

Pandemic after pandemic: Adopting the multidimensional family therapy approach for youth drug abuse in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Youth drug abuse in Zimbabwe has become a topical issue such that hardly a day passes without the mainstream media, social media, and other communication platforms mentioning drug abuse amongst youth and school children. The term new pandemic has been used to describe the drug abuse among Zimbabwe youth after the covid-19 pandemic. Several measures have been put in place by the Government of Zimbabwe to combat the 'new pandemic'. The measures among them were criminalization of drug victims and suppliers of drugs, however, with limited success. The main objective of the study was to unpack the multidimensional factors that influence youth to indulge in drug abuse in Zimbabwe. The study adopted a qualitative desk research approach to unveil the topical problem. The study reveals the multidimensional influences of youth drug abuse and the multidimensional solutions to the problem. The study was underpinned by two theories: the bioecological and family systems theories. Research findings were that problems of youth drug abuse were a result of drugs being regarded as a business venture, rising urbanization without the corresponding industrialization, socio-economic challenges, social fabric breakdown, youth collective idleness, and unattended/unsupervised children. The study recommends that the nation should embark on a massive exercise to train adolescents, parents, families, communities, and the whole nation to deal with drug abuse among youths.

Keywords: Communities; drug abuse; multidimensional family therapy; youth; Zimbabwe