



Perceived Stress Effect and Socio-demographic Factors in Substance Use: A Study of Undergraduate Students in a South African University

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ABSTRACT The study examined the effects of stress, year of study, gender and race on substance use among university undergraduates in the North-West province of South Africa. Respondents were 318 (mean age = 1.48; SD = 0.50, female = 63.5%) undergraduate students in the North-West university of South Africa. Respondents completed the stress component of the Drug, Anxiety and Stress Test as well as the Drug Abuse Screening Test. Data were subjected to two-way ANOVA analyses. Results showed a between subject significant main effect of stress, $F(2,309) = 7.11$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .044$ and a between subject significant main effect of year of study, $F(3,310) = 5.08$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .047$ on substance use among university undergraduate students. Thus, the finding emphasized the importance of basic stress management training to undergraduate students, particularly in their first year to reduce the reliance on substance use as a way of mitigating academic stress.