

# Addiction and Substance Abuse in Black and Coloured Communities in the Western Cape, South Africa

Willy Ndabihawenimana<sup>1</sup>, Mussa Urio Nderingo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Academic Solution Tutorial Center, Cape Town, South Africa*

<sup>2</sup> *University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa*

## ABSTRACT

Substance abuse devastates Western Cape's black and coloured communities, demanding urgent community-based interventions.

Substance abuse is a growing crisis among black and coloured communities in the Western Cape, driven by poverty, unemployment, broken families, and limited access to education and healthcare. This study investigated the patterns, causes, and effects of substance use in these communities and proposed targeted solutions.

A mixed-methods approach was used, involving 300 participants: 200 community members (aged 18–45), 50 healthcare/social workers, and 50 individuals in recovery. Stratified random sampling was used for residents in areas like Khayelitsha, Mitchells Plain, and Bonteheuwel, while purposive sampling was applied to professionals and recovering users. Data was gathered through structured questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions.

Findings showed that 68% of respondents were regularly exposed to drugs in their environment. Most users started using substances between the ages of 13 and 19. Methamphetamine ("tik"), alcohol, and cannabis were the most commonly used drugs. Substance abuse was linked to increased school dropouts, domestic violence, mental health issues, and community breakdown.

Recommendations include establishing culturally sensitive rehabilitation centers within communities, launching youth mentorship and outreach programs, and fostering collaboration between schools, clinics, and local leaders. Job creation and skills training initiatives must also be prioritised. Awareness campaigns through local media can help educate the public and reduce stigma around treatment.

**Keywords:** Drug prevention, township challenges, social interventions, youth addiction, youth risk