

**LEARNING FOR LIFE WORK AND THE FUTURE**

**RESEARCH PAPER ON HIV/AIDS IN TVET STAFF  
DEVELOPMENT**

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## **HIV/AIDS IN TVET STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

**THESIS:** The relevance of developing Technical Vocational Teachers/ Trainers On HIV/AIDS for a difference.

### **ABSTRACT**

The paper underlines the need for TVET to develop common regional strategies for professional development geared towards empowering TVE trainers in planning and implementing the best approaches to HIV/aids education. The trainers are the key holders to the continuous dilemma posed by the epidemic in the education system.

### **BACKGROUND**

Vocational Education plays a very important role in the economy of a country especially the African developing countries. HIV/AIDS poses as one of the major threats to the development of these countries and the world as a whole.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, HIV/AIDS accounts for about 71% of the global total no. of PLWHA. It has exceeded Malaria and other conditions as the leading cause of adult death between the ages of 15 & 49 in many countries such as Botswana, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Southern Africa's National antenatal prevalence in parts of the region is around 35%, millions of children are being orphaned, years have been knocked off life expectancy and all sectors are impacted to various degrees. AIDS threatens food security, productivity, human resource availability and development at regional level. This is a long-term development disaster on a scale never witnessed before (AIDS Africa, Helen Jackson, 2002)

### **Understanding the need to guide young adults to master fundamental life skills**

TVET is faced with a challenge to empower young adults with the knowledge and skills to face the world of work and life in general. Therefore during learning/training, the students need to be guided through the process of mastering fundamental skills such as:

- a) The establishment of a self-perception (awareness of body, self value, developmental process, feelings and social factors)
  - b) Interpersonal relations
  - c) Ways of communication
  - d) Family relationships
  - e) Peer group influence
  - f) Relationship with the opposite sex
- (Forisha – Kovach, 1982:121)

After mastering the fundamental life skills, it is significant that the young adult is exposed to important life choices like career, a marital partner and effective personal management.

The young adult must be empowered by the internalization of life skills strategies like decision-making, problem solving and the process experiencing, learning exercising and renewal.

- How well do current TVET practices accommodate student counselors to play their part in the above process?
- Does this call for a reform in the way the roles of the student counselors have been perceived prior to the HIV/AIDS era?
- How best can the student counselor role be applied to encourage and enhance behavioral change?

### **TVET-BOTSWANA**

Of all the SADC Nations, Botswana has relatively low standard of education for most specialized types Education including that of vocational. The poor quality of staff in Technical Institutions is the result of poor conditions of service and remuneration. The is acute shortage of qualified staff in most Technical colleges in the country, and as a result, personnel is recruited from neighboring countries.

However, there has been a massive training program since 1997 to counteract this and its still going on. Quite a number of Trainers have been sent to train in the SADC region and abroad in cases where specific programmes are not available in the region.

Officers who are other wise trained and employed for specific trades handle HIV/AIDS Education in TVET Botswana. This then leads to HIV/AIDS Education being treated second to their responsibilities. Committee members who are untrained do the work. In other education systems such as Primary and Secondary, in the same country, Guidance Teachers have been employed and the y work along guidelines stipulated in the relevant government policy. However in DVET, which is responsible for TVET in Botswana, there is only one person employed for Guidance and Counseling and is at the Principal Education Officer level. There is no doubt that some arrears are compromised by the situation.

### **Below are the requirements of a Teacher:**

#### **Teacher knowledge as a factor in instruction**

##### **1.Knowlegde of goals of Education**

There is always the need that every teacher understands the goals of education whether they are for HIV/AIDS or not.Each country has its own goals of education, which reflects the political values of the country. In Botswana, these values are development, democracy, unity, self- reliance and Botho (Humanness)

The Teachers ability to formulate goals from the national values is a valuable step in the process of formulating instructional objectives.

### Knowledge of Educational Psychology

In order to be an effective Teacher, one must learn how learners behave and why. Behavior refers to affective, cognitive and psychomotor characteristics of a human being. In the affective domain dwells e.g. willingness, appreciation. Attitudes and respect. In the cognitive domain dwell, behavioral abilities of recall, translation, application, distinguishing, developing and judgment; whereas in psychomotor domain lie visual abilities concerned with learning, tactile abilities concerned with learning, tactile abilities concerned with perception through the nose, and kinaesthetic abilities concerned with perception through muscles on tendons.

### Knowledge of methods of Teaching

There is literature showing that most young people have some knowledge about HIV/AIDS (Seligson and Peterson, 1992: Tonks 1996: Jack et.al, 1999) Interactive teaching methods demands that learners will learn about HIV/AIDS by being actively involved in lessons rather than being lectured to about the topic. Modeling, role-playing, peer education and teaching games are some of the methods that can prove useful.

### Knowledge of Guidance and Counseling

In Botswana, Vocational students venture into dangerous practices like alcohol, drugs and unprotected sex and these lead them to several social problems. Peer pressure also contributes since it is the most common source of information guide for them.

The Teacher must have knowledge of Guidance and Counseling in order to help them out of these problems. The ultimate goal being to enable them to attain five national values of development, democracy, self-reliance, unity and botho.

### Knowledge of Educational Philosophy

Philosophy can be defined as having a critical approach to solving issues of concern. This means that a person must have the ability to determine characteristic of an issue or knowledge and then apply a critical analysis of each characteristic in an issue in order to arrive at a definite conclusion about the issue. For example, Teachers today wonder if HIV/AIDS issues can be addressed through the curriculum. During instructional materials design, they engage in critical debates over curriculum issues to be integrated into a single curriculum package with issues of HIV/AIDS. Teachers ought to develop interest in the critical approach of analyzing social and curricular issues on HIV/AIDS in order to develop balance in their thinking and arrive at better conclusions.

### **Areas for improvement (Regional)**

- Proper compilation of statistical data on factors surrounding HIV/AIDS in TVET for evidence to strategize intervention.

- Identify areas to be covered in HIV/AIDS curricula and methods of integration.
- Prioritize training programme for HIV/AIDS counselors

How can the above be addressed without compromising the following?

- Exam driven curricula
- Existing policies
- Government Budget
- Funding

### **Designing and implementing a life skills curriculum focusing on combating HIV/AIDS in TVET.**

Teachers should be trained to design life skills curriculum on HIV/AIDS and in the process the following need to be observed:

The inclusion of HIV/AIDS Education in the curriculum is important, as the context chosen will provide a framework for decisions about the context, teaching style, and teachers of course. Ideally, education of HIV/AIDS and STDs should occur within the context of health education on sex and human relationships. This implies that whenever possible, instruction on HIV/AIDS should be integrated with health and sexuality education. The rationale being that most information about AIDS and refusal skills that need to be taught in conjunction with it appears within the context of sexual activity, and if discussed outside that context, most AIDS education may simply not make sense (Florence Luhanga, Donald Chipeta, 2001: 40)

### **Essential component of a programme**

The main aims of any comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention programme should be

- To provide accurate information about HIV/AIDS.
- To encourage students to explore their attitudes towards diseases and personal relationships
- To promote responsible behavior based on self-respect and others.
- To identify sources of help and advice within school and in the community outside the school. (Florence Luhanga, Donald Chipeta; 2001 : 41)

The following elements must at least be included in any AIDS prevention programme:

- Basic information about AIDS
- Safer sex
- Denial reduction
- De – stigmatization

## **Conclusion**

There is no doubt that TVET staff need to be developed to deal with HIV/AIDS in a more informed manner. Their knowledge base and skills in HIV and AIDS need to be enhanced especially on interactive teaching methods. In Botswana, this will contribute to the national efforts in reducing HIV/AIDS infection rates in the country, as well as mitigating the impact presented by the virus in the Education system. Teachers should have a solid base on HIV/AIDS issues as they present in the context of respective countries and in the region as a whole, so that they portray an informed understanding of the prevailing situation. They should further be appropriately supported, for them to deal with situations in their environment and to further teach the young generation so that they may demonstrate behavior that promote prevention of HIV infection.