

**DECLARATION**

I, **Chirwa Beatrice**, do declare that this dissertation is my own work and that it has never been submitted by anyone at this institution or at any another university.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my family for the support and encouragement they gave me throughout my education.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

This dissertation by **Chirwa Beatrice** is approved as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of \_\_\_\_\_ in Sociology of Education of the University of Zambia.

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## ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CHAZ	Churches Association of Zambia
FBO	Faith Based Organisation
HIV	Human Immune Virus
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
NAC	National AIDS Council
PLWHA	People Living With HIV
SFH	Society for Family Health
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UNAIDS	United Nations AIDS
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
WHO	World Health Organisation
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist Church
UCZ	United Church of Zambia

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate youths' perceptions of church and secular HIV and AIDS intervention strategies in schools of Lusaka District of Lusaka Province.

A survey approach was used in conducting this research. Data was collected through interviews, questionnaires, and Focus Group Discussions to a sample of 85 pupils, 4 clergymen 2 representatives of the civil society to accurately represent the population under study. The study used mainly qualitative methods in the collection of data however quantitative method was also used for numerical data to a very minimal level.

The study found out that the majority of the youths were aware of how people get infected with HIV and possible ways of preventing the infection. Among the noted common possible ways of getting the HIV and AIDS infection were having unprotected sex, sharing unsterilized equipment and Mother to Child Transmission, while the most common ways of preventing the infection were by abstinence and condom use.

The study also showed that the measures taken by pupils to safeguard themselves from the dangers of HIV and AIDS was by abstaining while others felt that having "good company" would reduce the chances of infection. Condom use was regarded as the last resort.

In terms of information provision to the pupils by the Church and secular organisations, the study revealed that such messages mostly came from the secular organisations, very little if any, came from the Church.

The findings of the study showed that the behaviour currently exhibited by the pupils towards HIV and AIDS was to a greater extent externally influenced by poverty and behaviour towards sex education and information which led to early pregnancies and unprotected sex among school going children. The most common reasons given for this situation were peer social norms.

The study showed that the safest thing to do, therefore, was to ensure that education provided to these children is "safe". Otherwise there are so many youths in the HIV and AIDS spectrum that may easily distort the true picture. It is of great importance to acknowledge that honesty, openness and confessing our complicity is a first step in the process of becoming effective change agents combating stigma and discrimination surrounding the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

The study recommended that:

- The Church and secular organizations should ensure that messages on HIV and AIDS related issues should be made available to the pupils at an early age so that they grow knowing what to do.
- Key information coming from the various actors in the HIV and AIDS education should be consistent and accurate because any inconsistencies will result in the recipients being confused and therefore not knowing what to do.

- Homes should become part of the many institutions charged with provision of information on HIV and AIDS through holding workshops for parents who will in turn disseminate this information to their children if the fight against HIV and AIDS is to be won.
- Churches should work closely with the local, regional and international communities in information dissemination on issues related to HIV and AIDS in order to curb issues of stigma and discrimination.
- The Church should incorporate HIV and AIDS related courses into their curriculum at their respective theological colleges so that graduates from these institutions will have the capacity to teach on the subject in their various churches.