

## **Abstract**

There is a paucity of academic studies that examine the complex and or multi-dimensional relationships between substance abuse and early sexual debut among street children of the Harare Central Business District. In this article, the child rights and child agency perspectives were adopted as conceptual frameworks in analysing the realities of these children. The substance abuse and early sexual debut among street children of the Harare Central Business District, illustrate agency of these children. The behaviours could be the only viable options for these children in a context of multiple constrains thus thin agency. Conversely, the behaviours could also be viewed as 'ambiguous agency.' The actions could also be seen as part of the selfdestructive agency. Drawing from a child rights concept, the early sexual debut and substance abuse of the street children illustrate huge child rights violations prevalent on the streets of the Harare Central Business District. The behaviours are inconsistent with the provisions of international, regional and local child rights laws, policies and programmes. The qualitative research methodology involving street ethnography was used to generate data for this study. The paper concludes by arguing for full implementation of child rights laws, policies and programmes in order to reduce risks associated with early sexual debut and substance abuse among street children.