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Among Cobbled streets and Magnolia trees: Exploring perceptions of drugs and drug use within the student community of Lund

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Supervisor: Mikael Klintman

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ABSTRACT

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Due to recent law changes, many municipalities are reviewing their crime prevention strategies. In Lund, narcotics is an area that requires further investigation. Contact with and information from the population is vital to plan effective preventative measures. This study contributes to filling a knowledge gap by bringing forward the perspectives of university students, who constitute a large part of the population. This explorative study aims to highlight students' experiences of the narcotics situation in their surroundings and how they relate to it. The student perspective is explored through semi-structured qualitative interviews with ten present students at Lund University. The study has mainly been data-driven and the theoretical framework was chosen based on the collected data. The study identifies themes that can be investigated further in future research. For example, the study finds that the students view addiction and certain drugs as impure, while other substances are normalized, and drugs are connected primarily to party contexts. Further, the study highlights several factors that the students believe form people's perception of and behavior concerning drugs. It also concludes that the student context is diverse and that multiple approaches should be used for preventative efforts targeted at students. The study exemplifies the importance of local knowledge for drug prevention.

Keywords: Narcotics, University students, Student life, Lund, Purity, Social norms

POPULAR SCIENCE SUMMARY

The drug market has a broad societal impact and affects both drug users and non-users. Besides individual social consequences and health effects, health budgets and social costs get strained, societies feel unsafe, and young people get recruited into criminality. Recent law changes increased the Swedish local authorities' responsibilities in dealing with this problem. Currently, many municipalities are gathering information and reviewing their preventative work. This study brings forward university students' perspectives on drugs, which can guide the future development of preventative measures in Lund. Students make up a large portion of the population in Lund, and their lifestyle commonly differs from other groups. Knowledge of the local context can help local bureaucrats and political leaders understand if there is a problem and what should be considered when confronting it.

Ten current students at Lund University were interviewed for this study. They bring forward a variety of thoughts and perspectives on drugs, which indicates when and where drugs are perceived to be used, by whom, what substances, how drugs and drug users are viewed, how the students themselves want to be perceived, what they see influence drug perceptions and usage in this specific context, and how drug usage possibly could be prevented. One finding is how different drugs are viewed as accepted or unaccepted. Cannabis is seen as common by most of the interviewees, and also more acceptable than other substances. Interestingly, some also view cocaine as more okay than other drugs. Another interesting finding is the combination of factors thought to shape people's perceptions of drugs, where social factors are highlighted as very important. Furthermore, information from personal experiences and friends' experiences are valued much higher than public information.

The study takes a broad approach and brings forward many perspectives and topics. This broadness shows that students live very different lives and meet people who think and act differently. The student context is diverse. Preventative measures must be designed with this in mind and adapted to varying behaviors and perceptions. Further research is needed to discover which groups would respond to different methods. This study does not point out specific groups of interest but raises relevant topics within the student context in Lund that can and should be further studied. Similar studies should also be conducted in other towns to increase the likelihood of effective local preventative measures.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The use of narcotics is a societal issue. According to the 2023 European Drug Report (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction,2023), it is likely that the drug market impacts everyone in some way. Besides direct effects for users such as health issues, reduced livelihood, social exclusion, stigmatization, and reduced well-being for people close to them (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.9), there are indirect effects such as health budgets and social costs getting strained, societies feeling unsafe, and young people getting recruited into criminality (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction,2023). Drug use leads to direct societal costs of, for instance, healthcare, the judicial system, social aid programs, indirect costs because of unemployment, and so on (The Public Health Agency,2022a). Further, immaterial costs are linked to the value of lost quality of life among users and people close to them. When including direct, indirect, and immaterial costs, drug use was estimated to have cost Swedish society SEK 38.5 billion in 2020 (The Public Health Agency,2022a). Undeniably, the problems of narcotics connect to complex policy issues.

On the Swedish municipal level, narcotics have recently come into focus because of a new law that came into force in July 2023 concerning municipalities' responsibility for crime prevention (SFS 2023:196). Among other things, the law states that municipalities should gather information to develop a situational picture of crime within the municipality, decide on preventative crime efforts, and coordinate these efforts. According to Brå, The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (2023), most municipalities because of this have a lot of work to do. It has been noticed that previous preventative measures have missed relevant connections between the problem and the measures taken, risking inefficiency. Municipalities must now gather knowledge about their local contexts to enable more efficient work (ibid).

The city of Lund is one of many municipalities that currently gathers information and reviews preventative efforts. One area that needs to be examined is narcotics (Flogstam,2023). In local media, Lund has been portrayed as a city where narcotics are flowing. In an article from January 2023 (Hjalmarsson & Strandberg,a), it is written that several actors take many drug-preventative measures, but drug use still seems to be rising. In another article, pupils in upper secondary school describe how everyone has a dealer on Snapchat and that drug experiences are being discussed openly with friends at school

(Hjalmarsson & Strandberg,2023b). Emma Erik Ohlsson, who works with the prevention and coordination of alcohol, drugs, doping, tobacco, and gambling issues at Lund municipality, has stated that it is hard to know how to communicate to reach effect through preventative efforts and that attitudes towards drugs seem to be changing to become increasingly liberal (Hjalmarsson & Strandberg,2023a).

This stands in contrast to the perception of Lund as one of the safest (SKR,2023) and best Swedish cities to live in (Infostat,2023). Local wastewater measurements of narcotics are conducted regularly, and Lund's levels do not stand out next to other municipalities (Karlsson,2024). Most substances have not been increasing in any significant way since the measurements started, except for cocaine, which has been growing in the samples and now exceeds the average national level (ibid). These contrasting images of Lund as a drug city and a safe and sound place to live are causing concerns at the municipal office, where they wonder if parts of the puzzle are missing. The municipality wants to gain understanding and information about the experiences of the drug scene in Lund (Flogstam,2023).

Emma Erik Ohlsson has previously stated that there is a knowledge gap regarding drug usage among university students (Lindholm,2024). Lund is a university city with a large student population and a well-established student culture. It is known that narcotics are available and that Lund is a city where many young people have money (ibid). Media has pointed out the student context as a drug scene and a drug scene that is hard to gain access to (Hjalmarsson & Strandberg,2023a). To increase knowledge of perceptions of drugs among students, this thesis will focus on the student population.

The student population becomes increasingly interesting if we recognize the student years as a formative time in life. The time as a young adult is full of possibilities, changes, and uncertainty (The Public Health Agency,2023b). During a time when foundations for future habits and life choices are built, it seems reasonable to try to prevent future societal costs of healthcare, rehabilitation, unemployment, and so on. This motivates preventative measures to target this population of young adults. Knowledge about how this population views narcotics is therefore crucial.

1.2 Research problem

There is a lack of knowledge of how inhabitants in Lund talk and think about drugs and experience the drug scene in the city. A large part of the population consists of university

students. To plan future effective preventative measures that can decrease the use of narcotics in the town, contact with and information from this population group is essential. This study can thereby fill a knowledge gap by bringing forward the perspectives of university students.

1.3 Contribution to the research field

The research field of drug use and attitudes towards narcotics is vast and includes both international and Swedish studies within several disciplines. This study contributes to the sociological field with the experiences and thoughts of young adults. The local focus on university students in Lund highlights perspectives within a specific social setting influenced by certain circumstances. These experiences can later be compared to experiences in other contexts to better understand how experiences can differ among young adults in different settings and life situations. The study can also lay a foundation for and complement future studies within the same local context as it brings forward themes that can be further explored. The findings will also be useful in the design of local preventative measures.

1.4 Aim & Research Questions

This study aims to highlight students' experiences of the drug situation in their surroundings and how they relate to it. Their experiences, perceptions, and thoughts will be in focus. Further, it aims to contribute knowledge that could help develop more informed preventative approaches. It is an explorative study aiming to reveal themes that students perceive to be relevant in the discussion of drugs.

To attain this knowledge, the overall focus of the essay is divided into four research questions. The focus is students' perceptions of narcotics within student life, and the four questions are:

- How do students perceive drug usage in Lund?
- How are drugs viewed within the student context?
- What do students perceive to influence perceptions and usage of drugs?
- What can the students' experiences teach us about how preventative measures should be designed?

1.5 Conceptual clarifications

Narcotics, drugs, and substances are synonyms in this study. In general, narcotics are illegal drugs. Drugs could be a broader concept, including substances that are not classified as narcotics according to law. All substances that are referred to as drugs in this study are illegal in Sweden. The substances classified as narcotics and thereby illegal in Sweden are too many to present here. A list can be found on the webpage of the Swedish Prosecution Authority (2024). Noteworthy, cannabis is illegal and classified as a narcotic in Sweden. Alcohol is not considered a drug in this study.

Here, the word attitude is not used as a theoretical concept. In this essay, attitude is synonymous with concepts such as view, perception, and narrative.

When mentioning nations, this is not a reference to a country but a specific type of student organization that exists only in Lund and Uppsala. In short, a nation is an organization run by students that hosts different events for students. They commonly also offer housing.

1.6 Delimitations

This study is qualitative and not statistically representative of the student population. The data will come from a limited number of students and should be considered to indicate how the drug scene within the student life looks rather than give a statistical understanding. What is of interest in this study is to bring forward the interviewees' experiences.

This study is limited to a specific population group: university students in Lund. I do not argue that they speak for students in other cities or people of the same age. The particular context comes with conditions that are not homogenous within the age groups or among Swedish university students. Cultures can differ remarkably between different groups.

This population is of interest because of the specific context of being a student. The only criteria for being part of this study was to be a current student at Lund University, with at least one year experience of studying in Lund. I have not made further delimitations within the student group as I wish to gain a broad perspective from students within different social circles and study focuses. The sample thereby includes both people who have used narcotics and those who have not, who have been involved in student organizations and not, and so on. There is a diversity in the sample. The students should not be seen as representatives of their

faculties, student organizations, etc. The study does not make conclusions about specific groups.

1.7 Disposition

Chapter 2 presents previous research that is relevant to the study. It concerns drug consumption in Sweden, in Lund, within student contexts, reported perceptions of drugs, what has been seen to influence perceptions and usage, and some previous thoughts concerning preventative measures. Methodological decisions and reflections are presented in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 contains explanations of the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter 5 presents the analysis, where the results are presented and discussed. Finally, chapter 6 gives a concluding discussion and suggestions for future research.

2. Previous research

Drug use and perceptions of drugs have previously been researched from different angles. Quantitative data is gathered regularly at a national and local level, showing usage trends and attitudes. Qualitative research is not as frequent within the field, but there are studies discussing attitudes towards and lived experiences of narcotics, both in Sweden and other countries. Below, a sample of previous research is presented and discussed. The research presented is to be seen as an introduction to the context to which this thesis contributes.

2.1 Drug consumption in Sweden

Quantitative surveys regarding narcotics usage are done regularly by both The Swedish Public Health Agency and The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs. A study from 2021 indicates that 7,8% of the Swedish population had used at least one kind of narcotic during the past 12 months, which is a decrease from 2017, when 8,6% reported usage (Sundin et al.,2022). Cannabis is most commonly used, as it had been used by 3,1% of the respondents in one study (Sundin et.al.,2022) and 2,5% in another (The Public Health Agency,2023c). Non-subscribed painkillers and sleeping pills came in second and third place (Sundin et al.,2022). Other narcotics, including cocaine, opioids, amphetamines, hallucinogenic drugs, and ecstasy, had been used by 1,6% during the last 12 months.

The distribution and scope of consumption are less studied than the percentage of people who have used narcotics (Guttormsson & Ramstedt,2023). It is known that a smaller percentage of people stand for a large share of alcohol consumption in Sweden, and recent numbers indicate that there is a significant distortion in the consumption of cannabis as well (ibid). Of ten million consumption occasions, 30,000 people stand for seven million, while the remaining three million are among 220,000 consumers. 54% of the occasions were reported by young users between the ages of 17-19 years, even if they only represent 20% of the age segment. The report (Guttormsson & Ramstedt,2023) also shows that usage is more common among men than women and in metropolitan regions than more sparsely populated areas. The overrepresentation of cannabis use in cities and among the younger population is interesting concerning the population we are studying. Further, the knowledge gap in the distribution of consumption motivates further studies investigating specific groups.

2.2 Drug use in Lund

The Research Institutes of Sweden (RISE) regularly conducts wastewater analyses to measure the level of narcotics and thereby monitor the consumption levels in specific regions. The latest report concerning Lund (Karlsson,2024) compares samples from 2020,2021,2022 and 2023. The samples from Lund are also compared to samples from two reference cities with similar population sizes. The analysis can not tell how many have used narcotics, but it shows which substances are taken. They also analyzed how many doses per 1000 inhabitants were in the water for some substances.

The measurements show relatively stable levels for the different substances over the four years (Karlsson,2024). The most common is cannabis, followed by cocaine and amphetamine, which also is commonly used. The high levels of amphetamine are not too alarming or surprising as it is present in some prescribed medicines. The levels of amphetamine have been stable, while cannabis is slightly decreasing and cocaine is increasing. The levels of cocaine during 2023 are relatively high compared to other cities in Sweden, even if one of the reference cities shows higher levels. In most other cases, the levels in Lund are in line with or lower than in the two reference cities. Ketamine stands out, as it has been a noteworthy increase in Lund and not as much in the other towns. Methamphetamine also shows an upgoing trend but is on level with the other cities.

This statistical knowledge will be interesting to compare to the experiences of the student population. The analysis gives an image of the broad usage within the city, but does not tell us if the usage differs between groups. The qualitative perspective can thereby contribute to a broader understanding of the drug scene in Lund by showing the experiences of substances considered common, normalized, or unfamiliar within the student community.

2.3 Drug use among university students

Finding relevant studies that specifically focus on university students has been challenging. However, a study from 2004 researched attitudes towards and use of narcotics among university students of four Swedish universities in Lund, Kalmar, Växjö, and Umeå (Bullock,2004). Similar to my study, the study aimed to gain a knowledge base for effective preventative measures. Even though the data could be argued to be outdated, I believe that it can give a relevant background and insight into student life, which other sources have not

been able to. It can be discussed later if the data still seems valid or if the student context seems to have evolved.

The study showed that 27,1% of students had tried some illicit drug (Bullock,2004,p.40). With the addition of prescription drugs that had been taken without a prescription or not by doctors' recommendations, the number increased to 36%. However, there were some concerns that respondents might have misinterpreted this question, which could have increased the number (ibid,p.41). Cannabis was most commonly used as 25,4% had tried it, followed by prescription drugs 15,4%, amphetamine 4,1%, and ecstasy 3,2%. Most of the usage was reported to be experimental and not regular (ibid,p.42-45). Noteworthy, these numbers are not fully comparable to the previously presented statistics since the national surveys measured use during a limited time frame, and this number indicates the overall experience of drugs. Also, this study was conducted years before the presented national surveys.

In a recent interview study (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022), many informants had chosen to try cannabis because it was available to them in a social setting. Bullock's study (2004) also showed that it was common for students to get introduced to narcotics in a social setting and to have been under the influence of alcohol when trying drugs for the first time (2004,42,45,p.46). Drinking weekly gave a 68% increased risk of cannabis use (ibid,p.53). A correlation between alcohol habits and narcotics use has also been identified by Järvinen and Østergaard (2011). In their study of young Danes, those who party more often and drink more showed more positive attitudes towards narcotics and were more experienced. Non-drinkers were unlikely to engage with drugs, while those who drank heavily two to three times a month were more likely to know drug users or use themselves.

Bullock (2004,p.47) also identified gender and age differences. 12,2% of men and 6,9% of women reported use of cannabis, and younger students were more likely to use cannabis, while older students were more likely to use prescription drugs. Reported levels of drug use and types of drugs used also differed between different fields of education (ibid,p.51). Many different predictors of use were reported in this study. Therefore, it is interesting to see which factors are mentioned as influential in decisions regarding the use of narcotics by students today. The author expressed that further research is needed within the field (ibid,p.53).

Among the four different universities, students from Lund University reported the highest level of drug use, 41,44% with prescription drugs included and 33,1% if excluded (Bullock,2004,p.40-41). Lund also presented the highest levels of use of drugs such as

painkillers, sedatives, antidepressants, cocaine, and magic mushrooms (ibid,p.47). Students at Lund University were also most likely to drink weekly (ibid,p.38). The indication that students of Lunds University in 2004 were more likely to consume drugs than students in other cities further awakens the interest to investigate this population. The image painted by the students in 2004 seems to correspond to the recent media portrait of Lund as a drug city.

The individuals have been replaced many times since 2004 and it will be interesting to see if perceptions and behaviors seem to have lived on or changed during these 20 years. Unfortunately, newer studies focused on university students have been hard to find.

2.4 Perceptions of narcotics

Qualitative studies have not been as regularly published within the field as quantitative ones. However, there are still some, and there is also quantitative research that has asked questions about perceptions. For example, a study conducted on mission by the Swedish Public Health Agency in 2021 showed that a majority of the Swedish adult population has a negative view of narcotics (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.29). However, cannabis was significantly more positively viewed than other substances (ibid,p.29). The study also showed that younger adults were more positive towards both cannabis and other substances than older adults (ibid,p.31).

A Danish focus group study (Järvinen & Østergaard, 2011) of young people's perceptions of drug use indicates that a majority of young Danes are insecure in their attitudes towards narcotics and neither regard them as free of risk nor distance themselves from it. Many had friends who used drugs or had tried cannabis themselves. These findings were interpreted as a possible indication that narcotics are becoming normalized in the younger population. Because of the geographical nearness and cultural similarities of Denmark and Sweden, it becomes interesting to see if the informants of this study will express a similar insecurity in their approach.

Previous studies have indicated that university students view alcohol as a regular part of university life (Bullock,2004; IQ,2018; Sæther et al.,2016). In an environment where alcohol is heavily normalized, one could expect that narcotics too would increase, as it has been seen that the most frequent partygoers and drinkers tend to be most experienced with and have the most positive attitudes towards narcotics (Järvinen & Østergaard,2011). Trying

drugs has, however, not been seen as common in student life in the same way as alcohol (Bullock,2004).

2.5 Influence on attitudes and usage

In an interview study from 2022, health risks, losing control, competing interests, promotion of organized crime, the law, and close social bonds were mentioned as reasons to abstain from cannabis (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022). In Bullock's study (2004), health reasons such as that drugs are harmful to your health and that you can become addicted topped the list of most common motivations for not trying; 94% of non-users agreed to these statements. 65% mentioned being influenced by the fact that their friends do not do drugs, and 75% that their family thought that they should not. Close contact with people who had used drugs was shown to decrease the desire to try it (ibid,p.63). One reason for not using that was mentioned was that someone close to them had been injured or sick due to drugs (ibid,p.64).

According to the Public Health Agency (2023a,p.30), restrictive laws regarding narcotics affect usage levels and attitudes, but it remains uncertain how significant the effect is. In the study by Bullock (2004,p.44), less than 20% worried about negative consequences such as being arrested or health effects in regards to cannabis use. The numbers were similar concerning amphetamines (ibid,p.46). The same tendency has been observed among young adults recently, as risk awareness was insufficient to prevent cannabis use (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022). For users, the perceived positive outcomes, such as increased well-being and positive social experiences, seemed to outweigh the negatives (ibid).

The non-users' information sources about risks were mainly media, public information, friends, and family, while users referred more to their own experiences (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022). Another recent focus group study found that both the surrounding world and social factors are perceived to impact the usage of and attitude towards narcotics among young adults (The Public Health Agency,2023a). Considering cannabis, normalization in popular culture and media, as well as legalization in other countries, is experienced to create a higher acceptance and lowered perception of risks (ibid,p.29). Several studies report that cannabis is perceived as less harmful than other narcotics (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022; The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.29;

The Public Health Agency,2022b). This perception is believed to affect usage among young adults (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.29).

Further, socioeconomic status and previous difficulties in life have also been mentioned as factors affecting attitude and usage (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.31). Regarding the perceived risks associated with usage, men and people with lower incomes have seen fewer risks than women and people with higher incomes (ibid).

However, the social circle was considered the most important as it affects both norms, exposure, and access to narcotics (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.31). Kvillemo, Strandberg, and Gripenberg (2022) saw that attitudes towards cannabis seemed to primarily originate from experiences and discussions with people close to them, and according to Järvinen and Østergaard (2011), a person who has personal experience with a specific substance or has friends who have so is more likely to consider the substance to be pleasurable and safe.

Several other studies also conclude that young people's use of narcotics is strongly connected to the habits and attitudes of their friends (Duan et al.,2009; Duncan et al.,1995; Parsai et al.,2009; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,2015). However, researchers have not agreed on whether this is because people adapt to their friends or if similar minds become friends. Järvinen and Østergaard (2011) state that it is most likely a combination of the two. Some argue that friendships play a more prominent role in younger ages and when one is being presented with drugs for the first time than for continuous use and as people get older (Mcintosh et al.,2006). Peer pressure has been identified as a highly influential mechanism among teenagers, who rely on the experiences of people they can identify with (Kvillemo et al.,2021). Peer pressure was not seen to have the same effect among young adults, even if they too looked for information in their social circle. (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022). Similar life situations and personal bonds could still provide credibility to received information (ibid). It also seems that the influence of friends is more significant in regards to cannabis than hard drugs, as the resistance towards hard drugs is stronger (Järvinen & Østergaard,2011).

2.6 Preventative measures with the target group in mind

The importance of including the target population and considering their experiences when planning preventative interventions has previously been highlighted (Bullock,2004; Järvinen

& Østergaard, 2011; Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022; The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.32). For example, Järvinen & Østergaard (2011) highlight that one has to consider the effect of peer influence and perceptions of risks and pleasure within different groups. According to Bullock (2004,p.82), it is likely that policy changes can gain effect if students see the benefits of them and therefore support them. To enable the needed analytical process, contact with and understanding the perspectives of specific groups is essential. This study's focus on the group of Lund University students can be further motivated.

When the participants in a Swedish focus group interview study were asked about preventative measures that could lower the usage of narcotics, they highlighted more public information about drugs, a more open climate of conversation, and increased access to care for mental illness (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.32). Public information has been seen to have limited effects (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022). Young adults have stated that the credibility of information given by the public is questioned since it competes with information provided by people with personal experiences (ibid). The public was seen only to give information focusing on the negative aspects of drugs and to try to scare people from using them. The informants wished for more honest and transparent information on specific effects and how to use substances more safely (ibid). Kvillemo, Strandberg, and Gripenberg (2022) deemed information about risks insufficient as a preventative strategy. A more comprehensive approach is needed to change behaviors. Both supply and demand should be addressed. It is recognized that the demand for narcotics is influenced by societal values and norms (ibid). Understanding social norms and values is then highly important in the design of preventative programs.

3. Method

This chapter presents the methodological choices made during the research process. The challenges and benefits of the chosen approach and ethical reflections are discussed.

3.1 Methodological approach

Epistemologically, the interviewees' experiences are treated as insights into the social reality they are part of. Their stories give us access to a social reality. This approach is inspired by social constructionism. A common meaning of social constructionism is that social reality is created and defined in social interactions and continuously redefined (Bryman,2018,p.58). Understandings and meanings can vary between contexts and times as different groups view things differently. What will be presented through this study is, thereby, a current understanding of the social reality within a specific group. With this approach, researchers look for the complexity of views and rely on individuals' views of the situation (Creswell & Poth,2018,p.24). Patterns of meaning are sought inductively (ibid).

According to the well-known Thomas Theorem, people act based on their understanding of reality rather than an objective reality (Cardano,2020,p.10). By learning about individuals' perspectives of a situation, we can understand what influences their actions. Through the interviewees' stories, we can get an understanding of why people in this specific context choose to act in particular ways regarding drugs.

Social constructionism relies on analytic induction (Pascale,2011,p.53). Analytic induction entails studying a limited number of cases in depth, examining similarities and differences to identify patterns and deviances and explain social phenomena (ibid,p.53-54). This methodological approach has influenced this thesis in how stories from a limited number of interviewees are studied and compared in depth. The strength of the analytic induction approach is that it can give a complex understanding of social life (ibid,p.55). The analytic process is subjective, whereby transparency is vital to enable readers to evaluate the credibility of the process (ibid,p.54). This methods section will, therefore, aim to clearly explain methodological and analytical decisions made during the research process.

3.2 Data collection

This study has a qualitative approach, chosen because of the focus on experiences and personal reflections. Qualitative research mainly aims to understand how things function in a specific setting (Cardano,2020,p.30). To access personal stories and reflections, I chose to conduct interviews. Qualitative interviews focus on the interviewees' perspectives. They are flexible, can follow the interviewee's tracks, and produce rich and detailed data (Bryman,2018,p.561-562). Ten interviews were conducted during January and February 2024.

The interviews were semi-structured. I developed an interview guide based on the areas of interest for my research focus (See Appendix 1). Using an interview guide facilitates comparisons between cases and gives the interviews a clearer focus (Bryman,2018 p.564). In this study, I wished that my interviewees would discuss the same topics to provide different perspectives and experiences that could complement each other in painting a picture of the perceptions and experiences of narcotics within student life. Still, using an interview guide also allows the researcher to be flexible during the interview (Bryman,2018,p.565), and I used the guide more as a support than a road map. Since I wanted some structure but also wanted to keep the interview situation flexible, to be able to ask follow-up questions and capture individual thoughts, the semi-structured approach was suitable. The openness of the method, allowing the unexpected to take place, enables more accurate representations of phenomena (Cardano,2020,p.36).

This study uses an inductive approach, and the interview guide was based on the topic, research issue, and previous research rather than a theoretical approach. It included two focus areas: (1) Conception of the general view of and approach to narcotics within the student life, and (2) thoughts about narcotics and what affects people's decisions to use or abstain from narcotics. I prepared questions within these areas to encourage the interviewees to develop their answers and ensure that the interviews covered some common ground. In most cases, many questions were answered without being asked. I also asked many follow-up questions during the interviews, which were not prepared.

3.3 Sampling

The interviewees were selected through purposive sampling. One through snowball sampling and nine through generic purposive sampling based on criteria connected to the research questions. All interviewees had to be university students at Lund University since they were the target group of the study. I did not approach students in the first year of their studies since they should have had time to gain some experience as a student in Lund.

The aim was to broaden the sample by including at least one student from each faculty within the university. Not to see them as representatives of their faculties but because they would have encountered different environments and groups. For the same reason, it was considered interesting if the interviewees belonged to different social circles and associations within the social student life. This study uses an exploitative approach and searches for themes of relevance for future research and interventions. A broad sample would enable variances of perspectives and experiences. Because of the broad aim, I also wished to include both females and males. To avoid any possible gender bias, five of the interviewees are female, and five are male. This thesis does not discuss gender differences specifically. Still, it should be seen as positive that both sexes are represented since previous research has concluded that there can be differences between how males and females reflect on and experience the narcotics culture (for ex. Bullock,2004; The Public Health Agency, 2023a,p.31).

The interviewees are homogenous in the sense that they all study at Lund University simultaneously, but there are many differences between them. For example, they have grown up in different cities of different sizes, have different experiences with narcotics, are part of different social circles, and belong to different research fields. The faculties of medicine, social science, natural science, law, economy, and engineering, as well as the joint faculties of humanities and theology, are represented in the sample. The fine and performing arts faculty was excluded since it is located in Malmö. Regarding social circles, besides the studies, the interviewees have experience with unions, program associations, student nations, spex, the Lund carnival, sports associations, and political student organizations. Combined, they have experienced many aspects of the student life. Therefore, this paper should be able to present a broad perspective of the perceptions of narcotics within the student context in Lund.

The interviewees' previous experiences of environments with narcotics and of using drugs differ. Previous research has shown that no matter personal experiences, narcotics have become something that is present in everyday life and that everyone must relate to in some

way (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction,2023; Sato,2004,p.46). Through a presence in news, culture, and social contexts, narcotics is a part of reality for all, which makes it relevant to study the perspectives of both experienced users and non-users.

The interviewees were found through my social network. After five years as a student in Lund, I have developed a broad network of students within different social and educational contexts. The nine strategically sampled students all know who I am and were contacted directly by me. They are people whom I have met in different contexts but not spent any significant amount of time with. We do not have strong personal bonds that should have influenced the interview situation significantly. Our previous contact could have affected their willingness to participate in the study. People being interviewed want to know that the researcher is trustworthy, and a personal connection can help them become more comfortable in the situation (Rubin & Rubin, 2004). Nine out of ten contacted students agreed to be interviewed, which I hope is a sign that they had a good impression of me and trusted that I would handle the data carefully. My previous knowledge of them also enabled purposive sampling since I knew what they studied and had a perception of which social circles they belonged to.

The tenth interviewee was found through a recommendation from one of the other interviewees. This snowball method enabled me to gain an additional perspective from a well-experienced user. This position was then and still is a minority group in my sample. His friend contacted the interviewee, and I reached out after he had expressed interest in participating. I asked both interviewees if they were comfortable with contributing when their friend was aware of their participation, and they both expressed that this was not an issue.

3.4 The interview process

Following the ethical guidelines about informed consent described by Brinkmann and Kvale (2015,p.93), the interviewees received information about the aim and purpose of the study, the research process, and voluntary contribution before the interviews (see Appendix 2). They were also informed that the results would be shared with the city of Lund. The interviewees verbally confirmed that they had taken note of the information, were willing to participate, and agreed to be recorded before the interviews started.

The interviews were held in person. Two took place in a public setting at cafés, one at the interviewee's apartment, and seven in private rooms on campus. Initially, the respondents

were offered to choose the location themselves. The idea was that they would have the opportunity to select a setting where they were comfortable. After two interviews in a café environment and one in a private room, I evaluated this decision and proposed a private setting for the remaining interviewees. In public places, I experienced that the interviewees, on some occasions, became aware that people could be listening to what they were saying. The first two interviews are still included in the material since I did not experience that these two interviewees were uncomfortable or avoided questions. Even if these two did not seem significantly affected by being in public, I did not want to risk that others would since the topic could feel sensitive. The majority of the interviews were, therefore, conducted on campus. Since all participants are students, the campus environment is known to them and part of their everyday lives. It was an accessible environment for all interviewees, and I experienced that they were comfortable in this setting.

The interviews lasted 29-69 minutes, depending on how developed the answers the interviewee gave were. Only two were shorter than 40 minutes, and the majority were one hour long. In all cases, I experienced that we had time to capture both their experiences and reasoning concerning narcotics. The two longest interviews exceeded 65 minutes and could probably have continued a little longer since these respondents gladly would have discussed the topic further. However, I felt the subject had been sufficiently covered and rounded off the interviews.

The interviews were recorded in sound format, with the approval of the interviewees. The sound files were stored on an encrypted USB drive during transcription. The interviews were transcribed and recorded in rapid succession. As the researcher, this allowed me to go through the material continuously and see patterns in the discussions. Since I got familiar with the material, I quickly started to hear similarities in the interviews. From the start, the respondents gave similar answers. Many described the usage and norms within the student life similarly, even if they had different personal opinions and experiences. Along the way, a few interviewees contributed with more differing perspectives and insights.

I first aimed to cover respondents from all faculties, which I had after seven interviews. I then saw that they mostly painted a common picture but decided to continue with a few more interviews to hopefully gain more insight into the culture of some specific student organizations. With three more interviews, people with greater insight confirmed what others had been telling me. When responses are recognized between interviews and response patterns reoccur, one can consider to have reached saturation (Ahrne & Svensson, 2015,p.42). The likelihood that the sample is analytically representative then increases as it

becomes less likely that further interviews would provide new knowledge (ibid). The data collection, therefore, stopped after ten interviews.

3.5 Analytical approach

The analytical method used is qualitative content analysis, as described by Drisko and Machi (2015). They explain that this method systematically searches for and describes meanings and examines latent and manifest content. Commonly, the focus of the analysis process is to identify themes and categories to highlight key content and summarize the content of the data, including variations found. The data used in qualitative content analysis is often newly done interviews. According to Drisko and Machi (2015), the approach is functional when one wishes to find new perspectives, and because of the interpretive emphasis, it is also well suited to constructivist epistemology. It is also an approach well suited for context-specific research, such as this study, since it generates contextual knowledge rather than transferability.

Within the qualitative content analysis, coding is used to find meanings of relevance for the research questions within the data (Drisko & Machi,2015). Inductive coding is most commonly used and highlights the participant's perspectives before the theories and ideas of researchers (ibid), which suits the purpose of this study. The analytical process has, therefore, been data-driven, meaning that codes, categories, and themes have been developed based on the data (Brinkmann & Kvale,2015,p.227-228). Initially, I did not have hypotheses or specific theories to apply but aimed to remain as open as possible to what was expressed in the data. Theories were applied later in the process as an analytical tool to aid new realizations and highlight the findings in the data. The stories in the data are also related to previous research to amplify how the study contributes to the field. However, it should be noted that I have studied sociology for five years and have been a student in Lund during this time. Thereby, I have previous knowledge and experiences that affect my interpretations and hinder an entirely inductive coding process. The ambition has nevertheless been to remain as inductive as possible in my approach.

3.6 Analytical process

The coding process started during the interviews as I reflected upon the interviewees' stories. The first round of focused, open coding later resulted in 46 codes. The coding process is emergent, and codes have been altered, merged, and separated along the process. It was challenging to process this amount of data as a sole researcher. Despite using a detailed code book, where I noted my interpretations of the codes, some codes intertwined or conflicted. This was realized during the process, and codes were reworked. Working through the data set several times has helped me get to know the data, and I am confident in my conclusions.

After the initial coding, I searched for patterns and themes in the constructed codes. In this process, I also revisited my research aim and reflected on what questions my data could answer. Eventually, four analytical themes emerged. The themes are the drug scene, approaches, influences, and prevention. How these themes build upon the initial codes is presented in Appendix 3. To enable further analysis and understanding of the material, quotes connected to the different themes were compiled in analytical memos. This process further highlighted patterns and differences in the interviewees' experiences. The analysis section follows these themes, but the theme approaches has been divided into two headings discussing purity and social positioning.

3.7 Credibility and Trustworthiness

There are different schools on how to discuss reliability and validity within qualitative research. I have followed the recommendation by Saldaña (2020) and will use the concepts of credibility and trustworthiness, which he describes as more suitable for qualitative research. Throughout this project, I have considered credibility and trustworthiness, and they have guided me in how I present my methodological decisions. I aim to be transparent so that readers can understand the research process. Following Saldaña's advice, I have cited relevant writers in my literature review, transparently described my data collection and coding process, quoted the interviewees in the analysis, and been transparent with ethical and analytical dilemmas to increase credibility and trustworthiness.

To follow my aim of transparency, I will also briefly mention a discussion, which is common when using the concept of reliability. The reliability of the study could have increased if a team of researchers coded the material and ensured that interpretations aligned

(Drisko & Machi,2015). However, this has not been possible within the scope of this project. The reader should be aware that only I have made the interpretations. In studies where the meaning of statements is complex and contextual, the coding could be influenced by the researcher's background and previous knowledge (Drisko & Machi, 2015). How I, as a researcher, affect this study will be further discussed below.

3.8 Researcher positionality

This study benefits from being conducted by a university student rather than a professor or municipal representative. As a fellow student of similar age, I can be seen as relatable and equal in status. Status and age relations between the interviewee and interviewer can influence the interview situation and should be considered (Ahrne & Svensson,2015,p.49). To increase the relatability, I mentioned during the interviews that I have been a student in Lund for almost five years and have personal experience of the local student life. Familiarity with the context can encourage people to provide more detailed and deep answers (Rubin & Rubin,2004). I experienced that the topic became more accessible than I believe it would have been if I was someone they knew did not have previous insight into the student life in Lund. The interviewees have been able to refer to places and social circles that I know, which has decreased the need to explain the more contextual facts and instead increased the focus on details. It also deepened my understanding of the meaning of particular descriptions. I believe this has enriched the gathered material and also made the interviewees more comfortable in the interview situation. They have all expressed that it was interesting and fun to discuss the topic, which, according to Rubin and Rubin (2004), is to be seen as a sign that the interview went well.

There was a risk that the interviewees would take for granted that I knew things and thereby not explain thoroughly enough. I considered this before the interviews, and in cases where I noticed it happening, I tried to ask them to explain further or ask follow-up questions where I stated my interpretation of their statements and got it confirmed or refuted.

I also wish to highlight that I have been independent in this project. The topic came from being inspired by conversations with representatives from the city of Lund, who told me about their current work with developing their crime preventative efforts and the need for more knowledge of the narcotics situation in the city. They expressed an interest in the student perspective, which inspired me to focus my thesis on this area. The knowledge I have

gathered can contribute to a knowledge base for the municipality. This is an excellent example and a valuable experience of how academia and other organizations can collaborate to enrich each other's work. However, the study has been designed and conducted solely by me, without directions from the city of Lund. The results will be shared with the organization only when this project is complete, hopefully aiding them in their future work.

The approach of this thesis will portray narcotics as a societal issue that creates difficulties both on a societal and individual level. Nevertheless, I, as the author, have a large respect for individuals' experiences and situations and want to strongly emphasize that the interviewees have not been met with negative reactions from me when talking about their usage of or opinions about narcotics. Their stories are valuable insights into how a societal problem is visible and experienced on the individual level.

3.9 Ethics

Student papers are not ethically reviewed in Sweden. They should nevertheless always be ethically justifiable (Eldén,2020,p.39). Narcotic usage is a criminal offense in Sweden, whereby this topic could be sensitive to discuss. It is illegal to sell, offer, produce, process, transport, store, pack, acquire, use, and possess drugs (SFS 1968:64,1§). Therefore, ensuring that the interviewees felt comfortable participating in this study and that the collected data was handled with care was vital.

From my personal experience of student life, my understanding is that narcotics are not considered to be a susceptible topic to discuss. It might not be addressed loudly in every setting, but the conversations are present. I thereby saw that this topic would be researchable within this population.

Informed consent is essential to ethical codes and laws (Eldén,2020,p.84). As previously mentioned, the interviewees received information about the study and the meaning of voluntary contribution before the interviews (see Appendix 2). They had the opportunity to ask questions, and I described the research process and how the data would be handled. They agreed to participate and did not express worry as long as the data was anonymized. Names have been changed, personal identifiers are excluded, and their real names have not been documented. Only I have processed the data, which was stored on an encrypted USB drive. Sound files will also be deleted after the completion of this study.

The interviews were conducted in Swedish, and the presented quotes have been translated into English. In this process, they have, in some cases, also been reformulated in more written than spoken language. This adaptation can improve legibility (Ahrne & Svensson,2015,p.53), and I have also considered it a way to depersonalize quotes. I have, however, strived to do as accurate translations as possible and keep the spirit of the quotes. As Ahrne and Svensson (2015,p.53) recommended, the original quotes are available in Swedish and shared upon request. Of course, with anonymizing alterations.

I choose not to collect written consent. Depending on the project design, written consent can be considered unnecessary formal (Eldén,2020,p.91), which was the case here. Written consent would have made the interview situation feel more formal, and I wished to create a relaxed situation for the interviewees. Further, the decision also stemmed from the consideration of anonymity. I did not want to collect and store signatures since they could be traced to the interviewees. There are also legal considerations concerning collecting and storing personal data, which influenced this decision. Instead, the interviewees verbally consented to participate. They agreed before and after the recordings started, so consent was recorded.

During the interviews, I deliberately never asked direct questions about whether they had used, sold, or in other ways handled narcotics. I did not want to push anyone to talk about illegal acts. If such acts were mentioned, it was on their initiative. The research guide focused on perceptions rather than behaviors (see Appendix 1).

Regardless of the information the interviewees shared, they trusted me with their thoughts and experiences. Researchers must consistently take responsibility for not abusing this trust (Eldén,2020,p.101). I am very grateful to my interviewees for their participation and confidence, and I have kept the importance of their anonymity as a guiding principle throughout this process. The study will be sent to the interviewees before publication.

3.10 A few reservations

Every study has shortcomings, and several flaws of this study have now been discussed. However, a few more should be mentioned. Firstly, there are ontological limits to the method. When conducting an intense study of a limited number of cases, we gain local information bounded by a specific time and place (Cardano,2020,p.31). The reader should acknowledge

this. However, this limit does not oppose the aim and purpose of this study since the local and current image is in focus.

Further, interviews present a limited image of a phenomenon (Ahrne & Svensson, 2015,p.53). It can, therefore, be beneficial to combine interviews with other methods (ibid). The knowledge gained through this study should be seen as a complement to already existing and future studies.

When working through the transcripts, I saw that there were times when I could have asked more follow-up questions to encourage further reflection. This could potentially have provided more interesting aspects to the analysis. Interview technique is a skill that can always be improved.

4. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework has evolved during the coding process, in line with the inductive approach of this study. The interviewees talked about their perceptions of drugs and drugs in their social context and discussed how these ideas affected them and others. The empirical material guided me towards a framework located at the intersection of sociology, social anthropology, and social psychology. Theories of normative social behavior (TNSB), stigmatization, purity and danger, and in-groups and out-groups has provided the study with a conceptual toolbox useful and consistent enough for bringing forward the stories told by the interviewees and add theoretical depth to the analysis. The rest of this chapter will explain these in some depth.

4.1 Social norms

Norms can be conceptualized in different ways. In this study, norms are considered socially negotiated, context-dependent, and dynamic rules, following the view presented by Rimal and Lapinski (2015,p.394). They can be reinforced by or stand in opposition to traditions and laws (ibid). Through norm studies, links between individuals' beliefs, behaviors, perceptions, and social contexts and factors can be brought to light (ibid,p.395).

One can differentiate between different types of norms. Collective norms operate at a societal level and describe what occurs within a social context (Rimal & Lapinski, 2015,p.396-397). What individuals perceive as the collective norm does not have to correspond to the actual behaviors (ibid). The perception of the collective norm is referred to as the descriptive norm (ibid). Collective norms can be studied by looking at the collective culmination of individual behaviors (ibid). As this study focuses on individuals' perceptions, it will not measure the collective norms but focus on descriptive and injunctive norms. While descriptive norms describe individuals' perceptions about what is commonly done, injunctive norms describe people's expectations of which behaviors are approved and expected by the significant people around them (Rimal & Real,2005,p.391).

4.2 The theory of normative social behavior - TNSB

The theory of normative social behavior (TNSB) builds upon the idea that perceived norms influence behaviors (Rimal & Real,2005). It aims to explain the underlying cognitive processes that modulate the relationship between behavioral intentions and descriptive norms (ibid,p.391). The theory highlights the importance of recognizing both descriptive and injunctive norms, the role of group identity, and outcome expectations if we are to understand how norms influence behaviors (ibid,p.410). The interaction between these mechanisms influences how the individual relates to norms in decision-making, as the mechanisms can increase or decrease the influence of descriptive norms (ibid,p.391). Descriptive norms have, for example, been seen to gain effect on behavior if strong injunctive norms are present (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.398)

When the theory was first presented by Rimal and Real (2005), they argued that current health promotion campaigns only targeted descriptive norms and, therefore, had limited chances to succeed in changing behaviors. They claimed that campaigns likely would be more successful if injunctive norms and other moderators of behaviors were considered (Rimal & Real,2005,p.410).

TNSB highlights that the individual strives to build connections and receive validation from her reference group. Group identity was described as the perceived similarity between the individual and the group and the aspiration to emulate others (Rimal & Real, 2005,p.395). It has previously been shown that conforming to group members is associated with positive emotions (Christensen, Rothgerber, Wood, & Matz,2004) and that behaviors of those we perceive as similar to ourselves affect us more than others behaviors (Phillips & Cartensen,1986). In a study by Rimal and Real (2005) focusing on university students' alcohol consumption, group identity was seen to affect the influence of descriptive norms. If students could find similarities and identify with other students, health promotion campaigns aimed at the descriptive norms, explaining that many drank less than anticipated, seemed more successful (ibid,p.408). Research has since then given different indications of how strong the connection is. Still, the idea that the more distinct a group identity is, the more descriptive norms affect behavior, has been supported by several studies (Glynn, 2012; Hogg & Reid,2006; Lapinsky et al.,2013).

In social cognitive theory, Albert Bandura (1986) theorized that outcome expectations affect human behavior. Individuals are more prone to engage in a behavior if it is expected to lead to benefits. This is incorporated in TNSB, which theorizes that expectations of

individual benefits, such as improved mood, stress reduction, and social benefits, could affect behaviors and how individuals relate to norms (Rimal & Real,2005,p.393-394). One aspect of this could be that individuals fear that they will miss out on benefits that others attain if they do not conform to a behavior (ibid). In the mentioned study by Rimal and Real (2005), they could not identify a strong association between outcome expectations and descriptive norms (ibid,p.405). However, outcome expectations were seen to influence behavior directly (ibid). Therefore, it is still important to recognize this as an influential factor.

Injunctive norms, group identity, and outcome expectations were presented as factors affecting the influence of descriptive norms on human behavior when TNSB was formulated. Since then, the theory has been built upon, and more factors that moderate the relationship have been discovered (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.399). Rimal and Lapinski (2015) propose a division of moderators into societal-level and individual-level moderators.

Societal-level moderators include group proximity and interdependence. Norms that originate from people we consider close to us have been seen to have a more decisive influence on our behaviors (Neighbors et al.,2010; Woolf et al.,2014) and being dependent on other people could cause us to conform to their behavior (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.401). Being group-oriented could also lead to adaptation, while individualistically oriented individuals could disidentify with the majority, causing them to act in contrast to the dominant norms (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.401).

Individual-level moderators of the norm-behavior relationship can be comparisons, people's perceptions of how others hinder or facilitate behaviors, level of personal involvement, self-monitoring, self-efficacy, and age. For example, high self-efficacy has been seen to lower the impact of descriptive norms (Jang, Rimal & Cho,2013), and age can affect which sources of normative information are valued and impact behavioral decisions (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.400).

Further, attributes of specific behaviors can also impact normative influence. For example, monetary costs, addictiveness, and behavioral privacy could be examples of attributes (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.402). They are underlying behavior properties that could affect how much impact norms have.

To summarize, norms are social phenomena that affect individuals, but individuals can relate to them differently depending on other factors that moderate the norm-behavior relationship (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.404).

4.3 Stigmatization

A stigma is a characteristic that is negatively seen and stands in contrast to how things should be (Goffman,2020,p.25). Goffman uses the concept to describe how individuals can be socially reduced to less worthy and seen as weak, dangerous, etc., for not living up to the stereotypical image of how they should be (ibid). The concept is relational, as it only functions as discrediting in relation to something that confirms group belonging and normality (ibid,p.25).

Everyone is vulnerable to what is socially valued in their interactions with others (ibid,p.182). How things are discussed in a context affects the scale of stigmatization (Persson,2020,p.13).

4.4 Purity and danger

In the book *Purity and Danger* (2002), Mary Douglas reflects on ideas of purity and impurity and their impact on behavior. Douglas uses the concept of dirt as something out of place (2002,p.44). A systematic order is needed to classify something as dirt since dirt is a rejected element within a system (ibid).

As learning creatures, we structure the world around us and categorize patterns and labels that affect our understanding of our surroundings (Douglas,2002,p.45). New experiences can cause us to remodify this structure of assumptions, but uncomfortable facts that do not fit in with our previous understanding can also be ignored (ibid,p.46).

Some basic categorizations are provided through culture (Douglas,2002,p.48). Cultural values and ideas are public matters and more rigid than personal assumptions (ibid). Events that do not conform to cultural values are labeled unclean, dirty, dangerous, etc. (ibid,p.49). For example, putting shoes on a dining table can be considered wrong and dirty, but placing them on the hallway floor might not (ibid,p.44). Douglas provides many examples of cases where behaviors are seen as pure or impure in different contexts throughout the book.

Beliefs can reflect and uphold a society's power systems and social structures (Douglas,2002,p.4). For example, beliefs about dangers and contagion can endorse moral codes, since specific behavior is believed to lead to undesired consequences (ibid). Beliefs that a behavior endangers some groups but not others can be signs of hierarchical structures

(ibid). Douglas exemplifies how sexual behavior in some cases is seen to be risky for both sexes and, in other cases, only for females or males (ibid).

Ideas of categorization create societal structure and order (Douglas,2002,p.5). However, societies do not exist in a vacuum; they are affected by external pressures. Ideas and categorizations are thereby changeable (ibid).

4.5 In-groups and out-groups

Henri Tajfel (1969) discusses humans' social nature as group members, adapting to situations and relations. He highlights that people's understanding of intergroup situations affects their attitudes toward other groups and behaviors (ibid,p.81). In a constantly changing social world, relationships between different groups constantly change, and people need to adjust their understanding of their social context continuously (ibid).

To find ways to relate to their social surroundings, people categorize and ascribe different characteristics to people and groups (ibid,p.81-92). Changes in the dynamic between groups can be explained by being viewed as situational or caused by characteristics of the groups. According to Tajfel (1969), most such changes tend to lead to the creation of ideologies, positioning the own group to the other. The ideology can, for example, be used to justify advantages or defeats (ibid,p.95).

Tajfel (1969) uses the concepts of in-groups and out-groups to separate a group that an individual belongs to and identifies with from others. These concepts are commonly used within the field of social psychology. In-group favoritism and in-group bias point out that people view their in-group more positively and favor it over out-groups in behavior, preferences, etc. (Turner, Brown & Tajfel,1979,p.187). Through historical examples, Tajfel (1969) demonstrates instances where out-group members have been perceived as different and sometimes subordinated. The group distinction can lead to discrimination, conflicts, prejudices, and hostility (Tajfel,1969; Turner, Brown & Tajfel,1979). Rivalry does not always have to be objectively relevant. For example, a study by Turner, Brown, and Tajfel (1979,p.202) concludes that social comparisons and striving for positive social identity can fuel intergroup discrimination, even if it undermines the in-group economic interests. There can even be rivalry when groups share common goals.

4.6 The contribution of the theoretical framework

This study highlights what affects the interviewees' decision-making regarding narcotics and how students in Lund reflect on the presence of drugs in their social context. The analysis will uncover mechanisms in play in the students' thoughts and the descriptive and injunctive norms surrounding narcotics within the student life. The framework will enable us to identify potential moderators and attributes at work in this specific context. Knowledge of norms is critical if intentions to affect behaviors are to be effective (Rimal & Real,2005,p.410).

Additionally, the framework will allow us to reflect on how individuals categorize and structure their understanding of their surroundings. The framework can provide a deepened understanding of how drug use in the student population can be approached.

5. Analysis

This section discusses the study's result with the guidance of theoretical concepts and compares it to previous research. Firstly, the interviewees are introduced. Section 5.2 portrays how students perceive that drug usage takes form in Lund. 5.3 discusses how drugs are viewed, and 5.4 presents how the students socially position themselves and others in in-groups and out-groups. Section 5.5 presents factors that the students see influence perceptions and usage of drugs. Finally, section 5.6 highlights how the students reflect upon preventative measures.

5.1 Interviewees

The names of the interviewees have been replaced. They will be called Lilly, Nadja, Marcus, Sarah, Oliver, Hugo, Samuel, Isak, Agnes, and Freya. They are between 21 and 27 years old, current students, and have studied in Lund for two to nine years. They have grown up in different parts of Sweden, in the Stockholm area, the west coast, Småland, and Skåne. They study different programs and put in different amounts of hours and energy into their studies. Some attend events and parties more often than others and are involved in different organizations. Student life is described as diverse. "I think that life as a student in Lund is very different depending on how you are as a person and where in student life you start, so to speak." (Freya).

To protect the identity of the respondents, I will not share information about where each individual originates from, which faculty they belong to, or which specific organizations they are or have been part of. Since we are not looking for patterns within specific social circles but more general indications of narcotics within the student environment, this should not affect the study's findings. However, the table below presents their age, how long they have been students, and if they have been active within student organizations.

Table 1. Interviewees

Name	Age	How many years they have studied	Involvement in student associations
Lilly	23	In the 4th year	Student union and another student organization
Nadja	22	In the 4th year	Student union and another student organization
Marcus	22	In the 3rd year	Nation, student union and another student organization
Sarah	25	In the 3rd year	Student organization connected to her studies.
Oliver	22	In the 3rd year	Student union and a political student organization.
Hugo	21	In the 3rd year	Not involved in any student organizations but attends events organized within the student community.
Samuel	22	In the 3rd year	Nation, student union, and another student organization
Isak	24	In the 2nd year	A political student organization.
Agnes	22	In the 3rd year	Student union and nation
Freya	27	In the 9th year	Several different organizations, for example, a student union and a nation.

5.2 The drug scene

This section will discuss the experiences of how drug usage takes form in Lund, as in how common drugs are, which substances are used, when, where, and by whom. Previous research

presents a statistical image of the situation in Sweden and Lund, which describes the collective norm within the larger context. This section will portray the descriptive norm of drug usage within the student world in Lund.

5.2.1 Substances & prevalence

Cannabis is the most commonly used drug in Sweden in general (Sundin et al.,2022; The Public Health Agency,2023c) and also in Lund (Karlsson,2024). Following this, all interviewees describe that people they know use cannabis, and three mention that they have smoked themselves. Non-subscribed painkillers and sleeping pills are the second and third most common substances nationally (Sundin et al.,2022) but are not mentioned by the interviewees. Further, amphetamine and methamphetamine are not mentioned as present in Lund but have been present in recent wastewater measurements (Karlsson,2024). In 2004, Lund presented higher levels of use of drugs such as painkillers, sedatives, antidepressants, cocaine, and magic mushrooms than other student cities (Bullock,2004,p.47). Out of these, the interviewees only mention cocaine and mushrooms, which could indicate that the popular substances have changed over the past 20 years.

Several of the interviewees know people who use a more comprehensive range of substances, but few of these people live in Lund. However, five of the interviewees describe that they know of people in Lund who use drugs other than cannabis, of which two are experienced users of various substances themselves. The most frequently mentioned after cannabis is cocaine. In 2004, cocaine was not one of the most common drugs in the studied student cities. However, it was more common in Lund than in the other towns (Bullock,2004). The popularity seems to have continued. Recent wastewater measurements show an increase in cocaine in Lund (Karlsson,2024). The fact that the interviewees highlight cocaine in this way indicates that the student population stands for a share of this consumption.

The wastewater analysis also showed increased ketamine (Karlsson,2024). Samuel is the only one who mentions having encountered ketamine in Lund, and only he and Oliver mention ecstasy. Further, a few mention having seen or done LSD.

The descriptive norm of present substances seems to align with the local collective norm concerning cannabis and cocaine but contrasts the collective norm regarding other substances such as amphetamine. It is important to note that we can not conclude that the

unmentioned substances are not present in student life, only that this study has not reached people who know those substances. We do not know if the students' perceptions differ from the actual prevalence or if this context's collective norm differs from the city's total collective norm. Either way, the descriptive norm is relevant since it can influence personal decisions and perspectives, according to TNSB (Rimal & Real, 2005). Also, the interviewees confirmed the presence of the substances they had encountered.

“The biggest is probably cocaine, it's probably the one I've seen the most. Then I have seen, I have seen ecstasy taken and I have seen ketamine. [...] And cannabis, of course, but that's one I've experienced in other contexts as well. It's very common ... it feels like everyone, or very, very many people I've met have done it or use it quite often.” (Samuel)

Both Samuel and Agnes experience that drugs are relatively common. As mentioned, all interviewees still know of people who have used some substance. Oliver, Samuel, and Freya describe having been in rooms where cocaine was taken, and Oliver, Samuel, and Isak mention having seen substances other than cannabis and cocaine being taken. Agnes describes that she has realized over time that drugs are more common than she initially believed.

“One time when I went to a ball, I asked the guy next to me something like, oh, can I have a snus, and he opened his snus box and was like, oh, you weren't supposed to see that, and there was a bag of cocaine, I guess. And then I realized that this is probably very, very common because it was lying there like nothing.” (Agnes)

Others describe drugs as pretty uncommon. Several interviewees have never been in contact with it or noticed that others have been high. A majority of the interviewees do not describe drug use as something commonly noticed at parties, clubs, or other kinds of events. Still, their experiences differ, especially regarding cannabis. Some never see it, while others describe that people commonly smoke joints at parties.

The interviewees present different descriptive norms regarding how common drugs are, and it is made clear that what is normalized differs between different social circles. As Isak describes: “I have experienced that drugs occur very differently depending on what it is

and how much it is talked about and perhaps how much it is seen as an okay thing to do.” This indicates that the student context is diverse and leaves room for different experiences.

5.2.2 When, where, and who?

When talking about in which contexts drugs are present, the interviewees mostly talk about parties. “Mostly it's like at parties. People go out and smoke a joint, or you do cocaine in the bathroom.” (Oliver) However, they have different views on whether it is done out in public at clubs or kept in private settings. For example, Nadja and Isak can not imagine that people do drugs at the clubs. At the same time, Marcus has found traces of drugs when working at a club, and Agnes describes how a specific bathroom at one of the nations is referred to as the cocaine toilet since that is where people do cocaine. Freya has experienced that the police have come when people have done cocaine at balls. Oliver's experience is that nothing happens at the nations' public venues but that drugs are done at the afterparties in the corridors where students live.

Some also mention occasions when drugs have been taken in quieter settings. For example, Lilly describes the context when her friends used cannabis: “They had eaten dinner, and it was a fun thing to try out.” Nadja explains how she tried cannabis while camping under a starry sky, and Oliver how he introduced cannabis to his girlfriend as a romantic thing for them to do together. Isak has mostly experienced drugs at house parties and reflects on the feeling of safety.

“If a person lives in a student corridor, then they know that they are close to home and so on. So if they, if it gets too much or they get tired and so on, someone can always, if it's a friend of theirs, they can sleep in their room or on their sofa or something.”

(Isak)

The contexts mentioned again point to the diversity of student life in Lund. The interviewees' perceptions of what is done and the descriptive norm differ. That most people mention narcotics in connection to parties is, however, not surprising in light of previous research. Studies have shown that drugs commonly are introduced in social settings (Bullock,2004; Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022), and Bullock (2004,p.42-46) also reported that many students were under the influence of alcohol when trying drugs for the

first time. The other contexts described by the interviewees have also been social, except for a few occasions described by Isak and Oliver when people have used drugs alone. In these cases, they referred to experienced users.

The interviewees also present their thoughts about in which groups drugs are more commonly used. They mention different student organizations and study fields. Bullock (2004) saw that different substances were more or less common among students within different fields. 20 years later, the interviewees share this perception to some extent, but their views are not consistent with each other. Some mention social scientists as more drug-positive, some high usage among medical students, and others view engineering students as frequent users. It is not the case that they all point fingers at each other's fields either; some view their fields as more active than others. The views of student organizations also differed. For example, some who have not been involved in the nations believe usage to be widespread there. "Those who live at the nations, those who are involved in the nations, that's where it feels like it's, or I've heard that it's lively there". (Hugo).

The ones that have been involved in different organizations, however, all emphasize that the organizations have zero-tolerance policies and that they have not experienced drugs in those settings. There is one exception, as all interviewees mention a specific nation as drug-dense. Most of them base this on rumors, but two interviewees have closer bonds to the nation and can confirm that the rumors are not unfounded. Further, Samuel and Agnes both describe how the same people can renounce drugs in the context of an organization but act otherwise in private settings. Several also mention that their friends use drugs in some specific context but never otherwise.

"You keep it away from contexts where you feel that yes, this is a bit wrong, like student clubs are wrong, but real clubs are okay. That kind of logic [...] there is some kind of separation between how you look at it depending on where you are and who you are with." (Samuel)

Once again, the descriptive norm differs between the individuals. They have different perceptions of who uses drugs and in which contexts. The consistent factors are that drugs are linked to social contexts and that they see that individuals adapt their behavior to different settings. This shows how the same behavior can be categorized as pure or impure in various settings. Several interviewees mention that stigmatization and normalization differ between groups and contexts. Interestingly, several portray the context of student organizations as

places where drugs are impure. These organizations usually have outspoken rules and publicly take a stand against drugs, which seems to have an effect. At least, it seems to have affected the perception of their activities for most of the participants in this study. How drugs are viewed will be further addressed in the following section.

5.3 Perceptions of purity and danger

This section focuses on how drugs are viewed. Previous studies have reported that cannabis is significantly more positively seen than other substances (The Public Health Agency,2023a, p.29) and commonly perceived as less harmful (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022; The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.29; The Public Health Agency,2022b). The students confirm this as they express that cannabis is highly normalized and common. The majority also bring up that cannabis is perceived as less harmful than other substances. Hugo experiences that it is as normalized as alcohol, while most others still consider it to have a separate status but be much more accepted than other substances. Lilly, Nadja, and Sarah say that they would be surprised to see cannabis at a party, but the others would not. “I think that weed feels so normalized that it's like, no one really raises their eyebrows, you know?” (Freya).

Some interviewees, such as Lilly and Sarah, clearly stated that all drugs are wrong and that they would never try substances. Their categorization of what is dangerous and dirty included all narcotics-classified substances. In general, cannabis, however, seems to be categorized as pure rather than impure in the student context in Lund. The majority showed an acceptance of what was referred to as lighter drugs, regardless of whether they chose to use them themselves.

When discussing substances other than cannabis, the interviewees present more thoughts of impureness. “There is some kind of acceptance of cannabis. Some are in favor of legalizing it and so on, but nobody is saying that we should legalize cocaine or heroin.” (Lilly). However, the interviewees have different perspectives on how accepted or stigmatized different substances are. Freya, who has been a student the longest, has experienced that cocaine has become much more normalized during the past nine years. Agnes, Oliver, and Samuel also view cocaine as very normalized in certain circles. Simultaneously, Oliver expresses that one does not want to openly relate to a person who takes cocaine with a larger group of people you do not know. Generally, cocaine seems to be

present in many contexts but kept in smaller circles and behind closed doors. This indicates that doing cocaine does not have the same status of pureness as smoking cannabis, which is done more openly. “I mean with cannabis, you can just go out on the lawn and smoke it. [...] When people take cocaine, they always do it in isolation with a few selected people.” (Oliver).

Other substances are not mentioned to as large extent as cannabis and cocaine are. Isak, however, indicates that he views natural substances such as mushrooms as more pure than chemical substances. At the same time, both he and Oliver perceive that if you use anything other than cannabis, you will soon be seen as a person with an addiction, which is negatively loaded.

“I think in student life you can, people are lenient and accept these drugs in a way that the rest of society may not. Like, of course, if someone is addicted, I think they will get a lot of shit, or it will be... People look down on people who are addicted or have problems. But, comparatively, it is accepted in student circles.” (Samuel).

Besides arguing that students are more accepting than society in general, Samuel points to a stigmatization of addiction that Isak, Hugo, Oliver, Marcus, Lilly, and Agnes also mention. There is a boundary between what is seen as fun and routine, and irresponsible and strange. Negatively loaded Swedish words, similar to dopeheads and junkies, were used. Addiction is seen as dirt, a rejected element in the social system.

Several interviewees point out that they know that addiction can be a disease and express an understanding that there are reasons why people become addicted. Nevertheless, it is seen as something abnormal. Interestingly, the most experienced interviewees also align with this imaging, perhaps unknowingly. They both explain that they respect all people's decisions and paths in life. However, they also express worry for friends with more extensive usage and distance themselves from addiction.

“You must never let it control you. This is so very, very, very important. If I use it, I feel that I have to use it responsibly. If I take LSD, I won't take LSD again for a couple of months.” (Oliver)

Beliefs of danger and contagion can endorse moral codes and uphold social structures (Douglas,2002,p.4). All interviewees mention that societal institutions, in different ways,

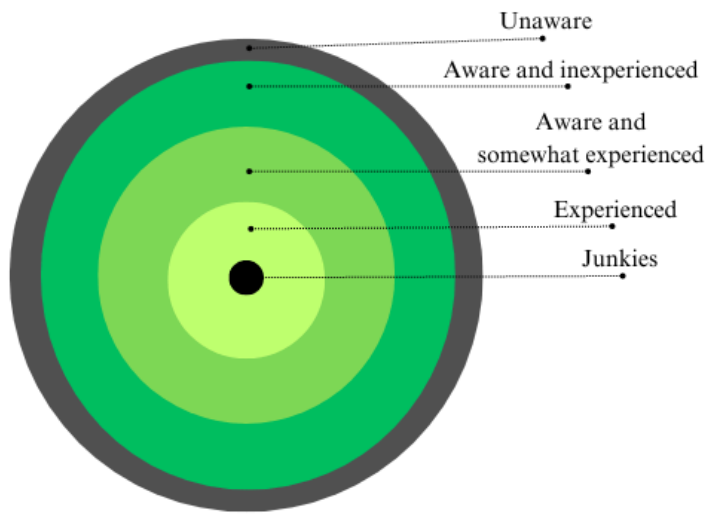
have tried to portray drugs as dangerous and bad during their childhood. Later, when the interviewees have encountered usage of cannabis or other substances, their previous assumptions have been challenged and sometimes re-evaluated. Some have held onto the view of drugs that they describe as taught by institutions, their families, the law, etc. For others, the moral code seems to have lost power, especially in their view of cannabis. For example, Freya describes how her friends started using cannabis in high school when they previously had been equally against it. Knowing them and seeing that they were still good people, caused her to re-evaluate her opinions, and she became more liberal in her view of cannabis. This becomes an example of how experiences shape perceptions, as Douglas (2002,p.46) claims they do. Something that had been seen as dangerous and dirty was re-evaluated and de-stigmatized. However, the interviewees mentioned worry about parents finding out about them doing drugs, which could indicate that the moral code is still present and has power in other contexts than the student circle. As Samuel points out in the previous quote, there is an awareness that the behaviors that might be accepted here are not so outside of the student context. The same behavior could be impure in other contexts.

Besides contextual factors, several interviewees believe that the approach to cannabis is a generational question and that young people are more likely to have a favorable view of drugs, specifically cannabis, than older generations. This aligns with previous research, as younger adults have previously portrayed a more positive view than older adults of both cannabis and other substances (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.31). Douglas (2002,p.5) mentioned that categorisation ideas can change over time from external pressure. This perception of generational difference would then indicate that there have been influences during the last decades pushing the categorization of cannabis to change. What these influences could be will be further discussed later in the analysis.

5.4 Social positioning

When discussing narcotics, the interviewees showed patterns in how they socially positioned themselves and categorized others. They constructed in-groups and out-groups (see Figure 1) and made distinctions between the characteristics of these groups.

Figure 1. In-groups and out-groups



Through the ways they talked about narcotics, the interviewees can be interpreted to categorize themselves as members of one of three groups. Either as (1) aware and inexperienced, (2) aware and somewhat experienced, or (3) experienced. In doing this, they socially positioned themselves as non-members of other groups. The most apparent constructed

out-group were people with extensive drug use and drug addictions, referred to as junkies in the figure. As previously mentioned, addiction was stigmatized. The interviewees presented specific perceptions of this group and distanced themselves from it.

To some extent, another out-group can be identified. Negatively loaded words were used to describe being fully unknowing of the drug usage. Agnes expressed being ashamed for having been unaware and not seeing the drug use that her friends had noticed, and Lilly described how you could feel dull when you have not tried any substances. In mentioning that they knew of users, even if they do not use themselves, and in still clearly distancing themselves from the usage of harder drugs, they socially position themselves as aware and inexperienced. This group could express pride for not engaging but did not want to be seen as clueless.

Five of the interviewees belong to the aware and somewhat experienced group. They have tried cannabis or other drugs a few times and know people with similar or more extensive experiences. They present a more liberal view of cannabis and sometimes other substances than the first group. Still, they have clear reasons for not trying more substances or using drugs more frequently. Lastly, two interviewees are more experienced and knowledgeable. They have tried a range of substances, have a liberal view of drugs, and use regularly but are not addicted.

It was expressed by several interviewees that it could be an honor to be invited to the rooms where drugs are taken. It has been described that some substances are done in private, out of sight of larger groups. Being included and allowed to participate in these happenings can be viewed as special, as being invited to something exclusive. "Sometimes I join in, you

know, and don't take anything. I just want to be there because it feels exciting to be in the room, like a little bit elitist.” (Oliver).

Overall, the interviewees point to a categorization of out-groups and in-groups, where the interviewees all position themselves between the unaware and the junkies. In general, it seems that the students want to be aware, some want to be more involved than others, but you do not wish to be seen as ignorant or as a junkie. This positioning is similar to the insecurity in attitude towards narcotics that Järvinen and Østergaard (2011) have identified among young Danes. They found that drugs are not seen as risk-free, but people also do not entirely distance themselves from them. The positioning could also be connected to the student context, as Oliver, Isak, and Lilly mentioned that people put weight on how they present themselves within the academic environment. Oliver compared it with how it can be seen as credible to be politically left-wing oriented, as long as you are not a communist or anarchist. “ I think it's this balancing act between presenting yourself academically and intellectually but also trying to present yourself as a fun student.” (Oliver).

There are small boundaries drawn between the three in-groups too. They are not as prominent as the two main out-groups. Still, especially the aware but inexperienced group distances themselves from students who use what they refer to as heavier drugs or repeatedly consume cannabis. For example, Lilly shares how she has disassociated herself from a girl who frequently smokes cannabis and takes pills. The first groups seem to use distancing to form a positive social identity. Interestingly, the other groups do not make comments that indicate that they view the other in-groups as out-groups. They do not draw clear boundaries. If there is hostility or prejudices between the in-groups, they seem to only come from the non-users and not be a mutual conflict. This can relate to the previous discussion of pureness, where the non-users view substance use as dirt. In contrast, the other groups do not view non-usage as abnormal but instead pure, thereby having no reason to stigmatize the first group.

5.5 Influences

During the interviews, the interviewees discussed their perspectives on what has influenced their own and others' approaches to drugs and mentioned several different influencing factors. This section discusses whether we can identify moderators and attributes that potentially affect the norm-behavior relationship in the student context.

5.5.1 The social circles' influence on thoughts and behaviors

Most of the interviewees describe that their close friends have similar views of drugs and habits as themselves. Previous research has shown that social bonds are one of the most influencing factors for how people relate to drugs (Bullock,2004; Järvinen & Østergaard,2011; Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022; The Public Health Agency,2023a) and that young people's use of narcotics is strongly connected to the habits and attitudes of their friends (Duan et al.,2009; Duncan et al.,1995; Parsai et al.,2009; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,2015). This aligns with the theoretical framework as norms that originate from people we consider close to us have been seen to have a more substantial influence on our behaviors (Neighbors et al.,2010; Phillips & Cartensen,1986; Woolf et al.,2014). Seven of the interviewees mention that they have become more accepting of drugs because, or could be influenced to do so if people around them expressed acceptance. Both Freya and Agnes express that if everyone in a social situation seems to think that it is okay that someone does drugs, their reaction has been or would be affected. They would not speak up if they thought something was strange if no one else reacted.

“It was so normalized among this group, that I reacted to it, and then I was like, well, okay, but then I might have to change my perception of this, it might be more okay to do coke than I thought before.” (Freya).

Agnes expresses that even if you believe something is wrong, you do not want to distance yourself and lose all your friends. This could explain why there seems to be a tendency to accept and align with the group's perception. The tendency also aligns with previous findings within TNSB, showing that conforming to group members is associated with positive emotions (Christensen, Rothgerber, Wood, & Matz,2004).

Furthermore, when asked what has shaped their personal views and could change their perceptions, all interviewees mention being influenced by friends' experiences that they have heard about or witnessed. Discussions with significant people seem to have a prevalent influence on perceptions of drugs, which aligns with the previous study by Kvillemo, Strandberg, and Gripenberg (2022). The influence has pushed the interviewees to become more or less restrictive in their approach to drugs, as some have heard about examples where

people have had bad experiences and faced the consequences. In contrast, others have only heard about fun experiences. Järvinen and Østergaard (2011) saw that people with personal experiences or experienced friends more likely viewed drugs as fun and safe, while Bullock (2004) saw that people were influenced to abstain if someone close had been injured or sick from drugs. Both perspectives emerge in this present study.

Interestingly, there is a clear difference in influencing reaction and perception from behavior. A majority of the interviewees express that they do not believe that they would be influenced to use more drugs if their friends did so. Nine of the ten interviewees have never experienced group pressure concerning drug usage within the student context. Some state that if they experienced pressure, they would want to change their social circle. As mentioned, they can change their perception to avoid losing friends, but with behavior, the case seems to be different. The student context is large, and the interviewees say there is a lot to do and always new people to meet. Perhaps these social opportunities make it not worth having to change habits to be accepted in a social setting. Interdependence and group identity have been mentioned as moderators of the norm-behavior relationship (Rimal & Lapinski, 2015, p.399). The interdependence could be perceived as significant within a friend group, but when the relationship is challenged, the social opportunities within the student context could lower the experience of interdependence. Some interviewees also express that if their friends changed, they would not relate to them anymore, indicating that the group identity would decrease. Here, we can see an example of how social relationships can have an impact but also lose it, which shows how context-dependent moderators are. Their influence is highly dependent on interactions with other factors. This finding complements previous discussions within TNSB and shows there are limits to when we choose to conform to the group and associate it with positive emotions.

The only one who has ever experienced group pressure in the student context is one of the engineering students, who was offered drugs during his introduction weeks. A majority mentioned that they believe new students could experience more pressure than they do later on since they want to be accepted and find new friends in an unfamiliar context. However, most have not experienced that themselves. Nadja, Marcus, Oliver, Samuel, Isak, Agnes, and Freya describe that drugs were more present during their time in high school or secondary school, and they experienced that peer pressure was more present at that time than during their university years. This aligns with previous research as McIntosh et al. (2021) argue that friendships play a more prominent role in younger ages, and since peer pressure seems more influential among teenagers (Kvillemo et al., 2021) than young adults (Kvillemo, Strandberg

& Gripenberg,2022). This could indicate that the social-level moderators have more influence in younger age groups, which makes age a moderator in the drug context. Age has previously been identified as a moderator that affects which sources of normative information are valued and impact behavioral decisions (Rimal & Lapinski,2015,p.400). Several interviewees mentioned that they believe that habits are formed at younger ages and that a majority of the drug users at the university have tried drugs before they started their studies. It is, however, perceived as more likely to try cannabis for the first time during the university years than other substances.

5.5.2 Relating to social expectations

Injunctive norms describe people's expectations of which behaviors are approved and expected from them by the significant people around them (Rimal & Real,2005,p.391). Thoughts about expectations and potential reactions from friends and family were discussed during the interviews.

None of the interviewees expressed fear of being excluded from their friend groups if they used or declined drugs, at least not straight away. A few mention that you might be seen as dull if you decline an offer when many others accept, but do not worry about long-term social consequences. Lilly, Nadja, Sarah, and Agnes mention that their friends do not expect them to use drugs. Marcus, Hugo, Samuel, Freya, and Oliver mention that some would be surprised, especially if they used heavier drugs, but others probably would not. Several nevertheless expect their friends to react and question their decision. Most of the interviewees think that taking drugs once or twice would be approved by their surroundings, but that repeated behavior would be frowned upon. Some mention that their friends would probably eventually disassociate themselves if it became a recurrent thing, and they also express that is what they would do themselves.

“Because there are some people in my immediate circle of friends who have tried it, I don't think there would have been any reprisals, but if it had become a recurring thing, I definitely think people would have said something or maybe even distanced themselves.” (Lilly)

This corresponds to the previously portrayed image of addiction as impure. Initially, most would, however, expect support and care from their friends. “I think they would have thought something was wrong and been supportive.” (Sarah). The experienced users have friends who also use drugs, and with them, it is not stigmatized. Instead, Isak expresses that he expects his friends to have honest and open conversations with him, be supportive, and help him gain better self-understanding. Oliver has both experienced users and non-users in his social circle, and he expressed that not all would react well if he told them about his usage. He thereby thinks twice before speaking openly about it. “That's kind of why I tend to be very careful about what I say to people because it's not always appreciated.” (Oliver).

Even the interviewees who express that they could risk being excluded by friends do not seem to be significantly influenced by this risk in their approach to drugs. Many more express concern for how their families would react. “I'd be more afraid that Mom and Dad would find out. Because you feel much more ashamed if you do something stupid in front of your parents.” (Agnes). This is in line with the results from Bullock's study from 2004, where more non-users stated to be influenced by their families than friends in their decision to abstain from drugs.

None of the interviewees were afraid that their parents would stop talking to them, but several mentioned that they would get strong reactions and that the parents would be angry and worried.

“Well, they would have tried to call and say that this is really bad, we are very worried about this and they would have probably come here unannounced and been here for a weekend just because - we have to be here for your sake. They would have made it a bigger deal than I feel it is.” (Marcus)

Still, they also mention that they are adults, not living with their parents, and their families' reactions would have been stronger when they were younger. Isak's parents found out that he did drugs when he was younger and threw him out of their house at the time. However, they worried about him and reached out again. Since then, Isak knows that he would not receive any strong reactions from his surroundings, and his injunctive norm stands out. Others expect stronger reactions from their significant people, especially their families. The injunctive norm can function as a moderator in this context but to different extents for different individuals. Families' expectations might also have a more significant influence than friends' expectations. Potentially, this could be a result of higher dependency and group

identification with the families than the friends. As mentioned above, friends could be perceived as replaceable, which family might not be.

5.5.3 Perceived benefits & risks

During the interviews, the interviewees discussed how they and others perceive benefits and risks in connection to drugs and what outcomes they expect when abstaining from or using drugs. According to the theory of normative social behavior, these thoughts can affect behaviors and how individuals relate to norms (Rimal & Real,2005,p.393-394). Social benefits and risks have already been addressed, and this section will focus on other perspectives.

The risks and benefits mentioned below have all been highlighted in previous research (Bullock,2004; Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022; Public Health Agency,2023a,p.30). However, the interviewees present some interesting reflections. Firstly, all interviewees mention an awareness of health risks connected to drug usage. For some, this causes them to abstain completely, while others consider health effects when choosing which substances they use and how often. Interestingly, even if they all mention this risk, only the inexperienced highlighted it as highly influential. The influence on this group aligns with findings from 20 years ago, as 94% of non-users in Bullock's study (2004) listed health reasons as a motivation for not trying. The other groups' perceptions are further interesting. Hugo mentioned that people choose to do many things they know are bad for their health. This risk of drugs might then not be seen as much worse than other harmful things, such as eating poorly.

A majority also mentions the risk of addiction as something that has shaped their approach to drugs. This risk seems more influential, which aligns with the previous discussion of how addiction is viewed. Further, Hugo, Marcus, and Nadja mention that usage could endanger financial stability by affecting job opportunities, structure, etc. Agnes, Hugo, and Lilly also mention personality changes and losing control as discouraging consequences. The risk of affecting one's life situation and stability, thereby, seems to be influential.

Further, the discussed substances are all illegal, but interestingly, nine out of ten describe that people, in general, are unconcerned about legal consequences. The Public Health Agency (2023a,p.30) has stated that restrictive laws regarding narcotics affect usage levels and attitudes but that it remains uncertain how extensive the effect is. Within the student context in Lund, the effect seems to be limited. The risk of the police finding out is

perceived so small that you do not worry much about it. “I think people understand that it is illegal but that you don't feel that you risk getting caught anyway, so it doesn't matter. Like riding a bike without lights.” (Nadja)

A few point out that for them, illegality still matters and that it feels morally wrong to break the law. Oliver instead sees that the illegality makes it exciting: “It becomes some kind of marking, you know, rebellious, breaking the law, rebellious student.” Bullock’s study (2004) was conducted in student contexts, and she reported that less than 20% worried about negative consequences such as being arrested, which seems to align with the interviewees’ perceptions now 20 years later.

Seven of the interviewees mention contributing to criminality as a consequence of drug usage. They express that they do not want to contribute to giving money to the ongoing gang criminality that has been frequently written about in Swedish media during the last year. This becomes more of a moral question than illegality does. Adverse societal effects are more worrisome and could have a more moderating effect than rules and risk of punishment.

The risks of using also become the benefits of abstaining. When not using, you do not risk your health or life stability, contribute to criminality, or break the law. Isak also highlights that he sees that it can give social status to abstain from drugs. He points to the impurity of drug usage that has been identified. Social risks have been discussed above, but it is worth pointing out that half of the interviewees emphasize social risks over other risks. It is perceived as beneficial to abstain from things that endanger your social relationships.

However, the interviewees also discuss the benefits of drug usage. Not all interviewees perceived benefits but reflect on how they believe others motivate their usage. The most commonly mentioned benefits are fun and fascinating experiences, calmness, getting a rush, and feeling good. Freya and Nadja mentioned the possibility of pain relief for sick people from cannabis, and Isak mentioned how science is starting to see the benefits of more substances for people with mental health problems. A majority of the interviewees express that they do not see that using heavier drugs would give any benefits. For most, the risks seem to outweigh the benefits. Following what Kvillemo, Strandberg, and Gripenberg (2022) saw, the benefits instead, to some extent, outweigh the disadvantages for the two experienced users. However, the risk-awareness still appears to affect how they choose to do drugs and make them reflect on safer consumption.

Risk awareness has previously been seen to be insufficient in the prevention of cannabis use (Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg, 2022), and as mentioned, cannabis is relatively normalized. However, the presented perceptions of risks and benefits have the

potential to affect how the students relate to norms and choose to behave. These perceptions are outcome expectations, a previously acknowledged moderator in the TNSB. Based on these interviewees, it, however, seems likely that risk awareness has more influence on decisions regarding heavier drugs than cannabis.

5.5.4 Further influential factors

The factors now presented as influencing factors were most prominent during the interviews. However, other factors have been mentioned and will be presented here to enable a better understanding of the many influences that affect the students' perceptions of drugs and mediate their behavior. These factors are potential moderators specific to this context and time.

Most interviewees mention having been influenced by media and popular culture in some way. Freya, Agnes, Isak, Oliver, and Marcus mention the portrayal of addiction in movies and TV shows, and Marcus, Lilly, and Nadja mention having been affected by news reports. Normalization of cannabis in popular culture, which has been seen to create higher acceptance (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.29), is, on the other hand, not mentioned at all. However, Lilly, Nadja, and Marcus mention that they believe other countries' legalization of cannabis to be influential among their peers, which has also been previously seen (ibid).

“People think that it's kind of legal in the Netherlands and you can buy in Christiania and you can, well, in the US it's legal in several places so people think it's like... Well, then it's not as bad to do it.” (Lilly)

Further, thoughts about socioeconomic factors and life situations also arose. Socioeconomic status and previous life difficulties have been considered factors affecting attitudes and usage (The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.31). For example, people with lower income have seen fewer risks associated with drug use, than people with higher income have (ibid). Four of the interviewees mention socioeconomic factors or class as an influencing factor. Oliver points out that social factors come with class belonging and that the social context affected him as a teenager when he started doing drugs. “Both he and I come from a slightly lower social class, where you hang very close to this type of criminal environment or people.” (Oliver).

Several mention social vulnerability, but there are also recurrent thoughts about drugs as an upper-class habit. For example, Hugo compares Lund with Malmö. He connects drug usage in Malmö more to lower classes and vulnerability, while in Lund, he connects drugs, such as cocaine, to rich people at snobby student organizations. The general view seems to be that in Lund, it is more common to see upper-class people as drug users than connecting drugs to socially vulnerable people. Several mention that drugs are expensive, and for some, being a student with scarce finances has affected usage. The monetary cost is of significance in the student context and seems to influence behaviors.

Being a student is also mentioned as a factor that influences decisions. Our two more experienced users both describe that you can not have extensive drug use and study simultaneously. Their focus has shifted, and their habits have changed because of it. Life situation or lifestyle becomes an influencing factor. Sarah also mentioned lifestyle as a highly influential factor, as she is very sports-interested, active, and health-aware; drug use goes against her whole lifestyle.

Another lifestyle or student context-related factor discussed by all interviewees is the alcohol culture in Lund. All interviewees describe alcohol as very present in the student environment and that it is usual to drink several times a week and get drunk often. They explain that generally, students perceive alcohol consumption as fun and social. Several express that they believe that alcohol takes such a dominant role in student life that drugs are not given space or much thought. Heavy alcohol consumption has previously been seen to increase the likeliness of drug consumption (Bullock,2004; Järvinen & Østergaard,2011), and some of the interviewees do see that individuals get tired of alcohol and move on to other substances. The general perception is, however, that alcohol often out-competes drugs in this context, except for cannabis. The greater masses do not even consider other drugs since getting drunk is highly normalized and socially promoted. The alcohol consumption norm thereby seems to influence drug relevance in this specific context.

5.6 Prevention

During the interviews, the interviewees presented thoughts about preventative measures. Firstly, only one interviewee mentioned having been influenced by information given in school. Most do not recollect receiving information there, while some say they did, but it did not impact them. Public information has previously been seen to have limited effects

(Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022). Young adults have stated that the credibility of information given by the public is questioned since it competes with information from people with personal experiences (ibid). The interviewees also express that personal experiences are valued higher than information from the public. Just as in the focus group study by Kvillemo, Strandberg, and Gripenberg (2022), some interviewees criticize the public discourse for not being objective and only focusing on intimidation. They wish for more honest and transparent information on specific effects and how to use substances more safely.

“If there is a climate where you don't feel you can talk about it, you might build more on your own experiences because no one talks about it.” (Marcus). Marcus reflects on how a more open discussion could increase the willingness to take in the information given by authorities. Isak mentioned the same thing, and both they and Nadja discussed that sometimes you might have to focus on getting people to use drugs in safer ways rather than abstaining. The three of them mention safe needle initiatives, where people can come and get clean needles and information without having to answer questions, as examples of promising initiatives.

Isak also reflects on how a more open climate of discussion could help people talk about their difficulties in life and get help before they turn to drugs to feel better. Both he and Oliver mention that social work should be prioritized. Oliver got help from social workers during his teenage years; they helped him find meaning and set goals for his future, which was very meaningful for him. Further, Nadja also points out that a more open discussion and de-stigmatization of drugs could lead to more people seeking help and finding their way to more healthy life choices.

Besides a change of public discourse mentioned by several, the interviewees do not agree on what should be done. Agnes discusses how harder legal consequences could discourage usage, while Sarah believes it could be effective to point more towards morality and what you are contributing to. Oliver thinks it could be beneficial to connect the health risks to how they could affect studies since students most often want to succeed with their studies. Marcus believes that people should be better informed about long-term health consequences. Freya thinks that the only way to affect students is to get the ones in leading positions within the student organizations to take a clear stand against drugs and thereby influence the descriptive norm. Their differing suggestions of preventative measures indicate that drug prevention is a complex issue and that there is no obvious answer to what should be done.

This study has highlighted many aspects that could guide the design of future approaches to increase the likelihood of reaching and affecting the student population. For example, how drugs are perceived to be used, how they are discussed, and how the interviewees' perceptions have been shaped and could be affected. Considering the many influencing factors found and the fact that each individual relates to these in different ways, it is clear that drug-preventative measures will have different effects on different individuals. The findings here indicate that a broad approach is necessary if the wish is to attain change within this student population, which also aligns with the conclusion of Kvillemo, Strandberg, and Gripenberg (2022).

6. Concluding discussion

This final chapter discusses and summarizes the results of the study. Further, it presents recommendations for future research and some concluding reflections.

6.1 Students' perspectives on drugs in Lund

The study indicates that drugs are present in the student context in Lund but not something that people expect to see at every party or gathering. Even if all interviewees know of people who have used drugs, the majority do not describe it as commonly observed in the student context. Cannabis is perceived as the most common substance, but several also mention cocaine as more used than other substances. Additionally, LSD, ecstasy, ketamine, and magic mushrooms have all been observed within student circles, which is not surprising in comparison with the recent wastewater report (Karlsson,2024) and aligns to some extent with Bullock's findings from 2004. Important to note is that the findings do not show that the mentioned substances are the only present substances, just that students in Lund use these substances.

Drug usage is mainly connected to parties and other social gatherings, which aligns with findings from previous research (Bullock,2004; Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022). Still, they can be hidden behind closed doors. The use of cannabis is commonly perceived as socially accepted and differentiated from other substances as purer and more similar to alcohol. Cannabis can be smoked in open settings, whereas other substances often are hidden, associated with addiction, considered impure, and less socially accepted. Cocaine seems to be more accepted than some other drugs but is still typically consumed in smaller groups in private settings. Addiction is stigmatized, and to some extent, it also seems undesirable to be completely unaware of drugs. The students all demonstrate varying levels of knowledge and experience with drugs, and it seems important not to be perceived as uninformed or as junkies but somewhere in between. There could be status in being invited into the small settings where heavier drugs are, or to not having tried any drugs and in that way be pure.

The interviewees' perceptions of what is used, by whom, and how frequently differ, which points to the diversity within the student community. Different behaviors and opinions are normalized in different social circles. Student organizations are most commonly described

as taking a stance against drugs, which has been seen to affect people to stay clean at the organizations' events but instead do drugs in other contexts where it is more accepted.

The interviewees brought up many different factors that they saw have influenced themselves or others in the perception and usage of drugs. The most prominent influences are social factors, even if group pressure is almost nonexistent in this context. For example, it is described as likely that one would change perceptions of drugs to align with the group's perceptions. Interestingly, there is a clear difference in changing behavior. Fewer believe that they would change their behavior and use drugs if people close to them did so, and if pressured to align, they would instead leave the friend group. Also, when discussing how the interviewees relate to social expectations, they were more worried about the potential reactions of their families than their friends if they would do drugs. Both these findings exemplify how the influence of social relationships is dependent on other factors, such as group identity and interdependence. Several also mention that they would have been more affected by group pressure at younger ages, which aligns with indications from previous studies (Kvillemo et al., 2021; Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg, 2022; McIntosh et al., 2021; Rimal & Lapinski, 2015, p.400) and would make age a moderating factor in the drug context.

Concerning risk perceptions, the interviewees show awareness of risks but are influenced to different extents. For example, the inexperienced saw health risks as highly influential for abstaining, while it seemed less influential for others. The illegality also appears to have a limited influence on perception and usage. The risk of monetarily contributing to criminal activities seemed more influential. For most, the risks still largely outweighed the potential benefits.

Furthermore, influences from media, popular culture, life situations, and alcohol culture are mentioned. The diversity of mentioned influences shows how individuals compile information from many different sources. Various individuals value information differently as they compare it to previous knowledge and perceptions. For example, some do not listen to public information since they value personal stories they have heard or their own experiences more. In contrast, others' lack of experience seems to make them more receptive to public information.

The interviewees present different ideas of how to prevent drug usage. The most prominent suggestion is to change public discourse towards a more open and honest conversation about effects, safety, etc. Further, all discussed findings are relevant information for this context's design of preventative measures. The study teaches us how the interviewed

students value different sources of information and what they experience as the norms, moderators, and attributes of drugs in this context. Their thoughts bring up topics relevant to the setting and group, even if the interviewees are not statistically representative of the whole student population.

The findings of this study, to a large extent, align with previous research but add personal reflections in a specific context. The findings exemplify that norms concerning drugs are context-dependent. This knowledge becomes of interest since it is essential to include the target population and consider their experiences when planning preventative interventions (Bullock,2004; Kvillemo, Strandberg & Gripenberg,2022; Järvinen & Østergaard,2011; The Public Health Agency,2023a,p.32). This study can not conclude which specific measures would be effective in this context since it shows that groups and individuals value information differently. The findings, however, highlight aspects that should be considered while designing interventions, and we can conclude that a context such as being a student in Lund is too large to address with a single approach.

6.2 Future research and methodological reflections

More targeted recommendations of preventative measures could have been found if the study focus had been narrowed. A more narrow study of a specific student group or a more limited topic could have enabled a deepened discussion within that area, resulting in interesting findings. The depth of this study is now restricted to some degree because of the width of the study. The aim was, nevertheless, to highlight the broader perceptions within the student population and find relevant themes and patterns. This study points out relevant factors to consider when developing preventative measures for the student population in Lund. The study can be viewed as a pre-study pointing towards themes that should be studied further. Future studies could deepen the knowledge by studying more specific, smaller groups of students. Which groups it should be will not be recommended here since the interviewees do not represent students at their faculties, programs, age, student unions, nations, etc. I suggest complementing this study with a quantitative study that maps habits or perceptions within specific groups within the university context. Combined, these two studies would show relevant themes and groups for further qualitative studies that could enable more targeted preventative efforts.

This study has, to a large extent, been data-driven, using theory and previous research as tools to highlight the interviewees' experiences. This process design has suited the project with its aims and objectives. I would not have changed the approach if this study were to be replicated. I have not encountered big problems during the process. After having conducted similar studies before, I have learned from my experiences. Of course, there is still always room for improvement. For example, I now would not have tried to conduct the first interviews in public. I would also have preferred if the two shortest interviews had been extended more. These two interviewees had limited experiences, but I could have encouraged them to reflect further. I could have asked more follow-up questions also during several other interviews. This could potentially have provided more interesting aspects to the analysis. Interview technique is a skill that can constantly be improved.

Furthermore, not all the gathered data are discussed in the study. As a researcher, I have to choose what to highlight that is relevant to my research focus. Another researcher might have brought forward other aspects. Nevertheless, I have portrayed the findings that I found most relevant and interesting concerning my research focus and have answered my research questions. For more methodological reflections, visit Chapter 3.

The use of narcotics is an issue with consequences for individuals, their loved ones, and society. As previously mentioned, there are prominent costs associated with drug usage. Because of the recent governmental focus on crime prevention, drug prevention is a current topic gaining attention. The norms and influencing factors highlighted by the interviewees are examples of how perceptions of drugs and, thereby, drug-related behavior are context-dependent. Although it would be resource-intensive, similar studies should be conducted in other municipalities to increase knowledge of local conditions and the likelihood of designing preventative measures in suitable ways. This study shows that one can discover locally relevant topics just by talking to a few people. These topics can then point toward how drug use can be discouraged.

The research community and societal leaders need to recognize the need for customized approaches. There is unlikely a single solution to this societal problem. Drug problems are connected to many different factors and issues, and people relate to drugs in various ways. The drug prevention debate needs to incorporate a multifaceted perspective of how different structures - norms, class, social relationships, discourses, etc., influence individuals in their perceptions of drugs.

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Appendix 1 - Interview guide

The questions in the interview guide are in Swedish since this was the language of the interviews. English translations can be conducted upon request.

First age, student life involvements, and how long they have studied in Lund.

Focus 1: Conception of the general view of and approach to narcotics within the student life

- Hur skulle du beskriva livet som student i Lund?
- Hur vanligt upplever du att det är att studenter är höga inom studentlivet?
 - Har du varit i sammanhang där det tas droger, eller hört om sammanhang där andra tagit?
 - Om ja →
 - Vilken sorts sammanhang? (Hemmafester, klubbar, studiesyfte, för att slappna av etc.)
 - Är din uppfattning att alla närvarande deltar? Eller kan det ske i sammanhang där bara någon gör det? Vad påverkar vilka som gör det?
 - Upplever du att det är vanligt att ha återkommande bruk eller är det vanligare att experimentera?
 - Om nej →
 - Är din uppfattning då att studenter generellt inte använder narkotika?
 - Vilka gör det?
 - Om du vill få tag i narkotika, vet du hur du skulle kunna få tag i det?
 - Skulle du säga att det är vanligare bland vissa grupper inom studentlivet?
 - Upplever du att det finns en koppling mellan alkoholbruk och droger?
- Är det främst fest/avslappningsyfte? Förekommer studiefokusdroger?
- Hur accepterat upplever du att det är att röka på och ta andra droger inom studentlivet?
 - Hur pratar man om det? Pratar man öppet om det?
 - Hur ser man på personer som gör det?
 - Upplever du att det är olika attityder gentemot narkotika i olika sammanhang?
 - Är det olika för olika sorters narkotika?
 - Hur förhåller man sig till att det är olagligt?
 - Upplever du att studentlivet lockar till droganvändning?
- Vad finns det för sociala förväntningar kring hur man ska agera? Upplever du att man förväntas avstå, eller förväntas ha testat eller använda regelbundet?
 - Hur blir man bemött om man inte agerar som man förväntas?
 - Är det okej att tacka nej om vänner tar det?
 - Hur blir man bemött om man följer förväntningarna?
 - Hur förhåller du dig till förväntningarna? Är de rimliga?
- Vilken reaktion förväntar du dig få från din sociala omgivning om du blir hög? / Avstår från droger?
- Vilket beteende skulle du säga att de runtomkring dig förväntar sig att du har?

- Varför?
- Gör ni likadant allihop i gruppen?
- Hur hade de agerat om du inte följde förväntningarna?
- Hur tänker du kring gruppträck? Är det något som påverkar dig?

Focus 2 : Thoughts about narcotics and what affects people's decisions to use or abstain from narcotics.

- Hur upplever du att ditt eget beteende och dina tankar kring droger motsvarar det vi har pratat om nu kring hur andra agerar och tänker?
- Vad associerar du droger med? Kul? Läskigt? Onödigt? Socialt? Avslappnande? Etc.
- Är det olika beroende på vilken drog?
- Finns det fördelar med att ta droger? Vilka?
- Hur riskfyllt upplever du att det är?
- Vad skulle du säga påverkar ditt eget agerande och dina tankar? (Varifrån har du fått information om droger? Vad har format din uppfattning?)
 - Lagar, samhällsinformation, hur närmaste vängruppen agerar, förväntningar, effekterna av det, moral, vad andra gör, livsstilen, olagligheten, värderingar etc.?
 - Varför/Varför inte?
 - Påverkar de risker som du ser ditt förhållningssätt?
 - Vad påverkar mest? Vad hade kunnat få dig att ändra inställning?
 - Minns du om det förekom någon undervisning om droger i skolan?
- Hade du samma inställning till droger innan du började studera?
 - Om nej → Vad har fått dig att ändra inställning?
- Upplever du att din umgängeskrets har samma inställning som du?
 - Om ja → tror du att ni har påverkat varandra i det?
- Om dina nära vänner helt plötsligt hade bytt åsikt och antingen börjat använda eller slutat beroende på hur det är nu, hur tror du att det hade påverkat dig?
 - Hade det påverkat dig på samma sätt om det var en annan grupp som du umgås med som gjorde samma förändring?
 - Om nej → Hur påverkar det ert umgänge? Pratar ni om det?
- Hur nära skulle du säga att du står dina vänner? Hur skulle du beskriva era vänskaper?
- Hur ser du på alkohol?
 - Har det förändrats under studietiden?
- Vad tror du hade kunnat minska droganvändandet inom studentvärlden?
 - Hade mer information om risker påverkat?
 - Vem borde de isåfall komma ifrån?

Appendix 2 - Information presented to the interviewees

Stort tack för att du har valt att delta i den här studien!

Studien du deltar i ligger till grund för en masteruppsats vid den sociologiska institutionen vid Lunds Universitet. Studien genomförs av mig, Elin Magnusson, och du kan nå mig via email: [REDACTED] eller via telefon: [REDACTED]. Du får gärna kontakta mig om du har några frågor eller funderingar kring studien och ditt deltagande. Skulle det vara frågor som du inte vill diskutera direkt med mig är du också välkommen att kontakta min handledare, Mikael Klintman, via email: [REDACTED].

Syftet med studien är att undersöka studenters upplevelser av drogsituationen i Lund. Under intervjun kommer vi främst diskutera hur vanligt du upplever att droger är inom studentlivet, hur det pratas om att vara hög samt din inställning till droger och de normer som du upplever finns kring det. Vi kommer att fokusera på substanser som är narkotikaklassade, alltså berör inte arbetet alkohol. Substanser så som cannabis, receptbelagda läkemedel, ecstasy, kokain, tramadol, LSD och liknande är relevanta. Det har ingen betydelse hur liten eller stor erfarenheter du själv har av droganvändning eller av att vara i miljöer där droger används. Att få ta del av olika perspektiv har stor betydelse för min forskning.

Deltagande är frivilligt. Du får närsomhelt avbryta intervjun eller lämna en fråga obesvarad. Du kan också kontakta mig i efterhand om du vill att något klipps bort ur materialet, dock senast 15 mars.

Med din tillåtelse kommer intervjun att spelas in i ljudformat. Ljudfilen kommer att behandlas som känsligt material och endast hanteras av mig samt eventuellt min handledare om min arbetsprocess skulle kräva det. Vid transkriberingen kommer materialet att aidentifieras, vilket innebär att namn och sådant som nämns som kan kopplas till din person kommer att ändras eller uteslutas ur uppsatsen. Dina uttalanden ska inte gå att koppla till dig som person. Intervjun hålls på svenska men citat som används i uppsatsen kommer översättas till engelska.

När uppsatsen är färdigställd kommer studiens resultat att presenteras för Lunds kommuns enhet för social hållbarhet. Kommunen arbetar aktivt med att förebygga narkotikaanvändning och under 2024 ska de se över sitt arbetssätt och utveckla ett mer långsiktigt förebyggande arbete. Studien kommer att bidra till att ge dem insyn i hur studentpopulationen reflekterar kring narkotika och hur vanligt narkotikabruk upplevs vara inom studentgruppen. Framtida insatser kan då bli tydligare och bättre kopplade till den verkliga situationen.

Ditt deltagande kommer därmed både att hjälpa mig att nå mina studiemål samt bidra till att ge Lunds kommun ett kunskapsunderlag för framtida förebyggande arbete. Tack för din tid och ditt engagemang!

Appendix 3 - Coding scheme

- **Drug scene**
 - Commonality
 - *Frequency*
 - *Common frequency of usage*
 - *Friends habits*
 - *Own experience*
 - Context
 - *Who*
 - *Where and when*
 - Drugs
 - *Substances*
 - *Accessibility*
 - Who
 - *Prejudices of specific groups*
 - *Who*
- **Approaches**
 - Group differences
 - *Gender differences*
 - *Study differences*
 - *Regional differences*
 - Different attitudes toward different substances
 - *Cannabis normalization*
 - *Different attitudes toward different substances*
 - Attitudes
 - *Common attitudes*
 - *Own attitude*

- *Hiding*
- *Talked about*
- *Unnormalized*
- **Influences**
 - Personally influenced
 - *Media*
 - *School*
 - *Family norms*
 - *Popular culture*
 - *Personal stories*
 - Influences
 - *General influences*
 - Social context
 - *Student life/culture*
 - *Alcohol*
 - *Drugs Alcohol*
 - *Student organizations*
 - *Group dynamic*
 - *Group pressure*
 - *Friendship*
 - *Family*
 - *Seen by social context*
 - *Social expectations*
 - Life context
 - *Life situation*
 - *Previous experience*
 - Consequences

- *Consequences*
- *Gang violence*
- *Perception of risks*
- *Family*
- *Social reactions*
- *Illegality*
- Motivation
 - *Why*
 - *Benefits*
- **Prevention**
 - *Discourage and prevent*

Codes that were not processed beyond the first round:

Background info - The background information was used in the methods section and the presentation of the interviewees but was not included in the main themes.

International - International refers to habits of international students that a few interviewees had observed, but the information was brief and considered not contributing to the analysis.

Denmark - The code Denmark referred to references to accessibility and habits in Denmark, which I later considered outside of this analysis's focus.