

Gender Inequality and HIV/AIDS in Lesotho: A Human Disease Ecological Perspective

Dipane Hlalele* and Puleng Relebohile Letsie**

**School of Education Studies, University of the Free State, Qwaqwa Campus, South Africa
E-mail: hlaleledj@qwa.ufs.ac.za*

***United Nations Development Programme, Lesotho
E-mail: puleng.letsie@undp.org*

KEYWORDS Gender Inequality. Human Ecology. Legislation. Socialisation and Culture

ABSTRACT In this article we ponder gender inequality and Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) in the context of Lesotho from a human disease ecological perspective. Overwhelming literature reveals a general trend in terms of inequalities relating to power relations, socialisation and culture, as well as legislation. Women remain disadvantaged. However, the reverse of the current scenario seems to have not always been the case as some literature revealed a nuanced picture of gender relations in nineteenth century in Lesotho convincingly showing that social presence of African women was at once contingent and independent, subordinate yet oddly powerful. It can be argued that addressing gender inequality in Lesotho, and in other countries as well, needs a conscious, concerted and deliberate effort, in mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS, and at making sense of each of the interdependent elements of human ecology.