

**KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF UNIVERSITY OF  
VENDA RESIDENT STUDENTS REGARDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE,  
THOHOYANDOU, SOUTH AFRICA**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

The use of psychoactive substances causes significant health and social problems for the people who use them. Recent estimates are that in 2008, 155 to 250 million people of the world's population aged 15-64, used other psychoactive substances, such as cannabis, amphetamines, cocaine, opioids, and non-prescribed psychoactive prescription medication. Globally, cannabis is the most commonly used (129-190 million people), followed by amphetamine type stimulants, the cocaine and opioids.

This study seeks to determine the knowledge, attitude and practices of resident students of the University of Venda in Thohoyandou, Vhembe district, Limpopo Province of South Africa regarding substance abuse. The study design is cross sectional and it utilized a quantitative approach. A sample size of 333 students out of the 2036 of the entire student population resident in the halls of residence was used for the study. The sample of 333 students was drawn from the hostel superintendent's office log sheet which contained the list of the entire resident students. The use of systematic sampling method was employed in the selection of the sample. A 43 item closed ended questionnaire was administered on the subjects. The data was analysed descriptively using the SPSS version 20.

The result of the study revealed that most of the respondents have adequate knowledge as 214 (64.1%) were able to identify the drugs that can alter mood, 175 (52.6%) were able to identify drugs that can lead to lack of concentration, 204 (61.3%) knew way through which people use drug. However a good number of students lack adequate knowledge of the negative social consequences of engaging in drugs 154 (46.2%) and how engaging in drug use can affect a students aducation 155 (46.5%). Even though the students generally have good attitude towards issue of substance abuse majority of majority of male students 36.1% felt that the level of alcohol use among the University of Venda students is not a reason for concern while (32.4%) was nothing wrong in keeping an alcoholic as a friend. Regarding practices, 78.6% of the students that currently engage in substance use take alcohol, 36.8% of the students drink alcohol in the bar/shebeen while 29.6% drink in the hostel. Most of the students 70.3% take alcohol or use drugs in the evening. Recommendation include introduction of alcohol and drug awareness as a component of the orientation programme for the new students admitted on yearly basis