

## Gender-Based HIV and AIDS Risk Reduction Training for Health Educators in Katlehong, Johannesburg

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**ABSTRACT** The aim of the study was to improve health educators' locus of control, self-efficacy, sexual assertiveness, and to reduce HIV and AIDS risk through training. A gender-based HIV and AIDS risk reduction training programme was used to train health educators in Katlehong, Johannesburg. Thirty-three health educators volunteered to participate in the study. Participants were invited through the organisation's internal communication channels. Participants were recruited from the organisation's two branches. Participants' locus of control, self-efficacy, sexual assertiveness and gender-based HIV and AIDS risk were assessed before training and after training. The instruments that were used to assess participants' psychological well-being were Roter's locus of control scale, general self-efficacy scale, sexual assertiveness scale for women, and HIV and AIDS risk was assessed using the gender-based HIV and AIDS risk scale. In addition, a qualitative design that used focus groups to get participants' views on how they would use the train-the-trainer gender-based skills they got from Tshenolo HIV and AIDS Prevention Project to protect themselves from HIV infection and to empower vulnerable girls and women, people at risk of HIV infection and those living with HIV and AIDS through training. Data were analysed using *t* related samples tests and thematic content analysis. The results of this study indicated that participants felt that the training programme equipped them with personal skills to deal with gender transformative HIV and AIDS prevention programmes and policies. The perception of participants in this study was that the gender-based training programme had adequately prepared them to help vulnerable groups experiencing gender inequality in the community. The quantitative results indicated an improvement in psychological wellbeing of participants and a significant reduction in HIV and AIDS risk after training. Future studies could focus on the longitudinal relationship between attending a gender-based risk reduction training programme and HIV incidence among participants.