

**THE INFLUENCE OF MULTICULTURAL CONTACT IN THE ABUSE OF DRUGS
AND SUBSTANCES BY THE YOUTH AT MALAMULELE TOWNSHIP**

BY

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Mini-Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

OR TAMBO INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE AND POLICY STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

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2014

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ABSTRACT

The study was based on the influence of multicultural contact in the abuse of drugs and substances by youth at Malamulele Township. Malamulele is a Township predominantly occupied by Tsonga people. Apart from the Tsongas, there are also people coming from other countries like Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, China, India, Pakistan, Somalia and Nigeria who have their cultures. The availability of people from other countries at Malamulele Township makes contact of different cultures to occur. All these people come to Malamulele Township because of certain reasons like employment, poverty, wars while others are just running from law enforcers from their countries. Most of the people from other countries are unemployed and they increase a high rate of unemployment, poverty, development of new drugs and substances, crime, deaths and increase in number of school drop outs. The availability of people from other countries makes drugs and substances, easily accessible to youth, which increases the potential for substance misuse, and ultimately abuse.

The study followed a mixed methods approach by implementing both qualitative and quantitative research. Survey design was selected in order to gather a large bulk of accurate information easily. Purposive sampling method of non-probability sampling was used. The researcher used questionnaire to collect data. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 22.0 assisted in analyzing data. The researcher also used interviews as techniques for collecting data. Thematic analysis was used in analyzing data.

The major findings of the study are:

The study found out that majority of the respondents agreed with the idea that there are different cultural groups at Malamulele Township. The researcher found that many respondents believed that multicultural contact results in the abuse of drugs and substances and disrespect, and that abuse of drugs and substances is associated with risk of sexual behavior. The researcher also found out that drugs and substance abuse have consequences that followed and dangerous to youth. The findings revealed that support from family members and school and community campaigns have positive impact on youth while and that the availability of state treatment centres reduces drug dependency to youth. Support can assist youth who are already involved in abusing drugs and substances.

The recommendations of the study were:

The researcher recommend that the government of South Africa should recognize all cultures in the society or communities and making sure that they are taken into consideration. The researcher further indicated that effective boarder control should be enforced to reduce high number of illegal immigrants, which have an influence on the creation of new drugs and smuggling networks. The researcher also recommends that problem of drug and substance abuse should be prioritized and support is very important and there must be collaboration between all stake holders from all departments. The researcher also recommends that existing policies must be applicable all of them in order to deal with the problem of drug and substance abuse.