SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONGST SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

by

Ronieawathee Harinarain Jeram

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Promoter: Prof M S Vos
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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation, “Substance abuse amongst secondary school learners” represents my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and knowledge by means of complete references.”

_____________________
R. H. Jeram
Tongaat
October 2009
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to ....

My late parents, dad, Harinarain Kissoon for inculcating the love for education from childhood and my mom, Dowmathi Kissoon who always believed in me, taught me that nothing in life is impossible and encouraged me from childhood and for always putting our needs before hers

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SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to investigate the effect of substance abuse amongst secondary school learners. This was achieved via a literature study and an empirical study. In the light of the findings certain recommendations which can assist educators, principals, parents and the Department of Education to plan and take action in order to combat drug abuse and addition amongst secondary school learners, were formulated.

Schools have always had and will always have significant influence on learner’s lives and must therefore be the focus of any effective implementation of arresting strategies.

The secondary school community has in the past and to a certain extend in the present not treated the increasing use of drugs as a priority. This could possibly be because of the many types of legitimate drugs that are available, and which are said to cure, prevent or slow down diseases and enable people to lead longer, healthier and happier lives. Antibiotics have improved the treatment of infections and vaccines have prevented the spread of diseases such as measles, while analgesics have lessened or eliminated pain. However, it should be the harmful and illegal drugs that parents and the community should be made aware of.

Illegal and harmful drugs infiltrate all levels of society, asking no name, title or gender. They come in many names and forms and they will negatively impact on health, sanity, families and finally people’s lives.

The literature study found that that substance abuse affected the physical, psychological (cognitive and affective), social and normative development of the secondary school learner.
For the purpose of the empirical investigation, a self-structured questionnaire for educators was utilized. The data obtained from the completed questionnaires was processed and analyzed by means of descriptive statistics. The findings confirmed that substance abuse has a negative effect on the development of the secondary school learner.

The following are some of the recommendations that were made:

- The Department of Education must develop a practical formal policy on the use of drugs in school in collaboration with Sanca, the National Department of Health, the Police Service and other relevant stakeholders.

- Sufficient human and financial resources must be made available by the Department of Education for the Training, supervision and monitoring of the drug policy in all school.

- The Department of Education in collaboration with teacher unions, principal forums, school management teams, education organization and Sanca must conduct workshops for the educators in which the following aspects, concerning drugs abuse will receive attention:
  
  - Reasons why learners use drugs.
  - How to identify learner drug abusers.
  - Procedures to follow when a learner is suspected of being a drug user.
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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Medical research has developed thousands of drugs that have had a revolutionary effect on man by curing, preventing or slowing diseases, and enabling humans to lead healthier and happy lives. Antibiotics have improved the treatment of infections, vaccines prevent the spread of diseases such as measles and analgesics lessen or eliminate pain. Drugs are the medical profession’s most valuable tool. The use of drugs under supervision of physicians has doubled the life expectancy in western countries in recent years (Nault, 1997: 313).

There are, however, many harmful and illegal drugs that people use to achieve a pleasurable state of mind. The abuse of legal drugs such as medicinal drugs, tobacco and alcohol has become a serious social issue. In general any drug which is used improperly can cause harm. When drugs are abused they do not discriminate or respect any boundaries or obey any laws. Drugs destroy whatever they come into contact with, effectively erasing health, sanity, families, and eventually people’s lives (Colett, 2004: 2).

In more recent times however, expressions of concern over the numbers of adolescents who are engaging in the use of various substances has grown tremendously. Drugs can be categorized into “hard” and “soft” drugs. Most teenagers become involved in substance use with “soft drug”, such as alcohol, marijuana, tobacco or nicotine. Papalia, Olds and Fieldman (2001) defined soft drugs as a gateway substance because their use often leads to use of addictive substance such as crack and heroin.
1.2. ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

South Africa has the potential for profitable criminal drug activity because (Harvey, 1998: 3; Colett, 2004: 4; Sanca, 2004a: 2):

- It has well developed infrastructure, i.e. road rail, air and water transport.
- South Africa has long, porous borders and weak border controls.
- Poor harbor, airport and border patrolling means that drugs can enter and leave the country relatively unnoticed.
- Drugs such as dagga are grown locally and are relatively cheap.
- Schools do not have an effective drug deterrent policy.
- An increasing number of people are concentrated in urban areas, which are characterized by unemployed and crime. This creates a market for drugs.
- South Africa has modern international, telecommunication and banking service.
- According to Colett (2004:2), learners are exposed to drugs on a daily basis. They watch alcohol and drug commercials on television and in magazines and they see adult family member smoking and drinking.

Van Niekerk (1998: 36) emphasizes that the use of illegal drugs are taking on epidemic proportions among the South African youth. Children tend to become involved with alcohol and drugs at a young age. Alcohol remains the most commonly abused drug in South Africa, followed by dagga (cannabis) and the dagga/mandrax (white pipe) combination. Mandrax (Methaqualone) is sometimes also used on its own. There is also considerable abuse of over the counter and prescription medicines e.g. pain relievers, tranquiller, (including benzodiazepines), cough mixtures (containing codeine), and slimming tablets, as well as solvents especially glue.

The effect of dagga are mild compared to some other drugs, it is more readily available in the South African market and at a cheaper price.
1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem that will be investigated in this study concerns the effect that substance abuse has on the development of secondary school learners. In essence, the study will investigate the following:

- What are the reasons for drug abuse among secondary school learners?
- What effect does the use of drugs by secondary school learners have on their physical, psychological (cognitive and affective), social and normative development.

1.4. ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS

In the interest of clarity and understanding, certain concepts in this study needs to be elucidated.

1.4.1. GENDER

In this study all reference to any gender includes reference to the other gender.

1.4.2 Educator/teacher

The definitions accorded to the term educator are based on the different roles that he plays. According to Parker (Maharaj, 2004: 3) an educator is a mediator, designer of learning programs and material, leader and manager, a citizen and community developer; in charge of a learning area or phase, Allen (1993: 37) defines an educator as a person who gives intellectual, moral and social instructions to the pupil.

An educator is more than the teacher of a subject and he seeks to impart to the child qualities that will enable him to reach responsible adulthood successfully.

In the Educator’s Employment Act, Act No, 76 of 1998 (Brunton & Associates, 2003: 4) an educator is defined as any person who teaches, educators or train other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at a school.
For learning to take place the pupil and the learning content or subject matter have to meet and interact. This contact is made possible in the classroom by the educator. The educator acts as a mediator between the learner (pupil) and the aim of education. Parent, teacher, grandparents, friends and siblings can all be regarded as educators since they may fulfill similar functions.

1.4.3. Parent
According to the South African School’s Act, Act No. 84 of 1996 (Brunton & Associates, 2003: 4) a parent means:

- The parent or guardian of a learner;
- The person legally entitled to custody of a learner, or
- The person who undertakes to fulfill the obligations of a person referred to the above, towards the learner’s education at school.

1.4.4. Secondary school learner
Allen (1993: 946) defines a secondary school as an institution where learners above the ages of fourteen, receive basic instruction.

Du Toit and Kruger (1994: 103) describe a secondary school learner as a learner between the ages of fourteen and twenty who attends an institution for the purpose of learning.

For the purpose of this study, a secondary school learner is a learner between the ages of fourteen and twenty (Grade 8-12) who need of instruction and who attends a school for that purpose.

1.4.5. Substances (drugs)
According to Allen (1993: 360) a drug is a” medicinal substance or a narcotic, a hallucinogen or stimulant, especially one causing addiction”. Laurence (2001;
1) describes a drug as a chemical or other substance that alters the function of an organism.

Drugs are chemical substances that change the way the human body works. When one swallows, inhales, applies or injects drugs into the body, they find their way to all parts of the body via the bloodstream. In the brain, drugs may intensify or dull senses, alter one’s sense of alertness and sometimes decrease physical pain. The effect of the drug or substance varies depending on how much is taken, how often it is used, how quickly it gets to the brain and whether other foods, drugs or substances are taken at the same time. A drug can therefore be described as a chemical that alters the speed of cell activities.

It must be noted that many drugs invoke more than one effect, e.g., alcohol acts as a stimulant and then as a depressant, while Ecstasy acts as both a stimulant and as a hallucinogen (Sanca, 2004:4).

1.4.6 Substance abuse (drug abuse)

Nault (1997: 322) defines substance abuse as the “harmful, non-medical use of mind altering substance which may lead to personality and behavioural problems”.

The World Health Organization (WHO) prefers to use the term “harmful use” (causing physical and mental damage to health) and “hazardous use” (having harmful consequences) for the user rather than the term abuse (United Nation Office of Drugs and Crime, 2004:2). In the context of international drug control, substance abuse implies the use of any substance under international control outside therapeutic indications, in excessive dose levels, or over an unjustified period of time. The person taking the substance has a choice whether to take the substance or not. The drug is used to achieve a pleasurable mind. Legal substances may also be abused. It is possible to abuse a substance without being addicted to it (United Nation Office Drugs and Crime, 2004: 1).

Substance abuse refers to any drug used for the wrong reasons in excessive doses. Mood altering substances known as psycho-active drugs are the most commonly abused drugs. These include but are not limited to street drugs such
as dagga, cocaine, crack, heroin and mandrax but also include medication not used legitimately to relieve pain (Colett; 2004: 2). Tobacco and alcohol, which affect mood, behaviour and bodily functions, are examples of everyday substances that are abused.

1.4.7. Substance (drug) addiction

According to the World Health Organization (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 119), addiction is the repeated consumption of a drug that produces a state of periodic or chronic intoxication that adversely affects the individual as well as society. Addiction refers to the individual’s overpowering desire or compulsion to continually take a drug by means (Cole & Miller, 1965: 262-263). According to Colett (2004: 2), addiction is “having an uncontrollable, abnormal need or desire for a drug”.

Addiction is thus a process that takes over the person. Addiction absolves the person from taking responsibility for his life. The person relies on the drug to “make things better”. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime regards addiction as the repeated use of a psycho-active substance to the extend that the user is periodically or chronically intoxicated and has great difficulty in voluntarily ceasing use (United Nation Office Drug and Crime, 2004: 3).

Addiction means that the life of the user centers on the need to consume the drug. The user is dependant on the drug. He no longer has a choice in the taking of the substance and he feels powerless to stop. Addiction is an illness that begins with the abuse of drugs and has nothing to do with weak morals or weak will power. Addiction can be both physical and psychological.

A) Physical Addiction

The person taking the drug becomes dependant on the particular drug (physically addictive). The user builds tolerance to the substance after uncontrolled and prolonged use, so the user needs continually larger doses of
the drug to achieve the same effect (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 120). The addict relies more and more on the substance to function and survive. When the person who is physically addicted stops using the drugs, he suffers withdrawal systems like diarrhea, delirium tremens (shaking) and feels absolutely awful.

**B) Psychological Addiction**
The user finds an emotional craving for the drug. The user experiences an overwhelming desire to consume the drug. The addict’s whole life becomes centered on the substance and the opportunities to use it. The substance begins to interfere with his relationships, schoolwork and other formerly productive areas of his life. He may lie, cheat or steal to obtain the drug for consumption.

**1.4.8. Education**
The word “education” is derived from the Latin word “educare” which means upliftment, rearing or bringing up of children (Smith, 1995: 7).

Educationists have come up with different definitions of education, some of which are (Smith, 1995: 8):

- Education is the guiding of the learner towards proper (moral) adulthood.
- Education deals with the formation of character. Character includes such virtues as integrity, honesty, patience, tolerance, compassion and humility. In this context, book knowledge and skills are of secondary importance.
- Education is considered as the gradual preparation for life in its entirety.
- Education is the guiding and bringing up of a child by an adult towards responsible adulthood.
- Education is the moulding of the personality of the child. The whole personality is molded and not just the intellectual aspect.
1.4.9. Effect

The term effect refers to the result of a consequence of an action (Allen, 1993: 374). Every action results in a consequence. The use of drugs by the secondary school learner (action) results in development problems (consequence) experienced by the learner. The researcher is tasked with proving that there is substance abuse among secondary school learners.

1.4.10. Development

Development refers to a gradual perceptible change or unfolding. It is a continuous, irreversible and complex process, unique to each child. Maturation and learning interact and determine the course of development (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 60). The researcher is concerned that, what substance abuse will have on the physical, psychological (cognitive and effective), social and normative development of the secondary school learner.

1.5. AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aims of the study are as follows:

- To pursue a study of relevant literature pertaining to substance abuse amongst the secondary school learners.
- To undertake an empirical study of substance abuse on secondary school learners.
- To determine, in light of the findings obtained, certain guidelines which can assist educators, principals, parents and the Department of Education on how to plan and what actions to take in order to combat substance abuse and addiction amongst secondary school learners.

1.6. METHOD OF RESEARCH

Research with regards to this study will be conducted as follows:
1. An overview of available relevant literature in order to base this study on an accountable, theoretical base.

2. An empirical survey comprising of self structured questionnaire to be completed by learners will be utilized. This will take the form of a Likert-type scale questionnaire with two categories (Yes/No). The two response categories will ensure that respondents fall in one of the categories enabling the measuring of direction and intensity of feeling.

1.7. FURTHER COURSE OF STUDY

Chapter two will deal with a literature review on substance abuse amongst secondary school learners.

Chapter three will explain the research methodology utilized in this study.

Chapter four will consist of the presentation and analysis of research data.

Chapter five will provide a summary, findings and recommendations.

1.8. SUMMARY

An analysis of the problem, statement of the problem/hypothesis, the aim of the study and the method of research were presented in this chapter. The method of research was explained and certain relevant concepts were elucidated. In conclusion the further course of the study was provided.
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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa, remarked in a speech at a special opening of the first democratically elected government, that the “youth of our country are the most valued possessions of the nation”, without whom there can be no future (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 53). What he implied was that everything should be done to guide, assist and support the secondary school learner, through his important developmental years. Erickson (Vrey, 1996: 86) refers to the secondary school phase as an era of “industry” characterized by exploration. The learner needs to take risks in order to develop into mature non-risk taking adult. One of the risks that a secondary school learner takes is experimentation with drugs.

Factor influencing substance use among adolescents, there are much speculation as to the reason behind adolescence substance use/abuse. In many cultures alcohol is nothing more than a savory complement to a tasty meal, a pleasant way to relax or part of a religious ritual. In some environments alcohol use is portrayed as a normal way of life, World Health Organization (WHO,1995). The initial use of alcohol by young people (especially boys) symbolizes an entry into adult world. Being able to “hold his liquor” is a mark of manhood which gains him respect from his peers, Ministry of Education Youth and Culture (MOYEC, 1991).
2.2 REASONS FOR DRUG ABUSE

The secondary school learner experiments, abuses or is addicted to substances because of, *inter alia*, the following reasons (Le Roux, 2000: 91; Web MD Health, 2004a: 1; Brown, 2004: 1; Lembersky, 2004b: 23; Cohen, 1991: 20):

- The learner strives to be accepted by the peer group. The learner wants to fit in and feel part of the peer group. It is important for the learner to conform to the peer group. The abuse of drugs within the peer group readily leads to drug abuse by the learner as a result of peer group pressure.

- Unhealthy marital relationship and weak maternal and paternal figures can predispose the learner to drug abuse. The absent maternal or paternal figure who does not fulfill his role of authority adequately or who provides the learner with inadequate social support in handling stressful life events or societal pressures often cause identification problems and a negative self-esteem in the learner. This encourages the learner to readily identify with undesirable elements and he easily becomes trapped into drug abuse thereby rebelling against authority.

- If a learner lacks meaningful leisure time activities and lapses into periods of idleness, boredom and laziness, participation in undesirable leisure time activities and a quest for aimless pleasure can lead to drug experimentation and abuse.

- Drugs serve as an escape mechanism for coping with stress, school and personal problems. The learner who cannot handle everyday school, sports, family or emotional problems is more likely to abuse drugs, as drugs represent a coping and escape mechanism.

- The learner with a negative self image may feel inferior and he may need recognition. He may want to feel control. In this case the learner chooses to abuse drugs since he experiences a temporary feeling of independence and power whilst under the influence of drug.
2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF DRUG ABUSERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

It is important for parents, learners, educators and adults to identify the physical and psychological signs and symptoms of drug use. The earlier the identification, the greater the success of the intervention programme (Rutherford, 2001: 6).

The secondary school learner who abuses drugs may show, *inter alia*, the following symptoms:

- The learner experience deterioration in scholastic performance. The learner achieves low grades and may display hostile, defiant and unco-operative behaviour towards others in school. The learner may also experience a drop in motivation, concentration, general achievement, interest in sport and extra-mural activities. Under these circumstances school is of no interest to the learner and truancy often results (Donald, Lolwana & Lazarus, 2002: 212).

- The learner may be involved in constant conflict situations and may experience a breakdown in communication and a general deterioration in interpersonal relationships. The learner may become withdrawn, depressed, sleepy, tired, manipulative and self-centred (Much, 2002: 4).

- The learner may begin to tell lies, keep secrets, steal or borrow money or engage in sneaky and suspicious behaviour. He may even be found in the company of suspicious individuals (Fish Hoek Drug Crisis Centre, 2004: 6).

- The learner may experience extremes of behaviour. He may either become extremely aggressive or unusually docile. On the other hand he may be defiant, unco-operative, moody, cranky, or verbally
abusive and on the other hand he may be jovial, pliable, sociable and agreeable (Marsh, 1992: 86).

2.4. EFFECT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNER.

Learners who abuse substance may have difficulty in establishing their identify, developing relationships or skills, gaining physical and emotional independence and preparing for the future responsible adulthood. Substance abuse halts the learner’s maturity causing him to continue immature behaviour into adulthood (Much, 2002: 5).

The impact of substance abuse on the development of the secondary school learner will be discussed under the following headings:

- Physical development.
- Psychological development (cognitive and affective).
- Social development.
- Normative development.

2.4.1. Physical development

Physical development concerns the growth of the body, changes in the proportions between different parts of the body and changes in the internal structure and functioning of the body (Gouws & Kruger, 2003: 8-9; Very,1996: (86-87).

(1) Physical characteristics

The secondary school years are characterized by a period of gradual growth into puberty.
The following are the physical characteristics of the secondary school learners (Gouws & Kruger, 2003: 8-9; Vrey, 1996:87; Toit & Kruger 1994: 104-106; Dreyer & Duminy, 1983: 35):

- The secondary school learner experiences an even increase in height and mass together with an increase in appetite. The learner takes an adult like appearance; however, he tires more easily. Girls are more inclined to look a little taller and heavier than boys. Learners begin to manifest sexual features e.g. breasts and penis enlarges. The learner’s brain reaches adult size and mass; breathing becomes slower and deeper whilst blood pressure rises but heartbeat decelerates.

- The learner enjoys physical strength and vitality with emphasis on skill and power and their capabilities on the sport field.

(2) **Effect of substance abuse on physical development**

Substance abuse has, amongst other, the following effects on the physical development of the secondary school learner:

Smoking drugs such as dagga, cigarettes and opium causes various respiratory problems and diseases such as bronchitis, pneumonia, cancer of the mouth, throat, larynx, esophagus, bladder, pancreas and kidney. Furthermore, smoking can aggravate asthma and prevent enough oxygen and nutrients from nourishing the skin, giving rise to bad skin and a disease called psoriasis (Life scope, 2004:4). The learner may experience difficulty in improving the skills of running, kicking, throwing, catching, cycling and swimming.

Continued smoking causes breakdown of lung tissue and clogging of the air sacs (Izenberg & Lyness, 2002: 3). This affects lung-power and the secondary school learner will consequently become less active and his athletic and sport performance will be inhibited. He will suffer from an increased heartbeat, poor blood circulation and shortness of breath making it difficult for him to engage
in activities that learners of his age group engage in (i.e. games that require physical strength and vitality such as body-building, soccer and cricket, and girls: sport such as netball, gymnastics, swimming and hockey).

Learners that smoke dagga ingest tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), a substance that affects overall growth and health. The substance is fat-soluble and attaches itself to fatty tissue like the brain, reproductive organs, liver, kidneys and spleen causing damage to them (Sanca, 2004b: 2). The learner’s physical development and more especially the development of secondary sexual features, which develop at this stage, will be hindered.

Drug abuse may make the learner giddy, stagger, lose balance and will affect his motor co-ordination (Sanca, 2004a: 6). Motor dysfunction (especially dysfunction regarding fine motor co-ordination as required for articulation, writing and eye movements) may cause secondary school learner to experience speaking, writing and reading difficulties.

Substance abuse robs the body of essential vitamins and minerals and interferes with the digestion of food (Sanca, 2004b: 4). Learners may suffer from malnutrition, which may prevent the learner from developing to his maximum height and mass. The brain may not get enough essential nutrients required for development resulting in the learner’s brain not reaching adult size and mass as expected in the secondary phase. This will hamper the learner’s learning abilities at school.

**2.4.2. Psychological development**

Psychological development refers to the development of mental characteristic or attitude of a person with specific emphasis on those factors affecting behaviour in a given context (Allen, 1993: 965).

The psychological development of the secondary school learner will be discussed by distinguishing between the cognitive and affective aspects.
(1) **Cognitive development**

The term cognitive development refers to the continuous and cumulative development of the intellect and has to do with thinking skills, creatively, perception, conceptualization, insight, knowledge, imagination and intuition.


- The learner has a conscious focus on the world and acquires knowledge of the world in a cognitive and formal manner. He acquires new skills such as calculation of mathematics, physics and also incorporates new concepts into his knowledge structure. He is expected to remember information and apply the information when solving problems and to be able to reproduce it at a later stage.

- The learner can communicate effectively and his vocabulary is large enough to follow teaching. Perceptually, he can assign meaning to sensation and can recognize, memorize, integrate, differentiate and imagine. He/she learns by personal experience and by active participation.

- His attention span improves and he is able to concentrate for longer periods. He is capable of devoting himself seriously to his tasks and completing them properly. He is willing, eager and ready to learn.

(1) **Effect of substance abuse on cognitive development**

Substance abuse impacts on the cognitive development of the secondary school learner in the following ways:
Substance abuse interferes with a good nutrient supply to the brain and may result in brain damage, which is done in a cognitive and formal manner. Excessive alcohol use causes the brain to age prematurely and the learner may lose up to 10 years of his life. Brain disorders commonly associated with alcoholism are Weenicke’s Syndrome, Koraskoff’s Psychosis and Marchiafava’s Disease (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 126).

The use of addictive substance over a long period of time may impair the memory and problem solving abilities of the learner (Web MD Heath, 2004a: 3). This has serious consequences on scholastic and other academic achievement as well as appropriate life decisions that have to be made. Substance abuse erodes the self-discipline necessary for learning. The learner may experience problems with reading, calculating, writing and incorporating new concepts into his knowledge structure. He may experience falling grades and may drop out of school.

The learner who abuses alcohol finds it more difficult to be cautious and to use good judgment to protect himself. Learners find it more difficult to think clearly because the more they drink, the more slowly their brain works (Lifescope, 2004: 6). This in turn impacts on his consideration of factual data and his reading, calculating and writing skills.

Dagga smoking may result in the loss of short-term memory and impairs a person’s ability to learn and concentrate, which in turn affects his problem solving abilities and the ability to reproduce information at a later stage. The dagga user experiences a lack of initiative, motivation and concern about the future (Ravesafe, 2003:6).
The affective development is concerned with the development of those aspects pertaining to the emotions, feelings, passion, moods, sentiments and whims and determines the learner’s personality (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 15).


- The learner’s emotions are aroused by internal rather than external factors. He/she shows a greater understanding for the feelings of others and simultaneously displays a greater degree of empathy and sympathy. He/she learns to express, control, suppress or hide his emotions according to social rules thus meeting the requirements of his cultural groups, his peer group and his community.

- His/her expression of aggression (anger, rage, stubbornness) becomes more refined and he/she uses the social skills that he/she has acquired to cope, i.e., communication and co-operation. Anger and rage make him moody and he/she will sometimes tend to use force to solve his/her problems or relieve his frustrations.

- Happiness and cheerfulness is expressed within the confines of his peer group to which he constantly strives to be accepted. He often prefers to gloat at a friend’s defeat rather than express happiness outwardly for social reasons.

- The learner understands moods and mood changes and the positive and negative feelings with which they leave him. He learns to suppress his emotions leading to stress, depression, feelings of discontent and bad moods. He also learns to rid himself of unpleasant feelings by having a good cry, doing rigorous exercise or having a good laugh.
(3) Effect of substance abuse on affective development

The following are some of the effects that substance abuse may possibly have on the affective development of the secondary school learner:

- Alcohol intake can make the learner talkative and friendly or aggressive and angry. Alcohol alters perceptions, emotions, movement, vision and hearing. In addition to this it can make people do embarrassing things like throwing up or urinating on themselves (Rutherford, 2004: 5). Furthermore, alcohol intake causes a learner to become more angry and stubborn or get into a rage without much provocation. The learner has not learnt to express control, suppress or hide his emotions in line with expectation of his peer group, his cultural group and his community.

- Substance abuse can weaken a person’s inhibitions, dull the common sense, bring out sexually aggressive behaviour and make the learner more egocentric (Shatz, 2004b: 8).

- Learner’s sometime attempt to hide feelings and emotions by abusing substances. The “high” that the substance abuser experiences can be a very happy or “spaced out” feeling or a feeling that he has special powers like the ability to fly or get rid of all his problems (Brown, 2004: 7). Since substance abuse has interfered with his ability to suppress his emotions, the secondary school learner may display anger, rage, stubbornness and jealousy in an open and less refined manner.

- Dagga use has been noted for blunting emotions and for making the learner paranoid. He will most probably end up becoming suspicious and fearful of the people around him causing him to bed-wet, stammer, boast, be anxious or engage in noisy behaviour, which are symptoms of suppressed fear (Bowman, 2002a: 3). Jealousy may be displayed by anger, rage and the use of force rather than by teasing, lying and bullying.
Substance abuse and addition may cause stress and anxiety, which in turn may cause the user to increase the substance dosage to cope with the situation. When this fails, the individual may suffer from uncontrolled depression and may commit suicide (Shatz, 2004a: 6).

Once the learner becomes psychologically dependent he finds it difficult to stop. Svanum and McAddo (Bezuidenhout, 2004:127) suggest that 90% will experience some degree of relapse. Even if he wishes to stop he will not know how to because he has relied on substance abuse to resolve his problems and escape from his situation. He may become less co-operative; less friendly and less sensitive to others who may want to assist him.

2.4.3 Social development
Social development refers to the development of relationships and associations with others. It is marked by mutual interaction, friendliness and generality with the aim of enjoying the society or companionship of others. It is dependant upon relationships and is learned. Social development is essential for healthy growth to adulthood (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 214).

(1) Characteristics of social development

• The learner shifts his security base from the parental home to his peer group, which helps him to gain gradual emancipation from his parent. The learner begins to depend less on his parents and more on his peers. This is sometimes accompanied by animosity towards adults.
The learner’s parents accept him unconditionally. However, in his peer group he must prove himself and earn his position a member of the group. The learner wants to be constantly with his friends and feels alone and discontent without their company.

(2) **The effect of substance abuse on social development**

Substance abuse has, *inter alia*, the following effects on the social development of the secondary school learner:

- Addiction begins to control the life of the learner and he tends to withdraw from all previous relationships with others. The addict finds it difficult to simultaneously maintain and satisfy the need for substance and for intra- and extra familial relationships (Izenberg & Lyness, 2002: 3).

- Substance abuse can make a learner feel happy, relaxed, less shy and more talkative but it can also make the learner more bold and aggressive (Gavin, 2004: 4). The learner may stop acting responsibly and may end up in conflict situations with other (arguments and fights), affecting his present and future interactions with those around him.

- The substance abuser finds it difficult to cope with and perform as a result of life’s stressful events and according to the expectations of the family members and this, leads to conflict. The learner may experience aggression resulting in him leaving home or committing suicide (Miranda, 2004: 13).

- Some substance-abusing individuals exhibit unacceptable behaviour such as mugging, stealing, handbag snatching and violence to acquire money to satisfy and maintain their habit whilst others may resort to prostitution (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003:128).
• Dagga use affects reasoning and judgment and hinders the learner’s chance to experience feelings and develop relationships with his parents, peers and adults (Lembersky, 2004b: 7); relationships that may have a positive impact on him becoming a responsible and socially accepted adult.

• Learners who abuse substances are more likely to engage in unacceptable behaviour such as having unprotected sex (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 126). This could possibly lead to unwanted pregnancies or the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STD’S) and HIV/AIDS.

• Substance abuse in school will probably brand the learner as an outcast, limiting his opportunities to acquire friends (Rutherford, 2004: 8). Since “birds of a feather flock together” the learner will most probably have friends with similar habits in his peer group. The greater the learner’s involvement with friends, that consume alcohol, the greater his chances of becoming addicted.

2.4.4. **Normative development**

Normative development refers to that which is accepted and practiced by the majority. Norms are standardized ways of acting or the expectations of the majority of the community that govern the limit of variations in behavior. Normative development includes moral and religious development (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 156; Gouws & Kruger, 2003: 10).

(1) **Characteristics of normative development**

Learners pass through various levels of normative development as their cognitive abilities develop. These levels are called the pre-conventional, the conventional and the post-conventional levels. The secondary school years are characterized by the conventional levels of normative development.

(2) **The effect of substance abuse on normative development**

Substance abuse is a very expensive pastime and learners may lie, cheat and steal to finance their habit (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 122). These are not qualities that parents, adults and educators would want learners to be familiar with.

Substance abuse is associated with crime and misconduct that disrupts the maintenance of an orderly and safe school atmosphere conducive to learning (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 122). Learners who abuse substance create a climate of apathy, disruption and disrespect for others. They transform schools into a market place for dope deals, which is associated with the destruction of school property and class disorder, which may affect the development of the learner’s inner moral sense and conscience.

Substance abuse impairs the learner’s ability to make healthy choices and decisions according to acceptable norms, putting the learner at greater risk (Lifescope, 2004: 4). The learner may begin to believe that the use of substances, make him feel good and he will have a better time if he uses it. This incorrect assumption can have dire consequences for him.

The learner strives to be part of the peer group and will do everything expected of him (Gavin, 2004: 6). To him, this is the correct behaviour and acceptable norm. Substance abuse to him may appear correct and normal. He most often will justify his behaviour because everyone else is doing it. The learner may lie to keep his habit a secret to avoid punishment, creating greater moral
complications. Youth with poor home support tend to seek support and understanding outside the home.

2.5. SUMMARY

The goal of formal education is to mould the learner into a responsible, accountable and contributing adult. The secondary school educator needs to be equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise on how to assist, guide and support the learner.

The educator needs to know why learners abuse substances. Understanding the learner’s perspective holds important key to deterrence. This knowledge can be very useful in lesson preparation strategies. Learners become aware of why some of their colleagues abuse substances, thus encouraging them from not experimenting with them.

The identification of learners will assist the educator to single out and provide one to one assistance to affected learners encouraging them to see the error of their ways and changing their habits. Identification of learners also makes it easier for the educator to refer such learners to other professionals and organizations that can help him/her.

The educator needs to be knowledge, about the learner’s normal development and how it is affected by the abuse of substances. This should form an integral part of lesson preparation and a significant component of prevention.

The next chapter will focus on the research methodology used in the investigation.
## CHAPTER 3

**PLANNING OF THE RESEARCH (EMPIRICAL)**

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CHAPTER 3
PLANNING OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding Chapter 2 the conceptual and theoretical issues relating to substance abuse in secondary schools are examined.

This chapter will focus on the research methodology used in the investigation and the perception of learner on substance abuse in secondary school

3.2. PREPARATION FOR THE DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

Selection of respondents

The empirical investigation was conduction in the Tongaat Region, Pinetown District. For the purpose of this study secondary school educators only in the Tongaat were randomly selected as the research sample.

The target population was defined by the following considerations:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of school:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Geographical location:</td>
<td>Tongaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>All educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience</td>
<td>1 year or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td>Male/Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>20 to over 60</td>
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Secondary schools were identified in accordance with the defined population. 50 educators from school were randomly selected for the sample to produce
statistically dependable result of the 50 questionnaire distributed to educators only, (50) returned to the researcher. This return (100%) may be considered an adequate sample for reliable data analysis.

3.2.2 Sampling

According to De Vos (1998: 191) a sample is the element of the population considered for actual inclusion on the study. It can be also viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which one is interested. A sample is a small portion of the total set of object, events or person, which together comprises the object of the study.

3.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

3.3.1 The questionnaire as a research instrument

A questionnaire is a set of questions dealing with the same topic or related group of topics, given to a selected group of individuals, for the purpose of gathering data on a problem under consideration (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994: 504).

Data is any kind of information that researchers can identify and accumulate to facilitate answers to their queries (Van Wyk, 1996: 130). The questionnaire is regarded as the most widely used survey data-collecting technique (De Vaus 1990: 80).

Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1990: 90) states that the questionnaire is a prepared question form submitted to certain persons called respondents, with a view to obtaining information. It is not a mere list of questions to be filled out but a scientific instrument for the measurement and collection of particular kinds of data. Therefore it has to be designed specifically with
particular specification in mind (Wolhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen & Vos, 2003: 14).

Churchill and Peter (Schnetler, 1993: 77) say that the questionnaire as a measuring instrument has the greatest influence on the reliability of research data. The careful construction of the questionnaire best controls the characteristics of measurement. The questionnaire serves two major purposes:

- It translates the research objectives into specific questions, the answers to which will provide the data necessary to test or to explore the area set by the research objectives.
- It motivates the respondent to communicate the formation that is required.

Huysamen (1993: 12) states that a well-designed questionnaire is the culmination of a long process of planning of the research objective, formulating the problem, generating the hypothesis, etc. A poorly designed questionnaire can invalidate any research results, notwithstanding the merits of the sample, the field’s workers and the statistical techniques. A well-designed questionnaire cans the reliability and validity of the data to acceptable tolerances (Wolhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen & Vos, and 2003: 14).

The researcher cannot design a questionnaire in a vacuum. The length of individual questions, the number of response options and the format and wording of questions are determined by the following (Dane, 1990: 315):

- The choice of the subject to be researched.
- The aim of the research.
- The size of the research sample.
- The method of the data collection.
- The analysis of the data.
It is for these reasons that the researcher looked at the principles to determine whether the questionnaire is well-designed or not. It is also necessary to draw a distinction between questionnaire content, question, format, question order, type of questions, formulation of questions and validity and reliability of questions.

### 3.3.2 Construction of the questionnaire

The questionnaire requires sufficient time and careful consideration in its construction. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:198) states that the researcher should consult and seek advice from specialists and colleagues at all times during the construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire should be pre-tested to eliminate all possible errors.

The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding secondary school learner’s perception of substance abuse amongst secondary school learners. The researcher’s objective was to avoid bias, ambiguity, prejudice and technical language in the questions. A variety of response systems or question types were used to obtain the desired result.

1. **Type of question**

   (a) **Close end question**

   De Vos (1998: 161) states that the questions in the questionnaire are one which the respondents are offered a choice of alternative answers. Closed-ended questions are easy to ask and quick to answer and their analysis is also straightforward. The major drawback of closed-end questions is that they limit the respondents to provide answers or alternatives. The respondents are deprived of the opportunity of providing their own answers in their own way. This question may also introduce some forms of bias.
(b) **Open-ended questions**

Cohen and Manions (1994:98) and De Vos (1998: 161) states that open-ended questions are not followed by any kinds of choice and the respondents answer are recorded in full. In the case of written questionnaire, the amount of space or the number of lines provided for the answer will partly determine the length and the fullness of the responses received. The advantage of the open-ended question is that it does not force the respondent to adapt to pre-conceived answers. Open-ended questions are flexible in that they enable researcher to clear up misunderstandings.

The chief advantage of open-ended question is the freedom it gives respondents. Once they have understood the intent of the question, they can respond freely without being influence by a prepared set of answers. The disadvantage of open-ended questions is that they are difficult to answer and analyze. Many open-ended questions lengthen the time of completion and respondents may be tempted to leave notes in completed, which decreases the real value of the data obtained from the questionnaire. A large number of open-ended questions also lengthen the time necessary for the processing of data. According to De Vos (1998: 160), the inclusion of too many open-ended questions makes it more expensive, more time consuming and more liable to contain errors.

(c) **Scaled items**

Schumacher and McMillan (1993: 244-248) emphasize that scales are used extensively in questionnaires because they allow a fairly accurate assessment of beliefs or opinions. This is because beliefs or opinions are thought of in terms
of gradations. The usual format of scaled items is a question or statement followed by a scale of potential responses. Scaled items are a type of multiple-choice questions. The subjects checked the place or the scale that best reflects their beliefs or opinions about the statement. The most widely used example is the Likert-type scale. A Likert-type scale is one in which the item includes a value or direction and the respondent indicates agreement or disagreement with the statement. Likert-type items use different response scales; the items can either be neutral or directional.

De Vos (1998: 164) explains that scaled question is useful to obtain information about non-exact and more subjected aspects. The researcher must be careful not to follow the same sequence from positive to negative throughout the questionnaire. Alternation is necessary to decrease bias. For this study the researcher employed the Likert-type scale response (agree, disagree and uncertain) in the construction of the questionnaire.

The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding the substance abuse amongst secondary school learners. The questionnaire was subdivided into two categories as follows:

- Section one dealt with the biographical information of the respondent. Babbie (1990: 84) regard biographical questions as valuable “ice breakers” at the start of the questionnaire, since they are not threatening and easy to answer. In section one completion type questions as well as multiple choice questions were used.

- Section two consisted of ten closed-ended questions. The question focused on substance abuse amongst secondary school learners. The researcher employed the Likert-type scale response in the construction of this section Close-ended questions enable the result of investigation to become available fairly quickly. Closed-ended questions are better understood and responses can be better compared to one another.
3.3.3  **Characteristics of a good questionnaire**

The researcher was guided by the following characteristics of a good questionnaire as identified by Wolhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen & Vos (2003: 15) and Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1990: 190):

- The topic must be significant and relevant. The respondent should recognize it as important enough to warrant spending his time on responding. The significant should be clearly and carefully stated on the accompanying letter.
- The questionnaire must seek only information which cannot be obtained from other sources.
- The items on the questionnaire must be stated clearly. An item achieves clarity when all respondents interpret it in the same way.
- Simple and short items are best. Long and complicated items should be avoided because they confuse the respondent and are difficult to understand. Also respondents may be unwilling to try to interpret them.
- The questionnaire must be short as possible but long enough to get the essential data. Long questionnaire are normally not answered.
- The questionnaire must be attractive in appearance and neatly arranged. It must also be duplicated or printed neatly.
- Instructions must be clear and complete and important items must be defined clearly.
- Double-barreled questions must be avoided. Each question must be limited to a single idea or concept and must be worded as straightforwardly as possible.
- Different categories must provide an opportunity for easy, accurate and unambiguous responses.
Objectively formulated questions with no leading suggestions should render the desired responses.

It is preferable to present questions that create a favorable attitude before proceeding to those that are more delicate and sensitive. Annoying, negative, biased and embarrassing questions should be avoided.

3.3.4 **Advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire**

Data may be gathered by means of a structured questionnaire in some of the following ways: a written questionnaire that is mailed, delivered or handed out personally, personal interviews and telephone interviews. Each mode has specific advantages and disadvantages which the researcher must evaluate for their suitability to the research question and the specific target population being studied as well as the related cost. In this study the researcher used the written questionnaire as the research instrument taking into consideration the following advantages and disadvantages discussed by Wolhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen & Vos (2003: 16).

(1) **Advantages of the written questionnaire**

Bless & Higson-Smith (1995: 112) lists the advantage of the written questionnaire as follow:

- Affordability is the primary advantage of the written questionnaire because it is least expensive means of gathering data.
- Written questionnaires preclude possible interview bias. The way the interviewer asks questions and even the interview’s general appearance and interaction may influence a respondent’s answer. Such bias can be eliminated with a written questionnaire.
A questionnaire permits anonymously; this would increase the researcher’s chances of receiving responses which genuinely represent a person’s beliefs, feelings, opinions and perceptions.

They allow a respondent sufficient time to consider hid response before answering.

Questionnaires can be given to many respondents simultaneously saving time and cost.

A respondent may be more willing to answer questions of a personal nature on a questionnaire as compared to face-to-face situation with an interviewer who may be a complete stranger.

Respondents can complete questionnaire in their own and in a relaxed atmosphere of their own choice.

Designing a questionnaire is relatively easy if the set guidelines are followed.

The administering of questionnaires and the coding, analysis and interpretation of data can be done without any specialized training.

Questionnaires can elicit information which cannot be obtained from any other source. It makes possible empirical research in different disciplines.

(2) **Disadvantages of the written questionnaires**

According to Wollhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen & Vos (2003: 17) the written questionnaire also has the following disadvantages:

- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility of interviews. In an interview an idea or comment can be explored or elaborated. An interviewer can also gauge how people are interpreting the questions.
- People are generally better able to express their views verbally than in writing. They have a notion that what is written could be jeopardizing unlike what is said.
• Questions can be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straightforward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions.

• In a mail questionnaire the respondent examines all the questions at the same time before answering them and therefore the answers to the different questions cannot be treated as independent.

• The researcher cannot control the context of question-answering or the possible communication with the other respondents. Respondents may also ask friends and family members to examine the questionnaire or comment on their answers, causing bias if the respondent’s own opinions are preferred.

• Written questionnaire do not allow the researcher to correct misunderstandings or answer questions that the respondents may have.

3.3.5 Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

Huysamen (1993; 1-3) says validity and reliability are of critical importance in understanding issues of measurement in social science research. Too rarely do questionnaire designers deals with degree of validity and reliability of their instrument. This is one reason why many questionnaires are lacking in two qualities (Cooper, 1989: 15). Questionnaire has a very limited purpose. They are often one-time data gathering devices with a very short life, administered to a limited population. There are ways to improve the validity and reliability of questionnaires. Basic to the validity of a questionnaire is asking the right questions phrased in the least ambiguous way. Terms must be clearly defined so that they have meaning to all respondents (Cohen and Manion, 1994:111-112; Cooper, 1989: 60).

Validity and reliability are very important in educational research because most of the measurements attempted in this area are obtained indirectly. Researchers can never guarantee that an educational or psychological measuring instrument
measures precisely and dependably what it is intended to measure (van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 198). Therefore, it is essential to assess the validity and reliability of these instruments. An educational researcher must include in the research report an account of the validity and reliability of the instrument that was used.

Kidder & Judd (1991: 53) state that although reliability and validity are two different characteristics of a measurement, they shade into each other. They are two ends of a continuum but at points in the middle it is difficult to distinguish between them. Researchers must therefore have a general knowledge as to how one goes about validating a research instrument and how one establishes its reliability (Huysamen, 1993: 3).

1. **Validity of the questionnaire**

Validity implies that the researcher’s conclusion is true and correct. Validity is the extent to which the measuring instrument satisfies the purpose for which it was constructed. It also refers to the extent to which it correlates with some criterion external to the instrument itself (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994: 560). Validity is that quality of a data-gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to determine what it was designed to determine. Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure. In general validity implies that the instrument has achieved its intended purpose. Validity is an indispensable characteristic of all measuring devices used to collect data in research.

There are all three types of validity suggested by Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1990: 237) and Dane (1990: 257) as follows:
• Content validity: Here content and cognitive processes are included and can be measured. Topic, skills and abilities should be prepared and items from each category drawn randomly.

• Criterion validity: This refers to the relationship between scores on a measuring instrument and an independent variable or criterion believed to measure directly the behaviour or characteristic in question. The criterion should be relevant, reliable and free from bias and contamination.

• Construct validity: It is the extent to which the test measures a specific trait or construct for example, intelligence, reasoning and attitudes.

The validity of the questionnaire indicates how worthwhile a measure is likely to be given situation. Validity shows whether the instrument is reflecting the true story, or at least something approximating to the truth. A valid research instrument is one that has demonstrated that it detects some “real” ability, attitude or prevailing situation that the researcher can identify and characterize (Schnetler, 1993: 71). The validity of the questionnaire as a research instrument reflects the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn. It refers to the extent to which interpretations of the instrument’s results, other than the ones the researcher wishes to make, can be ruled out. Establishing validity requires that the researcher anticipates the potential arguments that skeptics use to dismiss the research results (Dane, 1990: 148). From the interpretation of the results obtained and the level of certainty with which conclusions are drawn the researcher is convinced that the questionnaire to a great extent did measure that for which it was designed.

(2) Reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability is a statistical concept that relates to consistency of obtaining the same relevant answer when measuring phenomena for dependability (Mulder, 1989: 209). According to Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein (1994: 512) a
reliable measuring instrument is that, if repeated under similar conditions, would present the same results or a very near approximation of the initial result. Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1990: 194) distinguish between the following three types of reliability:

- Test-retest reliability (coefficient of stability): This gives an indication of the dependability of a score on one occasion and the same score on another occasion.
- Internal consistency reliability: this indicates how well the test items measure the same thing.
- Split-half reliability: By correlating the results from two halves of the same measuring instrument, the split-half reliability can be calculated.

In essence, reliability refers to consistency. However consistency does not guarantee truthfulness. The reliability of the question is no proof that the answers given are a true reflection of the respondent’s feeling (Dane, 1990: 256). A demonstration of reliability is necessary but it is not conclusive evidence that an instrument is valid. Reliability refers to the extent to which measurements results are free of unpredictable kinds of error. Kidder & Judd (1991: 45) identified these sources of error that can affect reliability:

- Variations in the conditions of administration between groups. These range from various distractions such as unusual noise outside to inconsistencies in the administrations of the measuring instrument such as omissions in verbal instructions.
- Fluctuations in the mood or alertness of respondents because of illness, fatigue, recent good or bad experiences or temporary differences amongst members of the group being measured.
- Differences in scoring or in the interpretations of results, chance differences in what the observer notices and errors in computing scores.
• Random effects by respondents who guess or mark off attitude alternative without trying to understand them.

When the questionnaire is used as an empirical research instrument, there is no specific method for example, the “test-retest” method, to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. As a result it is difficult to establish to what extent the answers of the respondents were reliable.

The researcher believes that the questionnaire in the study were completed with the necessary honesty and sincerity required to render the maximum possible reliability. Anonymity of the questionnaires as in this study encouraged frankness. In the coding process of the responses to the questions the researcher observed that the questionnaires were completed with the necessary dedication.

3.4 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study is an abbreviated version of research project in which the researcher practices or tests the procedures to be used in subsequent full-scale project (Dane, 1990: 42). The pilot study is a preliminary or “trail run” investigation using similar questions and similar subjects as in the final survey. According to Kidder and Judd (1986: 211-212) the basic purpose of a pilot study is to determine how the design of the subsequent study can be improved and to identify flaws in the measuring instrument. A pilot study gives the researcher an idea of what the method will actually look like in operation and what effects (intended or not) it is likely to have. In other words, by generating many of the practical problems that will ultimately arise, a pilot study enables the researcher to advert these problems by changing procedures, instructions and questions.

The number of participants in the pilot study or group is normally smaller than the number scheduled to take part in the final survey. Participants in the pilot
study and the sample for the final study must be selected from the target population. For the purpose of this study the researcher conducted a pilot run on secondary school learners.

According to Plug, Meyer, Louw and Gouws (1991:49-66) the following are the purposes of a pilot study, and these were also the aims of the researcher in this survey:

- It permitted a preliminary testing of the hypothesis that leads to testing more precise hypotheses in the main study.
- It provided the researcher with ideas, approaches and clues not foreseen prior to the pilot study.
- It permitted a thorough check of the planned statistical and analytical procedures, thus allowing an appraisal of their adequacy in treating the data.
- It greatly reduced the number of treatment errors because unforeseen problems revealed in the pilot study resulted in redesigning the main study.
- It saved the researcher major expenditures of time and money on aspects of the research, which would have been futile.
- Feedback from other persons involved was made possible and led to important improvements in the main study.
- In the pilot study the researcher experimented with a number of alternative measures and selected only those that produced the best results for the final study.
- Questions and instructions that were misinterpreted in the pilot study were reformulated in the main study.

Through the use of the pilot study as pre-test the researcher was satisfied that the questions that were being asked complied adequately with the requirements of this study.
3.5. ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is one of the best available instruments, if properly administered, for obtaining information from widespread sources or large groups simultaneously (Cooper, 1989: 39). The researcher delivered questionnaires personally to schools in Tongaat and made return visits after a week to collect them in the second school term.

3.6 THE PROCESSING OF THE DATA

After the data was collected, it was captured in a format which allowed for analysis and interpretation. It involved the careful coding of the 50 questionnaires that were completed correctly by the secondary school educators. The coded data was subsequently transferred onto a computer spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel in Office 2000.

3.6.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics deals with the description and/or the summarization of the data obtained for a group of individuals. Data may be described or summarized by tabulating or graphically depicting them. The purpose of descriptive statistics is to reduce large amounts of data physically to facilitate the drawing up of conclusions about them (Huysamen, 1993: 4). Frequency tables, histograms and polygons are useful in forming impressions about the distribution of data.

According to Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1990: 65) the frequency distribution is a method to organize data obtained from questionnaires in order to simplify statistical analysis. A frequency table provides the following information:
• It indicates how many times a particular response appears on the completed questionnaires.
• It provides percentages that reflect the number of responses to a certain question in relation to the total number of responses.

3.6.2 Application of data

The questionnaire (cf. Annexure A) was designed to determine whether there is substance abuse by secondary school learners. In order to obtain the information needed for the purpose of this study the questionnaire was divided into two parts:

• The first part required their biographical information
• The second part gathered information regarding substance abuse by secondary school learners.

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION

This investigation was constrained by a number of factors. The following are likely factors that might have influenced the reliability and validity of the questionnaire:

• Although anonymity was required in the questionnaire the possibility exists that because of the respondent’s cautiousness, they might not have been frank and truthful in their responses.
• The sensitive nature of items in the questionnaire might have elicited false or misleading responses and thus influenced the reliability of the results.
• To restrict the investigation to manageable proportions, the researcher limited the study to educators of secondary schools in the eThekwini Region/Pinetown district.
Despite the limitations identified, the researcher believes that the investigation will provide a much-needed basis for the future research regarding substance abuse amongst secondary school learners.

3.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter the planning and design of the empirical research was discussed and a comprehensive description of the questionnaire as a research instrument was given.

The data obtained from the 50 completed questionnaires will be presented and analyzed in the next chapter.
## CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA

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<td>66</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the data which was collected from the questionnaires completed by fifty respondents, to analyze and interpret the findings, and to comment thereon. The analysis of the data involved coding the questionnaires and transferring the coded data onto a computer spreadsheet.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Research can be defined as a systematic process of collecting and logically analyzing information for some purpose. Research aims, *inter alia*, to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon community or person (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995: 42). Descriptive research is concerned with the description and/or the summarization of the data obtained for a group of individuals. Data may be described or summarized by tabulating or graphically depicting them. The purpose of descriptive statistics is to reduce large amounts of data physically, in order to facilitate the drawing of conclusions about them. Descriptive research is one of the methods of research used to study a person or persons scientifically in the educational situation. It attempts to describe the situation as it is without the researcher interviewing or exercising control. Descriptive studies describe the distribution of variables rather than set out with intention of testing hypotheses about relationships (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994: 355). In this study homothetic descriptive research was employed with the aim of describing the effect of substance abuse amongst secondary school learners. The researcher was primarily concerned with the nature and degree of existing situations in schools.
4.2.1 Gender of respondents

Table 1: Frequency distribution according to the gender of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 MALES</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 FEMALES</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that the research sample comprises more females than male. Possibly reasons for the finding might be that:

- There are more females than males in the teaching profession, according to the random sample which focused on secondary school only (cf. 3.2.2). This is supported by the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), Resolution 1 of 2005 which confirms that schools in KwaZulu Natal are overstaffed by female educators in post level 1 (ELRC, 2005: 1).
- Females may view teaching as an occupation that affords them time in the afternoon to attend to their household chores and spend time with their children and to assist them to do their homework (Maharaj, 2004: 103).
- Many females are not sole breadwinners and therefore may see teaching as a second or additional family income (Maharaj, 2004: 103).
- Many males may have taken up more lucrative opportunities outside the public service (Mulvey, 2000: 10; Singh, 2001: 58). Males may be seen as more demanding in terms of discipline than female. Secondary school may have more females than male and this may have contributed to the steady increase of substance use amongst secondary school learners.
4.2.2 Age

Table 2: Frequency distribution according to the age of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the respondents (22%) in the research sample are in the age group 20 to 30 years while more than (50%) are in the age group 31 to 40 years. The frequency table (Table 2) also indicates that almost a third is younger than 40 years. Younger educators have more to offer in terms of time, energy and productivity. They could remain in school for a longer period, thus ensuring long term stability (Marsh, 1992: 93; Smith 1994: 55). A small percentage (12%) of the respondents who participated in the research is older than 50 years. Many of the colleagues of these respondents may have earlier taken the Voluntary Severance Package offered by the various Departments of Education in 1997 (Venketsamy, 2000: 130) or may have resigned from the profession through stress (Chetty, 2004: 114).
4.2.3 **Years of teaching experience.**

**Table 3: Frequency distribution according to years of teaching**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEARS OF EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 0-5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 6-10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 11-15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 16-20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 21-25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 26-30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 31-35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 36-40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency table (Table 3) indicates that almost one fifth of the respondents have five or fewer years of service whilst almost a half has more that 15 to 20 years of teaching experience. The more experienced educator might be able to identify learners who abuse drugs and may be better equipped to assist such learners with their problems. Experience as well as adequate training is needed for the responsibilities and demands imposed on educators have, the more confidence and expertise they will acquire to be more effective (Naidoo, 2000: 97).
4.2.4 Qualification

Table 4: Frequency distribution according to the qualifications of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Academic Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Professional Only</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Academic and professional</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 reveals that (14%) of the respondents in the research sample possess professional qualification only. The contents of teaching diplomas and certificates are more appropriate for teaching primary school children (Griessel, Louw & Swart, 1993: 71). Continuous personal development assists educators to keep pace with the changes in knowledge, advancement of technology and increasing demands imposed on them (Milton, 1991: 20).

Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents possess academic and professional qualifications. The quality of education depends, to a large extent on the quality of the educator. With adequate professional and academic qualifications educators will be able to promote efficiency in the classroom. Educators in possession of academic (degrees) and professional (educational diplomas) qualifications are perceived as better qualified for the teaching profession than the ones with only diplomas and or certificates (Naidoo, 2001: 96). The more empowered and qualified educators are, the easier it will most probably be to identify and assist learner drug abusers.

One of the requirements to be an effective educator is to develop oneself to one’s highest potential, both academically and professionally (Capel, Leask & Turner, 1995: 7).
4.2.5 Phases taught

Table 5: Frequency distribution according to the phases taught by respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASES</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 General Education and Training Grades 7, 8, 9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Further Education and Training</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency table (Table 5) reflects that all respondents teach in grades 7 to 12. This is an expected finding because the researcher intended focusing on the substance abuse on the secondary school learner.

4.2.6 Average number of learners in class

Table 6: Frequency distribution according to the average number of learners in classes of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO OF LEARNERS</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 20-30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 31-40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 41-50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 51-60</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The educator-learner ratio according to the PPN (Post Provisioning Norm) for October 2005 was 1:37 (ELRC, 2005: 2). The frequency table (Table 6) reveals that (60%) of respondents have class sizes of 41 or more learners. This is probably due to the practical implementation of the PPN, where time spent on administrative and management tasks by the head of department, deputy principal and principal is not taken into account in the drawing up of the PPN formula.

Large class sizes will probably make it difficult for the teacher to identify learners who use drugs, thus causing the problem to intensify.

4.2.7 Types of school

Table 7: Frequency distribution according to the types of school of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SCHOOL</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Private School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Public School</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The large percentage of respondents (100%) in the research sample indicated that they taught at a public school. This is an expected finding because the geographical area (eThekwini Region/Pinetown District) has more public schools than private school. Public schools will probably have more learners in the various classes than private school. Large class sizes impact on the educator’s ability to identify and assist learners with drug problems.
4.2.8 School Post

Table 8: Frequency distribution according to posts held by experience of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POST</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Deputy Principal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Head of Department(H.O.D)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Educator/Teacher</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 confirms that the majority (88%) of the respondents are level one educator. This is consistent with the composition of educators in most schools. Generally level one educator comprises a little more than seventy percent of the teaching personnel (DOE, 2002:2-8). Level one educator is more likely to be affected by increased workload due to bigger class sizes and more teaching responsibilities. This will affect their abilities in identifying and assisting drug abusing learners.

4.2.9 Location of school

Table 9: Frequency distribution according to the location of schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION OF SCHOOL</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Rural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Urban</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Peri-Urban</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most schools (94%) according to the frequency table (Table 9) are located in urban areas. This is expected finding because the area identified for the research (eThekweni Region/Pinetown District consists of urban and (6%) peri-urban areas.

4.2.10. Substance abuse policy

Table 10: Frequency distribution indicating whether schools where respondents teach, have a substance abuse policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOES SCHOOL HAVE A SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY?</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  YES</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  NO</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  UNCERTAIN</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency table (Table 10) indicates that (14%) of the respondents were uncertain whether their school has a substance abuse policy. It is evident that many schools may not have a formal policy on drug abuse at schools. School have to draw up their own policy according to the South African School’s Act, Act 84 of 1996 (Bruton & Associates, 2003: 68). This finding is a matter of grave concern because if educators are not exposed to the policy they may be ill equipped to identify and assist learners who abuse substances. According to the department of education, all school policies should be displayed in suitable places, e.g. the school foyer or staff room, and these should be readily available to educators, parents and learners (DOE, 2001: 15).
### 4.2.11. Physical development

#### Table 11  Frequency distribution according to the effect of substance abuse on their physical development of the secondary school learner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>The use of drugs (e.g. alcohol, dagga) by the secondary school learner:</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Affects the appetite (e.g. learner does not eat).</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Damage the lungs (e.g. experience respiratory problems like bronchitis).</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Causes impaired co-ordination (e.g. staggering movement).</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Contributes to heart damage (e.g. suffers from increased blood pressure)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Causes cancer (e.g. mouth, throat, lungs).</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Results in physical dependence (e.g. has to smoke cannabis for energy).</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Retards physical growth (e.g. suppresses The user’s appetite).</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Slurs the learner’s speech (e.g. does not talk clearly).</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Results in brain damage (e.g. brain does Not get essential vitamins and minerals).</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Weakens the body’s immune system (e.g. becomes prone to pneumonia).</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The use of drugs by secondary school learners, amongst other factors, can affect their physical development (cf. 2.4.1). According to the frequency distribution of responses in Table 11, the majority of respondents shared the thought that substance abuse affects the physical development of the learner in the secondary school. The above finding is substantiated by the responses to the following questions in Table 11.

**Appetite (2.1.)**

The majority of respondents (60%) indicated that drug use affects the appetite. The loss of appetite results in the secondary school learner not eating properly. This may result in inadequate nutrition which may interfere with the learner’s physical growth. Papalia and Olds (1992: 40) state that the secondary school learner usually has a very good appetite and they need to eat well because:

- Their play demands energy.
- Energy and protein is needed to grow.
- Food is needed to stay alive.

Poor eating habits causes slow growth and the learner does not have the energy to play and stay alert in school.

Drug abuse interferes with the absorption of nourishing foods and robs the body of essential vitamins and minerals (cf. 2.4.1.) which may lead to malnutrition and ill-health.

**Damage to lungs (2.2)**

The lungs refer to the pair of respiratory organs that bring the air into contact with the blood in humans. The function of the lungs is to supply oxygenated blood to the body via the heart. The secondary learner should be honing new skills such as playing soccer, volleyball, cricket, baseball, cycling and swimming. These skills require
energy and exertion and this in turn requires good, healthy lungs to supply oxygenated blood to the body.

The majority of the respondents (80%) confirmed that smoking cannabis damages the lungs. Continued smoking causes the breakdown of lung tissue and clogging of the air sacs, thus affecting lung power, causing the learner to become less active and hampering his athletic and sport performance.

**Co-ordination (2.3.)**

Co-ordination is the harmonious interaction of various parts of the body or the harmonious interaction of complex bodily movements to produce a successful pleasing result. Co-ordination is seen as any hand-eye, arm-eye and foot-eye activity (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 52).

Alcohol consumption decreases reaction time and affects hand-eye, foot-eye and arm-eye co-ordination resulting in difficulty in reading/writing and playing sport. Drug use often results in lack of co-ordination leading to clumsiness. This was confirmed by more that (80%) of the respondents in the research sample.

**Heart damage (2.4.)**

The larger percentage of respondents (70%) confirmed that smoking dagga can lead to heart damage. The function of the heart is to pump oxygenated blood to all parts of the body. The secondary school learner needs a strong heart to remain active physically and to progressively master physical skills (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994: 109). The learners in this phase normally enjoy games that utilize physical strength and vitality. A weak heart will not enable the learner to exert himself in such activities.

**Drug use causes cancer (2.5.)**

Cancer refers to a malignant tumor or growth that spreads indefinitely and tends to recur when removed. Lung, esophagus, bladder, pancreatic and kidney cancer have been found to be more prevalent in smokers than non smokers. Smoking exposes the
secondary school learner to various types of cancers and may thus prevent him from leading a healthy, happy life (cf. 2.4.1).

The respondents that participated in the research agreed the drugs use causes cancer. Smoking drugs such as dagga, cigarettes and opium causes cancer of the mouth, throat, larynx, esophagus, bladder, pancreas and kidney (cf. 2.4.1).

**Physical dependence (2.6.)**

Physical independence refers to the state when the user relies more and more on the substance to function and to service. The drug user cannot function without the drug and relies on the drug to help him get through the day. When he stops using drug, he suffers withdrawal systems such as delirium tremens or shaking (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 120). Most respondents (44%) agreed that drugs users became physical dependent on drugs.

**Retardation of physical growth (2.7)**

The majority of respondents (70%) in the research sample agreed that the use of drug retard the learner’s physical growth. Normal growth is important for the secondary school learner because (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994: 104):

- His height and mass needs to increase slowly and evenly.
- The proportion of his body needs to change to take on a more adult-like appearance.
- His brain needs to reach adult size and mass.
- His secondary sexual features need to manifest themselves.

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), substance found in dagga, attaches itself to fatty tissue such as the brain resulting in the retardation of physical growth and development (cf. 2.4.1).
**Slurred speech (2.8.)**

The learner whose speech is slurred and who consequently experience communication difficulties will have problems in making him understood. Ninety percent of the respondent (80%) agreed that alcohol consumption slurs the learner’s speech resulting in him experiencing reading and communication difficulties (cf. 2.4.1).

**Brain damage (2.9.)**

More than eighty percent (70%) of the respondents indicated that drug abuse causes brain damage. All sensations and all thoughts emanate from the brain (Allen, 1993: 134). A learner whose brain is damaged will not be able to think or sense efficiently. In order for the brain to work effectively, it needs proper nutrition to reach its optimum development (cf. 2.4.1.). Substance abuse (e.g. dagga, alcohol) robs the body of essential vitamins and minerals preventing the brain from reaching optimum size and mass (cf. 2.4.1.).

**Immune system (2.10)**

The majority of respondents (52%) affirmed that drugs abuse weakens the immune system. Excessive alcohol intake breaks down the vitamin B complex in the body, weakening the immune system and making it easier for infections to set in (cf. 2.4.1.). A weakened immune system will result in learner illness and absenteeism. In subjects such as mathematics and physical science, missing explanations that form the foundation for later work, might lead to poor performance in these subjects.
4.2.12  Cognitive development

Table 12: Frequency distribution according to the effect of substance abuse on the cognitive development of the secondary school learner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The use of drugs by secondary school learner:</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Inhibits the thinking processes (e.g. experiences difficulty in problem solving).</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Affects the memory (e.g. cannot recall learned material for tests/exams)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Impairs concentration (e.g. cannot pay attention in class).</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Weakens the ability to learn (e.g. finds difficulty in learning concepts)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Results in a lack of interest in school (e.g. is often absent).</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Makes it difficult to cope with school work (e.g. does not do homework).</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Retards scholastic progress (e.g. experiences falling grades).</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8 Impacts on his ability to follow instructions (e.g. may have a limited vocabulary).</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9 Affects good judgement (e.g. making incorrect decisions).</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10 Causes him to assign incorrect meaning to sensations (e.g. may be easily provoked).</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cognitive development refers to the continuous and cumulative development of the intellect and proceeds at the individual’s own tempo (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 39). According to the frequency table (Table 12) the majority of respondents shared the thought that the cognitive development of the secondary school learner is affected by the abuse of substances.

The above is substantiated by the responses to the following questions in Table 12.

**Thinking process (3.1)**

Thinking is regarded as a cognitive act of meaning attribution whereby the learner attributes meaning to situations he is involved in (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994: 48). Being a cognitive act, thinking is dependent on the effective functioning of the brain. The abuse of substance by secondary school learner hampers the effective functioning of the brain, thus interfering with the learner’s ability to think.

**Memory (3.2)**

(80%) of the respondents in the research sample confirmed that drug abuse affects the secondary school learner’s memory. Memory is the cognitive ability that enables a learner to remember and recall what he has learnt for use. Dagga smoking may result in a loss of short term memory, affecting the learner’s ability to recall learned material (cf .2. 4.2).

**Concentration (3.3)**

Concentration is the focusing of one’s attention on mental ability. Concentration by secondary school learner conceive images of objects, seeing similarities, differences and relationships between things and giving names to objects in his environment (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 41). Concentration in class enables
the learner to focus on the subject matter discussed by the teacher thus assisting in his academic progress.

The majority of respondents (82%) confirmed that drug use by the secondary school learner impairs concentration and consequently his ability to understand concepts in class (cf. 2.4.2).

**Ability to learn (3.4)**

The larger percentage of respondents (86%) in the research sample affirmed that drug use by the learner weakens the ability to learn. Learning is the gaining of knowledge or skill by study, experience or being taught. Dagga smoking may impair the ability to learn (cf. 2.4.2), thus affecting his assimilation and application of knowledge. (cf. 2.4.2).

**Interest in school (3.5)**

The majority of respondents (90%) indicated that drug use by the learner results in a lack of interest in school. Possible reasons for the drug users losing interest in school are, *inter alia*, the following:

- A drug user lacks the self discipline necessary to attend school regularly, complete homework/schoolwork or to learn (cf. 2.4.2).
- Substance abusers often absent themselves from school because of illness, consequently performing poorly in assessments.

Substance abuse erodes the self discipline necessary for learning (cf. 2.4.2.) Constant reprimanding by the educator because of poor attendance and schoolwork intensifies the learner’s apathy towards school.
Schoolwork (3.6; 3.7.)

More than seventy percent of the respondents (76%) agreed that the use of drugs makes it difficult for the learner to cope with the schoolwork because of the following:

- He may not understand concepts and may therefore apply them incorrectly.
- He may experience difficulty in attaining skills taught.
- He may perform poorly in assessments.

The abuse of substances by the learner results in irregular attendance and a poor attention span. This will impact negatively on the learner’s ability to cope with schoolwork which will then adversely affect the learner’s scholastic progress.

Judgement (3.8.)

Judgement refers to good sense. The learner needs to weigh up the consequences before making decisions. Decision based on bad judgement may create problems with educators, family members and friends.

Most respondents (58%) agreed that drug use affects good judgement. The learner who abuses substances finds it difficult to be cautious and to use good judgement to protect himself. The learner may resort to violence without much provocation. Learners find it more difficult to think clearly because the more they drink, the more slowly their brain works and this will impact on good judgement (cf. 2.2.4.).

Ability to follow instruction (3.9.)

The majority of respondents (46%) agreed that the use of drugs by secondary school learner causes the assigning of incorrect meanings to sensations. Sensations refers to
the consciousness of perceiving or seeming to perceive some state or condition of one’s body or its parts or senses or of one’s mind or its emotions. If the educator reprimands the learner for whatever reason the learner may:

- Become hostile and rebellious.
- Begin to dislike school and play truant.
- Become disinterested in school.

In this case the learner probably feels that the educator is targeting him or does not like him (assigning incorrect meaning). The abuse of substances results in the learner assigning different meanings to the sensations that he perceives and this will impact on his actions. He may misunderstood sensations emanating from fellow learners and may be easily provoked.
### 4.2.13 Affective Development

Table 13: Frequency distribution according to the effect of substance abuse by secondary school learners on their affective development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The use of drugs by secondary School learner:</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Weakens the learner’s inhibitions (e.g. he displays irresponsible sexual behaviour).</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Causes unacceptable behaviour (e.g. he steals at school).</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Dulls the learner’s conscience (e.g. he experiences no guilt feelings after wrong doing).</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Weakens feelings (e.g. his ability to display sympathy).</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Makes him self fearful of people (e.g. he may wet his bed).</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Causes rapid mood changes (he is calm and suddenly becomes aggressive).</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Blunts his emotions (e.g. he may not display sympathy).</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Leads to emotional outbursts (e.g. he cannot control himself).</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 Causes aggressive behaviour (e.g. he is always involved in fights).</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10 causes depression (e.g. the learner cannot control unpleasant emotions).</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Affective development is concerned with those aspects pertaining to emotions, feelings, passions, moods, sentiments and whims. The secondary school learner’s emotions are easily aroused and reaction may take the form of temper tantrums, real fears and unreasonable manifestations of jealousy. The more independent the learner becomes the easier it will be to frighten, annoy, anger and frustrate him (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 41).

The frequency distribution Table 13 indicates that the majority of respondents shared the though that the affective development of the secondary school learner is affected by the abuse of substances.

The findings are substantiated by the responses to the following questions in Table 13.

**Inhibitions (4.1)**

More than (50%) of the respondents indicated that the use of drugs by the secondary school learner weakens his inhibitions whilst a (40%) were uncertain, possibly because they were unfamiliar with the concept “inhibitions”. An inhibition refers to a restraint on the direct expression of an instinct. (Allen, 1993: 609).

The uses of substance cause the learner to experience difficulty in keeping his instincts in check thus disturbing the stable class and school environment and interrupting the educational process.

Substance abuse can weaken the learner’s inhibitions, dull common senses and bring out sexually aggressive behaviour (cf. 2.4.2.)

**Behaviour (4.2)**

Behaviour refers to the manner and way one conducts oneself. It also refers to the manner in which one treats others (Allen, 1993: 98)

The secondary school learner is expected to:

- Behave in a socially acceptable manner.
Co-operate and interact well with others.

Respect other learner’s property.

The use of substances causes the learner to exceed the bounds of acceptable behaviour resulting in chaos and disruption in class and in schooling (cf. 2.3.4.).

Most respondents (80%) agreed that drug abuse gave rise to unacceptable behaviour (cf. 2.4.2.)

**Conscience (4.3)**

The majority of respondents (70%) said that the use of drugs dull the secondary learner’s conscience. Conscience is the fault of the mind which dictates the moral quality of one’s action or behaviour. Conscience is an inherent, essentially human ability that enables a person to distinguish between that which is right, good and proper and that which is wrong, evil and improper (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994: 127-128).

Substance abuse affects the learner’s inner moral sense and conscience (cf. 2.4.3.). When under the influence of drugs the learner often acts without conscience i.e. he experiences difficulty distinguishing between what is good and what is bad.

**Feelings (4.4.)**

A feeling is a modality of the effective life and is a natural and spontaneous reaction to reality in an immediate positive or negative way. It is an inner condition excited by an external stimulus. When feelings activate a person to such an extent that the person is overwhelmed by it, it becomes an emotion (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990: 92). More than (56%) of the respondents acknowledged that substance abuse weakens the learner’s feelings. Learners sometimes attempt to hide feelings and emotions by abusing substances. However, when the effects of the substances wear off, the feeling and emotions remain (cf. 2.4.2.).
Fear of people (4.5.)

More than (40%) of the respondents in the research sample said that the use of drugs makes the secondary school learner fearful of people. More than (40%), were uncertain. This may be due to the fact that this may not have been one of the more prevalent reactions of drug use that the respondents observed in learners. Fear is a natural response to real or imagined danger. Paranoia is a mental disorder characterized by delusions of persecution. A paranoid person has an abnormal tendency to suspect and mistrust others. The secondary school learner needs the comfort and support of trusted adults to provide security (Strydom, 1997: 5).

Dagga use has been noted for making the users paranoid. The learner may become suspicious and fearful of people around him causing him to bed-wet, stammer, be anxious boast and engage in noisy behaviour which is all symptoms of suppressed fear (cf. 2.4.2.). This makes it very difficult for learner to act and behave normally in class and in school.

Mood Changes (4.6.)

The majority of the respondent (70%) agreed that drug use causes mood changes in the secondary school learner. A mood is an affective experience which alternates between cheerfulness and despondency. Moods can be positive, negative or in between these two extremes. The normal secondary school learner rarely experiences negative moods (Allen, 19993: 148). If the learner experience rapid mood changes he will not be able to:

- Concentration in class.
- Follow the instructions of the educator.
- Participate meaningfully in class discussion.

Alcohol intake may make the learner talkative and friendly or aggressive and angry (cf.2.4.2.).
Emotions (4.7; 4.8)

Emotions refer to strong mental or instinctive feelings such as love of fear. An outburst is an explosion of love or fear explained in words. Drugs blunt the learner’s emotions (Shatz, 2004a: 4). He experiences problems expressing, controlling, suppressing or hiding his emotions when compared to a learner not abusing drug. He becomes prone to emotional outbursts. The learner may quickly become angry, stubborn or fly into a rage without much provocation (cf. 2.4.2.) The larger percentage of respondents (70%) confirmed that drugs blunt the learner’s emotions whilst most respondents (70%) agreed that drug use by the learner may lead to emotional outbursts.

Aggressive behaviour (4.9.)

Aggressive behaviour is openly hostile and self-assertive behaviour directed towards another person or object. The secondary school learner who abuses drug will have a tendency to exhibit the following aggressive criminal behaviour (Bezuidenhout, 2004: 124):

- Mugging people in the street, e.g. bag snatching.
- Stealing from family members and friends.

More than (80%) of the respondents in the research sample said that the use of drugs causes aggressive behaviour.

Depression (4.10.)

A large percentage of the respondents (56%) acknowledge that drug abuse causes depression in secondary school learners. Depression refers to a mood of hopelessness and a feeling of inadequacy. This disorder involves an inability to have fun, to concentrate and show normal emotional reactions. Depressed learners are often tired,
extremely active or inactive. The secondary school learner may, *inter alia* (Papalia & Olds, 1992: 297):

- Sleep too much or too little
- Start performing poorly in school
- Feel overwhelmingly guilty.
- Complain of physical ailments.

Learners who attempt to abuse drugs to hide their anger, frustration, disappointment and sadness may end up magnifying the mood of their underlying mental state, causing them to become depressed (cf. 2.4.2).

### 4.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter an attempt was made to give some order to the range of information provided by the respondents in their answers to the questions in the questionnaire.

Some of the data were of a demographic nature which enabled the researcher to construct a broad profile of the sample selected for this investigation.

Data collection regarding the substance abuse by secondary learner was organized in frequency distribution tables to simply statistical analysis. The responses to the questions were interpreted and the findings discussed.

The last chapter of this study will consist of a summary, findings and certain recommendations.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

5.2. SUMMARY

5.2.1. Statement of the problem
5.2.2. Literature review
5.2.3. Planning of the empirical research
5.2.4. Presentation and analysis of research data
5.2.5. Aims of the study

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

5.3.1. Findings from literature review
5.3.2. Findings from empirical study

5.4. RECOMMENDATION

5.4.1. Policy on drug/substance abuse
   (1) Motivation
   (2) Recommendation

5.4.2. Workshop
   (1) Motivation
   (2) Recommendation

5.4.3. Further research
   (1) Motivation
   (2) Recommendation

5.5. CRITICISM

5.6. FINAL REMARK
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.5 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters the effect of substance abuse on the physical, cognitive and affective development of the learner in secondary school was investigated by means of literature review and an empirical study. In this final chapter a summary of the previous chapters will be given. This will be followed by findings from the literature and empirical research, recommendations, criticism that emanated from the study and a final remark.

5.1 SUMMARY

5.1.1 Statement of the problem

In essence this study investigated educator’s perception of substance abuse by secondary school learners. Secondary school learners are increasing coming into contact with drugs or other habit-forming substances (e.g. alcohol, dagga, sugars, and tic) and the problem of drug abuse is growing in schools. Learners who abuse substance often experience difficulty in establishing their own identity, forming healthy relationships, developing skills and gaining physical and emotional independence. Substance abuse affects the self-actualization of the secondary school learner. Self-actualization implies the learner’s effort to realize all his potentials, which includes every area of manual skills, cognitive ability, affective experience and moral awareness.
5.2.2 Literature review

Risk taking should be regarded as a normal activity for the secondary school learner. He needs to take risks in order to develop into mature, non-risk taking adult. One of the risks he might take is experimenting with drugs. Substance abuse affects the learner’s total development causing him to continue with his immature behaviour into adulthood.

The goal of formal education is to mould the learner into responsible and accountable person and to equip him with the necessary skills to take his rightful place as a contributing adult member of society. The learner continues on his path to adulthood. As time progresses adult educational assistance decreases, however, the assistance, guidance and support of the adult during these crucial years must not be compromised.

There are many reasons why the secondary learner abuses substance, some of which are:

- Drugs help the learner escape from his problems.
- The learner wants to rebel against his parents.
- The learner may want to take control.
- He wants to fit in and feel a part of a group.

The following are some signs and symptoms displayed by the secondary school learner who abuses drugs:

- He may engage in suspicious behaviour
- The learner experiences deterioration in scholastic performance.
- He may suffer from a perpetually runny nose or may display skin abrasions.
- The learner experience deterioration in scholastic performance.
The literature study revealed that substance abuse affected the physical psychological (cognitive and affective), social and normative development of the secondary school learner. Some of these effects can be listed here under as:

- Drug use can make the learner bold and aggressive.
- Substance abuse affects the learner’s good judgement.
- Alcohol intake can make the learner talkative and friendly or aggressive and angry.
- The learner may lie, cheat or steal to maintain his substance abusing habit.
- Drug abuse interferes with an adequate nutrient supply to the brain and may result in brain damage.
- Substance abusing learners may become moody and depresses and this may cause strain on all relationships.
- Substance abuse may lead to stress and anxiety which may cause the learner to increase the substance dosage to cope with the situation.
- Smoking causes various respiratory problems and diseases e.g. cancer of the mouth.

Educators need to understand why learner’s abuse substances and educators need to be empowered with strategies of identifying, assisting, guiding and helping learners to seek assistance from other professional and organizations.

5.2.3. **Planning of the empirical research**

In this study, a questionnaire, constructed by the researcher, was utilized as a research instrument to obtain data concerning the research problem. The questionnaire was administered to educators in secondary schools in the eThekwini Region (Pinetown District). The researcher chose to obtain the required information directly from the said educators. Situation like this exists, where the secondary schools targeted for the research are dispersed in the district, the most appropriate
source of obtaining data questionnaire. The questionnaire is easily adapted to a variety of situations and the information could, time-wise and cost-wise, be more easily and efficiently obtained.

The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding educator’s perceptions concerning the effect of substance abuse on the development of the secondary school learner. The questions were formulated to establish the effect of substance abuse on the secondary school learner’s:

- Physical development
- Cognitive development.
- Affective development.

5.2.4 **Presentation and analysis of research data**

In chapter four the data which was collected from the completed questionnaire was presented in frequency tables. The simplest and appropriate method to organize the data for this study was to calculate the number of responses to each question according to the codes assigned to the questions and then transforming them to frequency distribution tables, which indicate by means of percentages the number of times each code was attained. Frequency distributions show the most and least frequently occurring responses and are useful in analyzing and interpreting the data obtained. The data comprised biographical information and the effect of substance abuse on the physical, cognitive and affective development of the secondary school learner.

5.2.5 **Aims of the study**

The course of the study was determined by the specific aim (cf. 1.6.) formulated by the researcher. These aims were realized through a literature review, together with the empirical study comprising a self-structured questionnaire. On the bases of some of the significant findings, certain recommendations will follow.
5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

5.3.1. Findings from the literature review

It was found that the physical, psychological (cognitive and affective), social and normative development of the secondary school learner was adversely affected by the abuse of substance (cf. 2.4.). The following are some significant findings from the literature review:

- Continued smoking cause’s breakdown of lung tissues and clogging of air sacs. This affects lung power and the secondary school learner will consequently become less active and his athletic and sport performance will be inhibited. He will suffer from an increased heartbeat, poor blood circulation and shortness of breath, making it difficult for him to engage in activities that the learner of his age group engages in (cf. 2.4.1).

- The use of addictive substance over a long period of time may impair the memory and problem solving abilities of the learner. This has serious consequences on scholastic and other academic achievement as well as appropriate life decisions that have to be made (cf. 2.4.2).

- Substance abuse robs the body of essential vitamins and minerals and interferes with the digestion of food causing the learner to suffer from malnutrition, which may prevent him from developing to his maximum height and mass. The brain may not get enough essential nutrients required for the development resulting in the learner’s brain not reaching adult size and mass as expected in the secondary school phase. This will hamper the learner’s learning abilities at school (cf. 2.4.1).

- Some substances abusing learners exhibit unacceptable behaviour such as mugging, stealing, handbag snatching and violence to acquire money to satisfy and maintain their habit whilst other may resort to prostitution. This brings them into contact with the law and they may end up suffering the ire of
other adults, family members and educators causing them to withdraw and look for more sympathetic company elsewhere. There is thus a great possibility that the sympathetic company that he seeks will not give him the guidance and assistance that he requires (cf. 2.4.30).

- Substance abuse can weaken a learner’s inhibitions, dull common senses, bring out sexually aggressive behaviour and make the learner more ego-centric. Substance abuse prevents the learner from acquiring skills like cooperation and communication to resolve his differences with others and might encourage him to resort to force and violence to resolve his problem or to relieve him of his frustrations (cf. 2.4.20).

- Substance abuse increases the likelihood of learners engaging in risky behaviour such as fighting and carrying a weapon. This type of risky behaviour puts learners in conflict situations with their educators, parents, friends, peers and the law. The loss of a healthy relationship with the educator implies that the learner may look for another adult to gain gradual emancipation from his parents. The morals value of this adult may be suspect leading to greater complications (cf. 2.4.3).

- Substance abuse is associated with crime and misconduct that disrupts the maintenance of an orderly and safe school atmosphere conducive to learning. Learners who abuse substance create a climate of apathy, disruption and disrespect for others. They transform schools into a market place for dope deals, which is associated with the destruction of school property and classroom disorder (cf. 2.4.4).

5.3.2. **Findings from the empirical study**

The following are some of the significant findings from the empirical study:

- The larger percentage of respondents (70%) confirmed that smoking dagga can lead to heart damage. The secondary school learner needs a strong heart to remain active physical and to progressively master physical skills. The
learner in this phase normally enjoys games that utilize physical strength and vitality. A weak heart will not enable the learner to exert himself in such activities (cf. 4.2.11).

- The majority of the respondents (60%) said that drug use by secondary school learners, inhibits the thinking process. The abuse of substances by secondary school learner hampers the effective functioning of the brain, thus interfering with the learner’s ability to think (cf. 4.2.12).

- The majority of respondents (90%) indicated that drug use by learner results in a lack of interest in school. A drug user lacks the self-discipline necessary to attend school regularly, complete homework/schoolwork or to learn. Substance abuser often absent themselves from school because of illness, consequently performing poorly in assessments. Substance abuse erodes the self-discipline necessary for learning. Constant reprimanding by the educator because of poor attendance and schoolwork intensifies the learner’s apathy towards school (cf. 4.2.12).

- The majority of respondents (82%) confirmed that drug use by the secondary school learner impairs concentration and consequently his ability to understand concepts in class (cf. 4.2.12).

- The majority of respondents (70%) agreed that drug use causes mood changes in secondary school learner. The normal secondary school learner rarely experiences negative moods. If the learner experiences rapid mood changes, he will find difficulty to concentrate in class, follow instructions of the educator or participate meaningfully in class discussion (cf. 4.2.13).

- More than (80%) of the respondents in the research sample said that the use of drugs causes aggressive behaviour. The secondary school learner who abuses drugs will probably have a tendency to mug people in the street, break into houses or steal from family members (cf. 4.2. 13).
5.4 RECOMMENDATION

5.4.1 Policy on drug/substance abuse

(1) Motivation

Among secondary school learners, twenty percent admits to having used drugs and almost nineteen percent are still using them (Theunissen, 2004:2).

Although a well researched national policy concerning drugs, namely, the “National Drug Master Plan” (Harvey, 1999: 1) is in existence, it does not have the desired effect because not enough human and financial resources are spent on the supervision, monitoring and implementation of this policy. This ties up with Jansen’s assertion that policy making in South Africa is largely symbolic and that despite the production of thousands of pages of formal policy, there is little change in school and classroom practice (Jansen, 2002: 199-215). The Department of Education’s formal policy on the use of drugs in schools is impractical. According to the South African School Act, Act No. 84 of 1996 (Brunton & Associates, 2003: 51), it is the responsibility of the school governing body to develop and implement a policy concerning the use of drugs in the school. Many governing bodies find great difficulty completing the duties assigned to them by the South African School’s Act or alternatively may be incapable of doing so, even after they are empowered. It is also suggested that major role players like Sanca, health care and the medical professionals, the South African Police Service and the government Department of Health be involved in the developing and implementation of drug policies for the school.

Although many schools incorporate rules relating to the use of drugs in their code of conduct for the learners, there is an urgent need for a formal drug policy for schools because of the alarming increase of drug use among children (cf. 1.2).
Van der Burgh (Le Roux, 2000: 93) reports that in the research group that he investigated, 94% of secondary school boys had already experimented with alcohol.

(2) **Recommendation**

The recommendations are that:

- The Department of Education must develop a practical formal policy on the use of drugs in schools in collaboration with Sanca, the National Department of Health, the Police Service and other relevant stakeholders.
- Sufficient human and financial resources must be made available by the Department of Education for the training, supervision and monitoring of the drug policy in all schools.
- Where the Department lacks the necessary resources, support must be sought from the government, international organizations and the private sector.
- The drug policy for schools must be well researched and must be clear and concise directives as to what is expected from the regions, districts, circuits and schools. The drug policy must include, *inter alia*, the following:
  - Rules about the use of legal drugs during school hours and beyond, e.g. prescribed medication.
  - Rules about the possession of drugs in school.
  - Procedures for drug related offences.
  - A dependency management plan.
  - Factors influencing drug use.
  - Progressive nature of drug use.
  - The role of the educator.
  - Identification of drug abusers.
  - Prevention strategies.
  - List of organizations that can help e.g. Sanca.
5.4.2. **Workshops**

(1) **Motivation**

Statistics paints a gloomy picture of the use of drugs amongst the school going children in South Africa (cf. 1.2.). The use of legal drugs is taking on epidemic proportions among the South African youth. Research has found that learners in the secondary school have become users for a variety of reasons, which the following seem to be the most important (cf. 2.2):

- Peer pressure, because the learner wants to “fit in” and become part of the group.
- Parents who are drug users and are seen as exemplary figures by their children.
- Single parent families where an authority figure is absent.
- Poor family relationships with uninvolved parents.

The educator must be able to, amongst others:

- Identify learners who abuse substances.
- Be aware of the reasons learner’s abuse substances.
- Apply intervention strategies in order to assist the learner.

(2) **Recommendation**

The recommendation is that the Department of Education in collaboration with teacher unions, principal forums, school management teams, education organizations and Sanca must conduct workshops for the educators in which the following aspects concerning drug abuse, amongst other, will receive attention:

- Reasons learners use drug.
• How to identify learners who are drug abusers.
• Procedures to follow when a learner is suspected of being a drug user.
• How to interact with the learner who is a drug user.
• Knowledge of treatment methods of drug abuse.
• Names of organizations and contact persons that can help.
• The actual content to be covered in class during the Life Orientation lesson.

Parents can be invited to attend the workshops for educators on a voluntary basis and asked to cover their share of the costs.

5.4.3.  FURTHER RESEARCH

(1)  Motivation

While the use of drugs has increased dramatically over the past years, the information collected concerning the use of drugs in the secondary school may still be incomplete in many aspects. Some reasons for the drug abuse amongst secondary school learner’s mat not have been discovered as yet. The effects drug use has on the physical, cognitive and affective development of the learner in secondary school may not be comprehensive. With the introduction of new and modified drugs, the possibility exists that the symptoms and the effect of a new drug may differ from the already known ones.

(2)  Recommendation

The recommendation is that further research of a quantitative and qualitative nature must be undertaken into the effect of drugs on the development of the secondary school learner. Research needs to be done to assist educators in the recognition of changed or new symptoms of the drug because new or altered drugs are introduced
into the drug market at fairly regular intervals. New or altered drugs may also have a different effect on the development of the learner.

5.5. CRITICISM

- The investigation was limited to school in the eThekweni Region (Pinetown District). If the investigation included a wider area, the results may have been different.
- The research sample comprised educators only. The inclusion of parents and learners would have rendered a broader perspective.

5.6. FINAL REMARK

The findings in this study highlighted some of the detrimental effects that the use of drugs may have on the development of the secondary school learner. It is hoped that the recommendations that were formulated could be of use in eliminating the negative effects the use of drugs has on learners in school. It is further trusted that this study will be useful to all educators in the identification of and assistance to substance abusers in school.
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