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Re-imagining the self : an exploration of the applied drama technique role play in the development of life skills amongst orphaned and abused teenage girls. The case study of orphaned teenagers at "The House" shelter, Berea, Johannesburg.

Marovatsanga, Gift Tapiwa

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the use of role play as an educational medium in order to enhance life skills amongst orphaned and abused teenagers living at a shelter in Berea, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Chapter One explores the research domain. The study advocates an Action Research approach for the case study that deals with life skill development. Life skills are those abilities that help promote mental well-being and competence in young people. Life skills, this study argues, empower young people to take positive action to protect themselves and promote health and positive social relationships within the context of HIV/Aids.

Chapter Two introduces Role Play as an educational medium and theoretical construct. This study argues that because of role play's experiential and participatory nature, it is the most appropriate methodology to apply in the development of life skills amongst vulnerable adolescents. Role play acts as a safe dramatic metaphor for young people to practice role adoption and role flexibility.

Chapter Three maps out the case study, and Chapter Four discusses the series of Role Play workshops implemented for this research. Chapter Five analyses the research data, draws conclusions and makes recommendations. The study argues that this methodological approach, based on Role Theory, consists of experiential and participatory role play methodologies that are effective amongst adolescents for the re-imagining of the self.

The study concludes that such methodologies should be consistently used in the educational activities run by institutions like orphanages, children's homes and shelters, particularly those concerned with vulnerable young people.

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this research report is my own work unless where appropriately acknowledged and that I have not previously submitted it at any university for a degree or examination.

Name of Candidate: Gift Tapiwa Marovatsanga

Signature:……

Date: 30 September 2010

DEDICATION

To my family - immediate and extended!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Glory and honour to God the creator, for the precious gift of life, and for taking me this far- Ebenezer.

I would like to acknowledge and greatly thank all the Drama for Life staff, Warren for the great vision, and all my lecturers and mentors for the job well done. To all my colleagues, thank you for the wonderful moments, the good times we shared and all the support. Remo, we come a long way- thank you brother man. Many thanks go to GTZ Zimbabwe for funding my studies, this has been a rare and precious opportunity.

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