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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO HIV/AIDS COVERAGE IN SELECTED SOUTH AFRICAN
NEWSPAPERS**

By

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DECLARATION

I, Nketsi A. Moqasa student number 200700368 declare that an investigation into HIV/AIDS coverage in selected South African newspapers is a result of my own work that has not been submitted before at any other university. I further declare that all the sources I have used or cited have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Signature

Date

.....

.....

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my dear family, nephews, nieces and friends that I love very much.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for their support during the completion of my dissertation. First and foremost, my thanks go to **God**, the Father. In my times of need, you heard me, helped me and gave me strength to carry on. I thank you for always being there for me especially through my trials and difficulties and for always answering my prayers. To my supervisor, Professor **A. Salawu**, I thank you for your guidance and patience whilst supervising my research. Your support and availability when I most needed your help, and your kindness, are much appreciated and will always be remembered. May God Almighty be with you at all times. **Dr. S. Usadolo** and **Ms Cathy** thank you for all your help, particularly for proof reading my work; were it not for your encouragement, it would have been difficult to complete this work. To Mr. **Hector**, thank you very much for all your help, especially for my statistical analysis. Your patience and assistance has helped me climb a seemingly insurmountable mountain.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates HIV/AIDS coverage in selected South African newspapers. The rationale for the study hinges on the fact that the media's role in informing society about social issues, such as HIV/AIDS, is of paramount importance. The study adopted, principally, the content analysis method and, as a supplement, discourse analysis. Four daily newspapers were content-analysed, namely: Daily Dispatch, Daily Sun, Sowetan and The Star. A total of 288 editions of newspapers, spanning a period of twelve months (January to December 2010) were sampled. This study is informed by agenda setting theory. Discourse analysis was used to determine the compliance of these newspapers to media guides on the use of appropriate language or terminologies. The tone, sentence structures used when disseminating HIV/AIDS stories were also examined. The results revealed that HIV/AIDS coverage by these newspapers is reasonable even though the prominence given to HIV/AIDS issues is dissatisfactory in terms of placement on the page, headline font-size and number of paragraphs devoted to HIV/AIDS stories. 5.0% of HIV/AIDS-oriented stories were placed on the front page; 93.8% on the inside pages while 1.3% were placed on the back pages. It was also found that news and feature were used equally to disseminate HIV/AIDS issues. These genres constituted 50% each. On the other hand, the results revealed a statistically non-significant relationship between the newspapers and categories; that is: ($\chi^2 = 25.09$, $p = 0.122 > 0.05$). Results further revealed that these newspapers used appropriate terminology and value-neutral language in their stories. The tone of the messages was found to be positive and encouraging.

Keywords: *HIV/AIDS, Journalists, Coverage/Reportage, Media, Agenda-setting, Content-analysis, Discourse analysis, Journalistic genres*

ACRONYMS

AIDS		Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CADRE		Centre for Aids Development, Research and Evaluation
DA		Discourse Analysis
HIV		Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IFJ		International Federation of Journalists
IWMF		International Women's Media Foundation
NGOs		Non-governmental organisations
PLWHA		People Living With HIV/AIDS
SPSS		Statistical Package for Social Science
ART		Antiretroviral Therapy
UNAIDS		Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) have rapidly become the main cause of death in many countries in Southern Africa. Out of all the countries in the region, South Africa has the highest number of people infected by HIV/AIDS in the world (Visser *et al.* 2007:2). The 2009 and 2010 report from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), states that 40 million people around the globe were living with HIV/AIDS in 2009 and, out of this 40 million, 22.5 million were people from sub-Saharan Africa. The report also indicated that an estimated 5.6 million people were living with HIV/AIDS in South Africa alone (UNAIDS 2010).

In addition, statistics show that approximately 310 000 South Africans had died of AIDS between 2009 and 2010 (UNAIDS, 2010). As the number of people living with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) in South Africa is increasing at an alarming rate, one has to ask whether the media in the country is fulfilling its role of informing and educating society or not.

The media plays an influential role in setting the stage for important issues and events in society, and it has significant influence in the shaping of public opinion and changing people's behaviour. This indicates that the media can point to the healthy behaviour for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, as well as how people living with this epidemic are treated or cared for by their community, families, friends as well as the health care systems. To

buttress this, McQuail (2005) and Fourie (2001) suggest that the media has certain responsibilities to society. These include disseminating objective, accurate and informative information and setting the agenda for issues that are of great concern amongst the members of a particular society. “The news media have served as an important source of information about the epidemic for the public” (Brodie, Hamel, Brady, Kates and Altman, 2004:1). In the same manner, Coleman and Corbitt (2003:110) affirm that “people learn about health issues from mass media, whether or not they are purposefully seeking information”. Therefore, the media should cover and disseminate informative, objective and accurate information on HIV/AIDS. For the media to achieve this, well defined strategies for covering HIV/AIDS matters should be formulated.

In South Africa, there has been a substantial amount of coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by the print media over the past decade, although various criticisms have emerged out of this coverage (Swanepoel, Fourie and Froneman, 2005:2). Jacobs and Johnson (2007) point out that in a study conducted by Media Tenor, for the period of January 2004 to August 2005, less than 1% of coverage in leading print and electronic media report on this epidemic, which is corroborated by Sokana (Mail & Guardian Online, 2006) when she points out that “only 2% of news items in South Africa mentioned or focused on HIV/AIDS”. Currently the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues in the media is irregular. Rehbock (2009) affirms that the HIV/AIDS topic is less frequently given priority, or rated as newsworthy in the high circulation and prestigious press. This means that the space, time and prominence given to this epidemic have been very little. The use of journalistic genres by print media seems to be biased as some genres are underutilised. On the

other hand, the use of negative and stigmatizing language when reporting on this epidemic still exists in the media reports. In support of this notion, Forman(2008:28) point out that the media frequently use words such as “scourge” and “plague” which add to the general perception that HIV/AIDS and those who are affected by it should be avoided. Doka (1997:122) noted that “the AIDS epidemic could lead to significant disruptions in society as well as curtailments of civil rights and other restrictions on human behaviour”. For this reason, public awareness and a clear understanding of HIV/AIDS is very important in attempts to minimize the spread of this disease. The media is supposed to set the agenda in this regard, by covering more HIV/AIDS-related topics and showing its responsibility to society. This means that HIV/AIDS issues should be permanently on the media agenda to ensure that society is well informed about the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The fight against HIV/AIDS needs a multi-disciplinary approach, but over all, there exists a need to keep the public informed (Linda, 2000:119). This implies that the public has a right to information. To emphasize this, Dennis and Merrill (1991:45) point out that “the right to know is the right of the listeners to information of public interest and importance. They further clarify that in order for “the right” to be functional however, information must be acquired and published”. Therefore, information on HIV/AIDS should be readily available in the media. Uninformed societies practice things which are not acceptable. To avoid this, the media has to fulfill its role of disseminating information to society. This is why Rogers, Dearing and Chang (1999) point out that “if there is a lack of information about an issue, news coverage will stop”. The international Women’s Media Foundation (IWMF) (2006) adds to this point by noting that news coverage is the

first source of new information available on an issue. Shedding more light on the issue of information, Veinot (2010:876) cited Ervin (2005) who points out that “information acts as a bridge for people as they face gaps in understanding or challenging situations”. This statement is relevant to the issue of HIV/AIDS, as people need more information to understand the consequences of this epidemic.

In order to keep society informed about HIV/AIDS and its implications, media organisations in South Africa should cover HIV/AIDS issues thoroughly. The regular coverage of HIV/AIDS is very important because it helps to keep the public aware of the severity of the pandemic. Media reports can also help health workers to design programmes that can be used to address the epidemic more effectively. In the research report by Panos institute (2004:12), it was explained that the “public’s reliance on the media for HIV/AIDS is unquestionable”. Nevertheless, HIV/AIDS issues seem to take up a modest space in the media environment in South Africa, as confirmed by Media Tenor research. This research further shows that, for the period from January 2004 to August 2005, print and electronic media covered less than 1% of HIV/AIDS pandemic (Media Tenor, 2005:10).

The media has become a major source of information, and the tendency for people to discuss what appears in the media has considerable influence in shaping public opinion and people’s behaviour (Linda, 2000:111). However, the outcome of this depends on how the media priorities HIV/AIDS issues in its coverage, as the public will most likely react in a corresponding manner. This is because media is a powerful tool which is used to convey information to society. Therefore, if less information is provided on this issue, society will regard it as an insignificant issue. There is an almost universal belief that

mass media institutions shape our thinking, influence our attitudes and opinion and contribute towards particular behaviour (Dennis and Merrill, 1991:83). HIV/AIDS, as a social problem, needs to be on the media agenda at all times in order to address its repercussions on society.

HIV/AIDS impacts society in different ways and in this regard one can ask how frequently media covers HIV/AIDS issue. What prominence is given to HIV/AIDS issues in the media? Does media use neutral language in reporting this epidemic? Answering these questions will help to ascertain whether the South African media, especially the press perform its role in informing society about this epidemic or not. In some countries such as Zambia, Uganda and Lesotho, to mention but a few, the issue of HIV/AIDS is given priority in the media.

It might be plausible that frequent coverage, including informative, well-written, accessible stories might influence people's sexual behaviour in a way that could reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS. Through HIV/AIDS agenda-setting, the media is able to influence people to change their behaviour. This will help in building a healthy nation.

Even though the media plays a crucial role in educating and informing society about the dangers of HIV/AIDS, collaboration with other institutions such as religious organisations, government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) will help in combating this disease. But media has to be at the forefront in informing society about this epidemic. However, there is a debate that HIV/AIDS coverage in South Africa is infrequent. For instance, Media Tenor (2005) indicated this in the findings from its study, "Agenda cutting: 'Aids fatigue is still media's excuse". This study therefore investigates

the frequency of coverage of HIV/AIDS. Other issues that will be investigated include prominence and proportion given to HIV/AIDS articles, as well as journalistic genres in these newspapers to determine whether these selected newspapers comply with guidelines proposed for language use in reporting HIV/AIDS issues or not. In addition to this, the study will examine the message tone and sentence structure used to disseminate the HIV/AIDS message in these newspapers.

1.2 Research problem

As previously mentioned, South Africa has the highest number of HIV/AIDS infections internationally (UNAIDS, 2010). The country's population is already battling with the HIV/AIDS condition which is overwhelming health facilities as they are failing to cope with this burden. The South African education system, economy and families are all inundated with the menace which threatens to destroy their viability and livelihoods. The major functions of the media in a society, as identified earlier, are to inform and educate citizens. These functions are even more important within the context of HIV/ AIDS.

Given this scenario, the media has campaigned, educated and debated on HIV/AIDS issues in an attempt to reveal strategies for reducing and stopping infections and assisting those living with this disease. Despite all these efforts, the epidemic seems to be spreading at an alarming rate. Therefore, this study argues that currently the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues in the media is irregular. Even the space or time and prominence given to this epidemic is very little. This will further examine how much coverage these newspapers gave to HIV/AIDS issues in 2010. It will also look at journalistic genres used to disseminate HIV/AIDS issues.

1.3 Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do the selected South African newspapers carry HIV/AIDS issues?
2. In what proportions are journalistic genres used for the dissemination of HIV/AIDS issues?
3. Does the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by selected South African newspapers vary in extent, categories, prominence and depth of treatment?
4. Do selected South African newspapers comply with the guidelines proposed for language use in reporting on HIV/AIDS issues or not?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues in South African print media. The study focuses primarily on four daily newspapers, namely: *Daily Dispatch*, *Sowetan*, *Daily Sun* and *The Star*. Therefore, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To determine the HIV/AIDS content of selected South African newspapers (*Daily Dispatch*, *Sowetan*, *Daily Sun* and *The Star*) – the kinds, the frequency of coverage, the prominence and depth of treatment.
2. To ascertain the journalistic genres and proportions in which these genres are used for the dissemination of HIV/AIDS issues.
3. To determine whether or not there are variations in the coverage of HIV/AIDS in terms of extent, categories, prominence and depth of treatment.

4. To determine whether selected South African newspapers comply with guidelines proposed for language use in reporting HIV/AIDS issues or not.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

Due to the seriousness of HIV/AIDS in the Sub-Saharan region, especially South Africa, this study seeks to evaluate the frequency of reporting HIV/AIDS in *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Sun*, *The Star* and *Sowetan*. The study also seeks to ascertain journalistic genres and proportions in which these genres are used for the dissemination of HIV/AIDS issues; and to determine whether or not there are variations in the coverage of HIV/AIDS in these newspapers, as well as to assess whether these selected newspapers comply with guidelines proposed by IFJ for language use in reporting HIV/AIDS issues or not. Message tone and sentence structure used in disseminating HIV/AIDS message will also be looked at. In general, this study sets out to examine the frequency in which these newspapers cover HIV/AIDS issues to the society.

1.6 Significance of the Study

HIV/AIDS is a without doubt the worst epidemic to hit humankind since the Black Death epidemic (Whiteside, 2008:147). This study investigates the coverage of HIV/AIDS in selected South African newspapers and will therefore act as a contribution to the campaigns that fight against HIV/AIDS around the globe. It unfolds the importance of incorporating different genres when reporting HIV/AIDS, as this allows readers to find information about this epidemic more easily within the newspapers. In addition, the study encourages adequate coverage as well as high prominence for HIV/AIDS issues in the media as this will help in informing, educating and promoting awareness of this

terrible disease. Furthermore, the study looks at the extent to which these newspapers cover HIV/AIDS issues as this will show us how these newspapers inform society about this epidemic. This study also seeks to contribute to the already existing body of knowledge about media coverage on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It will also act as a springboard for future studies on media and HIV/AIDS.

1.7 Scope

The purpose of this study was to investigate the coverage of HIV/AIDS in selected South African newspapers. It also sets out to determine the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by these newspapers, as well as the scope of this coverage in terms of the prominence, frequency and treatment given to the HIV/AIDS stories that are published. It further examines whether the stories are in different genres of journalistic writings, such as: features, news, commentary and opinions. The use of language or terminology, tone of the message and sentence structure used to disseminate HIV/AIDS messages in the selected newspaper articles will also be explored. The previously mentioned daily newspapers were sampled and all articles that deal with HIV/AIDS issues from these newspapers were content analysed to find out how frequently these newspapers published this epidemic with the purpose of setting public agenda on this issue. This study covered a period of one year (January to December 2010). Nothing much happened on the issue of HIV/AIDS in 2010, therefore this period was chosen to see whether media was able to create news or stories on this epidemic or it relied on occasions such as HIV/AIDS World Day to inform the public about this social problem. It is also clear that the period of study was the period in which the press focused on the

FIFA Soccer World Cup and other related events. The researcher wanted to find out whether HIV/AIDS issues were also considered by the media.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

This study was limited to four South African daily newspapers, which were systematically chosen because they are involved in informing society about HIV/AIDS issues. This is also seen as a manageable sample which allowed the researcher to generalize the results to the whole of the study population. These newspapers are: *Daily Dispatch*, *Sowetan*, *Daily Sun* and *The Star*. The reason for choosing these newspapers is that they target a variety of population and they are major dailies in South Africa. Besides this, they can be afforded by all levels (low, middle and upper classes) as compared to weekly newspapers which are somehow expensive. More importantly, these newspapers are published in the English language, which is considered as a major medium of communication in South Africa and this means they can be read by different groups in the South African society. The study focused on HIV/AIDS articles from the above mentioned newspapers. These newspapers play an important part in disseminating information to the society, as results they set agenda on social problems such as HIV/AIDS. Therefore, this makes it important to use agenda setting as a theoretical framework for this study. Financial and other resource constraints were the main reasons why this study concentrated on the above mentioned newspapers and issues.

1.9 Relevance of the topic

The coverage of HIV/AIDS in the South African press is relevant to the situation that people are going through due to this epidemic. The fact that media is a source of information; whatever it does is believed to have certain implications for its audience. Therefore, whichever way the media reports on HIV/AIDS, is vital as there is no cure for this epidemic. Moreover, it becomes crucial to try and identify the importance of media in informing society about this epidemic as well as identifying other ways of curtailing the tide of this disease. An examination of the positive ways of using media for stemming this epidemic can be used as a solution; as this disease claims millions of lives worldwide. The statistics released by UNAIDS (2010) have revealed that about 5.6 million South Africans are living with the disease. The prevalence rate was about 17.8 percent among those aged 15-49, with some age groups being particularly affected. It further showed that women aged 25-29, and over a quarter of men aged 30-34, were living with HIV.

In relation to this, HIV/AIDS affects diverse areas of life such as education, politics, economy, health, households, culture and so on. Due to the fact that there is no vaccine or medication to cure this disease, the media can be used to set an agenda and influence people to change their behaviour, in order to minimize the spread of this disease.

Ajibola (2009:23) points out that the media is a powerful force in the area of news dissemination. This indicates that the media has a significant potential to help stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. This can only be achieved through informing the public, continuously and accurately, about the true nature and scope of HIV/AIDS around the

world. If the media fails to disseminate information which is as important as the issues that surround HIV/AIDS to its audience, this disease will continue spreading and claim millions of lives around the globe. For this reason, HIV/AIDS issues should be on the media agenda at all times, in order to inform and educate people about this disease. This is what deems an examination of the coverage of HIV/AIDS in the South African press relevant.

1.10 Relationship of HIV/AIDS Coverage to Communication Discipline

Communication is a broad field of study which includes media studies, public relations, radio, television, internet, print, communication science, communication development, publishing, advertising, marketing and so on. Therefore, the present study which focuses on the coverage of HIV/AIDS in selected South African newspapers can be classified as an investigation in the field of media studies. This is because it focuses its attention on how journalists, in selected newspapers, report on this pandemic.

This study, however, examines issues such as the frequency of coverage, prominence, depth of treatment, journalistic genres and the proportions in which these genres are used for dissemination of HIV/AIDS issues. It further explores variations in the coverage of HIV/AIDS in terms of extent and categories. In this regard, this study can further be situated within the realm of communication studies as it is believed the power of the media does not come from a single message, but from the accumulation of messages and from the domination of the environment by the media. Covering HIV/AIDS issues more frequently will allow the media to set a public agenda on this epidemic, and as a result, the public will be in a good position to know prevention as well as the

consequences of this disease. This means that HIV/AIDS issues should be on the media agenda at all times.

1.11 Operational Definitions of Terms

HIV:

This is an abbreviation of the term Human Immunodeficiency Virus. This is sometimes explained as a virus that attacks the human immune system. HIV destroys the body's protection against diseases thus leaving it vulnerable to many infections and cancers that might not normally develop in healthy people. People infected with HIV may look and feel healthy for a number of years before an opportunistic infection develops in their bodies. Many people infected with HIV are completely unaware of the fact that they carry the disease in their bodies, unless they decide to have a medical blood test. Thus, whilst ignorant of their HIV status, they can be carriers of the virus and transmit it to other people.

AIDS:

This is an acronym for the term Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. This is often considered a group of signs and symptoms or combination of diseases caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus; it impairs the body's ability to fight infection, making it especially susceptible to opportunistic infections, of which the most common include Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia (PCP) and certain cancers, such as Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), a skin cancer.

Journalists:

This is someone who presents or writes information about events and issues for a newspaper, magazine, radio or television station or the internet.

Reporting/coverage:

Coverage means the way in which a subject or event is being reported on the radio, television, or in newspapers. HIV/AIDS coverage will be measured in terms of its frequency. Reporting and coverage will be used interchangeably in this study.

Media:

These are all organisations such as the radio, internet, television, magazines and newspapers that provide information to the public. The terms 'media', 'newspaper' and 'press' will be used interchangeably in this dissertation.

Journalistic Genres:

These are models that make it possible to present the contents of mass media in an adequate and comprehensible form. According to Gascon (2010:83), journalistic genres are classified into information genres (news); interpretative genres (reports and chronicle), dialogic genres (interview, forum or debate, chat, and survey) and argumentative genres (comment and opinion). For this study, journalistic genres will be divided into news and features.

1.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethics in research are very important because they prescribe what is permissible or not when conducting research (Kalof, Dan & Dietz, 2008). There are, however, several

ways in which scholars view ethics. Curtis, Martin, Graham and Sinsabaugh (2006) point out that ethics are related to many different aspects of professional conduct. These authors further clarify that ethics concern the philosophies that a profession is based upon the principles or morality, and codes that define and guide ethical behaviour. However, Lumsden and Lumsden (2010:368) explain ethics as value judgements concerning degrees of right or wrong, goodness and badness in human conduct. The ethical considerations of this study were practical. That is the researcher had to seek permission to use newspapers from University of Fort Hare librarians, Vereeniging public library in Gauteng, Media24 and Avusa Media and the researcher had to explain the purpose of the study verbally. Babbie (2004) points out that informed consent is an important ethical norm any research should consider.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Fourie (2008:380) is of the opinion that it is important that the media takes its role as a partner in the struggle against HIV/AIDS seriously. Undoubtedly, the media is playing and will continue to play an influential role in the war against HIV/AIDS by influencing and setting the agenda on how the infection of this terrible disease can be avoided. The purpose of this chapter is to review some of the vital concepts relevant to the study. This chapter also reviews the available literature, as well as similar studies that have been undertaken on HIV/AIDS coverage in newspapers. It also explores the role that the media plays in setting an agenda on this disease. Moreover, this study makes use of agenda setting as its theoretical framework.

2.2 HIV/AIDS in South Africa

Southern Africa is often described as the epicenter of the global AIDS epidemic (Birdsall and Kelly, 2007:15). Among all Southern African countries, South Africa has been identified as the most severely affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It is believed that, in 2010, an estimated 310,000 South Africans died of AIDS out of a population of 50 million. According to a report released by UNAIDS in 2010, the HIV/AIDS infection rate in South Africa was 17.8 percent among those aged 15-49. The report indicated that almost one-in-three women aged 25-29, and over a quarter of the men aged 30-34, were living with HIV (UNAIDS, 2010).

According to the statistics published by Statistics South Africa, in 2010, life expectancy was estimated at 53.3 years for males and 55.2 years for females. Statistics South Africa (2010:3) further reports that the infant mortality rate was estimated at 46.9 per 1 000 live births in 2010. Judging by these figures, an estimation of 1.6 million people aged 15 and older, and approximately 183 000 children, would be in need of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) in 2010. The total number of new HIV infections for 2010 was estimated at 410 000. Of these, an estimated 40 000 were children. There were 1.99 million HIV/AIDS orphans in South Africa in 2010 while new HIV infections among adults were estimated at 370 000 in the same year. Based on these figures, it is clear that HIV/AIDS infections are increasing rather than decreasing.

In South Africa, the first few cases of HIV/AIDS were identified in 1982 when two men were diagnosed with HIV. In 1987, another man in South African was diagnosed with AIDS (www.avert.org). From this point, HIV/AIDS spread to all corners of the country. Since then, South Africa has been among the list of countries with the highest number of people living with HIV/AIDS. According to the most recent UNAIDS estimates on HIV/AIDS, South Africa's total number of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) now stands at 5.6 million (UNAIDS, 2010). This indicates that HIV/AIDS is a major social problem in South Africa.

These figures indicate that HIV/AIDS is prevalent and progressively spreading in South Africa. There is still no vaccine or medication that can be used to cure this disease, besides informing the public to change its behaviour. Although there are some drugs, like ARVs, which are used to treat AIDS with consequences that suppress the spread of this epidemic; other measures still need to be applied. To achieve this, institutions such

as governments, families, religious organisations, schools, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and media can play vital role in curbing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Among these institutions, it is the view of this study that the media can play a crucial role in disseminating information and educating the public about this incurable disease. This means that the media needs to maintain constant coverage of HIV/AIDS and be proactive, as opposed to reactive, when reporting on the disease.

Reactive coverage of HIV/AIDS issues means that the media tends to focus on events and personalities rather than engage in a deliberate and concerted effort to generate its own news (Ajibola, 2009:64). A proactive approach, on the other hand, means that the media needs to generate its own stories or news on HIV/AIDS issues and stop focusing on events and personalities. This can be achieved through writing features, editorials and articles which scrutinize government plans and set an agenda on this epidemic. Doing so will allow HIV/AIDS issues to remain on the media agenda and, as a result, the public will be aware of this disease and infection rates will consequently decline.

To minimize the spread of HIV/AIDS and its impact in society, the media is expected to act as conveyers of information to society. In support of this idea, Patel (2005) confirms that mass media is expected to play a leading role in stimulating rapid change and development in societies. This has to be across all institutions of society, including the economic, political and social institutions.

2.3 Impact of HIV/AIDS

It is a known fact that curbing the HIV/AIDS pandemic is one of the major challenges facing the world today. Since the global emergence of HIV/AIDS in 1981, an estimated

2.4 million people have died as a result of this disease, worldwide. Unfortunately, researchers have found that this disease is increasing at an alarming rate in Africa and this has imposed great restrictions on development issues (Way and Stanecki, 1994:3).

Stressing the impact of HIV/AIDS, Setswe (2009) cites a World Health Organisation (WHO) representative who stated that:

Of all diseases, AIDS provides the most dramatic and disturbing examples of the capacity of a previously unknown pathogen to rapidly spread throughout the world... and cause social and economic upheaval on a scale that threatens to destabilize a large geographic area.

Over the years, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has been found to have a negative impact on a number of elements in many countries around the globe. The epidemic has been found to affect elements which include the economy, families, education as well as health.

Barker (2007:19) is of the view that HIV/AIDS has probably become the most devastating disease humankind has ever experienced and unfortunately the impact is particularly severe in South Africa. Way and Stanecki (1994) observed that AIDS may have both a direct and indirect impact on the affected population. The direct impact of AIDS may be the increase in the number of deaths in the population affected, while the indirect impact can be the survival of non-HIV-infected children who may be negatively affected by the death of one or both parents. This dissertation presents the above mentioned elements that have been affected by HIV/AIDS. The effects of HIV/AIDS are explained in an attempt to reveal the HIV/AIDS coverage by the media so that such

effects may be ameliorated. This will support the notion that the HIV/AIDS issues need a significant presence on the media agenda at all times.

2.3.1 Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Economy

The survival of any country depends on the state of its economy. There is no doubt that HIV/AIDS affects the economic growth of those countries with a high prevalence of HIV. According to Bollinger and Stover (1999), AIDS is one of the major causes of rising labour costs and it is threatening the competitiveness of many South African firms. On the same issue, Barker (2007:19) points out that HIV/AIDS has had a negative impact on the profitability of South African companies and makes labour more expensive due to the higher cost of group and medical insurance, as well as the high staff turnover. Similarly, Kauffman and Lindauer (2004:17) state that it is hard to state the economic and social impact that AIDS has had on Southern Africa. Hunter (2003:53) adds that, in Africa today, HIV/AIDS has intertwined with a crippled economic and social development to rip society apart along every conceivable dimension.

These viewpoints suggest that HIV/AIDS has a substantial negative impact on the economy; the media needs to cover this and disseminate information on how this epidemic has cost the nation its human and monetary resources. The media can achieve this by analysing and interpreting this kind of information for the public.

2.3.2 Impact of HIV/AIDS on Household and Families

It is common knowledge that since the dawn of human civilization, no other epidemic has inflicted so much misery and suffering on humankind than the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Tshoose, 2010:408). In support of this, Frohlich, (cited in Abdool-Karim and Abdool-

Karim, 2005:351) suggests that HIV has had a major impact on individuals and community structures such as the family. Frohlich in Abdool-Karim and Abdool-Karim (2005:351) points out that “family has traditionally been the fundamental unit of any society but as the epidemic progresses, this structure is being eroded”.

As it has been noted that the effects of HIV/AIDS are direct as well as indirect, families suffer from this epidemic differently. Kauffman and Lindauer (2004:109) show that the direct effects of HIV/AIDS are linked to situations in which one or more family members die of AIDS. As a result of this, HIV/AIDS prevents families from pursuing investments. This means that, instead of budgeting for family issues such school fees for children, they have to buy medication for affected family member(s) or cater for funerals. To buttress this, scholars like Booyson, Van Rensburg, O'Brien and Steyn (2001) found that AIDS-affected households draw on available savings to finance medical costs and funerals.

In the same manner, Nattrass (2004:32) maintains that HIV/AIDS reduces the economic security of households by reducing the productivity of (and eventually killing) income earners, while simultaneously diverting scarce household resources towards medical expenditure. This, however, will contribute to the lower levels of savings and in turn, causes these families to resort to borrowing money from relatives and micro-lenders. Booyson, Van Rensburg, Benchmann, Engelbrech and Steyn (2002) imply that increased borrowing from relatives probably translates into lower levels of savings by these families and borrowing from micro-lenders certainly results in AIDS-affected households being caught in a debt trap. For this reason, the affected households are likely to become poor.

In light of the above information, the media can stimulate strategies which enable families to seek better options of staying out of debt; this can be done by publishing articles which inform these families and the general public about the impact of this disease. In this regard, the media can inform them of the organisations that help people living with HIV/AIDS and this can help the affected households manage their savings.

2.3.3 Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education

Education is often the most valuable asset for people to pursue opportunities, obtain skilled jobs, and start businesses. However, HIV/AIDS tends to reduce both the supply and demand for education. Arrehag, Devylder, Durevall and Sjoblon (2006:154) support this statement when they indicate that the demand for education is going to decrease in severely affected countries. Arrehag *et al* (2006:160) go on to point out that “one important mechanism behind the expected decrease in demand for education in countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates is the epidemic’s demographic impact”. With reference to its demographic impact, White and Barnett (2006:329) stipulate that the impact of HIV/AIDS results in smaller numbers of children going to school; fewer children born and many HIV-infected infants who do not live until the school-going age. Unfortunately, this results in the decline in manpower development which, in turn, depletes the human resource base, thus crippling the country’s economy.

Arrehag, Devylder, Durevall and Sjoblon (2006:154) further point out that the epidemic’s adverse impact on household income may result in a decline in the share of the household budget which is dedicated to children’s schooling. This will obviously result in

high drop-out rates due to the lack of funds for tuition fees. HIV/AIDS affects people at different ages. Enrolment rates are likely to decrease and absenteeism will increase in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Due to this, Arrehag *et al* (2006:155) outline that decreasing enrolment rates, increasing absenteeism and high drop-out rates can be expected in countries with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. This will result in fewer people seeking any form of education.

The supply for education and its quality will also be negatively affected by the epidemic as teachers are also susceptible to HIV/AIDS infection because of their income and status (Arrehag *et al*, 2006:161). This, however, will result in a low quality of education as the affected teachers will not attend classes continuously, due to their illness or medical conditions. White and Barnett (2006:331) support this notion by pointing out that “all teachers are at risk of HIV infection; there are some indications that they may be at a greater than average risk”. White and Barnett (*ibid*) further point out that a teacher’s status and income create opportunities for high-risk behaviour.

To emphasize the impact of HIV/AIDS on education, Bollinger, Stover and Nalo (1999:12) identify the following three ways in which HIV/AIDS affects the education sector:

1. The supply of experienced teachers will be reduced by AIDS-related illness and death; children may be kept out of school if they are needed at home to care for sick family members or to work in the fields.
2. Children may drop out of school if their families cannot afford school fees due to reduced household income as a result of an AIDS death.

3. Another problem is that teenage children are especially susceptible to HIV infection and, therefore, the education system also faces a special challenge to educate students about Aids and equip them to protect themselves.

These factors clearly indicate that HIV/AIDS has an immense impact on education. To eradicate this, it would be of paramount importance to use tools that can inform and educate communities on the impact of this disease. The media is one of the tools that could be used to inform and educate communities about the impact of HIV/AIDS. This is because much of what society understands of this epidemic and its future possibilities are sourced from the media. Therefore, the media's heterogeneous, diverse roles and agendas can be of the outmost importance in influencing behavioural changes in society. For instance, newspapers, as an important component of the media, collect, compile and process news and thoughts and communicate them to the public (Tasdemir and Kus, 2011:171). Taking this into consideration, newspapers are able to communicate appropriate information to society in order to inform them of this epidemic. This will reduce the number of infections and, as a result, the number of pupils and teachers in educational institutions will rise. Therefore, the impact of HIV/AIDS should be on the media's agenda at all times, in order to curb this epidemic.

2.3.4 Impact of HIV/AIDS on Health

The aspect of health is very important in any country's economy; however, HIV/AIDS appears to be a great challenge to the health sector in the country. Wards in the hospitals throughout the country have become overcrowded by HIV/AIDS patients. In support of this view, Abdul-Karim and Abdul-Karim (2005:336) maintain that the main

impact on adult health services appears to be increased hospital admissions, leading to ward overcrowding and possible exclusion of HIV- negative patients. The HIV/AIDS epidemic has posed and will continue to pose tremendous challenges to the health systems of developing countries, especially in the most severely affected countries. As the leading cause of illness and death in sub-Saharan Africa, HIV/AIDS has become an added burden on already strained health care systems (Colvin in Abdool-Karim and Abdool-Karim 2005:336).

The impact of HIV/AIDS on the health workforce and health systems is an added burden to the already fragile health systems in developing countries which are characterized by poor infrastructure, an insufficient number of service providers, lack of drugs and commodities, and poor management (Tawfik and Kinoti, 2006:3). In this regard, media has to act as watchdog and inform society and government about the issues that might acts as barriers in curtailing this epidemic. Based on this understanding, Mandla-Routledge (2006:6) suggests that the “media should not only tell stories about HIV/AIDS but also highlight the impact of the pandemic not only in terms of people dying but also in terms of how it is affecting the delivery of health care, as well as health professionals themselves”.

Looking at the role and functions of the media in society, it is of great importance that the media place greater emphasis on scrutinizing and showing how HIV/ AIDS impacts the areas mentioned above. It is through media that the government, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and influential leaders can be made aware of the impact of HIV/AIDS in society. With this, the media should not only cover issues about

the spread of HIV/AIDS, but it should also show the consequences it has for different elements within society.

2.4 Roles, Functions and Effects of Media in Society

It is important to note that the media can play an important role in raising public awareness about HIV/AIDS, by reporting issues that promote the prevention of the virus and reduce the stigma associated with those who suffer from it (*Soul City, 2001*). However, the coverage of this epidemic seems to be infrequent in the South African media, especially the print media. Cullen (2003:67) describes frequency of HIV/AIDS coverage as the 'rise-peak-decline approach'. This means that the rate at which this epidemic is being covered by media is fluctuating. It is vital for media to maintain regular reporting on HIV/AIDS, as this will keep the issue in the public agenda and this in turn will promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

The mass media have a powerful influence on the mass audience and could easily alter or control people's behaviour (Suresh, 2003). However, some scholars argue that media audiences have a choice to accept or ignore a message from the media. Therefore, it can be argued that media effects are limited in influencing certain behaviour in society. The fact that many people rely on the media for information makes it vital for the media to perform specific functions in society. McQuail (1978), cited in Fourie (2007:188) identifies the following functions of the media in society:

1. **Information:** providing information about events and conditions in the society and the world, indicating relations of power; facilitating innovation, adaption and progress.

2. **Correlation:** explaining, interpreting and commenting on the meaning of events and information, providing support for establishment of authority and norms, socializing; coordinating separate activities, consensus building; setting orders of priority and signalling relative status of a topic.
3. **Continuity:** expressing the dominant culture and recognizing cultures and new cultural developments; forging and maintaining commonality of values.
4. **Entertainment:** providing amusement, diversion, and the means of relaxation; reducing social tension.
5. **Mobilization:** campaigning for social objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic development, work and sometimes religion.

It is very important that press contributes to the national, if not international awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic by fulfilling the important role of disseminating information. This has to be fair, accurate, balanced and newsworthy information in order to bring positive change in society's behaviour and attitude towards this epidemic. In support of this idea, Swain (2005) points out that the media has enormous potential to help stop the spread of AIDS if it could inform the public continuously and accurately about the true nature and scope of HIV risks around the world. This means that accurate information from the media can help people change their behaviour and take informed decisions in curbing the infection rates of this disease.

Ajibola (2009:53) asserts that information includes all those facts and details that an individual needs in order to make meaningful decisions about issues of interest and significance to him or her. This information may involve news on development, culture, education and health issues, such as those related to HIV/AIDS. It is true that the media

performs all these functions in order to keep society abreast of what is going on around them. But the question which now arises is whether the press in South Africa includes these functions when reporting HIV/AIDS issues.

Wood (2006:308-309) offers another view of the role of the media as information providers when she states that “mass communication does more than report information; it also provides characters with whom we identify, and entertain us”. Wood further suggests that mass communication also shapes our attitudes, values, and perceptions of people, situations, places, and events. However, Severin and Tankard (2001:125) affirm that “a mass communication message does not have the same effect on everyone”. Severin *et al* (2001) reaffirm that “its effect on anyone is dependent on a number of things, including personality characteristics of the person and various aspects of the situation and the context”. This indicates that by giving social problems like HIV/AIDS issues more space and time in the media will affect people in varying ways depending on the personality and situation.

The effective communication of appropriate information about HIV/AIDS is very important in order to eradicate many of the social ills associated with misinformation and myths about the epidemic (Forman, 2005:192). This implies that to contain HIV/AIDS infections, more information should be supplied to communities. This can be achieved through the use of media. However, Linda (2000:118) maintains that to contain the HIV/AIDS situation, the media as a channel of information dissemination needs to be supplemented by other sources of information dissemination since not all people, particularly those in rural areas, have access to the mass media.

In addition to the abovementioned functions of the media, Vivian (1993) identified surveillance as one function of mass media. Vivian (1993:340-341) also asserts that “in modern human society, surveillance is provided to individuals by the mass media, which scan local and global environments for information that helps individuals make decisions to live better, even survive”. This implies that the media familiarize members of a particular society with issues that might affect their lives directly or indirectly. Through news coverage on social issues such as HIV/AIDS, the media can fulfill its surveillance role successfully.

Another role of the media in society is advocacy. Media advocacy provides a framework for shifting the focus of health oriented news reporting to policy issues addressing public health (Stein, 2002:4). Stein (*ibid*) further argues that the aim of media advocacy is to increase the capacity of groups or societies to act in a manner conducive to their goals. This role of the media is also aimed at achieving social behaviour among societies. A strong hands-on advocacy role might mean that reporters should incorporate social and cultural situations in their news reports on HIV/AIDS.

The advocacy role involves more than educating the public regarding appropriate individual behaviour; it includes the promotion of social change and collective action (Stein, 2002). This testifies to the fact that media advocacy can help in building a conducive environment for behavioural change and, as a result, help in managing the impact of HIV/AIDS over a long period of time. The research undertaken by CADRE (2002) revealed that advocacy within the context of newspaper reporting involves an internal policy agenda that is specifically focused on social issues and this can go a long way in bringing about the much required change.

The fact that the media nourishes society with information means that more information about HIV/AIDS should be covered and disseminated to society in order for the abovementioned functions to be achieved. News coverage is occasionally the only source of new information available on an issue (Steinberg, 2010:266). This means that more has to be done in order to ensure that the society has access to different forms of information. The majority of people have come to depend on the media for news and other significant information to such an extent that this information can shape people's everyday lives (Hanefeld, 2005:2).

In addition, Connelly and Catriona (2003:64) add that the media can also play a vital role in informing public opinion on key issues of the day and communicating knowledge about HIV/AIDS. In support of this, Linda (2000:111) articulates that "the media can play an influential part as an agent of change so that the knowledge acquired is translated into practice or the desired behavioural change".

Even though that is the case, it is important to note the following aspects of media effects in society as identified by Klapper (1960), as cited in Fourie (2007:235):

1. Media communication in itself is not a necessary or sufficient cause for behavioural change. At most, it operates in conjunction with and via certain mediating factors and influences.
2. Media, however, can contribute to behavioural change and reinforce existing behaviour.
3. Where mass communication does change behaviour, there may be no mediating factors, or mediating factors themselves operate in the direction of change. This

is found in authoritarian societies or in developing societies where the media is expected to play a leading role in transforming society.

4. The effects exercised by the media are subject to situation and context.

It is true that the media can provide society with information that is aimed at changing behaviour; however, this alone cannot bring about the desired change in society. Individual behaviour is influenced through relationships of the individual with others (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981). It is also believed that behavioural change in society can only be achieved if other institutions such as religious organisations, government, families and schools collaborate in the fight against this pandemic.

Adopting new issues or ideas from media can also contribute to behavioural change. Singhal and Dearing (2006) relate this to diffusion of innovations when they point out that the concept of diffusion of innovation concerns messages that contain new ideas and mass communication encompasses all types of message. They further point out that in the case of diffusion, messages are new and a degree of risk for the receiver is present. This leads to somewhat different behaviour on his or her part in the case of innovations than if he were receiving a message about routine ideas. Dissemination of new ideas on how to treat and prevent contracting this disease might contribute to positive behaviour in society. Communication is the exchange of information through which new ideas are propagated from one individual to others (Rogers, 2003). Communication is very important for diffusion of innovations. Roman (2003) points out that mass media are best for creating awareness about innovations.

In this regard, covering or reporting new ideas on how to deal with HIV/AIDS can lead to positive behavioural changes in society. In addition to this, Rogers and Kincaid, (1981) point out that diffusion is linked to existing social networks while Rogers (2003) says the concept of homophily is very important in the propagation of new ideas. Media should inform the public about new innovations in relation to prevention and treatment of this epidemic as this might contribute to behavioural change towards this epidemic.

In succinct terms, Bracht (1999) asserts that media institutions are particularly important in society in promoting major health issues such as HIV/AIDS because they legitimize an issue in order that it is regarded as relevant. The media also raises awareness and provides frameworks of meaning (Qakisa, 2003:45). Although the media has this potent role, it still has a long way to go in terms of informing and educating the public about the consequences of HIV/AIDS. In light of this, many scholars have written on the role of the media with regard to HIV/AIDS and Shepperson and Parker (2000) cited in Ajibola 2009:17), cognizant of such a situation, observe that:

The role of the media in reporting and framing HIV/AIDS issues within the context of a growing epidemic is well recognized. Press reporting and analysis play an important role in developing public understanding of key elements of the epidemic, and also promote understanding amongst professionals, working in the field. Health workers, for example often cite newspapers as their main source of regular information on HIV/AIDS research. In addition, the press also plays an important role in mediating response to HIV/AIDS, policy issues, and provides a forum for discourse.

In relation to this view of the role of media in society, McQuail (1994) and De Beer (1998) (quoted in De Wet 2004:96-97) suggest the following assumptions about the influence of the media:

1. The media is able to influence matters and control innovation because it remains the most potent way of informing and influencing society.
2. The media remains the sphere where issues, nationally and internationally, are played out. It has the potential either to place issues at the centre of debate or to ignore issues that could steer debate in particular directions.
3. The media provides definitions of identity and social realities. It is an intellectual, yet tangible place where the changing cultures and values of society are displayed, constructed and communicated.
4. The media is a platform to fame and disgrace where instant heroes and villains are made.
5. The media is the source of an ordered and public meaning system that provides a benchmark for what is 'normal'.
6. The media is the single largest focus of leisure-time activity and means of entertainment.
7. The conduct of both democratic and undemocratic politics, nationally and internationally, depends increasingly on mass media being a part of social systems. For example, government policy on HIV/AIDS cannot be communicated effectively without mass media involvement.

These are plausible roles that the media plays in an effort to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS. Its potential in providing the information, knowledge, attitude and skills that

will inform and lead to positive moral behaviour is vital in building a healthy nation. The media is in a position to create greater public awareness of HIV/AIDS, which is necessary before individuals can critically analyse the challenges posed by the epidemic (Wangulu, 2007:12). In order for citizens make informed decisions to help prevent infections, protect people, and ensure proper care of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), the media has to accurately inform the nation.

2.5 Role of Journalists in Reporting HIV/AIDS

Having dealt with the functions and the role of media in society, it is germane to assess the role of journalists in reporting HIV/AIDS. Journalists, as media workers and members of a society affected by HIV/AIDS, should act as advocates in the war against this epidemic. Journalism has a threefold role: to inform, educate and entertain (Cullen, 2003:74). Based on these functions, journalists can play a major role in the fight against HIV/AIDS by covering and disseminating well researched, objective and accurate information surrounding this incurable disease. By so doing, journalists will be able to inform and educate people about the extent of the problem and ways of preventing infection.

HIV is a large-scale and disturbing social problem that needs proper strategies to combat it. In support of this idea, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) (2006:10) posits that “HIV/AIDS pushes all the news buttons, it is a health emergency, it has a human face, it has elements of science, medicine, religion, and it has deep grief and moments of extreme joy”. This denotes that HIV/AIDS generates news from different angles. With this view in mind, journalists should cover news on HIV/AIDS from

different angles in order to inform and educate communities about the consequences of this epidemic.

2.6 Challenges of Covering HIV/AIDS

The challenges of covering HIV/AIDS are varied and complex (Valentine, 2006:12). Valentine notes that journalists need to understand the sometimes difficult science behind, for example, vaccine and microbicide trials in order to report them well. The fact that some journalists have not had training in science means that scientific errors are sometimes found in their reports on HIV/AIDS matters. For instance, journalists should be in the right position to understand how antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) work in order to educate and inform people who live with HIV/AIDS on how to use them. However, journalists' lack of scientific interpretation of HIV/AIDS issues sometimes misleads the public because they rely on the media for their understanding of HIV/AIDS issues.

One of the biggest challenges of reporting HIV/AIDS is to ensure that every person interviewed is treated with respect, and gives their "informed consent" to be interviewed and for their names and photographs to be used (Cullinan, 2001:5). This means that articles on HIV/AIDS should be well sourced and the source of information should not be disclosed without the consent of the source. However, in some cases, journalists do not take this into consideration.

In such cases, journalists may face many barriers to good reporting, from government censorship to prejudice from their own media outlet. Despite these, organisational constraints and traditional news gathering practices can also act as a challenge to the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues. For instance, journalists could face a problem when trying

to interview sources of information, due to the unavailability of resources. Wangulu (2007:12) states that “covering the issue of HIV/AIDS requires a clear understanding of the challenges and limitations faced by journalists”. Pertinent to this, Panos (2005:4) outlines the following challenges which are faced by media workers in reporting HIV/AIDS:

1. Lack of access to accurate information about the epidemic.
2. Curbs on freedom of speech and oppressive government policies affecting access to information and freedom to scrutinize policies affecting HIV/AIDS.
3. Limited personal understanding about issues, trends and changing dynamics in the epidemic due to lack of training.
4. Lack of resources, including money, time and equipment, to travel and investigate HIV stories, leading to an over-emphasis on HIV in urban areas and neglect of rural populations.
5. Ethical dilemmas, such as the tension between the need to respect a person’s confidentiality and the need to provide a platform for the voices of people affected by HIV/Aids.
6. Self-censorship, as a response to cultural taboos, such as open discussion of sexual behaviour or analysis of gender roles.
7. Competing topics on the news agenda and perceived AIDS fatigue by editors, as well as audiences, resulting in a lack of editorial support.
8. The need for new, imaginative approaches to creating Aids stories and programmes appropriate to different media such as community radio.

In relation to the challenges of reporting on HIV/AIDS, it is apparent that covering HIV/AIDS stories is very challenging, because reporters or journalists have to take different issues into consideration before they can publish their stories. Regardless of these challenges and limitations, journalists should make sure that they contribute to the fight against this epidemic. To strengthen this point, Cullen (2003:76) concurs that regardless of any limitations and difficulties in effecting behavioural change, the press is able to improve awareness, knowledge and understanding of the epidemic. In order to defeat these challenges, journalists should acquire adequate skills so that the issue of HIV/AIDS can be reported effectively.

2.7 Brief History of Newspapers under Study

A look at the press in South Africa is very important to this study because the press in the country has been and is still educating and informing the public about social problems as well as development issues. However, before much can be said about the roles, functions and effects of media especially press in moulding, informing and influencing certain behaviour in the society; it is important to have a brief history of the newspapers under study as this will bring more understanding of how these newspapers contribute to the cover HIV/AIDS issues.

These newspapers were considered to be the appropriate sample for this study as they target low, middle and upper class readership in South Africa, and they circulate in most of the provinces. For instance, *The Star* circulates in the following provinces: Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North-West, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Western Cape (the Star 2007). The other reason for selecting these newspapers is

that they are published in the provinces where HIV prevalence rates are high. For instance, statistics released by Avert in 2010 indicated that Gauteng had 30.4% HIV prevalence and this is a province where *Daily Sun*, *Sowetan* and *The Star* are published.

2.7.1 Daily Dispatch

The *Daily Dispatch* began its life in 1898 and was published as London's *Daily Dispatch* (mediacclubsouthafrica.com). This newspaper is owned by Avusa Media Limited known as Johnnic Communications before, formerly known as Times Media Limited (TML). This company is owned by a coalition of black business groups and trade unions, the National Empowerment Consortium. Other publications by this company include the *Sowetan*, *Sunday Times*, the *Herald* and *Sunday World*. *Daily Dispatch* is the biggest selling daily newspaper in the Eastern Cape. Its daily sales are estimated at 33,555 papers and daily readership amounts to 226, 000 individuals (mediacclubsouthafrica.com).

Donald Wood, according to Williams (1997), is the most well known figure to have edited this newspaper from February 1965 until he was banned by the apartheid government in October 1977, for exposing government responsibility for the death of Steve Biko. Williams (1997) further points out that the *Daily Dispatch* continued publishing in politically turbulent times during the 1980s when its distribution area included the so-called independent states of the *Transkei* and *Ciskei*, where 30% of its readership lived in 1983.

2.7.2 Daily Sun

Daily Sun is a Media24 publication owned by Deon du Plessis. This is the first South African tabloid aimed at black readers (Herman, 2008). It is mainly published in English and is a national daily newspaper. The circulation of this publication is estimated at 494,875 and it has audience 3,831 000 readers. This newspaper is sold in Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the North-West provinces (www.southafrica.info).

2.7.3 Sowetan

This is a tabloid daily newspaper which was founded in 1981, as a liberation struggle newspaper. It was initially distributed as a weekly free sheet in Soweto. This paper was transformed into a daily in 1987 to fill the void left by the deregistration of the Post, at the hands of the apartheid government. According to De Wet (2004:103), the *Sowetan* used to be the biggest daily newspaper in terms of readership. It is mainly and traditionally an English language people's paper with a strong emphasis on nation building. The daily sales for this newspaper are estimated at 118,261 newspapers and a readership of 1.54 million people per day. The paper targets the black community and it is *Daily Sun*'s primary competition. This paper is considered relevant to this study in the sense that it will enable the researcher to examine how HIV/AIDS affects ordinary people.

2.7.4 The Star

This is a broadsheet newspaper which first appeared on newsstands in 1887 in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape as the *Eastern Cape Star*. In 1989, it moved to Johannesburg (Fourie, 2007:32). *The Star* is a publication of Independent Newspapers owned by Irish tycoon Tony O'Reilly; Independent Newspapers first acquired a stake in

local newspapers in 1995 when it took control of the Argus Newspapers in 1990s and renamed it Independent Newspapers. *The Star* is a prominent daily English paper with a history of quality reporting (De Wet, 2004:103). It targets middle to upper class readership in Gauteng.

This newspaper was exclusively aimed at a white market and today over 50% of its readers are black. The demographic profile of its readers is as follows: Black 65%, White 29%, Coloured 2% and Indian 4%. This newspaper is distributed throughout South Africa, with most sales in Gauteng. It is also available in the following provinces: Free State, Northern Cape, Western Cape, Kwazulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and North-West. This newspaper considered important in this study because the researcher will be able to examine how it informs the middle to upper classes on HIV/AIDS issues. Its daily sales are estimated at 125,490 while its readership is estimated at 574,000 per day.

2.8 HIV/AIDS Coverage in South African Media

The Sub-Saharan region has been hit hard by HIV/AIDS, especially South Africa which has the highest number of people living with this incurable disease. For this reason, Fourie (2008:394) is of the opinion that African reporting on HIV/AIDS should be specialized. The impact of media messages and campaigns has helped to inform, sustain and shape attitudes on health issues, such as HIV/AIDS (Qakisa, 2003:45). If the media cover HIV/AIDS more extensively, it could help in changing and building an environment which is conducive to behavioural change within society.

Much of the early coverage of HIV/AIDS implied that people who are at risk of contracting the disease are prostitutes, homosexuals, drug abusers or people who have multiple sexual partners (Qakisa, 2003:49). Qakisa further posits that, although the media went out to correct this perception, some people still believe that HIV/AIDS affects only immoral people. The media was the initiator of the association between the disease and prostitutes, homosexuals, drug abusers or people who have multiple sexual partners, whilst ignoring other means of contracting this disease.

Qakisa (2003:49) proposes that “another problem that may have influenced the way in which the AIDS issues are reported is the issue of language and presentation”. In this regard, the use of negative and stigmatizing language in reporting HIV/AIDS issues discourages people living with this disease from disclosing their status. Therefore, HIV/AIDS stories need to be accurate and balanced in order to convince readers, listeners and viewers about the effects of this pandemic. Accuracy is a critical media principle, since society may be influenced by media reports. In this regard, Williams & Miller noted that:

“When you talk about a disease such as AIDS,” says a TV news science correspondent, “and you can’t show actual injections, you can’t show blood and you can’t talk about anal intercourse, and then it does cause problems. I’m sure that it is one of the reasons that it is very hard to convince people what the hell is happening with AIDS (quoted in Qakisa, 2003:49).

In South Africa, HIV/AIDS communication has focused on methods that will motivate individuals to change their attitudes and behaviour. Even though positive behaviour and

attitude change can play a crucial role in the prevention of this epidemic, Melkote, Muppidi and Soswami (2000:25) argued that such behaviours and attitudes are produced and reproduced by individuals living in larger communities and being impacted by cultural, economic, social and political influences. In this regard, press can still play a vital role in shaping the individual's attitudes and behaviours related to HIV/AIDS. This can be easily achieved through frequent coverage of this epidemic and the use of neutral language by print media which will result in setting public agenda.

In spite of this, press coverage of HIV/AIDS has been erratic. This, however, could be due to a lack of funds or inexperienced journalists who lack the skills to accurately cover this deadly disease. Wangulu (2007:12) reasons that “adequate skills in HIV/AIDS can help in reporting this issue effectively”. Muchendu (2008:1) shows that the media's role in the covering of HIV/AIDS issues is more than vital, while Fourie (2001:499) states that media plays an important role in informing the public about issues that affect their day-to-day lives. This means that the media should continuously disseminate information which concerns the public.

Covering HIV/AIDS issues, on a continuous basis, will encourage people to change their behaviour. Providing society with fair, balanced and accurate information will raise awareness and help people stay informed about this disease. This indicates that the role of media is vital in the fight against HIV/AIDS. This is why Kofi Annan, the former United Nations Secretary General, made the following argument:

When you are working to combat a disastrous and growing emergency, you should use every tool at your disposal. HIV/AIDS is the worst epidemic humanity has ever faced. It

has spread further, faster and with more catastrophic long-term effects than any other disease. Its impact has become a devastating obstacle to development. Broadcast media have tremendous reach and influence, particularly with young people, who represent the future and who are the key to any successful fight against HIV/AIDS. We must seek to engage these powerful organisations as full partners in the fight to halt HIV/AIDS through awareness, prevention, and education (Kofi Annan, UNAIDS, 2004 in Kruger 2005).

Frequent coverage of HIV/AIDS can promote awareness of this epidemic in society. However, this is not the case in South African media and Duncan (2008) posits that HIV/AIDS coverage is still irregular, with peaks relating to moments or events that provoke coverage that is, generally, not sustained. This implies that the media tends to cover more stories on HIV/AIDS when there are special events like HIV/AIDS World day.

In addition to this, the media only publishes more HIV/AIDS stories when politicians or celebrities are in conflict about this disease. This is why Fourie (2008:391) points out that reporting on HIV/AIDS is generally done in a simplistic way. Similarly, Panos South Africa (2004) found that HIV/AIDS is still primarily reported as a health issue and not as a social or cultural issue that affects the society in general. The fact that the media is a key institution for deliberation, consensus building and information dissemination, this means that all the issues that surround the HIV/AIDS pandemic should be covered thoroughly.

2.9 Quality of HIV/AIDS Coverage in South Africa

Studies of media coverage of HIV/AIDS, however, have shown that despite the horrific impact of AIDS in South Africa, until the recently national media coverage - with few exceptions - does not reflect the urgency of the crisis. Instead, media coverage focuses primarily on conflicts around HIV/AIDS policy (Jacobs and Johnson, 2007:127). The reason for this might be the result of the lack of reporters who specialize in reporting health issues. Muchendu (2008:71) points out that for media to have a quality and effective HIV/AIDS news coverage, it needs to get specialized reporters on health or train their journalists on HIV/AIDS issues.

However, journalists should write more proactive articles which will aid in setting an agenda on HIV/AIDS issues. Proactive approach means that journalists should peruse and investigate truth in an independent manner rather than relying on events that deal with this epidemic. This will cause HIV/AIDS issues to receive more productive coverage from newspapers as journalists will not wait for special events or issues such as World HIV/AIDS Day to produce articles. Reporting on this epidemic, in this manner, will make it look like a serious matter in the eyes of society and, as a result, the media contributes towards positive behaviour. That is why Omoera, Awosola, Okhakhu and Adenina (2010:3) argued that “the strength of the media in influencing people’s perception as well as making society to change their behaviour may be an essential tool for fighting medical and social problems such as HIV/AIDS”. In relation to this statement, it can be argued that the media has a huge impact on the public, as it can shape the public’s opinion in different ways, depending on the objective of the message. For instance, writing more news and feature on people who have HIV/AIDS or who have

died from this epidemic, people will see this as real an issue that affects them and will have to adopt good behaviour especially the one that will make them avoid contracting this disease.

The findings of a quantitative content analysis of press coverage of HIV/AIDS in Australia, the USA, France and Britain during the 1980s and 1990s reveal a common pattern (Valentine, 2006). Initially there was a slow response to evidence of the infection in which certain high-risk groups such as homosexuals and drug addicts were targeted as the main offenders and sufferers. This was followed by increased coverage of HIV/AIDS with the acknowledged risk of HIV infection in the wider heterosexual population. Finally, the disease was 'reutilised' and treated as just another health story.

Actually, HIV/AIDS should be given more prevalence in the media than other issues, such as crime, due to its complexity and impact on society. Fortunately, some researchers have revealed that "AIDS reporting has been no different from reporting on crime, elections, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, corruption or any sort of stories of the decade" (Whiteside, 2008). Yet, as the above argument shows, HIV/AIDS should receive more attention from media.

To put it differently, the quality of the media coverage of HIV/AIDS epidemic remains an essential element to increasing public awareness of the issue, and forms an integral part of any behavioural change. The quality of reporting on an issue can be gauged through different media principles. These principles include: accuracy, balance, clear and concise writing, well-focused reporting as well as a diversity of sources and context. However, these principles will not be discussed here.

2.10 Ethical Reporting on HIV/AIDS

In every discipline, there are ethics that control and guide individuals. This is no exception in the media industry as journalists and editors have to abide by ethics that guide them whenever reporting on issues such as HIV/AIDS. This is why Wood (2006:31) points out that “all forms of communication involve ethical issues. The principle with regards to ethics in reporting HIV/AIDS is to reduce the stigma it has in society”. Ethical reporting should however, provide appropriate facts on HIV/AIDS and eliminate stress from those affected or living with it.

Media ethics is not an exercise solely for leadership (Claassen in Hadland, 2005:134). This implies that not only editors have to make ethical decisions to publish or not to publish, but everyone involved in the process of gathering and publishing news has to follow and abide by ethical standards. For instance, journalists have to exercise ethical considerations because whatever they say or write has the possibility of influencing the public either positively or negatively. Claassen in Hadland, (2005:134 further notes that ethics deal with the philosophical foundations of decision making, or choosing between the good and bad options that one faces (Claassen in Hadland, 2005). In relation to HIV/AIDS reporting, journalists have to consider which information is relevant to changing people’s behaviour for the better, while not discriminating against people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).

Media coverage when reporting on HIV/AIDS should be fair, accurate and objective in order to be ethical in reporting on this disease. Ajibola (2009:71) stipulates that it may not always be obvious to the audience, but implicitly, ethics are always at the core of the decisions that a journalist makes while in the field, or what the editor does at his desk in

the newsroom. This means that media practitioners, such as journalists or reporters, have to make ethical decisions when reporting sensitive and social problems as this determines what the public may read, hear and see.

When reporting on HIV/AIDS matters, journalists should follow certain ethics in order to write ethical stories. Fourie (2008:393) is of the view that, to change the attitude of the public, there needs to be a sensitive and ethical way of reporting on social and cultural ideas and beliefs that influence the general attitude that many people have regarding HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

To report news ethically, journalists need to seek clarification of information before reporting it. Clarification is especially important in reporting issues such as HIV/AIDS because it can be difficult for a reader to fully understand scientific and statistical information. For instance, the statistics on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS might look easy but is often misunderstood when reported out of context.

The issue of HIV/AIDS is a story of critical importance that should be covered by journalists with imagination, initiative and sensitivity to gender and larger social forces that drive the epidemic (www.journaids.org). This shows that the reporting of HIV/AIDS by journalists needs high ethical standards. It is true that the media portrays reality for a certain society and Panos (2009:8) supports this notion by stating that the media reflects the realities, values and norms of a society. Therefore, it is imperative that reality is presented in a convincing manner so that myths, prejudices, fear and misconceptions towards this disease are minimized. With this in mind, journalists must

remain vigilant in their performance of their duties, and must be aware of their responsibilities.

Journalistic ethics includes respecting rights to privacy, and matters of public interest (Kruger, 2004:7). This indicates that journalists have to bear in mind the confidentiality of their sources of information when writing and publishing information pertaining to HIV/AIDS. The issue of privacy is very complicated when one considers that the public has the right to know anything that journalists find newsworthy. Kruger (2004:7) further indicates that journalists' first loyalty is to the audience and it is critically important that issues of HIV/AIDS are reported fully and accurately. However, sources must be protected from the harm caused by the disclosure of the HIV/AIDS status of PLWHA, without their consent.

Language usage is another factor that journalists have to keep in mind when dealing with HIV/AIDS issues. Language usage determines the message passed to the audience and it further determines whether the message is clear and understandable, as well as the value it carries (Irimu and Schwartz, n.d:14). In order to communicate effectively with their audience, media practitioners need to use appropriate language so that they can present reality. In relation to this, Hopson (2000) suggests that the selective use of language can trivialize an event or render it important, marginalize some groups and empower others; define an issue as an urgent problem or reduce it to a routine one. This suggests that journalists need to be careful in their choice of language, when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues, as this might aid in curbing this epidemic.

Since each discipline has its own vocabulary or jargon, journalists should learn to find appropriate terminology when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues. The very words we use to describe HIV/AIDS play an important role in shaping perceptions; journalists therefore need to ensure that their words do not carry a value judgment (Cullinan, 2001:6). It is, for instance, not ethical to call a person who lives with HIV/AIDS “an HIV/AIDS carrier or an AIDS sufferer” as this will negatively affect the infected person. Words or concepts can be considered as labels that structure perception by classifying objects, people and situations (Fourie, 2008: 110-111). This emphasizes the ethical importance of the using appropriate language when covering HIV/AIDS issues in the media.

Based on the ethical use of appropriate language in reporting on HIV/AIDS, Foreman (2007) identifies the following points as appropriate for guiding journalists in the use of language when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues:

1. It is essential to use language appropriate to the journalist’s audience. The use of language is not just a question of whether to use a local dialect, but how to phrase concepts, and what type of vocabulary to use. To find the appropriate language, a journalist needs to build her/his understanding of her audience, and to become “fluent” in HIV/AIDS terminology.
2. Language has a strong influence on attitudes toward HIV/AIDS and people affected by HIV/AIDS. It can be damaging or it can be non-judgmental, positive, and constructive. Good media coverage of HIV/AIDS uses neutral, gender-sensitive language.
3. HIV/AIDS involves highly technical terminology. It is imperative for journalists to “translate” this terminology into ideas and terms that their audiences can readily

understand. It is also crucial to ensure that the language used in stories is accurate. Good journalism requires journalists to understand the facts about HIV/AIDS, and to get these across to their audiences in ways which the audiences can understand.

The above points indicate that the appropriate use of language is imperative when covering HIV/AIDS issues. The appropriate use of language will encourage the target audience to read articles from newspaper sources. This is why the words of Valentine (2006:17) are relevant:

Good media, as much as it is about news, is also about story-telling and people are at the centre of those stories. So yes, there is a need to both be accurate and ethical about how we report those things, but also to connect with the human issues. And HIV ultimately, comes down to how we have sex, with whom we have sex, how often we have sex, how many partners we have at the same time or not...and if we can't find decent media stories to write about that then we're in a really sorry state.

The appropriate use of language coverage of balanced, accurate, fair and informative news especially on social problems like HIV/AIDS will encourage behavioural change among members of society. In relation to this point, Deacon, Pickering, Golding and Murdock (2007) state that “media language use is seen as embodying relations of power and authority in society and contributes to the ongoing production of social conceptions, values, identities and relations”. The media should also engage in consistent coverage of this epidemic in order to combat it.

In general, the points below were identified in a meeting between senior media editors (from Mauritius, Bakina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal) who wished to adopt basic principles to assist the media in reporting on HIV/AIDS ethically. Irimu and Schwartz (n.d: 4) state that, in this meeting, it was noted that any journalist who imparts biased information on HIV/AIDS is a constraint to the flow of information and a hindrance to the fight against the epidemic. Therefore, journalists should:

1. Respect the rights of persons living with HIV by being sober, realistic and balanced and by keeping confidentiality of news sources
2. Increase knowledge and training on HIV/AIDS issues
3. Be concerned about figures and facts
4. Involve the community in reporting
5. Collaborate with HIV/AIDS organisations and persons living with HIV/AIDS
6. Make a link between HIV/AIDS and STDs
7. Use appropriate language
8. Sustain commitment to increased coverage of HIV/AIDS and
9. Avoid discrimination by linking HIV/AIDS to tribe, class, race, culture, religion or nationality.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

This study focuses on HIV/AIDS coverage in selected South African newspapers and it adopts agenda-setting as its theoretical framework. This theory is very important in that it allows the researcher to examine how the media sets the agenda for issues such as HIV/AIDS that are of great concern to society.

Agenda-setting is based on the idea that media form the public agenda through the amount of coverage devoted to a particular issues and events. An agenda is a list of current events and public issues which are viewed in a hierarchy of importance at a particular point in time (Roger and Dearing, 1988). Agenda setting is an effect theory that places the media in the powerful position of determining the salience of issues on the public agenda. Media achieves this through framing some aspects of perceived reality to enhance their salience in such a way as to promote a particular problem definitions, causal treatment, moral evaluation and or treatment recommendation (Entman, 1993:53). This means that the attention that media puts on the issues or social problems such as HIV/AIDS helps the audience to understand the seriousness of such issues. The concept of framing suggests that the way an issue or problem is presented influences the choice people make. That is why Chong and Druckman (2007:109) point out that “framing in communication affects the attitudes and behaviours of audiences”. This implies that the way journalists write or talk about HIV/AIDS can influence audiences either positively or negatively. Framing HIV/AIDS issues in the positive manner is one of the influential ways that media can adopt in order to shape public opinion. This can be achieved through the choice of good language because it is a vital tool of communication.

Brubaker (2008:2) states that “as media coverage increases, the issue’s salience to the audience increases, and the items move higher in the public’s agenda hierarchy”. In support of this, Barren (1997) points out that the issues that receive prominent attention are the problems that the public views as the nation’s most important. Agenda setting emphasises the media effect on the public. The media determine the important political

issues and therefore, set the public's agenda (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). McCombs and Shaw (*ibid*) further indicate that audiences learn both about given issues and how much importance to attach to the issues by the amount of information provided by media.

According to this theory, media does not mirror public opinion as much as they influence behaviour (Ader, 1995). However, McCombs and Shaw (1972) argue that the media influences issue salience among audience members through the amount of news coverage provided. This indicates that when media chooses issues and events to cover, the media shapes its audiences' reality. Giving social problems like HIV/AIDS more space and time in the media agenda will help audience to regard such issues as a serious matter. It is in this direction that Willings and Macdowell (2000) aver that "the strength of the mass media lies in helping to put issues on the public agenda, in reinforcing local efforts, in raising consciousness about issues and in conveying simple information". Adesanya and Ibagere (1999) reaffirm the powerful influence of the media on the public when they state that "agenda setting implies that mass media predetermine what issues are important at a given time in a given society". Lindsey (1994) argued that media plays a central role in mediating information and framing public opinion. Adding to this view, Omoera, Awosola, Okhakhu and Adenina (2010:2) indicate that "the media cast an eye on events that face us directly and render remote happenings observable and meaningful.

Essentially, the agenda setting function of the mass media refers to the ability of the news media to focus public attention on a few key 'objects' (Valenzuela and Correa, 2009:207). According to Rogers, Dearing and Chang (1991), agenda setting theory

suggests that factors such as the number of articles, news types and locations in the newspaper are important for putting a media agenda into the public. The suggestion of this theory for the coverage of social problems such as HIV/AIDS is that frequent coverage of such issues that concern wellbeing of society is necessary to place them high on public agenda especially among policy makers. Rogers and Dearing (1991) studied AIDS coverage in the United States and the results revealed an interaction between the agenda of mass media and the agenda of the science community. Thus newspaper coverage of HIV/AIDS issues can provide information with which discussion of this epidemic can take place.

Rogers and Dearing (1991) further state that the agenda-setting theory can explain how the media emphasizes issues in the public's cognition through the increasing intensity and persistence of media coverage and creating meanings for news events related to public issues. Tuchman, (1978), adds that "media can construct reality in the eyes of its audiences through various framing techniques such as selection and emphasis of certain aspects of an issue". Pratt, Ha and Patt (2002) affirm that the implication of the agenda setting theory for the coverage of diseases in Africa is that heavy media coverage of such health problems is necessary to place them high on the public agenda, especially among policy makers. Pratt *et al* (2002) further point out that the framing techniques used by the media can affect the perceptions of the public and policy makers on those diseases. This indicates that a media agenda can serve as a yardstick on how certain issues are given attention by the public and how such issues affect them. For instance, if HIV/AIDS as a social problem receives more coverage from the media, this might change people's perception and attitude towards this epidemic.

McCombs (cited in Valenzuela and Correa, 2009:207), is of the view that since the seminal 1968 Chapel Hill study, by McCombs and Shaw (1972), more than 400 studies and experiments in the US and other countries have been able to produce evidence that there is a transfer of salience and ideas in agenda setting between the 'objects' prominent in the media agenda and those prominent in the public agenda. In succinct terms, these 'objects' are public issues and could be situated in the realm of politics, economy or the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This implies that the media agenda setting not only tells the public what to think about but also how to think about issues discussed by the media. The issue of HIV/AIDS in this regard is no exception as it is a social problem that affects the whole world and, therefore, should be prioritised in the media agenda.

Zucker (1978) argued that agenda setting effects could not take place everywhere, but the effects would depend on the degree of the issue's obtrusiveness (cited in Lee 2010:761). To say that agenda setting effects are determined by obtrusiveness or unobtrusiveness of issues is to say that certain issues are closer to the centre of the media agenda than others. For instance, HIV/AIDS issues need to be on the media agenda permanently as it affects everyone around the globe, even more so than conflicts which are often discussed in the parliament.

According to Rogers and Dearing (2007:85), the scholarly research on the agenda setting process of the mass media stems most directly from the writing of Cohen (1963), who observed that:

The press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and adoption. It may not be successful much of the time in telling what to think, but it is stunning successful in telling its

readers what to think about. And it followed from this that the world looks different to different people depending not only on their personal interest, but also on the map that is drawn for them by the writers and editors, and publishers of the papers they read. The editor may believe he is only printing things that people want to read, but he is thereby putting a claim on their attention, powerfully determining what they will be thinking about, and talking about, until the next wave laps their shore (quoted in Nel, 2002:33).

Lee (2010) is of the view that agenda setting was able to explain the media effects such as telling people what to think, but also telling them how to think. This shows that the prominence that is given to certain issues, like HIV/AIDS, by the media agenda helps people consider such issues as important. McQuail (2000:426) adds that “the attention given to news coverage influences the rank order of public awareness and attributes to the significance of an issue”. This means that the attention that the media can give to social problems, like HIV/AIDS in South Africa, will promote awareness of this terrible disease and as result contribute to public agenda.

Giving issues such as HIV/AIDS more prominence in the media could help in informing and promoting awareness of this epidemic in the society. The use of different genres as well as decipherable headlines when reporting HIV/AIDS could also contribute to the awareness of HIV/AIDS issues in the media. Therefore the researcher believes that this theory is suitable for this study as it will help in finding out how media (especially press) cover and set agenda on HIV/AIDS issues.

2.12 Review of Past Related Studies

HIV/AIDS is a crucial issue and has been dealt with by different researchers. Researchers such as Finlay (2004), Cullinan (2003), De Wet (2004) and many others have studied media coverage of HIV/AIDS. Most importantly, several of these studies have specifically looked at the South African media's coverage of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Finlay (2004) conducted research on the factors influencing the representation of the conflict around HIV/AIDS policy in the South African press. She found that the media was an effective vehicle that carries HIV/AIDS information. The results also indicated that there is an absence of the broad analytical role expected to be played by the press.

In addition, she concluded that HIV/AIDS reporting in the commercial press, including substantial pressure placed on the government for policy change, is influenced by factors that are in some sense predetermined by a press which is driven by profit. This means that the media will only give more coverage to commercial news values than HIV/AIDS issues; these are seen by some editors as stories which are not important enough to publish in newspapers. In other words, the stories are not viewed as newsworthy.

The purpose of the media industry is to disseminate educational as well as informative information to the target audience, but the main motive behind these is to make profit. Therefore, there is an argument that HIV/AIDS stories do not sell the publications and readers no longer regard them as newsworthy. This, however, will hinder this industry from making a profit. It can then be inferred that various factors have a profound effect on the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues. However, it is felt that some important factors have

been neglected in Finlay's study, especially those relating to the ethical reporting and representation of PLWHAs. If well covered, HIV/AIDS issues can be disseminated effectively through proper media channels and, therefore, society will be well informed.

Several studies have been conducted on media coverage of HIV/AIDS issues in South Africa. Swanepoel *et al.* (2007) analysed the coverage of HIV/AIDS in three South African newspapers. The purpose of their study was to examine the extent to which the press complied with the diverse guidelines suggested for reporting HIV/AIDS accurately. The study established that the newspapers partially comply with the guidelines, such as presentation of HIV/AIDS issues, use of language and accuracy in reporting HIV/AIDS issues. What seems to be left out is the extent to which these newspapers use stigmatizing language in their reports.

Swanepoel *et al.* (2007) further found out that the language used for reporting HIV/AIDS was not appropriate because some of the terms used stigmatized and belittled those living with HIV/AIDS; for an example, the use of terms and phrases such as 'prostitute', 'innocent victim', 'people suffering from HIV' were found to be used. This implies that some organisations are concerned about the way in which HIV/AIDS issues are presented in the media. Therefore, journalists have to be very sensitive and use the appropriate terminology when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues in order to contribute to a behavioural change in society.

Johanna Hanefeld (2005) examined HIV/AIDS and the media when she attempted to analyse results for all the four provinces of Pakistan. The results showed that the media has influenced individual behaviour and the behaviour change included going for a HIV

test or starting to use condoms. She further stated that media was possibly the most powerful tool in humanizing and normalizing HIV/AIDS and taking it from a “disease” status to a day-to-day reality of our lives.

Ajibola (2009) conducted a study on the ethics of reporting on HIV/AIDS in three South African newspapers. This study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches in gathering and interpreting data. The combination of these approaches allows the researcher to identify the weaknesses of each approach and how they complement each other. However, the present study uses the content analysis method in gathering and analysing data from selected South African newspapers.

The empirical findings from Ajibola’s study reveal that, in the newspapers studied, there was an average of one story per issue. The study further revealed that there is a gross dearth of stories that are reported from the human angle and which were humanized. The language of reporting, especially the use of some metaphors, had negative connotations, some positive and one was political. The analysis of this study further unveiled that very few examples regarding sensationalist headlines and texts were found.

The study concluded that stories on HIV/AIDS ought to be humanized and more journalistic genres such as news and features be used more often. It also indicated that very few stories were sensationalized. This means that HIV/AIDS stories should raise greater awareness amongst the public in order to combat this disease and shift the blame from PLWHA to the virus itself. Finally, the study also argued that the newspapers were ethical since they published at least one HIV/AIDS article per issue.

However, Ajibola's study failed to reveal how the analysed newspapers constructed their HIV/AIDS messages in terms of paragraphing, choice of words and the tone of the articles found in those newspapers; in simple terms, the style in which the articles and information get presented in the newspapers. The present study, however, seeks to investigate the frequency, prominence, depth of treatment and the extent to which the selected newspapers cover HIV/AIDS issues. It will further analyse the language which the newspapers in question use to disseminate their HIV/AIDS message.

Besides all these, the features and editorials from the *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Sun*, *The Star* and *Sowetan* will be analysed to ascertain whether the messages they carry are setting an agenda on HIV/AIDS or not. It is presumed that if the media constructs influential messages on this epidemic, it can create a turn-around of this epidemic as well as influence behavioural changes in society. With this notion in mind, it is expected that this study will make a significant contribution to the literature on HIV/AIDS coverage by adding to the already existent body of knowledge and to campaigns that fight the spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

2.13 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to review some of the concepts relevant to the understanding of how HIV/AIDS is covered in South African newspapers. In this chapter, the available literature and similar studies that have been undertaken on HIV/AIDS coverage by the media have been reviewed as well as the role that the media plays in setting an agenda on this disease. Statistics indicate that HIV/AIDS prevalence

is still high in South Africa. Therefore, the media continuously has to inform and educate society about this disease.

From the literature, it has been established that HIV/AIDS has a tremendous impact on society. In spite of the lack of consensus on how communication affects behaviour, a discussion on the subject is important, given the severity of impact of HIV/AIDS and the centrality of the mass media as part of the communication process (Parrish-Sprowl, 1998). Literature further revealed that much of the information on HIV/AIDS is sourced from the media, especially newspapers. Kiai (1998) points out that “the media has been viewed as being influential in building awareness across different sectors of society on HIV/AIDs and importance of being careful in sexual behaviour and practices”. This supports the notion that the main functions of the media are to inform and educate society about issues that affect their day-to-day lives. In this regard, HIV/AIDS is no exception.

Moreover, it has been revealed that the media played and still plays a tremendous role in informing and shaping society’s attitude on health issues, such as HIV/AIDS (Shepperson, 2000). However, this study argues that in order to ensure that there are more desirable and positive changes in the society, HIV/AIDS issues should be on the media agenda at all times and reactive reporting on this disease should be adopted. The findings from previous studies show that the quality of HIV/AIDS coverage remains an essential element for increasing public awareness of this epidemic and an integral part of influencing behavioural change. Finally, this chapter also concludes that ethical reporting on HIV/AIDS is vital in order to disseminate information that does not disgrace other parts of society. With this background, it can be suggested that informing the

public about HIV/AIDS is not solely the responsibility of the press and other media. It requires a multi-sectional approach, which includes different institutions such as religious organisations, political parties, NGOs, families and schools. Agenda setting was also used as theoretical framework for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the paradigm, approach, research design, population studied, sample size and sampling technique employed. It also discusses the instruments used and how such instruments were used to collect data. The chapter also delineates the sampling procedures and data analysis techniques employed in the study.

3.2 The Paradigm

Researchers ought to have a guiding philosophy which makes it possible for them to put in place principles that systematically lead to valid steps as phenomena are examined. Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) intimate that it is the choice of paradigm that sets down the intent, motivation and expectations for the research. Without nominating a paradigm as a first step, there is no basis for subsequent choices regarding methods, literature, or research design. Paradigms are philosophical frameworks that give the researcher a starting point where they should reflect on the world, search for what they believe in, why they view them as such and what philosophical framework shapes them (Gibson and Sanderson, 2003).

It can be inferred from the two definitions that the term paradigm refers to the researcher's guiding philosophy in the research undertaking. It is essential that the researcher chooses a research paradigm that suits the knowledge interests or purposes

of the research. This study is underpinned by the post-positivist paradigm as it is a foundation of education and psychology evaluation (Mertens, 2005).

3.2.1 The Post Positivist Paradigm

Positivism is a scientific research method that is based on the rationalistic empirical philosophy of Aristotle, Francis Bacon, John Locke, August Comte, and Emanuel Kant (Mertens, 2005). It views knowledge as hard, objective and tangible. Hence it demands the researcher to play an observer's role with an allegiance to the methods of natural science (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

The post-positivism paradigm fits well into the present study because the paradigm opens the door to multiple methods and worldviews while allowing for incorporation of different forms of data collection and analysis, thus it enables the researcher to get complimentary approaches to both explanatory and observational techniques of unearthing knowledge from peoples constructed ideas.

This view is also shared by Trockim (2006) who postulates that the post-positivist paradigm emphasizes the importance of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess different types of error, and therefore raising the need to use triangulation across these multiple erroneous sources to try to get a better lead on what is happening in reality. Post-positivists acknowledge that people are all biased and all of their observations are affected (theory-laden); therefore their best hope for achieving objectivity is to triangulate across multiple fallible perspectives (Trockim, 2006). Thus post positivism employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches both of which are also used in this study.

3.3 Research Design

This study adopted the mixed method which incorporates both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Mixed methods research is the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, approaches, concepts or language into a single study (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15). Many questions have arisen on whether the contrast between qualitative and quantitative research is a particularly constructive one. However, the best researches in social science contain elements of both. Ryan (2006:18) affirms that “of all the methodological distinctions that have been concocted, it is the quantitative or qualitative one which has proved most durable and which, to be fair, most accurately reflects the customary division of practice in social science”. Ryan (2006:19) reaffirms that one aspect of the contrasts between qualitative and quantitative concerns the mode of data analysis used.

Creswell (2009) maintains that “the qualitative research is an enquiry process of understanding where a researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting”. Kalof, Dan and Dietz (2008) observe that the objective of the qualitative research method is to comprehend the processes; experiences and meaning people give to phenomena. This helped this researcher to understand how HIV/AIDS issues are covered and portrayed in selected newspapers. Qualitative research helped to unfold information for understanding phenomenon where not much is known about them. It also provided space for new views and what is already known. Qualitative research also provides in-depth information that may be difficult to express quantitatively (Silverman, 2005).

On the other hand, “Quantitative research is a formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data are utilised to obtain information about the world” (Burns 2000:140). Quantitative approaches assume interval or ordinal data which are amenable to statistical manipulation and the advantage of this method is that its results are very objective and that they can be generalized

Singh (2007:63) defines research design as the plan, structure and strategy of investigation in order to obtain answers to research questions and to control variables. It is a plan of how to go about the research. Similarly, Taylor, Wilkie and Baser (2006:31) point out that “research design is a constructed plan and strategy that is moulded and used to obtain answers to research questions”. Based on the problem, as well as questions posed, the research design for this study is content analysis. This is considered appropriate for the investigation of HIV/AIDS coverage by the press because according to Krippendorff (2004:18), content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matters) to the context of their use. This is appropriate for obtaining quantitative and qualitative data. The research design guides the researcher in systematically setting steps to follow in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data. It is also regarded as a programme that guides the researcher in collecting data relevant to the study.

In relation to this, De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005:132) assert that the research design is a systematic plan on how a researcher intends to conduct a study. In addition, Yin (2009:26) notes that the research design is a blue print that contains four crucial steps in the research process. These include identifying which questions to ask, identifying the relevant data to be collected, identifying the appropriate instruments and

procedures to use and the manner of analysing the data. On the basis of these, content analysis as a research design was chosen for this study.

3.4 Quantitative Content Analysis

Neuman (2000:292) defines content analysis as a technique for gathering and analysing the content of texts. This was used to analyse data obtained quantitatively. Quantitative content analysis method, which is essentially a counting exercise, was used in this study. According to Berger (1991), this is a research technique that is based on measuring the amount of something in a representative sampling of some mass-mediated popular art form. According to Muchendu (2008:27), in content analysis, researchers usually examine artifacts of social communication, be they written documents or even transcriptions of recorded verbal communications. Gray (2009: 500) is of the view that content analysis is one of the most commonly used approaches to analysing quantitative data. This study adopted this method to determine the frequency of HIV/AIDS coverage in these selected newspaper.

The disadvantages of content analysis, as established by this research, include the fact that content analysis only looks at whether a certain content of what is researched is available. Another disadvantage that the researcher recognized is that old newspapers may not be safely kept and some pages might be missing, hence there might be some errors in the collection of data and bias in the interpretation of the results. In this study, data were obtained through quantitative content analyses of articles in *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Sun*, *Sowetan* and *The Star*.

3.5 Discourse Analysis (DA) as a method

Qualitative textual analysis procedures are concerned with how signifying occurs and the unraveling of the polysemic nature of texts (Lindloff, 1995:22). This study employed discourse analysis as a qualitative procedure of textual analysis. Discourse analysis utilises the researcher's ability to analyse information from specialized language that belongs to a particular genre. That is why Ritchie and Lewis (2003:200) argue that "discourse analysis is concerned with the way knowledge is produced within a particular discourse through the use of distinctive language (for example, legal discourse, medical discourse)". Furthermore, Thorne (2000:5) posits that "discourse analysis capitalizes on inquiry into the language that is used and the way it is used to uncover the societal influences that underlie our behaviours and thoughts." In relation to this, Slembrouck (2005:1) points out that discourse analysis refers to attempts to study the organisation of language above sentence or above the clause and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written text. Slembrouck (*ibid*) reaffirms that discourse analysis is also concerned with language in social context. Discourse analysis is tactically used to unearth underlying ideologies that influence and energize people in thought and in action. As Gee (2010) argues, discourse analysis exposes the implicit ideologies in texts.

The study of media texts is well established in the field of media studies and usually involves the use of analytical tools borrowed from literary criticism, film studies and linguistic analysis. These kinds of studies focus on the construction of meaning in media texts thus emphasizing their qualitative nature as opposed to quantitative content analyses which emphasize a fixed meaning in media texts (Gunter 2000:82). This

means that discourse analysis (DA) can be used more effectively to analyse text to convey multiple meanings depending on the receiver.

Analyses of media texts and representation have the ability to reveal the assumptions and values that are wrapped up in the construction of texts, and are also helpful in revealing how language use in the media contributes to the ongoing production of social conceptions, values, identities and relations (Deacon, Pickering and Murdock, 2007). Similarly, Gee (2010) is of the view that discourse analysis has a social dimension and for many analysts, it is a method for studying how language “get recruited ‘on site’ to enact specific social activities and social identities”. This means that this approach will help in understanding how language has been used in these newspapers to disseminate and present HIV/AIDS information. Thus, the discourse analysis which entails an eclectic approach to textual analysis was employed to assess the use of language or choice of words, tone of the message and sentence structure.

Guidelines for language use from International Federation for Journalists (IFJ) have been adopted in this study. The media guideline for language usage or the terminology employed when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues includes strategies and approaches that should be followed when dealing with PLWHA or reporting this disease in general (IFJ, 2006). This was used as a benchmark in analysing language or words used to report HIV/AIDS issues in the selected newspapers. For example, the researcher read the articles on HIV/AIDS from selected newspapers and noted words and phrases which need not to be used when reporting this disease. The identified phrases and words were analysed to emphasize their impact to the receiver of information. Table 3.1

contains some of the words or phrases suggested by the IFJ. These include words that can be used and those that need not be used when reporting HIV/AIDS issues.

Table 3.1: Examples of Phrases or terms to use and avoid when reporting HIV/AIDS

Use	Do not use
HIV infection, HIV-positive, Person with HIV	AIDS, if the intention is to refer to HIV
HIV or AIDS	AIDS Virus, HIV virus
Person with HIV or person living with HIV (or AIDS), people living with HIV/AIDS	AIDS victim or AIDS sufferer
Sex worker	Prostitute
Breast milk, vaginal fluids, semen, pre-ejaculate	Body fluid
AIDS	Full-blown AIDS
Affected communities, high-risk behaviour (unsafe sex, sharing needles)	High risk group
Person living with HIV or AIDS, HIV-positive person	AIDS patient

Source: International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) media guide 2006

3.6 Research Questions

This research sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do the selected South African newspapers carry HIV/AIDS issues?
2. In what proportions are journalistic genres used for the dissemination of HIV/AIDS issues?

3. Does the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by selected South African newspapers vary in extent, categories, prominence and depth of treatment?
4. Do the selected South African newspapers comply with the guidelines proposed for language use in reporting on HIV/AIDS issues or not?

3.7 Population of the Study

Briggs and Coleman (2007:130) define the population frame as “the entire group in which we are interested in and which we wish to describe or draw conclusions about.” Babbie and Mouton (2005) state that this is a plausible plan to strategise about the population focus since, in many studies, the population groups targeted are often too large for all members to participate. Therefore, the population for this study comprises four selected daily South African newspapers, namely: *Daily Dispatch*, *Sowetan*, *Daily Sun* and *The Star* for a period of 12 months (January 2010 to December 2010). The study population constituted a total of 960 editions of newspapers. What informed the choice of this period, January to December 2010, is the fact that there was no major event that took place in connection with HIV/AIDS in South Africa throughout this year, except World AIDS Day that took place towards the end of the year.

3.7.1 Selection of the Newspapers

An attempt was made to include newspapers targeting a variety of population groups, as defined by race and class, across South Africa. These newspapers are major dailies in South Africa and have been selected to analyse the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues. For instance, *The Daily Sun* has an average daily readership of 2.29 million in South Africa. Therefore, its content is likely to reach and influence a wide audience. *Sowetan*

has an average daily readership of 1.54 million as compared to *Star* and *Daily Dispatch* which have an average of 616 000 and 226 000 readers respectively.

All these newspapers can be afforded by people from low, middle and upper classes which therefore guarantees a wide circulation and readership. One of the factors that were considered in selecting the newspapers for the study was language. Since English is generally accepted as a medium of communication in South Africa, only newspapers written in English were considered. It is assumed that by using a language that may be understood by the whole nation, the papers intended to communicate to all South Africans affected or infected by HIV/AIDS. These four newspapers were also selected on the basis that they are popular dailies that target different groups and readers. These newspapers are read by all racial groups in South Africa- Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians.

3.8 Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample is a sub-set of a population that is taken to represent the entire population. A sample that is not representative of the population, regardless of its size, is inadequate for testing purposes and the results gained from such a sample cannot be generalized (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003:83). Mason (2002) highlights that sampling is a systematic, principle based procedure used to make a carefully considered selection that would enable a researcher to gain access to relevant data sources. The sources are then used to generate data through selected methods. Mason (2002) goes on to say that the sources relate to a relevant wider population and a researcher's choices need to be meaningfully linked to a wider context. The suggestion here is that choices made

in sampling cannot be impromptu. They must be based on carefully reasoned principles that are justified by the intentions and the nature of what needs to be examined in terms of depth, circumstance and the purpose for which the results need to be used.

This study used four daily South African newspapers, namely: *Daily Dispatch*, *Sowetan*, *Daily Sun* and *The Star*. Out of these, 288 issues representing thirty percent of the total were analysed for this study. A systematic method was adopted in the sampling of issues of each of the newspapers. Systematic sampling involves selection of elements within a sampling frame, using a regular interval with a random start. In this case, the researcher used one as the starting point while selecting the rest at intervals of three.

To realize this, each month was divided into four weeks leaving out weekends because the newspapers used in this study are published from Monday to Friday. For instance, the following weeks were selected for January 2010 (1st- 8th), (11th – 15th), (18th – 22nd) and (25th – 29th). From a segment of four weeks, six issues for each newspaper, per month, were picked for a period of twelve months. This means that 72 newspaper issues were content-analysed per edition. A total of 288 newspaper issues were content-analysed.

3.8.1 Sampling for the Qualitative and Qualitative Data

All HIV/AIDS articles that appeared inside the selected newspapers were chosen for quantitative data. As for the qualitative data, purposive sampling was used. This is because purposive sampling allowed the researcher to get the relevant and appropriate articles which assisted in answering research questions. The main purpose of purposive

sampling is to allow the selection of articles which are able to provide relevant information about the phenomenon under investigation (Speziale and Carpenter, 2007).

Purposive sampling techniques are basically used in qualitative (QUAL) based research for specific purposes associated with answering a research questions of the study (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). For this case study, purposive sampling was used to select relevant articles from newspapers. As suggested by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2006) a researcher should handpick sites that are typically suitable for the research as concerning highly relevant journals.

Silverman (2005) insists that purposive sampling allows a researcher to apply some of his or her sample plans by manipulating activities and analysis interactively during the process, allowing for flexibility. This was a valuable quality that availed opportunity for the researcher to manoeuvre matters on the ground into a workable plan and still remain credible. According to Engel and Schtt (2010:97-102), in purposive sampling, sampling units are selected subjectively by the researcher, who attempts to obtain a sample depending on the subjective judgment of the research. This means that the researcher made decisions on picking articles that he saw as relevant in answering questions at hand.

3.9 Unit of Analysis

Wimmer and Dominick (2011:164) are of the opinion that the unit of analysis is the smallest element of a content analysis but also one of the most important. They further indicate that, in written content, the unit of analysis might be a single word or symbol, a

theme or an entire article or story. For this study, units of analysis consist of the following:

1. Hard news stories on HIV/AIDS issues.
2. All feature articles and editorials on HIV/AIDS.
3. All opinion and commentary articles on HIV/AIDS.
4. All letters to the editors, news in brief, with HIV/AIDS as a theme.

3.10 Content Categories

Wimmer and Dominick (2011:165) state that “at the heart of any content analysis is the category system used to classify media content”. The authors clarify that there are two ways to go about establishing content categories; these are emergent coding and a priori coding. The difference between these systems of categories is that in emergent coding, categories are established after a preliminary examination of the data while a *priori* coding system establishes categories before the data is collected. This study adopted a *priori* method, in which the researcher uses the categories developed and applied by other researchers.

This study focused on the following categories: medical, economic, social, political, sexual (violence or rape), education as well as awareness and disaster, in relation to HIV/AIDS issues. These categories were identified and adapted from research conducted by Visser *et al* (2002), Khan and Holtz (2001) and Swain (1997) which defined them as follows:

1. Medical

This concerns the epidemiological aspects of the disease, medication, prevention, cure and AIDS researchers.

2. Economic

This refers to the adverse effects of the HIV/AIDS on households, education, production, workforce, cost of drugs, and cost of treatment at national and international levels.

3. Political

This situates the issue in a political light by referring to government action or inaction, to the political parties, president, ministers, members of parliament, provincial governmental authorities and to government's plans.

4. Social

This deals with the social dimensions of the disease and includes issues such as religion, culture and traditions. It also includes people and places in society where the disease may be concentrated such as among prostitutes and in the prison. Further inclusions in this regard are issues about human rights (crimes against humanity and basic human rights), and the rights of women, children and other groups.

5. Disaster/devastation/hopelessness

This concern includes the portrayal of HIV/AIDS as a desperate, unsolvable overwhelming issue which is impossible to combat. It also refers to statistics or trends (increase, decrease, leveling off, stagnation, etc.) in mortality and death among the general population or sub-groups of the population.

6. **Sexual violence or rape**

This refers to the act of sexual aggression and rape against any group in society (men, women and children, etc.). Sexual violence or rape can increase the spread of HIV/AIDS. This category places greater emphasis on issues of forced sex and fear of negotiating safer sex with partners which might lead to contacting HIV/AIDS, especially on the part of women.

However, this researcher added “**education or awareness**” as a seventh category. This category is concerned with information provided by public health organisations to educate the public about the epidemic.

The items which were content-analysed were categorized into HIV/AIDS stories. HIV/AIDS-oriented stories include the above mentioned sub-categories. Other editorial matters in the newspapers, which did not fall into any of these categories were excluded from the sample. Each HIV/AIDS category mentioned above was examined for:

1. **Frequency of coverage**

This means the number of times a sub-category appears in the publication.

2. **Type of editorial matter**

This has to do with whether a sub-category appears in the form of news, features, editorial, and cartoons or in the form of an opinion. The items were also broadly categorized into two sections. All items that are straight news-reporting, particularly events or statements, either verbally or pictorially, were categorized as news. All other items: features, editorials and cartoons, were regarded as features.

3. Prominence

This has to do with the part of the newspapers in which a sub-category appears.

A sub-category may appear in the front page, back page or inside pages. It also includes font-size used for the headlines of stories.

4. Depth of treatment

This has to do with the amount of space an issue is allocated in a particular story; in other words, the lengths of stories. Story lengths are measured in paragraphs and page dimensions.

The above schema was adopted from Salawu (2001:128-129).

3.11 Procedure for Data Collection

The data for this study was collected from August to September 2011. Data was collected through analysis of written stories with HIV/AIDS as the subject matter in four South African daily newspapers: *Daily Dispatch*, *Sowetan*, *Daily Sun* and *The Star*. Some editions of these papers were sourced from the University of Fort Hare library while those which were not available in the University of Fort Hare library were sourced from Media24, Avusa Media and the Vereeniging public library in Gauteng.

Although the researcher was aware that there are some clippings from the database services provided by the SA Media Unit of the University of Fort Hare, the researcher decided to manually collect data from the selected newspapers. This is because the aforementioned clippings did not meet the objectives that the researcher wanted to achieve in the study; for instance, it would have been very difficult to establish page dimensions for HIV/AIDS articles when studying clippings only.

Some of the issues of the newspapers proposed for sampling were not available. This was because of poor record keeping in some of the visited libraries. These libraries could not provide all the issues published. Some had been lost. However, Avusa media offered some help in providing missing copies of *Daily Dispatch* and *Sowetan* that were not available in the Fort Hare library.

3.12 Inter-coder Reliability

Inter-coder reliability is a measure of the extent to which two or more coders agree when applying a coding scheme to a given set of information (Gorman, Childs and Clifton, 2008:4157). In the same manner, Wimmer and Dominick (2011:170-171) explain inter-coder reliability as levels of agreement amongst independent coders who code the same content using the same coding instrument. This indicates that the key to reliability is agreement among coders. In this study, the researcher created a spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel to record the articles data. Categories were defined and two coders, besides the researcher, were trained and then asked to code the data from articles that were content analysed. All the data obtained from the analysis was coded, with numbers assigned to each category.

There are different measures for calculating reliability. Among them are Krippendorff's alpha (α) and Fleiss' kappa (k). Thus, this study adopted Fleiss' (1971) kappa reliability to calculate agreement between coders. This method is appropriate for this study because it is available in SPSS, the software that the researcher used to analyse data. However, Wimmer and Dominick (2011:175) warn researchers to pay special attention to reporting inter-coder reliability.

In this study, reliability was measured in seven variables, namely: newspapers, categories, placement, genres; number of paragraphs, page dimensions and headline font-size. Krippendorff (2004:241) suggests that, “one must not rely on variables with reliability below $k = 0.80$, but should consider variables with reliability between $k = 0.667$ and $k = 0.80$ only for drawing tentative conclusions”. The interpretation of values of inter-coder agreement was done through the use of Landis and Koch’s (1977) interpretation guidance, as presented below.

Table 3.2: Interpretation Guidance for Strength of Agreement (Landis and Koch, 1977)

<i>K</i> Kappa Co-efficient	Interpretation Strength of agreement
<0	Poor agreement
.01 - .20	Slight agreement
0.21- 0.40	Fair agreement
0.41 – 0.60	Moderate agreement
0.61 – 0.80	Substantial agreement
0.81-1.00	Almost perfect agreement

Variable 1: Newspapers

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.977	.013	23.436	.000
N of Valid Cases		172			

$$k = 0.98$$

The kappa value of newspapers is 0.98 indicating that there is almost perfect agreement between two coders.

Variable 2: Categories

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.834	.031	26.225	.000
N of Valid Cases		172			

$$k = 0.83$$

The kappa value of categories is 0.83 indicating that there is almost perfect agreement between two coders.

Variable 3: Placement

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.537	.093	9.450	.000
N of Valid Cases		172			

$$k = 0.54$$

The kappa value of genres is 0.54 indicating that there is moderate agreement between two coders.

Variable 4: Genre

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.706	.044	11.284	.000
N of Valid Cases		172			

$$k = 0.71$$

The kappa value of genres is 0.71 indicating that there is substantial agreement between two coders.

Variable 5: Number of paragraphs

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.832	.032	22.935	.000
N of Valid Cases		171			

$$k = 0.83$$

The kappa value of number of paragraphs is 0.83 indicating that there is almost perfect agreement between two coders.

Variable 6: Page dimension

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.863	.029	24.104	.000
N of Valid Cases		171			

$$k = 0.86$$

The kappa value of page dimensions is 0.86, indicating that there is almost perfect agreement between two coders.

Variable 7: Headline font size

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.897	.029	18.212	.000
N of Valid Cases		156			

$$k = 0.90$$

The kappa value of headline font-size is 0.90, indicating that there is almost perfect agreement between two coders.

3.13 Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the newspapers was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive and inferential statistics were also used to analyse the data. For the inferential statistics, cross-tabulations were done on pairs of variables. Then, chi-square tests were performed to assess whether or not there were statistically significant associations between the two pairs of variables.

A significance level of 5 percent (0.05) was used to perform the tests. The SPSS software package is specifically designed to analyse social research data. This software offers a comprehensive package of procedures for survey data analysis, taking care not only of descriptive statistics – simple frequency distributions, averages, percentages and cross tabulation but also accommodating analytical procedures such as means and standard deviations, among others.

Raw data collected from the issues of the newspapers sampled were assigned figures based on categories. Journalistic genres, which include news and features; prominence, which includes the placement of stories on pages and use of point-sizes for headlines;

and depth of treatment, which has to do with the amount of space measured in paragraphs and page dimensions were also assigned numbers. For instance, identified categories were coded from 1 to 7; frequencies of these categories were then determined. The frequencies were later translated into percentages and presented in tables and charts which the researcher then interpreted.

In addition, language used; the tone of the message and sentence structures used to disseminate HIV/AIDS messages on the part of the selected newspapers, were qualitatively analysed using discourse analysis. The stories chosen for analysis were carefully studied and observations were made. From these observations, conclusions were made and these formed the basis of judgments for this study.

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research methodology and procedures used in the study. The study was conducted with a focus on four daily South African newspapers selected at the beginning of the study. The research sample comprises 288 newspaper issues drawn from the study population of 960 newspapers. Content analysis was adopted as the research design. The findings were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, with the simple use of percentages; the findings were presented in the form of tables, graphs and charts.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three presented the research methodology of the study. This chapter presents the data obtained from the research as well as the findings and analysis thereof. Where necessary, aids such as tables, charts and graphs are used, and further explanations are provided in order to offer a greater understanding of the phenomenon under analysis. This chapter focuses on the key findings in understanding HIV/AIDS coverage in selected South African newspapers which are: *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Sun*, *The Star* and *Sowetan*. The study further evaluates the language used in these newspapers when covering HIV/AIDS issues.

For this study to provide answers to the research questions proposed, the quantitative data collected through the use of instruments mentioned in chapter three was computer analysed, using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), version 18, while the language analysis was done qualitatively. This allowed the researcher to present the findings and discuss them with the view of making clear inferences as well as drawing conclusions from this study.

4.2 An overview of the general distribution of HIV/AIDS stories across newspapers

The purpose of this sub-section is to present an overview of statistical representation of the data according to the following classifications:

1. Descriptive statistics.

2. Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories in newspapers.
3. Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by category.
4. Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by appearance on front, back and inside pages.
5. Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by genre.
6. Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by number of paragraphs.
7. Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by page dimension.
8. Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by headline font size.

After presenting this overview in tables and graphs; the analysis and findings will be discussed fully in order to answer the research questions raised in this study.

Table 4.1: Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum code	Maximum code	Mean	Standard deviation
Newspaper	160	1	4	40	14.65
Category	160	1	7	23	13.64
Page	160	1	3	53	83.77
Genre	160	1	2	80	0
Number of paragraphs	160	1	5	32	14.88
Page dimension	160	1	7	27	16.68
Headline font size	160	1	5	32	30.72
Valid N (list wise)	160				

Table 4.1 summarizes the number of HIV/AIDS stories analysed (N=160) for 7 variables, that is; four newspapers (coded 1 to 4), category of the stories (coded 1 to 7), page (coded 1 to 3), genre (coded 1 to 2), number of paragraphs (coded 1 to 5), page

dimension (coded 1 to 7) and headline font size (coded 1 to 5). The mean number of HIV/AIDS stories analysed in the four newspapers during the period under review was 40 with a variation of 14.7 around the mean; the mean number of HIV/AIDS stories analysed for the seven categories was 23 with a spread of 13.6 about the mean; the mean number of HIV/AIDS stories analysed for the two genres was 80 with no dispersion; the mean number of HIV/AIDS stories analysed for the five paragraph measurements was 32 with a variation of 14.9 around the mean; the mean number of HIV/AIDS stories analysed for the seven page dimensions was 27 with a dispersion of 16.7 about the mean; the mean number of HIV/AIDS stories analysed for the five headline font sizes used was 32 with a spread of 30.7 about the mean.

Table 4.2: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories in newspapers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>Daily Dispatch</i>	27	16.9	16.9	16.9
	<i>Daily Sun</i>	37	23.1	23.1	40.0
	<i>Sowetan</i>	61	38.1	38.1	78.1
	<i>The Star</i>	35	21.9	21.9	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

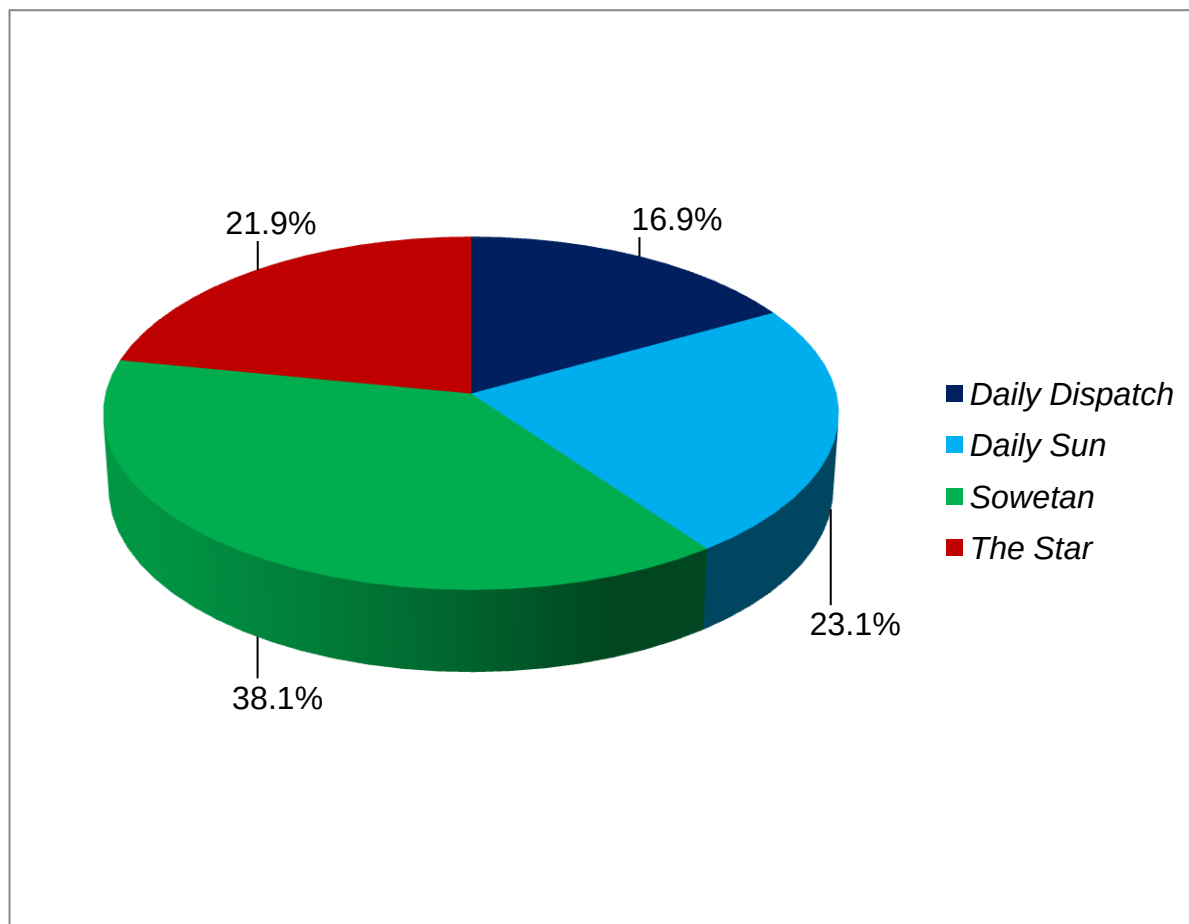


Figure 4.1: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories in newspapers

Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1 jointly indicate that, under the period of review, a total of 160 HIV/AIDS stories were analysed; the *Sowetan* carried the highest number of HIV/AIDS stories as it accounted for 38.1% of the total sample population, followed by *Daily Sun* (23.1%), *The Star* (21.9%) and *Daily Dispatch* (16.9%).

Table 4.3: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by category

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Medical	46	28.8	28.8	28.8
	Economy	11	6.9	6.9	35.6
	Social	24	15.0	15.0	50.6
	Political	32	20.0	20.0	70.6
	Education/Awareness	27	16.9	16.9	87.5
	Sexual violence/Rape	8	5.0	5.0	92.5
	Disaster	12	7.5	7.5	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

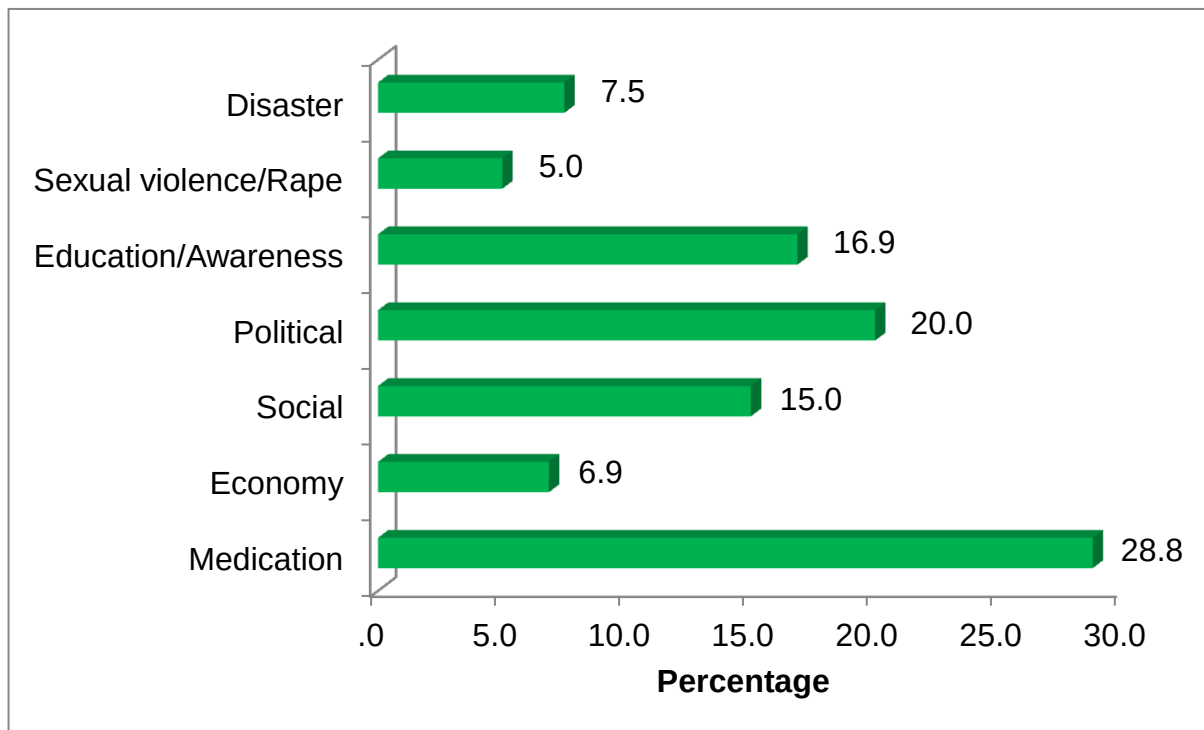


Figure 4.2: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by category

Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2 indicate that the majority of HIV/AIDS stories across the selected newspapers were related to medical, which accounted for 28.8% of the stories surveyed, followed by those related to politics (20.0%) and education or awareness (16.9%). News items concerning economics and sexual violence or rape were the least as they represented 6.9% and 5.0%, respectively.

Table 4.4: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by appearance on front, back and inside pages

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Front	8	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Back	2	1.3	1.3	6.3
	Inside	150	93.8	93.8	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

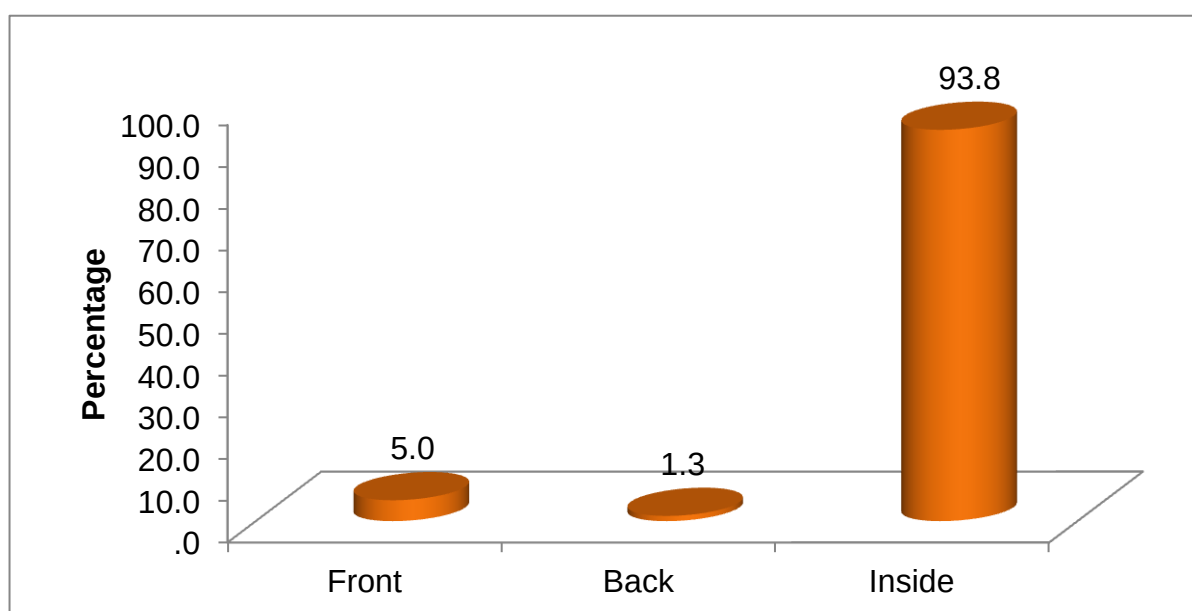


Figure 4.3: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by appearance on front, back and inside pages

Table 4.4 and Figure 4.3 indicate that out of the 160 news items on HIV/AIDS that were analysed, 150 appeared on the inside pages of the newspapers, representing an overwhelming 93.8%. More news items were placed on the front pages (5.0%) than on the back pages (1.3%). The probability of news items appearing on the inside pages is much higher since there are quite a few inside pages and only one front or back page, than there is of it being placed on the inside pages which are in majority.

Table 4.5: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by genre

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	News	80	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Feature	80	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

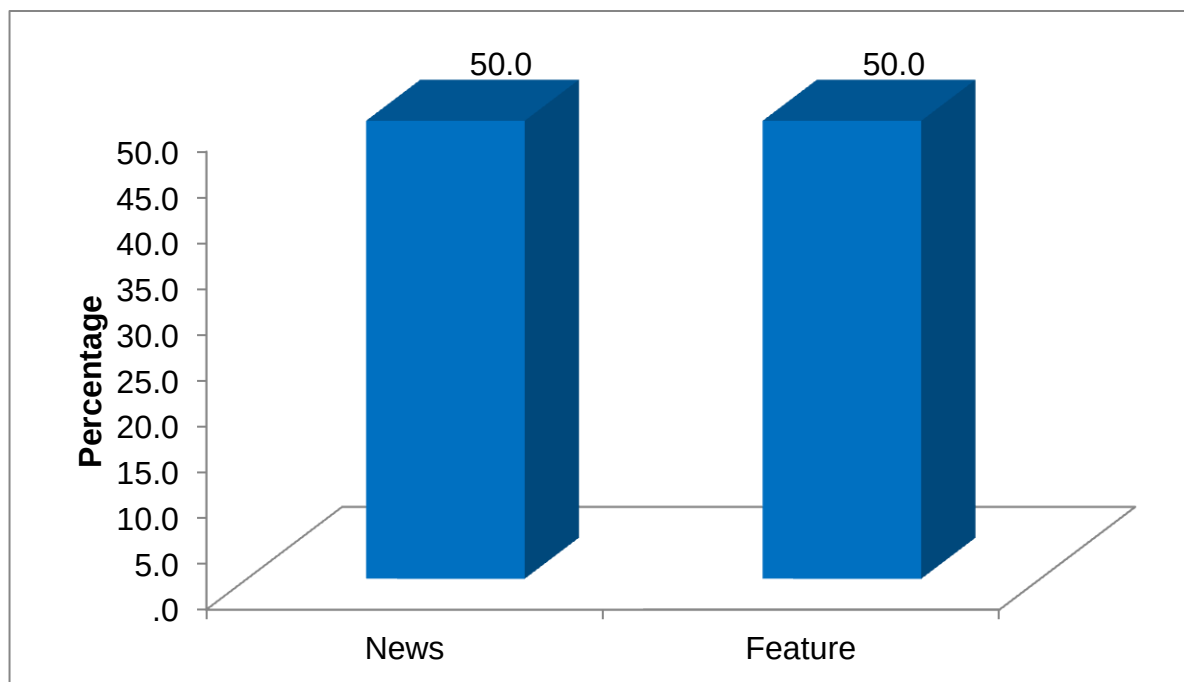


Figure 4.4: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by genre

Table 4.5 and Figure 4.4 reveal a balanced distribution of news and feature stories, each carrying 80 items; each genre thus represents 50.0% of the sampled group.

Table 4.6: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by number of paragraphs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5	25	15.6	15.6	15.6
	6-10	56	35.0	35.0	50.6
	11-15	36	22.5	22.5	73.1
	16-20	18	11.3	11.3	84.4
	21 or more	25	15.6	15.6	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

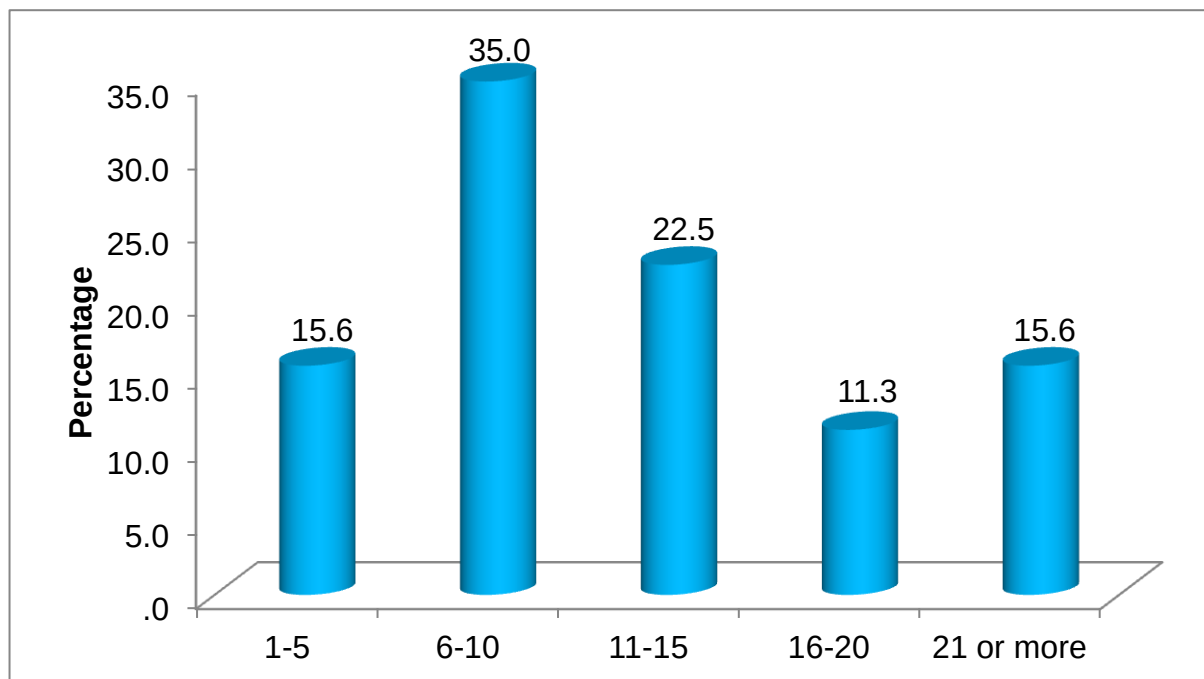


Figure 4.5: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by number of paragraphs

Table 4.6 and Figure 4.5 indicate that HIV/AIDS stories that used 6-10 paragraphs had highest frequency of 56 items. This was followed by news items that contained between 11-15 paragraphs with frequency of 36, 1-5 and 21 paragraphs or more accounted for 25 stories each. Stories which were between 16-20 paragraphs long accounted for only 18 stories of the total.

Table 4.7: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by page dimension

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Full	4	2.5	2.5	2.5
	Half	18	11.3	11.3	13.8
	1/4	46	28.8	28.8	42.5
	1/3	36	22.5	22.5	65.0
	1/5	41	25.6	25.6	90.6
	2/3	15	9.4	9.4	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

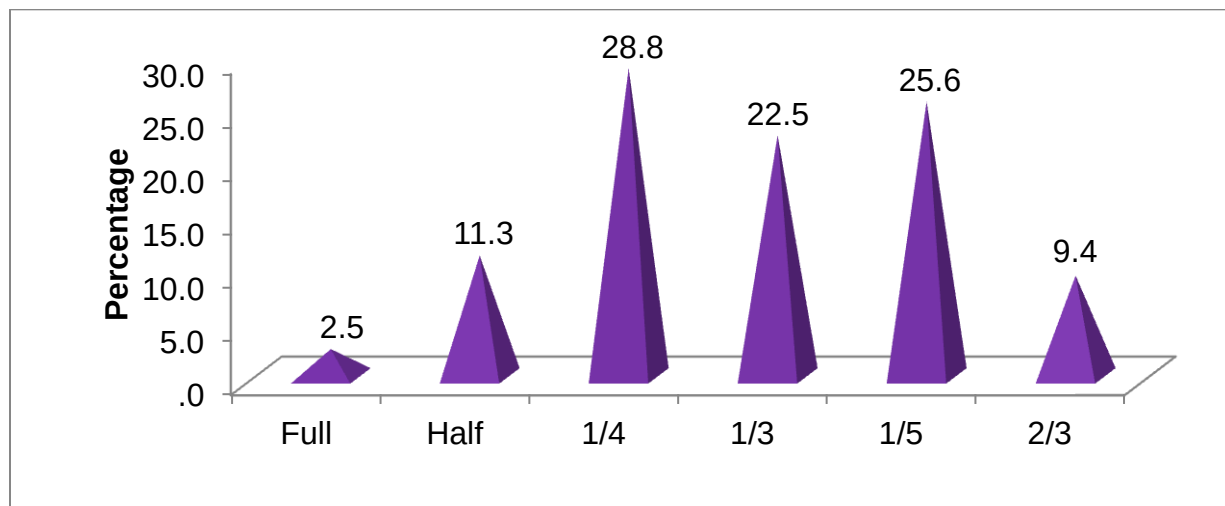


Figure 4.6: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by page dimension

Table 4.7 and Figure 4.6 reveal that the stories that occupied one-quarter of a page had the highest frequency (46) and accounted for 28.8% of the stories analysed. This was followed by news items that occupied one-fifth of a page (25.6%) and one-third of a page (22.5%). Those stories that occupied a full page amounted to 2.5% of the study sample.

Table 4.8: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by headline font-size

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	12-16	74	46.3	46.3	46.3
	18-24	53	33.1	33.1	79.4
	36-48	23	14.4	14.4	93.8
	54-60	9	5.6	5.6	99.4
	72 or more	1	0.6	0.6	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

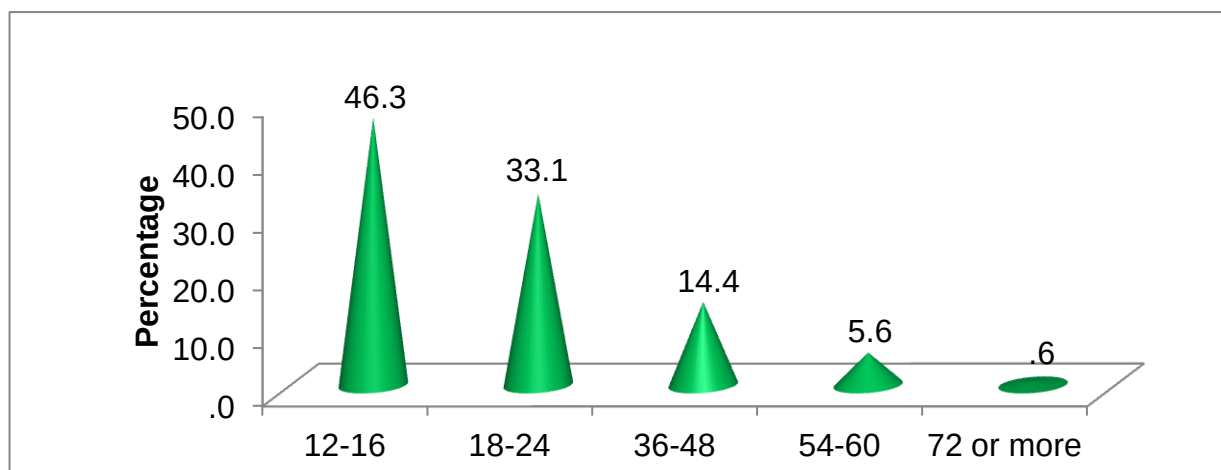


Figure 4.7: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories by headline font-size

Table 4.8 and Figure 4.7 jointly indicate that the most frequently used headline font size was between 12 and 16, which was used on 74 news items, representing 46.3% of the sample population. This was followed by items that used a headline font size between 18 and 24 (33.1%) and 36-48 (14.4%). It was less likely to find a news item that had used a font size of 72 or more as this accounted for 0.6%.

4.3 Analysis of research questions

The purpose of this section is to present answers to the specific research questions raised in this study. This is done through the consideration and analysis of the relevant data collected via the instruments adopted for this study. A total of 288 issues of selected South African newspapers were content analysed. The analysis was based on newspapers published in 2010, as explained in Chapter One and Three.

Research Question1: To what extent do the selected South African newspapers carry HIV/AIDS issues?

This question is interested in knowing the categories of HIV/AIDS issues covered by selected South African newspapers content-analysed and the extent to which these issues were covered. The question is similarly interested in the level of prominence given to the HIV/AIDS-oriented stories. This prominence was measured in terms of the kinds of pages on which these stories appeared and in terms of the point-sizes in which their headlines were cast. The question was also interested in the depth of treatment, that is, the amount of space devoted to those stories. This was measured in number of paragraphs and page dimension.

Table 4.9: Distribution of HIV/AIDS stories in newspapers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>Daily Dispatch</i>	27	16.9	16.9	16.9
	<i>Daily Sun</i>	37	23.1	23.1	40.0
	<i>Sowetan</i>	61	38.1	38.1	78.1
	<i>The Star</i>	35	21.9	21.9	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.9 indicates that, under the period of review, a total of 160 HIV/AIDS stories were analysed; the *Sowetan* carried the highest number of HIV/AIDS stories as it accounted for 38.1% of the total sample population, followed by *Daily Sun* (23.1%), *The Star* (21.9%) and *Daily Dispatch* (16.9%).

Table 4.10: Distribution of the number of items for the various categories of HIV/AIDS-oriented stories

HIV/AIDS CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF ITEMS (%)
MEDICAL	46 (28.8)
ECONOMY	11 (6.9)
SOCIAL	24 (15.0)
POLITICAL	32 (20.0)
EDUCATION/AWARENESS	27 (16.9)
SEXUAL VIOLENCE/RAPE	8 (5.0)
DISASTER	12 (7.5)
TOTAL (%)	160 (100.0)

Table 4.10 above indicates that the selected newspapers were found to published HIV/AIDS-oriented stories in the areas of medical, economy, social, political, education or awareness, sexual violence or rape and disaster. Medical concerns the epidemiological aspects of the disease, prevention, cure, and AIDS researchers. Economic deals with effects of the HIV/AIDS on households, education, production, workforce, cost of drugs, cost of treatment at the national and international levels while political concerns government action or inaction, political parties, president, ministers, members of parliament and provincial governmental authorities. Social category deals with religion, culture, traditions and places in society where the disease may be concentrated among sex-worker and in prison. Disaster category concerns portrayal of HIV/AIDS as desperate, unsolvable issue, overwhelming and impossible to combat;

also statistics or trends (increase or decrease in mortality or death among population. Sexual violence or rape category concerns the act of sexual aggression that might lead to contracting HIV/AIDS, while education category deals with information which is provided by public health organisations to educate the public about this epidemic.

This table further reveals that the majority of HIV/AIDS stories across the selected newspapers were related to medical details, thus accounting for 28.8% of the articles selected. This is followed by those related to politics (20.0%) and education/awareness (16.9%). HIV/AIDS issues concerning economics and sexual violence/rape were the least reported upon and represented 6.9% and 5.0% of the items analysed respectively.

Table 4.11: Placement of HIV/AIDS categories on pages

HIV/AIDS CATEGORIES	FRONT PAGE	BACK PAGE	ANY INSIDE PAGE
MEDICAL	1	1	44
ECONOMY	0	0	11
SOCIAL	1	0	23
POLITICAL	4	0	28
EDUCATION/ AWARENESS	1	1	25
SEXUAL VIOLENCE/RAPE	0	0	8
DISASTER	1	0	11
TOTAL	8	2	150
PERCENTAGE (%)	5.0	1.3	93.8

Table 4.11 presents the placement of HIV/AIDS categories (on pages). Inside pages appeared to be the most used for this subject matter with a total of 150 representing 93.8%. In this 150, medical has a share of 44 articles, followed by political and

education or awareness with 28 and 25 articles respectively. Sexual violence or rape is the category with the least articles appearing on these pages as these articles appeared 8 times. Social issues related to HIV/AIDS appeared 23 times on these pages while disaster and economy appeared 11 times. Political issues related to this epidemic have the highest frequency on the front pages, appearing for 4 times, while medical, social, education or awareness and disaster appeared only once. Economy and sexual violence did not feature on this page at all. Most of the categories identified in this study were not placed on the back pages of the newspapers chosen for analysis. For instance, medical and education appeared once on this page.

Table 4.12: Distribution of HIV/AIDS categories based on font-size

HIV/AIDS CATEGORIES	12-16	18-24	36-48	54-60	72+
MEDICAL	15	16	11	3	1
ECONOMY	4	5	2	0	0
SOCIAL	12	8	1	3	0
POLITICAL	18	7	5	2	0
EDUCATION/ AWARENESS	16	9	2	0	0
SEXUAL VIOLENCE/RAPE	3	4	1	0	0
DISASTER	6	4	1	1	0
TOTAL	74	53	23	9	1
PERCENTAGE (%)	46.3	33.1	14.4	5.6	0.6

Table 4.12 indicates that the most used font-size to distribute HIV/AIDS categories was between 12 and 16; this was used on 74 items, representing 46.3% of the articles analysed. This was followed by a font-size of 18 to 24 (33.1%) and 36-48 (14.4%). It

was less likely to find HIV/AIDS categories that had used a font size of 72 or more as quantified by a negligible 0.6%.

Table 4.13: Distribution of lengths of HIV/AIDS categories measured in number of paragraphs

HIV/AIDS CATEGORIES	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
MEDICAL	9	13	12	6	6
ECONOMY	1	2	5	0	3
SOCIAL	3	9	3	2	7
POLITICAL	5	13	6	1	7
EDUCATION/ AWARENESS	6	11	5	4	1
SEXUAL VIOLENCE/RAPE	0	4	2	2	0
DISASTER	1	4	3	3	1
TOTAL	25	56	36	18	25
PERCENTAGE (%)	15.6	35.0	22.5	11.3	15.6

The table 4.13 above indicates that the majority of HIV/AIDS categories in the selected newspapers were given a total of between 6 and 10 paragraphs. This occurred for 56 times which accounted for 35.0%. This was followed by categories featured between 11 and 15 paragraphs (22.5%), 1 and 5 paragraphs (15.6%) and 21 paragraphs or more (15.6%). The least number of paragraphs used was between 16 and 20, accounting for a meager 11.3% of the total.

Table 4.14: Distribution of lengths of HIV/AIDS-oriented stories measured by page dimension in terms of categories

HIV/AIDS CATEGORIES	Full	Half	1/4	1/3	1/5	2/3
MEDICAL	1	8	14	8	12	3
ECONOMY	0	2	1	6	1	1
SOCIAL	1	2	10	5	5	1
POLITICAL	2	1	13	2	7	7
EDUCATION/ AWARENESS	0	2	6	7	11	1
SEXUAL VIOLENCE/ RAPE	0	1	1	6	0	0
DISASTER	0	2	1	2	5	2
TOTAL	4	18	46	36	41	15
PERCENTAGE (%)	2.5	11.3	28.8	22.5	25.6	9.4

Table 4.14 reveals that stories that occupied one-quarter of a page had the highest frequency at a total of 46, accounting for 28.8% of the sample population. This was followed by news items that occupied one-fifth of a page (25.6%) and one-third of a page (22.5%). Only 2.5% of the stories that were analysed used a full page.

Research question 2: In what proportions are journalistic genres used for the dissemination of HIV/AIDS issues?

In Chapter Three, it was stated that all items were broadly categorized into two of the journalistic genres. All items that are straight news reporting were categorized as news. All other items such as cartoons, column and editorials were regarded as features.

Table 4.15: Distribution of HIV/AIDS items into news and features

NEWSPAPERS	ALL (%)	NEWS (%)	FEATURE (%)
<i>DAILY DISPATCH</i>	27 (16.9)	17 (10.6)	10 (6.3)
<i>DAILY SUN</i>	37 (23.1)	15 (9.4)	22 (13.8)
<i>SOWETAN</i>	61 (38.1)	32 (20.0)	29 (18.1)
<i>THE STAR</i>	35 (21.9)	16 (10.0)	19 (11.9)
TOTAL (%)	160 (100.0)	80 (50.0)	80 (50.0)

Table 4.15 reveals that of the 80 news items, the *Sowetan* carried the highest frequency of 32, representing 20.0% of the total, followed by the *Daily Dispatch* (10.6%), *The Star* (10.0%) and the *Daily Sun* (9.4%). As for the 80 features that were analysed, 29 were found to be from the *Sowetan* (18.1% of the total); with *Daily Sun* carrying 22 items (13.8%), *The Star* 19 (11.9%) and *Daily Dispatch* carried the least features (6.3%).

Research question 3: Does the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by selected South African newspapers vary in extent, categories, prominence and depth of treatment?

Table 4.16: Distribution of items into various HIV/AIDS categories on the basis of newspapers

HIV/AIDS CATEGORIES	DAILY DISPATCH	DAILY SUN	SOWETAN	THE STAR	TOTAL
MEDICAL	7 (15.2%)	13 (28.3%)	15 (32.6%)	11 (23.9%)	46
ECONOMY	0 (0.0%)	1 (9.0%)	5 (45.5%)	5 (45.5%)	11
SOCIAL	4 (16.7%)	4 (16.7%)	11(45.8%)	5 (28.8%)	24
POLITICAL	10 (31.3%)	4 (12.5%)	15 (46.9%)	3 (9.4%)	32
EDUCATION/ AWARENESS	3 (11.1%)	10 (37.0%)	8 (29.6%)	6 (22.2%)	27
SEXUAL VIOLENCE/ RAPE	1 (12.5%)	3 (37.5%)	4 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8
DISASTER	2 (16.7%)	2 (16.7%)	3 (25.0%)	5 (41.7%)	12
TOTAL	27 (16.9%)	37 (23.1%)	61 (38.1%)	35 (21.9%)	160

$$\chi^2 = 25.09$$

$$d.f. = 18$$

$$\text{Significance} = 0.122 > 0.05$$

Table 4.16 reveals that the *Sowetan* had the largest share of HIV/AIDS oriented news related to medical as this accounted for 32.6% of all the HIV/AIDS oriented news related to medical reported in the four newspapers analysed. This was followed by the *Daily Sun* (28.3%), *The Star* (23.9%) and the *Daily Dispatch* (15.2%). Table 4.16 further indicates that the *Sowetan* and *The Star* have an equal share of HIV/AIDS news related to the economy, at 45.5% each while the *Daily Sun* had only 9.0% of its news in this

category. *Daily Dispatch* did not report anything related to this category during the period under review. *Daily Sun* published the most HIV/AIDS stories related to education or awareness with 37.0%, followed by *Sowetan* (29.6%), *The Star* (22.2%) and *Daily Dispatch* (11.1%).

The Star predominated reporting on HIV/AIDS stories relating to disaster with 41.7% of the total. It was followed by *Sowetan* with 25.0% and the other two papers each accounted for 16.7%. However, a chi-square test does not reveal a statistically significant relationship between newspapers and categories of HIV/AIDS oriented stories ($\chi^2 = 25.09$, $p = 0.122 > 0.05$). This indicates an equal likelihood reporting of HIV/AIDS oriented stories based on the categories analysed in the four newspapers.

Table 4.17: Distribution of HIV/AIDS news items in various newspapers according to placement on page

PLACEMENT ON PAGE	DAILY DISPATCH	DAILY SUN	SOWETAN	THE STAR	TOTAL
FRONT	3 (37.5%)	2 (25.5%)	2 (25.5%)	1 (12.5%)	8
BACK	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2
INSIDE	23 (15.3%)	34 (22.7%)	59 (39.3%)	34 (22.7%)	150
TOTAL	27 (16.9%)	37 (23.1%)	61 (38.1%)	35 (21.9%)	160

$$\chi^2 = 6.16$$

$$d.f. = 6$$

$$\text{Significance} = 0.405 > 0.05$$

Table 4.17 indicates that out of a total of eight HIV/AIDS oriented stories placed on the front page, 3 appeared in the *Daily Dispatch*, representing 37.5%, 2 each in the *Daily Sun* and the *Sowetan* (25.5%) and 1 in *The Star* (12.5%). Only 2 stories were placed on the back pages of the *Daily Dispatch* and *Daily Sun*. No news items were placed on the

back pages of either the *Sowetan* or *The Star*. Regarding the 150 stories placed on the inside pages, the *Sowetan* had the highest number of 59, representing 39.3%, followed by the *Daily Sun* and *The Star* with 34 items each (22.7%). *Daily Dispatch* had the least number of items on the inside pages (15.3%).

However, a chi-square test indicates that the placement of HIV/AIDS oriented stories on either the front, inside or back pages were not statistically significantly related ($\chi^2 = 6.16$, $p = 0.405 > 0.05$). This shows that there was no statistical difference in the extent of reporting on HIV/AIDS oriented matters with respect to placement in the four newspapers analysed.

Table 4.18 Distribution of HIV/AIDS news items in various newspapers according to headline font size

HEADLINE FONT SIZE	DAILY DISPATCH	DAILY SUN	SOWETAN	THE STAR	TOTAL
12-16	15 (20.3%)	14 (18.9%)	26 (35.1%)	19 (25.7%)	74
18-24	7 (13.2%)	16 (30.2%)	20 (37.7%)	10 (18.9%)	53
36-48	5 (21.7%)	4 (17.4%)	9 (39.1%)	5 (21.7%)	23
54-60	0 (0.0%)	2(22.2)	6 (67.7%)	1 (11.1)	9
72+	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1
TOTAL	27 (16.9%)	37 (23.1%)	61 (38.1%)	35 (21.9%)	160

$$\chi^2 = 11.42$$

$$d.f. = 12$$

$$\text{Significance} = 0.493 > 0.05$$

Table 4.18 indicates that the headline font size of 72+ was used by the *Daily Sun* once, while the other three newspapers did not attempt to use this headline font size. However, the most frequent font size was 12-16 used in a total of 74 headlines. Of these, 26 appeared in the *Sowetan* (35.1%), 19 (25.7%) in *The Star*, 15 (20.3%) in *Daily Dispatch* and 14 (18.9%) in the *Daily Sun*. The second most used headline font size was 18-24 which appeared 53 times. Out of these, 20 (37.7%) were found in the *Sowetan*, 16 (30.2%) in the *Daily Sun*, 10(19.9%) in *The Star* and 7 (13.2%) in the *Daily Dispatch*. A headline font-size of 36-48 was used 23 times. *Sowetan* appeared to be the only newspaper which used this font-size 9 times (39.1%), *The Star* and *Daily Dispatch* used this font size 5 (21.7%) times respectively, while the *Daily Sun* used it only 4 (17.4%) times. The headline font size of 54-60 was used only 9 times. Of these, 6 appeared in the *Sowetan* (67.7%), 2 (22.2%) in the *Daily Sun*, 1 (11.1%) in *The Star*; the *Daily Dispatch* did not use this headline font-size at all.

Nevertheless, a chi-square test reveals no statistically significant relationship between the font size used for reporting HIV/AIDS-oriented stories and the newspapers ($\chi^2 = 11.42, p = 0.493 > 0.05$). This means that the extent of the usage of headline font-sizes, for reporting on HIV/AIDS oriented stories was not statistically significantly different in the four newspapers.

Table 4.19: Distribution of HIV/AIDS news items in various newspapers on the basis of number of paragraphs used

NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS	DAILY DISPATCH	DAILY SUN	SOWETAN	THE STAR	TOTAL
1-5	7 (28.0%)	9 (36.0%)	4 (16.0%)	5 (20.0%)	25
6-10	3 (5.4%)	19 (33.9%)	23 (41.1%)	11 (19.6%)	56
11-15	5 (13.9%)	6 (16.7%)	17 (47.2%)	8 (22.2%)	36
16-20	4 (22.2%)	3 (16.7%)	8 (44.4%)	3 (16.7%)	18
21+	8 (32.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (36.0%)	8 (32.0%)	25
TOTAL	27 (16.9%)	37 (23.1%)	61 (38.1%)	35 (21.9%)	160

$$\chi^2 = 27.40$$

$$d.f. = 12$$

$$\text{Significance} = 0.007 < 0.05$$

Table 4.19 indicates that the most frequent number of paragraphs used for reporting HIV/AIDS oriented stories was 6-10, which was used for 56 times. Of these, 41.1% were from the *Sowetan*, 33.9% from the *Daily Sun*, 19.6% from *The Star* and 5.4% from the *Daily Dispatch*. This category was followed by 11-15 paragraphs which were used 36 times. Out of these, the *Sowetan* used these paragraphs 17 (47.2%) times, followed by *The Star* with 8 (22.2%), 6 (16.7%) for the *Daily Sun* and 5 (13.9%) for the *Daily Dispatch*. Articles that were 1-5 paragraphs in length appeared in the same group 25 times. *Daily Sun* used these paragraphs more frequently, 9 (36%) than the other newspapers that were content-analysed, the *Daily Dispatch* used it 7 (28.0%) times; *The Star* used it 5 (20.0%) times followed by the *Sowetan* which used it 4 (16.0%) times. Articles of 21 or more paragraphs in length were found to be used more frequently by the *Sowetan* with, 9 (36.0%) of the total sample, followed by the *Daily Dispatch* and *The Star* which each have 8 (32.0%) articles of this length. *Daily Sun* did not attempt to use this number of paragraphs at all. It was found that the number of

paragraphs ranging from 16-20 were least used in newspapers. These were used 18 times. Out of these, 8 (44.4%) were found in the *Sowetan*, 4 (22.2%) in the *Daily Sun* and 3 (16.7%) each in the *Daily Sun* and *The Star*.

A chi-square test shows a statistically significant relationship between number of paragraphs used for reporting HIV/AIDS-oriented stories and newspapers ($\chi^2 = 27.40$, $p = 0.007 < 0.05$). This indicates that the four newspapers differently used paragraphs in reporting HIV/AIDS issues.

Table 4.20: Distribution of HIV/AIDS news items in various newspapers according to page dimension

PAGE DIMENSION	DAILY DISPATCH	DAILY SUN	SOWETAN	THE STAR	TOTAL
Full	0 (0.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.5%)	2 (50.0%)	4
Half	1 (5.6%)	1 (5.6%)	12 (66.7%)	4 (22.2%)	18
1/4	9 (19.6%)	7 (15.2%)	23 (50.0%)	7 (15.2%)	46
1/3	1 (2.8%)	11 (30.6%)	17 (47.2%)	7 (19.4%)	36
1/5	9 (22.0%)	17 (41.5%)	2 (4.9%)	13 (31.7%)	41
2/3	7 (46.7%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (40.0%)	2 (13.3%)	15
TOTAL	27 (16.9%)	37 (23.1%)	61 (38.1%)	35 (21.9%)	160

$$\chi^2 = 52.14$$

$$d.f. = 15$$

$$\text{Significance} = 0.000 < 0.05$$

Table 4.20 indicates that one is unlikely to find an HIV/AIDS oriented story published on a full page, as shown by only 4 items, out of a possible 160 analysed. In these 4, 2 were found in *The Star* and 1 in the *Daily Sun* and *Sowetan* respectively. No full page stories were found in the *Daily Dispatch*. The majority of HIV/AIDS stories were reported on quarter pages (46). Out of these 46, 23 (50.0%) were found in the *Sowetan*, 9 were

found in the *Daily Dispatch* while 7 (15.2%) were found in the *Daily Sun* and *The Star* respectively. The one-fifth page dimension was used 41 times. *Daily Sun* used this page dimension more than other three newspapers, for 17 (41.5%) times followed by *The Star* which used it 13 (31.7%) times, and the *Daily Dispatch* and the *Sowetan* which used it 9 (22.0%) and 2 (4.9%) times, respectively.

The one-third page dimension was used for 36 stories. Out of these, 17 (47.2%) appeared in the *Sowetan*, 11 (30.6%) in the *Daily Sun*, 7 (19.4%) in *The Star* while 1 (2.8%) was found in the *Daily Dispatch*. The half page dimension was found to be used 18 times. Of these, *Sowetan* had 12 (66.7%), 4 (22.2%) for *The Star* while *Daily Dispatch* and *Daily Sun* had 1 (5.6%) each. On the other hand, the two thirds page dimension was used 15 times. In these 15 occurrences, *Daily Dispatch* used this page dimension 7 (46.7%) times in its articles, *Sowetan* for 6 (40.0%) followed by *The Star* which used this page dimension twice (13.3%). *Daily Sun* did not use this page dimension when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues.

A chi-square test reveals a statistically significant relationship between page dimension and newspaper ($\chi^2 = 52.14, p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This entails that the extent of the page dimension used for reporting HIV/AIDS oriented stories was statistically significantly different in the four newspapers.

Research Question 4: Do the selected South African newspapers comply with the guidelines proposed for language use in reporting on HIV/AIDS issues or not?

This question will be answered based on the language usage of the newspapers in question. Stories selected for analysis were carefully studied and observations were made concerning their choice of words, sentence structure and tone of the message adopted in the dissemination of an HIV/AIDS message.

1. Choice of words/Language

HIV/AIDS has left many families moaning for their beloved ones and it still hurts people in different ways. To counsel and sympathize with the affected parts of society, it is very important to use accepted terminologies and value-neutral language when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues. In addition to this, the IFJ (2006:7) encourages journalists not to use complex epidemiological or medical terminology that their readers or audience will not understand. They should be precise without being overly complicated. Table 3.2 in chapter three was used as yardstick to analyse the use of appropriate language or terminology. This table contains phrase and terms that can be used and the ones that need not be used in reporting HIV/AIDS issues.

The analysed newspapers were found to be very generous in the use of appropriate words and value-neutral language. These newspapers avoided derogatory or discriminatory words when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues. The use of neutral language when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues is vital as this encourages people to change their behaviour and to treat people living with HIV/AIDS with respect. This is supported by the

International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) (2006) which stipulates that appropriate language is constructive and does not cause prejudice.

IWMF further points out that language has a strong influence on attitudes towards HIV/AIDS and people living with HIV/AIDS. The fact that the role of the media is to inform, educate and to entertain does not mean that it has to use words or language that discriminates against people living with HIV/AIDS. However, it sometimes happens that media unintentionally uses those words which create anxiety and discrimination amongst readers. The argument of this study is that the use of derogatory language, when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues, should be downplayed and replaced with value-neutral language.

Previous studies found that media coverage of HIV/AIDS, in many parts of the world, was dominated by discriminating words and phrases such as 'innocent victims', 'catch AIDS', 'AIDS scourge' and 'plague.' It is surprising to reveal that newspapers sampled for this study do not have words such as these in their reports. This is a very positive response of media to the guidelines proposed for the use of appropriate language when reporting HIV/AIDS issues.

For instance, the article found on page 7 of *Sowetan*, 19th of July 2010, entitled 'Hope for those with HIV' is a good example of appropriate language usage. The language used in this article is simple and positive. The terms are also selected in order to show that there is hope for those living with HIV/AIDS. Apparently, the main purpose of this article is to inform the readers of the strides that have been made in a bid to improve the lives of those living with HIV/AIDS. For instance, phrases such as 'HIV-positive', 'HIV

infections' are used instead of 'HIV victim' or 'AIDS carrier'. These words, according to IFJ (2006), can cause distress or negative stereotypes.

However, the language used in this story, 'Hope for those with HIV', which was published by *Sowetan*, its tone gives the impression that this newspaper is carefully abiding by the guidelines proposed by interest groups, such as the IFJ, in terms of using appropriate language when reporting this epidemic. Another article found on page 15 of *Sowetan*, 1st of December 2010, reads 'Prevention of HIV depends on us all'. Such a title has a way of bringing citizens together against HIV/AIDS which, in this case, has been presented as an enemy of all South Africans.

The use of the first person plural 'we' in this article is meant to represent South Africans as a collective. This has the effect of making people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) feel accepted rather than being stigmatized and isolated as social pariahs. However as the article progresses, the author moves away from collective nouns like 'we' and '*fellow citizens*' to the second person 'you' to imply that communication is now directed at the reader as an individual rather than part of a collective.

The *Daily Dispatch* makes use of sensational language that may actually cause fear and despondency amongst those infected with HIV/AIDS. Insensitive words and phrases such as 'incorrect labels,' 'scrambling to recover' may actually invoke panic within people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). An article entitled 'people with HIV given wrong pills after mix-up' was found on page 1 of this newspaper and contains the above mentioned words and phrases. The *Daily Dispatch* also exploits stereotypes to convey its messages to the public. In this particular story, about the incorrect medication

mistakenly given to HIV-positive persons, the identification of the suppliers of the incorrect medicine as Indian is not without connotations.

The newspaper also uses inflammatory language that may scare those infected with the disease, for example: 'the mix-up may lead to death of those involved.' In this particular story, 'people with HIV given wrong pills after mix-up' technical jargon is also used. This is seen in the use of medical terms like 'dispense' 'batch' and 'administered'. This is probably an attempt to make the story credible since it is written by an expert reporter. The technical terms are often combined with simple words to ensure accessibility.

Compared to the *Sowetan*, the *Daily Dispatch* tends to be sensational and anti-establishment. Most of its stories deal with controversial issues. For example, in another article which was published on the 19th of August 2010, page 6, the headline reads: 'Health experts warn of mutant HIV strain.' Again, the phrase 'health experts' is rather ambiguous because it does not tell us who these health experts are. The allusion to a mutant strain of HIV is rather scary for people living with HIV/AIDS as they may feel threatened by this newly discovered strain. While one may be duped to think that the reporter has consulted the relevant people, 'health experts' is a collective noun that does not refer to any specific individual. The subheading, in small case, is also highly sensational: 'It's a time bomb that could be even more deadly.' The choice of the words 'time bomb' and 'deadly' is not innocent; it serves to emphasize the magnitude of the problem at hand.

The use of figurative language, as in 'young South Africans seem to be drowning in a high infection rate', is both scary and sensational. The word 'drowning' is usually

associated with sinking in water but here it is being used figuratively to portray the manner in which young people are sinking in the disease. Institutions of higher learning are described as 'brothels' while lecturers are characterized as 'sex crazy perverts.' These terms are offensive but the intention of the article is to condemn the increasingly wayward behaviour of individuals in institutions of higher learning.

The *Daily Sun* is also sensational in its diction. The use of screaming action words like 'beware' and adjectival phrases like 'very disturbing' and 'this is frightening' raise alarm and amplify the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in higher institutions of learning. For instance, the word 'frightening' can be seen as sensational because it connotes that HIV/AIDS is likely to destroy South Africans.

The newspapers analysed in this study were found to comply with the IFJ's media guide in reporting HIV/AIDS issues to such an extent that reports on HIV/AIDS were found to be accurate, fair and balanced as suggested by the media guide. Journalists used language or terminology appropriately and provided explanations where necessary, so as to enable readers to grasp the meaning of the message. It is the aim of the media guide to encourage journalists and other media workers to use acceptable language and report on HIV/AIDS issues as accurately as possible, so as to reduce the harm caused to those who are affected by this disease.

However, there are other words which can cause harm but are not suggested in this media guide; therefore, journalists have to be very careful when they report on this epidemic. For instance, words or phrases such as 'disease with no cure'; 'died of AIDS' and 'suspected of having HIV' need not be used when reporting HIV/AIDS. Journalists

should make sure that they avoid such terms. Avoiding the use of language that does not perpetuate stigma and discrimination will help affected people disclose their status; it will also encourage those who do not know their status to go for testing.

2. Message Tone

Most of the articles which were analysed from the selected South African newspapers are sensational and inciting in tone. For example, in the *Daily Dispatch* the headline of a story that was published on the 17th of March 2010, which appeared on page 1, reads 'People with HIV given wrong pills after mix-up'. The tone of the message that is depicted in this article is formal. On the other hand, *Sowetan* reads like a pro-government newspaper which has adopted a sympathetic tone to government programmes on HIV/AIDS.

Although the *Daily Sun* is well known for its sensational reportage, most of the articles that it has published on HIV/AIDS, in recent years, have been educative and informative although the sensational aspect is still recognizable. An article that appeared in the 'editorial' section, on page 11 on the 29th of November 2010, is largely educative. It focuses on 'HIV/AIDS in the work place' and judging from the diction and the tone of the article, its purpose is to encourage employers to stop discriminating against people living with HIV/AIDS. The writer adopts an authoritative tone: 'there is need to prohibit unfair discrimination' and 'employers are required to take steps.' The authoritative tone is further reinforced by the use of non-conditional phrases like 'employers must put systems' and 'the law protects employees' which suggests that employers should treat PLWHA with respect.

In addition, in an article found on page 10 of the *Daily Sun*, 1st of April 2010, the headline is still forceful and authoritative: 'Students must beware of HIV'. The use of the word 'must' implies that there is no other alternative and that students only have one choice, i.e. to do what is right and avoid contracting HIV/AIDS. The word 'beware' is usually associated with warning signs. In this case, it is being used to scare students away from HIV/AIDS. The use of an authoritative tone, in some cases helps readers appreciate how serious the issue is or can be.

It is, however, observed that the tone of the messages contained in these newspapers is both positive and encouraging. The reason for this is that these newspapers are engaged in a campaign which is aimed at curtailing the spread of this epidemic. For instance, *The Star* had an HIV/AIDS related story entitled 'Two of every ten on ARVS treated in SA.' The tone of the article is celebratory as it suggests that government is making progress towards curbing the disease. The positive tone of the message encourages people to practice good behaviour, unlike a negative tone which contributes towards irresponsible actions such as practicing unprotected sex and discriminating against people living with HIV/AIDS.

The tone of the messages in these newspapers was found to be generally positive even though some articles published in some newspapers are negative. For instance, in the *Daily Sun*, an article published on the 2nd of August 2010, on page 6, entitled 'Those with HIV/AIDS are far from helpless'. These kinds of words need not be included when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues as they discriminate against and stigmatize those living with HIV/AIDS.

3. Sentence structure

Introductory sentences for stories that appear in the *Sowetan* are usually formatted in bold typeface. The purpose of this, in most cases, is to gain the attention of the reader but, most importantly, headlines in the *Sowetan* are overtly inclined towards a particular position, which is usually pro-government. For example, on the 1st of December 2010, on page 15, the *Sowetan* published a story entitled 'Prevention of HIV depends on us all' while on the 19th of July it also had a story entitled, 'Hope for those with HIV.' The *Sowetan* also makes use of direct speech and dialogue to capture the views of experts and other relevant authorities on the subject. Since direct speech is about presenting the 'exact words' of experts, one is given the impression that the story is authentic and thus deserves attention. Yet, in some cases, the so-called experts may be expressing their own bias depending on their political affiliation.

It is also observed that these newspapers contain sentences which are presented in the form of a statement. The reason for this is that the purpose of media is to report news; therefore, reporters are trying to present the news in the most direct and accessible way to the readers. The statement 'to protect yourself and others against HIV and stop the epidemic is not dependent on your status but on changing your behaviour', is an example of statements used by *Sowetan*, page 15, 01- December 2010.

Most of the sentences in the story titled 'Circumcision tops HIV agenda' in *Sowetan* dated 29 January 2010 are simple because the newspaper wishes to reach out to the ordinary persons. Some of the sentences are constructed in the form of questions with the effect of engaging the reader. This, however, does not mean that newspapers

should construct all their sentences in the form of questions in order to involve or engage their readers.

Another way in which newspapers can involve their readers in the message that they send to them is through the use of simple and understandable sentences. It has been observed that these newspapers use simple and understandable sentences in their reports of HIV/AIDS issues. For instance, the story titled 'HIV/AIDS in the work place: Know your status', on page 11 of *Daily Sun*, of 29-November 2010 contains these kinds of sentences. Examples of the simple and understandable sentences used in this article include: 'people living with HIV/AIDS face many forms of unfair discrimination in the work environment' and 'it is also important for infected and affected people to manage this epidemic'.

On the other hand, most of the sentences were found to be simple and short. The reason for this is that simple and short sentences allow readers to understand media messages more easily; for instance, the use of wise sayings and clichés, like 'prevention is priceless', in the story entitled 'prevention of HIV depends on us all', in the *Sowetan* of the 1st of December 2010. In this article, the reporter uses rhetorical language such as 'remember that,' and 'let us live in our reality and accept personal leadership' to remind readers to take steps in the fight against this epidemic. It is important as it gives the subject a sense of seriousness while the *Daily Dispatch* treats people living with HIV/AIDS as a separate group of people in danger of death at any moment. The *Sowetan* sees them as part of a collective and HIV/AIDS is seen as a national problem.

The *Daily Dispatch* also makes use of generalized sentences that often begin with noun clauses, for example, 'medical experts yesterday said...', 'other private practitioners said...', 'high ranking officials said.' In addition, it uses adjectival clauses to offer vivid descriptions; for example, in the same story published on 19th August, 2010, page 6, there are clauses like 'deadlier version,' 'extremely drug resistant strain' and 'clever virus.' These constructions are not very informative as one keeps wondering who these nameless experts and practitioners are. Upon reading such a story, one is tempted to think that the reporter has not done enough research and that the story is fabricated. Unlike the *Sowetan*, the *Daily Dispatch* makes use of hyperbole as implied in phrases like 'looming time bomb' which has been used to refer to the mutant HIV strain and cumulative transitional expressions as implied in 'worse still.' The use of generalized statements such as 'some sections of society' and 'other stakeholders' does not tell us anything about who these stakeholders and sections of society are.

The Star also reports direct speech, for example, in a story that was published on 29th March 2010 on page 11, president Zuma is quoted from a speech that expounded the government's position on HIV/AIDS. The use of oxymoronic sentence structures and words which juxtapose oppositional ideas is typical of reportage in *The Star*. The statement 'Khyelitsha may be poor but it is here that extraordinary measures have been implemented' places two opposing concepts side-by-side, that is, the poverty in Khyelitsha and the 'extraordinary measures' that government has put in place. This juxtaposition makes it clear that government has done something which cannot possibly go unnoticed because the community was extremely poor.

The impression that one gets from these newspapers is that the government is in control of the situation as far as HIV/AIDS is concerned. References to policy papers and the constitution imply that the government is living up to its word, thus instilling public confidence in its institutions. In this particular story, *The Star* uses complex sentences that are well punctuated with commas and colons in their proper places. For example, one sentence reads 'doctors working in Khayelitsha hailed December last year as the first happy World AIDS Day this country had seen'. The sentences are also simple (easily understood) and accessible to the common reader. For example, another sentence reads 'we need extraordinary measures to reverse the trends we are seeing in the health profile'. Technical terms and abbreviations are also explained the first time they are mentioned, for example 'antiretrovirals (ARVs).'

Another aspect identified in these newspapers is that sentences structured in such a way that they answer the what, where, why, when and how of journalistic writing style. For instance, the article "HIV infection down by 35%", published on page 9 of the *Daily Dispatch* of 23 June, 2010 is a good example. The reason for this is that the objective of newspapers is to inform and educate readers. However, in some instances, these newspapers seem to structure sentences in such a way that the meaning of the message gets distorted. As an example, the article published on page 7 of the *Daily Sun* on the 1st of December 2010 used the sentence 'love life is hosting the concert to highlight the way in which HIV/AIDS has caused so much suffering from the disease'. Upon reading this sentence, one would question of which disease it is HIV/AIDS has caused suffering of. The reason for this meaningless or poor sentence structure can be linked to carelessness or bad proof-reading.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

1. To what extent do the selected South African newspapers carry HIV/AIDS issues?

In this study, only 160 HIV/AIDS-oriented stories were found out of 288 newspaper issues. As much as this research considers HIV/AIDS as social problem that affects society in different ways, it, however believes that HIV/AIDS issues should be consciously and considerably covered. However, it has been observed that the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Sun*, *Sowetan* and *The Star* is reasonable depending on the total of newspapers analysed.

On another consideration, we found out that some of the sampled newspaper issues had no HIV/AIDS stories at all. However, the findings of this study are in contrast to Ajibola's findings (2009) on the ethics of reporting on HIV/AIDS, in three major South African newspapers. The findings from her study indicate that more than one HIV/AIDS story was published per issue of the selected newspapers. *The Star* and *Daily Sun* were included in that study. However, in this study, some newspapers issues were found to have no HIV/AIDS stories at all but overall the coverage of HIV/AIDS was found to be reasonable in these newspapers because the ones which published HIV/AIDS stories were found to have more than two stories. If each of these newspapers issues had covered a minimum of three stories on this epidemic per day, this would be regarded as extensive coverage; however, this is not what is revealed by the findings of this study. It has thus become clear that there is a fluctuation in the coverage of this social problem.

In this study, the findings revealed that the selected newspapers covered HIV/AIDS issues reasonably. For instance, 61(38.1%) of HIV/AIDS stories found in *Sowetan* can be seen as reasonable coverage depending on the sample for this study. In regard to this, the researcher argues that these newspapers considered HIV/AIDS as a serious issue which the public has to be informed about. Murdock (1998:6) is of the view that the media is the source of information and explanation of social and political processes for the most people. In relation to this, it can be argued that newspapers content-analysed in this study disseminated reasonable HIV/AIDS information to the public and as a result helped in setting public agenda.

The results show that these newspapers informed the public about this epidemic. For example, out of the 288 content-analysed issues, *Sowetan* had the highest frequency of HIV/AIDS stories accounted to 61 (38.1%), *Daily Sun* had 37 (23.1%) while *The Star* had 35 (21.9%) and the *Daily Dispatch* had 27 (16.9%). When looking at the nature and readership of these newspapers, as discussed in Chapter Two and Three of this study, it can be deduced that these newspapers were able to inform publics about the risks associated with HIV/AIDS even though the coverage was somehow fluctuating.

The reason for fluctuation coverage of HIV/AIDS issues from these newspapers can be attributed to what Cullinan (2005) terms 'media fatigue'. The other reason for this kind of coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by the media could be the fact that journalists and/ or editors regard HIV/AIDS stories as less newsworthy since it is believed that HIV/AIDS stories do not sell newspapers (Linda, 2000:119). This could be due to a commercial and profit-oriented approach that has been adopted by the media. If this is how the media operates, one would have to question how the media will survive if it covers this

epidemic in a fluctuating manner as its consumers might become infected due to a lack of adequate information. If all these issues can be treated well in the newsrooms, these newspapers can do much better in disseminating HIV/AIDS issues to the public.

2. In what proportions are journalistic genres used for the dissemination of HIV/AIDS issues?

Journalistic genres are crucial in the reportage of social problems like HIV/AIDS issues. Analysis revealed a balanced usage of news and feature at 50% each. 50% indicates a reasonable coverage of this epidemic. The importance of reporting issues such as HIV/AIDS in the news format is that news does not allow a comprehensive report; it just goes straight to the gist of a very specific issue. In addition to this, Stein (2002) points out that the role of media in promotion of public health is especially useful when applied to news media's advocacy role in relation to HIV/AIDS. This study, however, believes that these newspapers used this genre effectively to disseminate HIV/AIDS information to the public.

On the other hand, features are more appropriate for thorough treatment of any issue; they allow background information to be gathered and provide detailed information to educate and inform readers on an issue. This shows that reportage on HIV/AIDS issues is both reactive and proactive, unlike other studies which argue that HIV/AIDS reportage in South Africa is merely reactive. Falobi and Babingbetan (2000) argue that journalists shy away from adopting an overly proactive response to HIV advocacy on the grounds that they must remain neutral and objective commentators. In this study, this is not the reason as results indicate a reasonable use of feature at 50%. Reporting issues such as

HIV/AIDS in the form of feature shows that journalists are tackling this issue proactively. This however, can results into influencing positive behavioural change in society as well as setting agenda the on this disease.

The *Sowetan* used feature articles frequently to disseminate HIV/AIDS messages, with 29 (18.1%). This indicates that, when it comes to HIV/AIDS coverage, the *Sowetan* is more committed in informing people about this epidemic than the other three newspapers. The *Daily Sun* had an average of 22 (13.8%) feature stories while *The Star* had 19 (11.9%) feature stories, followed by *Daily Dispatch* with only 10 (6.3%) feature stories. Feature writing as one of journalistic genres is perceived to have less structural constraint than hard news and allow more of the individual journalists' imagination. This means that feature stories should be used more frequently in reporting on HIV/AIDS issues as it allows journalists to provide detailed information so as to inform and educate their audience.

3. Does the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by selected South African newspapers vary in extent, categories, prominence and depth of treatment?

The results reveal a statistically non-significant relationship between newspapers and categories, that is ($\chi^2 = 25.09, p = 0.122 > 0.05$). This indicates an equal likelihood reporting of HIV/AIDS oriented stories based on the categories analysed in the four newspapers. A chi-square test further indicates that the placement of HIV/AIDS oriented stories on the front, inside or back pages were not statistically related, that is ($\chi^2 = 6.16, p = 0.405 > 0.05$). This shows that there was a variation in the placement of HIV/AIDS issues in these newspapers.

The results further indicate no statistically significant relationship between the font-size used for reporting HIV/AIDS-oriented stories. The non-significant relationship between newspapers and the font-size used to report HIV/AIDS issues show that the content-analysed newspapers did not give this epidemic enough prominence. For instance, font-size 54-60 was used only 9 times throughout the newspapers while font-size 72 plus was used once. Lending support to this, Kasoma (1991) in his study of the Zambian press and the AIDS crisis observed that newspapers he content-analysed did not regard HIV/AIDS stories important enough to deserve page one treatment. This is similar to the findings of the present study as only 5.0% of the total stories on HIV/AIDS appeared on page one. This study, argues that these newspapers did well in reporting this social problem.

It is however, of importance to note that analysing the coverage of HIV/AIDS from these newspapers in the present study, individually, one would find that *Sowetan* has performed creditably well on most counts. For instance, the newspaper contained 61 HIV/AIDS-oriented stories of all the stories found in its editions content-analysed. It is followed by *Daily Sun*, with 37 stories; *The Star* with 35 and *Daily Dispatch* with 27. For almost all content categories, Sowetan had the highest contributions.

The prominence given to HIV/AIDS in the media was measured in terms of the number of paragraphs and page dimension of each HIV/AIDS-related story. The results show a statistically significant relationship between the number of paragraphs used in reporting HIV/AIDS issues and newspapers. This indicates that the percentage of HIV/AIDS

stories of varying paragraphs lengths were statistically significant from the four content-analysed newspapers.

4. Do selected South African newspapers comply with guidelines proposed for language use in reporting HIV/AIDS messages?

The results revealed that, indeed, the selected South African newspapers comply with the guidelines proposed by IFJ (2006) which is concerned with the way in which HIV/AIDS issues are portrayed in the media. Articles from these newspapers were found to be generally balanced and sensitive. It is also observed that the language used in these newspapers and the tone set in the stories was positive and encouraging. However, there are some articles which still use derogatory language, including terms like “HIV/AIDS victims” and “safe sex”. The results are similar to what the study of Ajibola (2009) has revealed. Her study revealed that some metaphors containing negative connotations are still used. She further points out that this could create further stigma and discrimination for people living with this disease. To counteract this, journalists should make sure that they eliminate the use of words which cause harm to other parts of society.

The use of sensitive language in HIV/AIDS reporting can be a useful tool for encouraging positive behavioural change within society. In contrast, language can be manipulated for particular purposes; therefore journalists should take care not to place too much emphasis on the effects of the epidemic and they should also pay serious attention to HIV/AIDS sensitive language. De Wet (2004) emphasizes that language, terms and terminology could be used to reduce the level of stigma in HIV/AIDS

reporting. This shows that language is a productive tool that can be used to instill positive behaviour amongst the public.

Each newspaper's agenda tends to influence the overall meaning of the stories they publish. In their study Krishnan, Durrah and Winkler (1997) point out that media need to serve as reinforces, as agenda setters as well as gatekeepers, in the coverage and dissemination of HIV/AIDS information in the African American community. It is also apparent, however, that these newspapers have a specific agenda infused and embedded in the HIV/AIDS stories they covered. It is evident, upon looking at the tone and sentence structures, in these stories, that the newspapers have a hidden agenda which is overtly anti-establishment. The general impression is that HIV/AIDS is seen as a disturbing social problem in South Africa. Therefore, these newspapers need to do better than what they are doing to inform and educate people about this epidemic.

Even though these newspapers were found to comply with the recommended language guide in reporting HIV/AIDS, they need to adopt a more proactive, as opposed to reactive approach to reporting this epidemic. This is supported by Bardhan (2001) who found that the coverage HIV/AIDS has become reutilised and is more reactive than proactive. This author, further points out that a passive description dominates over active narration about the future of the pandemic. This means that they need not to rely on events and personalities as this contributes to the low coverage of the epidemic.

The effectiveness of HIV/AIDS reporting depends on journalists' attitudes and values in relation to this disease. This means that journalists should carefully sensitize themselves against the prejudices and discriminatory attitudes found in statements and

messages from many of their sources. By so doing, they are more likely to use sensitive language in their reports.

4.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to analyse the data and discuss the findings of this study. The results reveal that, in terms of degree, the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues is reasonable in these newspapers. It is further observed that HIV/AIDS does not feature regularly, or permanently, in these newspapers during the period covered in this study. For instance, 160 HIV/AIDS stories, out of a total of 288 content-analysed newspaper issues seem to be reasonable coverage. A breakdown of the figures shows that the *Sowetan* published the highest number of stories (61) followed by *Daily Sun* (37), *The Star* (35) and *Daily Dispatch* with (27); see Table 9 for further details.

The average coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by these newspapers is especially surprising since the study covered the month of December which opens with World AIDS Day. It was expected that there would be extensive of press reports on HIV/AIDS during this month.

The use of language and tone of the messages constructed by these newspapers were deemed positive and encouraging. However, there is still some language that journalists need to eliminate when reporting on this epidemic. The structure of the sentences was also found to be simple and understandable in order to accommodate to all levels of readers. Even though complex sentences were found to be used in these newspapers, they were used in such a way that the intended message could reach readers without any inconvenience.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the study whilst drawing conclusions and making recommendations related to the findings presented in the previous chapter; the data presented was collected from four selected South African newspapers namely: *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Sun*, *Sowetan* and *The Star*. Conclusions provide an overview of the outcome of the study, citing what was identified in the study. Conclusions represent inferences drawn from findings (Cooper and Schindler, 2006:48) and these will be made in relation to the research questions and objectives set out for the study. Finally, recommendations for further research will be provided; these are drawn from the conclusions as well as the analysis of data.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The aim of this study was to find out how selected South African newspapers covered HIV/AIDS issues, with the purpose of setting an agenda and promoting awareness on this epidemic. The newspapers that were analysed in the study are: *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Sun*, *Sowetan* and *The Star*. This study examined the extent to which these South African newspapers covered HIV/AIDS issues, particularly in relation to the frequency, prominence and depth of the treatment given to those issues.

The study went on to evaluate whether the newspapers under study comply with media guidelines on the use of sensitive language when reporting HIV/AIDS issues. This study

argued that the media has a pivotal role to play in curbing and combating the spread of this epidemic through the dissemination of accurate, fair, balanced and informative information. By so doing, the media would help in changing the behaviour of the public.

The relevant data were gathered in September 2011. In this study, content-analysis was the research design employed to examine the coverage of HIV/AIDS. A total of 288 newspaper issues were sampled and analysed. The sample was drawn from a pool of newspapers published in 2010. The analysis yielded a total of 160 HIV/AIDS related stories. These stories were examined for frequency, journalistic genres, prominence; depth of treatment, use of language or terminology, tone of the message and sentence structure.

The results were presented in tables and graphs with their percentages and variations. The purpose of this was to provide answers to the research questions. The chi-square test was used to determine whether there are any significant differences in the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by the selected newspapers. The qualitative aspect of the analysis focused on the discourse analysis of HIV/AIDS articles which were purposively sampled from newspaper issues.

Four questions were raised in this study and the following section of this chapter offers summary of the findings related to each question.

1. Content was analysed to determine the extent to which HIV/AIDS issues were covered. The findings revealed that these newspapers carried reasonable number of HIV/AIDS issues. Out of the total of 288 content analysed newspaper issues, only 160 stories were found to be related to HIV/AIDS. This indicates that

the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by these newspapers is average and the reason for this might be the fact that other issues such as politics and entertainment were given more space than this epidemic.

This kind of coverage of HIV/AIDS issues allows one to ask whether there genuinely is nothing more to report on this disease, or whether it is a matter of media fatigue. If media fatigue is the reason for this, how do the media expect the public to adopt a positive behaviour towards this disease if it fails to disseminate extensive information that could keep the public well-informed about this epidemic? Although the reasons for this average coverage of HIV/AIDS are not clear, there are possible explanations for this. It is clear that the period of study was the period in which the press focused on the FIFA Soccer World Cup and other related events. However, media workers should not consider this as an appropriate reason because the public needs more information on issues that affect them. The other reason might stem from newsrooms in which the issue of HIV/AIDS is not regarded as newsworthy by editors.

When HIV/AIDS stories were covered by these selected newspapers, it is evident that more focus was placed on medical issues while education and other social issues enjoyed less coverage. The results further indicate that the prominence given to HIV/AIDS issues is not satisfying as most of the stories (about 93.8%) appeared on the inside pages of these newspapers. Placing a topic on the inside pages suggest that the issue is of little value to the paper. The front page is regarded as the most eye-catching page, where newsworthy issues are placed. However, in the selected newspapers only 5.0% of HIV/AIDS stories appeared

on front page; this indicates that this epidemic received limited treatment from the papers. Generally, there is poor treatment of HIV/AIDS issues in terms of placement on pages, point-size of headlines and the length of stories.

2. The newspapers that were analysed adopted a variety of journalistic genres in reporting HIV/AIDS issues. News as journalistic genre accounted for 50% of HIV/AIDS stories found in these newspapers. Out of this 50%, 20% were covered by the *Sowetan* followed by *The Star* with 10% while *Daily Dispatch* and *Daily Sun* covered 10.6% and 9.4% news stories respectively. This indicates that newspapers are more concerned with delivering news on this epidemic as a way of promoting awareness, as well as informing and educating the public. The results indicate that there is a balanced between the use of news and features in disseminating HIV/AIDS issues. This means that features also accounted for 50% (50%). It was also observed that *Sowetan* had highest frequency of feature articles on HIV/AIDS, with 29 (18.1%). This indicates that, when it comes to HIV/AIDS coverage, the *Sowetan* is more effective than the other three newspapers. The *Daily Sun* had an average of 22 (13.8%) feature stories while *The Star* had 19 (11.9%) feature stories, followed by *Daily Dispatch* with only 10 (6.3%) stories.
3. The findings revealed that these newspapers covered HIV/AIDS issues differently. *Sowetan* was found to have the highest frequency of HIV/AIDS stories in comparison to the other newspapers in question. In this regard, a chi-square test revealed no statistical relationship between newspapers and categories of HIV/AIDS-oriented stories. This indicates that the identified categories were

covered differently in each newspaper. It was further revealed that there is no statistical difference in the extent of reporting on HIV/AIDS-oriented stories with respect to replacement in the four newspapers analysed.

4. It was found that the newspapers usually comply with the media guidelines for the use of appropriate language when reporting HIV/AIDS issues, even though some offensive phrases and words like 'scourge', 'HIV/AIDS victims' were used occasionally. Editors should encourage journalists to downplay these words as they might stigmatize PLWHA. Language is seen as the most productive tool to be used in attempt to encourage behavioural change in society; therefore, it should not be used in a way that may offend some parts of society. Generally, the study found that language used in, coupled with the tone of reports on HIV/AIDS was encouraging and positive. Most of the newspapers did not adopt the use of language that could cause fear or panic amongst the public, especially amongst those who are living with this disease. The structure of sentences was found to be simple and understandable and were structured in such a way that message could reach the readers without any inconvenience.

5.3 Conclusion

The analysis of the selected South African newspapers' coverage of HIV/AIDS indicates that the papers in question gave reasonable attention to HIV/AIDS issues. Even though political, entertainment and business issues take up most of the space in the newspapers. This does not rub out the importance of covering HIV/AIDS issues frequently. This disease needs to be covered extensively, as this will keep society

abreast of the changes that take place in relation to treatment or medication. This means that journalists and editors need to prioritise HIV/AIDS stories in order to feed society with accurate, fair and balanced information. However, the coverage of this epidemic can be seen as periodic, because HIV/AIDS issues are featured irregularly and are not featured prominently in the newspapers.

There is also a balance in the genres used in reporting on HIV/AIDS issues. In this regard, it can be argued that the newspapers have done enough work to set an agenda, raise public awareness and affect positive behavioural change. It is well known that the media can frame issues in such a way that people can regard it as a true story. This shows that if a serious social problem like HIV/AIDS receives extensive attention and more prominent space from the media, the public as well as policy makers will also pay more attention to it. This would, in turn, contribute to effective recognition of health campaigns aimed at promoting the awareness, prevention and treatment of this epidemic in society.

5.4 Recommendations to the Media

Taking into consideration the important issues that the study delved into, the researcher identified some points for consideration in order to improve the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues. The researcher recommends that:

1. The coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by the media is generally limited to issues like medical and political. Therefore, the media has to play its role in the realization of covering more HIV/AIDS issues in relation to education, economy and social.

This means journalists and editors as part of the society affected by this epidemic

need to increase the attention given to HIV/AIDS issues in the newsroom. One way of achieving this is to devote more space or have specific pages devoted to HIV/AIDS issues. There is also a need for greater magnitude of reports of this nature in the newspapers; they should be placed on the front and back pages as these pages carry more prominence than those on the inside pages of the paper. For the prominence of the headlines, there is a need for newspapers to use font-size of 54–72 and above, more often when reporting on HIV/AIDS related issues.

2. Government and non-governmental officials who advocate on rights and awareness of HIV/AIDS should encourage media editors to give HIV/AIDS issues more consideration. This can be achieved through conducting workshops or seminars with editors where the importance of reporting on HIV/AIDS issues can be discussed.
3. Since editors claim that HIV/AIDS stories no longer sell papers, there exists a need to train journalists to package HIV/AIDS stories in such a way that they will make them sell newspapers. This can be achieved through media training for journalists who specialize in HIV/AIDS reporting. Journalists would then be well equipped with requisite skills to create and sustain HIV/AIDS reporting that is accurate, fair, balanced, and informative.
4. The media should collaborate with HIV/AIDS services and organisations in order to curb the spread of this disease as well as helping the public develop their own solutions to HIV/AIDS as this would enable them to participate in planning

prevention strategies. This can be achieved through developing effective policies and programmes to address emerging issues related to this epidemic.

5. Media should not engage in sensational reporting as this tends to create hatred and rejection for people living with HIV/AIDS. This can contribute to the stigmatization and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS.
6. The media has to be socially responsible by providing regular and consistent coverage of this epidemic as this will contribute in forming public agenda.

5.5 Recommendations for further studies

Although this study is a worthwhile endeavor that should be replicated in future research, the researcher recommends that future studies include a wide range of media institutions when assessing the reportage of HIV/AIDS issues. Moreover, the researcher recommends that the following topics be taken into consideration when conducting research in relation to the media and HIV/AIDS.

1. Further research should also be conducted to ascertain how media audiences react after receiving media content on HIV/AIDS issues. There exists a need to study how media producers are best able to obtain feedback on the messages they disseminate to their readers or audience. This will allow for the evaluation of message production or communication processes so that further strategies can be implemented.

2. While the present study focuses solely on newspapers, comparing electronic and print media can help to determine which medium may be the most effective in disseminating information on HIV/AIDS issues.
3. In addition, instead of dealing with daily newspapers alone, further research could compare the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues in both daily and weekly newspapers in order to determine those which offer greater and more substantial coverage of this epidemic.
4. It is important to find out if print media (press) meet the challenges of HIV/AIDS reporting as most readers get more HIV/AIDS information from electronic media like the internet.

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APPENDIX1: NEWSPAPERS

Daily Dispatch

Daily Sun

Sowetan

The Star

APPENDIX 2: ISSUES OF NEWSPAPERS CONTENT ANALYSED

January 2010

1st

7th

13th

19th

25th

29th

February 2010

1st

5th

11th

17th

23th

26th

March 2010

1st

5th

11th

17th

23th

29th

APRIL 2010

1st

7th

13th

19th

23rd

29th

MAY 2010

3rd

7th

13th

20th

25th

31st

JUNE 2010

1st

7th

11th

17th

23rd

29th

JULY 20101st7th13th19th23rd29th**AUGUST 2010**2nd6th12th18th24th30th**SEPTEMBER 2010**1st7th13th17th23rd29th**OCTOBER 2010**1st7th13th19th25th29th**NOVEMBER 2010**1st5th11th17th23rd29th**DECEMBER 2010**1st7th13th17th23rd29th

APPENDIX 3: CODING SHEET FOR THE FOUR SELECTED SOUTH AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS ON HIV/AIDS ISSUES

HIV/AIDS issues

Newspapers	Number of HIV/AIDS Issues
<i>Daily Dispatch</i>	
<i>Daily Sun</i>	
<i>Sowetan</i>	
<i>The Star</i>	
Total	

HIV/AIDS categories

HIV/AIDS categories	Number of items
Medical	
Economy	
Social	
Political	
Education/Awareness	
Sexual Violence/Rape	
Disaster	
Total	

Placement of HIV/AIDS oriented stories on pages

HIV/AIDS Categories	Front Page	Inside Pages	Back Page
Medical			
Economy			
Social			
Political			
Education/Awareness			
Sexual Violence/Rape Disaster			
Total			

Genres used to disseminate HIV/AIDS issues

HIV/AIDS Categories	News	Feature	Editorials	Columns	Cartoons
Medical					
Economy					
Social					
Political					
Education/Awareness					
Sexual Violence/Rape Disaster					
Total					

Number of paragraphs used to disseminate HIV/AIDS issues

HIV/AIDS Categories	News	Feature	Editorials	Columns	Cartoons
Medical					
Economy					
Social					
Political					
Education/Awareness					
Sexual Violence/Rape Disaster					
Total					

Page dimensions used to disseminate HIV/AIDS issues

HIV/AIDS Categories	Full	Half	$\frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{2}{4}$
Medical						
Economy						
Social						
Political						
Education/Awareness						
Sexual Violence/Rape Disaster						
Total						

Headline font-size used to disseminate HIV/AIDS issues

HIV/AIDS Categories	12-16	18-24	36-48	54-60	72+
Medical					
Economy					
Social					
Political					
Education/Awareness					
Sexual Violence/Rape Disaster					
Total					

APPENDIX 4: An Example of HIV/AIDS Categories

1. Medical

SA Media - The University of the Free State

Source: DAILY DISPATCH Date: 23-Jun-2010 Page: 1

Topic: 10 Ref No: 3802 

 1 ID: 03868432-01 Source Page: 9

Daily Dispatch

OUR OPINION

HIV infections down by 35%

AMID the distractions of the World Cup, some good news emerged yesterday which shows that new HIV infections in South Africans aged 15 to 49 have dropped by 35 percent.

Lest we forget why this is important, South Africa is still the country with the highest HIV/Aids prevalence in the world.

Lately the subject has fallen off the radar for media in general, possibly because it generates less controversy now than during the presidency of Thabo Mbeki.

With his equally contentious Health Minister, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, by his side, the two succeeded in bringing attention to the disease, but arguably for all the wrong reasons. Fewer headlines may mean sobriety is now guiding the country's HIV strategy.

The latest research by the Human Sciences Research Council was based on data compared with three household surveys done in 2002, 2005 and 2008.

The authors attributed the decline to increased awareness of individuals' HIV status, the mantra of using condoms during intercourse and an improved willingness to get tested.

And the researchers were emphatic in one of their conclusions: anti-retroviral treatment is saving lives.

In his novel *The Plague*, Albert Camus describes how officials in the Algerian port city of Oran dally over the semantics of naming the epidemic which is killing so many people – and then congratulate themselves when they find the right “form” of words to describe it.

Mbeki similarly pontificated about HIV and spent far too much energy trying to explain his alternate view of the problem. He was guilty, like Oran's leaders, of abstraction. That is, he saw HIV (like the plague) as an idea rather than an event that was taking place in real time with devastating consequences.

The result? While Mbeki and Tshabalala-Msimang fought tooth and nail to avoid confronting the reality of the disease, people died.

And the research now tells us that unequivocally. With the data at their disposal, the scientists quantified the impact of treatment on the estimates of HIV, and calculated that 440 000 HIV-positive people were alive in 2008 because they had access to anti-retroviral therapy.

The history of HIV in South Africa is tragic. But knowing that we can make inroads must fill us with optimism for the future.

Of course much more has to be done. The research tells us that. But our will to confront this reality decisively must be this country's ultimate legacy – bigger even than hosting the 2010 Fifa World Cup.

2. Economic

HIV and AIDS in the workplace know your status

HIV and AIDS is having a significant effect on all South African workplaces and the economy. People living with HIV and AIDS face many forms of unfair discrimination in the work environment. The pandemic primarily affects working age adults and its impact is primarily seen through an increase in absenteeism and sick leave, faster staff turn over due to early deaths, etc.

There is a need to prohibit unfair discrimination based on HIV Status as well as to promote a non-discriminatory work environment in which persons infected and affected by HIV and AIDS are able to participate fully without fear of stigma or prejudice. It is also important for infected and affected people to manage this pandemic. For this to happen it is crucial that every individual takes the responsibility to know their status through testing and counseling, i.e. both pre- and post-counseling.

The law protects employees and job applicants from unfair discrimination on the basis of HIV and AIDS.

Employers are required to take steps to promote equal opportunities in the workplace by eliminating unfair discrimination on various grounds, including HIV and AIDS, in all employment policies and practices. Eliminating unfair discrimination in

the workplace is a vital step towards reducing the impact of HIV on infected and affected employees, as well as preventing the further spread of this epidemic.

“The law protects employees and job applicants from unfair discrimination on the basis of HIV and AIDS.”

It is important for workplaces to ensure that voluntary HIV testing takes place in an environment that conducive for this purpose. It means that employers must put systems in place to guarantee confidentiality. At the same time, it is always vital to remember that a person has a right to disclose or not to disclose their status.

Knowing one's status promotes a safe working environment for all employees, which enables people living with HIV to manage the impact in an informed manner. For example, an employee may request reasonable accommodation in order to, among other things, attend to medical problems. Any HIV programme must be mainstreamed to address gender sensitive needs relating to HIV.

Workplaces carry the responsibility to ensure its employees have access to HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment programmes, including awareness activities, voluntary counseling and testing, education and training, condom promotion and distribution, management of STDs and infection control measures, including the treatment and prevention of TB. Creating strategic partnerships to enhance the greater involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS in the workplace will ultimately result in a well-informed programme of action.

for more information visit www.labour.gov.za or your nearest labour office



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Early Sun 29 November 2010

3. Political

SA Media - The University of the Free State

Source: SOWETAN
Topic: 10
Date: 19-Jul-2010
Ref No: 3066
Page: 1

ID: 03856342-01 Source Page: 7

HOPE FOR THOSE WITH HIV

Zinhle Mapumulo

THE government has committed itself to increasing the budget allocation for HIV treatment next year to ensure that all those who need to be on antiretroviral treatment get it.

At present more than 900 000 people are receiving treatment but 500 000 more need to be on the programme.

Last year about 600 000 people were on ART. The number increased by 50 percent this year after President Jacob Zuma announced that women who are pregnant and HIV

positive with a CD4 count of 350 or less have to be put on treatment.

Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, in Vienna for the 18th International Aids Conference, said yesterday that the announcement was part of government efforts to intensify the fight against HIV-Aids.

Motlanthe said through advice from the South African National Aids Council and other stakeholders the government had committed itself

to increasing the budget allocation for ARV drugs.

"South Africa has made progress when it comes to scaling up treatment but more work needs to be done," he said. "We have expanded coverage rapidly and a drop in new HIV infection among young people has been reported. What we need to do now is ensure that people receiving treatment are maintained."

South Africa is one of the few African countries that has lived up to the commitment

made in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2001. African heads of state committed themselves to putting the fight against HIV in the forefront and as the highest priority issue in their national development plans.

The declaration also called for countries to allocate at least 15 percent of their annual budget to health services.

"This country has done it and this year it has managed to invest 30 percent more in its health services and the biggest portion of the money

is dedicated to the fight against HIV-Aids," Motlanthe said.

UNAids executive director Michel Sidibe praised the efforts made by South Africa in the fight against HIV.

"The country must be applauded for its efforts," he said. "They have managed to scale up treatment and prevention. As a result HIV prevalence dropped among the youth in 15 of the highest burden countries."

"We need to continue to empower them with sexual education that builds life skills. Their energy and bold ideas have inspired me in Vienna."

4. Social

SA Media - The University of the Free State

Source: SOWETAN

Date: 29-Jan-2010

Page: 1

Topic: 10

Ref No: 148



1



ID: 03801056-01 Source Page: 10

CIRCUMCISION TOPS HIV AGENDA

Aids activists agree knife can reduce risk

Zinile Mapumulo

THE debate on whether to include male circumcision in the comprehensive HIV prevention package continues to top agendas around the world.

Scientists, Aids and human rights activists all agree that male circumcision reduces the risk of contracting HIV in heterosexual men by more than 50 percent - if done correctly. But the main issue is at what age the procedure should be done.

Many have suggested that it should be in infancy, but the Children's Act of 2005 does not allow it. The Act prohibits circumcision of males under 16. It only exempts the procedure when performed in accordance with religious practices or for medical reasons.

At present government and other stakeholders are working on ethical issues around this policy. The draft is expected to be

finalised later this year.

Mark Heywood, deputy chairperson of the SA National Aids Council, said yesterday: "Though the Children's Act says no child under 16 should be circumcised without a medical or religious reason, we feel that it should be done because it is in the best interest of the child.

"The Constitution does provide for a parent or guardian to decide for a child for medical reasons or if it's in their best interest. In the case of male circumcision it is. We recommend that children under 16 should only be circumcised after

proper counselling and with their consent. We are calling on the government to speedily include it in the National Strategic Plan," Heywood added.

While local scientists and civil society are for the inclusion of male circumcision in the HIV prevention package, some Australian researchers are against it. They say there is no evidence that infant circumcision will reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases. They further warn that the procedure will have significant psychological harm on males circumcised at infancy.

Caryn Perera, a researcher at the Royal Australian College of Surgeons, wrote in her review in the *Annals of Family Medicine*: "Strong evidence suggests circumcision can prevent HIV in sub-Saharan African men.

"These findings remain uncertain in men residing in other countries. The role of adult non-therapeutic male circumcision in preventing sexually transmitted infections remains unclear. Current evidence fails to recommend widespread neonatal circumcision for these purposes," she wrote.

"Neonatal circumcision may cause significant anger or feeling incomplete, hurt, frustration, abnormal or feeling of violation."

5. Disaster or Devastation or Hopelessness

Source: SOWETAN
Topic: 10

1

SA Media - The University of the Free State

Date: 25-May-2010
Ref No: 2019

Page: 1

ID: 03837722-01 Source Page: 5

HIV cause of kids deaths, says minister

Zinhle Mapumulo

HEALTH Minister Aaron Motsoaledi has blamed the HIV pandemic for the country's high infant mortality rate.

He said that HIV-Aids was at the centre of what happened at the Natal-spruit Hospital's neonatal ward.

Two weeks ago 10 babies died on the same day at the Ekurhuleni hospital. Three of them were stillborn, one had an extremely low birth weight and died immediately after birth. The other six died of various reasons which the minister did not divulge.

But he said that it did not necessarily mean the infants were HIV positive.

South Africa records 20 000 stillbirths and 22 000 babies under one-year-old die every year. More than half of these deaths are HIV-Aids related. A 2007 study on infant mortality in the country showed that most of these deaths could have been avoided.

Motsoaledi said yesterday: "Unless we deal with the HIV-Aids burden the infant mortality will continue to increase."

"South Africa is 0.7 per cent of the world population but it carries 17 per cent of the HIV-Aids burden," he said.

"We need to fight this pandemic if we intend to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, which include reducing infant and child mortality by two-thirds by 2015."

South Africa is not winning the battle against infant and child mortality, with 75 000 children under five perishing from HIV-Aids related illnesses.

6. Sexual Violence or Rape

SA Media - The University of the Free State

Page: 1

Source: DAILY DISPATCH

Date: 20-May-2010

Topic: 15

Ref No: 8385



1



ID: 03858057-01 Source Page: 3

R3m lawsuit after woman raped by HIV+ husband

Police minister and cops responsible, she says

By KATHRYN PARKES
Court Reporter

AN EAST London woman is suing the Minister of Police for nearly R3 million after she was brutally raped by her HIV-positive husband.

The action comes two years after the State was found liable for the attack.

The harrowing civil suit – dating back to 2005 – was heard in the East London High Court on Monday. It was postponed to October 25.

Marilyn White, a 54-year-old former shop assistant, who gave the Dispatch permission to publish her name, is suing Police minister Nathi Mthethwa and three police officers after they failed to arrest her estranged husband for breaching a restraining order.

White said the physical and verbal assault and rape occurred solely as a result of the "negligence" of the three officers.

In court documents, White claims that on

November 23, 2002, she telephoned the police "no less than 10 times" as her husband, Thomas White, forced his way into her Morningside home and threatened to kill her.

She said she was told that the police "did not have any available vehicles" and would respond to her call as soon as they could.

White claims three Cambridge police station inspectors arrived at her residence almost three hours later and, despite being shown the terms of the interdict against her husband, refused to arrest him or evict him from the premises.

At the time, Thomas White was on bail pending his appeal against a conviction for sexual assault against a minor.

The police officers dismissed the matter

and allegedly told the distraught woman to "sort out her marriage". Three days later, on November 25, he returned to White's property and brutally raped and assaulted her.

He was arrested on December 3, 2002, and later convicted to 12 years' imprisonment, but has subsequently died.

Following his arrest, White served the minister and his employees with a civil suit and in 2008 the East London High Court ruled in her favour. The State appealed, claiming that when the officers arrived, they were told the dispute had been resolved. They denied being shown the protection order or being asked to arrest Thomas.

However, the officers were again found to have acted negligently and the then-Minister of Safety and Security (now Minister of

Police) was found liable for their actions.

Now White is claiming R2 680 660 for damages incurred as a result of the attack – medical expenses, loss of earnings as she was medically boarded from her job, and general damages.

White said that, as a direct result of the sexual assault, she sustained physical and emotional injuries, shock and trauma, had to be tested for HIV and experienced three months of mental anguish awaiting the result and about eight months for confirmation that she had not been exposed to sexually transmitted diseases.

White said she continued to suffer from major depression, post traumatic stress disorder, flashbacks, and was still unable to drive. — kathryn@dispatch.co.za

7. Education and Awareness

SA Media - The University of the Free State

Source: DAILY DISPATCH Date: 17-Mar-2010 Page: 1

Topic: 10 Ref No: 1881

ID: 03835508-01 Source Page: 1

People with HIV given wrong pills after mix-up

Incorrect labels put on diabetes medication

By NTANDO MAKHUBU
Health Reporter

THE provincial Health Department is scrambling to recover diabetic medication given to HIV-positive patients in error after the tablets were incorrectly labelled by their Indian pharmaceutical supplier.

Thousands of public health users across the province could be at risk, although the department is unsure how many tablets have been dispensed.

Last week Be-Tabs Pharmaceutical announced an urgent recall of Diacare Tablets, batch number DC 8020 for diabetics, and Cozole Tablets, batch number DC 8021, an antibiotic administered to HIV-positive people in the province, following the mislabelling of some of the packs.

The Indian company said Diacare tablets had been packed into boxes labelled as Cozole.

① ↓

Source: DAILY DISPATCH

Date: 17-Mar-2010

Topic: 10

Ref No: 1881



1



ID: 03835508-02 Source Page: 1

Medical experts yesterday said the side-effects for patients could range from mild symptoms to possible fatality.

ER Consulting's Dr Izak Maree said side-effects could include gastro-intestinal discomfort, nausea and vomiting, weight gain and blood abnormalities.

"Unless they excessively overdose themselves the tablets would not be life-threatening," he said.

But other private practitioners said it meant HIV-positive patients who took the wrong medicine weren't treating their opportunistic infections.

"It is a crisis," one said, asking: "How long will they wait before going back to the clinic? How far would an infection have gone by then?"

The pharmacist said defaulting on medication leads to complications, which could result in death.

Another private pharmacist said: "It is not a mistake you want to make if the beneficiaries are people with serious infections like those associated with HIV and Aids."

Saying that taking Diacare would not necessarily lead to death, he explained defaulting would allow any bacteria present to mutate.

"If they do not die of the complications they could be too far gone when they are seen by medical experts."

But the Department of Health insisted that everything was under control and the recall of all dispensed tablets was under way.

Still unable to quantify the number of affected patients, the department said when it received notification of the con-

ready been dispensed, and efforts to trace the end users was proving futile.

They said Cozole was given to people living with HIV and Aids, and the drug was used to treat opportunistic infections as a combination drug with ARVs.

One senior official said: "Most of the bulk has been issued, and right now we are worried that some people, still taking the medication for their infections, have developed serious complications and could have died."

Be-Tabs Pharmaceutical refused to comment but in its adverts published in Eastern Cape newspapers the company said: "An infection for which Cozole is dispensed will not be controlled if the patient is administered Diacare and not Cozole. Diacare will affect the blood sugar levels of the patient."

The company asked that patients who had taken these tablets consult with healthcare professionals. — ntan-dom@dispatch.co.za

tamination, as the mix-up is officially called, officials removed all affected stock from the shelves and kept it on one side for collection by the company.

"The Port Elizabeth depot also sent a notification to the users regarding the return of the contaminated product to the depot, and subsequently the product has been received," the department's deputy director-general of clinical services, Dr Nandi Diliza said.

She said that the Mthatha depot had found that none of the available stock corresponded with the batches that were being recalled. "We have also sent the communique regarding the recall to the institutions, and have requested that they send any stock corresponding with the batches in question back to the depot for exchange," she added.

But high ranking officials working in the department's pharmaceutical department said most of the contaminated medicine from the main depots had al-