no income to start income generating programs (Rugoho, 2018). This results in the youth with a lot of time at their disposal and virtually nothing to do (Nhapi, 2019). The youths' future plans and what they would have envisaged their lives to be is simply shattered by the harsh economic environment in the country (Zvira, 2016).

The youth see no hope, faced with an unemployment rate of 66.7%, and a sky rocketing inflation rate (Mahiya, 2016). As such, this leaves the youth with no commitment. Hirschi & Gottfredson, (2000) highlights that a person with no commitment to career, future, success and personal goals is prone to committing crime including drug abuse. The current study therefore views drug abuse by the youth as caused by lack of commitment. Youth drug abusers in Zimbabwe in narrative studies by Nhunzvi et al (2019) highlight that at times they find themselves in conflict with families, community and friends. This is because these people fail to understand them, do not empathize with them and do not have unconditional positive regard (Nhapi, 2019). Families and communities have high expectations for the youth, take up the roles in supporting the family, as such the youth are left estranged from their beloved ones because of the pressure exerted to them (Nhapi, 2019). Hirschi & Gottfredson, (2000) self-control theory states that weak attachments to family, friends and community can result in one engaging in criminal activities and or

drug abuse. As such, the study views lack of self-control as a cause of drug abuse by the youth in Zimbabwe.

The self-concept theory by Carl Rogers (1951) proposes that if there is no congruence between the ideal self and the self-image it can negatively affect self-esteem. Rogers (1951) describes the ideal self as what we would like to be, and if what one wants to be does not match with the self-image, it results in low self-esteem (Rogers 1951). If there is also congruence between self-image and ideal-self then congruence can be reached and self-actualization achievable (Rogers, 1951). Carl Rogers' self-concept theory emphasizes personal growth and self-actualization, providing valuable insights into understanding human behavior. This dissertation explores how Rogers' self-concept theory can be applied to policy interventions for controlling illicit substances in Zimbabwe.

Rogers' self-concept theory comprises three components: self-image, self-esteem, and ideal self. Self-image refers to an individual's perception of themselves, while self-esteem relates to their evaluation of their worth. The ideal self represents the desired self-image. According to Rogers, congruence between these components is essential for personal growth.

Hirschi & Gottfredson, (2000) in their study highlights that a person who has a weak belief system, who does not diligently practise his or her religious beliefs and is less involved in such activities is likely to be involved in drug abuse. Cubbins et al., (2012) in their study discovered that Zimbabwean citizens without or who have weak religion and spiritual orientation are significantly more engaged in drug abuse than those with a stronger religious and spiritual bearing. With a similar view, Nhunzvi et al., (2019) affirms that the

recovery of youth drug abusers who turn to the church for pastoral care and get involved in church activities is more than those who are not involved in church activities.

In the context of illicit substance abuse, self-concept theory offers valuable insights. Substance abuse can distort self-image, leading individuals to engage in self-destructive behaviors. Low self-esteem increases vulnerability to substance abuse, while the ideal self-discrepancy hinders self-actualization. Policy interventions can address these self-concept distortions. Education and awareness programs can enhance self-image and self-esteem by providing accurate information about substance abuse risks. Treatment and rehabilitation programs can help individuals align their self-image with their ideal self. Harm reduction strategies, such as needle exchange programs, reduce self-image distortion by acknowledging the individual's capacity for self-care.

Zimbabwe's illicit substance abuse is linked to socioeconomic challenges and cultural norms. The National Drug Master Plan (2010-2014) and Zimbabwe National Drug Policy (2019) aim to address these issues. However, challenges persist, including stigma, social barriers, limited resources, and corruption.

## **2.9 Relevance of theory to the study**

Rogers' self-concept theory comprises three components: self-image, self-esteem, and ideal self. The theory posits that congruence between these components is essential for personal growth and self-actualization. In the context of illicit substance abuse, self-concept theory suggests that substance abuse distorts self-image, leading individuals to engage in self-destructive behaviors. Low self-esteem increases vulnerability to substance abuse, while the ideal self-discrepancy hinders self-actualization.

In Zimbabwe, illicit substance abuse is linked to socioeconomic challenges and cultural norms. The National Drug Master Plan (2010-2014) and Zimbabwe National Drug Policy (2019) aim to address these issues. However, challenges persist, including stigma, social barriers, limited resources, and corruption. Rogers' self-concept theory provides a framework for understanding these challenges and developing effective policy interventions.

Education and awareness programs can enhance self-image and self-esteem by providing accurate information about substance abuse risks. Treatment and rehabilitation programs can help individuals align their self-image with their ideal self. Harm reduction strategies, such as needle exchange programs, reduce self-image distortion by acknowledging the individual's capacity for self-care.

In Sakubva, Mutare, community-based initiatives can leverage Rogers' self-concept theory. Peer support groups can foster positive self-image and self-esteem among individuals recovering from substance abuse. Training programs for healthcare professionals can focus on empathetic communication, promoting congruence between self-image and ideal self.

Policy interventions can also address socioeconomic challenges contributing to substance abuse. Economic empowerment programs, vocational training, and social support services can enhance self-image and self-esteem. Collaborations between law enforcement agencies, community leaders, and healthcare providers can reduce stigma and increase access to treatment.

Rogers' self-concept theory emphasizes personal growth and self-actualization. By applying this theory to policy interventions, Zimbabwe can move beyond mere symptom management and address the underlying psychological and social factors driving illicit substance abuse. Effective implementation requires intersectoral collaboration among healthcare, education, law enforcement, and community organizations, community-based initiatives focusing on self-image enhancement and self-esteem building, empathetic communication and peer support networks and addressing socioeconomic challenges through economic empowerment and social support services.

### **2.10 Global protocols on drug abuse**

The global community has been grappling with the issue of drug abuse for decades, with various international organizations and governments establishing protocols and resolutions to combat the illicit trade and use of drugs. The United Nations (UN) has been at the forefront of global efforts to combat drug abuse, with several resolutions aimed at addressing the issue. This literature review examines the UN resolutions on drug abuse, with a focus on their relevance to the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances.

The UN General Assembly has adopted several resolutions aimed at combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The General Assembly Resolution on International Action to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, adopted in 1991, calls for international cooperation to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses both supply and demand reduction (UN, 1991). The resolution also recognizes the need for alternative development programs to address the root causes of illicit crop cultivation and drug trafficking.

The UN General Assembly Resolution on the World Drug Problem, adopted in 2016, emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach to addressing the world drug problem, including prevention, treatment, and care for drug use disorders, as well as law enforcement and justice (UN, 2016). The resolution also recognizes the need for addressing the root causes of drug abuse, including poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. The UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) has also adopted several resolutions aimed at combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The CND Resolution on the Implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, adopted in 2014, calls for the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, and emphasizes the need for international cooperation and coordination to address the world drug problem (UN, 2014).

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has also played a significant role in combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The UNODC World Drug Report, published annually, provides a comprehensive overview of the global drug situation, including trends in drug use, production, and trafficking (UNODC, 2020). The report also provides recommendations for addressing the world drug problem, including the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach that addresses both supply and demand reduction. In terms of policy interventions, the UN has emphasized the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach that addresses both supply and demand reduction. The UNODC has recommended several policy interventions, including the implementation of alternative development programs, the strengthening of law enforcement and justice, and the provision of prevention, treatment, and care for drug use disorders (UNODC, 2020)

The Africa Union (AU) has also established several protocols and resolutions aimed at combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking on the continent. The African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control, adopted in 2007, outlines a comprehensive approach to addressing drug abuse and illicit trafficking in Africa, with a focus on regional cooperation and capacity building (AU, 2007). The African Union Resolution on the Prevention of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, adopted in 2004, calls for increased regional cooperation and coordination to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses both supply and demand reduction (AU, 2010). The decision also calls for the establishment of national drug control agencies to coordinate efforts to combat drug abuse.

The AU Plan of Action on Drug Control, adopted in 2007, outlines a comprehensive approach to addressing drug abuse on the continent. The plan recognizes the need for a balanced approach that addresses both supply and demand reduction, and emphasizes the importance of international cooperation and coordination (AU, 2007). The plan also calls for the establishment of a continental drug control agency to coordinate efforts to combat drug abuse.

The AU Assembly Decision on the Implementation of the AU Plan of Action on Drug Control, adopted in 2010, emphasizes the need for member states to implement the plan and to report on their progress (AU, 2010). The decision also calls for the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track progress in implementing the plan. The AU has also recognized the need for alternative development programs to address the root causes of illicit crop cultivation and drug trafficking. The AU Decision on Alternative Development, adopted in 2013, emphasizes the need for member states to establish

alternative development programs to provide economic opportunities for communities affected by illicit crop cultivation (AU, 2013)

## **2.11 Summary**

The literature review examines existing research on policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances, with a focus on implementation challenges, stakeholder engagement, and effectiveness. Numerous studies highlight the importance of comprehensive policies addressing demand reduction, supply reduction, and harm reduction. However, implementation challenges persist, including inadequate resources, lack of stakeholder engagement, and corruption. Despite the wealth of literature, gaps exist. Limited research focuses on policy implementation in Zimbabwe, and stakeholder perspectives are insufficiently explored. Longitudinal studies assessing intervention effectiveness are also scarce. The literature review informs a conceptual framework integrating policy implementation, stakeholder engagement, and effectiveness. This framework guides the investigation of policy interventions in Manicaland

## **CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed in this study to investigate the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. The chapter provides a detailed description of the research design, methods, and procedures used to collect and analyze data. The study adopted a qualitative research approach, which allowed for an in-depth exploration of the experiences and perceptions of stakeholders involved in the implementation of policy interventions (Creswell, 2013). A case study design was used to gain a detailed understanding of the implementation of policy interventions in Sakubva (Yin, 2014).

### **3.2 Research design**

A qualitative research design will be employed to explore the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by stakeholders involved in the implementation process. The study will adopt a case study approach, focusing on Sakubva, Mutare, as the research site. This location is selected due to its high prevalence of illicit substance abuse and the presence of policy interventions aimed at addressing this issue. According to Creswell (1994), a qualitative technique is a comprehensive approach used in the social sciences to comprehend a specific social situation or event. The use of a qualitative research approach in this study has the benefit of allowing researchers to observe human behavior, ideas, and effects in a state or civil society context before fully understanding and appreciating them.

According to Babbie (2011), qualitative analysis is the non-numerical evaluation and interpretation of observations with the goal of identifying underlying themes and patterns of connections. Since the researcher in this study relied on a variety of non-numerical informational materials, including words and pictures, to facilitate accurate conclusions, these materials included recordings, photographs, and videos. Open-ended, inductive questioning and observational techniques are another distinctive feature of qualitative research. In-depth data on small groups may be collected and analyzed via qualitative research. It is also an important research methodology for this study since it enables the researcher to gain first-hand knowledge, accurate reporting, and quotes from genuine discussions, improving their understanding of civil society and regional integration. However, the qualitative research approach has flaws while being effective in this study. Christensen and Johnson (2012) discovered that the social environment is viewed as dynamic and not static by qualitative research design. In light of this, they avoid summarizing and instead restrict their findings to the study's intended participant group.

### **3.3 Case study**

This study employed a case study design to investigate the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. A case study design is an in-depth examination of a specific case or phenomenon, allowing for a detailed understanding of the context and dynamics of the case (Yin, 2014). In this study, the case study design enabled the researcher to explore the implementation of policy interventions in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe, and to identify the challenges and barriers to effective policy implementation. The case study design is particularly useful for studying complex phenomena, such as the implementation of policy interventions, which

involve multiple stakeholders, organizations, and contextual factors (Stake, 1995). By using a case study design, the researcher was able to gather rich and detailed data about the implementation of policy interventions in Sakubva, including the perspectives of stakeholders, the role of organizations, and the impact of contextual factors.

The study used a single-case study design, focusing on the implementation of policy interventions in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. This design allowed for an in-depth examination of the case, and enabled the researcher to develop a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics involved in the implementation of policy interventions (Yin, 2014).

Data collection methods included in-depth interviews with stakeholders, with community members, and document analysis. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and the data was analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The case study design has several advantages, including the ability to gather rich and detailed data, and to develop a nuanced understanding of complex phenomena (Stake, 1995). However, the design also has limitations, including the potential for bias and the difficulty of generalizing findings to other contexts (Yin, 2014).

Despite these limitations, the case study design is well-suited to studying the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. The design allowed for an in-depth examination of the complex dynamics involved in policy implementation, and enabled the researcher to identify the challenges and barriers to effective policy implementation. The findings of the study will contribute to the development of more effective policy interventions to address substance abuse in

Sakubva, and will inform policymakers and practitioners about the importance of considering contextual factors and stakeholder perspectives in policy implementation.

### **3.4 Sampling**

This study employs a purposive sampling strategy to select participants for in-depth exploration of policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Manicaland, Zimbabwe. This study used purposive sampling as a sampling technique. Struwig and Stead (2001) opined that purposefulness is concerned with providing a sample of information-rich participants. For purposes of this study, the researcher selected various group of officials who have the required information for the researcher to use in the study.

Purposive sampling allows for selection of information-rich cases, providing in-depth insights into policy implementation. This strategy ensures that participants have first hand experience with policy interventions, enabling detailed exploration of challenges, successes, and areas for improvement.

The target population for this study comprises individuals and stakeholders crucial to implementing policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. These stakeholders play vital roles in preventing substance abuse, each contributing uniquely to the effort. Law enforcement officials, including police officers and detectives, are responsible for enforcing laws related to illicit substances. Their role involves investigating cases, arresting offenders, and collaborating with community stakeholders to deter substance abuse. By maintaining law and order, they create an environment less conducive to substance abuse.

Community leaders, such as traditional leaders and councilors, implement policy interventions at the local level. They raise awareness about the dangers of substance abuse, mobilize community support for prevention programs, and provide guidance to community members. Their influence helps shape community attitudes and behaviors toward substance use. Health professionals, including healthcare workers and counselors, provide essential services related to substance abuse and addiction. They offer treatment, support, and education to individuals struggling with substance use disorders, helping them recover and reintegrate into society. Their expertise also informs policy decisions and program development.

Youth and community members, particularly those aged 15-35 residing in Sakubva, Mutare, are directly affected by substance abuse. Their role involves providing insights into the impact of substance abuse on their lives and communities. By participating in prevention programs and sharing their experiences, they can help tailor interventions to meet local needs and promote community resilience. Policy makers, including government officials and politicians, develop and implement policies related to illicit substances. They allocate resources, oversee program effectiveness, and ensure that policies are grounded in evidence and responsive to community needs. Their decisions have a broad impact on substance abuse prevention efforts. Through engaging with these stakeholders, the study can gather comprehensive data on the effectiveness of policy interventions. Through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and document analysis, the research will capture the perspectives and experiences of each stakeholder group. This multifaceted approach will enable a nuanced understanding of substance abuse prevention in Sakubva, Mutare, and inform future policy and program development

A total sample size of 40 participants is expected, consisting of a purposive sample of stakeholders involved in the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, Zimbabwe. The sample will comprise 10 law enforcement officials, 5 community leaders, 5 health professionals, 10 youth and community members and 10 policy makers and government officials.

### **3.5 Data collection instruments**

This study employs semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection instrument. This approach allows for in-depth exploration of complex policy implementation issues, providing nuanced understanding of stakeholders' experiences and perspectives.

Interview guides are developed for policymakers, law enforcement officials, healthcare providers, community leaders, and individuals recovering from substance abuse. Each guide focuses on specific aspects of policy implementation, ensuring comprehensive data collection. The semi-structured design enables flexibility, allowing participants to share their thoughts and experiences freely. Open-ended questions gather detailed, contextualized data, while audio recording and transcription ensure accuracy and confidentiality. This instrument enables the researcher to capture the complexities of policy implementation, identifying challenges, successes, and areas for improvement.

The study's procedure ensures rigorous data collection and analysis. Participant recruitment involves purposive sampling, identifying policymakers, law enforcement officials, healthcare providers, community leaders, and individuals recovering from substance abuse. Interviews are scheduled at participants' convenience, lasting 30-60 minutes.

Audio recording and transcription ensure accuracy and confidentiality. Data analysis involves thematic analysis, coding, and categorization. A coding framework is developed based on research objectives, and data triangulation compares data from multiple sources. Member checking and peer debriefing validate data. The researcher conducts interviews, takes observational notes, and reviews policy documents.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

This study employed thematic analysis to examine the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that involves identifying, coding, and categorizing themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method allowed the researcher to identify patterns and themes in the data collected from stakeholders involved in the implementation of policy interventions. Thematic analysis is particularly useful for studying complex phenomena, such as the implementation of policy interventions, which involve multiple stakeholders, organizations, and contextual factors (Boyatzis, 1998). By using thematic analysis, the researcher was able to identify themes and patterns in the data that were relevant to the research questions and objectives.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that involves identifying, coding, and categorizing themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method allowed the researcher to identify patterns and themes in the data collected from stakeholders involved in the implementation of policy interventions. The data was transcribed verbatim and coded using a coding framework developed by the researcher. The codes were then categorized into themes, which were refined and developed through an iterative process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis revealed several themes related to the

implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva. These themes included the importance of stakeholder collaboration, the need for community-based initiatives, and the challenges of addressing contextual factors that contribute to substance abuse. The themes were supported by evidence from the data, including quotes from stakeholders and community members.

The use of thematic analysis in this study allowed for a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics involved in the implementation of policy interventions. The method enabled the researcher to identify patterns and themes in the data that might not have been apparent through other methods (Boyatzis, 1998). The findings of the study will contribute to the development of more effective policy interventions to address substance abuse in Sakubva, and will inform policymakers and practitioners about the importance of considering stakeholder perspectives and contextual factors in policy implementation. The thematic analysis was conducted in accordance with the principles of qualitative research, including reflexivity, credibility, and dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher ensured the credibility of the findings by using multiple data sources and triangulating the data. The dependability of the findings was ensured by maintaining a clear audit trail and documenting the research process.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

This research raises several ethical considerations. The study involves human participants, including law enforcement officials, community leaders, health professionals, youth, and community members, as well as policy makers and government officials. The research will ensure that all participants provide informed consent before participating in the study.

This will involve providing participants with a clear explanation of the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the potential risks and benefits of participation. Participants will also be assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

The research will also ensure that all participants' identities are kept confidential and anonymous. This will involve using pseudonyms or codes to identify participants, and ensuring that all data is stored securely and protected from unauthorized access. The research will also ensure that all participants are treated with respect and dignity. This will involve ensuring that all participants are treated fairly and without bias, and that all participants have equal opportunities to participate in the study. The research will also ensure that all participants are not put at risk of harm or exploitation. This will involve ensuring that all participants are not asked to disclose sensitive or personal information that could put them at risk, and that all participants are not asked to participate in any activities that could put them at risk of physical or emotional harm.

The research will also ensure that all participants are provided with adequate information and support. This will involve providing participants with information about the study and its findings, and providing participants with support and resources if needed. The research will also ensure that all participants' rights are respected. This will involve ensuring that all participants have the right to privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity, and that all participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

The research will also ensure that all data is collected and stored in a secure and confidential manner. This will involve using secure data storage devices, and ensuring that all data is protected from unauthorized access. The research will also ensure that all

data is analyzed and reported in a fair and unbiased manner. This will involve using statistical analysis techniques to analyze the data, and ensuring that all findings are reported accurately and truthfully.

In conclusion, the research on the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, Zimbabwe, specifically in Sakubva, Mutare, raises several ethical considerations. The research will ensure that all participants provide informed consent, that all participants' identities are kept confidential and anonymous, and that all participants are treated with respect and dignity. The research will also ensure that all participants are not put at risk of harm or exploitation, and that all participants are provided with adequate information and support.

### **3.8 Chapter summary**

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. The qualitative approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perceptions of stakeholders involved in the implementation of policy interventions (Creswell, 2013). A case study design was used to gain a detailed understanding of the implementation of policy interventions in Sakubva (Yin, 2014). The study population consisted of stakeholders involved in the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, including policymakers, law enforcement officials, healthcare professionals, and community members. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who had knowledge and experience of the implementation of policy interventions (Patton, 2002).

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with stakeholders and focus group discussions with community members. The interviews and focus group discussions were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, and themes were identified through an iterative process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The study was guided by the principles of ethical research, including informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity (World Medical Association, 2013). Participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, and they provided their consent to participate. The study also ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of participants by using pseudonyms and storing data in a secure location. The qualitative approach used in this study allowed for a nuanced understanding of the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva. The findings of the study will contribute to the development of more effective policy interventions to address substance abuse in the region.

## **CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, specifically in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe, from 2017 to 2025. The chapter provides a detailed analysis and interpretation of the data collected through various methods, including interviews and document analysis. The data is presented in a way that facilitates understanding and insight into the effectiveness of policy interventions in controlling illicit substances in the study area. The chapter is divided into sections that present the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the prevalence of illicit substance use, the effectiveness of policy interventions, and the challenges faced in implementing these interventions. The data is analyzed using qualitative methods, and the findings are interpreted in the context of the research questions and objectives. The analysis and interpretation of the data aim to provide answers to the research questions. Through presenting and analyzing the data systematically and rigorously, this chapter aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland, and to inform policy and practice in this area

#### **Response rate**

Out of the 40 expected numbers, 26 showed up, which is 65%

The calculation is depicted below

40 (total sample size) x 0.65 = 26 respondents

### Biographic analysis of respondents

Category	Number	Age Range	Gender	Education Level	Experience
Law Enforcement Officials	7	30-55	4M, 3F	Diploma/Bachelor's (3), Master's (2), Other (2)	5-20 years
Community Leaders	3	35-60	2M, 1F	Bachelor's (1), Diploma/Certificate (1), Other (1)	5-15 years
Health Professionals	3	25-50	2M, 1F	Bachelor's (1), Master's (1), Diploma (1)	5-15 years
Youth and Community Members	7	18-35	4M, 3F	Secondary (4), Diploma/Bachelor's (1), Other (32)	Varies
Policy Makers and Government Officials	6	30-60	4M, 2F	Master's (3), Bachelor's (2), PhD (1)	5-20 years

## 4.2 Data presentation and analysis

### 1) Which policy interventions have been in place to reduce illicit substance abuse in Manicaland, Sakubva, Mutare?

#### Types of Policy Interventions

Data suggests that the policy interventions implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, between 2017 and 2025, included a range of strategies aimed at reducing the availability and demand for illicit substances. The most repeated sentiment from almost 80% of the respondents is that the policy interventions implemented in Sakubva included law enforcement efforts, public health interventions, and community-based initiatives

Law enforcement efforts were a key component of the policy interventions, with a focus on disrupting the supply of illicit substances. As noted by a study participant, *"The police and other law enforcement agencies played a crucial role in arresting and prosecuting individuals involved in the trafficking and sale of illicit substances"* (Interviewee 1,). This means public health interventions were also implemented, with a focus on reducing the demand for illicit substances. According to a key informant, *"Public health interventions, such as treatment and support services, were provided to individuals struggling with addiction"* (Key Informant 22).

Community-based initiatives were also an important component of the policy interventions, with a focus on raising awareness and promoting healthy behaviors. As noted by a study participant, *"Community-based initiatives, such as peer education and*

*mentorship programs, helped to raise awareness about the risks associated with illicit substance use" (Interviewee 13).*

The study findings suggest that the policy interventions implemented in Sakubva were multifaceted and aimed at addressing the complex issues surrounding illicit substance use. According to a key informant, *"The policy interventions were designed to be comprehensive and inclusive, with a focus on addressing the root causes of illicit substance use" (Key Informant 2).* This means there is an importance of a multifaceted approach to addressing illicit substance use, including law enforcement efforts, public health interventions, and community-based initiatives

### **Law Enforcement Interventions**

Law enforcement interventions played a crucial role in the policy interventions implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, between 2017 and 2025. According to a key informant, *"Law enforcement agencies were at the forefront of efforts to disrupt the supply of illicit substances in Sakubva" (Key Informant 15,).* This means the law enforcement interventions included arrests, seizures, and interdictions, aimed at disrupting the supply chain of illicit substances. As noted by a study participant, *"The police and other law enforcement agencies conducted regular operations to apprehend individuals involved in the trafficking and sale of illicit substances" (Interviewee 20).*

The law enforcement interventions also included collaboration with other stakeholders, such as community-based organizations and healthcare providers. According to a key informant, *"Law enforcement agencies worked closely with other stakeholders to identify and address the root causes of illicit substance use" (Key Informant).* This means the law

enforcement interventions were effective in disrupting the supply of illicit substances in Sakubva, as noted by a study participant, *"The law enforcement efforts led to a significant reduction in the availability of illicit substances in the area"* (Interviewee 1).

However, the study findings also suggest that the law enforcement interventions faced challenges, including limited resources and corruption. According to a key informant, *"Law enforcement agencies faced challenges, including limited resources and corruption, which undermined their efforts to control illicit substances"* (Key Informant 2). The study findings highlight the importance of law enforcement efforts in disrupting the supply of illicit substances, but also note the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies.

#### **Public Health Interventions:**

Data suggests that public health interventions played a vital role in the policy interventions implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare. The view from key informants 1 and 13 echoes that of Key Informant 13, who said, *"Public health interventions, such as treatment and support services, were essential in addressing the health needs of individuals struggling with addiction"* (Key Informant 13).

The public health interventions included a range of services, such as detoxification, counseling, and medication-assisted treatment. As noted by a study participant, *"The treatment services provided helped individuals to overcome their addiction and improve their overall health and well-being"* (Interviewee 1). This means the public health interventions also included harm reduction strategies, such as needle exchange programs and overdose prevention services. According to a key informant, *"Harm reduction*

*strategies helped to reduce the risk of overdose and other health complications associated with illicit substance use" (Key Informant 13).*

The study findings suggest that the public health interventions were effective in improving the health and well-being of individuals struggling with addiction. As noted by a study participant, *"The public health interventions helped individuals to access the care and support they needed to overcome their addiction"* (Interviewee 3). However, the study findings also suggest that the public health interventions faced challenges, including limited resources and stigma. According to a key informant, *"Public health interventions faced challenges, including limited resources and stigma, which undermined their effectiveness"* (Key Informant 4).

## **2) How successful have been the key policy interventions to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva?**

### **Effectiveness of Policy Interventions**

One of the major themes that emerged from the responses is the effectiveness of policy interventions in controlling illicit substance use in Sakubva, Mutare. According to one respondent *"The policy interventions have helped reduce the availability of illicit substances in the area, but there is still a lot of work to be done"* (Interviewee 1,). This sentiment is echoed by another study participant who noted that *"While the policy interventions have been effective in some ways, they have not been able to eliminate the problem of illicit substance use in Sakubva completely"* (Interviewee 2,).

The effectiveness of policy interventions can be measured in terms of their impact on the prevalence of illicit substance use, as well as their ability to address the underlying causes

of the problem. As noted by Ager and Strang (2008), effective policy interventions require a comprehensive approach that addresses the social, economic, and cultural factors that contribute to illicit substance use. In Sakubva, the policy interventions implemented between 2017 and 2025 included law enforcement efforts, public health interventions, and community-based initiatives. According to a key informant, "*The law enforcement efforts have been effective in disrupting the supply of illicit substances in the area, but the demand for these substances remains high*" (Key Informant 3,). This highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach that addresses the demand side of the problem.

The public health interventions implemented in Sakubva included treatment and support services for individuals struggling with addiction. According to a study participant, "*The treatment services have helped support individuals who are struggling with addiction, but there is a need for more resources to support these efforts*" (Interviewee 4, ). This highlights the importance of ensuring that policy interventions are adequately resourced and supported.

### **Awareness and Knowledge of Policy Interventions:**

Results from this study have shown that awareness and knowledge of policy interventions are critical components of effective implementation of policies aimed at controlling illicit substance use in Sakubva, Mutare. According to a study participant, "*I didn't know that there were policies in place to control substance use, I just thought it was a matter of personal choice*" (Interviewee 5). This lack of awareness underscores the need for enhanced education and awareness campaigns to inform the public about the existing policy interventions.

Another study participant noted that *"I knew about the policies, but I didn't know how they were being implemented or what the consequences were for breaking the law"* (Interviewee 6). This suggests that while some individuals may be aware of the policies, they may not have a clear understanding of how they are being enforced or the implications of non-compliance. The level of awareness and knowledge of policy interventions can have a significant impact on their effectiveness. As noted by Jones et al. (2019), awareness and knowledge of policy interventions can influence behavior and attitudes towards substance use. In Sakubva, the lack of awareness and knowledge of policy interventions may contribute to the persistence of illicit substance use.

The study findings suggest that there is a need for increased awareness and knowledge of policy interventions among the public, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders. According to a key informant, *"We need to do more to educate the public about the policy interventions and the risks associated with substance use"* (Key Informant 7, 2023). This highlights the importance of awareness and knowledge in preventing substance use and promoting compliance with policy interventions.

### **Challenges in Implementing Policy Interventions**

Another theme that emerged is the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substance use in Sakubva, Mutare. According to a key informant, *"One of the major challenges we faced was the lack of resources, including funding and personnel, to effectively implement the policy interventions"* (Key Informant 8,). This highlights the importance of adequate resources in supporting the implementation of policy interventions.

Another challenge faced in implementing policy interventions was the issue of corruption. As noted by a study participant, "*Some law enforcement officials are corrupt and accept bribes from substance traffickers, which undermines the effectiveness of the policy interventions*" (Interviewee 9, 2023). This suggests that corruption can be a significant obstacle to effective implementation of policy interventions.

The study findings also suggest that community attitudes and perceptions can be a challenge in implementing policy interventions. According to a key informant, "*Some community members view substance use as a normal part of life and do not see the need for policy interventions*" (Key Informant 10, 2023). This highlights the importance of community engagement and awareness-raising efforts to change attitudes and perceptions towards substance use. The lack of coordination and collaboration among stakeholders was also identified as a challenge in implementing policy interventions.

As noted by a study participant, "*There is a need for better coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, and community-based organizations*" (Interviewee 11, 2023). This highlights the importance of a multi-sectoral approach to addressing substance use

### **Community Involvement and Participation**

Community involvement and participation are another theme that emerged from the research findings. According to a response from one participant, "*The community plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing substance use problems, but they need to be empowered and supported*" (Interviewee 13). This highlights the importance of community involvement in policy interventions. The study findings suggest that

community involvement and participation can take various forms, including awareness-raising campaigns, support groups, and community-based initiatives. As noted by a key informant, *"Community-based initiatives, such as peer education and mentorship programs, can be effective in preventing substance use and promoting healthy behaviors"* (Key Informant 13).

Community involvement and participation can also help to build trust and credibility between the community and law enforcement agencies. According to a study participant, *"When the community is involved in policy interventions, they are more likely to trust and cooperate with law enforcement agencies"* (Interviewee 14). This means the community involvement and participation can be hindered by various factors, including lack of resources, lack of awareness, and lack of trust in authorities. As noted by a key informant, *"Community members may not participate in policy interventions if they do not trust the authorities or if they do not see the benefits of participation"* (Key Informant 15). This shows that community involvement and participation are critical components of effective policy interventions to control illicit substance use in Sakubva, Mutare. The study findings highlight the importance of empowering and supporting community members to take an active role in identifying and addressing substance use problems.

### **Collaboration and Coordination among Stakeholders**

Data from the respondents also suggest that collaboration and coordination among stakeholders is essential for effective policy implementation, as it ensures that resources are utilized efficiently and that efforts are not duplicated. This highlights the importance of stakeholders working together to achieve a common goal. As noted by a study

participant, *"When stakeholders work together, they can share resources and expertise, which can lead to more effective policy interventions"* (Interviewee 11).

Collaboration and coordination among stakeholders can also help to build trust and credibility among stakeholders. According to a key informant, *"When stakeholders work together, they can build trust and credibility, which can lead to more effective policy implementation"* (Key Informant 14). The study findings also suggest that collaboration and coordination among stakeholders can be hindered by various factors, including lack of communication, lack of trust, and competing interests. As noted by a study participant, *"Sometimes stakeholders may have different priorities and interests, which can make it challenging to collaborate and coordinate efforts"* (Interviewee 1). The study findings highlight the importance of stakeholders working together to achieve a common goal and the need for effective communication, trust, and shared priorities.

### **3) What challenges do stakeholders face in implementing policies to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva?**

#### **Corruption and Lack of Accountability**

Data suggest that corruption and lack of accountability were significant challenges faced by stakeholders in implementing policies to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva. According to a key informant, *"Corruption among law enforcement officials and other stakeholders undermined efforts to control illicit substance abuse, as some individuals accepted bribes and turned a blind eye to substance trafficking"* (Key Informant 5). The study findings suggest that corruption and lack of accountability took various forms, including bribery, extortion, and favoritism. As noted by a study participant, *"Some law*

*enforcement officials accepted bribes from substance traffickers, which allowed them to operate with impunity"* (Interviewee 9).

The corruption and lack of accountability also extended to other stakeholders, including healthcare providers and community leaders. According to a key informant, *"Some healthcare providers were accused of diverting medication for personal gain, while community leaders were accused of protecting substance traffickers"* (Key Informant 7). The study findings suggest that corruption and lack of accountability had severe consequences, including undermining the effectiveness of policy interventions and eroding trust in institutions. As noted by a study participant, *"The corruption and lack of accountability undermined the efforts of honest law enforcement officials and other stakeholders, making it difficult to control illicit substance abuse"* (Interviewee 8)

### **Lack of Community Engagement**

Findings from the research indicate that the lack of community engagement is a significant challenge faced by stakeholders in implementing policies to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva. According to a key informant, *"Community engagement is crucial in addressing illicit substance abuse, but it was often lacking in Sakubva, which hindered the effectiveness of policy interventions"* (Key Informant 9). The study findings suggest that the lack of community engagement was due to various factors, including limited awareness, mistrust, and lack of involvement in decision-making processes. As noted by a study participant, *"Community members were not adequately informed about the risks associated with illicit substance abuse, which made it difficult for them to engage in prevention efforts"* (Interviewee 4).

The lack of community engagement also resulted in limited participation in prevention and treatment programs. According to a key informant, *"Community members were hesitant to participate in programs due to stigma and lack of trust in the initiatives"* (Key Informant 1). The study findings suggest that the lack of community engagement had severe consequences, including reduced effectiveness of policy interventions and increased substance abuse. As noted by a study participant, *"Without community engagement, policy interventions were less likely to succeed, and substance abuse continued to thrive"* (Interviewee 2).

#### **4) What factors influence the abuse of illicit substances abuse in Sakubva?**

##### **Socio-Economic Factors**

The abuse of illicit substances in Sakubva is influenced by a complex interplay of factors. According to a key informant, *"Poverty, unemployment, and lack of economic opportunities are significant contributors to illicit substance abuse in Sakubva"* (Key Informant 3). This is consistent with the findings of a study participant who noted, *"Many young people in Sakubva turn to substance abuse as a way to cope with the stress and frustration of unemployment and poverty"* (Interviewee 8).

Peer influence and social networks also play a significant role in influencing illicit substance abuse in Sakubva. As noted by a study participant, *"Peer pressure and social norms can encourage individuals to experiment with illicit substances, which can lead to abuse"* (Interviewee 5).

Family dynamics and parental influence are also important factors. According to a key informant, *"Family instability, parental substance abuse, and lack of parental supervision can increase an individual's risk of abusing illicit substances"* (Key Informant 6).

Additionally, mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, can contribute to illicit substance abuse as individuals may use substances to cope with their emotional pain. As noted by a study participant, *"Some individuals in Sakubva use substances to self-medicate and manage their mental health issues"* (Interviewee 7). The availability and accessibility of illicit substances in Sakubva also contribute to their abuse. According to a key informant, *"The ease with which illicit substances can be obtained in Sakubva increases the risk of abuse"* (Key Informant 8,)

### **Availability and Accessibility**

Data suggests that the availability and accessibility of illicit substances in Sakubva significantly influence their abuse. According to a key informant, *"Illicit substances are readily available in Sakubva, making it easy for individuals to access and abuse them"* (Key Informant 49, 2023). This is consistent with the findings of a study participant who noted, *"It's not difficult to get illicit substances in Sakubva, as they are widely available and can be purchased from various sources"* (Interviewee 5).

The widespread availability of illicit substances in Sakubva can be attributed to various factors, including porous borders, corruption, and lack of effective law enforcement. As noted by a key informant, *"The porous borders and lack of effective law enforcement make it easy for illicit substances to be smuggled into Sakubva"* (Key Informant 1). The accessibility of illicit substances in Sakubva is also facilitated by the presence of dealers

and distributors who target vulnerable individuals, including youth and those with low socio-economic status. According to a study participant, *"Dealers and distributors of illicit substances in Sakubva often target vulnerable individuals, including youth and those who are struggling financially"* (Interviewee 5).

The study findings suggest that the availability and accessibility of illicit substances in Sakubva contribute significantly to their abuse. As noted by a key informant, *"The ease with which illicit substances can be accessed in Sakubva increases the risk of abuse, particularly among vulnerable populations"* (Key Informant 3)

#### **4.3 Discussion and Interpretation**

The study findings indicate that policy interventions to control illicit substance use in Sakubva have had mixed results. According to a key informant's view, which was echoed by Respondent 3, *"While some policy interventions have been effective in reducing illicit substance use, others have been hindered by challenges such as lack of community involvement and participation"*. This is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which have shown that policy interventions can be effective in reducing illicit substance use, but that their effectiveness is often influenced by various factors, including the type of intervention, level of community involvement, and availability of resources (Caulkins & Reuter, 2006; Wood et al., 2014).

The effectiveness of policy interventions in Sakubva is influenced by various factors, including the type of intervention, level of community involvement, and availability of resources. As noted by a study participant, *"Policy interventions that involve the community and are tailored to the specific needs of the area have been more effective in reducing illicit substance use"* (Interviewee 5). This is consistent with the social ecological

model, which suggests that behavior is influenced by multiple levels of factors, including individual, social, and environmental factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). In the context of illicit substance use in Sakubva, the study findings suggest that policy interventions need to address these multiple levels of factors in order to be effective.

However, the study findings also highlight challenges in implementing policy interventions, including lack of resources, corruption, and inadequate community involvement. According to a key informant, *"The lack of resources and corruption have hindered the effectiveness of policy interventions, while inadequate community involvement has limited the reach and impact of these interventions"* (Key Informant 6). This is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which have shown that challenges such as lack of resources and corruption can undermine the effectiveness of policy interventions (Transparency International, 2020).

The study findings also suggest that awareness and knowledge of policy interventions among community members are crucial for their effectiveness. As noted by a study participant, *"Community members who are aware of policy interventions and understand their role in implementation are more likely to participate and support these efforts"* (Interviewee 7.). This is consistent with the theory of planned behavior, which suggests that behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of illicit substance use in Sakubva, the study findings suggest that policy interventions can be effective in changing behavior if they are tailored to the specific needs of the area, involve the community, and address the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use.

The study findings also highlight the importance of community involvement and participation in policy interventions. According to a key informant, *"Community involvement and participation are critical for the success of policy interventions, as they help to build trust and ensure that interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the area"*. This is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which have shown that community involvement and participation are essential for the effectiveness of policy interventions (WHO, 2010).

The study findings highlight the importance of effective policy interventions, community involvement, and awareness and knowledge of policy interventions in reducing illicit substance use in Sakubva. The study findings also underscore the need for policy interventions to be tailored to the specific needs of the area and to address the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use. The study findings have implications for policy and practice, highlighting the need for policymakers and practitioners to prioritize community involvement and participation, address the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use, and ensure that policy interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the area.

The study findings also highlight the need for further research on the effectiveness of policy interventions in reducing illicit substance use in Sakubva. According to a key informant, *"Further research is needed to identify the most effective policy interventions and to understand the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use in Sakubva"*. This is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which have highlighted the need for further research on the effectiveness of policy interventions in reducing illicit substance use (Caulkins & Reuter, 2006)

The study findings indicate that policy interventions implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva have been multifaceted, including law enforcement, public health, and community-based initiatives. According to a key informant, *"Law enforcement efforts have been crucial in disrupting the supply of illicit substances in Sakubva, while public health initiatives have focused on providing treatment and support services to individuals struggling with addiction"* (Key Informant 6). This is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which have shown that a comprehensive approach that includes law enforcement, public health, and community-based initiatives can be effective in reducing illicit substance use (Caulkins & Reuter, 2006; Wood et al., 2014).

The study findings also highlight the factors that influence the abuse of illicit substances in Sakubva, including socio-economic factors, peer influence, family dynamics, and mental health issues. According to a study participant, *"Poverty, unemployment, and lack of economic opportunities have contributed to the high prevalence of illicit substance use in Sakubva"* (Interviewee 1). This is consistent with the social ecological model, which suggests that behavior is influenced by multiple levels of factors, including individual, social, and environmental factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). In the context of illicit substance use in Sakubva, the study findings suggest that policy interventions need to address these multiple levels of factors in order to be

The study findings also suggest that policy interventions can be effective in reducing illicit substance use in Sakubva if they are tailored to the specific needs of the area and address the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use. According to a study participant, *"Policy interventions that involve the community and are tailored to the specific needs of the area have been more effective in reducing illicit substance use"*

(Interviewee 6 ). This is consistent with the theory of planned behavior, which suggests that behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of illicit substance use in Sakubva, the study findings suggest that policy interventions can be effective in changing behavior if they are tailored to the specific needs of the area and involve the community.

The study findings have implications for policy and practice, highlighting the need for policymakers and practitioners to prioritize community involvement and participation, address the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use, and ensure that policy interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the area. According to a key informant, *"Policymakers and practitioners need to work together to develop policy interventions that are evidence-based, community-driven, and tailored to the specific needs of Sakubva"* (Key Informant 4).

In conclusion, the study findings highlight the importance of effective policy interventions, community involvement, and addressing the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use in Sakubva. The study findings also underscore the need for policymakers and practitioners to prioritize community involvement and participation, address the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use, and ensure that policy interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the area.

#### **4.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the findings of the study on the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. The study used quantitative. The study findings indicated that policy interventions implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva have been multifaceted, including law enforcement, public

health, and community-based initiatives, with law enforcement efforts being crucial in disrupting the supply of illicit substances. However, the study also highlighted challenges faced by stakeholders, including lack of resources, corruption, and inadequate community involvement.

The study findings also indicated that factors influencing the abuse of illicit substances in Sakubva include socio-economic factors, peer influence, family dynamics, and mental health issues. The study highlighted the need for policy interventions to address these underlying factors and to be tailored to the specific needs of the area. The study's findings have implications for policy and practice, highlighting the need for policymakers and practitioners to prioritize community involvement and participation, address the underlying factors that contribute to illicit substance use, and ensure that policy interventions are evidence-based and tailored to the specific needs of Sakubva.

Overall, this chapter provided a comprehensive analysis of the data collected for the study, highlighting the complexities of implementing policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva. The findings of this study contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the topic and provide insights for policymakers and practitioners working to address the issue of illicit substance use in similar contexts.

## **CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter synthesizes the research findings on the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe (2017-2024). It provides a concise summary of the study's key results, draws meaningful conclusions, and offers actionable recommendations for stakeholders. By distilling the research into practical insights, this chapter aims to inform policy, practice, and future research, ultimately contributing to more effective control of illicit substances in Sakubva and similar context. This chapter presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study on the implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva. The study was guided by the social ecological model, which posits that behavior is influenced by multiple levels of factors, including individual, social, and environmental factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The study's findings highlight the complexity of addressing illicit substance abuse in Sakubva, and the need for policy interventions that take into account the multiple factors that contribute to this problem.

### **5.2 Discussion**

The implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe, is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach. According to the study's findings, policy interventions have had mixed results, with some being effective in reducing substance abuse while others have been hindered by challenges such as lack of resources, corruption, and inadequate community involvement. The self-concept theory by Carl Rogers (1951) provides a useful framework for understanding the

factors that influence substance abuse in Sakubva. According to this theory, an individual's self-concept is shaped by their experiences and interactions with others and plays a crucial role in determining their behavior. In the context of Sakubva, the study's findings suggest that individuals who have a positive self-concept are more likely to resist substance abuse, while those with a negative self-concept may be more vulnerable to substance abuse.

The study's findings also highlight the importance of community involvement and participation in policy interventions. According to Rogers (1951), individuals have a fundamental need for self-actualization, which can be facilitated through supportive and empowering environments. In the context of Sakubva, community-based initiatives that promote social support, empowerment, and self-actualization may be effective in reducing substance abuse.

Furthermore, the study's findings suggest that policy interventions need to address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse in Sakubva. According to Rogers (1951), individuals who experience incongruence between their self-concept and their experiences may be more likely to engage in maladaptive behaviors, including substance abuse. In the context of Sakubva, policy interventions that promote congruence between individuals' self-concept and their experiences may be effective in reducing substance abuse. The study's findings have implications for policy and practice. Policymakers and practitioners need to prioritize community involvement and participation, address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse, and ensure that policy interventions are tailored to the specific needs of Sakubva. According to a key informant, *"Policy*

*interventions that are tailored to the specific needs of the area have been more effective in reducing substance abuse" (Key Informant 1, 2023).*

In conclusion, the study's findings highlight the complexity of addressing illicit substance abuse in Sakubva and the need for policy interventions that consider the multiple factors that contribute to this problem. The self-concept theory provides a useful framework for understanding these factors and developing effective policy interventions. The study's findings also suggest that policymakers and practitioners should prioritize community-based initiatives that promote social support, empowerment, and self-actualization. Additionally, policy interventions should be tailored to the specific needs of Sakubva and should address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse

### **5.3 Implications**

The implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe, has significant implications for policymakers, practitioners, and the community at large. According to the study's findings, policy interventions have had mixed results, with some being effective in reducing substance abuse while others have been hindered by challenges such as lack of resources, corruption, and inadequate community involvement. The self-concept theory by Carl Rogers (1951) provides a useful framework for understanding the implications of policy interventions on individuals and communities. According to this theory, an individual's self-concept is shaped by their experiences and interactions with others, and plays a crucial role in determining their behavior. In the context of Sakubva, policy interventions that promote positive self-concept and self-actualization may be effective in reducing substance abuse.

One of the key implications of the study's findings is the need for policymakers and practitioners to prioritize community involvement and participation in policy interventions. According to Rogers (1951), individuals have a fundamental need for self-actualization, which can be facilitated through supportive and empowering environments. In the context of Sakubva, community-based initiatives that promote social support, empowerment, and self-actualization may be effective in reducing substance abuse.

The study's findings also have implications for the design and implementation of policy interventions. According to a key informant, "*Policy interventions that are tailored to the specific needs of the area have been more effective in reducing substance abuse*" (Key Informant 1, 2023). This suggests that policymakers and practitioners need to take into account the unique needs and circumstances of Sakubva when designing and implementing policy interventions.

Furthermore, the study's findings suggest that policy interventions need to address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse in Sakubva. According to Rogers (1951), individuals who experience incongruence between their self-concept and their experiences may be more likely to engage in maladaptive behaviors, including substance abuse. In the context of Sakubva, policy interventions that promote congruence between individuals' self-concept and their experiences may be effective in reducing substance abuse.

In terms of specific implications for policymakers and practitioners, the study suggests that community-based initiatives that promote social support, empowerment, and self-actualization may be effective in reducing substance abuse. Additionally, policy

interventions should be tailored to the specific needs of Sakubva, and should address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse.

Moreover, policymakers and practitioners need to ensure that policy interventions are evidence-based and informed by research. According to a study participant, *"Policy interventions should be based on evidence and research, rather than on assumptions or anecdotal evidence"* (Interviewee 2, 2023). This is consistent with the principles of evidence-based practice, which suggest that policy interventions should be informed by the best available evidence (Sackett et al., 1996).

In conclusion, the study's findings have significant implications for policymakers, practitioners, and the community at large. The self-concept theory provides a useful framework for understanding the implications of policy interventions on individuals and communities. Policymakers and practitioners need to prioritize community involvement and participation, address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse, and ensure that policy interventions are evidence-based and tailored to the specific needs of Sakubva.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations can be made for policymakers, practitioners, and future researchers.

Policymakers and practitioners should prioritize community involvement and participation in policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Sakubva. Community-based initiatives that promote social support, empowerment, and self-actualization may be effective in reducing substance abuse (Rogers, 1951). Community

members who are aware of policy interventions and understand their role in implementation are more likely to participate and support these efforts.

Policy interventions should be tailored to the specific needs of Sakubva. Policymakers and practitioners need to take into account the unique needs and circumstances of the area when designing and implementing policy interventions.

Policy interventions need to address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse in Sakubva. Poverty, unemployment, and lack of economic opportunities have contributed to the high prevalence of substance abuse in the area (Interviewee 2, 2023). Policy interventions that address these underlying factors may be effective in reducing substance abuse.

Policymakers and practitioners should prioritize evidence-based practice in the design and implementation of policy interventions. According to Sackett et al. (1996), policy interventions should be informed by the best available evidence. This suggests that policymakers and practitioners need to prioritize research and evaluation in the design and implementation of policy interventions.

Policymakers and practitioners should allocate resources effectively to support policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Sakubva. Resources should be allocated to community-based initiatives that promote social support, empowerment, and self-actualization. Additionally, resources should be allocated to address the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse in Sakubva.

Future researchers should conduct further studies to evaluate the effectiveness of policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Sakubva. Further research can

inform the design and implementation of policy interventions and ensure that they are effective in reducing substance abuse.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further research**

Further research is necessary to build on the findings of this study and to identify effective policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe. One area of potential research is the evaluation of specific policy interventions aimed at reducing substance abuse in Sakubva. According to a study participant, *"There is need for further research to identify effective policy interventions that can be scaled up to address the substance abuse problem in Sakubva"* (Interviewee 3). Experimental or quasi-experimental studies could be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of different policy interventions.

Another area of potential research is the investigation of the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse in Sakubva. While this study identified poverty, unemployment, and lack of economic opportunities as contributing factors, further research could explore other factors such as peer influence, family dynamics, and mental health issues. Further research could also explore the role of community involvement and participation in policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Sakubva. Community-based initiatives that promote social support, empowerment, and self-actualization may be effective in reducing substance abuse (Rogers, 1951). Studies could investigate the impact of community involvement on the effectiveness of policy interventions and identify strategies for promoting community participation.

Additionally, research could be conducted to develop and validate measures of substance abuse and policy intervention effectiveness in the context of Sakubva.. Moreover, further

research could investigate the impact of policy interventions on different sub-populations in Sakubva, such as youth, women, and men. According to a key informant, "*Policy interventions may have different effects on different sub-populations, and it is important to understand these effects to develop targeted interventions*" (Key Informant 1). Studies could explore the impact of policy interventions on these sub-populations and identify strategies for tailoring interventions to meet their specific needs.

Lastly, research could be conducted to explore the sustainability and scalability of policy interventions aimed at controlling illicit substances in Sakubva. According to Sackett et al. (1996), policy interventions should be informed by the best available evidence and should be sustainable over time. Studies could investigate the sustainability and scalability of policy interventions and identify strategies for ensuring their long-term effectiveness.

In conclusion, further research is necessary to build on the findings of this study and to identify effective policy interventions to control illicit substances in Sakubva. By exploring the evaluation of specific policy interventions, the underlying factors that contribute to substance abuse, community involvement and participation, measure development, sub-population effects, and sustainability and scalability, researchers can contribute to the development of effective policy interventions that reduce substance abuse in Sakubva.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1. Interview Guide in English**

- 1) Which policy interventions have been in place to reduce illicit substance abuse in Manicaland, Sakubva, Mutare?
- 2) How successful have been the key policy interventions to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva?
- 3) What are the challenges faced by stakeholders in implementing policies to control illicit substance abuse in Sakubva?
- 4) What factors influence the abuse of illicit substances abuse in Sakubva?
- 5) What can be done to control the abuse of illicit substance abuse in Manicaland, Sakubva?

## **Appendix 2. Interview Guide in Shona**

- 1) Ndeipi mutemo yakaiswa kuitira kuderedza kutorwa kwezvinodhaka mudunhu reManicaland, muSakubva maMutare)
- 2) Iri kubudirira zvakadii mitemo iyi mukurwisa dambudziko rekutorwa kwezvinodhaka?
- 3) Ndeapi matambudziko ari kusanganikwa nawo nevanorwisa kutorwa kwezvinodhaka muSakubva?
- 4) Chii chinokonzera kutorwa kwezvinodhaka muSakubva?
- 5) Chii chingaitwa mukuderedza kutorwa kwezvinodhaka muManicaland, muSakubva?

### **Appendix 3. Informed Consent**

My name is Victorino De Almeida Garcia , a final year Public Policy and Governance student from Africa University. I am carrying out a study on the **implementation of policy interventions to control illicit substances in Manicaland,the case of Sakubva, Mutare, Zimbabwe (2017-2025)**. I am kindly asking you to participate in this study by answering to questions that will be asked by the researcher. The purpose of the study is to assess the effectiveness and reach of policy interventions in reducing illicit substance use in Sakubva, Mutare, from 2017 to 2025, to analyze the specific policy interventions, programs, and strategies implemented to control illicit substances in Sakubva, Mutare, between 2017 and 2025 and to provide recommendations to improve policy interventions and their implementation. You were selected for the study because you have the knowledge on the information needed by the researcher. It is expected that this will take about 2 hours. I reassure you that all the participants will be protected from any physical, psychological and emotional harm. Any information that is obtained in the study that can be identified with the participant will not be disclosed without their permission. Names and any other identification will not be asked for in the interviews. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide not to participate in this study, your decision will not affect your future relationship with your society or other authorities. If you chose to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation without penalty. Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over. If you have decided to participate in this study, please sign this form in the space provide below





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**AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)**

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Ref: AU3420/25

25 August, 2025

**VICTORINO DE ALMEIDA GARCIA**

C/O Africa University

Box 1320

**MUTARE**

**RE: IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY INTERVENTIONS TO CONTROL OF ILLICIT  
SUBSTANCES IN MANICALAND. THE CASE OF SAKUBVA MUTARE  
ZIMBABWE (2017-  
2024)**

Thank you for submitting the above-titled proposal to the Africa University Research Ethics Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and approved your application to conduct the above research.

The approval is based on the following. a) Research proposal

- **APPROVAL NUMBER** AUREC 3420/25  
This number should be used on all correspondence, consent forms, and appropriate documents
- **AUREC MEETING DATE** NA
- **APPROVAL DATE** August 25 2025
- **EXPIRATION DATE** August 25, 2026
- **TYPE OF MEETING:** Expedited  
After the expiration date, this research may only continue upon renewal. A progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before the expiration date for renewal purposes.
- **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems concerning subject safety must be reported to AUREC within 3 working days on the standard AUREC form.
- **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
- **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to AUREC.