

# SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' CONCEPTUALISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AIDS ACTION PROGRAMME IN ZIMBABWE

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## SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' CONCEPTUALISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AIDS ACTION PROGRAMME IN ZIMBABWE

by

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# PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR

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I dedicate this PhD thesis to my late sister Ms Estella Manjindo, for her immense contribution to my education. I cherish the values and ethos I learned from my late parents Solomon and Rarami Mukuni, and my father-in-law Timothy Mugweni. You are greatly appreciated.



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# **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I, Rose Mugweni, hereby declare that this PhD thesis titled Secondary school teachers' conceptualisation and implementation of the AIDS Action Programme in Zimbabwe is my original work and that all sources that I have consulted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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HESTER VAN DER WALT





#### SUMMARY

In 2003 the Ministry of Education – Zimbabwe, in partnership with UNICEF introduced an HIV and AIDS subject area named the AIDS Action Programme for Schools (AAPS) in secondary schools. It was mandated that AAPS be a compulsory subject area taught alongside other subjects in the curriculum as the objective of the strategy was to use the life-sustaining power of education to reduce the learners' vulnerability to HIV infection. Despite the innovation there still exists a high prevalence of 11,1% of HIV infection among secondary school learners (UNAIDS 2010183). The high HIV infection rate prompted the study into how secondary school teachers understand, respond to and implement the AAPS. The study was founded upon the Concerns-Based Adoption Model. The sample comprised twenty teachers, four school heads and two Ministry of Education officials from the Masvingo district. Data for the qualitative case study was collected via individual interviews, focus group interviews and open-ended questionnaires.

The study found that the AAPS has a low status in schools. Most teachers face numerous challenges regarding their understanding and implementation of the AAPS. It became apparent that teachers had mixed perceptions, were uninformed, ignorant, frustrated or confused regarding the AAPS policy, curriculum requirements and components. They developed negative attitudes because they lacked resources, syllabuses and prescribed textbooks, support, sufficient time for the subject area and a protective policy to cover them when they teach sensitive topics. The lack of understanding among teachers created feelings of helplessness and fear of implementing the subject area. Teachers feared loss of status among colleagues in the schools, and that they or their learners might be labelled as being HIV-positive. Teachers feared teaching orphaned and vulnerable learners in their classrooms, some of whom were infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, without being able to offer them practical solutions. Teachers who had a positive attitude attempted to adapt the curriculum while many were reluctant and ignored implementation of the subject area. Evaluated against the Concerns-Based Adoption Model, it was revealed that many of the teachers implemented the AAPS



at low stages of concern and levels of use. Overall, the subject area was implemented with reluctant compliance and compliance with constraints, revealing a disjunction between policy and curriculum requirements and practice in the schools.

In the light of these findings, recommendations were made with regard to the study on training and support of teachers. The Ministry of Education should become proactive in developing teachers' knowledge and skills via significant and ongoing professional development and training for all teachers in HIV and AIDS education. School heads should exercise control and provide support with regard to curriculum implementation. Subject area coordinators, and school heads should deliberately create opportunities for staff to collaborate and exchange creative ideas and information that will improve teachers' conceptualisation and implementation of the curriculum. Qualified and interested teachers should be appointed in a permanent capacity to teaching HIV and AIDS education. Universities should develop and provide programmes that will prepare teachers to effectively implement the curriculum of the AIDS Action Programme for Schools.

#### **KEY WORDS**

- AIDS Action Programme for Schools
- Understand
- Knowledge
- Teacher
- Secondary school
- Response
- Attitude
- HIV
- AIDS
- Implementation



# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAPS	AIDS Action Programme for Schools
ABCD	Abstinence and secondary 'virginity', behaviour change, correct
	and consistent use of condoms, and early diagnosis and treatment
	of STIs
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARHEP	Adolescent Reproductive Health Education Project
CADEC	Catholic Development Committee
CBAM	Concerns-Based Adoption Model
CDC	Centre for Disease Control
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HEAT	HIV/AIDS in Education Assessment Team
HIV	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
HoD	Head of Department
LoU	Levels of Use
MGDs	Millennium Development Goals
MoESAC	Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture
NAC	National AIDS Council
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PED	Provincial Education Director
PLWHA	People Living With HIV and AIDS
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAFAIDS	Southern Africa HIV/AIDS Information Dissemination Service
SoC	Stages of Concern
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TARSC	Training and Research Support Centre



- UNAIDS United Nations joint programme on AIDS
- UNESCO\_\_\_\_United Nations Educational, Scientific and Culture Organization
- UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund
- VCT\_\_\_\_\_Voluntary Counselling and Testing
- WHO World Health Organization
- WLSA\_\_\_\_\_Women and Law in Southern Africa
- ZHDR Zimbabwe Human Development Report
- ZIMSEC \_\_\_\_\_Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council



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