

## RECOVERY FROM SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG ZIMBABWEAN MEN: AN OCCUPATIONAL TRANSITION

Clement Nhunzvi<sup>1,2</sup>, Roshan Galvaan<sup>2</sup>, Liesl Peters<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe,* <sup>2</sup>*University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa*

**Background:** Substance abuse is a rising global problem, associated with medical, psychiatric, family, occupational, legal, political, financial and spiritual problems. Recovery is an important area of consideration in occupational therapy's quest to promoting health and well-being. However, an occupational perspective of recovery is still understudied.

### **Objectives:**

1. To determine the occupations that former substance abusers engaged in before and during recovery.
2. To explore how these occupations influenced and/or are influencing recovery.

**Method:** This narrative inquiry explored the journey of recovery from substance abuse among young adult Zimbabwean men. Three men were purposely selected to participate in in-depth narrative interviews about how their occupations and participation therein, influenced their recovery. Data was analysed using a narrative analysis, followed by analysis of narratives.

**Findings:** Explanatory stories and three super-ordinate themes illustrated how substance abuse was associated with both positive effects and negative consequences. The recovery process emerged as an ongoing occupational transition, influenced by occupational identity and involving changes in occupational participation, mainly in areas to do with productive living, spirituality and family responsibility.

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** Recovery from substance abuse can be conceptualized as an occupational transition. Ongoing participation in 'healthy' and meaningful occupations is a key factor in this process. Construction and or reconstruction of a positive occupational identity are also central to this occupational transition.