

Commercial Sex Work and HIV and AIDS: An Onomastic Perspective

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ABSTRACT This paper examines diverse names used to refer to 'commercial sex workers' or 'ladies of the night' at Zimbabwe and Mozambique Nyamapanda boarder post. The 'commercial sex workers' regard themselves as casualties of the economic hemorrhage Zimbabwe was in since the beginning of 2000s due to various militating reasons beyond the present scope. Through participant observation, one-to-one interviews and questionnaires, the research established that the 'ladies of the night' get ready, lucrative market from, among others, the two governments' personnel manning the border post, boarder jumpers, truck and bus drivers plying that root. This economic distress has led to onomastic innovation as the 'sex workers' and the outsiders resorted to using various names as labels to capture the unfolding trade and accompanying HIV and AIDS calamity. Names are then used to perform different communicative roles, for intra and extra class stratification, labeling and as survival and marketing strategies.