

**Young Black Women's Constructions of Sexuality in the Context of HIV and AIDS in a
Township School in Durban.**

Nelisiwe Simamane

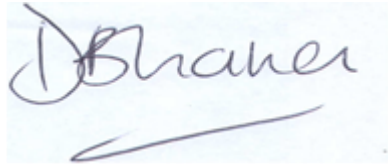
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**A research study submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the Master of
Education in the Faculty of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

Supervisor: Professor Deevia Bhana

December 2013

‘As candidate’s supervisor I agree to the submission of this dissertation’.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Deevia Bhana', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Signed:

Name: Deevia Bhana

Date: 10 March 2014

Declaration

I, Nelisiwe Simamane declare that:

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- ii. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the following people for having made my study a complete success:

1. Almighty God, for providing me with the health and strength during my hard work. With Him, 'all things are possible'.
2. The 6 young black women of the Greater Cato Manor- Mayville area, who enthusiastically participated in my study.
3. My supervisor, Professor Deevia Bhana, for her endless support, insight, and exceptional guidance. I would not have imagined myself completing this study had it not been for your belief and trust in me; I sincerely thank you. You are indeed a true inspiration!
4. My mentors, for their tireless encouragement: Dr Tawanda Makusha, you inspired me greatly. Sherry-Lee Gopaldass, you are absolutely a star; thank you for your patience.
5. My family, for affording time and space in which to complete my studies. To my beloved husband, Sibusiso, thank you for your understanding and patience, and also for making sure that I was not disturbed during my studies. Thank you Qwabe! My son, Nqobani, for all your love and support.
6. My friends and colleagues, for your moral support.

May God bless you all!

Abstract

This study investigates the manner in which six young black women aged 16-17, in a Durban township, construct their sexual identities within the context of HIV and AIDS. The aim of this study was to discover what young black women regard as risky sexual behaviour, and the way in which they negotiate their sexuality; how they construct their sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS, and the manner in which their understanding of sexuality influences their behaviour.

The study utilised the feminist theory and social constructionism, as theoretical frameworks. These frameworks were used in analysing the data that was produced. The theories were referred to in comprehending the way in which young black women view their world in terms of sexuality and high-risk behaviour. Two interviewing techniques for generating data were also utilised, namely; focus groups and individual interviews.

The findings of the study indicate that young women's engagement in risky sexual behaviour is influenced by various factors, including culture, sexual beliefs and their inability to negotiate safe sex practices with their partners. Findings also reveal that transactional sex, peer pressure, multiple sexual partners, and alcohol abuse, form part of the risky sexual behaviour engaged in by young women. These primary findings were used to provide recommendations in an effort to reduce HIV and AIDS in schools; and to increase safer sex practices amongst South African youth at large.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding young women's constructions of sexuality, within the context of HIV and AIDS. The study as titled, "Young black women's constructions of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS in a community school in Durban," examines how a group of young black women, aged 16 to 17, within the community of Mayville (near Durban, KwaZulu-Natal), provide meaning to the construct of sexuality. This study also adds to a larger investigation project titled: "Youth, gender, and sexuality, in the context of HIV and AIDS," which seeks to understand how South African youth give meaning to their sexuality, specifically at a crisis time for HIV and AIDS.

1.2 Background and focus of study

South Africa is one of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa compounded with the problem of high levels of HIV and AIDS amongst its population. Thurman, Kidman and Taylor (2011) state that South Africa is one of the severely affected countries in this region, with approximately 18% of adults between 15 and 49 years likely to have contracted HIV. The HIV and AIDS pandemic also affect millions of children, with an estimate of 3.8 million affected children, during 2006 (Thurman, Kidman & Taylor, 2011). Specifically, the KwaZulu-Natal province has been more seriously affected than other provinces in South Africa (Thurman, Kidman & Taylor, 2011). The largest number of HIV positive people is situated within the province (1.5 million), with an estimated 43% of those in need of antiretroviral treatment (Nicolay, 2008).

Young black women in KwaZulu-Natal are the main focus of this study, since the province is regarded as one of the provinces that is acutely affected by HIV and AIDS (Thurman, Kidman & Taylor, 2011). Understanding the manner in which young women in this province construct their sexuality will assist decision-makers in promoting various campaigns which could fight HIV and AIDS.

The UNAIDS Report (2012) on the global AIDS epidemic states that young women are exposed to sexual risks, even prior to the age of 15. The report continues, by illustrating that many women engage in sexual activities before the age of 15 years old, which puts them at a risk of contracting sexually-transmitted diseases (UNAIDS, 2012). Poulin (2007) emphasises

that latest records indicate that in the region of sub-Saharan Africa, women aged between 15 and 24 years are twice as likely to be infected with HIV as opposed to men within the same age group (UNAIDS, 2006).

The UNAIDS report states that fewer than half of the population of young women have broad and precise information about HIV. Remarkably, young women lack knowledge pertaining to the efficacy of condoms in reducing the risk of HIV transmission (UNAIDS Report on the global AIDS epidemic, 2012). Some young black women, in KwaZulu-Natal live under the guidance of Zulu cultural practices, traditions, and misinformation. Shefer and Foster (2001) confirm that the South African discourse on culture, beliefs, and ritual, are at the essence of gender dissimilarity. Zulu cultural practice makes it difficult to talk about sexuality (WHO, 2006); in which parents and their daughters experience difficulties in talking openly about sexual activities (Mudhovozi, Ramarumo and Sodi, 2012). In a study by Salo (2006), it is mentioned that culture is thought of as a noun: as unending, fixed, awkward practices to which a collection of people adhere indiscriminately, because ‘they have to.’

Therefore, culture plays a significant role in the life of most young, black women. In Zulu cultural practices, and traditions, individuals belong to a set of communal beliefs. Individuals are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that would meet the expectations of the community in which they reside. Jewkes, Morrell and Christofides (2009) state that culture regards children as attached to wider families and societies, rather than to particular or specific individuals. In this study, the young, black women will a source of primary information to discover the influence of culture on their construction of sexuality.

Ntseane and Preece (2007) argue that, owing to economic sufferings that have led to a lack of employment opportunities, the youth and single women in particular, engage in unsafe sex outside of their families in exchange for income and other basic needs. Therefore, young women from destitute conditions are increasingly vulnerable to HIV infection. There is also a common occurrence in sexual relationships whereby older men exploit girls and young women (Clutton & Coles, 2007). The older ‘boyfriends’, commonly known as ‘sugar daddies,’ lure young women into risky sexual relationships, in which women are forced to have unprotected sex (Clutton and Coles, 2007; Ntseane and Preece, 2007). Leclerc-Madlala (2008) states that it has been reasoned that grown-up men usually have HIV-illness rates higher than teenage boys or young men, and that the age gap between spouses is likely to diminish a younger person’s capability of exchanging safe sex effectively. Generally, women

experience some form of sexual abuse in relationships (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008). Jewkes, Morrell and Christofides (2009) claim that the common experience of rape, sexual abuse and violence, carry vital messages to young women regarding gender power dimensions. They are left with a restricted capacity to practise agency within associations.

Therefore, it is necessary to understand how young, black women construct their sexuality in light of various factors, such as culture, poverty, risky behaviour, and gender inequities.

In the following section, the aim and objectives of this study will be discussed.

1.3 Aim and objectives

The rationale for conducting this study is informed by high levels of HIV and AIDS among young, black women living in KwaZulu-Natal (Nicolay, 2008). Many young, black women are sexually active and exposed to sexual risks even before they are 15 years of age (UNAIDS, 2012).

It is therefore necessary to understand how young black women construct their sexuality, which is what this study aims to achieve. It is also necessary to highlight the factors shaping young, black women's constructions of sexuality, which influence their engagement in risky sexual behaviours.

The study seeks to provide reasons as to why many young women fail to practise safe sex with their partners. It seeks to understand the link between gender, race, class, culture, and sexuality. Furthermore, the study seeks to understand the role played by different institutions which, directly or indirectly impact on how young women construct their sexuality. For the purpose of this study, these institutions include culture, family, religion, community and any other institution that seeks to construct sexuality for women. The study will create a space for young women to talk about different experiences they encounter, when constructing their sexuality. Through understanding young women's constructions of their sexuality, recommendations may be provided to assist in the campaign of fighting HIV, and to support safer sex practices through teaching Life Orientation, for example. Lastly, the study seeks to understand the influence exerted by economic conditions on young women, with regards to their construction their sexuality.

1.4 Key research questions

The research was conducted in order to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. How do the young, black women in my study construct their sexuality in era of HIV and AIDS?
2. How does their understanding of sexuality influence their behaviour?
3. What do these young women understand about sexual risks; and how do they negotiate their sexuality?

1.5 Mayville: the research site

This research was carried out at ‘Mzamo’ High School (a pseudonym) in Mayville, which is situated south of Durban. ‘Mzamo’ is located in a densely populated township of Durban. Mayville Township also has Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses (see map showing Mayville Township and the surrounding areas). The area is populated by relatively poor communities. Many of the learners from the school come from the poor communities of Mayville, and other, similar communities surrounding Mayville.

The participants of this study are from the Mayville area, and the Greater Cato Manor Township. Most of the pupils enrolled in the schools in this area either walk to school, with the exception of a very few pupils who are transported. The school is co-educational, having a total of approximately 1,300 pupils from Grade 8 to 12. The participants were chosen from the Further Education and Training Phase (FET), Grades 10 and 11.

The research site is a densely populated township of about 70 000 people, with a high unemployment rate, and a very low socio-economic status. Most of the families are poverty-stricken. People of the township are faced with many barriers hindering economic progress. These range from crime-related behaviour to; gender-based violence, alcohol and drug abuse, child-headed homes (owing to HIV and AIDS deaths), and teenage pregnancy. Moffett (2006: 129) argues that ‘contemporary sexual violence in South Africa is fuelled by justificatory narratives that are rooted in apartheid practices, that have legitimated violence by the dominant group against disempowered, not only in overtly political arena, but in social, informal and domestic spaces.’ Cato Manor is largely recognised as a community of ‘low-income earners’ (Yusuf & Allopi 2010:416).

1.6 Reasons for the study focusing on young, black women

The focus of the study is on young, black women. The reason for focusing this study on this population group is due to the high HIV prevalence in this sector of society. KwaZulu-Natal is sorely affected by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. It is necessary to make a contribution towards determining what informs young, black women in constructing their sexuality. The main reasons for choosing this particular group are as follows:

1.6.1 Young, black women are most hard hit by HIV and AIDS (Reddy and Dunne, 2007).

As mentioned previously, this study focuses on young black women. There has been a high HIV prevalence among this racial group (Reddy & Dunne, 2007; UNAIDS, 2012). Many researchers point out that blacks are the racial group which is more affected by HIV and AIDS than other racial groups. Presented with the opportunity for conducting this study, the researcher chose to study sexual behaviour amongst blacks, the group most seriously affected by HIV/AIDS. The study focused on girls rather than boys because girls are more vulnerable in patriarchal dominated townships.

The study focused on the age group of 16 to 17: this group is twice as likely to be affected by HIV (UNAIDS, 2006).

1.6.2 As an educator.

As an educator in township schools, the researcher has observed over the years some of the risky behaviour conducted by young women. This has greatly inspired the undertaking of this study, so as to investigate how these young women construct their sexuality.

1.6.3 Language

The participants in this study speak isiZulu as their home language therefore; it was easy for them to communicate in their vernacular. As a researcher, it was not complicated to understand their methods of communication. The participants, in this study, speak IsiZulu. Therefore, it was easy for them to express themselves in a language they understand.

1.6.4 Project

This study forms part of a large project which seeks to understand sexuality of youth based on gender, race, and class in an era of HIV and AIDS. Therefore, this study contributes to the larger project on the perspectives of young black women of African origin living in black

townships of Durban. Based on the aforementioned reasons, the researcher was encouraged to focus on young, black women aged between 16 and 17.

1.7 Rationale for the study

Sexuality is influenced by a number of factors. Research indicates that it is influenced by social factors, culture, societal norms, and personal experiences (Fine, 1993). Young women brought up in a certain society will encounter these factors working together, or in contrast with an aim to define how a woman should conduct herself when it comes to sexuality. In the Zulu society, factors such culture, and patriarchal system tend to define how young women should define their sexuality. However, Zulu women do not live in isolation of media and peers who disseminate different views about how young women should construct their sexuality. Township women are also influenced by other factors, such as violence exerted upon them; which has a high prevalence in townships. Moffett (2006) reveals that South African townships still face high rates of violence directed towards women. All of these factors interplay in the context of high HIV prevalence. Based on this complexity of sexuality, it is essential to understand how young black women construct their sexuality.

1.8 Brief outline of chapters

Chapter One: This chapter provided the aim and objectives; background and the key research questions of this study. It also discussed the research area (i.e. school) and the rationale for undertaking this study.

Chapter Two: In chapter two, various sources of literature surrounding the issue of young, black women's sexuality, were reviewed. The purpose of reviewing literature was to understand how young black women aged 16 and 17 construct their sexuality. The work of many researchers was carefully reviewed. Relevant literature pertaining to the specific topic of this study was synthesized and arranged into themes. These themes are: sex and dating; culture, sexuality and virginity; sex for money, gifts, sex and financial security; contraceptives and unprotected sex; cheating and casual sex; sex and alcohol.

Chapter Three: In chapter three, the research design for this study, which would help achieve the aim of this study, was discussed. This study was conducted using a qualitative research approach; focus groups and individual interviews were also used. Limitations of this study; ethical considerations; and the issues of validity and reliability were also outlined in this chapter.

Chapter Four: In chapter four, an in-depth discussion was presented on how six young, black women in a township school constructed their sexuality. Their responses to various interview questions highlighted their interpretations of sexuality. The theories of interpretivism, constructivism, and feminism were employed, in order to analyse their constructions of sexuality. There were seven themes identified in the chapter, which supported the questions discussed with participants of this study.

Chapter Five: This chapter concludes the study. It summarises the main ideas and findings of this research. It also provides recommendations for encouraging safer sex amongst youth, preventing or reducing HIV infection (by highlighting risky sexual behaviour of young women), such as: risks of engaging in unprotected sex, risks of alcohol during sexual relationships, and age-disparate relationships.

Chapter Two

Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is based on a review of literature highlighting the manner in which young, black women construct their sexuality, and participate in risky sexual practices; particularly during an era faced with the pandemic of HIV and AIDS. In this chapter, thematic literature review technique was utilised, in which studies based on culture, young women's sexuality, sexual risk, and HIV and AIDS, have been assessed and organised under relevant themes or headings. The themes listed below were identified during the process of data analysis. The interview transcripts were carefully analysed and data was categorized according to themes. Thereafter, literature was aligned with the relevant themes. Therefore, the literature discussed in this chapter was assessed using the following criteria: (a) selected themes, (b) young black women of African origin, and (c) new statistical data not older than 5 years. Although, the bulk of literature shows that there is much work done with regards to research on young black women's sexuality, however, young black women in Mayville Township and other neighbouring townships South of Durban, still face significant HIV incidences at schools. Hence, there is a need to conduct further investigation into understanding the manner in which young women in black townships construct their sexuality.

The literature review was conducted under the following themes:

- Culture and young women's sexuality;
- Transactional sex amongst young women in South Africa;
- Sexually risky practices of young women in South Africa;
- Young women's sexual agency; and
- HIV and AIDS awareness amongst South African youth.

Thereafter, this chapter provides a section on theoretical frameworks, which highlight and explain the two theoretical positions that will be used to analyse and interpret primary data. These theories are: the feminist theory and social constructionism. Both, international and local studies have been drawn on in this chapter.

2.2 Culture and young women's sexuality

This section focuses on Zulu cultural practices and the multiple ways in which it frequently impacts on young African women, by demonstrating how it influences their construction of sexuality; their engagement in sexually risky behaviour; as well as the way in which it silences or restricts their expressions of sexuality.

Although there are a number of studies focusing attention on young, African women living in poor, black townships in KwaZulu-Natal (where there is a high HIV and AIDS prevalence rate), there is still room to conduct further studies on this subject, since human behaviour is dynamic and requires constant observation. Researchers, such as Bhana and Pattman (2011); Jewkes, Morrell and Christofides (2009); Leclerc-Madlala (2008), and Shefer and Foster (2010) have conducted research on young, African women, aged between 16 and 17, living in poor, black townships. Bearing this in mind, it is also necessary to understand that Zulu culture and traditional practices often have the potential to influence the 16 and 17 year old age groups among young African women, with regards to the manner in which they construct their sexuality.

Normally, culture will have an influence on young African women's interpretation of sexuality. Shefer and Foster (2010) argue that the masculine culture is deeply entrenched in South African societies, in all ranks of people classification and ethnic groups. Many young women featured in their study appeared "challenging to the male-defined heterosexual sometimes boldly, but usually in more muted forms, however there also seemed to be more adherences to traditional translations of masculinity and femininity and less indication of feminist opposition to male supremacy" (Shefer and Foster, 2010).

In a study conducted by Ntseane and Preece (2005), it is argued that culture can be 'sceptical to the introduction of condoms and contraceptives.' Ntseane and Preece (2005), also assert that in the African culture, of which Zulu culture is a part of, condoms are not believed to be effective because of being lubricated; and from the point of view that they do not belong to the culture. Leclerc-Madlala (2001) also explains how people from one culture are sceptical of anything that comes from another culture: "I don't believe in Western civilization and culture as they say we must use condoms and contraceptives, which promotes adultery. That is why I believe in African culture" (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001, p533). Many of these cultural beliefs have a negative impact on young women's sexual decision-making, as they prevent or deter them from engaging in safe sex practices or from making safe sexual choices.

Aufseeser, Jekielek, and Brown (2006), reveal that many young, black women find it difficult to talk about sex to their parents, especially their fathers, because of 'Zulu' culture that 'precludes' this activity. Remes, *et al.*, (2010) state that mothers also find it uncomfortable to talk about menstruation with their daughters; certain mothers also did not know when their daughters commenced menstruation. Young women's knowledge of menstruation comes from their peers; and the money for hygienic pads, often from boyfriends (Remes, *et al.*, 2010). Parents have a compelling impact on young people, however, they are inadequate in their paternal obligation, failing to discuss sexual matters with their children, including teaching them about good sexual behaviour (Remes, *et al.*, 2010). Ntseane and Preece (2005) found that a family maintains culture when parents are responsible for talking to their daughters about their sexuality. Wilson and Koo (2010) go on to argue that many parents either do not talk to their children about sex, or have limited communication on the topic. Fathers are assumed to be more distant towards daughters than mothers, which creates communication gaps (Wilson & Koo, 2010). Lundberg (2005) confirms this by stating that fathers devote more time to, and are more concerned with sons, compared to daughters. Girls are less likely to live with their fathers than boys are. Other studies conducted by Boler, *et al.*, (2003) and; Jewkes, *et al.*, (2008) also reinforce the message, that there is a great need to improve communication in the family, in order to improve sexual health, and to reduce sexual diseases such as HIV and AIDS.

There is, however, a challenge to increase communication apropos sexuality amongst young people without encouraging them to experiment (Boler, *et al.*, 2003). Furthermore, Remes, *et al.*, (2010) point out that there is even poorer communication between teachers and villagers, which often also strengthens the parental notion that 'sex education' motivates sexual activity. Remes, *et al.*, (2010) argue that, while there is no communication at the family level, parents are not happy with sex education provided at schools. On the other hand, however, it is understood that developing communication skills and nurturing discussion about issues surrounding sexuality, such as traditional gender role norms, will lead to enhanced sexual well-being (Jewkes, *et al.*, 2008).

Remes, *et al.* (2010) assert that some cultures expect that young women should be submissive. Hutson (2007) explains that each culture's values perceive women as inferior to men. Men are observed as positively sexual, while women are the representatives of love and relationships, and are often regarded as asexual beings (Shefer & Foster, 2001).

Leclerc-Madlala (2008) argues that ‘a socially established behaviour, the meanings, values and motivations ascribed to sexual expression vary widely across cultures, as well as within particular populations.’ Certain cultures require that young women should not engage in sex before marriage (George, 2007). In an attempt to explain this, George (2007) states that the virginity-testing custom among the Zulus was initially envisioned to ensure the pureness of young wives-to-be, who were required to verify their chastity before their parents and future in-laws settled an amount to be transferred by the groom’s family to the bride’s family (*Ilobolo*).

Although virginity testing was practiced long before HIV and AIDS pandemic, however, in KwaZulu-Natal it can be comprehended as an effort to reiterate command over women’s sexuality at a time when it is seen to be ‘out of control’ and causing disaster in the form of escalating disease and death (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001). Jewkes and Morrell (2010) also highlight that men showering women with gifts and money in exchange for sex, is seen by other people as a culturally acceptable practice because many men and women have accepted this as a norm.

Bhana and Pattman (2011) in their research explored how young women in an urban township were viewed in terms of fewer supervision constraints in comparison with young, rural women. Young men prefer young women from rural areas for marriage, because urban young women are considered ‘loose’ or ‘free’ in character (Bhana & Pattman, 2011). ‘Young South African women encounter substantial limitations around sexuality with an emphasis on encouraging modest behaviour, protecting virginity and keeping away from sexual relations until engaged in a trusting relationship or marriage, as many religious organisations would argue’ (Bhana & Pattman, 2011).

The studies highlighted above indicate that culture has an influence on the way in which young African women construct their sexuality. However, Bhana and Pattman (2011), and Jewkes and Morrell (2010) clearly demonstrate that culture is wide and it varies. As a result, new subcultures are evolving. Jewkes and Morrell (2012), therefore argue that young women’s dissimilar sexual experiences and their intricacy are rarely tackled in existing research, yet these are very central in addressing challenges of gender health interventions.

This section clearly highlighted some of the ways in which Zulu culture and cultural beliefs influence young women’s constructions of sexuality, their engagement in sexually risky behaviour; and the way in which culture often silences young (African) women’s sexuality.

2.3 Transactional sex amongst young women in South Africa

This theme will highlight various findings on how young women involve in transactional sex, which is the exchange of goods, material possessions, and even money, for sexual favours (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008; Minki, 2005, Remes, *et al.*, 2009).

The section focuses on transactional sex among young women, showing how poverty often forces them to have sex for money, as a means of basic economic survival.

Eames, *et al.*, (2009) argue that transactional sex is the idea of people imposing power relationships by means of gifts. One may see that permitting agency to these gifts often authorises the sexual relationship between two people into something more, sexual relationships often having agency connected with the participants' exchanges.

Poverty is considered by many studies as the cause of young women's practise of transactional sex (Wamoyi, *et al.*, 2011). Young women are economically dependent, living in dire poverty with less economic opportunity compared with men, hence they are vulnerable to HIV and AIDS' infection (Shisana, 2004); Whiteside, *et al.* (2003). Hoffman, *et al.* (2006) reiterates that poverty is considered a driver in the increase of HIV in South Africa. In cases where young women exchange sex for money, they have very little to say or do, even when their older male partners are sexually abusive (Campbell, 2000). This reinforces the idea that the HIV epidemic among women is fuelled by endemic poverty (Wechsberg, Parry & Jewkes, 2008). Hunter (2002) explains that financial and material exchanges are reasons for women to have sex in circumstances where they might otherwise abstain. Poulin (2007) also discovered that sexual relationships are maintained by male partners providing money to female partners. As soon as a male partner fails to provide money, the female partner may end a relationship. It is also common for parents to put pressure on their daughters to have a relationship with an grown-up employed man, both as a means of obtaining money and household requirements, as well as to marry and bring in bride-wealth money (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008). Parents do not give their children money, which subsequently leads children to search for people who can provide them with money (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008).

In contrast with many of these findings, other studies show that some young women engage in transactional sex merely to improve their lifestyles.

For example, Leclerc-Madlala (2008) argues in her study that many (young) women in South African urban areas exchange sex for financial well-being or standard of living rewards. This is a vital part of their orientation towards sexual engagements, normally not having to do with being poverty-stricken. She also clarifies that this exchange is not necessarily a clear-cut cash transaction. Women can agree on engaging in sex in order to surmount certain hardships of poverty; they therefore become reliant on supportive men (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008). Maroon (2009), goes on to argue that added reasons for involving in transactional sex take in gathering funds to provide “educational expenditures and acquire connections in social networks,” also being able to deal with “peer pressure of obtaining luxury goods, including expensive clothing, jewellery, fashionable hairstyles, accessories, and makeup.”

According to Campbell (2000), the idea of young women engaging in age-disparity sexual relationships, has to do with peer pressure, self-uplifting, and financial freedom. This is also captured in Leclerc-Madlala’s (2001) work, where she emphasises that young women whose chances of education and employment are strictly limited, may also use transactional sex in helping them attain a higher standing among their peers. Kaufman and Stavrou (2002), also state that young women dependent on the prosperity or status of the men in question, label these men as ‘masters of transport,’ if a man provides transportation to various destinations; ‘master of finance,’ if a man provides ‘pocket money;’ ‘minister of education’ if a man pays for school fees, or purchases school books. Fashionable hairstyles are items that also encourage young women to engage in transactional sex (Minki, 2005).

With regards to peer pressure and young women’s involvement in transactional sex, Remes, *et al.* (2009) assert that young women have little choice other than to take part in sexual partnerships in order to acquire material goods, and to improve their status among their peers. This study indicates that young women can sometimes be pressured by the status of their peers to involve in transactional sex, in order to ‘boost their social situation,’ in the eyes of their friends (Remes, *et al.*, 2009). Dunkle, *et al.*, (2007) confirm that many researchers of transactional sex have aimed at women, predominantly younger women in association with grown-up men (i.e. “sugar daddies”).

Campbell (2003), mentions the “sugar daddy phenomenon,” which applies to young women who exchange money for unprotected sex with older men.

Leclerc-Madlala (2002), and Womoyi *et al.* (2011), show that young women who need material goods and money from so called ‘sugar daddies’ may agree to unsafe sex.

Sometimes they will even engage in sex with multiple partners in order to gain more material goods and money (Womoyi, *et al.*, 2011). Womoyi, *et al.* (2011) further argue that, in order to fulfil their material needs, young women from underprivileged families participate in casual sexual activities with multiple partners, or agree to have sex without a condom.

By contrast, in many urban areas, material advancement was found to be a prominent factor alluring young women to have sex with grown-up men (Leclerc-Madlala, 2002). Leclerc-Madlala (2008) highlights that young women often trust older men because they regard them as ‘safe’ partners and are less likely to be risk-takers, however, they cannot persist with protected sex practices, because this would endanger their economic objectives in the relationship.

Despite this, many young women are not only victims of transactional sex. Wamoyi, *et al.* (2011), feel that young women should not be viewed as merely victims of their sexuality, but in a field of pleasure and agency in which they are encouraged to make choices on their sexually-related issues, without feeling ineffectual. Wamoyi, *et al.* (2011) state that young women perceive themselves as fortunate to be women, because they can make use of their sexuality for enjoyment and material gain. However, although young women view the handling of the female body positively, they are also mindful of the health risks (Wamoyi, *et al.*, 2011).

This section highlighted how poverty, peer pressure, and a desire for money and expensive goods often influence young women’s decisions to engage in transactional sex.

The following theme focuses on the sexually risky behaviour that many young women engage in, thus placing themselves at risk of HIV infection and unwanted or unexpected pregnancies. The studies highlighted in the next theme will show how some young women lack power to negotiate safe sex in their relationships. Sometimes, however, they choose to engage in unsafe sexual practices with their partners.

2.4 Sexual risk practices of young women in South Africa

Throughout this theme, I focus on sexually risky practices in which young women engage, which often places them at risk of HIV infection, and of falling pregnant.

In a study conducted by Marston and King (2006), it was revealed that young women understand that condoms can prevent sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and AIDS. However, they choose not to make use of condoms during sexual intercourse (Marston &

King, 2006). The UNAIDS (2012) report demonstrates that less than half of young women have broad and precise information about HIV. Jones, Mosher, and Daniels (2012) argue that, although women of all ages are less likely to utilise condoms as their most efficient approach of contraception, the reduction in condom usage among teenagers is highly significant.

Drawing on this point, a study conducted by Maticka-Tyndale and Kyeremeh (2010) shows that there is a low usage of condoms amongst young women, which is the result of myths and beliefs related to gendered sexual interaction. Maticka-Tyndale and Kyeremeh (2010) further state that if condom use is to be increased, the facts should be provided not only to dispel these misrepresentations, but also to deal with deeply deep-rooted beliefs associated with the gendered type of sexual contact.

Leclerc-Madlala (2008), in her research, illuminates that there are myths about engaging in sexual intercourse with a virgin, which can afford a remedy for STDs and HIV. Such beliefs are counteractive to campaigns which fight the scourge of HIV and AIDS (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008). Maticka-Tyndale and Kyeremeh (2010), claim that many young people are afraid to use condoms, believing that these may slip off during sexual intercourse, and thus be thrust into young women's uteruses. These myths often render young women susceptible to HIV infection.

In the preceding section with regard to transactional sex, it has been explained that some young women agree to engage in unsafe sex because of their need for money, and their desire for expensive gifts and educational opportunities (Leclerc-Madlala, 2002; Womoyi, *et al.*, 2011). The need for money and other material goods hinders young women's abilities to argue condom usage, during sexual intercourse (Jewkes, *et al.*, 2012). Kaufman and Stavrou (2002) maintain that a 'gift' of any kind to a partner is connected with sexual trade that gives the right of one partner to physical and sexual rights over the other's body.

Young women also become vulnerable in transactional sex relationships, entering into unprotected sex because they want to maintain their financial security (Dunkle, *et al.*, 2004). A study by Jewkes, *et al.* (2012) reveals that there are situations where young women lack the power to argue the usage of condoms, and are unable to benefit from fact that male circumcision reduces chances of contracting HIV and AIDS.

Some young women also engage in risky sexual behaviour just to prove that they love their partners. This is confirmed by:

Preston-Whyte and Zondi (1992), who argue that in South Africa, many young African people engage in early and unprotected intercourse to prove love for their partners.

Furthermore, Reddy and Dunne (2007) found in their study that young women's pursuit of love might be exercised in conditions of a lack of safe sex practices, in spite of the risks involved.

Wood, Maepa, Maforah and, Jewkes (1998), discuss how young women want to please young men that they love, while the young men are only interested in having sex with many young women. Young women may also want to look good in order to attract the attention of men, and therefore compete with other young women in order to prove beauty through sexual desirability (Wood, Maforah & Jewkes, 1998). Bhana and Pattman (2011) go on to highlight that young women at the lower end of South Africa's societal hierarchy support masculinity which values beautiful appearance, good hairstyles, white teeth, and branded and designer clothing.

Some young women also partake in sexual relationships with many sexual partners concurrently.

There are many reasons why young women participate in sexual relationships with many sexual partners. Firstly, some young women participate in sex with many partners simultaneously in order to maximize the benefits of transactional sex (Luke, 2003).

Secondly, Jewkes and Morrell (2012), assert that young women actually want a mutually monogamous sexual relationship, however, they become obliged to have multiple partners when their boyfriends are unreliable, in an attempt to avoid being single.

Thirdly, Agnarson (2013) highlights that young women from indigent households are highly likely to engage in multiple concurrent partnerships, compared with those from affluent households.

Having multiple sexual partners increases one's risk of contracting HIV and AIDS (Agnarson, 2013). The World Health Organization (2004), also states that women's experience of violence is related to heightened daring, taking into account having many sexual partners, non-prime partners (or partnerships out of marriage) or participating in transactional sex.

Casual sex can also be regarded as a sexually risky behaviour, in that it is a sexual relationship that does not involve love; rather, involves a brief encounter or an encounter which happens only once (Wentland & Reissing, 2011). Casual sex often comes about as the result of young women from indigent families wanting to satisfy their material or monetary needs and wants (Wamoyi, *et al.*, 2011).

Lyons, Manning, Giordano, and Longmore (2012) explain that prior work on casual sexual behaviour has focused on health concerns. It has emphasised the risks associated with non-usage of condoms, or the role of other risky behaviour, such as alcohol abuse.

With regard to substance abuse and its impact on sexually risky activities, Onya, Tessera, Myers, and Flisher (2010) argue that alcohol usage among South African adolescents is cause for concern. It is related to a range of negative outcomes embracing school drop-out; unprotected sexual behaviour that places the adolescent at risk of infectious disease and unwanted pregnancies; and the later development of alcohol abuse, drug taking, and mental disorders. Wojcicki (2002) claims that young women in bars are predominantly at risk of violence, and of HIV and AIDS infection. These young women, who are under the influence of alcohol, often become “loose” in their behaviour and start to look for sex (Parks, 2009). Alcohol consumption can result in reduced inhibitions and poor judgements regarding sexual activity and risky sexual behaviour (Kenny, 2010). Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, and Shai (2012) claim that sex may also be exchanged for alcohol in bars by young women, and after drinking, condoms may not be used or are less likely to be insisted on.

In traditional Zulu culture, it would be impolite, uncultured, and a mark of parental irresponsibility, should a typical black African young woman use alcohol or other drugs, especially in the case of females who drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes. These young women are generally regarded as wayward. Some people even associate this behaviour with sex work (Onya, Tessera, Myers & Flisher, 2010). Parks, Hsieh, Collins, Levonyan-Radloff, and King (2009) argue in their work that women were recounted as being more likely to have a connection with men, and to call attention to themselves, after drinking their ‘usual’ number of drinks in a bar.

Bazargan-Hejazi, Gaines, Bazargan, Seddighzadeh, and Ahmadi (2012) refer to various studies reporting individuals who misuse alcohol, and are more likely to report a greater intention to engage in risky sexual behaviours; more likely to report having many sexual partners; are unable to use condoms during sexual intercourse; and are more likely to have

sex with someone whom they have just met. Hutton, McCaul, Santora, and Erbeling (2008) also argue that alcohol consumption is linked to risky sexual behaviour, including unsafe sexual intercourse and several sex partners.

Some traditions also encourage young women to agree to unsafe sex because male partners believe that they have power over women's bodies.

Kaufman, Shefer, Crawford, Simbayi and Kalichman (2008) state that in South Africa, where women are inclined to lack command and hegemony in their sexual relationships, owing to traditional gender roles, it is very hard for a woman to discuss safe sex and to protect herself from the risk of contracting HIV. Male partners normally want to dominate sexual relationships (Holland, et al., 1998), insisting on unprotected sex, because men see condoms as interruptive agents against trust, intimacy and sexual enjoyment (Shai, Jewkes, Nduna & Dunkle, 2012). Holland (1998) also states that "to be traditionally feminine is to appear sexually ignorant, to aspire to a relationship, to let sex happen, to trust to love, and to make men happy." Such ignorance often places young women in danger of contracting HIV and AIDS, by rendering them sexually vulnerable.

This section clearly highlighted some of the sexually risky practices of young women in South Africa, and how this careless behaviour increases their risk of HIV infection and unwanted pregnancies.

The following theme will discuss gender inequities, which serve to oppress or undermine young women in sexual relationships.

2.5 Gender inequities

Throughout this theme, the section will focus on gender inequities, and how they serve to silence young women's sexuality, encouraging male sexual domination.

Gender inequities are created culturally; women are often regarded as inferior to men (Hutson, 2007). There are findings of studies suggesting that some cultures regard women's sexuality differently from that of the young men (Hutson, 2007; Remes, et al., 2010; Shefer & Foster, 2001).

In a study conducted by Reddy and Dunne (2007), it is revealed that the gendered discourse of virginity constructed sexual double standards in which immoral males are esteemed as studs and immoral females are undervalued as slags. The virginity of young women

determines *ilobolo* for young women, while the same, is not levelled against young men (George, 2007).

A culture is manifested in patriarchal settings of families, the head of the family being a man. It is a societal arrangement in which the father is the leader of the family, and men have power over women and children (Walby, 2002). The authority of men is not only created through the application of force, but also by cultural establishments of patriarchy and procedures through which it is upheld, even when it includes limited violence, which is perceived by many, but not all, as legitimate (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010). Kambarami (2006) states that patriarchy leads to gender inequity and the demotion of women, to the extent that females do not have control over their sexuality. Women are expected to be obedient to men, and their attempts to negotiate safe sex in relationships are often viewed as disrespectful to men (UN Women, 2011). This is also supported by Hunter (2010), who acknowledges that displaying respect (*inhlonipho*) was one of the key fundamentals used in deciding a young woman's capability of becoming a good wife in KwaZulu-Natal.

Gender inequities are also created by economic opportunities which have always favoured men over women (Shisana, 2004). Young African women, due to poverty, depend on men who can provide them with gifts and money. Leclerc-Madlala (2002) explains that deprived rural areas' lack of right of entry to education, health services, job opportunities, and a weak economy, often drive women and girls into age-disparate sex for possible financial gain.

Gender violence against young women and girls also reinforces and reproduces gender inequalities in South Africa.

The World Health Organization (2012) defines sexual violence as "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work."

Greig, Peacock, Jewkes, and Msimang (2008) highlight that schools are frequently a locale in which sexual harassment of female students by teachers and other learners is rife. Young women in these institutions are subjected to physical and verbal abuse. Muhanguzi (2011) argues that there is an indication that girls are put in danger of substantial sexual harassment (verbal and physical), mainly from boys and male teachers in schools, and from males in the wider community.

Muhanguzi, Bennett, and Muhanguzi (2011) argue that the school is a gendered place through which young people acquire important values, beliefs, and norms critical in shaping young men and young women's sexual identities. Therefore, schools are places where femininities and masculinities are made, enacted, reproduced, and contested (Epstein & Morrell, 2012). Kharsany, *et al.*, (2012) believe that the HIV frequency among high school learners, in their studied rural district, is of great concern. It undermines the attempts to reduce HIV risk and to promote sexual reproductive health service attempts in high schools.

Muhanguzi, *et al.*, (2011) reveal that a school is a social institution characterised by particular gender regimes, where learners are gender segregated; starting with registers, school dress, and in co-curricular activities. Bhana (2010), states that structural conditions and class inequities in South Africa produce exposure to violence and HIV, particularly for girls in poor townships.

Muhanguzi (2011) argues that "sexual harassment strains girls' participation in schools, contributes to poor academic performance, and may lead to truancy, change of schools, and even the eventual dropping out of school." However, Bhana (2010) argues that young women encompass great consciousness of their exposure to the risk of sexual violence by male peers and older men, including male relatives and teachers.

Physical and sexual violence are seen as acceptable ways of establishing power and of controlling female partners (Pettifor, Macphail, Anderson, & Maman, 2012).

Leclerc-Madlala (2001) argues that "the popular perception of the modern young woman as someone who is assertive and active in pursuing her sexual interests in a manner similar to a man is a perception of transgression, an overstepping of accepted morality."

If for example, young women reject young men, male teachers, and other men's sexual advances, they are usually met with unkind abuse that involves men's denigration of young women's bodies, and sexual harassment, where men want to articulate their masculine power and subjugate young women (Leach & Humphreys, 2007).

Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, and Shai (2010) go on to argue that violence is a result of gender power inequalities, at both a social and relationship level. It also serves to replicate power inequalities. Jewkes and Abrahams (2002) further argue that sexual violence has often been said to occur on a continuum of degrees of force. Such violence includes rape, gang rape,

sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and verbal degradation (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

There is another form of violence against women called intimate partner violence. Jewkes (2002) describes intimate partner violence as physical violence which can also include psychological abuse directed against a woman by a current, or ex-boyfriend.

Russell, Cupp, and Jewkes (2013) state that IPV (Intimate Partner Violence) is related to an intensified risk of becoming infected with sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS. Jewkes (2002) argues that (sexual) violence against women is a method of solving the crisis in a situation, where men no longer have control or economic support, owing to poverty, as well as their incapability of encountering social anticipations of successful manhood.

This section highlighted many forms of gender inequities serving to oppress young women and their sexuality. Such inequalities also place young women in sexually vulnerable positions, thus increasing their risk of HIV infection.

The next theme will focus on young women's sexual agency; and how many of them have control over their sexuality and their bodies.

2.6 Young women's sexual agency

This section focuses on young women's sexual agency; in order to show that young women have the sexual power and freedom to negotiate either safe or unsafe sexual practices with their partners.

Pittard and Robertson (2008), define sexual agency as the ability to create sexual choices according to one's will, free from coercion.

According to Leclerc-Madlala (2008), young women are sexual agents, in that they use their bodies and sexuality for financial gain. She goes on to state that young women's power and agency within the limits of recent economic and gender inequalities must be clearly comprehended, if we are to improve current successful HIV deterrence interventions (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008).

Poulin (2007) explains that, in a framework where money allocations are normative, men's inadequate earning power raises women's bargaining power. Boys must provide girls with much of their money, or risk losing them (Poulin, 2007). Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna and Shai

(2012) also state that women in prostitution often claim to have more independence and power, including insisting on condom usage, compared with women in transactional relationships.

According to Greig, Peacock, Jewkes and Msimang (2008), the knowledge of the power of individual men and women is basically acquired by a range of other life situations, including right of entry to economic resources, education, age, race, and geographical location. In some cases, women have significant power over men and agency; however, admitting to this does not alter the widespread reality of a gendered distribution of power that privileges men over women. It appears that many young women are becoming more vocal, attempting to challenge the hegemonic construction of women as inferior to men when it comes to love and sex (Shefer & Foster, 2010). Young African women can express their feelings by doing exactly what their male counterparts do. Williams and Hickie (2011), discuss in their study, how some young women cheat because: “He cheated on me, I cheated on him.”

Resisting sexual pressures may also be interpreted in terms of the cultural and social anticipations related to the dominant stereotype of traditional femininity, by which girls are envisaged to reject sexual invitations so as to protect their sexual reputation in the communities in which they live (Hunter, 2010; Jewkes & Morrell, 2012; Muhanguzi, 2011). However, young women’s agency is often negotiated within complex social processes involving sexual violence, highly unequal gender and age inequities, and also sexual expressions (Bhana, 2009).

A study conducted by Bhana (2008) reveals that, during the Apartheid era, African working-class women used their bodies to fend off apartheid police who came to demolish their shacks. Women and girls used their naked bodies as a sign of anger, casting curses on the apartheid police who came to demolish their shacks (Bhana, 2008). These women utilised sexuality to draw attention to themselves by mobilising their vulnerability as a tool, and using the cultural and social capital of sexuality to make claims for their right to shelter (Bhana, 2008).

In a similar way, Mudaly (2012) also shows that the young African women in her study have the ability to demonstrate ‘hyper-visibility’ and ‘hyper-sexuality’ to resist, and subvert ‘hetero-patriarchal’ cultural contexts, when these are largely driven by hedonistic behaviour. According to Mudaly (2012), it becomes clear that young women have power over their bodies to engage in sex with multiple partners, and to engage in sex for pleasure. Many

young women also want to be dominant in sexual relationships (Allen, 2003). Maxwell and Aggleton (2009) argue that young women have taken back the control over their sexual relationships, making themselves feel powerful, and actively discussing sexual pleasure.

Many young women in the 15 to 19 year age group also report having more than one sexual partner (Berry & Hall, 2009). Fay (2002) argues that sexual pleasure is important for young women, who should learn about it in their teen years. Young women also enjoy sex, and are open about the enjoyment they derive from engaging in sexual intercourse (Galinsky & Sonenstein, 2010).

A study conducted by Philemon and Kessy (2008), for Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA), indicates that some young women have the sexual power to resist unsafe sex practices, and that rural young women were found to have more power to negotiate safe sex than urban young women. Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe, and Thomson (1998), argue that safer sex is not all about using protection, avoiding penetration, or being chaste, it brings questions of power, trust and female agency into sexual relationships.

This section highlighted that young women have the sexual power and freedom to negotiate either safe or unsafe sexual practices in relationships.

The next theme will focus on prevention and awareness with regard to HIV and AIDS among South African youth.

2.7 HIV and AIDS awareness amongst South African youth

In this theme, HIV and AIDS awareness amongst young women will be discussed, showing that they often fail to practise safe sex despite the information available to them; as well as the risks attached to contracting HIV.

In South Africa, HIV and AIDS are among other sexually related threats towards young women, yet it is difficult to foresee the likelihood of connecting HIV and AIDS to sex and sexuality, and constraining efforts to talk more comprehensively about HIV and AIDS prevention in schools (Bhana, 2007). Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, and Shai (2012), state that young women are much less able to lessen their own risk of HIV than older women and men. Taking into consideration the intensified vulnerability of young women to HIV, and the strong connotation found between HIV and transactional sex, a greater understanding of what underpins the practice is critical if interventions designed to protect young women from HIV infection are to succeed (Dunkle, *et al.*, 2004).

Many scholars agree that young women normally do not use condoms, despite awareness campaigns with regard to usefulness of condoms in preventing HIV and AIDS (Jones, Mosher & Daniels, 2012; Marston & King, 2006; Maticka-Tyndale & Kyeremeh, 2010). Young women agree to engage in unsafe sex because they want material gains such as money, expensive goods, education, and even status (Leclerc-Madlala, 2002; Womoyi, *et al.*, 2011). Young women agree to exchange money and other gifts for unsafe sex (Campbell, 2003).

Many academics indicate that there is a disjuncture between HIV and AIDS alertness programmes and their implementation at grassroots level (Hallman, 2005; Marston & King, 2008). The disjuncture is apparent when a small percentage of young women use condoms to protect themselves against HIV and AIDS (Bankole, Singh, Woog, & Wulf, 2004). Leclerc-Madlala, Simbayi, and Cloete (2009) state that rates of HIV among young South African women in the 15- to 24-year-old age group is disproportionately high, approximately four times that of young men. The UNAIDS report on the global AIDS epidemic (2012) argues that young women are still lacking in knowledge regarding the helpfulness of condoms in preventing HIV transmission. It seems that there are myths and misconceptions about contraceptives, particularly condoms (Shefer & Foster, 2010). Young women's quest for love may be expressed in terms of a lack of assertion on safe-sex practices, despite the risks involved (Reddy & Dunne, 2007).

The youth of South Africa are often unable to put many of the educational messages depicted in these various campaigns into practice. Whereas many of these campaigns centre on HIV prevention methods, they fail to take into account the reality of young people's lives (especially females) and the inter-sectionality of race, class, gender, sexuality and HIV and AIDS (Bhana & Epstein, 2007; Bhana & Pattman, 2011; Harrison, *et al.*, 2012; Holland, *et al.*, 1990; Pattman & Bhana, 2006; Pettifor, *et al.*, 2004).

The South African National policy on HIV (1999) states that learners must receive HIV and AIDS education on an "on-going basis," and that Life-skills and HIV/AIDS education should not be presented as isolated learning content, but should be linked within the whole curriculum. UNAIDS (2009) recognized that education has a great impact on reaching out to large numbers of learners. This could assist in reducing vulnerability of young women. Schools have enough opportunity of encouraging the knowledge, understanding, and skills to assist young people in making responsible decisions about their sexual behaviour (Natural

Curriculum UK, 1999). Moreover, educational effects may persist after schooling is completed, because the educational levels of other household members are found to have an important association with risky behaviour (Baxen and Breidlid, 2004). Also, the household members' education and adolescents' risk-avoidance suggest that programmes encouraging risk lessening for adolescents, stressing family and household involvement, may be particularly successful (Harper, 2004; Ellwood, 2002; McDermott, 2012).

The Department of Basic Education Draft Integrated Strategy on HIV and AIDS Report (2010) indicates that there is still a need for involvement of all role players within the education system; there is still a need for development of strategies at the levels of prevention and treatment, in line with the public health approach. Lastly, involvement must be mainstreamed across the education system.

This section highlighted that some young women are not adhering to safe sex, despite the risks of contracting HIV. Notwithstanding sex education and other forms of communication, young women still engage in unprotected sex. It was also highlighted that there is a disjuncture between HIV and AIDS consciousness programmes and an implementation stage, which requires the involvement of all stakeholders in the education system, as well as the integration of sex education into the curriculum.

2.8 Theoretical frameworks

This study draws on two theoretical positions: those of feminism, and social constructivism. These theories were selected carefully, in line with the purpose of this study because firstly, it is based on young, black women; and secondly, it covers the way in which they construct their sexuality in a society where they are often marginalized and silenced when it comes to outward expressions of sexuality.

The feminist theory will explore how young women are observed compared with young men in the sexual world, where there is gender inequality. Bowen and Wyatt (1993) in Sarikakis, Rush, Grubb-Swetnam, and Lane (2008) suggest that there is no precise definition of 'feminism' or 'feminist' because, by nature, these concepts resist definitive statements. Sarikakis, et al., (2008) argues that feminism is concerned with women's lives, and women speak with many voices. Owen (1995) argues that social constructionism may be described as a viewpoint that a great deal of human life endures as it does owing to social and interpersonal influences. Kim (2006) also argues that social constructivism highlights the

significance of culture and framework, in knowing what arises in society, and constructing information based on this understanding.

2.8.1 Feminist theory

The feminist theory is used as a main framework of this study. This is because this study attempts to give a voice to young, black women, who are usually among the marginalised groups when it comes to expressing their views. They are usually the most vulnerable and at risk of HIV transmission (Muhanguzi, 2011). Jewkes and Morrell (2010) go on to state that inequity in sexual relationships assigns women to a heightened risk of HIV infection. The feminist theory not only documents inequalities and women's powerlessness, but also highlights how women are themselves active agents in their own lives, as they fight for equal rights – even when they are not capable of dictating the circumstances surrounding them, or conforming to or even colluding with their inequalities (Sarikakis, *et al.*, 2008).

Feminist theory empowers women as it prepares them for the various realities of women's lives, including how they construct their own sexualities (Villanueva, 1997). Feminist research aims to move away from basing all knowledge on the experiences of Euro-American, class privileged, heterosexual men (Osmond & Thorne, 1993). By using feminist research as an empowering tool, people are able to address feminist interests and guide research in the direction of social change (Osmond & Thorne, 1993).

The study employed a cultural feminist theory as a theory through which the data collected from interviews were analysed. The reason of following cultural feminist theory is based on the premise that the study is on young women, of which the theory highlights that there are fundamental differences between men and women. The theory believes that young women are special and should be highly regarded for being women. The cultural feminist theory was important in the study to allow young women to construct their own sexuality in the perspective of feminist.

2.8.2 Social constructionist theory

The social constructionist theory was used as a second framework for this study. Owen (1995) argues that, although genetically inherited factors and social factors are at work at the same time, social constructionism does not reject the influence of genetic inheritance, but resolves to concentrate on examining the social impacts on communal and individual life. Blackwood (2002) examines social construction theorists such as Foucault (1978), who argue

that sexuality itself is a social construction. This study utilises the social constructionist theory because “it is primarily concerned with explicating the procedures by which people come to define, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live. It tries to pronounce common forms of comprehending as they now happen, as they have existed in prior historical periods, and as they might exist should creative attention be so directed” (Gergen, 1985).

Social constructionist theory was important in my study because young women in my study were expected to construct their sexuality in view of different influences exerted by different forces from their environment. The young women grow up under various influences of factors such as culture, family rules and regulations, peer pressures, and many other factors.

Choosing both cultural feminist theory and Social constructionist theory, was appropriate to investigate how young women construct their sexuality.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed studies conducted by various researchers on the subject of young women’s constructions of their sexuality. Studies were grouped according to broad themes underpinning this research. This chapter also included a section on theoretical frameworks: feminist theory and social constructionist theory. The next chapter focuses on the methodology of the study, including the research problem, ethical considerations, sampling strategies, data-collection methods, and the advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative research methods.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research methods used to generate useful data for this study, which was conducted in order to explore how young women's constructions of sexuality impact on their health and that of others, particularly in the context of HIV and AIDS.

The chapter will firstly discuss qualitative research and the interpretivist paradigm. Thereafter it will describe the research site and research school, referred to as Mzamo High School (a pseudonym). It will then go on to highlight methods of sampling and data collection that were applied. The chapter will explain the limitations and ethical considerations of this study. Finally, this chapter also includes ethical issues, and the kind of data analysis that was used. The limitations of this study and suggested ways of overcoming them are also provided.

3.2 Qualitative research approach

A qualitative research method was used in this study. This method was seen as appropriate for this study because it captured in-depth information which is vital in understanding the phenomenon under study (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Qualitative research has been defined as a type of research involving the interpretation of non-numerical data (Welman & Kruger, 2003). According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), qualitative research provides a more profound description and interpretation of events or actions. This assists the researcher in gaining insight into why and how these events or actions take place, rather than simply displaying a phenomenon. The reason behind choosing a qualitative approach was to allow participants to discuss their experiences according to themes; to capture in-depth information about the participants' views; and lastly, to allow the researcher to gain insight through probing questions, where necessary. The qualitative approach is personal, field-based, and interactive. The data sought from young women required gleaning of personal information through interactive interviews.

The subjective nature of qualitative interviewing allows researchers access to individuals' personal interpretations of experiences and activities that are not apparent from observations and pre-coded interview responses. Participants were able to present their own social reality rather than the researcher's interpreted reality, which is likely to be based on the researcher's own socio-cultural background and personal experiences. Generally, qualitative methods

uncover micro-level individual, group, and community practices and patterns, which are missed or masked by less rigorous methods (Furstenberg & Hughes, 1997).

Another reason for choosing a qualitative approach over a quantitative approach is the following: In the qualitative approach, data collected consists of large volumes of words through the use of open-ended answers, interviews, participant observations, field notes, & reflections (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Lichtman, 2006). On the other hand, quantitative data collected is in numbers and statistics, with exact measurements, using structured & validated data-collection instruments (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Lichtman, 2006).

In this study, interviews and discussions were employed in a relaxed environment. The participants were asked open-ended questions, and were allowed to discuss issues at hand. Participants were provided the opportunity of relating to their experiences with regard to sexuality. The discussions were guided by themes provided by the researcher, who initially chose eleven themes on which interviews and discussions were to be based. However, during pilot interviews it became necessary to combine some of the themes, as participants provided overlapping answers.

The study afforded young black women the opportunity to discuss themes from their own perspective, thus encouraging a feminist viewpoint. This encouraged these women to be free to voice their views in a way that promotes women's emancipation. Based on cultural feminist theory, data was collected and analysed in the perspective of young black women participants, in my study, who seek to be understood when constructing their own sexuality. The Social Constructionist Theory was evident when these young women in the interview venue constructed their sexuality. This theory was used to understand how social factors such as culture, patriarchy, and others which affect young women, plays a role in the construction of their sexuality.

Interpretivist paradigm

This study draws its methods from interpretivists, who trust that truth is not objectively shaped, but is socially constructed (Hussey & Hussey, 1997). The main assumption is that, by putting people in their social contexts and requesting information of them in an open-ended manner, there is greater opportunity of comprehending the opinions they have of their own circumstances and activities (Hussey & Hussey, 1997). The choice of qualitative research allowed respondents to articulate emotions and thoughts in their own words (Hussey &

Hussey, 1997; Myers, 1997). This research paradigm (interpretivism) is related to the exceptionality of a particular situation (interjecting to the fundamental pursuit of contextual Depth) (Myers, 1997).

Research site and research school

The site of the research is the African township of Mayville in the south of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. KwaZulu-Natal, as mentioned, is one of the provinces severely affected by HIV and AIDS (Thurman, Kidman & Taylor, 2011). Mzamo High School (pseudonym), the research school, is situated in Mayville. It is the actual site from which the researcher gathered the sample for this study. The school noticed an increasing incidence of HIV and AIDS among the learners. This is another reason for this school been chosen, besides the reasons detailed in Chapter One.

3.3 Sampling

A purposive sample was chosen for this study, for the reason that it is focused, it lessens dissimilarity, makes simpler analysis, and facilitates group interviewing (Patton, 1990). The reason for selecting a purposive sample was informed by the sensitivity of data to be collected. Secondly, the sample was required to fit within the criterion set for the research. Thirdly, the sample was expected to agree on the divulging of personal information required by the researcher during interviews. The purposive sample in this study refers to the selection of young women between the ages of 16 and 17, as required by this study. The school in Mayville, south of Durban, was chosen out of convenience as the researcher had easy access to participants. The researcher purposely selected 6 young, black women in Grades 10 and 11, aged between 16 and 17 years, as participants for this study. I had previously taught two of the learners; the other four I knew from extracurricular activities in which they had engaged at the school. I initially chose ten young women randomly in this age range to take part in the study, however, four of them declined to participate. Two stated that their parents did not approve of their taking part in the study, while the latter stated that they were uncomfortable and embarrassed with the subject.

The school enrolment comprises around two thousand learners, with class intake averaging around 60 pupils per teacher. Mzamo High School is an African school; hence all participants in this study were young, black women. There were five 16-year-old participants and one which was a seventeen-year-old. Young women aged 16 and 17 were chosen because the

study is part of a larger project investigating the way in which young women aged 16 and 17 years construct their sexuality. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) highlight that purposive sampling saves time by producing enormous amounts of worthwhile data in a brief period of time. The study used a small sample of young women, because the target of the study was to gain a profound understanding of how young women construct their sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS. It was only possible to attain in-depth information by conducting a qualitative study with a small number of young women.

The choice to engage this study on women rather than men is informed by the reason that the researcher is the woman. Therefore the female participants could easily share their sexual experiences with another female. On the other hand, the researcher was in a better position to understand what young women are talking about even when they were using “the girls’ slang” or ways of referring to things.

BIOGRAPHIES OF PARTICIPANTS

LUTHANDO is 16 years of age and in Grade 10. She is from a working class family. Both her parents are working in Durban. Her father works in a sea port organization, while her mother in the textile industry. She is an outspoken young woman, whose parents originate from a rural area in the KwaZulu-Natal midlands, in the small village of Msinga, however, she was born and bred in Mayville. She sometimes visits her grandparents living in uMsinga rural area. She regards Msinga life as more cultural, because many young women are still proud of being virgins. They attend Umkhosi Womhlanga at Nongoma for virginity testing. She does not attend it, however, she has friends who attend virginity testing.

She is caught between two different worlds - the rural, when she visits Msinga during school holidays, and modern life where she stays in Durban. She lives with both parents in the township house. She claims that her parents are very religious, which also influences the way in which she conducts herself.

She considers herself a God-fearing young woman brought up in a family that prays to God every day. Although she fears God, she understands her rights in any relationship. “Fearing God does not mean you should be taken for granted by the people,” she maintained. It is with this background that the answers she provided to questions about sexuality reveal that a woman should abstain from sexual activities. She talks as though she is also active; however, she hesitantly denies this. She seems as if she wants to be considered as a ‘well-behaved girl.’

NONTO is a 16-year-old young, black woman in Grade 10. She is from a working class family. Both her parents are working. Her father is working in transport industry, while her mother works at a hotel. She is currently living in Mayville, Greater Cato Manor area, however, she originally comes from the rural settlement of Hlabisa in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. She comes from a large family of 2 boys, 4 girls, a mother and a father. Nonto likes to visit Hlabisa area during school breaks, as she still regards Hlabisa as her first home; she still has many friends in Hlabisa with whom she grew up with. Her parents are traditionalists, as they follow many Zulu traditions and cultural practices. Her father prefers Zulu traditional food and music at home. The community from which she hails still follows the Zulu tradition of virginity testing, however, her family has not requested her to go for testing as yet.

ZINHLE is a 16-year-old young, black woman studying Grade 10. She is from a working class family. Her mother is working in branded supermarket. Raised by a single parent, she has never seen her father. Her mother, originally from Kwa-Swayimane, moved to the Greater Cato Manor area in search of a job. That is when she met Zinhle's father. Zinhle was therefore born and bred in a Durban township. She claims that she is not sexually active. Although Zinhle was brought up by single parent, she maintains that her mother does not let her do as she pleases. Her mother works as cleaner in one of the big hotels in Durban. Her salary is not enough to provide the 'good life,' as she puts it.

THANDI is 16 years of age, also in Grade 10. She is from a working class family. Both her parents are working (she did not specify the industry). She was born and bred in Lamontville Township. Her parents are 'liberals,' meaning that they parents are not strict. The children are allowed to live their lives the way they wish. She is the youngest child in the family of 5 children, comprising one boy and four girls. She is not sexually active, and does not find it easy to talk about sexual activity as she is shy. Her parents have roots in rural areas (not specified). Only her father works and provides for the family. She is of the opinion that the family barely survives on a daily basis.

ANELIWE is 17 years and is currently in Grade 11. She is from a working class family. Both parents work. Her father drives long-distance trucks and, sometimes is not home for weeks. Her mother works in a hotel. She considers her family to be a normal family using fair disciplinary measures. Her family comprises of four people – she has both parents and a younger brother. The family does almost everything together. Born and bred in Durban, she

grew up in the townships around Durban. She is sexually active and is not shy. She has one boyfriend.

MANDISA is 16 years of age. She is in Grade 10 and is from a working class family. Her mother works in a supermarket. She was raised by a traditional single parent family. Both, she and her mother stayed in a flat in town, however, they have a rural home in Ndwedwe, where grandmother and grandfather lived. During school holidays, she always visits Ndwedwe. She is not shy. The rural ties seem not altering her behaviour as she is a girl who love boys. She has more than one boyfriend. She was born and bred in the townships of Durban. Mandisa is living in the flat community and associates herself with many young women living in this community. Some of these young women rent their own flats with the money they obtain through prostitution. Her mother works in town and comes at night.

3.4 Instrument design

The design of the data-compilation instruments also facilitated consideration of the nature of the issues, and how respondents might react to particular questions (Thomas & O’Kane, 2000; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

The instrument began with pilot interviews, in which three young women who eventually became part of focus group interviews, were asked questions about their sexuality. The questions were not the same, they varied. The purpose of pilot interviews was to test the sensitivity of questions which were to be used in the focus-group interviews. The pilot interview meeting assisted in adjusting the phrasing of questions to the level of 16- and 17-year-old young women.

Two types of interview schedule for focus groups and individual interviews were designed. These interviews were conducted on the Mzamo premises; at the computer laboratory. The reason for choosing focus groups is to achieve in-depth information through interviews and thorough the discussions of themes. The focus-group meetings were the most suitable method for obtaining profound descriptions and interpretation of issues. Apart from focus groups, individual interviews were conducted with four young women. The selection of four young women from participants to further participate in individual interviews was based on the answers provided in the focus group meetings. The reason for conducting individual interviews was to privately question these young women, based on the answers they had provided.

Focus group interview schedule

Focus group discussion questions were designed, comprising mainly open-ended questions. These open-ended questions were designed to suit the objectives of the study, but also with the purpose of making the discussions more interactive (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Thomas & O’Kane, 2000). There were 20 questions in the focus group interview schedule.

Semi-structured individual interview schedule

Interviews were designed, comprising mainly open-ended questions which were asked of the young women participants. The questions were simplified in order to help participants understand what they were being asked. There were 10 questions in this instrument.

3.5 Data collection

In order to obtain relevant research information, interviews were conducted in the computer laboratory, which is a relatively quiet venue at the school. The interviews were conducted after school, but during extra classes. The duration of the interviews was set as two hours; however, sometimes took longer. All interviews went effortlessly, without interruptions. All interviews conducted were recorded.

Being an educator in the school afforded the researcher a certain degree of respect from participants. The atmosphere in the interview room was that of a normal classroom.

The techniques used in the study included focus group discussions, individual interviews, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and pilot interviews. This combination of techniques amounts to methodological triangulation. The use of highlighted techniques is regarded as an effective research method, because the limitations of using either method alone are compensated for by the counter-balancing strengths of the other approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Triangulation not only provides an explanation for the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives, but also enriches one’s understanding, as it permits the emergence of new or deeper dimensions (Jick, 1979). Importantly, these methods allowed the young women “the independence to state their views, dreams, and interpretation of the surrounding world in their own terms” (Thomas & O’Kane, 2000, p. 825). The intention was to obtain rich descriptions that would give an awareness of the issues within this particular bounded reality (Thomas & O’Kane, 2000).

Advantages of using focus group discussions

De Vos (2002) states that focus groups draw on three of the essential strengths that are distributed by all qualitative methods: exploration and discovery, context and depth, and interpretation. Focus groups form a method of sharing and comparing among the participants (De Vos, 2002).

Focus groups should be perceived as a way of locking the difference between people (De Vos, 2002). They are an influential means of uncovering reality and of investigating complex behaviour and motivation (De Vos (2002). Focus groups are particularly useful in trying to understand diversity, since they can assist one in understanding the multiplicity of others' experiences (De Vos, 2002). The approach is also a welcoming and polite one. People feel relatively energised and braced in a group situation where they are amongst others (De Vos, 2002). They are also more likely to communicate experiences and emotions in the company of people whom they recognise to be like themselves in some way (De Vos, 2002).

Limitations of using of focus-group discussions

Litosseliti, 2003) debates that, although focus group interviews present some benefits parallel with other means of assembling data, there are probable limitations of focus group interviews. There is the element of unfairness and exploitation (Litosseliti, 2003). The threat is that of directing participants and urging them to act in response to the researcher's own prejudices (Litosseliti, 2003). Participants may reply according to what they assume the researcher wishes to hear (Litosseliti, 2003). The other restraint is that of 'false' consensus (Litosseliti, 2003). A handful of participants with sound personalities and related views may tower above the dialogue, while others may remain mute (Litosseliti, 2003). Focus group interviews also create the complexity of breakdown and clarification of results owing to the open-ended nature of focus groups, and the impact of many immediate situational factors (Litosseliti, 2003).

These interviews not only facilitated access to information concerning young women's sexuality, but also information on the way in which each young woman experienced her sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS (Murphy, *et al.*, 1998).

The flow of conversation, ease of interviewing, and interviewing style were also essential elements that were covered in preparatory discussions (De Vos, 2002). The researcher conducted role-play prior to conducting focus group discussions and individual interviews.

Firstly, a pilot project was conducted with three young women, testing the sensitivity of the questions and whether these questions would be able to derive the desired data. The researcher then reworked interview questions to generate more useful data, and attempted another set of interviews. Knox and Burkhardt (2009) state that pilot interviews are necessary to prepare both interviewer for the interview and participants for the potentially diverse and intense responses to the interview. Two focus groups were conducted, with six young women and two individual interviews with four young women.

Scheduling and conducting of focus group discussions

Scheduling and conducting of focus group discussions involved agreement on the dates of the interviews. Since the young women were from the same school, it was easy to agree on the dates.

Description of each focus group discussion

Pilot interviews: The three young women selected for pilot interviews were a bit nervous. The purpose of conducting the interviews was explained to them. After explaining that the research would contribute to the reduction of HIV which was a problem to the school, they wished to be part of the solution, in reducing the impact of HIV in the school and within the country. The young women who were part of the pilot project were Nonto, Luthando, and Aneliwe.

The first group discussion: All six young women, including three who were in the pilot project, participated. The young women were comfortable even at the first focus group discussion. The reason was that the three young women from the pilot project had discussed with other three young women the purpose of the interviews. The second reason was that the researcher was a teacher they knew and had interacted with in the school. Two young women in this study were previously taught, and the other four were interacted with during sporting activities, by the researcher. The young women answered all questions with confidence, which was attributed to the familiarity with the researcher. There were those learners who were talkative and those who were bit shy at the beginning. The aim of the first focus group interviews was firstly, to cover 10 questions. These few questions were aimed at obtaining more data; and secondly, to enable them to enjoy these focus group interviews.

The second focus group: The purpose of the second focus group interviews was to cover the remainder of questions. The account obtained from each young woman provided rich

contextual information, and also provided a perspective of the various dynamics in young women's interpretations of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS in a township school of Durban.

Description of individual interviews.

The purpose was to allow those young women who were shy during focus group interviews to acquire greater confidence. Another purpose was to clarify some personal issues discussed during these interviews. The young women who were selected for individual interviews were Luthando, Aneliwe, Mandisa, and Thandi.

First focus group discussion themes	Second focus group discussion themes
Definitions of young women's sexuality	Recap of the themes discussed in the previous focus group discussion
Importance of virginity at marriage	Relationship types concerning young women and men
Young women's protection of their own sexuality	Multiple concurrent romantic relationships
Transactional intergenerational relationships concerning young women and older men	Emotional attachment in romantic relationships
Society's role in determining and defining young women's sexuality	Knowledge and use of contraceptives
Abstinence	Poverty and its impact on young women's sexuality
Casual sex	Young women's use of their sexuality to get what they want (agency)
Dating	

Scheduling and conducting of individual in-depth interviews

Scheduling of interviews was accomplished after the focus group discussions had been completed. Individual interviews were intended to allow young women to be free to discuss sensitive personal issues, which they would otherwise be unable to mention in the focus group interviews.

Of six young women, four were selected to provide individual accounts of their interpretations of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS, in a township school in Durban. Individual interviews were scheduled by the researcher in consultation with the individual participants. The participants were asked the date and time that suited them. The researcher had to make time to meet with each individual participant in conducting the interviews. Each individual interview lasted for approximately 45 minute. These interviews validated the focus group discussions' findings.

3.6 Data Analysis Process

The data collected from discussions, in-depth interviews, and observation was taken into account during the data analysis phase. The analysis was directed through social constructivism and feminist theories. Social constructivism assisted in allowing participants to construct their sexuality. Young women in this study spoke from the female perspective, providing their opinions.

The analysis process was captured in the following steps: (a) developing questions in areas related to the topic, (b) conducting interviews (c) audiotaping interviews, (d) listening to audiotaped interviews in order to develop transcripts verbatim, (e) read and compare transcript with audiotaped voices, (f) read transcript six times, four readings to check correctness of interpreting from the isiZulu language into English. Some of the participants used both isiZulu and English in their answers. Two readings were used to develop themes. Lastly data was organized into themes.

Data was clarified using a thematic analysis approach with the help of the qualitative data clarification software programme, NVIVO 9. Coding and relating of concepts was key to this process. All transcripts were put into NVIVO 9, and were read one by one to formulate themes. The focus was put on similarities, and on deviant and rare cases found within themes on all transcripts. This encompassed the recognition of all data linked to the classified

patterns, merging and creating a catalogue of interconnected patterns into sub-themes to a theoretical construction of the social context (Leininger, 1985).

The themes that developed from the participants' responses were melded together to make an all-inclusive picture of their collective experience (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Thematic analysis was therefore a crucial tool in analysing and understanding all information that surfaced from the different data tools used to gather inferences from the findings. Although qualitative research methods have great advantages in many respects, they also have the disadvantage of being time consuming in both, data collection and analysis. Also, a potential limitation of conducting qualitative interviews is that some data may be lost in the process of translation. However, the loss of important data was avoided by recording all the interviews and then carefully transcribing them after each session.

Data was analysed through the lenses of feminist theory. Young women in the study were given a platform to express themselves. Although young women expressed inequalities and women' powerlessness, they, at same time showed that women can be agents of their own lives by fighting for their rights.

3.7 Limitations of this research

The limitation of this research was that it included some women who had not yet become sexually active, therefore could not offer information which could enhance the investigation.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought ethical clearance for conducting the research from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Ethics Committee. According to Scheyvens and Storey (2003: 142) informed consent is essential, because it ensures people's freedom not to participate in the research if they are not comfortable with it. Special attention was given to preparing young women for participation, protecting and respecting their rights, and ensuring referral to appropriate services when necessary (Scheyvens & Storey, 2003). The participants were notified about a variety of issues relating to the study, namely, the objective of the investigation; the manner in which participants were nominated; the identity of the researcher; and the manner in which the information obtained would be made available to them. First-hand information collected from the participants was not revealed to anyone in a way which would allow for the identification of any participant.

The pseudonyms were used for both participants and the school site, in order to protect the identity of the young women who participated in my study.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter firstly, discussed qualitative research and interpretivism. Thereafter, it described the research site and research school, referred to as Mzamo High School (pseudonym). It then highlighted methods of sampling and data collection that were used. Finally, it explained limitations and ethical considerations of this research. The next chapter will analyse the data collected from six young women.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

The rationale behind this investigation was to discover the various ways in which young, black women aged 16-17, construct their sexualities in the context of HIV and AIDS. A multi-faceted approach was adopted in order to deal with wide-ranging human perspectives, regarding sexuality among young women in the townships. According to Kakavoulis (2001), acquiring gendered sexuality is a difficult process, which is rooted in religious and cultural norms, with the family offering being the most instrumental context. The theories applied in this study include interpretivism, social constructivism, and feminism. The theories of interpretivism and social constructivism are imperative in understanding how young women in this study understand their world with regards to the concept of sexuality. The interpretive theory assumes that the social world is not similar to the natural world, and therefore can be interpreted contrarily. Young and Colin (2004), state that constructivism suggests that each individual rationally composes the world of experience through cognitive processes; while social constructionism has a social, rather than an individual focus. The feminist theory, which proposes that women are free just as men are in determining their lives, was also used. Hence, this theory will show how young women interpret inequality that exists between men and women with regards to sexuality.

Primary data was collected cautiously, in order to develop six themes (which are discussed in this chapter). Owing to ethical reasons, pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the participants of this study. The pseudonyms used in this chapter are: Mandisa, Luthando, Zinhle, Thandi, Nonto, and Aneliwe.

The questions designed for focus group and individual interviews, created the following themes:

- Young women, love and dating;
- Culture, sexuality and virginity;
- Sex, money and peer pressure;
- Contraceptives and unprotected sex;
- Young women, cheating and casual sex; and

- Sex and alcohol.

4.2 Young women, love and dating

Findings reveal that certain young women in this study consider age important when choosing a partner. Responses from participants suggest that partners of similar age groups are considered by young women as suitable for long-term plans. The women also felt that older partners are too controlling, and interfere with younger women's education. Jewkes and Morrell (2012), state that some women feel that mature men are not necessarily considered desirable as partners because they beat their women, demand sex, and are also domineering. Leclerc-Madlala (2003), on the other hand, argues that some young women regularly manipulate their attractiveness in an endeavour to entice older men, who can support them with expensive commodities.

Researcher: *What is your opinion about dating? Having a boyfriend or girlfriend?*

Luthando: *Mina, I think it's about having fun, enjoying each other's company, I think dating and having a boyfriend is cool. Nothing serious, but you have to do this with young men of your own age because you have to know your plans for the future. If you have a boyfriend who is older than you, you can never plan when to study or when to play; all they want to do is spend time with you when they can and do not take into consideration that you are a pupil. So dating is not bad but what is bad is dating someone older than you or dating for the purpose of getting money and gifts.*

Aneliwe: *I think when it comes to dating it depends on the girl or boy, because at the end of the day, one does not gain anything from these relationships. For example your boyfriend will not help you to reach your goals.*

Mandisa: *Mina, I don't think it is useless, because there are people who really care for each other in their relationships, "abantu abathandanayo ngempela, kuhlange ne future, their love is not only based on only love..... "ngiyakuthanda nje kuphela," some relationships are also based on helping and pushing each other towards achieving in education. The quality of love is just not the same. It depends on the people involved; how they see things and each other.*

Mandisa: *I say, "FUN", is about discussing things and sharing things with your boyfriend. If there is something that I would like him to help me with, and also if there is something that he needs assistance with.*

Zinhle: *In my opinion, I think is about those butterflies you get when you see him or when he hugs you...*

Aneliwe: *the hugs are just not isolated, it comes with warmth, kisses and love and some vibration and nice feeling in the body. It's just exciting.*

Luthando mentions four factors which may have influenced her decision to date men. Luthando loves having fun; enjoying the company of another; having a boyfriend of one's own age; having future plans with one's boyfriend. She is of the opinion that providing her boyfriend with love and commitment can 'make her his queen.'

Young women's responses revealed that they understood dating as a preparation for entering into long-term relationships. They felt that dating an older person for the purpose of obtaining money and gifts was not part of "true" dating. These women felt that dating an older person interfered with studying and their plans for the future. Luthando wanted to use dating as a way of understanding her 'future' husband; she wanted to establish a bond with her future husband; she wanted to grow together with her boyfriend who should be of a similar age, valuing education as the foundation for a better future.

Aneliwe, on the other hand, believes that dating assists one in achieving goals, but this is uniquely dependent, on both boy and girl. She feels that a boyfriend does not assist in attaining education. Mandisa, however, feels that dating is not pointless, because partners are more likely to assist each other towards achieving educational goals. She mentioned the existence of a quality of love that impels people to assist each other in achieving their goals. She describes a relationship with a boyfriend in which they had assisted each other with education, as much as they had had fun. Zinhle and Aneliwe describe having fun with a boyfriend as hugs, kisses, and warm feelings of love.

Researcher: *What does it mean to be a queen to your boyfriend?*

Mandisa: *Mam, it means that he feels me in his heart, even maybe if he has other girlfriends but I am the queen of his heart. I love him too.*

Mandisa's answer depicts that she can hold onto a man who loves her, regardless of whether that a man has other or alternate relationships. Mandisa believes that her boyfriend should show that he loves her more than other young women. This could provide another interpretation or view of sexuality - that Mandisa wants dominance, encourages her boyfriend

to show her that, among other girlfriends, she is superior. Mandisa's attitude illustrates that young women are looking for love, while young men are looking for sexual confrontations. Although she loves her boyfriend for being the 'queen of his heart,' her boyfriend is allowed to enter into relationships that are 'inferior' to their relationship. Wood, Maepa, Jewkes (1998) discuss how the nurses in their study perceive young women wanting to please young men they love, while the young men are only interested in having sex with many young women.

Aneliwe agreed with Mandisa that a girlfriend and a boyfriend should have a healthy relationship. It appeared that these young women felt that love should not be confused with the desire for money and expensive gifts. Aneliwe seems to regard sexual relationships as the enjoyment a young woman deserves, which is not conditioned by materialistic demands. Maroon (2009) argues that both young men and young women alike, enjoy sex.

In analysing the answers that were elicited by the question:

What does it mean to be a queen to your boyfriend?

One may deduce the following:

The young women in the study interpreted 'queen' as 'representative of complete love that filled the hearts of their boyfriends.' The word 'queen' for a boyfriend seemed to be associated by the young women as intimate love with their boyfriends. The word intimacy is defined by Sternberg (1986) as feelings of closeness, connectedness, and attachment in loving relationships, and warmth in a loving relationship. This definition concurs with the Free Online Dictionary (2012) as 'close and warm friendship'. Dictionary.Com (2012) defined intimate love as:

"A devoted, familiar, and generally affectionate or loving personal relationship with another person."

Hence, the concept of 'queen' holistically refers to love, despite gifts or money not being exchanged for sex.

Young women in the study seemed to respond to the question in a similar way, but with minor variances. Aneliwe spoke of a relationship that was built on 'oneness.' Aneliwe already had a steady boyfriend that she was prepared to spend her life with. Mandisa, on the other hand, answered the question as someone still searching for a partner.

Bhana and & Pattman (2011) state that women at the lowest end of South Africa's social hierarchy uphold masculinity staged around good looks, hairstyles, white teeth and branded designer clothing. The young women in this study also adhered to this notion of looking attractive, despite being indigent, and coming from financially struggling, working-class families. They all perceived good looks as important for any young woman, however, for different reasons. Some of the young women in this study felt that a young woman should look attractive to young men, while others thought that a young woman should look attractive in her own eyes. The question sought to determine whether the best-looking young women behaved differently from those young women who were perceived as not good-looking.

Researcher: *Does the way you look influence your behaviour?*

Thandi: *It doesn't, my behaviour is not influenced by the way I look. But I know of young women who do that. They wear short skirts and change the way they walk when they see guys.*

Thandi's response shows that her beauty does not influence the way she behaves sexually. Thandi did not associate beauty as something that is appreciated by the opposite sex. Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe and Thomson (1998) argue that young men are aware of their masculinity, which they use sexually, while young women are silent about their femininity.

Zinhle's response emphasised that young women should look good, but not for the purposes of having sex with young men. Her response indicated that looking attractive was within the nature of young women. The young women in the study believed that beauty was related to sexuality. Luthando agrees with Zinhle, in that it is in the nature of young women to focus on their beauty, but added, that they ensure that they look beautiful so that they would attract young men. Wood and Jewkes (1998) state that some young women enter into competition with other young women to prove beauty through sexual desirability. The responses of both Zinhle and Luthando are similar in that young women desire beauty. The difference lies only within 'for whom' beautifying should be attempted, or rather, the rationale behind looking beautiful. Perhaps Zinhle has no current desire to be sexually active, while Luthando does display a desire to be sexual active.

Zinhle: *I think that when people speak about your sexuality they mean the type of clothes you wear, the makeup you put on and just acting like a girl nje. A girl's sexuality is different from that of a boy. Young women are thought to be gentle while young men are rough by nature. It*

does not necessarily have to do about having sex with a boy but you just treat yourself as a beautiful woman. I guess that is what people mean when they speak of sexuality.

Zinhle contrasts sexuality of young women to that of young men. She thinks that young women should be 'gentle, whereas most young men are rough in nature'. Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe, and Thomson (1998) argue that young men have significant ability that is not available to young women. This considerable power is viewed by Zinhle as roughness of young men which has become their nature. The roughness of young men is encouraged by the various situations in which young men find themselves in life. Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, Dunkle (2011) argue that 'roughness' of young men starts from childhood when indigent youngsters lack caregivers, and become neglected in the process.

Luthando: *I agree with Zinhle because it is in young womens' nature to make themselves look beautiful and attractive so that guys will love them and other young women will admire them. If you do not take care of yourself as a girl and don't look beautiful, no guy will approach you and it will make you feel unwanted. Young women have to look beautiful for guys. I also think it's about the types of relationship you get involved and also whether you are virgin or not. Like all the things about sex education and many things.*

The young women in the study stated two things with regard to young women's beauty. Firstly, young women should always look attractive, because it is in their nature to do so. Secondly, young women should look attractive in order to be loved by young men and to be admired by other young women. Looking beautiful appears to place a degree of pressure on young women to be acceptable in the society in which they live. Durham (1999) argues that media representation of femininity is restrictive, unrealistic, and focused on physical beauty. Luthando feels that there is pressure on young women to look beautiful, in order to be approached by young men, and admired in general. The young women in the study may be encouraged by media which portrays femininity as being beautiful. Dittmar, Halliwell, Ive (2006) argue that beautiful dolls such Barbie are inspirational to young women to look beautiful. De Casanova (2004) argues that 'gorgeousness' is understood as being alluring or having above average appearance. This has significant social and economic implications for women. Luthando thinks that looking beautiful is in the nature of young women. Her statement implies that a young woman's appearance is an imperative factor in her social and economical status. De Casanova (2004) explains that conventional beauty is the route to

power for young women to be able to marry a man with high socio-economic status, or in her ability for being hired for employment, or being promoted in the workplace.

It appears as though a number of the young women in this study regarded dating as a means of finding life-long partners. They regard dating as 'proper dating' if they and their partners were of a similar age. They regarded the similar-age relationships as stable. An age gap could create a problem should an older partner become dominant in the relationship. The young women in this study mentioned planning for the future, encouraging each other as partners to finish education, and growing together, as common activities, if the partners are of a similar age. They believe that older partners are controlling, disruptive to their schoolwork, and demand sexual favours. Deduced from the focus-group discussion with regard to the age gap, it appeared that this gap creates a communication chasm between unequal partners. Jokes, Levin, Penn-Kekana (2002) argue that the age difference in couples, where a man is five years older than a partner, will have communication implications in matters such as HIV. Also deduced from the focus-group discussion is the dominance of older men in the relationship, mainly when it comes to sex. Leclerc-Madlala (2008) states that there is a perception that in an era of economic crisis, where young women have limited control in negotiating safe sex.

Young women who have no steady relationships, like Luthando and Mandisa, think dating is about having fun and enjoyment. Aneliwe, on the other hand, has a steady relationship with her boyfriend, and has constructed dating as a planning time for the future.

Researcher: *Tell me, where does it all go wrong then? Sometimes one can just tell that something has gone wrong somewhere. Why then do we still see some young women unhappy and always grumpy?*

Zinhle: *Hey girl, boys are complicated one minute we are talking and the other minute he does not like to talk to me. Ngivele ngingazi sengenzi (I don't locate my wrongdoing).... but whatever I did he must not like it.*

Luthando: *Maybe he wanted to have sex with you and you said no... Angithi Zinhle?(Am I right Zinhle?) You can say... Isn't ma'am said this will stay inside the room. You can tell us. We know that's what all guys want and if they do not get it they will ignore you and move on to the next girl.*

Aneliwe: But hey you can never understand guys uyazi, at one end if you don't sleep with them and tell them that you want to wait until you are married they will leave you and find some other girls to sleep with. If you also have sex with them then after they get what they want they will leave you for other girls again. You do not know what to think when it comes to what guys really want. I guess they are just confused.

Nonto: I think that all men are selfish, the reason that guy is not talking to Zinhle is that he did not get what he wanted from her and wants her to feel bad and then when he has sex with her he will hurt her again. The fact that he is not talking to her means he is not a good guy. If he was a good guy then he would have respected whatever Zinhle told him and still be her boyfriend.

Zinhle, Luthando, and Aneliwe reveal that while young women require love from boyfriends, boys on the other hand only desire sex (Wood, Maepa, Jewkes, 1998). Boys are reluctant to wait until marriage to engage in sexual relationships.

4.3 Culture, sexuality and virginity

Virginity is the main determinant of the price paid for a bride on her wedding day; however the same is not said for the groom. George (2008) states that the potential bride's virginity is a factor in negotiating the amount of 'ilobolo' with her future in-laws. Wickstrom (2010) explains that the association between men and women in a sexual relationship is asymmetric, because loss of virginity and pregnancy is visible only to women, not to young men, and that loss of virginity is associated with their social identity and status in a way that is never the case for a man. The young women in this study were asked questions with regards to this asymmetric treatment of young men and young women when it comes to culture on virginity.

As part of focus group interviews, young women discussed the issue of culture and how it related to their constructions of sexuality. The issues that surfaced during the discussion were that familial background, culture, and discipline, are important factors in interpreting sexuality. The types of family, culture, and where a young woman comes from, often determine the way in which young women in this study behave with regards to sex, i.e. their perceptions of sex.

Thandi: Most people grow up in different backgrounds. Others are raised by real matured and dignified women, ómama abaqotho', whilst others are raised by single women that are still very young. It all depends on the environment from which we grow up, for example in

Durban, young women go overboard competing for the attention of young men, and they wear miniskirts izigqebhe'. In rural areas on the other hand, young women have pride in maintaining their virginity.

In this study, the importance of family upbringing was imperative in the definition of sexuality. The young women agreed that families that enforced or imposed strict discipline on their children or young women positively impacted on the young woman's upbringing. Young women in the study, who come from families where discipline is enforced, always stressed during the interviews that 'good behaviour of the young women is the result of good upbringing by family, and good culture.' In addition, they expressed their belief that a single parent struggled to raise a child more than did a two-parent family.

Virginity and marriage are interlinked in the Zulu cultural practice. This is manifested by the price paid for marrying a woman that is a virgin. It was from this background that the first question to participants was posed: their view of the importance of being a virgin on their wedding day. Nonto's response stressed that the importance of virginity is still held high when interpreting sexuality in the context of marriage. She even used strong words such as 'dirt' if a young woman is not a virgin on the day of the wedding. In addition, she associated virginity to the upbringing of a young woman. The young women from rural areas, where virginity testing is practised, are more highly regarded than are young women from townships. Bhana and Pattman (2011) established that the women in townships are viewed in terms of fewer constraints of supervision, compared to rural young women. They further determine that young men prefer young women from rural areas for marriage, since urban young women are 'loose' in character (Bhana and Pattman 2011). Lerclerc-Madlala (2008) states that young urban township women are open to signifiers of modern life in various media. This exposure puts the urban women in a position to construct sexuality differently from rural women. 'Young South African women deal with substantial limits around sexuality with an emphasis on encouraging modest behaviour, protecting virginity and avoiding sexual relations, until involved in a trusting relationship or marriage, as many religious organisations would argue' (Bhana & Pattman, 2011).

Researcher: *Do you think it is important to be a virgin on your wedding day?*

Nonto: *I also say, it is important. If a man meets a woman, the truth is very few women are still virgins out there. Even when he pays 'ILOBOLO' for her he must be proud of her. He*

must pay extra because the girl is not dirty just like others. At her household as well, they become proud of her and they see that they have raised her well.

The importance of being a virgin on the wedding day was constructed by most young women in a group interview as showing strong character and resilience to temptations. Luthando even used words such as ‘preserve yourself,’ and ‘a husband will value’ (the wife who is still a virgin on wedding day). The response of the young women revealed that women are merely seen as objects or trophies, which husbands will treasure. Bhana & Pattman (2011) discovered that young men want virgins as wives, and believe that they believe primarily come from ‘farms,’ and not the city.

Luthando: *Yes it is, because it is important to show that you have preserved yourself for a long time and your husband to be will virtue and see how important you are. If a woman is not a virgin her husband will not trust her. He will cheat on her because he knows that she has been out there ‘kade ayebona’, so it is important that a woman gets married only when she is still a virgin.*

Luthando and other young women in the study were moulded and nurtured into believing that young women should ‘preserve themselves’ for their wedding day. The African tradition and culture requires that young women, rather than young men should preserve their virginity. Wickstrom (2010) argues that the pressure is placed on young women because the loss of virginity of young women can be detected. It seems that this belief has been inculcated into the minds of young women and men. It appears as though the emphasis and pressure is placed on women rather than men to remain virgins until marriage. George (2007) argues that virginity testing was originally intended to ensure the purity of young brides who were compelled to prove their chastity, as expected by the groom and the in-laws.

Luthando’s statement that a husband trusts a woman, who is virgin on her wedding day, perhaps stems from a groom paying ilobola for a bride who is still a virgin.

Mahanguzi (2011) states that the young men in particular are inspired to engage in behaviour which asserts their masculinity, independence, assertiveness, activity, and ambition. This also permeates through their construction of sexual meanings, whereby young men coordinate sexuality around the fulfilment of their own needs, and see themselves as influencing sexual relationships.

Luthando: *I said it is important to get married whilst you are still a virgin. This will help gain the trust from your husband. Marriage will never work if there is no trust. If your husband sees that you were not a virgin when he married you, he will not trust you. He will think you will cheat on him, double crossing game. Virginity helps a lot in gaining the trust of your husband.*

When one scrutinizes Luthando's response and compares it with other previous responses, one may find certain contradictions. It remains unclear whether Luthando is a virgin because she does not make this explicit; however it appears as though she is, because she strongly believes that a young woman should remain a virgin until marriage. She will perhaps abstain, but this too remains unclear. In this way, her beliefs about trust, sex and marriage also have the potential to prevent her from engaging in sexually risky behaviour or engaging in sex before marriage, thus protecting her against HIV and STIs. Luthando and Nonto seemed to agree that women should be virgins on their wedding day; Mudaly (2012) explains that young women believe that they should 'preserve themselves.' Kaufman and Stavrou (2002) state that sex before marriage is regarded as culturally unacceptable. Mandisa, on the other hand, showed agency, and spoke her mind. Mandisa demonstrated independence and high self-esteem when she pointed out that men must also be subjected to virginity scrutiny. There is asymmetric treatment of young men and young women when it comes to losing virginity (Wickstrom, 2010).

Mandisa: *No, I do not agree. If he loves you, he will be tolerant Úzokubekezelela'. Virginity only helps a woman to gain dignity. If a man is not a virgin, nobody cares, why must it be a big deal if a woman is not? So I do not agree that a man will cheat and not trust you if you are not a virgin as he marries you.*

Luthando: *You know I have heard some girls say that it is not important to be a virgin when one gets married because you need to know what you are getting yourself into before you say 'I do'. They say that you need to sleep with the guy you are going to get married to before your wedding so that you will know if you enjoy sex with him then you will marry him but if you don't enjoy sex with him then you will look for someone who makes you happy. But I think that as a young woman I would have to value myself because what if I am not happy with the all the men then it means you will continue to sleep around and not get married.*

***Mandisa:** It's a free world, I am young and have my free life when it comes to sex, I make my own decisions. But my parents want to take decisions for me. I don't see any problems with sex before marriage.*

Mandisa challenges the norms and standards set by culture on expecting virginity only from young women, while young men are not measured by same expectations. In doing so, she resists fixed, hegemonic, gender-held expectations (Mudaly, 2012). Connell (2012) discusses such a stand against set cultural and traditional expectations.

However, the young women in the study seemed to be interested only in that young women should be virgins on the wedding days. The same standard is not set for young men. Virginity testing is still encouraged among young women however, less is done for the young men. Muhangazi (2011) quoted Bartky on various levels of status expressed in the masculine and the feminine, where a woman's body is given inferior status, while a man is given superior status. Additionally, while young women are expected to be virgins on the wedding day, young men feel that they are not expected to be virgins until marriage.

***Nonto:** It is difficult to trust a man you are not married to. Be in a relationship with a man and don't sleep with him until you have a white wedding.*

Perhaps Nonto thinks that a man will only be trusted when he has committed to marriage. A man who is not committed is still 'moving around' with young women. The study by Wood, Maepa, Jewkes (1998) reveals that young men are notorious for seeking sex. Therefore, Nonto seems to trust only a man who commits himself to marriage.

4.4 Sex, money and peer pressure

It was apparent during the discussion that money can precede love in sexual relationships. Some young women indicated that they enter into sexual relationships in order to obtain money. They sleep with men even when there is no love. Aneliwe even used the word *ukuqola* (con) to depict the lack of love when young women engage in sex with older men who are generous with their money.

Leclerc-Madlala (2003) discovered that many women in the urban township communities exchange sex for financial or lifestyle rewards. It is considered an important part of their orientation towards sexual encounters, and often has little to do with being indigent.

During the group discussions, it emerged that young women viewed their sexuality as a means of being loved. However, the interviews showed that love or sexuality may be used by the young women in achieving more goals than merely, the financial.

Hoffman, *et al.* (2006) confirms this by emphasising that poverty is considered a driver in the spread of HIV in South Africa. The young women in this study were in agreement when asked about sexuality as a means of making money. Aneliwe believes that young women use their bodies to ‘take money’ from very generous men.

Researcher: *Do sexual relationships assist young women in getting or buying goods that they need or want?*

Aneliwe: *Yes it does. We call it “ukuqola”; if you know that a guy is very generous with his money yet you don’t love him, you still continue to take his money and demand a lot of this from him. In that case you are using what God gave you to gain what you want.*

According to Luthando, the power lies with a girl about what she wants from a relationship. A young woman can choose to enter into an honest relationship or just for using her ‘body to get money’.

Luthando: *It depends on what you want when you enter into a relationship. If from the start you want money from the relationship, there you always strive to use your body to get money.*

Mandisa: *mam, If I don’t love the young man I don’t give him, but if he has money. I use him. Yes, sometimes I even sleep with him, but only if he is generous enough with his money and buy me nice things. Uma eyidedela ngempela imali’ (if the boy is not stingy).*

Zinhle: *I agree with Mandi, it’s not everyone in the community or society. However, there are a few of those individuals that influence young people to do bad things. These are men who do not want to grow up and still want to have sex with young women. They influence and entice young women to have sex with them by buying them luxury gifts. Maám if I tell you that there are some young women in these classrooms who have more expensive cell phones than you will be shocked, but they do not get these phones at home. It is these sugar daddies who buy them phones in exchange for sex.*

The reply by Aneliwe unveils that young women are prepared to sell their bodies in order to obtain money. All the young women in the group interviews reiterate that young women can enter into a relationship with no love, only in pursuit of money. Luthando even used the

words ‘you always strive to use your body to get money.’ In scrutinising the words of Luthando, one could tell that some young women use their bodies as commodities that can be sold in order to obtain money.

Jewkes, Dunker, Nduna, and Shai (2012) state that in transactional sex, a wide range of goods or services, such as transport or accommodation, may be received in exchange for money. Kaufman and Stavrou (2002) argue that a ‘gift’ of any kind to a partner is associated with sexual trade entitling one partner to physical and sexual rights to the other’s body.

The group interviews also revealed that young women can sell their bodies simply to obtain gifts. In Zinhle’s words, it appeared that young women can sell their body for luxurious gifts.

The interviews showed that Mandisa was brave enough to talk about using her body in order to achieve financial freedom. Morrell, *et al.* (2012) state that economically motivated relationships and transactional sex have been more common in the USA than in Southern Africa, owing to the divergent views crafted by cultural practices, African traditions, and Christian-influenced morality. The love of money; and peer pressure exerted by their friends who are financially well-off, was discussed by these young women. Some of these women use their looks in order to attract men for financial gains. A close scrutiny of why the young women sell their bodies for gifts and money revealed that young women suffer from inequality posed by gender.

These women desire gifts and money which can be provided by rich men. Mandisa openly admitted that she used her body to obtain money from men. Jewkes, Dunker, Nduna, and Shai (2012) state that women who engage in sex motivated by economic gain, whether in prostitution or in more informal transactional sex, are very vulnerable to sexually-transmitted infections, including HIV.

The gender inequality sees men using money to entice young women. Jewkes and Morrell (2011) state that even mothers contribute to gender inequality, when they give more money to their sons (i.e. pocket money to use on their girlfriends), while their daughters are given far less.

Zinhle is concerned about older men who entice young women with gifts and money in exchange for sex. She thinks that these men don’t want to grow up. Jewkes, Dunker, Nduna, Shai (2012) state that transactional relationships are stereotypically marked by substantial age differences between partners who are engaged in such relationships. These older men are

sometimes referred to as sugar daddies. Young women are vulnerable to so-called 'sugar daddies' who promised them money in exchange for sex. Campbell (2003) explains that 'sugar daddies' exchange money for unprotected sex from young women. Leclerc-Madlala (2003) argues that young women exploit their desirability in an effort to attract men who can supply them with expensive commodities.

Wamoyi, *et al.* (2011), however, state that, although young women see taking advantage of the female body in positive terms, they are also mindful of the health risks. Wamoyi, *et al.* (2011) argue further that, in order to fulfil their material needs, young women from poor families engage in casual sexual activity with many partners concurrently, or come to an agreement to have sex without a condom. Leclerc-Madlala (2003), however, found that in some cases transactional sex was not associated with being promiscuous, because in some situations young women have had some access to basic needs. Nevertheless, they are involved in sexual relationships characterised by a transactional element.

The young women in the study come from impecunious, working-class backgrounds. Mandisa comes from a single-parent family. She resides with her mother in a flat. Her behaviour is influenced by the surroundings in which she lives. The friends she associates with in the flat determine how she chooses her school friends. Aneliwe considers her family to be a normal family, applying normal discipline to the children. She grew up in the townships around Durban. Both parents are working, making the financial situation not too 'dismal' as she put it. Thandi also comes from a family with both parents working. The parents provide almost all of her needs for survival. Zinhle comes from a single-parent family; however, her mother is 'well-salaried,' making her well-off, financially. Nonto comes from a large family which makes life harder, as the lives of other young women such as Zinhle. Luthando, who also comes from a family with both parents. She goes to church in support of the family beliefs. The family can barely provide for her wants and needs. These brief descriptions of participants' backgrounds and family lives indicate that some of them are economically deprived.

Nonto, although not wealthy, is not sexually active; she does not sell her body in order to sustain herself financially. Her behaviour is contrary to Mandisa's sexual behaviour. Mandisa engages in multiple sexual relationships in order to sustain herself financially, while Aneliwe is in a stable relationship with her boyfriend. She does not engage in sex for money or gifts. Mandisa, on the other hand, is influenced by the various types of behaviour she observes in

her surroundings (i.e. her place of residence). She also associates herself with young women who chase rich men for money. Mandisa engages in sexual relationships in order to comply with the standards set by the environment in which she is growing up. She exposes herself to risks of contracting sexually-transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancy.

During the focus-group interviews, Mandisa made the following statement, which is evidence of the impact on her of the sexual behaviour to which she subscribes:

Mandisa: Behaviour like that....I think it shows your moral values are low. But most young women in this community do it all the time when they want material gains. But then, we come from different families. So I am not judging anyone here. If you feel that selling sex or úkuphana' (being generous with your private parts) is your thing, you must go ahead and do it.

Her statement indicates that she knows that her behaviour may be regarded as of low value or low in morals, however, the community and family background may place pressure on a young woman to engage in sexual relationships in order to achieve material gains. Mandisa wants to be at the level set by her friends. Living in the flats places her in a situation of having to select her friends. The friends she selects are determined by the situation in which she finds herself. She wishes to emulate certain friends.

Her friends possess items that she finds desirable. She wishes to achieve the standards set by her peers. Mandisa has learnt that many rich boyfriends can provide for her wants. She wishes to engage in relationships which can provide money and expensive goods such as cellphones. Wamoyi, *et al.*, (2011) state that many research papers have attributed young women's practise of transactional sex to poverty. Jewkes, Dunker, Nduna, and Shail (2012) describe transactional sex as occurring where a woman engages in a sexual relationship motivated by a young man providing her with a range of rewards or goods. Mandisa says that a deprived background encouraged her to do 'a lot of things' to obtain what she wants. She feels that the standards set by her friends are the reason for her engaging in sexual relationships.

Maroon (2009) argues that further intentions of involving in transactional sex consist in acquiring funds to cover "education-related expenses and gain connections in social networks" as well as "peer pressure to attain luxury items, such as expensive clothing, jewellery, fashionable hairstyles, accessories, and makeup."

Researcher: *Does poverty at home - lack of money - drive you or any other young woman that you might know of to engage into sexual activities?*

Mandisa: *I agree, most of the time when poor at home, young women tend to do a lot of things to get what they want. If your friend has a posh Blackberry phone and you do not have, you really feel bad. Sometimes an older man wants you to be his girlfriend, because you want these material gains, you do not even hesitate to say yes and you become his girlfriend. Also when your parents can't afford to buy you nice clothes and you have friends who dress nicely you will be forced to find a boyfriend who can buy you nice things also so that you can fit in with your friends. It usually depends with the type of friends you play with. If you play with friends who do not want to show off and who are humble you are not influenced to find a man to have sex with for material gain.*

Thandi: *Like what the others were saying these young women want money so that they can come to school and show off. Some also want expensive clothes to wear during the weekends and holidays and their parents cannot afford so they have to find older men to buy them but you know men only want one thing from a woman...If you can't sleep with them then they will not buy you anything or not give you money. But if you sleep with them then they will give you money. But they will only give you money if they still want to sleep with you. When they find someone else they will leave you and that's done for you. You will have to find another rich guy to look after you otherwise people at school will start laughing at you saying that you are now back to poverty. That's why these girls continue to find older men to have sex with.*

Wood, Maforah, Jewkes (1998) argue that the peer environment in which adolescents 'are placed,' seemed to reinforce the pressure to engage sexually. They further state that adolescents engage in sexual activities in order to belong to the group, otherwise they may be isolated. Mandisa's environment forces her to behave just like the peers she lives with. However, Mandisa's actions are extremely risky; she is vulnerable to sexually-transmitted infections.

Mandisa's words highlight that, if financially poorer families or working-class families cannot provide desired goods, some young women participate in sexual relationships with grown-up and young men, so that they can provide for their families or achieve economic survival. This study also revealed that peer pressure and the need to 'fit in' or belong, were the contributing factors to the sexually risky behaviour of some young women. Remes, *et al.*,

(2010) citing (Wamoyi, *et al.*, 2009; Wight, *et al.*, 2006) argued that young women have narrow options, other than participating in sexual partnerships to acquire material goods and to heighten esteem among peers.

Luthando: *I have a friend; at her house they are very poor. Recently she met up with this old man whose wife is in the Eastern Cape Province. This man buys her absolutely everything and now she feels that she has to thank him by sleeping with him, she fears that if she does not sleep with him he might leave her. She was asking us as her friends as to what to do. Some of our friends she has to sleep with him of course others said it's not a right thing to do. So I say poverty does contribute to young women having sexual relations.*

Thandi: *I also agree, there is a neighbour of mine that is also doing that. She is involving herself with rich people so that she will get material gains. She is now in grade 12, her family is very poor. She is the victim of peer pressure. She wants to fit in the circle of her friends that are from rich families.*

Some of the participants who were not sexually active, such as Nonto and Thandi disapproved of young women who exchanged sex for money. Mandisa blamed it all on poverty and the inability of cash-strapped families to provide expensive 'goodies' such as BlackBerrys to their daughters. Her construction of 'sex for money' is personal, as she is tangled by the net of engaging in transactional sex in order to conform to the standards of her friends.

Researcher: *What is the role played by the society in all this? Does it put pressure on young women to have sexual relationships with older men?*

Thandi: *No, it is not society, it all depends on you. If your parents tell you how to behave and you still go ahead and choose otherwise, that is absolutely up to you, it's your decision. Parents can try everything but if you still want to sleep with older men for the sake of money then it's up to you. Some girls come from very Christian families here but you do not even think that when you see what they do at school and the type of cars that come to pick them up. It is up to an individual to decide on how they want to look after themselves and not up to society. People choose to be who they are.*

Thandi's answer shows that young women have choice and influence in deciding what they wish to do with their bodies. Society, culture, and religious influence may sometimes not

influence the young women's power to choose. Pittard and Robertson (2008) define sexual agency as the ability to create sexual choices according to one's will, free from coercion.

However, Luthando believes that friends may exert influence on young women's decisions.

***Luthando:** I think there are some friends who are not good for you. Those girls who like old men and who like going out to drink and go to parties. If you have friends like that you will end up doing what they do because you spend a lot of time with them. These friends are not good, they are the ones who introduce other girls to sugar daddies who are friends with their own sugar daddies so that when they want to hang out together they will do that because they are the same crew.*

The older men use their economic opportunities for exploiting young women who depend on them for financial survival (Holland, et al., 1998; Leclerc-Madlala, 2010; Shisana, 2004).

The gender inequity also occurs among young women and young men in schools (Greig, Peacock, Jewkes, and Msimang, 2008).

***Luthando:** Still with young men at school once you have sex with them they will move around the whole school and tell everyone that they have had sex with you so as a way of protecting yourself you have to make sure that you abstain from sex. Some young men even claim or lie that they have slept with you when you have turned them down so imagine if you really slept with them they can tell everyone and you won't be able to yourself and everyone at the school will think you are loose. You need to protect yourself from these situations by not sleeping with guys at the school. One young woman had sex with a guy when they were in class and the guy had told his friends to watch from the window and after they had sex the guy's friends came in laughing at the young woman. It was so embarrassing so now everyone knows she is not a virgin. The young men's friends think he is a star while everyone thinks the girl is loose. So young girls should avoid these situations because they always back fire on the young woman and not on the young man.*

***Nonto:** I say it is different when it comes to gender. Boys will always be boys. God created boys to be able to protect themselves. There are girls that cannot protect themselves, they are scared of boys and would do something not out of their will, for example engaging in sex with a boy even when they don't want to. Boys can hit or become violent to women and when asked why they smack girls, boys say they do it with no desire; they sometimes do things which they do not want do.*

Luthando and Nonto reveal that young women are harassed in the school environment by their fellow young men. Muhanguzi (2011) argues that there is testimony that girls are exposed to substantial sexual harassment (verbal and physical) by other male learners and male teachers. Although Nonto feels that young women cannot protect themselves from harassment, Luthando thinks otherwise, when she says:

Luthando: *I disagree, gone are those days when men were superior over women. I do not agree with Nonto if she says we as women cannot protect ourselves, I think that we are just helpless. Girls have too much fear and it consumes us. Girls can also say no and demand condom use, but because they are scared they end up doing what they do not desire. And when it comes to their marriage they will now regard having lost their virginity to a guy who did not marry them.*

Luthando shows resistance to boys' domination at school. According to Shefer & Foster (2010), young women are becoming more vocal; they are challenging the hegemonic construction of women as inferior to men.

Researcher: *Do you think young women can protect their own sexuality?*

Thandi: *Most people grow up in different backgrounds. Others are raised by real matured and dignified women, ómama abaqotho', whilst others are raised by single women that are still very young. It all depends on the environment from which we grow up, for example in Durban, girls go overboard competing for the attention of boys, they wear miniskirts ízigqebhe'. In rural areas on the other hand, girls have pride in maintaining their virginity.*

Thandi's answer indicates that young women have power over their virginity. She compares young women in townships who put themselves in a situation where they lose their virginity, with rural young women, who have power over their virginity. Young women have the power to resist sexual pressures. They are also likely to reject sexual requests in order to protect their sexual reputation in the communities in which they are living (Hunter, 2010; Jewkes & Morrell, 2012; Muhanguzi, 2011).

Researcher: *Is it only young women from poor backgrounds that do this? Using their sexuality to get what they want?*

Luthando: *No, it is not. Even those young women from wealthy families do it. Amongst our peer groups, we sometimes ask one another if our boyfriends have money or not. Our peers*

always tell us to dump those boyfriends and get new boyfriends with money. The problem with teenagers, they are very greedy. We always want more. So if our parents are telling us to wait and understand the situation, we do not want to wait. We want material gains.

Luthando's answer reveals that peer pressure can also affect young women from well-off, or financially stable families. A poor background was not found to be a factor affecting young women's engagement in transactional sex; it is also part of orientation to sexual engagement (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008).

Thandi: Kodwa (But).... these girls are not really desperate for money but they want to ukuzilinganisa nje (conform to the standard only of their friends).

Nonto: May they think poor girls are making more money than they have. Bafisa ukuhlala be ngaphezulu (they want to remain richer than their poor friends).

Aneliwe: I think they want feel and experience what other girls are enjoying out of these relationships.

The argument derived from these young women indicates that peer pressure can also affect young women from affluent families. It also shows that young women have power to make their own decisions, no matter what their financial circumstance may be.

4.5 Contraceptives and unprotected sex

Oyedeki and Cassimjee (2006) cited (Boult & Cunningham, 1991; Jacobs, 2002) that there is low usage of contraceptives among young adults. Again, Shai, Jewkes, Nduna and Dunkle (2012) argued that young men are susceptible to contracting HIV infection, owing to the tendency to engage in unprotected sexual intercourse.

During the group interviews with the young women in the study it was revealed that, despite their awareness of the dangers of unprotected sex, they were not fully aware of the various types of contraceptive available to females. Some young women claimed that they were sexually active, however, were not using contraceptives, not even condoms. MacPhail and Campbell (2001) found that there is low condom usage among young people aged 13-25 years. Maticka-Tyndale and Kyeremeh (2010) argue that young people are afraid of using condoms, protesting that they may slide off during intercourse and be inserted into young women's uteruses. Participants of this study indicated that women cannot insist on the usage of

condoms if their boyfriends refuse this method of contraception. During the focus discussion, it appeared that there are widespread misconceptions about condom effectiveness.

Some of the young women in this study emphasised in their responses that they want to make their boyfriends happy by engaging in unprotected sex with them. Mandisa stated openly that she does not use condoms for the sake of retaining her boyfriends. Sayles, *et al.* (2006) states that there is still a belief that the use of condoms signifies mistrust of one's partner, and is linked to low condom usage in a recent study on South African young people. Young women may sometimes find it difficult to ask older men to use condoms. Campbell (2000) asserts that the young women have very little say when older male partners are abusive.

Researcher: *What are your views or opinions about the use of contraceptives?*

The question posed by the researcher confirmed that some young women in this study were confused about the issue of contraception. They answered by posing questions which indicated their lack of awareness of contraceptives. Nonto replied with a question which indicated that she is not sure whether condoms are also contraceptives.

Nonto: *Condoms?*

Luthando: *Morning after pill? ... but I am not really sure.*

Researcher: *Is that the only form of contraceptive you know?*

Nonto: *I am not sure about the name, but there is also an injection, it is used for prevention of pregnancy.*

Zinhle: *I am also not sure, there is an injection which they say it's for horses, if people use it, their bodies become like jelly.*

Since Aneliwe is not engaged in many relationships; she seemed uninterested in contraceptives. She had a boyfriend that she trusted, and did not look forward to engaging to other sexual relationships. The injection the young women were talking about could be one of the myths levelled against condoms and other contraceptives. Ankomah, Anyanti, and Oladosu (2011) explain the negative effects of myths and misinformation on contraceptives. Zinhle believed in the myths and misinformation of 'horse' injection contraceptives. Ankomah, Anyanti, and Oladosu (2011) argued that major obstacles to the use of contraceptives lie in myths and misinformation passed from one or more persons to others. It

appears that the young women in this study do not use contraceptives because of myths and misinformation levelled against contraceptives. This attitude results in a low usage of contraceptives (Oyededeji and Cassimjee, 2006)

Researcher: *Now that you have mentioned all these contraceptives, please tell me, what do you think about them? About their use.*

Luthando's response may shed light on reasons for young women not knowing about or not using most contraceptives. The reason revealed by Luthando's response was that men do not want to use them. Male partners normally want to dominate sexual relations (Holland et al, 1998).

Luthando: *Many men do not like using a condom. I have seen and heard from most relationships that men do not like using condoms. So I do not want to chase my boyfriend away by forcing him to use a condom. If I really love and trust him, it should not be an issue if he does not like it.*

Shai1, Jewkes, Nduna and Dunkle (2012), state that non-usage of condoms, or inconsistent usage is informed by complex factors. Men see condoms as interruptive agents against trust and intimacy, and sexual pleasure experienced (Shai1, Jewkes, Nduna and Dunkle , 2012).

Jewkes, *et al.*, (2009) state that gender power inequalities constrain young women's sexual choices, in terms of using contraceptives. Jewkes, *et al.*, (2012) concur, stating that young people engaging with an adult partner, particularly young women, are less likely to report using contraceptives and less expected to use them consistently. Holland (1998) states that "to be conventionally feminine is to seem sexually unknowing, to want to have a relationship, to let sex occur, to trust to love, and to make men happy."

However, Aneliwe illustrated another side of young women's ignorance, when it comes to contraceptives and their proper usage:

Aneliwe: *I am just not sure. There are people, young women who are now with babies and they claim to have religiously used contraceptives yet they fell pregnant. I guess maybe there is a problem with their use or maybe we are failing as young people to use them or not knowing how to use them in the proper way.*

The young women in the study indicated that men still determined the way in which sexual relations are undertaken. The study also underlined the inequality of young women and men

in sexual relationships. Mandisa displayed, in her response, that boyfriends have the power to refuse the use of condoms. There are many reasons why young women such as Mandisa believe that boyfriends have power to determine whether condoms should be used. Mandisa is one of the young women in the study who has been exposed to inequality that exists in sexual relationships, crafted by a number of factors, including; culture, and the upbringing of children.

Muhanguzi (2011) quoted Barky (1990) when highlighting the various levels of status embodied in the masculine and the feminine, with the woman's body given an inferior status. The physical roles placed on the young men portray them as superior to young women, who are assumed the role of running the kitchen (i.e. social reproductive responsibilities). Jewkes and Morrell (2010) say that the supremacy of men is by no means ascertained through the practise of force, but also on the cultural grounds of patriarchy and processes through which it is upheld; even with limited violence, which is perceived by many, but not all, as legitimate. The submission of Mandisa to the will of her boyfriends may have detrimental consequences to her health. She confesses that she has more than one boyfriend. It is not clear whether these males are in tandem or serial boyfriends. Leclerc-Madlala (2008) discovered that there are women who, at their own will, maintained relationships with more than one partner concurrently, viewing such actions as modern, and as the result of gender equity and human rights.

Young women normally lack sexual freedom and agency in some sexual relationships. Holland, *et al.* (1998) argued that young men have substantial power that is not available to young women.

It does not make a difference whether Mandisa has boyfriends at the same time or not; what matters is that she engages in unprotected intercourse with these males. Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, Shai (2010) state that the consequence of gender power inequality at both social and relationship level, is linked to the spreading of HIV and AIDS. Mandisa is vulnerable to contracting sexually-transmitted diseases if she has more than one boyfriend, by also allowing her boyfriends to sleep with her without protection.

Researcher: *Would you compromise your life by agreeing to unprotected sex, if you really love the boy and he does not want to use a condom?*

Thandi: *I have done it before. But I will never do it again. It is not something which I planned, it just happened.*

Thandi's response indicates that some young women can agree to unprotected sex simply to prove love to their boyfriends. Preston-Whyte and Zondi (1992) argue that it is common for young women to engage in sexual intercourse, merely to show love to their partners.

Mandisa, provided the following response to the same question:

Mandisa: *I only use injection. My boyfriends don't like condoms. So I respect their wishes, because I love them and I also like 'skoon sex', (flesh to flesh). I want to keep them.*

However, Mandisa engaged in unprotected intercourse; she likes sex without the use of condoms. Mandisa's attitude shows the shift from norms set by traditions, which see young women as submissive beings in sexual relationships. This attitude contrasts the argument of Holland, *et al.* (1998) who states that young men have considerable power, not available to young women. Mandisa demonstrated that not all young women are passive victims of male dominance and sexual power in relationships. She resists fixed hegemonic gender roles held in tradition and culture expectations, about young women and sexuality (Mudaly, 2012). Mandisa enjoys 'flesh to flesh' sex. Manroon (2009) explains that the notion that young women are taken advantage of when it comes to sex, is at variance with the idea that young women and young men alike simply enjoy sex.

During individual interviews with Mandisa, the following question was posed:

Researcher: *Are you always safe? Do you use protection during your sexual encounters?*

Mandisa: *No, I have never used a condom, I prefer injection. I know that it is dangerous but I have never had a sex disease like sexual infections. My boyfriends don't like using a cond.*

Mandisa typifies women who 'sleep around' with many men but do not use condoms.

Zinhle: *Most teenagers like having sex, so I think contraceptives are good. Sometimes young women say that their boyfriends do not like using condoms, so they don't know what to do. They also say that there is a pill which a young woman can use if they have had an unprotected sex and they are not sure of the status of their partner regarding HIV and AIDS.*

When asked to elaborate, Zinhle mentioned the following:

Zinhle: *It is inserted in a woman's vagina and it helps protect from the transmission of HIV and AIDS but one has to use it immediately after intercourse. I do not know its name though... It is also used for people who have been raped.*

The young women in the study seemed to be caught in a web of myths preventing them from using contraceptives and condoms. Zinhle's explanation shows that most young women have minimal knowledge of protection when it comes to sexual relations. All participants agreed that young women are sexually active however, they seemed to lack knowledge of contraceptives.

Aneliwe is sexually active; however, she too does not make use of condoms. One of the reasons for her not using condoms is that she is in a steady relationship with her boyfriend. She is, however, in a distance relationship, which puts her in danger (if her boyfriend is not faithful to her). Jewkes, Morrell (2010) stated that men may feel free to have sex with other women, while expecting their girlfriends to remain faithful.

It was only after our discussion on the subject in which she realised that she needed to use condoms.

Aneliwe: (laughs lightly)..... *I don't have anything against condoms. In order to prevent diseases as well I think I must start using it. For now we have just been relying on early withdrawal....(laughs lightly), but I see that I have big chances of falling pregnant, in fact I have been very lucky so far.*

Aneliwe is an example of young women who don't trust condoms, having not used them. She laughed when talking about condoms, which portrayed that, she had misconceptions, or perhaps ignorance about contraceptives. Remes, *et al.*, (2009) state that, besides the problems in negotiating the use of condoms, there are multiple misconceptions about condom efficacy which results in the low usage among youth. Condoms are perceived by youth as reducing the pleasure; they also believe them not to be part of 'tradition', because they prevent pregnancy, but not HIV infection (Remes, *et al.*, 2009). Aneliwe is aware that condoms can prevent early pregnancy, however, she does not engage in condom usage.

Aneliwe: *I would prefer male condoms. Female condoms look very funny and strange, I don't even think I can trust them. I hear you must wear it a couple of hours before you do sex. Now who wants dat?.....(laughs), haybo it's just very strange shame.....*

Aneliwe's response illustrated that she was uninterested in the manner that condoms could protect her from the sexually transmitted diseases. Her response confirmed that she could not overcome the misconceptions of condoms (Remes, *et al.*, 2009). In addition, she preferred male condoms, which she was not utilising either. Aneliwe expresses her distaste or disapproval of the female condom.

Aneliwe: *Big NO, it is just strange, I have never imagined a woman wearing a condom. I also think it's very uncomfortable.*

Nonto: *I think it's wrong to use them, "ayaphaphalaza ngoba umuntu ugcina azi ukuthi angeke amithe, akhohlwe nokuthi kukhona ingculazi", (people end up being over dependant on them and forget about sexually transmitted infections as well as HIV).*

Luthando: *I do not see a difficulty with their use; I believe they are here for a reason. They are our guidelines, other people like the idea of abstinence, whilst others are sexually active, so I don't have a problem with them. If you know you are sexually active it is better for you to use them rather than get pregnant or get HIV. I think it is a good thing that government has put condoms in schools because they know that young people are having sex so they have to protect themselves.*

Luthando approves of condoms being made accessible in schools. Greiga, Peacock, Jewkes, and Msimang (2008) stated that schools are regularly a setting in which sexual harassment of female students by teachers and other learners, is rife. The widespread sexual abuse by teachers at schools is confirmed in the work of Plummer, Wight, Wamoyi, Nyalali, Ingall, Mshana, Shigongo, Obasi and Ross (2006), who state that there are teachers who sexually abuse pupils, and there are reports of sexual relationships between male teachers and female pupils. Perhaps it is from this perspective that Luthando feels that condoms should be made available in schools. Greig, Peacock, Jewkes, and Msimang (2008) state that pressure is crucial for the enabling of civil society in general, and social movements in particular, to hold governments and donors accountable for action on sex and AIDS, and to counter the active or passive resistance by programme planners and implementers of the principles of human rights and gender equality.

Firstly, the study has revealed that young women were not fully aware of the usage of the injection. They spoke about injections and based their debates on hearsay, and not on anything to which they had first-hand information. Nonto felt that the injection was not good,

because a young woman might become dependent on such a drug. The myth around the usage of contraceptives in the form of injections is that they have low success rates.

This study also indicates that sexually active young women are reluctant to challenge their partners on condom usage. The fear articulated by young women in the study was that they could lose their partners if they insisted on condom use.

Luthando had the following to say regarding condoms and boyfriends:

Luthando: *Many young men, do not like using a condom. I have seen and heard from most relationships that men do not like using condoms. So I do not want to chase my boyfriend away by forcing him to use a condom. If I really love and trust him, it should not be an issue if he does not like it.*

However, close scrutiny showed that women are not cognisant of the benefits of using condoms. In Aneliwe's words: *'I don't have anything against condoms. In order to prevent diseases as well I think I must start using it. For now we have just been relying on early withdrawal.'*

Aneliwe seemed to focus mainly on early withdrawal as means of preventing pregnancy, forgetting the danger of contracting deadly diseases such as sexually-transmitted infections and HIV and AIDS. Women are often powerless in sexual relationships; protected sexual practices are difficult for women to enact, because self-protection is often compromised by feelings of intimacy (Kaufman, Shefer, Crawford; Simbayi and Seth; Kalichman, 2008; Connell, 1987).

Researcher: *Do young women insist in condoms usage or they just allow older men to take advantage of their bodies since have been given money or expensive gifts?*

Mandisa: *I think this is true, you will see some girls want to come to school show off with fancy cellphones and nice hairstyles every week so they start sleeping with older men forgetting that there is HIV out there. They even forget that they can be pregnant. You see we hear that older men do not want to use condoms so the chances of you getting pregnant when you sleep with them are high. A lot of girls who were sleeping with old men now have children or they are pregnant yet the men have now run away. They got what they wanted and now they left the girls to suffer with their children.*

Mandisa's answer reveals that older men may insist on unprotected sex once they have paid or provided expensive gifts or money to young women (Campbell, 2003; Leclerc-Madlala, 2010; Womoyi, *et al.*, 2011).

Lungiswa: *I agree with Amanda, some girls in this school even go out with Taxi drivers and every time they come and leave school they will be sitting in the front seat. You cannot sit in the front seat because the taxi driver will tell you that that is not your seat. These girls sometimes do not come to school and sometimes even bunk school because they want to spend time with their taxi drivers.*

Lungiswa's response depicts that young women sometimes engage in risky sexual behaviour on their own accord. Wamoyi, *et al.* (2011) argue that young women should not be viewed merely as victims of their sexuality, but also as choosing pleasure and agency in which they are encouraged to make choices on their sexual-relational issues, not feeling powerless.

Thandi: *Like what the others were saying these young women want money so that they can come to school and show off. Some also want expensive clothes to wear during the weekends and holidays and their parents cannot afford so they have to find older men to buy them but you know men only want one thing from a woman...If you can't sleep with them then they will not buy you anything or not give you money. But if you sleep with them then they will give you money. But they will only give you money if they still want to sleep with you. When they find someone else they will leave you and that's done for you. You will have to find another rich guy to look after you otherwise people at school will start laughing at you saying that you are now back to poverty. That's why these girls continue to find older men to have sex with.*

Thandi's response shows that young women can engage in multiple sexual partnerships in order to achieve financial freedom. Luke (2003) argues that some young women engage in sex with multiple partners simultaneously, in order to maximise the benefits of transactional sex.

However, not all young women depend on men for survival. The following statement from Luthando's answer reveals that young women can be independent:

Luthando: *I think it depends with the person. There are some girls who love attention from boys then they are those girls who do not even want to see men around them. They just want to study. Some girls do not even care about their bodies that they end up sleeping with as*

many old men as possible for the love of money. Young women have the power to do whatever they want with their bodies. Some choose to be good girls while you see some getting picked up by different cars each and every day and you wonder why they do not take pride in their bodies.

Luthando's answer illustrates that that young women are different and heterogenous; some young women will not succumb to pressures of poverty in engaging in transactional sex. However, there are young women, according to Luthando's answer, that can sleep with many older men, merely for money. Previously, in this section, it has been highlighted that young women tend to abstain from condom usage and have very limited knowledge of other means of contraceptives. This concurs with the findings of many scholars, who argue that young women do not use condoms, despite awareness campaigns (Jones, Mosher & Daniels, 2012; Marston & King, 2006; Maticka-Tyndale & Kyeremeh, 2010). Luthando mentions that some young women do not care about their bodies, and sleep with as many old men as possible. Sleeping with many sexual partners without protection puts young women at risk of contracting sexually-transmitted diseases.

4.6 Young women, cheating and casual sex

Leclerc-Madlala (2008) uses the word casual sex to refer to more affluent men that are inclined to report more condom usage, however, also tend to report a larger number of casual sexual partners. The young women in the study called this a 'one-night stand.' Dictionary.com (2013) outlines casual sex as 'sexual relations not engaging a love relationship.' It is defined as brief encounters or an encounter on a single occasion. Cheating differs from casual sex, in that cheating offends a relationship, while casual sex may not offend any relationship. Lyons, Manning, Giordano, and Longmore (2012) define casual sex as sexual activity among unmarried individuals that occurs outside of committed intimate relationships. The key words are unmarried, or outside committed intimate relationship.

When defining cheating, one should consider the views of other authors. Leclerc-Madlala (2008) explains cheating as 'unfaithful' or 'the inability to be loyal to one partner.' The young women in this study consider cheating as when one's boyfriend turns to other young women instead of concentrating on his girlfriend. Cheating also takes place when there is an existing sexual relationship; however, one partner establishes another relationship without the knowledge of his or her partner. Kruger, Fisher, Edelstein, Chopik, Fitzgerald, and Strout (2013) explain that having sex with someone other than a primary partner in a long-term

relationship in the context of a nominally monogamous relationship, may be regarded as cheating.

Researcher: *What do you understand about cheating? Is cheating good or bad?*

Nonto: *Mina, I don't understand why people cheat? If you really love your partner why do you cheat on him? If he is the one cheating on you, find what the problem is, or just dump him and then move on with your life, get another boyfriend who won't cheat on you. "Mhlawumbe abantu banamathando amaningi, mina angazi". (Maybe people have more than one heart to give to a person, I really do not know).*

Aneliwe: *I think people who do that do not like themselves. I do not see them taking their culture seriously. As a woman you are not supposed to do that. I also think it is because of low self-esteem. Why expose yourself like that, like you are desperate unless you are selling sex. If you are a woman, you must walk with your head high and not feel ashamed about anything. Your parents must be proud of you, and you yourself must also be proud of yourself. I just think it is wrong.*

Mandisa: *Behaviour like that....I think it shows your moral values are low. But most young women in this community do it all the time when they want material gains. But then, we come from different families. So I am not judging anyone here. If you feel that selling sex or 'ukuphana' (being generous with your private parts) is your thing, you must go ahead and do it.*

Thandi: *.....(laughs,) ...but young women we do this and just pretend like nothing is wrong. I think some people are naive and don't understand what pride is. But again we will never know why they do it, so I don't want to judge them.*

Nonto was quick to express negative feelings about cheating. All of the participants of this study were also against cheating.

Researcher: *But why do young women cheat?*

Mandisa: *Sometimes when you cheat on your boyfriend it might happen that you have had a crush on other man long before your boyfriend and when he eventually propose or asks you out, you find it difficult to say no and then you find yourself living a double life. "Uvele ubone kungcono ubabhanqe" ("You just decide to love both of them in the same time").*

Mandisa reveals that young women have no power to approach boys for love. An inferiority complex has been instilled in some young women through the cultural establishment, that women are inferior to men (Hutson, 2007). Some cultures regard young women's sexuality differently to that of young men (Hutson, 2007; Remes, et al., 2010; Shefer & Foster, 2001).

***Nonto:** It's all about the games. Girls want to keep time. Maybe your real boyfriend does not satisfy you somehow. So you are still looking and searching. But sometimes you just wasting time with the other, "uchitha isizungu ngalona omunye".*

Nonto reveals that young women may also cheat because they require sexual or physical satisfaction. Young women also enjoy sex (Galinsky & Sonenstein, 2010).

***Nonto:** My personal views, if someone cheats.....do not let them get away with it, just dump him or her there and then. Just don't waste your time on them. Find someone else that loves you. Make sure you tell him or her that it is over, Do not ignore them, just let them know its over!*

***Thandi:** I can't just say it's over when I really love him, so I disagree with Nonto. People are not the same, others are tolerant others are not. Especially if it's a long standing relationship. Sometimes boys get bored with routine. Even yourself you would not like to keep eating beans for supper all the time. "Nawe ngeke uvume ukudla ubhontshisi zonke izinsuku".*

Thandi reveals that young women feel that it is not easy to leave a boyfriend that you love, even if he is cheating. The study revealed that some young men have the upper hand in their sexual relationships, with young women.

Young men can date other young women despite having relations with their girlfriends. Their girlfriends may either respond by dating other young men, or pretend to be cheating to attract the attention of the young men they love.

***Mandisa:** I will tell you guys about myself. Sometimes I do it. When your partner cheats on you and they don't know why they are cheating on you. Nami (Me too) I want to be level and I cheat on him. If you are not sleeping with your boyfriend, he finds it easy to cheat on you since you are not satisfying his needs. So I allow him to cheat on me, then I go ahead myself and cheat on him. But it is not easy, it's just not nice to cheat when really loves the person.*

Mandisa's answer indicates that young women cheat as a means of retaliation towards cheating boyfriends. Williams and Hickle (2011) discussed how young women, in their study, cheat because their boyfriends cheat. During the group interviews, Aneliwe mentioned that young women cheat because they are jealous and envious of their boyfriends, who are 'taken' by other young women.

Thandi: *I agree with Mandisa when a girl cheats on her boyfriend it's because he has started it first. I don't do it just because I like doing it but I want to level and square up with him.*

Aneliwe: *Also, some people cheat because they want attention. If you have a boyfriend and you always see him with different young women, talking to them, you become jealous, so want to make him envious. You cheat with a person, not because you love them but you want to be noticed by the other. It's like you want some closure.*

Thandi and Aneliwe reiterated that cheating may be a two way-street, where a girlfriend engages in cheating in response to a cheating boyfriend.

Aneliwe's statement indicates that some young women may not trust their boyfriends when they mingle with other young women. They may not feel loved by them. They interpreted the association or the interaction of their boyfriends with other young women as cheating.

Aneliwe: *Yes I have. I realised that there is no need to be faithful to someone when they keep cheating on you. So I cheated on him. I was also playing the game that he was playing, but I did not love the guys that I was cheating with. I really loved my boyfriend at that time. We are not together now. I am with the young man that I was cheating with.....*
(Laughs). *He loves me and I love him a lot.*

Aneliwe's response revealed two important issues. Firstly, young women also cheat. Aneliwe is in a steady relationship; she believes that sleeping with another man is constituted as cheating (Kruger et al, 2013). Secondly, cheating may be in response to a partner who is cheating in the relationship (Williams and Hickle, 2011).

Luthando: *I will never share a bed with someone for just one day; give myself to them for just one night....I would rather abstain than to rush into sex just because I need money. I believe in love and I want to be loved just the way I desire. I like feeling special*

Thandi: *"hayi, ngeke....mina, I do not see nothing wrong. If you are a person you choose your own way of doing things. It's my body and it's my life. This also depends on what your*

parents have taught you. If you are strongly cultured, then it's obvious you won't do it. But if ... "uyilabatheka", LOL... (a person who cannot control their greed- slang) you will not have a problem.

Luthando constructed cheating and casual sex as types of sexual relationships that are lacking love. She said that she believed in love. Luthando's answer confirmed that she was actively looking for love. Thandi is not sexually active, but observes sexual behaviour in the environment she is schooling and living in. When she mentioned, "it is my body and my life;" this could imply that she would not be influenced to engage in sexual activity, because she has power over her body. This attitude is contrary to a notion of young women having less power than men in sexual relationships (Holland, 1998).

Thandi's statement depicts that a young woman has a certain amount of power over her body. She can decide how she handles it. If she decides to use it in order to gain something of financial value, it is within her power to do so. Maroon (2009) argues that selling of one's body in transactional sex comes about when both parties attribute a value to the gifts or money that is exchanged, which exceeds simple monetary value. Both Luthando and Thandi seemed not to attribute value to gifts or money that could have resulted in them selling their bodies.

This response displayed the sexual power that some young women have over their bodies.

The young women who are not sexually active dislike casual sex and cheating. Specifically, young women such as Thandi, Nonto, Zinhle, and Luthando interpreted casual sex and cheating in the light of values underpinned by their upbringing and cultures. Aneliwe and Mandisa, on the other hand, viewed casual sex and cheating slightly differently from other participants of this study.

The young women in the study felt that casual sex and cheating was against good morals - Aneliwe associated casual sex with a person who has a low self-esteem and lacks good morals. She further stated that a young woman engaging in casual sex did not take her culture very seriously. Mandisa agreed with her when she mentioned: 'moral values are low'. However, Thandi indicated cautiously that 'we will never know why they do it, so I don't want to judge them.'

Luthando: *Still with young men at school once you have sex with them they will move around the whole school and tell everyone that they have had sex with you so as a way of protecting*

yourself you have to make sure that you abstain from sex. Some young men even claim or lie that they have slept with you when you have turned them down so imagine if you really slept with them they can tell everyone and you won't be able to yourself and everyone at the school will think you are loose. You need to protect yourself from these situations by not sleeping with guys at the school. One young woman had sex with a guy when they were in class and the guy had told his friends to watch from the window and after they had sex the guy's friends came in laughing at the young woman. It was so embarrassing so now everyone knows she is not a virgin. The young men's friends think he is a star while everyone thinks the young woman is loose. So young women should avoid these situations because they always backfire on the young woman and not for the young man.

Luthando's argument illustrated that young women are sexually ill-treated by young men; young men at her school put young women in unfair situations. Young women concede that, in sleeping with young men, these young men denigrate them to their friends. The behaviour of the young men in Luthando's school shows how young men wish to dominate young women physically and emotionally, when it comes to sex. Holland, Ramazanoglu, and Thomson (1998) argued that young men experience their sexuality and masculinity as normal, when they exercise power over women. Pettifor, Macphail, Anderson, and Maman (2012) state that physical and sexual violence is seen as acceptable ways of establishing power over, and controlling female partners. The young men, referred to by young women in this study, as those who humiliate young women who refuse to have sex with them, and exert emotional violence and power over these young women.

In concluding this theme, the following should be recognised:

Although most of the young women in the study voiced their dislike of cheating and casual sex, they speak from different viewpoints. The young women expressed their feelings based on differing status with regard to sexual activities. For example, Nonto, Zinhle and Thandi constructed casual sex and cheating from a lack of direct knowledge, not yet being sexually active. They were quick to provide an attribute of casual sex and cheating, designating it as a display of 'low morals.' Mandisa, on other hand, is currently engaged in multi-partner relationships. Previously, we analysed that these relationships may have started by casual sex and cheating. Aneliwe also has hands-on cheating experience.

None of the young women, including Mandisa and Aneliwe, condoned this behaviour. Mandisa and Aneliwe constructed this behaviour unrealistically. This is the essence of the

theories of constructivism and interpretivism. Thandi says she does not want to be judgemental; perhaps she was not prepared to offend Mandisa.

4.7 Sex and Alcohol

Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, and Shail (2010) stated that (many) women might settle for riskier sex, and may be less capable of rejecting it when drunk, drugged, dissociating, desperately seeking affection, or otherwise manipulated by controlling partners. Aneliwe, although claimed never to have been drunk at a party, is aware of young women who cannot control themselves when they are under the influence of alcohol. The group discussions revealed that the young women in the study have never found themselves in a situation in which they engaged in sexual activities while under the influence of alcohol.

Researcher: *Do you think one can control the sex urges if one is under the influence of alcohol? Especially in the absence of contraceptives?*

Aneliwe: *No they can't. When women are drunk, most of the time they demand sex. If there are no contraceptives it's not a problem to them because at that particular moment all they want is to have sex, they do not even care with whom they are having with. If you are a woman and you do that, you are just shameful.... "unehlazo lokungazithandi nje".*

Luthando: *They develop confidence. They have that feeling which is about not caring at all. So I say they can't control themselves. They actually throw themselves at young men and the next morning they feel bad, they regret the night before sometimes they even claim they were raped. This is very nasty.*

Although the participants of this study have never found themselves in situations where alcohol led to sexual encounters, they knew of other young women who were the victims of such situations. Their responses revealed that some young women, under the influence of alcohol, demanded sex. They went to certain clubs and parties looking for sexual partners. Lorway, *et al.* (2011) stated that most women perceive the consumption of alcohol as facilitating a connection with a potential sexual partner.

Luthando said that the young women developed confidence and were then unable to control themselves. These young women became vulnerable to unprotected intercourse. Jewkes, *et al.* (2010) stated that women might settle for riskier sex, and be less able to reject it when drunk. Alcohol is known to impair the reasoning power to resist sex. George and Stoner (2000) stated that alcohol impairs men's capacity to control penile reactions. On the other

hand, women who are under the influence of alcohol often initiate sex (Harvey and Beckman, 1986). Palen, *et al.*, (2006) discovered a link between substance use and risky sexual behaviour.

Luthando: *No, I have not. I have never had sex at all, I am still a virgin. I know of someone that is now pregnant because they had sex whilst drunk. She left school at grade 9. She doesn't know who the father of the baby is.*

Parks, *et al.* (2009) stated that, as a result of their high levels of alcohol consumption and their view of bars as a venue for finding romantic or sexual partners, women bar drinkers are likely to be at higher risk of engaging in irrational sexual behaviour. Luthando alludes to a young woman who put herself at risk of unplanned pregnancy. Young women under the influence of alcohol do not only put themselves at risk of unplanned pregnancy; but also risk becoming infected with sexually transmitted diseases such HIV and AIDS (Remes, *et al.*, 2009).

Aneliwe has previously visited the so-called “big explosion parties” and observed occurrences that took place there.

Aneliwe: *No, I have never. During school holidays, there are these parties which are known as “big explosion parties”; lots of strange things happen there. It's like people lose themselves, you find women drinking and letting it everything loose. At that moment their hormones are raging high and they want to have sex there. I think this is very bad behaviour. They end up doing whatever; have sex with anyone or everyone.*

Aneliwe points out that some of the young women at these parties displayed risky and careless behaviour. She described this behaviour as very bad. These young women put themselves in high risk of falling pregnant or contracting HIV and AIDS. Alcohol abuse is linked to young women vulnerable to a number of negative consequences, such as contracting HIV and AIDS (Onyal; Tessera; Myers & Flisher, 2010).

Firstly, all young women in the study constructed sex and alcohol as a bad thing; secondly, the young women did not consume alcohol, or not much alcohol. The factors such as cultural backgrounds of some of these young women assisted them in avoiding certain behaviour, including consuming alcohol. The strict family upbringing was mentioned several times during the group discussion. Aneliwe did not engage in the consumption of alcohol, nor in sex.

4.8 Conclusion

This study revealed that some young women were vulnerable within their sexual relationships. They find themselves in relationships which are dominated by their male partners. In addition, they expressed their inability to refuse unprotected sex, mainly for fear of losing their boyfriends.

This study proved that young women interpreted sexuality in terms of how they look, whether or not they looked attractive to their boyfriends. Respondents even changed the way they walked, in order to attract the attention of young men. This study also showed that young women can enter into sexual relationships, even when they do not love their male partners. They are not afraid to offer their bodies to older men in exchange for material goods and money, and in this way, they actively engage in transactional sex.

The chapter also emphasised that young women do not always use contraceptives. Findings suggest that they do not know about contraceptives, which could potentially protect their lives from sexually-transmitted infections, such as HIV and AIDS. Some young women voluntarily refrain from the use of condoms. They think contraceptives are not entirely safe in preventing pregnancy and the transmission of HIV and AIDS.

This study also proved that young women from working-class backgrounds are often pressured by the high standard of living set by their peer groups at school. Young women sell their bodies in order to conform to the standards set by their friends, who attain expensive goods and money through selling their bodies. They desire to possess exclusive goods such as expensive cellphones, which could not have been provided by their parents. In addition, they sleep with older, rich men, in order to have these expensive gadgets, and to live the lives their parents cannot provide for them.

This study proved that young women under the influence of alcohol cannot control themselves when it comes to sexual encounters. It also revealed that young women may actually demand sexual intercourse with anyone they encounter, if they are under the influence of alcohol. In such situations, condoms and contraceptives are not likely to be used.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the main findings of this research. It goes on to make recommendations which would assist relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions in their fight against HIV and AIDS, which is rife among young, black women aged between 16 and 17.

The study was conducted on a group of six young, black women in a certain school in Durban around the Mayville - Greater Cato Manor area. These young women were learners from grades ten and eleven, who come from deprived backgrounds, and working-class families. Their family backgrounds seemed to define the manner in which they constructed sexuality. The study shows that the young women did not only construct sexuality based on cultural and religious inclinations; familial backgrounds also played a major role. The young women from families with both parents, were more disciplined when it came to sexual acts.

In Chapter One, the aims and objectives of this study, and the background of this research were outlined. The rationale for conducting this research was thoroughly discussed in this chapter. The discussion focused on young, black women and their engagement in unprotected sex, despite high prevalence levels of HIV/AIDS in the country. The rationale for undertaking this study was also highlighted in this chapter.

In Chapter Two, numerous studies regarding young, black women were reviewed. The literature was scrutinised with the purpose of understanding how young, black women of ages 16 and 17 construct their sexuality. The work of many researchers was carefully reviewed, and relevant literature pertaining to the specific topic of this study was synthesised and arranged into themes. These themes were: Young women: sex and dating; culture, sexuality and virginity; sex for money, and gifts; sex and financial security; contraceptives and unprotected sex; young women: cheating and casual sex; sex and alcohol.

In Chapter Three, the research design for this study was discussed, in order to achieve the aims of this study. This study was conducted using a qualitative research approach, as well as focus group and individual interviews. In this chapter, the limitations of this study were outlined; ethical considerations were discussed; and, finally, the issues of validity and reliability were outlined.

In Chapter Four, an in-depth discussion of this study on the way in which six young, black women in a township school constructed their sexuality was presented. Their responses to the various interview questions highlighted their interpretations of sexuality. The theories of interpretivism, constructivism, and feminism were employed in analysing their constructions of sexuality. There were seven themes in Chapter Four which supported the questions discussed with the young women. These themes were: Young women: sex and dating; culture, sexuality and virginity; sex for money, and gifts; sex and financial security; contraceptives and unprotected sex; young women: cheating and casual sex; sex and alcohol.

5.2 Main findings

The main findings are listed below:

5.2.1 Young women: sex and dating

Findings indicated that young women consider age as an important factor when deciding to date someone. There was a general consensus that older men are not suitable for dating, because they are controlling and are only interested in sex. There was also a general agreement with young women in the study that partners of a similar age are considered suitable for long-term plans. Therefore, this study concludes that the age-disparity relationships, where young women date older men, have the potential for young women to be abused by their older partners. This finding answered the second key question: ‘how does their understanding of sexuality influence behaviour?’ It was indeed established that young women consider age disparity when choosing partners.

5.2.2 Culture, sexuality and virginity

Findings also showed that young women feel that the upbringing of children is of crucial importance to any family, nation, and country. It was found that culture is sometimes used by some communities to place expectations on how girls should conduct themselves in society, when constructing their sexuality. While young women are expected to be virgins on wedding days, the same expectation is not placed on males. Therefore, this study concludes that culture plays a major role in young women’s construction of their sexuality. The study also concluded that culture and young, black women’s upbringing have an impact on how they construct sexuality. Culture places expectations on the way in which young women should conduct themselves sexually (Mudaly, 2012). The strictness of the family of a young, black woman guides the young woman in refraining from engaging in sexual activities. These

young women also value their virginity until their wedding day. It was apparent during interviews that young women perceive culture as important in constructing their sexuality. Therefore, the finding on culture answered the first key question: ‘how do young black women in my study construct their sexuality in an era of HIV and AIDS?’

5.2.3 Sex, money and peer pressure

This study showed that young women are capable of entering into sexual relationships for money and gifts from boyfriends. Poverty and poor parents may pressure young women to engage in sexual relationships with older men in order to satisfy financial needs. These so-called ‘sugar daddies’ offer young women gifts and money in exchange for sex, and in many instances, unprotected sex. Peer pressure, and the environment in which a young woman lives, can contribute to young women engaging in transactional sex. Therefore, this study concludes that young women are pressured by indigence and poor conditions, into engaging in transactional sex. This finding answered the third key question: ‘what do young black women understand about sexual risks and how they negotiate their sexuality?’ It was clear during interviews that young women understand risky behaviours; however, peer pressure forces them to engage in such behaviour.

5.2.4 Contraceptives and unprotected sex

This study revealed that young women in the study were not using methods of contraceptives, including condoms. It was also determined that there was misinformation and myths around the use of contraceptives. Therefore, it has been concluded that young women do not use condoms, thereby placing themselves in danger of contracting HIV and AIDS. The study also concludes that almost all young, black women in this study were not familiar with contraceptives, and did not use them, perhaps under the influence of myths around these devices. This finding answered the third key question: ‘what do young black women understand about sexual risks and how they negotiate their sexuality?’ It was determined that young black women who are sexually active, were not using condoms.

5.2.5 Young women: cheating and casual sex

Findings also revealed that casual sex and cheating do happen in relationships. Sometimes cheating is a form of pay-back by young women to their cheating boyfriends. Young women in this study were strongly against casual sex; however, they agreed that casual sex does happen amongst young women. The study concludes that cheating and casual sex were

disapproved of by all participants. It was, however, also determined that even the young, black women in this study who engaged in sexual activity, also criticised casual sex. This finding answered both key questions one and three: ‘how do young black women in my study construct their sexuality in an era of HIV and AIDS?’ and ‘what do young black women understand about sexual risks and how they negotiate their sexuality?’ It was determined that young women in my study were strongly against casual sex, this being risky sexual behaviour.

5.2.6 Sex and Alcohol

Finally, the study showed that alcohol and sex can lead to unprotected sex, or the engagement of young women in risky sexual practices. It was discussed that such behaviour often has consequences, such as unplanned pregnancy, or the contraction of sexually-transmitted diseases, such as HIV and AIDS. This research demonstrated that the sexually active young, black women in my study did not use condoms when they engaged in sexual intercourse. They stated that they wanted to experience sexual gratification, and therefore many of them engaged in sex for pleasure. This kind of careless behaviour puts these young women at risk of becoming infected with sexually-transmitted diseases. Although young women in the study do not consume alcohol, the discussion touched on alcohol as a factor in risky sexual behaviour. Therefore, this finding answered the third key question: ‘what do young black women understand about sexual risks and how they negotiate their sexuality?’

5.3 Recommendations

Despite all information regarding the risk and dangers of having unprotected sex, many young, black women aged 16 and 17 continue to reject the use of condoms. Based on findings highlighted above, the following recommendations are proposed:

5.3(a) Use of condoms

This study revealed that young women are not, in most cases, using condoms, despite high levels of HIV/AIDS prevalence. Therefore, an effective communication and training by experts visiting schools would highlight the dangers of the lack of condom usage. More details will be discussed below under institutions recommended for participation.

5.3(b) Contraceptives

It was apparent during the focus group interviews that young women were not aware of the various types of contraceptives. This ignorance is underlined by the high number of teenage pregnancies. The myths around the use of contraceptives should be corrected. Relevant governmental institutions and NGOs should distribute booklets providing information, as a means of awareness for contraceptives.

5.3(c) Alcohol abuse

During Life Skills classes, educators should discourage the abuse of alcohol by young women. The risks of consuming alcohol, especially when young women are vulnerable to unprotected sex, should form part of Life Skills' education.

The following institutions are required to carry out recommendations:

5.3.1 My teaching environment

This study was able to confirm that there are myths around using contraceptives. Therefore, as an educator, I will recommend that sex education should focus on deconstructing myths around the use of contraceptives. I will use the findings of my study to teach Life Orientation subject at my school. I will also use this study to upgrade the knowledge of teachers in my school and district with regards to how young women construct their sexuality. Burgard and Kusunoki (2009) argue that there have been efforts to influence young, black South Africans' health beliefs, relationship characteristics, and condom usage through the country's long history of institutionalised racially discriminatory policies. However, these efforts failed to yield positive results, HIV and AIDS prevalence remaining high among this section of South African population owing to various myths and cultural influences.

These myths become a hindrance to campaigns which would curb the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS; also reducing teenage pregnancy in school. During Life Orientation, teachers will assist by dispelling myths around the use of condoms and other contraceptives. Booklets extolling the benefits of using contraceptives should be developed and distributed as learning aids during Life Orientation classes.

5.3.2 Use with family members

Knowledge from the study will also be used to encourage family members to practice safe sex, as Burgard and Kusunoki (2009) state that young people in modern South Africa face high rates of heterosexually-transmitted HIV/AIDS. This study shows that certain sexual behaviour of young, black women arose as a result of their deprived backgrounds, where they lived in poverty. These young women become vulnerable to older men, who take advantage of their plight. These indigent women become financially dependent on them. As Jewkes and Morrell (2012) put it, some women feel that grown-up men are not desirable as partners, because they beat them, insist on constant sex; and they are also controlling. The reason for young women seeking sexual relationships with these older men is their poverty or poor economic conditions.

5.3.3 Educators and Community

Educators and community need greater knowledge as far as sexual behaviour of young women in schools is concerned. This study could be distributed to community libraries for public consumption. The reason as to why knowledge is required is because Zulu cultural practices and traditions make it difficult for teachers, even for parents to talk about sex to young ones. Young, black women find it difficult to talk about sex with their parents, especially fathers, because of cultural belief systems that preclude such conversation (Aufseeser, Jekielek, & Brown, 2006). Parents are sceptical about teachers talking to their daughters about sex. Remes, Renju, Nyalali, Medard, Kimaryo, Chantalucha, Obasi, and Wight (2010) state that poor communication between teachers and villagers reinforce parental perceptions that 'sex' education, stimulates sexual activity. Therefore, the community should understand the importance for sex education at a school level, and support it. The community could assist in providing awareness of safe sex and HIV/AIDS, at community meetings, and also on community radios.

5.4 Conclusion

Currently, governmental and non-governmental institutions have minimal exposure to the crisis concerning young, black women's understanding of sexuality (and its associated risks), and this is attributed to their lack of school visits. The gender equity among learners should be addressed through training and providing young women with leading roles in school projects. Encouraging young women to lead school projects such as environmental projects and

other school projects, will transfer the message that young women can also be leaders and be respected. Well-prepared communication around safe sex and HIV/AIDS by experts from various departments is required on a regular basis. Booklets with such information should be made available to learners during Life Orientation classes. Learners should be taught good behaviour through discouraging cheating and casual sex as undesirable. Churches, the community, and motivational speakers are required to assist in this regard. Competitions should be introduced which would identify young men who respect young women at school. A new culture of talking about sex should systematically be introduced through booklets and news magazine articles at school. UNESCO's Strategy for HIV and AIDS report June 2013 stated: "the role of education in the response to HIV includes learning in formal educational settings, non-formal educational activities, and informal education and communication through mass media and community channels."

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APPENDICES



UNIVERSITY OF
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University of KwaZulu-Natal
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17 April 2012

Ms/Mrs Nelisiwe Simamane (212558686)
School of Educational Studies

Dear Ms/Mrs Simamane

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/0088/08W

PROJECT TITLE: Young black women's constructions of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS in a township school in Durban

NEED FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL WAIVED

I wish to inform you that the need for ethical review has been waived because this protocol forms part of a broader research protocol which has already received ethical clearance (HSS/0088/08).

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. **PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

cc Supervisor Professor Deevia Bhana
cc Mr N Memela/Mrs S Naicker

APPENDIX 2



P. O Box 6774
Zimbali
4018

30 April 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian/Care – giver

I am student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in the Faculty of Education. My student number is 212558686. I am conducting a study about the Young black women's constructions of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS in a township school in Durban. Your child has been selected to participate in this study which involves individual interviews and focus group interviews. Therefore I am requesting permission for your child to participate in the study. The aim of the study is not to make money so there will be no monetary gain on it. All research material will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and the material will be destroyed after 5 years.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw your child from participating in the study at any time. Similarly, if your child decides to withdraw and not participate in the study, I will accept his/her decision entirely.

The particulars of my supervisor are as follows:

Professor D. Bhana – Faculty of Education at University of KwaZulu-Natal

Tel: 0312602603

Email: bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za

Please complete the form attached to indicate that you understand what I have requested and indicate your reply to this request.

Please return this form to the school before the ___ of _____ 2012

Yours sincerely

Mrs. Nelisiwe Simamane

APPENDIX 3



Informed consent declaration

Young black women's constructions of sexuality in the context of HIV AND AIDS in a township school in Durban.

Researcher: Mrs. Nelisiwe Simamane

- I understand the request about the activities that my child will be invited to participate in doing.
- I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and he/she can withdraw at any time from the activity.
- I understand that my child's name and identity will not be used in any reports that are written.

I agree/disagree to allow my child: _____ of _____ to participate in this study as indicated in Mrs. N. Simamane's letter.

Signed

Date



APPENDIX 4

P O Box 6774

Zimbali

4418

30 April 2012

The principal and SGB chairperson

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for permission

I am a student in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and I am studying towards a Masters Degree in Education. My student number is 212558686. My study is about the Young black women's construction of sexuality in the context of HIV AND AIDS in a township school in Durban. In my study I plan to conduct individual and group interviews with learners. The group interview participants in my study will be 10 learners from grade 10 and grade 11 i.e. Ten girls aged between 16years old and 17 years old. The aim of the study is not to make money so there will be no monetary gain on it. All research material will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and the material will be destroyed after 5 years.

I am writing this letter to request permission to conduct my research at your school.

Participation in this study is voluntary and the names of participants and the school will be kept confidential.

The particulars of my supervisor are as follows:

Professor: D. Bhana

School of Education and Development,

Faculty of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal

Tel: 0312602603

Email: bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Mrs. N. Simamane

APPENDIX 5



P. O Box 6774

Zimbali

4418

30 April 2012

Dear learner

I am a student at University of KwaZulu-Natal and doing a Masters Degree. My student number is 212558686. As part of my study I am trying to understand Young black women's construction of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS in a township school in Durban.

I am writing this letter to invite you to participate in my research. Participation in this study is voluntarily and your name will be kept confidential. The aim of the study is not to make money so there will be no monetary gain on it. All research material will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and the material will be destroyed after 5 years. If you decide to withdraw and not participate in the study, I will accept your decision entirely.

The particulars of my supervisor are as follows:

Professor: D. Bhana – Faculty of Education at University of KwaZulu-Natal

Tel: 0312602603

Email: bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za

Please complete the form attached to indicate that you understand what I have requested and indicate your reply to this request.

Please return this form to the school before __ of _____ 2012

Your participation will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. N. Simamane

Informed Consent Declaration

Young black women's constructions of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS in a township school in Durban.

Researcher: Mrs. N. Simamane

- I understand the request about the activities that I am invited to participate in doing.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time in the activity.
- I understand that my name and identity will not be used in any reports.

I _____ agree/disagree of _____
school to participate in this study as indicated in Mrs. N. Simamane's letter.

Signature of a learner

Date

Appendix 6

Turnitin Originality Report

Young black women's constructions of sexuality in the context of HIV and AIDS in a township school in Durban by Nelisiwe Simamane

From 16 Turning 17: Youth, Gender and Sexuality (Gender Education Master Students Year 2)

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Appendix 7

Interview Schedule

Focus Group:

1. Is it important for a girl to be a virgin on her wedding day?
2. What is your opinion regarding casual sex?
3. What are your opinions or views about the use of contraception?
4. Do you have a boyfriend or partner?
5. What sort of relationship do you have with your boyfriend or partner?
6. Do you sometimes have more than one partner at the same time?
7. Have you ever engaged in a sexual relationship because of peer pressure? Or just because you wanted to belong to a group of friends?
8. Does poverty or the lack of money at home drive you (or any other girl that you may know of) to engage in sexual activities or relations?
9. Do you (or any other girls that you may know of) see sexuality as the means of making money?
10. Do sexual relations assist in having money to buy 'good' girls want?
11. Do you observe sexuality as the means to assist girls in paying for studies?
12. Do you or your partner indulge in alcohol?
13. Have you (or any other girls that you may know of) ever had sex when under influence of alcohol?
14. To what extent did you (or were they) able to control your (their) sexual urges in absence of contraception?
15. What is your opinion on premarital sex?
16. What are your thoughts on virginity?
17. Are you (or any other girl that you may know of) sexually active? If yes, at what age did you (they) start becoming sexual active?
18. What do you understand about HIV and AIDS?
19. Please give me your opinion on this, having an unprotected sex; does it cause hiv and aids?
20. What type of protection against HIV and aids do you Prefer?
 - Abstaining;
 - Be faithful;
 - Condom?

Please tell me why you prefer this protection?

Individual Interviews:

1. Do you see sexuality as the means of making money?
2. Do sexual relations assist girls in getting or buying goods that they need or want?
3. What do you think about the use of contraceptives?
4. Do you have a boyfriend? What sort of relationship do you have with your boyfriend?
5. Are you sexually active?
6. Have you ever had multiple partners at the same time?
7. Have you used contraceptives before?
8. Would you prefer female or male condoms? And why?
9. Have you ever had sex whilst under the influence of alcohol? Or do you know of someone who has?
10. Do you think one can control the sex urges if they are under the influence of alcohol?
Especially in the absence of contraceptives
11. What type of boys do you find attractive?
12. Do you have a boyfriend? How many?
13. Do you engage in sexual intercourse with your boyfriend?
14. Have you engaged in sex with your previous boyfriends? What protection did you use?
15. Why do you prefer condoms to pills or injection?
16. What is your opinion regarding having sex before marriage?
17. Tell me, what are your thoughts about virginity testing?
18. Some men use women to satisfy their desires (sexual). What do you think about the behaviour of such men?
19. What does it mean to be a young woman growing up in this community? How do you define your womanhood?
20. Have you ever felt pressured to do something just because you are a girl? If yes, how did that make you feel?
21. Do you feel free to talk or discuss issues of sexuality with your parents?
22. What is your opinion regarding social networks? Tv, facebook, twitter, etc....
23. Do you think it exposes youth to too much sex?
24. Does sex education take place in your school?
25. Is there any subject that you think you might align with sex education?
26. Do you think this subject is relevant? Should it be taught?
27. Do you use anything to enhance the way you look?
28. Do you think that being a woman is an advantage? How?
29. How does the way you look influence your behaviour?
30. Would you stay in an abusive relationship?
31. What do you consider as being abusive in a relationship?
32. Tell me about your culture, when it comes to how you are expected to behave?
33. What do you consider to be risky, when it comes to sexual intercourse?
34. Would you compromise your life by agreeing to unprotected sex, if you really loved the boy and he does not want to use a condom?
35. How do you feel about your culture? Do you still see it as relevant?

