

## **Perception and Willingness of Students towards HIV Counseling and Testing at a Higher Learning Institution in South Africa**

**J. C. Makhubele, S. A. Dhlamini and T. I. Khoza**

*Department of Social Work, University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus), South Africa*  
*Telephone: +27 (15) 268 2291; Fax: +27 (15) 268 3636/2866*  
*Mobile: +27 (84) 712 2913; E-mail: Jabulani.Makhubele@ul.ac.za*

**KEYWORDS** Attitude. Fear. Barrier. Stigma. Discrimination

**ABSTRACT** The study focuses on perception and willingness towards HIV Counseling and Testing (HCT) amongst a sample of twenty-five third-year social work students at a higher learning institution in South Africa. The study aimed at describing the perceptions and willingness of students towards HIV counseling and testing at the institution of higher learning. A descriptive, non-probability sampling was used to select the 25 students that took part in the interview schedule and Thematic Content Analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. There were thirteen female students and twelve males aged from 19-27. The results showed that students had a negative attitude and were unwilling to undergo HIV counseling and testing due to personal fear and self-efficacy, stigma and discrimination and lack of positive support from partners, family and friends. It was concluded that such findings serve as a barrier for students towards undergoing HIV counseling and testing.