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INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF THEATRE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS: A CASE STUDY OF AMAKHOSI THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of theatre in the fight against HIV/AIDS. A case study of Amakhosi Theatre Productions (ATP) was used. The study analyses the role of theatre for HIV/AIDS prevention, ascertains to what extent theatre assists in the prevention of HIV/AIDS and identifies the message being communicated through theatre. A case study design was used to investigate the role theatre in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Quantitative method was employed in the study i.e in depth interview, focus groups, documented information and observations. The main paradigms guiding this study are drama theory, social learning theory and participation. This thesis set out to explore the effectiveness of theatre as a communication tool for communities and raising awareness about HIV/AIDS and to draw conclusions in terms of strength and weakness. The usefulness of these paradigms in the study is mainly on the emphasis of communities being agents of their own change. The findings illustrated theatre as a creative, interactive and fun way to raise people’s awareness about HHI/AIDS. It was found out that the theatre is participatory, uses both play and message and combines entertainment to educate and communicate highly sensitive information. This makes it an ideal communication tool that easily attracts the communities’ attention, help them to personalize the risk of HIV/AIDS and participate in finding their solutions to this problem. However, it was discovered that though theatre is highly effective in the role of fight against HIV/AIDS, it has challenges because its performance might be limited due to the facilities, lack of social partners and environment and culture not being conducive. Preparations of dialogue and preparation of performance takes long time, it is expensive to buy costumes and live drama might cause the audience to try to practice some of the bad ideas they watch.