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**A SOCIAL WORK STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS IN THE
SOUTH AFRICAN POST OFFICE IN DURBAN**

by

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Pretoria.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation denotes original work by me and has not been submitted in any other form to another University. Where use has been made of the work of other authors and sources it has been accordingly acknowledge and referenced in the body of the dissertation.

The research for this dissertation was completed in the Department of Social Work at the University of Pretoria, Pretoria. Research was undertaken under the supervision of Dr F.M. Taute during the period May 2002 to April 2003.

Opinions expressed and conclusions attained are mine.

Signature : _____

MILDRED NTOMBENHLE MAMOEKETSI MOHAU-BUTHELEZI

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APRIL 2003

DEDICATION

This Dissertation is dedicated to:

my dad

Wilfred Tsidiso Selo Mohau who passed away in 1973

“Every time I make a wish.....I wish you were here”

and my daughter:

Melody who was born in 2002

“The happiest moments are those shared with you, I’m glad I have you”

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MILDRED NTOMBENHLE MAMOEKETSI MOHAU-BUTHELEZI

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ABSTRACT

AIDS is a leading high-risk disease with multiple-faceted impact worldwide. It is impacting on a number of sectors.

This subject was chosen because of personal interest, and also because of lack of research on the subject in the South African Post Office (SAPO). The researcher's work in Durban, at the SAPO as an Employee Assistance Professional for two years, has exposed her to an increasing number of employees infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

As an Employee Assistance Professional the researcher is expected to support these employees. Through working with employees who are infected and affected by HIV/AIDS the researcher felt interested in the subject, especially in investigating how HIV/AIDS is affecting SAPO. The researcher also wanted to contribute to increasing the knowledge base, and to contribute to the development of the organization. This study will assist management to gain insight into the impact of HIV/AIDS on the workplace, and then to be able to plan for the future.

This study was focused on the impact of HIV/AIDS in the SAPO in Durban. It was designed to understand the psychosocial impact of HIV/AIDS on both the infected and the affected employees. The aim of the study was to explore the impact at individual level and at the organization as a whole. A particular area of interest was on the impact caused by HIV/AIDS on their benefits and the execution of work of the employees.

Data was gathered by a questionnaire through a sample of 33 supervisors and 10

managers from the Post Offices around Durban who were selected using systematic random sampling. Efforts were made to ensure that cultural diversity in the Post Office is represented in the sample.

A literature review was conducted on the subject of HIV/AIDS and its impact in the workplace.

Key concepts of the study were the following; Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and impact.

The study found that both the infected and affected employees were affected physically and psychologically by HIV/AIDS in different ways. It was indicated that the impact was also experienced in different ways. The impact depended on the type of a job of an infected employee. Employees were found to be at various stages and relapsing to and from backward stages, most of the time.

As a final product of the applied research used for this study, some guidelines to make a difference to the impact are proposed. Proposals constitute future broad guidelines with regard to HIV/AIDS services to be provided by the Employee Assistance Professional and management, and the support to be provided to both the HIV infected and affected employees.

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