'Renegotiated Identities'
Stories of Women who are Initiated Traditional Healers and Work in a Hospital Environment in a Different Capacity

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Arts in Research Psychology by Coursework and Research Report

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Johannesburg
2007
DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Research Psychology by Coursework and Research Report at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

__________________________
Leonie Human

Signed at Johannesburg on this:
______ Day of _________________ 2006.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people whose assistance and support made this research report possible:

• Firstly I wish to thank all participants of this study, whose willingness to share their stories with me to be represented here is greatly appreciated, and without whom this study could be done.
• I also thank Carol Long, my supervisor, who has read extensively on many drafts and continuously encouraged me to completion.
• All loved ones and friends who believed me, thank you for your support.
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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the experiences of traditional healers who work in a hospital environment in a different capacity. A secondary aim of this inquiry is to look at how participants' perceptions of the interface between traditional and modern medicine in a hospital context influences their practices as both traditional healers and hospital employees. A snowball sampling strategy was employed and five suitable participants were identified through referral and post-interview selection. Participants were selected from a sample of South African-born women who have experienced an ancestral calling and initiation into African traditional healing, have been initiated as an Inyanga/iSangoma (diviner), and are presently working in a different vocational capacity in a hospital environment. All participants work and reside in Gauteng. Data was collected through two semi-structured interviews per participant. Interviews were based on an interview guide.

In looking at participants' experience as traditional healers who work in a hospital and how their perceptions on the interface between traditional and modern medicine influence their traditional healing practices, four research questions have been identified: 1. How do participants perceive themselves as a traditional healer? 2. How do participants perceive and experience their work in the hospital? 3. How do participants perceive the interface between traditional and modern approaches to healing in a hospital context? 4. How do participants experience the perceptions of others at work? A qualitative approach was adopted in order to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences. Data analysis was guided by narrative and thematic approaches. Thus results are presented in a storied form with thematic categories so as to reflect participants' experiences as described in their own words. Interpretation of data focused on the ways in which these women relate to their role as traditional healer in a different vocational capacity and how their perceptions reflect a broader dialogue on the relationship between traditional and modern healing modalities in a modern health care context.

**ADD FINDINGS AT END**