THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DRUG ABUSE AND LEARNER BEHAVIOUR IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PARYS

by

MAGAUTA DIANAH KHATITE

MINI-DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in

PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION

in the

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

SUPERVISOR: Dr RC Grobler

NOVEMBER 2005
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Special thanks to

- The merciful God, for seeing me through my studies
- My supervisor, Dr RC Grobler for her constant supervision
- My children for their understanding and support
- Statistical Consultation Service of the former Rand Afrikaans University for their help in analyzing the data
- Mrs. Bonnie Whiffler for editing this work
- Mrs. C Bucknall for typing this mini-dissertation
ABSTRACT

The secondary schools in Parys are characterized by serious erosion of academic performance and acceptable behaviour. Drug abuse is very rife. This state of affairs prompted educators to embark on a research in an attempt to revive the culture of learning at schools.

The research investigated the relationship between learners' academic performance and behaviour. The research questions which emerged, were:

- What is the relationship between drug abuse and learners' academic performance?
- What is the relationship between drug abuse and the learners' behaviour?

Data pertaining to the respondents was obtained from the incidents book, which is obtained by the school principal's permission. This data consists of the respondents personal information. However, the names of the respondents are not used in the research but are expressed in numbers. The second set of data was obtained from the class schedules. From the schedules, it was investigated whether a learner has improved or has declined in performance from the first date of the identification as drug abuser to the last date of identification.

The research found that family set up serve to contribute to drug abuse. Learners who are taken care by other people who are not their biological parents tend to abuse drugs. The respondents comprised of females and males. The female respondents participated in abusing other drugs, but did not participate in smoking habit. This may be culture determined because it is acceptable in African culture for a male child to smoke when he turns 18 years, but girls are ridiculed.
It is found that under educational category, whether a learner is a senior or junior, they abuse drugs in anyway. Drug abuse is not determined by the age of a learner. All learners who are respondents are in Grade 8 – 12 ages ranging from 13 – 22, and they all abuse drugs. Advancement in age in some cases may be the reason for drug abuse, drop out of school and other problem behaviour mentioned in the research.

Distance from the school is also associated with drug abuse. Learners who walk 6 – 10 km per day going to school and back, abuse other drugs and smoke cigarettes because of the ample time they have to experiment with various kinds of drugs (Note should be taken that only male respondents smoke cigarettes).
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CHAPTER 1 | ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY | 1 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY | 2 |
| 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS | 3 |
| 1.3 AIM OF RESEARCH | 3-4 |
| 1.3.1 Paradigmatic perspective | 4 |
| 1.3.1.1 Theoretical assumptions | 4-5 |
| 1.3.1.2 Meta theoretical assumptions | 5 |
| 1.3.1.3 Methodological assumptions | 5 |
| 1.4 CONCEPTS CLARIFICATION | 6 |
| 1.4.1 Drug | 6 |
| 1.4.1.1 Drug abuse | 6-7 |
| 1.4.1.2 Drug misuse | 7 |
| 1.4.1.3 Dependency | 7 |
| 1.4.1.4 Tolerance | 7-8 |
| 1.4.2 Learner | 8 |
| 1.4.3 Academic performance | 8 |
| 1.4.4 Behaviour | 9 |
| 1.5 METHODOLOGY | 9 |
| 1.5.1 Literature review | 9 |
| 1.5.2 Empirical investigation | 9-10 |
| 1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION | 10 |
| 1.6.1 Description of respondents | 10 |
| 1.6.2 Negotiating access into the school premises and access to the data | 11 |
| 1.6.3 Data processing | 11 |
| 1.7 PLAN OF ACTION | 11-12 |
| CHAPTER 2 | VARIOUS DRUGS AND FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNERS | 13 |
| 2. INTRODUCTION | 13 |
| 2.1 DRUGS COMMONLY ABUSED BY LEARNERS | 13-14 |
| 2.1.1 Alcohol | 14-15 |
| 2.1.2 Dagga | 15-17 |
| 2.1.3 Stimulants | 17-19 |
| 2.1.4 Central nervous system hallucinogens | 19-20 |
2.1.5 Sedatives ................................................................................ 20-21
2.1.6 Doping drugs ............................................................................. 21
2.1.7 Heroin and mandrax ................................................................. 21-22
2.1.8 Anabolic steroids ........................................................................ 22

2.2 FACTORS WHICH MAY CAUSE LEARNERS TO ABUSE DRUGS ..... 23
2.2.1 Environmental factors .................................................................. 23
2.2.1.1 Weak attachment to school......................................................... 23-25
2.2.1.2 Poverty at an individual level and poor neighbourhood ............... 25-26
2.2.2 Social factors .............................................................................. 27
2.2.2.1 Peer influence .............................................................................. 27-28
2.2.2.2 Family situation ........................................................................... 28-31
2.2.2.3 Sub-cultural factors ..................................................................... 31
2.2.3 Personal factors of learners ................................................................. 31
2.2.3.1 Learner's personality ..................................................................... 32
2.2.3.2 Learner's attitude ....................................................................... 32
2.2.3.3 Learner's self-concept ................................................................. 33

2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF LEARNERS WHO ARE ABUSERS .......... 33-34
2.3.1 Psychological signs ........................................................................ 34
2.3.2 Physical signs .............................................................................. 34-35

2.4 SUMMARY .................................................................................. 35

CHAPTER 3 ....................................................................................... 36

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND DESIGN ................................................. 36
3. INTRODUCTION ........................................................................... 36
3.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY ................................................................ 36-37
3.1.1 Stage one: Preparation and sifting ................................................. 37
3.1.1.1 Determination of education relevance .............................................. 37
3.1.1.2 Suspension of possible prejudice of the researcher and stating of assumptions 37
3.1.1.3 Questioning and research approach an willingness to work hard .............. 38
3.1.2 STAGE TWO: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS ................. 38
3.1.2.1 Identification sources of knowledge ..................................................... 38-39
3.1.2.2 Systematising and classifying data from the various sources of knowledge 39
3.1.3 Stage three: determination of meaning and self-correctional steps ....... 39
3.1.3.1 Interpretation and questioning the meaning or importance of the findings ... 39
3.2 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE ................................................ 39-40
3.2.1 Intrusive measures versus unobtrusive measures .............................. 40

3.3 SUMMARY .................................................................................. 41
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA CONCERNING ABUSE AND LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOUR

4. INTRODUCTION

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SAMPLE

4.1.1 An analysis of the sample with regard to the independent variables

4.1.2 Descriptive analysis of the dependent variables

4.2 HYPOTHESES

4.3 A DIFFERENTIAL ANALYSIS OF DATA AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE STATISTICAL FINDINGS

4.3.1 Univariate hypotheses with gender as independent variable concerning the different variables

4.3.2 Univariate hypotheses with distance from school as independent variable concerning the various variables

4.3.3 Univariate hypotheses with educational category as independent variable concerning the various variables

4.3.4 Univariate hypotheses with age group as independent variable concerning the various variables

4.3.5 Univariate hypotheses with caregiver as independent variable concerning the various variables

4.4 CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5 INTRODUCTION

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

5.1.1 Summary regarding age group and gender

5.1.2 Summary regarding gender and smoking habit

5.1.3 Summary regarding caregiver

5.1.4 Summary regarding distance from school

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 Recommendation regarding distance from school

5.2.2 Recommendation regarding educators

5.2.3 Recommendation regarding the caregiver
5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY ........................................... 66
5.4 CONCLUSION ...................................................................... 67
BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................... 68-70
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 TABULATION OF INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING GENDER AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING EDUCATIONAL CATEGORY AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING AGE GROUP AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING CAREGIVER AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2.1</td>
<td>KINDS OF ALCOHOLS ABUSED BY LEARNERS</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2.2</td>
<td>THE MOST COMMON ILLEGAL DRUGS ABUSED AMONGST SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2.3</td>
<td>COCAINE HYDROCHLORIDE POWDER AS USED BY COCAINE ADDICTS</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPENDIX</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LETTER FROM THE EDITOR</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LETTER FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LETTER FROM FACULTY ACADEMIC ETHICS COMMITTEE</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

It is frightening how easy it is to get hold of drugs nowadays, and how they are used to cope with everyday life. It is no longer only dagga on schools’ premises, drugs are getting harder and the users are getting younger! According to Levinthal (1996:1), the subject of drug abuse has always been, and may long continue to be one of the most considerable controversies. For this reason, it seems imperative to embark on a study of drug abuse and its relationship to learners’ academic performance and their behaviour. Some of the most controversial questions of our day involve the use, misuse and abuse of drugs.

Meyer and Roy (1992:25) indicate that the association between drugs and behaviour is interconnected, and their covariance may be an aid in identifying the learners who are at risk. This interconnectedness may lead to educators applying greater risk taking behaviour such as, absenteeism, drop out or failure due to unsatisfactory classroom performance, or other behaviours that keep learners from attending or participating in the school as indicators of problem behaviour.

"Substance abuse remains firmly entrenched in learners’ culture, a sphere in which drinking and drug use are often considered badges of belonging" (Finn, Willert & Marable, 2003:80). As stated in the first paragraph, it is no longer only dagga that is used on school premises. According to Mwamwenda (1996:485), six categories of recreational drugs can be identified. Learners use these illicit drugs to differing degrees, and this affects their lives - socially, at home and at school. The various categories of drugs that which are used most in schools will be discussed in more detail in chapter two.
Heaviside (1998:55) maintains that drug abuse costs schools a lot of money for truancy, special education disciplinary programmes, educators' turnover and property damage. The Department of Education conducted different surveys asking educators and non-teaching staff about the level of safety and discipline in their schools. In a 1991 survey, ten percent of school educators indicated that learners' drug abuse is a primary problem in their schools (Heaviside, 1998:56). A review of the research on the drug abuse in the secondary schools, its relationship with the learners' academic performance and their behaviour will reinforce what we still have to learn and offer some ideas of where to go from here.

1.1 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

From the perspective of education, learners labelled "drug addicts" are seen as been prone to school dropout and failure due to unsatisfactory academic performance and other behaviours that keep them from attending and participating effectively in the school. Risk of the abovementioned aspects, has been related to delinquency, aggression and absenteeism which may lead learners to abuse drugs.

According to Gruber and Machamber (2000:61), there is a need to identify the learners who are at risk as early as possible. They can be identified through effective anticipatory guidance and intervention by disciplinary programmes, which are designed for correctional purposes. Considering the evidence for worsening behaviour and the decline in learners' academic performance, as is the case in point, it is imperative to conduct an assessment to ascertain whether or not secondary school learners' regular use of drugs, crack distribution or smuggling of drugs at their shacks, such heavy involvement in drug abuse say (Meyer & Roy, 1992:28) at an early stage, affects regular psychological development which will, in turn, interfere with learning.
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

There is a serious concern within educational circles about achievement, decline in learners' academic performance and behaviour in secondary schools (Mwamwenda, 1996:485). This decline in performance and behaviour can be attributed to casual factors such as drug trafficking on school premises, misuse and abuse of psychoactive drugs, as Mwamwenda (1996:485) has stated, whether they are licit or illicit, they qualify as substance abuse with varying degrees of potential for abuse.

Psychoactive drugs can damage learners in a variety of ways, causing illness both physically and psychologically. In this way, learners' school progress is hampered. It also causes the disruption of a family, personal relationships, loss of education and economical opportunities, productivity and loss of dignity and autonomy (Kleiman & Mark, 2001:1).

In the light of the preceding information, the following research question emerges:

- What is the relationship between drug abuse and the learners' behaviour?

1.3 AIM OF RESEARCH

There is a need to reflect on the way in which this matter of problem behaviour (drug-related behaviour) is handled in order to ensure that matters do not become worse. For an example, a school might be formalising a reactive policy in an effort to eradicate drugs from school premises. However, the outcome of this policy may end up promoting exclusions. The interaction with a particular learner might be handled in such a way that his/her dignity is eroded, rather than being enhanced. On all such occasions, the outcome is not what everyone really wants.

In the light of the above information, the aim of this study is to:

- Investigate the relationship of drug abuse with the learners' academic performance and behaviour.
• To provide guidelines to educators and parents in an effort to implement correctional measures.

1.3.1 Paradigmatic perspective

1.3.1.1 Theoretical assumptions

The ability to achieve academically is of particular interest for the educational field of study. Many researchers maintain that there is a causal relationship between drug abuse and academic performance (Hussong & Chassin, 1996:66). It is however, not clear as to whether current drug abuse affects subsequent performance or prior drug abuse impacts the academic performance of learners, or whether this is the result of other factors altogether.

Learners' academic achievement is affected and determined by many factors. These factors include external influence from families, school, and classroom environments. Internal factors related to the individual's cognitive and effective prerequisites, such as the acquisition of the underlying actual competencies that is sufficient knowledge base, effective study habits and good learning strategies (Hussong & Chassin, 1996:67). These internal factors are influencing the learners' academic performance and behaviour. Environmental factors influence is also of utmost importance in this study because these factors play a pivotal role as they may in fact be the primary causal factor for drug abuse and this is going to be investigated. The abovementioned internal factors can, to a certain extent, be introduced by external factors.

Learners from the low socio-economic status, who are pedagogically neglected, culturally deprived and socially disadvantaged are usually perceived as restrained in their growth. In the research on children restrained in their maturing, Hussong and Chassin (1996:67), asserts that these children feel negative about themselves and are extremely vulnerable to peer pressure. They fear situations in which they can fail, which make them exceptionally withdrawn and reluctant to communicate especially in class (Hussong & Chassin, 1996:67).
1.4 CONCEPTS CLARIFICATION

Conceptual analysis or clarification is the study that clarifies the meaning of a concept by describing the essential or generic meaning, the different meanings and the appropriate usage of the concept. Some related concepts to this study would also be clarified, as they will be used in the next chapter.

Eight such concepts, which are going to be used in this study, are drug, drug abuse, drug misuse, dependency, tolerance, learner, academic performance and behaviour. Each concept is going to be explained briefly and its relevance to the study will be outlined.

1.4.1 Drug

According to Oxford Paperback Dictionary (1988:248), drug refers to a substance that acts on the nervous system of a human being and causes intoxication or addiction. Some drugs are prescribed by the doctors for medical use to alleviate pain and help to relax nervous system in the case of patients suffering from stress and depression. Drug is chemical substance that when taken into the body, alter the normal functioning of the body in some way, excluding those nutrients considered to be related to normal functioning, (Levinthal, 1996:4). The implication for learning is that learners who abuse drugs are not going to perform as expected because of the impairment caused by the drugs.

1.4.1.1 Drug abuse

Recreational drugs are those that contain chemical substances bringing about change in mental, emotional and behavioural aspects of an individual (Mwamwenda, 1996:485). Levinthal (1996:6) defines drug abuse as drug-taking behaviour resulting in some form of physical, mental or social impairment. Drug abuse is typically applied to cases in which a licit or illicit drug is used in ways that produce some form of physical, mental or social impairment that will hinder a learner's ability to perform to an optimum level or as
expected by her/his educators and parents. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on how the drug abuse is related to learners' academic performance and their behaviour.

1.4.1.2 Drug misuse

Drug misuse refers to drug-taking behaviour in which a prescribed or non-prescription drug is used in an inappropriate way. Many instances of drug misuse involve instrumental goals, for example, "Drug doses may be increased beyond the level of the prescription in the mistaken ideas that if a little is good, more will be better" (Levinthal, 1996:18).

1.4.1.3 Dependency

Dependency is a process by which the taking of drug sets up physiological or environmental changes that encourage future drug taking. Collier, Harvey and Longmore (1989:363) maintain that the degree to which a person becomes dependent is determined by his characteristics, needs and also by the nature of the drug and the extent to which it is consumed. This means that individuals differ in their susceptibility to drug dependency, and drugs differ in their capacity to cause dependence. This is the reason why we find various types, which are used by learners at school as well as differing degrees of usage. Drug dependence is a complex affliction that, if not correctly approached, can have a detrimental effect on learners, their family, and the society at large (Searli, 1995:149).

1.4.1.4 Tolerance

The concept tolerance refers to the capacity of a drug dose to have a gradually diminished effect on the user as the drug is taken repeatedly. The drug's early effects are later achievable only by applying higher doses. The physical effect experienced when a tolerance-inducing drug is withdrawn, is called a withdrawal syndrome (Collier et al., 1989:362).
From the above assertion, one can deduce that from this kind of the environment, learners are likely to abuse drugs, to escape the prevailing reality around them.

1.3.1.2 Meta theoretical assumptions

Based on the premises presented in the preceding paragraph, the researcher believes that the relationship between drug abuse and learners' behaviour in secondary schools needs to be investigated. The reason being that learners who grow up in families who are often poor; who are educationally neglected; whose parents are often illiterate or semi-literate usually resort to drug abuse for fulfilment. The researcher also believes that these factors impact negatively on the learners' academic performance and these learners' behaviour changes as a result. This kind of situation robs learners of the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills required for learning, thus leading to further drug abuse, poor academic performance and problem behaviour.

1.3.1.3 Methodological assumptions

The task of the researcher is to find answers to questions in a scientific and objective way that would adhere to logic and justification. The principle of logic entails that scientific statements ought to be free from all contradictions. Precision and clarity should characterise it. The principle of justification entails that in order to qualify as scientific, concepts and statements in which they are limited must pass the test of empirical observation (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:11). This means that the findings from the investigation should be reliable so that if the study is repeated the result will be the same.

A scientific method is therefore a specific method used to discover and describe truths and build up a body of knowledge, which is free from personal convictions, perception, subjectivity and attitudes.
The users build up tolerance to the drug; they require increasing amount of drug in order to produce the desired sedation. When an individual stops taking the drug he/she will usually experience unpleasant physical and mental side effects. It is of utmost importance to employ therapy or intervention on such learners as early as possible (Collier et al., 1989:363).

1.4.2 Learner

In terms of section 3, subsection 1 of South African Schools Act (1996) the concept a 'learner' refers to any person who is obliged to receive education in a formalised institution. The school is obliged to produce a conducive, learning climate at school, free of crime, gangsterism, drug trafficking and drug abuse.

1.4.3 Academic performance

The concept 'performance' is to how successful someone is in executing the output in the given work (Cambridge Learners' Dictionary, 1991:475). In this study academic performance is an educational output resulting from learning activity through the utilisation of essential teaching and learning aids. It is related to subjects that involve thinking and studying (Cambridge Learners' Dictionary, 1991:15).

Academic performance, in this study, will refer to decline or unsatisfactory performance such as failing and repeating of grades. Academic performance is an observable behaviour of the learners. The information pertaining to the learners' academic performance is recorded, which indicates their performance prior to the identification and the period after the identification. This information will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.
1.4.4 Behaviour

The concept 'behaviour' refers to a way in which one conducts him/herself in a particular situation, a treatment he/she gives to others and the kind of manners he/she portrays (Collier et al., 1989:365). The learner, who cannot or will not adjust to the socially acceptable norms of behaviour and consequently disrupts his/her academic progress, the learning efforts of his/her classmates and interpersonal relation, is referred to as behaviour problem learner. Learners who are involved in drug abuse may display some of the abovementioned characteristics.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

This section of the chapter explains the research methodology that the study will employ. A research method helps the researcher to acquire the desired data. The research indicates the subjects, instruments, and the procedure to be used in the study (Vermeulen, 1998:73). This study employs a literature review and an empirical investigation.

1.5.1 Literature review

Literature review is usually a critique of the status of knowledge on a carefully defined educational topic. Literature review when conducted carefully and presented well, adds much to the understanding of the selected problem. It gives the researcher an opportunity to review what other authors have written on the subject under investigation (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:113). These may be found in journals, books, newspapers and dissertations.

1.5.2 Empirical investigation

Research is characterised by a strong empirical attitude and approach. To the researcher, empirical means guided by evidence obtained from systematic research methods rather than by obvious (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:114). For this study, data will be
collected from the secondary schools, to investigate the relationship of drug abuse with the learners' academic performance and behaviour. This information is readily available in the principal's office because the sample are those learners who are already identified as drug abusers.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Research ethics provide the researcher with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct a research in a morally acceptable way. In this study the respondents are not aware that they are the participants in the research. This is due to the fact that drug abuse is a very sensitive issue, and no learner would like to carry the stigma of being a drug abuser. The other reason is that no researcher would be given permission to give learners drugs for experimentation. Therefore the respondents in this study are learners who were found abusing drugs.

1.6.1 Description of respondents

The respondents are the secondary school learners in Parys who are doing grade eight to twelve. They are both boys and girls. The first section of respondents' information comprised of learners age, grade, gender, siblings, care giver, distance from school and types of drugs abused. The first section of the information was found in the incidents book, which is locked in the school principal's office, and it is only obtainable through his permission.

The second section of the data comprised of the respondents' date of first identification, last date identified and aggregate after identification. All information was obtain from various class schedules at school. The number of respondents was initially fifty-six, but only the first fifty were taken as the respondents for the study, as guided by the head of the Statistical Consultation Service of the former Rand Afrikaans University.
1.6.2 Negotiating access into the school premises and access to the data

The researcher obtained permission from the Director of the Northern Free State District to conduct a research in four secondary schools in Parys. The duration of the research was two months as granted by the District Director. However, the nature of research determines the methodology to be employed in collecting data. In this study, data was collected from one secondary school and the data obtained from that particular school represented the other three, because the information obtained is also applicable in the other three schools. To obtain the required data, permission was obtained from the principal of that particular school. The principal and the researcher compiled the information according to the sections described in paragraph 3.4.1.

To guarantee the confidentiality of the data, the names were identified by means of numbers and the information obtained from the individuals was grouped together and reflected as averages. In this way individuals cannot be identified.

1.6.3 Data processing

The data collected from the incidents book was sent to the Statistical Consultation Service (Statcon) of the former Rand Afrikaans University where it was keyed into a computer for analysis. The output was given to the researcher and the analysis was explained. The second section of data, which was obtained from various class schedules, was also submitted to Statcon for analysis. The output was also given to the researcher and analysed. The processing of data was done after being controlled and checked for usefulness.

1.7 PLAN OF ACTION

Chapter one is an introductory chapter to the study and represents an overview with regard to the problem statement, aim of the study, concepts clarification and research methods that will be employed.
In chapter two an overview of the literature study with regard to the relationship of drug abuse on learners academic performance and behaviour will be presented. The various categories of drugs commonly abused, contributory factors to drug abuse by learners at risk will be discussed. In chapter three research design and research instrument will be presented. Chapter four will contain analysis and interpretation of data. In chapter five the summary of the findings, recommendation and counselling procedures will be presented.
CHAPTER 2

VARIOUS DRUGS AND FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNERS

2. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, reference was made of the manifestation of a fundamental problem experienced by learners who abuse drugs. It was also indicated that it is no longer only alcohol and dagga that are abused by learners in schools. In this chapter various categories of drugs will be identified. Aspects that will receive attention are the various categories of drugs, which are abused by learners.

Drug abuse is also related to other offences at school. Some learners miss lessons because they are abusing drugs in the toilet. At certain times, for example, the learners can’t concentrate in class because they are suffering from a hangover, having consumed alcohol the previous day. Statistics of learners who abuse and/or use drugs are not accurate since those who are caught only represent a fraction of the total number those who uses drugs (Sinclair, 1994:4).

Drugs are ideal commodities, because they are lightweight and they are easily transportable. Learners can hide them and carry them in their school bags. The problem, according to Pretorius (1998:263), is that drug abuse is a socio-pathological phenomenon as the drug addict is subjected to the total breakdown of himself as a person, his social relationships, and his humanness and his survival as an individual. The breakdown takes place on the physical, emotional, cognitive, ethical and moral levels. All the abovementioned aspects are essential for learning, but drug abuse is very destructive for effective learning, a fact that no educator should ignore.

2.1 DRUGS COMMONLY ABUSED BY LEARNERS

Drugs that are commonly abused in school settings are all intoxicating. Intoxication is a temporary state of mental chaos and behavioural dysfunction resulting from the presence of a drug in the central nervous system. The following are the various drugs that are abused
by learners during school hours and their relation with the learners’ expected performance and behaviour (Cuijpers, Jonker, De Weerde & De Jong, 2002:69).

2.1.1 Alcohol

Alcohol abuse is the oldest mood changer dating back to the Stone Age. When alcohol reaches the walls of the stomach, and the small intestines, it goes directly into the blood stream. The blood carries alcohol to the brain in a short period of time. While low doses of alcohol stimulates, high doses slow down the area of the brain that governs judgement and thoughts. A high dose of alcohol interferes with co-ordination and thinking (Searl1, 1995:145).

Alcohol intoxication may cause a state of euphoria, a dulling of sensory perception and impaired hearing equilibrium, taste and touch (Levinthal, 1996:13). Moreover, alcohol intoxication impairs both the storage and retrieval of information in the brain. It decreases learning ability, the ability to recall past events and the retention of facts and figures. It has been established by Meyer and Roy (1992:212) that alcohol intake interferes negatively with an individuals problem solving ability and decision making process.

Windle and Windle (1997:327) indicates that the effects of alcohol are that visual and hearing activity is reduced. The learner who is under the influence will have difficulty in performing gross motor skills, blurred vision, unclear speech, and definite impairment of mental functions, irresponsible behaviour, difficulty in standing, walking, talking, distorted perception and judgement. The effects of alcohol abuse according to Mwamwenda (1996:490) are not only limited to the abuser himself, but extend to ‘significant others’ or the next of kin. It affects many more people, like the abuser himself, his family and the society, in general, suffers the loss of the prospective citizen who would be productive in his society. The school and the welfare have to pay for the support of the abuser!
In social gatherings (school activities) such as beauty contests, educator's confiscated various kinds of alcohol as in (figure 2.1) above.

2.1.2 Dagga

Learners who abuse dagga have escalated to using other illicit drugs at a particular time. They are more heavily involved in other drugs than other youth. They perform at a lower level psychologically and socially than their peers who have not or do not use dagga as regularly (Meyer & Roy, 1992:214). Learners who are abusers are more likely to perform poorly in schools, to be less religious and are delinquent. They become friends with other learners who abuse illicit drugs and perform at a much lower level in all areas of their lives. There are other behavioural and psychological effects of using dagga that pose additional risks for users. According to some research, many more dagga users reported having bought and smoked it at school (Meyer & Roy, 1992:214). This situation raises a major continuing concern about dagga's effect on the learning process.
Learning ability and attention levels are impaired when dagga is smoked, even after a day of supervised abstinence from the psychoactive drug, “The lingering results – the carryover effect of using dagga – persist after the drug is metabolised and no longer affecting the human body” (Carroll, 1996:240). State dependent learning occurs with dagga, which is the material learned while under the influence of the drug is remembered best in the state of drug intoxication in which it was originally learned. The quality of learning and recall are almost always impaired because the abuser's ability to acquire the information or skill will be impaired while the abuser is intoxicated.

Dagga has psychosocial and behavioural effects. Motor co-ordination, specifically, is impaired. It affects hand steadiness, body sway, accuracy of carrying out body movements and ability to maintain postural stability. Although the learners who have smoked dagga may feel great, he/she may become somewhat clumsy (Levinthal, 1996:213).

Dagga provides a convenient chemical escape from growing pains, in this way it prevents youngsters from learning to become mature, independent and responsible adults.

According to Levinthal (1996:215), dagga smoking may produce more subtle neurological changes that would affect one's personality, motivation to succeed or their outlook on life. Regular abusers may contribute to development of more passive inward-turning personality characteristics. For numerous middle class learners, the subtle progressive change from conforming achievement-orientated behaviour to a state of relaxed and careless drifting has followed their use of significant amount of dagga. Such learners exhibit greater introversion, becoming totally involved with the present at the expense of future goals. They also demonstrate a strong tendency towards regressive, childlike magic thinking (Levinthal, 1996:216).
Figure 2.2 The most common illegal drugs abused amongst South African youth

Source: De Miranda (1987:39)

Dagga can be sold in small packets like in the matchbox and in small packets as indicated in figure 2.2. These packets can be put easily in the learners' pockets. If packed in the box of matches, it can fool many people, those who think that the box contains matches which is used to light cigarettes. In Chapter 4 mention is made that educators and parents are not so fussy when learners smoke cigarettes as compared to the abuse of other drugs.

2.1.3 Stimulants

"Stimulants are intended to increase central nervous system activation and behavioural activity" (Mwamwenda, 1996: 486). Examples of stimulants are caffeine, nicotine and cocaine (which are very strong stimulates). Cocaine makes the abuser feel very high and entertain the belief that he is on 'top of the world' and is capable of conquering everything. The person is highly alert, buoyant, energetic and elated (Mwamwenda, 1996:486). Excessive use of cocaine could lead to mental disorders, hallucination and difficulty in
controlling one's thoughts. The behaviour of a learner who is under the influence of the stimulants may be altered. For an example, a learner who suffers from mental disorder will not be able to recall the schoolwork he has studied, and, as a result, effective learning will not take place. This is where under-achievement comes in.

The following incidents took place at one secondary school in Parys. The incidents may help indicate the seriousness or the consequences of stimulants abuse:

- A 17 years old grade II boy, a member of Learners Representative Council, took off his clothes in front of all learners and educators at the assembly. He was taken to hospital, and it was discovered that he was under the influence of stimulants. From hospital a week later, he dropped out of school. He has no memory of what he did at school.

- A 15 years old grade 10 girl collapsed at the assembly. It was discovered at hospital that she had been taking drugs for a long time without eating. For the first time she failed the grade, and she is still repeating the same grade (at the time when the study is conducted). She has now adopted a “don’t care” attitude towards school.

Both learners were taken to the hospital. It was discovered that they were under the influence of strong stimulates.

Because of its intense stimulation, cocaine abusers frequently abuse sleeping tables and tranquillizers to counter the unpleasant side effects of anxiety, agitation and insomnia (Turpeinen, 2000:263). The habitual cocaine abuser frequently goes on a cocaine spree where he continuously remains under the influence of drug for a number of days. During this time he is usually unable to eat or sleep. This usually leads to a “cocaine psychosis” with all the symptoms of paranoid delusion, aggressiveness and homicidal behaviour (Turpeinen, 2000:263). It is evident that drug abuse is a direct attack on learners' psychological development. Therefore it is imperative for educators, parents and society at large to intervene as early as possible.

Figure 2.3 Cocaine hydrochloride powder as used by cocaine addicts
The two learners referred to above, were diagnosed to have abused cocaine.

2.1.4 Central nervous system hallucinogens

The intoxication effects of these drugs are manifested by a general disturbance of perception, resulting in either illusions or true hallucinations. The concurrent hallucination induced by these drugs are:

- Visual: The tendency to see things that are not there.
- Auditory: A tendency to hear things not there.
- Tactile: A tendency to feel things that are not there (Pretorius, 1998:30).

In some instances, hallucinations of smell and taste can occur. Another phenomenon known as “Synesthesias” can also occur. In this phenomenon one can blend two different senses, for example music can be seen, and colour can be heard (De Miranda, 1987:37). Distortion of time, space and body image frequently occur. There is a marked disturbance of thought processes and impairment of short-term memory. Mwanwenda (1996:486)
focused on learners who become excessive sedative users and to see how this affects development in other spheres of life.

2.1.6 Doping drugs

Doping drug is a thick liquid used as a lubricant. It is given to athletes to enhance performance. Kindlundh, Isacsong, Berglund, and Nyberg (1998:72), in their study, conducted a research to determine the extent of doping drug users among adolescents and analysed the main reason for use. The result showed that 2.7% of the male and 0.4% of the female adolescents had used doping drugs at same time in their life. However, the knowledge of how to get doping for exceeded use is not available or known. The main reason for using doping was to improve appearance and to enhance performance in sports. The secondary school learners who had used doping drugs at least once, reported that the sources for doping drugs firstly, were at gymnasium, secondly at school, and lastly on the street. The learners had either bought or been offered the substances from friends, had dealt themselves or had bought from unfamiliar persons. The reason of using it is an alternative to becoming more brave and because friends do so.

Despite the pronounced side effects of these drugs, young people continue to use them. Some studies indicate that doping abuse may lead to the development of dependence. It can also release aggression. It is imperative to provide early information to learners about the risks of these drugs, “if doping attitude were to turn more positive, it would not take long for a significant increase in use to follow, since these drugs remain plentiful and easily accessible (Kindlundh et al., 1998:73).

2.1.7 Heroin and mandrax

Drugs such as heroin and mandrax are highly addictive. Even though many people who experiment with these drugs for the first time do it with the intention of trying it once. But because of its highly addictive substance, the body develops a craving for it and seldom ends at once. The abusers of these drugs inject themselves with needles. Injecting the drug
is more dangerous because they are putting themselves at great risk of contracting HIV/AIDS from those sharing the needles. Contaminated needles are not the only health-related risk with drugs. It is reported by Turner, Fleishman, Wenger, London, Burman, Shapiro, Bing, Stein, Longshore and Bozzet (2001:626) that young girls and boys prostitute themselves for drugs, many of them end up sleeping with the drug dealers in order to get a fix. Learners who are HIV/AIDS positive will not be able to attend school regularly. They will miss tests and examinations. In this way their performance will drop and eventually they may drop out of school. They may also drop out of school because other learners discriminate them against.

2.1.8 Anabolic steroids

Another form of substances abuse in school setting is the use of anabolic steroids, which is more secretive and more closely related with a focus on self, both in learners' appearance and performance. This performance-enhancing drug is usually used by athletes (Meilman & Kelly, 1995:80).

Comparatively speaking, the use of steroids has not captured the same attention as alcohol abuse and other drugs. This is because of low prevalence rates and use is only related with one subgroup – the learners who are athletes within this population. However, concern about the use of steroids is increasing. Reported adverse effects have included hepatic abnormalities, endocrinology affects, marked behaviour effects and psychological change (Meilman & Kelly, 1995:80). Because of the danger related with these drugs, there is a need to identify factors that may lead learners to abuse drugs. Although anabolic steroids are performance-enhancing drugs, the abovementioned effects might hamper with normal schooling as the learner will be sick. As it is said that it affects behaviour, the learners whose behaviour is problematic are likely not to perform well in their schoolwork.
2.2 FACTORS WHICH MAY CAUSE LEARNERS TO ABUSE DRUGS

Despite the ambitious vision of goal, the drug culture is alive and well in our schools. One may wonder as to why these problems continued to increase in recent years. Some factors are causal to this problem. As educators, we need to be concerned with the understanding of the nature of learner and the learning process, the many variables that interact with learning and development that take place in the classroom, the role of the educator and social interaction and behaviour.

A Department of Education research conducted by Finn, Willert and Marble (2003:85), indicate that social influence plays a prominent role in drug abuse. The following are some of the describable factors that may lead to drug abuse by learners.

2.2.1 Environmental factors

The child’s education primarily starts at home, but the school provides the arena for socialisation to the values and expectation of the larger community. Not only does the school inculcates learners with community norms and values, but within the school social structure, learners develop a sense of where they fit into the societal hierarchy and poor social group. The following are examples of environmental factors that may lead learners to abuse drugs.

2.2.1.1 Weak attachment to school

Learners turn to school drug abuse when their attitude toward school begins to deteriorate. Research from the Department of Education has shown that learners who are less bonded to school are less likely to succeed academically and more likely to engage in disruptive or delinquent behaviour including substance use (Finn et al., 2003:81). This research shows that learners with weak attachments to school are more likely to engage in drugs abuse both inside and outside the school.
Interviews with learners revealed that learners generally find it easy to indulge unnoticed in substances used in school. Learners also indicated that the knowledge of educators 'maybe' catching them serves as a strong deterrent (Finn et al., 2003:80). Educators need to be more sensitive to possible learners' drug abuse in order to re-engage learners who have withdrawn from the learning process. It is also the responsibility of the School Management Team to reduce learners' opportunities to buy, use, and sell drugs in school settings. Learners who identify with school have an internalised perception of belonging. They perceive themselves as part of the school environment, and the school forms an important part of their own experience. As a result, these learners perform well at school, they also participate well in extra-mural activities. (Finn et al., 2003:81).

On the other hand, poor school performance, as indicated by standardised tests, leads to frustration and embarrassment for a learner. The learners' frustrations may lead to disrupting the instructional process, skipping class or even committing delinquent acts. Eventually the learner is suspended, drops out, or is thrown out of school. In this way, the movement towards drugs abuse indicates negative relationship between commitment to school and frequent drugs abuse among junior and senior learners (Hawkins, Cantalo & Miller, 1992:84). Under this heading weak attachment to school, two important aspects need attention. The two aspects are:

- School drop out

According to Sinclair (1994:4) a large proportion of dropouts in South Africa come from the disadvantaged groups who encounter problems when the school expects them to conform to cultural expectations for which they were not prepared at home.

The learners' failure to finish school may not necessarily be a matter of specific learning disability at times, but rather a broader educational disability. A poor atmosphere at home and the occupation of parent/parents as labourers are among other factors predictive for dropping out of school. These learners are viewed as failures of the educational system, and as individuals who failed to achieve basic requirements for South African life. The failure of a learner to participate in school and class activities or to develop a sense of
identification with schools may lead learners to drop out of their school. According to the study conducted by Turpeinen (2000:263), school drop out was related to lack of educational attainment, early first conviction and regular use of drugs in the school settings. The learners who experimented with drugs and dropped out were mostly from homes of low socio-economic status.

- Problem behaviour

Problem behaviour may include skipping classes, truancy, and disruptive behaviour in the classroom and juvenile delinquency. Dropping out of school may also be related with poor academic performance and behaviour. However this behavioural problem maybe attributed to other factors other than poor academic performance. Hawkins, Catalano and Miller (1992:83) indicate that conflict among family member appears more important in the predictions of delinquency. Parental conflict is related with antisocial behaviours in children even when the home is unbroken, and drug abuse is strongly related with parental marital discord. In other words, learners who are raised in families with high conflict appeared to be at a risk for both delinquency and abuse. Hawkins, Catalano and Kandel (1999:83) assert that “Children characterised by withdrawal responses to new stimuli, biological irregularity, slow adaptability to change, frequent negative mood expressions, and high intensity of positive and negative expressions of effect, more often become regular users of alcohol, tobacco and dagga in adolescents.”

2.2.1.2 Poverty at an individual level and poor neighbourhood

Among all learners under the age of 19, two in five live in families classified as “poor”. However, poverty is far from being equally distributed. Poverty at an individual level refers to densely crowded living conditions, being hungry, living in substandard housing, having drug dealers and drug addicts as a “normal” part of neighbourhood environment. Children who are from these kinds of conditions are likely to drop out of school and abuse drugs (Carroll, 1998:230). In population subgroups where employment opportunities are severely constrained and at life stage where economic independence is expected and required, the drug economic is one of the relatively few options open.
Mwanwenda (1996:489) asserts that drugs that are commonly abused, are exceptionally expensive and are primarily available on black market. A way of funding the abuse of drugs is necessary to the abusers so that the supply is sustained and constant. For learners who are abusers to fund drug, they may turn into criminals who steal and traffic drugs. This is, in most cases, applicable to boys. Girls may turn to prostitution or sleep with drug dealers so that they can get their "fix". These behavioural changes or problems are detrimental to the learning process.

Although hard numbers that differentiate the truly poor from the nearly poor exists, poverty itself is relative. There are many people living in the rich ghettos who are characterised by poverty influence. They all have material possessions that the children in poor ghettos want but few of the non-material things that make life more worthwhile (Jang, Vernon, Livesy, Murray, Stein & Wolf, 2001:1309). The situation can be clearly described by the following incident.

"Mary didn’t grow up in dire poverty, she lived in Warren, perhaps Barrington or some other coast bay community. Her family attended church, they took her to Disney World for her 8th birthday and started saving for college when she was born. Her parents hired a tutor for her. She was sent to Girls Scouts and her mother kept a careful eye on her friends. She wasn’t abused; in fact you might say she was pampered. So you ask, how could Mary and any other of the children become a crack addict or junkie? Because that is what happened to Mary. By the age of 16 she turned to heroine, at 20 crack cocaine. At the age of 21 she had a R200 day habit criminal record. What went wrong? A genetic predisposition to addiction, problems at home, too much television, playing with the wrong crowd at school, or stress from learning disability (Koening, 2003:1). Unfortunately her parents had no idea what was wrong, nor did teachers or even the counselors her parents dragged her to, one after another to solve Mary’s "emotional problems".

A learner who abuses various drugs, like Mary from the above paragraph, will not perform as expected. She had everything a child could get from her own parents, but because of addiction to drugs, she behaved strangely.
2.2.2 Social factors

The individual and group exist within a social context, which is determined by values and structures of the society. A shift in cultural norms in legal definition of certain behaviours and in economic factors, for example, have been shown to be related with some changes in drug abuse behaviour (Hawkins, Catalano & Miller, 1992:64). Factors in these categories collectively contribute to drug-taking behaviour, and include the existing knowledge base of learners, their beliefs, attitudes and those human characteristics that make them particularly susceptible in their advance towards drug abuse (Hawkins et al., 1992:85).

The following are some of the factors, which may fall under social factors.

2.2.2.1 Peer influence

Inadequate upbringing often leads to misconduct and criminal behaviour by learners who may relate with peer groups that influence them negatively (Pretorius, 1998:294). Naturally, people like to conform as a way of getting approval from others. This is the case with learners who may yield to peer pressure in an attempt to conform (Mwamwenda, 1996:489). If certain groups of learners who abuse drugs, others in a group “will want to subscribe to the expectations of the dominant majority only to maintain membership in such groups” (Mwamwenda, 1996:489). Learners succumb to drug abuse to satisfy the group they belong to. Often they abuse drugs because they have been persuaded to do so by friends and dealers, sometimes they think it will be fun and may not be addicted. They abuse drugs because they want to escape from reality, but realistically drugs create more problems for them.
Some learners have discrepancies between societal expectations and resources they have available to meet these expectation. Peer culture may develop as a response to those discrepancies as the learner searches for an alternative route to adulthood. Some behaviour allow peers the veneer of sophistication and maturity, but places them at a risk due to their psychological and emotional immaturity, i.e. drug abuse, sexual behaviour and other crimes. Engaging in drug abuse may appear to be a fast-track to peer acceptance and a more viable path to an adult status that seems unattainable through conventional ways (i.e. good grades and good academic performance).

Windle and Windle (1997:21) suggest that isolation serves as protective factor against the negative influence of peers. However, isolated learners are at a higher risk for drug abuse compared to learners with peers who for most of the times abstain from drug abuse. The learners' social or emotional characteristics alleviate their risk as compared to adolescents who are not isolated and who do not have peers who are involved in drugs. Windle and Windle (1997:21), further suggest that learners' lack of involvement with drug-abusing peers is partially offset by their elevated alienation and emotional distress, which make them vulnerable to drug abuse.

Hawkins et al., (1992:85) reported that peer use of drugs has consistently been found as predictors of drug use among adolescents. The influence of peers on learners' drug abuse is stronger than that of parents. Learners who are alienated from the dominant values of society and their parents, low religiosity and rebelliousness have been positively related to drug abuse and delinquent behaviours. Learners who display these behaviour, have strong need for independence and lack of norms. All these are qualities that appear to characterise learners who are less bonded to their parents but more attached to their peers.

2.2.2.2 Family situation

The family is the child's primary agent of socialisation. The type of family upbringing a child gets in the family co-determines his developments and social behaviour. According to Pretorius (1998:294), the parents' child-rearing approach plays a vital role in socially
deviant behaviour among children. There are factors and family types that could put children to crime and drug abuse. The following are the family types and the contributing factors:

- The pseudo family
  This kind of family is characterised by tension and conflict. These aspects may contribute to drug abuse by learners. Learners may resort to drug abuse to alleviate the pain brought by this situation (Pretorius, 1998:294).

- Permissive family type
  This is the family that lacks discipline. The children are free to do as they wish, as a result they may become more susceptible to drug abuse (Pretorius, 1998: 294).

- Parenting errors
  This will include neglect, spoiling, lovelessness, hardiness and over strictness. The learners feel neglected and unloved by their parents. Some of them need to belong, and be loved by their parents. Some of the children who are now street kids and abuse drugs are the result of this type of parenting. The other reason may be that the parents themselves are abusers (Pretorius, 1998:294).

- Too strict parents and not talking to children
  Children from this type of family get information and answers from their peers. The pressure children get from their peers may influence them negatively or positively. This may lead to peers influencing other children to abuse drugs if parents do not talk to them. Unfortunately every society suffers from this sickness of drug abuse (Pretorius, 1998:95). As a researcher, one cannot pass judgement. Perhaps use the word “dilemma” – it illustrates that drug abuse is problematic, without you exposing your personal feelings towards this behaviour

- Identifying parents
In this type of family environment, the child is not educated nor developed according to his inherent potential. The child is coached to duplicate one of his parents who forces their own interests. This is frustrating and demoralising to the child, as the child has mind of his own (Pretorius, 1998:296).

- Neurotic parenting

It is characterised by the fact that the child never knows what to expect from his parent. Untrustworthy and unreliable parents may create confusion and mistrust from the child (Pretorius, 1998:296).

The obvious victim of these different kinds of factors is the rebellious and sensitive child, who is impeded by these circumstances. According to Mwamwenda (1996, 489), there is a tendency once in a while for people to defy authority. This becomes more prevalent with learners as they relate to parents, educators, society in general. The abovementioned factors (family situation) can lead the child becoming rebellious and, as a result, turn to drug abuse. Therefore the use of drugs by learners may be a way of defying authority because it is generally known that it is illegal and harmful to abuse drugs.

- Drug abuse in the family

Each individual inherits from parents and generation of family members before them. Some of the family history impact is biological and many involve genetic transmission of the potential for alcohol and drug abuse (Levinthal, 1996:29). Some of the learners abuse drugs because the child sees and incorporates this into his life as a response as well as the behaviour styles of his parent/s. Imitation is the first and enduring way in which learners develop a repertoire of behaviour to apply in proper situation. The availability of alcohol and other drugs in the family, the inadequate family management techniques exhibited by drug impaired parents all have an impact on the likelihood that children in these circumstances will themselves use and abuse drugs.
Low bonding to family

Parent-child interaction characterised by lack of closeness, lack of maternal involvement in activities of children appear to be related to an initiation of drug abuse (Hawkins et. al., 1992:83). Conversely, positive family relationships, involvement and attachment appear to discourage learners' initiation into drug abuse. Hawkins et al., (1992:88) report that learners who have trustworthy, warm and involved parents inhibit drug involvement during adolescence. Strong parent-child attachment leads to the child's internalisation of traditional norms and behaviour, which encourages learners to associate with non-drug using peers, and, in turn, leads to non-use.

2.2.2.3 Sub-cultural factors

A child identifies readily with the norms of the immediate community from which he comes. Members of the lower socio-economic class express their aggression against the social order mainly through crime and abuse. Another risk factor under this would be involvement in delinquent behaviour. Many of the researchers on delinquency has focused on the delinquent person, but this individual, more often not, does not live in an environment where many of his or her associates are also involved in delinquent behaviour. This is referred to as a subculture of delinquency (Carroll, 1998:63)

2.2.3 Personal factors of learners

According to Smith (1996:5) personal characteristics refer to intrinsic characteristics of a learner, his attitudes and motivation to study, perception and values that influence learning, his intellectual ability as well as the emotional make-up of a learner. These personal characteristics have a strong influence on the learners' academic achievement and behaviour at school. The following characteristics of a learner need to be outlined as they play an important role in learning and drug abuse.
2.2.3.1 Learner's personality

Personality refers to what a person is, in terms of intellectual, physical, social and cultural characteristics (Mwamwenda, 1996:322). The drug abuse literature suggests that there are three general dimensions of personality that are related to learners' drug abuse. The three dimensions are 'behavioural under control', 'negative emotion and self-esteem'. Behavioural under control represents an inability to inhibit behavioural responses to cues of impending or possible punishment. Impulsiveness, rebelliousness and risk-taking propensity are dimensions of behaviour under control that are positively associated with drug abuse. Negative self-esteem is also associated with drug abuse at school (Voelk & Frone, 2000:584). Learners who hold positive perception regarding their academic abilities are less likely to be involved in drug abuse at school.

2.2.3.2 Learner's attitude

The term attitude is used to describe the predisposition to act in a certain way in different circumstance (Voelks & Frone, 2000:586). Attitude, therefore, contains elements of value and belief, as well as varying degrees of factual knowledge. Attitude influences the individual acceptance or reflection of person's belongings and ideas. According to Voelks and Frone (2000:586) attitude and values are highly dependent upon environmental factors such as the home, the school, the neighbourhood and the church. Learners from different socio-economic status face different kinds of life situation, therefore their academic performance will be influenced to an extent by their attitude. The attitude that a learner develops towards the school, educators and different subjects has an influence on the academic performance. Poor academic performance may be related to negative attitudes, which may ultimately leads to drug abuse by learners.
2.2.3.3 Learner's self-concept

Self-concept refers to the way in which an individual sees himself. A person's self-concept is composed of all the beliefs and the attitude he has about himself. Self-concept is the control part of one's personality. This definition of self-concept highlights two important characteristics: it is formed out of the previous experiences and it is dynamic (Voelk & Frone, 2000:589). The way a learner sees himself reflects the way he is going to regard himself as being attractive, able, clever and valuable. If a learner sees himself in this way he will be probably cope better with life situations at home and at school. The learner will see himself as valuable and worthy, and will therefore master his academic work and perform outstandingly at school, irrespective whether the environment at home or at school is not favourable.

The learner who sees himself as a failure or weakling, and as a victim of circumstance will probably perform poorly at school. This poor performance may be related to drug abuse and behaviour of a learner. In this regard, learners will abuse drugs as a way of making himself recognisable. Feelings of insecurity, pain, humiliation, fear of failure and worthlessness all threaten one's self-concept and in this way may encourage a learner to abuse drugs (Windle & Windle, 1997:21).

It is vital to highlight that educators within the classroom setting can enhance the learner's self-concept. By allowing learners with poor self-concepts to experience success and challenge the learner's intellectual ability through tasks that he should be able to complete successfully, so that he can contribute to a positive self-concept.

2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF LEARNERS WHO ARE ABUSERS

Different people react differently to drugs, therefore detection is not always easy. For an example, learners who had too much alcohol may be tipsy, sleepy, morose or aggressive (Pretorius, 1998:268). Because learners are often going through a period of experiencing new feelings and confusion, they show behaviour changes, which could be mistaken for drug behaviour, while they may only find drugs in the learners' possession. At some
instances these may be purposely left where they could be found as a carry for help, or just to defy authority. The other reason may be that the abuser may have become careless due to impairment caused by drugs (Pretorius, 1998:268).

2.3.1 Psychological signs

According to Pretorius (1998:268), the following are some of the psychological and physical symptoms, which can help identify learners who are drug abusers:

- A sudden, unexplained increased need for money
- Wild mood swings and appetite changes without evident cause
- An unexplained deterioration in school performance
- A sudden change in dress and grooming
- Uncommunicativeness, withdrawal from friends and family
- Over-reaction to mild or innocuous statements or questions
- Drowsiness, lack of concentration, slow thinking, impaired functioning in social, interpersonal, and decline in academic performance (Pretorius, 1998:268).

Learners who are doing well in school and feel a strong bond to school are less likely to feel alienated from school activities. Those who are bored and find themselves so far behind that they become alienated from school activities. Those who are bored and find themselves so far behind that catching up seems impossible are likely learners for dropping out or for coming to school drugged (Adair, 2000:44).

2.3.2 Physical signs

Most of the time the physical symptoms go together with psychological ones. The following are some of physical signs of drug abuse:

- Bloodshot eyes and dropping eyelids
- Uncontrolled moods like gaiety, giggling and talkativeness
- Over confidence leading to crime, twitching and involuntary movement
Learners do not practice drug abuse and problem behaviour in the open. The results may be that only attentive adults can identify them. In their regular contacts with learners, educators may detect the fatigue, inattentive or thick speech that results from drug abuse. Learners may smell a scent of alcohol or dagga or witness emotions or behaviour that are altered from the usual. The very regularity of their contact with learners makes educators more likely to identify learners who abuse drugs than service providers who see learners less often (Kauffman, Wong & Lloyd, 1991:7-16). It is important for educators and parents to be alert about such symptoms and co-ordinate with medical personnel to help learners who are abusers of drugs.

2.4 SUMMARY

In summary, from the preceding paragraphs, it is evident that while drugs can be used for medical purposes and contributes to the physical and psychological well-being of an individual, there are others who use drugs that are more harmful to health and have devastating social, economical, academic, moral and psychological effects. Some of the drugs that are abused by learners are licit drugs, which may be prescribed by doctors, but because they are abused, they hamper effective learning.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND DESIGN

3. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research design and research strategy to collect data for achieving the aim of the study will be presented. The motivation for this study emanates from the concern that many learners in Parys are reluctant to learn, and perform poorly at school. As a result of this reluctance to learn they may not be able to feature anywhere in this Democratic South Africa.

Among other contributory factors, drug abuse is rife in the abovementioned area, hence it is imperative to conduct a research on drug abuse. A better understanding of the underlying reasons for drug abuse by learners could be found from the findings of this research. This may restore the culture of learning at schools in Parys.

3.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

A research strategy is a broad approach or manner in which a research project is undertaken (Vermeulen, 1998:8). The strategies employment in this study is descriptive research and phenomenological research strategy.

The aim of the descriptive research strategy is to describe what exists. The real nature of phenomenon approach is used to reveal or disclose the actual characteristics of the phenomenon (Vermeulen, 1998:8). In this study the relation between drug abuse by learners and their academic performance and behaviour will be described.
Smith (1996:18) postulates that the phenomenological method consists of ten methodical steps. The ten steps can be categorised into three stages:

- The preparation and sifting stage
- The data collection and analysis stage
- The determination of meaning and self-correction

3.1.1 Stage one: Preparation and sifting

The researcher must define precisely the area to be investigated. In this study the researcher is going to investigate the relationship of drug abuse with learners' academic performance and behaviour at secondary schools in Parys. The researcher is going to investigate the factors within the child, family and school that may lead to drug abuse and may have a negative influence on academic performance and behaviour.

3.1.1.1 Determination of education relevance

The current prevailing situation of the culture of teaching and learning in many secondary schools is appalling. Lack of discipline, vandalism, extensive absenteeism, dropout, drug trafficking, late coming and aggressiveness are very common in secondary schools in Parys. All the abovementioned problems have led to the decline in academic performance of learners and increase in problematic behaviour. To single out one problem that will receive attention in this study, the researcher will focus on drug abuse and its relationship to academic performance and behaviour.

3.1.1.2 Suspension of possible prejudice of the researcher and stating of assumptions

At face value, the researcher can be biased and draw conclusions based on influences or opinions. It is of utmost importance for the researcher to be objective during the investigation, and not to draw conclusions from own experiences and opinions.
3.1.1.3 Questioning and research approach and willingness to work hard

It is imperative for the researcher to know if she is competent enough to carry out the investigation. She holds B.A., H.D.E. and B.Ed. degrees. As an educator in a secondary school, the researcher has a profound interest in the restoration of the academic performance as it determines the success of the learner at this juncture as well as the learners' behaviour at school. Therefore the researcher is committed to this study.

3.1.2 STAGE TWO: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

3.1.2.1 Identification of sources of knowledge

Sources of knowledge used in this study include the following:

- Literature Study

The literature gives the researcher the opportunity to review what other authors have written on the subject under investigation. It enables the researcher to know which procedures and instruments have proven useful and which seem less promising (Vermeulen, 1998:6). In this study, literature was sought from journals, various authors and dissertations. This literature study formed the basis of this research.

- Exploration

Exploration research involves an attempt to determine whether or not a phenomenon exists. It concerns itself about the existence or nature of human behaviour (Vermeulen, 1992:7). In this study data was collected from the learners' class schedules at school. This data provided a guideline as to whether there is any relationship between learners' academic performance and drug abuse.
• Description

Description research concerns itself with examination of a process, to define it more fully to differentiate it from other processes. It can be used to investigate change by comparing old results with the new ones. Its purpose is to generalise and to relate the findings obtained from investigation to other situations in future (Vermeulen, 1998:7).

3.1.2.2. Systematising and classifying data from the various sources of knowledge

This step required that the data collected be fitted and classified systematically then the information will be analysed. The information that confirms each other will be accepted as valid.

3.1.3 Stage three: Determination of meaning and self-correctional steps

As educators we are determined to investigate the existing problem and make any conclusions based on the findings. Avoid biasness and conclusions based on personal opinions.

3.1.3.1 Interpretation and questioning the meaning or importance of the findings

Teaching and learning takes place within a certain context. That is, the investigation in this study takes place in a semi-rural township in the Free State Province of South Africa. All findings and interpretation are based on the research conducted in Parys.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE

When conducting research, the researcher must examine the technique used in their study to collect data; that is, how did the researcher obtain the data? The following are basically six ways to collect data: observation, questionnaires, interviews, documents, tests and unobtrusive measures (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:40). All researchers use a variation of one or more of these, depending on the strengths and limitations relating specifically to their research objectives. Researcher technique can be classified as both qualitative and
Quantitative. The technique used in this study is quantitative. This technique of data collection uses numbers to summarise the findings. It assumes that social reality is relatively constant across time and settings (Vermeulen, 1998:14). In this study the setting is the secondary school in Parys, and the participants are the learners who were identified as drug abusers.

Quantitative research uses preconceived concepts and theories to determine what data will be collected. In this study the learners' academic results were collected from the schedules at school. The nature of data and the problem for research dictate the research methodology. The methodology is to describe and explain the features reality by obtaining numerical data on observable behaviour of sample and by subjecting these data to statistical analysis (Gall, 1997: 767).

Data is presented by means of exact figures and analysis is undertaken by means of standardised statistical procedure. This technique maximises objectivity by using numbers, statistics, structures and experiment control (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:32).

3.2.1 Intrusive measures versus unobtrusive measures

In the intrusive measure, the respondents know that they are being measured or assessed. They voluntarily participate in the research. With unobtrusive measures, on the other hand, the respondents are unaware of being participants in the study. This technique is non-reactive. Nothing out of the ordinary, like an observer or questionnaire is introduced into the situation. This technique has the advantage of eliminating sources of bias that are present when respondents realise they are subjects in a research study (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:42).

In this study the respondents are not aware that they are participants in research. This is due to the fact that the information used in this study is readily available from the incidents book and the class schedules. This information was found in the principals' office.
3.3 SUMMARY

The researchers conduct a research with a view to investigate the problem prevailing in the context. The aim is to improve their own educational practice and the situation in which they practice. The aim of the research in this study is to investigate the relationship between drug abuse and learners’ academic performance and behaviour, and provide guidelines to educators and parents in an effort to implement correctional measures. Chapter three outlined the research design, and research methodology was discussed. The next chapter will focus on the analysis and interpretation of data.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA CONCERNING ABUSE AND LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOUR

4. INTRODUCTION

From the perspective of the field of education, learners who are at risk of being drug abusers are seen as being prone to school dropout or failure due to unsatisfactory classroom performance or other behaviour that prevents them from attending school, or effectively participating in the school activities. The risk of failure and dropout in the adolescent age group has been related to delinquency, aggression and later convictions for violence and premature sexual activity (Kauffman et al., 1991: 14)

One should point out, however, that there are some circumstances that can lead to school failure, which are beyond the educators control or observations that may also lead to drug abuse. In this study, the intention is to examine the relationship between drug abuse and academic performance and behaviour of the learners.

In this chapter the focus will be on the following:

- A descriptive analysis of the sample.
- A differential analysis of data and the interpretation of the statistical findings.

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SAMPLE

A sample is a portion of the elements in a population. It is made up of the individuals who are going to participate in the study. The fundamental purpose of any sampling procedure is to obtain a representative sample – a sample that represents those elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993: 161).
4.1.1 An analysis of the sample with regard to the independent variables

In the analysis of the sample the following came to the fore:

The sample comprised of 50 people being male and female. 86.0 percent of the sample were males and 14 percent were females. This independent variable is known as gender (sex).

With regard to independent variable age group, 56.0 percent of the sample were 18 years and younger, while 44.0 percent of the respondents were older than 18 years. The independent variable age group does not discriminate gender; this means it is applicable to both female and male respondents.

The independent variable educational category comprised of 46.0 percent of the sample who are the juniors. These juniors are in grade eight and nine. Another category comprised of seniors. 54.0 percent of them are in grade ten, eleven and twelve.

The variable distance from school to the learners' respective homes is categorised into 0-5 kilometres walking distance and 6-10 walking distance from school. Of the sample, 56.0 percent live within 0-5 kilometres walking distance from school. 44.0 percent of the live within 6-10 kilometres walking distance from school.

With regard to independent variable caregiver, 74.0 percent of the sample have their own parents (mother and father) as their caregivers. 26.0 percent of the sample have other people as their caregivers. Others would refer to the samples’ relatives or people other than own parents. All the learners attend one secondary school in Parys.

The above information was obtained from school records of the respective learners in the sample.
4.1.2 Descriptive analysis of the dependent variables

The dependent variables are the factors that are observed and measured to determine the effects of the independent variables. It is a factor that appears, disappears or varies as the researcher introduces, removes or varies the dependent variable. Dependent variables will change as a result of variations in the independent variables. It is termed dependent because its value is assumed to depend on the value of the independent variable (Vermeulen, 1992). What follows is the description of the dependent variables as tabled in Table 4.1.

Of the sample, 46.0 percent do not abuse alcohol while 54.0 percent abuse alcohol. Alcohol is a drug that is mostly abused by learners. Dagga is abused by 26.0 percent of the sample, while 74.0 percent do not abuse dagga.

The other dependent variable is other drug abuses; this refers to drugs other than alcohol, dagga and cigarettes. In Chapter 2, paragraph 2.2, various categories of drugs abused by learners are outlined. 74.0 Percent of the sample do not abuse other drugs and 26.0 percent of the sample abuse other drugs, like dagga, these other drugs are easy to carry and can also be abused without being caught.

With regard to smoking, 74.0 percent of the sample do not smoke cigarettes while 24.0 percent do. Of this 74 percent who do not smoke cigarettes, 14.0 percent are females as indicated in paragraph 4.2.1. All smokers in the sample are male.

The dependent variable outcomes at school is categorised into poor performance and other behaviour. Poor performance refers to declined or unsatisfactory performance in academic matters, failure and repeating of grades. Other behaviour refers to behaviour like dropping out of school, absenteeism, aggressive behaviour, indulging in unprotected sex and involvement in crime. 74.0 percent of the sample performs poorly in academic matters, while 26.0 percent are engaged in other problem behaviours.
The dependent variable *period between first day of identification and last day of identification* is categorised into one year or less and more than one year. This variable refers to the period between the first, and last day when the respondent was identified as a drug abuser. This variable was created to check whether the learners’ academic performance has improved or declined during the period of abusing drugs, or has she/he displayed any problem behaviour.

One year or less refers to the period between the first time the respondent was identified as the drug abuser and the last day the respondent was identified. This will mean that the respondent was identified on the first day and was again identified within period of one year or less. More than one year will mean that the respondent was identified for the first time as the drug abuser and took a period of more than a year before he/she can be identified again. 40.0 percent of the sample were identified within a period of more than one year, while 36.0 percent of the sample were identified within a period of one year or less.

The dependent variable *status between first and second performance* is categorised into improved or constant performance and declined performance. Improved or constant performance refers to the sample learners’ academic performance whether it improved for better or if it was constant. The variable was created to investigate whether drug abuse enhances the learners’ performance or does not have any relationship with academic performance whatsoever. Declined performance refers to whether drug abuse causes deterioration in academic performance. 40.0 percent of the sample have improved or constant performance, while 48.0 percent of the sample have declined performance. The dependent variable learners status is categorized into all exams written and at least one exam not written, or dropped out. 72.0 percent of the sample have written all the examinations, while 28.0 percent have missed one exam or dropped out of school.

The variable *status between the second and the third performance* is also categorised into improved or constant performance and declined performance. Under improved or constant performance 35.5 percent of the male sample have improved or constant performance.
while 64.5 percent of the male sample have decline performance. 25.0 percent of the female sample have improved or constant performance, and 75.0 percent of the female sample have declined performance. Under status between first and second performance 47.4 percent of the male sample have improved or constant performance and 52.6 percent of the female sample have a declined performance, where 33.3 percent of the female sample have improved or constant performance and 66.7 percent of the female respondents have declined performance. What follows is Table 4.1, which tabulates the independent and dependent variables described above.

TABLE 4.1. TABULATION OF INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEPENDENT VARIABLES</th>
<th>DEPENDENT VARIABLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from school</td>
<td>Dagga abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5 kilometres</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 kilometres</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational category</td>
<td>Other drug abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age group</td>
<td>Smoking habit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years or younger</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than 18 years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver</td>
<td>Outcomes at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and/or father</td>
<td>Poor performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other caregiver</td>
<td>Other behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of abuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Period between first day of identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One year or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learner’s Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written all exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At least one exam not written or dropped out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status between first and second performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decline performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status between second and third performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Declined performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 HYPOTHESES

Research hypothesis is a statement that describes a relationship between the variables. It is an expectation regarding events based on generalisation of the assumed relationship between variables. The important point is that a hypothesis is a statement made in an answer to the evidence surrounding the research question. A hypotheses needs to be formulated by a researcher, that predicts what may happen in the study. It can be put into an “if/then” form to indicate the relationship between variables. In its simplest form, a hypothesis should have a clear understandable coherence and order of arrangement (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:88).

Two kinds of hypotheses will be used in this study; the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis. For the purpose of statistical testing and interpretation, the researcher prefers to use a null hypothesis. The null hypothesis usually states that there is no difference or no relationship between the population means of the two groups. Null hypothesis can be rejected if observed differences are found to be large enough to reject that such difference could occur by mere chances (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:88). An alternative hypothesis is usually given with the null hypothesis. What follows is the alternative hypotheses on the comparison of the independent with the dependent variables.

4.3 A DIFFERENTIAL ANALYSES OF DATA AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE STATISTICAL FINDINGS

4.3.1 Univariate hypotheses with gender as independent variable concerning the different variables

\( H_0 \) There is no relationship between gender and the dependent variable
\( H_1 \) There is a relationship between gender and the dependent variable
TABLE 4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING GENDER AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPENDENT VARIABLES</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>0.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagga abuse</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other drug abuse</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking habit</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes at school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>0.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other behaviour</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of abuses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>0.406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period between first day of identification and last day of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year or less</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>0.653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one year</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner's status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written all exams</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one subject not written or dropped out</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between first and second performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>0.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between second and third performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.2, it follows that we fail to reject H₀. Therefore, there is no relationship between gender and any of the dependent variables (alcohol, dagga abuse, other drug abuses, smoking habit outcomes at school, total number of abuses, learner status, period of between first day and last day of identification, status between first and second performance and status between second and third performance).
In Chapter Two, it was outlined that some factors are contributory for learners to abuse drugs. Learners abuse drugs because they do so at own will. The environment surrounding them may be conducive, but because of personal characteristics, a learner may deviate from what is expected.

Personal characteristics according to Smith (1996:5) refer to intrinsic characteristics of the learner as his attitude and motivation to study, his values that influence learning, his intellectual ability as well as the emotional make up of the learner. Personal characteristics have a strong influence on the learner’s academic achievement and behaviour at school. Late arrival at school is a common practice by learners; absenteeism and not writing all examinations are all types of problem behaviour. This problem behaviour, as indicated in paragraph 2.4.2, makes learners vulnerable to drug abuse because they, themselves, want to do so. Such children may be in an environment at school and at home, have school-attached peers, but because of their own personal characteristics, have deviated from acceptable behaviour at school.

From Table 4.2, it is evident that the female respondents are not smoking cigarettes. This may be culture determined, because it is usually acceptable for boys to smoke in front of their parents as compared to the girls. Even at school when female learners are found smoking cigarettes, they are reprimanded severely but nothing is done about the boys. As also indicated in table 4.2, out of seven female respondents, six of them are abusing alcohol. This may imply that alcohol is more acceptable to be abused by females more that other drugs in the table. When it comes to total number of abuses, we find that six female abusers abuse only one kind, and only one female respondent abuse two kinds of drugs.

4.3.2 Univariate hypotheses with distance from school as independent variable concerning the various variables

$H_0$  There is no relationship between distance from school and the dependent variable

$H_a$  There is a relationship between distance from school and the dependent variable
### TABLE 4.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>0 – 5 km</th>
<th></th>
<th>6 – 10 km</th>
<th></th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>0.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagga abuse</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>0.051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other drug abuse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>0.009**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking habit</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>0.045*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes at school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>0.339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other behaviour</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of abuses</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>0.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period between first day of identification and last day of identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year or less</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>0.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one year</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners' status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written all exams</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one subject not written or dropped out</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>0.753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between first and second performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>0.545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between second and third performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>0.477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** 1% level of significance (p < 0.01)

* 5% level of significance (P < 0.05)
From Table 4.3 it follows that except for other drug abuse and smoking habit we fail to reject $H_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between distance from school and alcohol abuse or dagga abuse, outcomes at school, total number abuses, period between first day of identification and last day of identification, learners status, status between first and second performance and status between second and third performance.

As far as other drug abuses are concerned, $H_0$ is rejected in favour of $H_a$ on the 1% level of significance ($P = 0.009$). Therefore, there is statistically significant relationship between distance from school and other drug abuses. We then conclude that learners who live further away from school are more inclined to use other drugs than those who live close by.

The learners who live further away from school are inclined to abuse other drugs (other drugs than dagga, alcohol and cigarettes). The reason may be that the walking distance from parents at home and from educators at school gives learners ample time to experiment with various drugs without the possibility of being caught by adults. Literature indicates that it is of utmost important for the educators and parents to identify those learners who may abuse drugs as early as possible before they become risk-taking learners.

$H_0$ is rejected in favour of $H_a$ on the 5% level of significance ($P=0.045$). Therefore, there is a statistically significant relationship between distance from school and smoking habit. More learners staying closer to school smoke cigarettes than learners staying far from school. From this information one can deduce that smoking cigarette is more acceptable by adults than other drugs. At school setting, learners who smoke cigarette are not ridiculed like those who smoke dagga and other drugs for an example. When searched in their pockets, learners who are found in possession of dagga are sent to prison with immediate effect, but those who are in possession of cigarettes weren’t subjected to punishment.

With regards to other variables when compared to each other in Table 4.3 there were no statistical significance and we conclude that alcohol, dagga abuse and poor academic performance by learners may result from other factors, such as the learners’ personal inherent characteristics or family situations or upbringing.
4.3.3 Univariate hypotheses with educational category as independent variable concerning the various variables

H₀  There is no relationship between educational category and the dependent variable
Hₐ  There is a relationship between educational category and the dependent variable
From Table 4.4, it follows that we fail to reject H₀. There is no relationship between educational category and all the dependent variables. Educational category would refer to whether a learner is a junior (grade eight and nine) or a senior (grade ten, eleven or twelve). From the findings we conclude that drug abuse by learners is not determined by the grade in which a learner is. This is because the sample are learners doing grade 8 – 12 who were caught abusing drugs at school.
In chapter II from paragraph 2.2.2.1 it is evident that learners who hang out with peers who abuse drugs will want to subscribe to the expectations of the dominant majority, only to maintain membership in such groups. As a result, this learners may drop out of school, or repeat grades.

4.3.4 Univariate hypotheses with *age group* as independent variable concerning the various variables

\[ H_0 \] There is no relationship between *age group* and the dependent variable

\[ H_a \] There is a relationship between *age group* and the dependent variable
TABLE 4.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES REGARDING *AGE GROUP* AND THE VARIOUS DEPENDENT VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPENDENT VARIABLES</th>
<th>18 years or younger</th>
<th>Older than 18 years</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagga abuse</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other drug abuse</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking habit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes at school</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other behaviour</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of abuses</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period between first day of identification and last day of identification</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year or less</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one year</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner's status</td>
<td>Written all exams</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At least one exam not written or dropped out</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between first and second performance</td>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between second and third performance</td>
<td>Improved or constant performance</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 4.5, it follows that we fail to reject $H_0$. Therefore there is no relationship between age group and the dependent variables. The learners' drug abuse and academic achievement and behaviour are not dependent on their age. From the data collected it was apparent that learners who are 18 years or younger or older than 18 years are found in all grades, i.e. grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Therefore drug abuse is not determined by the age of the learner. In chapter 2 in paragraph 2.2.3.2 and paragraph 2.2.3.3 the attitude that the learners develop towards the school, educators and different subjects has an influence on the academic performance. Poor academic performance may be related to negative attitudes, which may ultimately lead to drug abuse by learners. Sometimes the self-concept of the learner also plays an important role in the learner's academic performance. The other problem is that learners lack interest in schoolwork as a result they often repeat grades. They simply do not have the culture of learning in them.

4.3.5 Univariate hypotheses with caregiver as independent variable concerning the various variables

$H_0$ There is no relationship between caregiver and the dependent variable

$H_a$ There is a relationship between caregiver and the dependent variable
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPENDENT VARIABLES</th>
<th>Mother and/or father</th>
<th>Other caregiver</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daggabuse</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other drug abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking habit</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes at school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other behaviour</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of abuses</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of abuses</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period between first day of</td>
<td>One year or less</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identification and last day of</td>
<td>More than one year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner’s status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written all exams</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one exam not written or</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dropped out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between first and second</td>
<td>Improved or constant</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance</td>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status between second and third</td>
<td>Improved or constant</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance</td>
<td>Declined performance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*5% level of significance (p<0.05)
From Table 4.6, it follows that except for dagga abuse and total number of abuses we fail to reject $H_0$ in favour of $H_a$. As far as total abuses and dagga abuse are concerned, $H_0$ is rejected in favour of $H_a$ on the 5% level of significance for total number of abuses ($P = 0.014$) and for dagga abuse ($P = 0.023$).

When the independent variable caregiver is compared to dagga abuse, statistical significance showed that there is a relationship. Therefore dagga abuse is dependent on the caregiver. Learners whose caregivers are not own parents may be inclined to abuse dagga. Various types of drugs abused by learners were outlined in the literature review, in Chapter 2. Dagga was indicated as being very easy to smuggle into schools. It can be marketed in small packets, just like other drugs, and is cheaper to purchase. Learners can carry it easily in their packets and their school bags as it can also be sold in small quantities. At school, learners smoke dagga more often than they drink alcohol. This is so because they can smoke dagga in the toilet during the lessons and come back in the classroom.

In chapter 2 under paragraph 2.2.2 it is indicated that dagga has provided a convenient chemical escape from growing pain. As dagga abuse is dependent on the caregiver, one may conclude that learners abuse dagga to escape from the reality of not having own parents. This may affect personality indicated in chapter two. Regular users may develop more passive inward-turning personality characteristics.

One may also deduce that most of the times own parents (father and/or mother) show some interest in their children’s education and general well being, hence we have this statistical significance. Learners who are experimenting with dagga are often doing so to escape from psychological problems they are experiencing. Such learners are likely to move from one drug to another in an ongoing search for peace or a good ‘trip’ (Sher, 1991:95).
4.4 CONCLUSION

The research offers information about various illicit drugs often used by learners at school. Their emotional, physical and psychological effects and how they influence their academic performance and behaviour. Using statistical procedures revealed differences between variables pertaining to aspects of drug abuse and learner's academic performance and behaviour. Hypothesis was formulated, and when to reject the null-hypothesis in favour of alternative hypothesis was indicated.

In order to improve the academic performance of learners and their behaviour at school, problems which hamper teaching and learning, the ones which mentioned in the research need to be addressed, as recommended in the research and programmes may be drawn which will help learners feel invested in their school education. Early intervention by educators, increased co-ordination between school, medical personnel, social workers and law enforcement officials may help combat the drug abuse by learners.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5 INTRODUCTION

Failure in many schools may predict or induce drug abuse frequency and levels of use of illicit drugs. Early antisocial behaviour by learner may predict academic failure (Riddle, Bergin and Douzins, 1997:201). To highlight the relationship between drug abuse, and learners' academic performance and behaviour, the relevant literature was studied in chapter two and data was analysed in chapter four to help investigate the relationship. From the literature in paragraph 2.2, various kinds of drugs were explained and their psychological and physical effects on the learners performance were discussed.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

5.1.1 Summary regarding the age group and gender

A learner undergoes different developmental stages in life. When going through these biological changes, the change affects his emotional balances. A learner who is thirteen years of age for an example, is expected to be in grade 8 and he is starting to experience changes in his body, and this may affect his behaviour in general if he does not receive proper guidance or counselling. No relationship was found between age group and the dependent variables. However, the following needs to be emphasised.

The sample comprised of learners who were identified abusing drugs, and they are in grade 8-12. In grade 8 for an example, we have learners who were 22 years of age. From table 4.5 we find that learners who are eighteen years or younger and those who are older than eighteen years participate in all the dependent variables.
The advancement in age may be the reason for them to resort to drug abuse. The other problem is that learners lack interest in schoolwork and as a result they often repeat the standard. They simply do not have the culture of learning in them. Educators spend their energies chasing them to get into classes for their lessons. As a result effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a situation where there is a cat and a mouse game going on between learners and educators. In this situation learners are likely to repeat grades, and this may make them to find it difficult to cope with failure. This may also lead them to drug abuse, gangsterism, school vandalism, and dropout of school, and only experience decline in performance.

5.1.2 Summary regarding gender and smoking habit

No relationship was found between gender and the dependent variables. Among the 50 respondents, 7 respondents were females who were caught abusing drugs. From table 4.2 it is indicated that the females took part in all the dependent variables (see table 4.3 on p.38), except in smoking habit. All 7 females are not smoking cigarette. Smoking is more acceptable in black South African males than in females. When found smoking cigarette at school educators do not take drastic measures to correct behaviour like when found abusing other drugs. One may also deduce that female respondents grew with the notion that cigarette smoking is for males only.

5.1.3 Summary regarding caregiver

The type of upbringing a learner gets from home determines the child’s developments and his social behaviour (Pretorius, 1998:294). The family situation is very important for the child’s social behaviour. From table 4.6 it is indicated that drug abuse is dependent on the caregiver. From the above information one may deduce that the child who is taken care by non-biological parents is inclined to abuse dagga and one or two other drugs as indicated in the table. One may also deduce that most of the time own parents (father and/or mother) show some interest in their children’s education and general well being, hence we have this statistical significance. Learners who are experimenting with dagga are often doing so to
escape from psychological problems. Such learners are likely to move from one drug to another in his eternal search for peace or a good trip (Sher, 1991:95).

5.1.4 Summary regarding distance from school

In table 4.3 it is indicated that learners who live further away from school are more inclined to use other drugs than learners who live closer to school. Because of the walking distance, that is 6-10 km, learners have ample time to experiment with various drugs as they may be hanging with peers and are away from the parents and educators.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

As educators, we need to become aware of and respond to affected learners, we should look for all the warning signs and act immediately – e.g. frequent class-skipping and poor academic performance. Researchers and educators must also identify ways to increase learners' attachment to school. These may include classroom activities that increase learners' participation, school wide programmes that encourage learners' involvement in extracurricular activities, school governance and individual and group counselling activities. These programmes will help students feel an investment in their school and education. In view of the findings of this study and its aim, the following recommendations are made:

5.2.1 Recommendations regarding distance from school

From table 4.3 it is found that there is statistically significant relationship between distance from school and other drug abuses. Because of socio-economic factors, some learners are forced to travel those mentioned kilometres to school.

To combat this problem the school may organise transport e.g. a bus that will minimise the walking distance of learners. Educators who may reside in this vicinity may be requested to utilize the same bus as a means of monitoring the learners' behaviour in the bus.
The MEC of education of the Free State Province i.e. Mrs. Tsopo promised to buy bicycles for learners who travel long distances to school. She specifically referred to learners who have to travel from the farms. This may also help to reduce the chances of learners abusing drugs along the way.

Learners who are members of LRC may be utilized to help to combat drug abuse by doing what is recommended in the following paragraphs. In this case it is assumed that the LRC learners are non-abusers of drugs.

It is very difficult to meddle in learners’ lives, at the best of times, but the first thing to do when it is suspected that someone close to you is abusing drugs, is try to establish the truth, find whether he is indeed using drugs, and what his attitude towards drugs is. Try to persuade the peer to take you into his confidence. Convince him that he can trust you. impress upon him that he has your best interest at heart, and that you want to offer help, having no intention of making matters worse by getting him into trouble (Searll, 1995:145).

One does have to be over certain age in order to be of assistance or give support to peer who is in trouble. However, one should learn as much as you can about the drugs that are being abused, so that you can give your friend a good advice. Try to persuade him that he is harming himself and that he should go for help. You should also try to find another trustworthy, understanding adult in whom he can confide. If the abuser is your brother, don’t try to hide things from parents, by covering up for your siblings you are actually prolonging the agony or helping him to continue drugging.

5.2.2 Recommendations regarding educators

Educators play a very important role in a learners’ life, because they often spend more time with the youngsters than their parents do. Because of this close relationship, educators should be able to detect symptoms of drug abuse that a parent may overlook. Symptoms such as a deterioration in academic work, inattentiveness to personal hygiene, disorderly behaviour, frequent absence from school and inability to concentrate or stay awake in class.
It is very important that educators, school principals and guidance counsellors are thoroughly informed about every aspect of substance abuse. They should know how to cope effectively with the problem of drug abuse in schools. It is also important that educators produce an environment in which learners find themselves for many hours of the day to be supportive and sympathetic (Bolognini, 2002:438).

Many learners have problems that are initially drug related. These trouble learners are easy influenced and very vulnerable to drug abuse. Learners need to feel secure in the knowledge that they can talk to educators about everything. It is of utmost importance for educators to explain the effects of drug dependence to their learners, but do so in a balanced, calm and informed way. According to Searl (1995:148), research has indicated that the scare tactics in certain modern drug-prevention programmes do not make much impression on learners, and may even be counter-productive, because they arouse intense curiosity about drugs. Educators need to develop drug prevention programmes in order to combat drug abuse.

Poor self-image and lack of self-confidence are often the main reasons why youngsters persist in abusing drugs. An educator towards his charge can profoundly influence both of these. The educator needs to be aware at all times of his ability either to build up a learner’s faith in himself or, on the other hand, to destroy his self-confidence. It is vital that educators introduce life-skills and anti-drug programmes at their school and encourages learners to form associations such as learners against drugs.

Guidance and counselling play an important role in the lives of learners. For the school to provide quality education, guidance and counselling should form an integral part of the school curriculum. Guidance and counselling contribute importantly to social, academic and personality development of the learners. Mwanwenda (1996:457) states that the success of the counsellor in helping learners to resolve their problems will determine the quality of learners the school produces, who will in turn contribute to national and economic development of the country.
Learners, who are identified as drug abusers as is the case in this study, need not only be threatened by suspension from school. These learners need to be counselled and guided to the right channels. The success of the counselling depends on factors like the quality of the counsellor, the type of learner in search of counselling and the manner in which the counselling is conducted. As drug abuse is a sensitive issue, counsellors should have a caring attitude that is understood and interpret by learner. A counsellor must be likable, trustworthy, accepting and acceptable, open, valuing, helpful, respectful, and non-threatening. The counsellor must also be an expert in his field of operation (Mwamwenda, 1996:459).

5.2.3 Recommendations regarding the caregiver

From table 4.6, statistical significance showed that dagga abuse is dependant on the caregiver as indicated from Figure 2.2 dagga is easy to carry in the schoolbags or in the pockets. It is of utmost importance for the school based support team (SBST) to organise the workshops where they can educate parents on the parenting skills and some of the reasons why learners abuse drugs. This may be done at a school level. If the situation does not improve, the educators may refer or call in a professional psychologist and social worker for intervention. The intervention would be for a learner or the parent.

The family forms part of the support system and provides the child with essential basic needs. Parents should be trained for the fundamentals of drug abuse and how to identify learners who are drug abusers. They need to be equipped with knowledge on how to deal with drug abusers and be able to check the progress of their children, and how to reinforce achieved behaviour change. Parental involvement may promote the classroom performance. Parenting skill is essential to help parent set clear expectations for behaviour, how to monitor and supervise their children. Consistency in monitoring the child’s work is needed to reinforce pro-social behaviour.

Acquisition and use of these skills by parents in managing their children may reduce learners’ behaviour problems in schools and increase learners’ academic performance.
5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research respondents are only 50 learners from one school who were found by educators while abusing drugs. These learners are only a small portion of the other learners who may be abusing drugs, but are not yet being caught up. The method used is only quantitative, because we were dealing with the readily available information contained in the incidents book. Maybe if other research methods had been employed, for example, conduct interviews, and have observations, more information would have been obtained as why learners abuse drugs at school premises and outside the schools. Because I am not a registered psychologist, I am not allowed to conduct such interviews.

One other problem is that the 50 respondents are taken from one school, and decided that this school will represent the other three secondary schools. The findings may have been different because every school has its own needs and norm. This may also influence the behaviour of the learners and their performance. The school culture plays an important role in learners' academic performance and behaviour. Even if learners are from the same community, but the culture and norms of the school may influence their behaviour in a particular way.
5.4 CONCLUSION

Drugs have made many people (drug dealers) very rich. While there are customers and learners ready to buy drugs, there will always be corrupt drug barons and merchants eager to sell them. If more learners refuse to take drugs, the drug business would deteriorate and eventually the drug manufacturer would have close down altogether because of lack of customers.

Our concern, as educators, should be accessibility of some of the dangerous drugs to learners in the school and at home. Succumbing to drug abuse definitely affects learners’ academic performance; we need to intervene as early as possible. Schools have important role to play through public education. Learners need to be given information and knowledge about the adverse effects of drugs. Learners who are already at risk should be given opportunities to receive counselling and be assisted in overcoming such serious problems.
Bibliography


Smith, D.P.J. 1996. *Culture of teaching and learning: Concept problems and possible solution*. Paper delivered at the University of Zululand, Durban, South Africa.

South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996.


To whom it may concern:

RE: Dissertation on Drug abuse in Secondary Schools in Parys

This is to confirm that I have been editing the abovementioned thesis due for submission. I do apologise that it has taken me longer than anticipated, however, I have been editing the thesis.

I trust you find the above to be in order.

Warm regards

Bonnie Whiffler
Tel: 082-580-8993
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Permission is hereby granted to Mrs. Magaua Diana Khatite an educator in the employ of the Free State Education Department (Northern Free State District) stationed at Phehellang Secondary School in Parys to conduct a research on the Effects of drug abuse on the learner's academic performance and behaviour.

The research is based on the enhancement of MED Degree in Psychology that will in turn be ploughed back to the corrective measures to all learners in our schools in the Republic of South Africa. During the period of the whole research, her line of operation will only be based to the four secondary schools in Parys as per her application and obligatory to the employer and employee operational requirements.

Give her full support during the whole process from 01 August 2003 to 30 September 2003.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]

DIRECTOR: H.M. MTHOMBENI
NORTHERN FREE STATE DISTRICT

04 August 2003