

**The marketing implications and youth perceptions on mobile  
phone adult content**

By

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## DECLARATION

This research has not been previously accepted for any degree and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed..........

Date.....*5/03/2007*.....

## **DEDICATIONS**

To my late father and my brother - going home is never the same without you. I know you would have been proud. Miss you lots, "dig you the most."

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1. To my husband Dingaana Daka and daughter Nosipho, now I can give you all the attention you deserve.
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## **ABSTRACT**

Mobile telephony has become one of the most commonly used communication tools in the telecommunications industry. The rapid growth of mobile telephony usage and all technology developments in handsets as well as the mobile networks are generating tremendous changes in telecommunications. The changes range from sending text messages, being able to take pictures using the mobile phone, downloading content and being able to access the Internet using the mobile phone. Mobile phones have become an integral part of life and at the same time have established itself as a distribution channel of adult content. By being a distribution channel of adult content it is opening the possibility of children's exposure to adult content on their mobile phones. The availability and accessibility of adult content by the youth has marketing implications for the mobile network operators which need to be taken into account and it raises issues regarding the marketing of the product as well as the debate relating to the brand reputation, corporate image versus potential revenue generation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Declaration</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Dedications</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>List of figures</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of tables</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>Chapter 1 – Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background.....	1
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	3
1.4 Value of the study.....	3
1.5 Key critical questions.....	4
1.6 Research problem.....	5
1.7 Objectives of the study.....	5
1.8 Research methodology.....	6
1.9 Limitations of the study.....	7
1.10 Structure of the study.....	7
1.11 Conclusion.....	8
<b>Chapter 2 – Literature Review</b> .....	<b>9</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Marketing and business strategy.....	10
2.3 Mobile industry, mobile content industry and mobile phones.....	26
2.4 Internet and mobile phones penetration in South Africa.....	31
2.5 What impact and effect does adult content have?.....	32
2.6 Youth and exposure to adult content.....	38
2.7 Conclusion.....	48

<b>Chapter 3 – Research Methodology</b> .....	<b>49</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	49
3.2 Research Design.....	49
3.3 Ethical guidelines.....	59
3.4 The role of the researcher.....	61
3.5 Conclusion.....	61
<b>Chapter 4 – Findings and Interpretation</b> .....	<b>62</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	62
4.2 Methodology.....	62
4.3 Emergent Themes.....	63
4.4 Discussion and the data.....	64
4.5 Conclusion.....	80
<b>Chapter 5 – Conclusion and recommendations</b> .....	<b>81</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	81
5.2 Study objectives and questions.....	81
5.3 Limitations of the study.....	85
5.4 Quality.....	85
5.5 Recommendations.....	86
5.6 Suggestions for future research.....	90
5.7 Conclusion.....	90
<b>References</b> .....	<b>91</b>
<b>Annexure A – Discussion Guide</b> .....	<b>102</b>
<b>Annexure B - Ethical clearance letter</b> .....	<b>105</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Distribution of the population by religion affiliation Census 1996 and 2001

Figure 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Figure 3: Total Revenues from Adult Mobile Content (US\$m). Forecast 2004 – 2009

Figure 4: Projected five year mobile content trends

Figure 5: Access Policy Example



## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Dimension of child development

Table 2: Sample and data collection method

Table 3: Emergent themes from the youth

## **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

For years South Africans didn't have access to mobile phones and since mobile telephony was launched in South Africa in 1994, mobile phones have become an integral part of people's lives. It doesn't matter what your age, race, religion, literacy and occupation is, mobile phones are owned by a large variety of people. The technological developments within the mobile phone industry have drastically changed over time as well as the reasons why people buy mobile phones. The reasons range from safety need to always be in touch, status, business as well as entertainment. With the technological developments mobile phones can be used for emailing, listening to music, banking, taking photos as well as accessing Internet to mention a few.

### **1.2 Background**

According to the Telecommunications Act of 1994, the mobile telephony industry was first launched in South Africa in 1994. Vodacom (Pty) Ltd and MTN (Mobile Telephone Networks (Pty) Ltd were incorporated in terms of the Companies Act, 1973 (Act 61 of 1973), and awarded licences to provide mobile cellular telecommunications services in accordance with the terms and conditions of the telecommunication licence and multiparty implementation agreement published under General Notice 1078 of 29 October 1993. Furthermore a third licence was offered in June 2001 to the Cell C Consortium, whose mobile services were launched on 17 November 2001 as the third mobile operator in South Africa.

South Africa has a vibrant mobile market that has seen rapid uptake of mobile services since competition was introduced to the sector more than 10 years ago. BMI-T (2004) stated that "subscribers to the three networks operated by

Vodacom, MTN and Cell C exceeded 20 million during 2004, compared with less than 5 million fixed-line connections” (BMI-T 2004:15). The market has mainly been driven by the prepaid sector, which accounts for around 85% of all mobile phone users. The entry of a third operator, Cell C, in November 2001 and introduction of mobile-based Internet and data services have greatly contributed to growth in this sector. Third generation (3G) services were introduced in December 2004.

When the mobile industry was launched in 1994, the only service that was available was the voice service. More than ten years later consumers are faced with a variety of products and services to choose from within the market place. The mobile operators have added data services in the form of mobile banking, short message service (SMS), wireless access protocol (WAP), email, multimedia message service (MMS), mobile content and 3G, giving access to the downloading of video clips as well as access to the Internet. Text based adult content has been in existence for sometime but the launch of MMS and 3G has raised issues around the availability of adult content on mobile phones.

Within the telecommunications industry mobile adult content is commonly described either as soft-core or hard-core pornography, online gambling, violent or sexually explicit mobile games and chat rooms. In addition, many premium rate SMS services which may include sexual content are also included. For the purposes of this study adult content focuses on sexual content: including images, videos and text-based services.

Davies (2004:24) says that “the adult content industry has been at the forefront of technology for a number of decades, and attention is now turning to using mobile phones and networks as a channel to distribute adult content.” The increase in data delivery speeds to wireless devices combined with the technological handset advances which offer colour screens and the ability to create and

download video clips gives the adult content industry another good channel for distribution.

The mobile industry has a wide spread of consumers ranging from under 8 years to over 70 years old. For the purposes of this study the youth is defined as between 13 and 18 years old.

The constant evolving and changing mobile industry has always made the mobile network operators to keep revisiting their business and marketing strategies. The availability of adult content is also contributing to the fact that business and marketing strategies that mobile network operators adopt have to be reviewed because of the implications that adult content has to their businesses. The main issue is the contradiction between revenue generation versus direct or indirect association of the mobile network operator with providing mobile adult content.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to survey the youth and get their view towards the availability and accessibility of adult content on mobile phones. The study also debates the marketing implications and looks at issues that MNOs need to take into account with the introduction of mobile adult content. In the mobile content environment the youth are the most aggressive content adopters and users, actively downloading different forms of content which include ring tones, logos, games, messages etc. According to the survey conducted by Sunday Times in the Sunday Times Generation X Survey Report (2005) the mobile phone emerged as the most treasured possession and it showed status. The assumption is that since the youth own mobile phones there is a possibility of them accessing and downloading adult content whether intentionally or unintentionally.

This study will draw correlations from the studies that have been done within the Internet industry with reference to the youth accessing adult content and the effects and impact of accessing this content as well as learnings from the cigarette industry mainly with regards to the marketing to the youth a product that is seen as potentially harmful.

#### **1.4 Value of the study**

This study will contribute to mobile network operators (MNOs), wireless applications service providers (WASPs), content providers and even parents in understanding how the youth views mobile adult content and the possible effects as they get exposed to the particular adult content. It also sensitises marketers within the industry on factors that have to be considered in dealing with the youth.

#### **1.5 Key critical questions**

**The key critical questions of this study are:**

- Are the youth aware of the availability of adult content on mobile phones?
- What is the current interaction with adult content on mobile phones if there is any?
- What are their perceptions and attitudes of adult content on mobile phones?
- How do they think the availability of adult content on mobile phones will impact on their behaviour?
- What are the marketing implications of the availability of mobile adult content in the market place?
- How is the availability of mobile adult content affecting marketing strategies of the product?

## **1.6 Research problem**

The technological developments within the telecommunications environment have seen the introduction of 3G and handsets that offer colour images as well as access to the Internet. The introduction of these technologies provides the pornography industry with another distribution channel for adult content. With the youth owning mobile phones with these technologies they are vulnerable to accessing or receiving adult content.

According to the Trend Youth 2 Report (2002) 44% of the youth in South Africa own mobile phones and with the evolving technology giving access to the Internet, downloading of video clips as well as handsets with colour screens, has given rise to the opportunities for content providers to bring mobile adult content to the market. Adult content has been identified as a huge revenue spinner for content providers and MNOs in the adult content market which also raises debates on whether MNOs should be engaging with mobile adult content for revenue purposes and how that impacts on their businesses mainly looking at corporate image and reputation.

## **1.7 Objectives of the study**

The primary objectives of this study are:

- To investigate the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of youth towards the availability of adult content on mobile phones.
- To explore factors that MNOs should consider when working on marketing strategies for this product.

In more detail, the objectives are:

- To establish any awareness of the availability of adult content on mobile phones amongst the youth, and establish whether there is current interaction with mobile phone adult content.
- To explore their perceptions and attitudes towards the availability of adult content on mobile phones in order to understand their opinions/viewpoint i.e. do they think it's wrong or right?
- To explore how they think the availability of mobile phone adult content will impact on their behaviour i.e. how likely are they to engage with mobile adult content?
- To explore how they perceive the impact of the availability of adult content on mobile phones is to them.

### **1.8 Research methodology**

This study is a qualitative study and it is defined as a technique involving a small number of respondents who provide descriptive information about their thoughts and feelings that are not easily projected to the whole population. The usage of this methodology aimed to identify categories, theme motifs in the perceptions and attitudes emerging from the data. The qualitative approach was to allow participants to express their feelings and attitudes but the findings cannot be generalised.

Ulin et al (2005) argue that the theoretical framework for most qualitative research emerges from an interpretivist perspective, a paradigm that sees the world as constructed, interpreted, and experienced by people in their interactions with each other and with wider social systems. The methodological substance of the interpretivist framework comprises identifying, sorting and analysing the meaning in relation to objective behaviour. For this study the key components of

the framework were taken into account and these are subjective perceptions and understandings, which arise from experience or observations.

In order to explore answers to the research problem, the following steps were taken. Data was collected using triad interviews with the youth as well as focus groups with the young adult group between the ages of 21 and 25 years. A discussion guide was used as an instrument and participants were requested to give their opinions and attitudes towards the availability of adult content on mobile phones. The data was analysed by a textual analysis of dominant themes from the documented responses.

### **1.9 Limitations of the study**

- Time factor - there is limited time to conduct this study before deadline and with school holidays the accessibility of teenagers could be limited.
- Due to ethical guidelines, the youth cannot be shown examples of adult content.
- There's the possibility that participants communicated what they thought the researcher was looking for mainly with reference to their own participation or engagement with mobile adult content.
- Since it's a qualitative study, the sample can be regarded as small.
- Cost – had to find a cheapest way to conduct the study

### **1.10 Structure of the study**

The remainder of this report is organised in the following sequence:



## Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter refers to the theory that supports the study and works that have been done previously with reference to the Internet as well as the psychology behind adult content.

## Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter documents how the research was conducted. The methods and techniques used for the data collection and data analysis.

## Chapter 4: Findings and discussion

This chapter discusses the findings of the study, interpretation of the result. The results are discussed with reference to the literature.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

The conclusion relates to whether the study has achieved the objectives and purpose of the study. The recommendations are also detailed in this chapter.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the purpose of the study taking into account the research problem which indicates that the technology developments within the mobile phone industry have a possibility of affecting the youth and making them vulnerable to adult content.

## **Chapter 2 – Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

According to Thornburg and Lin (2002:77) the youth are faced with a lot of information and entertainment which they need to view and absorb on a daily basis. This information or entertainment is in different media formats ranging from books, television, music, movies, computer or playstation games, mobile phone content to name a few. With regard to this study the focus is on mobile entertainment which gives access to adult content as a form of entertainment.

Thornburgh and Lin (2002) continue to state that the access to these mediums raises concern since time on the computer, mobile phones and online, does not always involve parental supervision. Many children have mobile phones, radios, CD players, a television, and even a computer in their rooms. As a result, parents are not in a position to monitor their children's media activity, nor can they readily provide any feedback or support for children's online or mobile phone activities.

More often than not parents find themselves relying on these mediums to keep the youth busy or entertained, while their attention is required elsewhere. Activities such as long working hours, caring for younger siblings and even cooking the evening meal often leaves the youth without the intended parental supervision.

Since this study assesses the perceptions and attitudes of the youth to mobile adult content, it is important to isolate and understand the terms “perceptions and attitudes”. According to the South African Pocket Oxford Dictionary (2003:660) perception is defined as the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses or a way of understanding or regarding something. Attitudes are defined as a way of thinking or feeling about someone or something.

The adult content that can be accessed by mobile phones is provided by different players within the mobile phone market. One is the advancement of technology giving mobile phones ability to access the internet as well as phones with cameras that can take pictures and also record movie clips. Secondly, the content is provided by MNOs through their content portals. Thirdly, the content is provided by WASPs using the MNOs network.

This chapter covers literature that looks at the issues that marketers have to take into account in making decisions whether to provide mobile adult content as MNOs or allow WASPs to use their networks for the delivery of mobile phone adult content. As well as literature which supports the perception that adult content can influence a person, can have negative impact on the youth, youth trends and how South African society has changed in the past decade.

## **2.2 Marketing and business strategy**

According to the South African Pocket Oxford Dictionary (2003:898) strategy is defined as the plan designed to achieve a particular long term aim, art of planning and directing military activity in a war or battle often contrasted with tactics. “Technology affects marketing in two basic ways with new products and with new processes (ways of doing things), the world has moved from an industrial society to an information society” (Perreault and McCarthy 2005:106). The technological change opens up new opportunities but also poses challenges for marketers. The success of some companies highly depends on how quickly

new ideas can be brought to the marketplace but at the same time marketers need to help decide what technological developments are ethically acceptable.

The introduction of mobile phone adult content in the market place will be seen as an introduction of a new product which will require a marketing strategy or plan taking into account the business strategy. As part of the corporate strategy the MNO has to define what business they are in and how they are going to achieve the overall objective which is profits thus creating value for shareholders. One of the ways to contribute to profits is to create new services or bring new services or products to markets which will meet consumer needs or demands. If the MNO sees the opportunity and believes that the market is looking and ready to accept mobile adult content, the MNO has to make a strategic decision taking into account all the implications of providing the product. "The primary focus of marketing strategy is to effectively allocate and coordinate marketing resources and activities to accomplish the firm's objective within a specific product market" (Mullins et al 2005:42).

Main objective of most businesses except for not-for-profit organisations is to make profit but this has changed with time and it is no longer the only factor that has to be taken into account and this is incorporated in the societal marketing concept. According to Kotler (2000) the societal marketing concept holds that the organisation's task is to determine the needs, wants, interests of target markets and to deliver the desires satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors in a way that preserves or enhances the consumer's and society's well being. Social marketing has been incorporated into the objectives because it is seen as contributing to the welfare of the community and can create a good image and reputation for the business.

In the case of mobile adult content the question is, does mobile phone adult content preserve or enhance the consumer and the society's well being? Is it

justifiable for MNOs to provide adult content because of potential revenues that they can make associated with the product? Is the corporate perception or image of providing the product which might not be seen as being socially responsible or morally correct to bring to the market being tarnished?

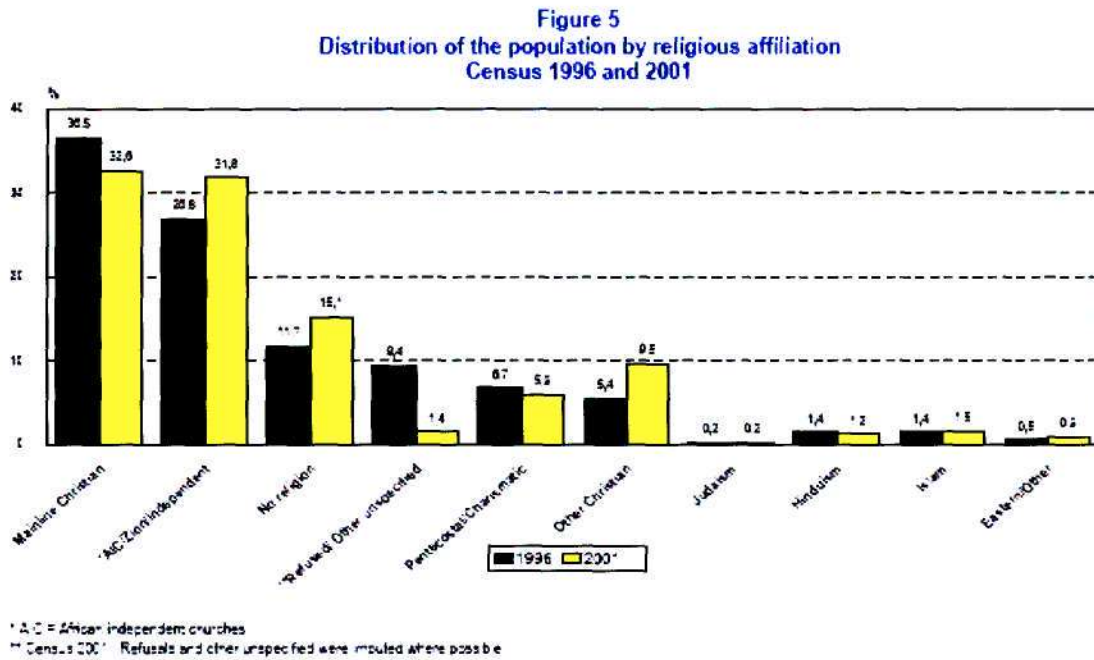
Depending on the country and society mobile phone adult content can be perceived differently. There are countries where pornography is legalised and is acceptable within society. At the same time there are countries where adult content is not acceptable. If adult content is not legal and mainly unacceptable to be viewed by people under the age of 18 years of age and South Africa falls into this category this means precautions have to be taken when providing this service to adults so as to be able to protect children.

### **2.2.1 Market segmentation and target marketing**

Market segmentation and target marketing are critical factors within a marketing strategy. Mullins et al (2005) defines market segmentation as the process by which a market is divided into distinct subsets of customers with similar needs and characteristics that lead to respond in similar ways to a particular product offering and marketing program. Different market segments have different wants and needs both tangible and intangible.

Furthermore Mullins et al (2005) states that the segmentation criteria or descriptors are used to do the segmentations, these descriptors are; demographic (which reflect who the target customers are), geographic (where they are) and behavioural (how they behave with regard to their use and/or purchases of a given category of goods and services). Market segmentation is used to define the target market or define which target market to exclude. In the case of this study we focus on the market that needs to be excluded using the age descriptor which is anybody less than 18 years of age whether female or

**Figure 1: Distribution of the population by religious affiliation Census 1996 and 2001**



**Source: Adapted from Census 2001 Report**

### 2.2.2 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Maslow's hierarchy classifies the diversity of needs. He classified human needs in a scheme in which the lower level needs must first be satisfied, or partly satisfied, before the higher level needs can fully emerge. The individual is motivated to fulfil whichever need is most strongly felt at any given moment. Figure 2 below shows Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

**Figure 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**



### Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: [www.pateo.com/article6.html](http://www.pateo.com/article6.html)

According to Strydom et al, a need is a basic force that motivates an individual to do something. When examining mobile phone adult content this study argues that the mobile phone adult content is trying to fulfil the self esteem need, the question is whether the same need is being satisfied within adults and youth or different needs get satisfied within the different age groups?

It is argued by Kelley and Lazer (1973:457) that buyers do not always know why they decide to make a purchase and even when they do, they may prefer to keep the reason to themselves and this is the case with mobile phone adult content since the person can view the content on their own. Often, more than one reason or psychological motive may underlie a purchase, some of which may be known to the purchaser and others not. Research findings do not clearly establish why consumers react as they do to products and services. The above

statement tries to explain that companies are always taking a risk with introduction of new products because they can never predict or guarantee how the response is going to be like in the marketplace. The product can be accepted or rejected. The study believes that if the MNO could target the youth there could be existing customers that would not be willing to part of the MNO. A study to test this hypothesis can be done in the future.

### **2.2.3 Ethics, morals and social responsibility**

The introduction of mobile phone adult content raises questions around ethics, morals and social responsibility mainly looking at the MNO that is bringing the product to the marketplace. "The lack of control that we have over the various mediums to which the youth are exposed begs the question; censorship or freedom of expression? What we need to do is to educate the youth as to what is appropriate and what is not, but again here lies another conundrum, in that morality differs from culture to culture and family to family. Marketers and family units need to share the responsibility when it comes to questions of morality and what is appropriate or not for a specific age group." (Kuhne;2005)

"Because marketing is a social instrument through which a standard of living is transmitted to society, it is a social discipline with commensurate social responsibilities that cannot merely be the exclusive concern of companies and their customers, but involve governments, stockholders, and the public at large" (Lazer 1971;552) The accessibility and availability of mobile adult content to the youth can be viewed as not being socially responsible and unethical by other customers. For customers that perceive the provision of mobile adult content as unethical will this lead to them not wanting to be associating with the MNO that is providing adult content, how far will this affect the relationship between the customer and the MNO?



Kelley and Lazer (1973) state that ethics refer to the evaluation of human conduct in the light of moral principles. Morality refers to the acceptance of and adherence to certain kinds of rules, moral rules the standards approved by the culture or a large number or group of people, and that are, therefore, based on subjective judgments. Moral rules are those that define good, right, true, or appropriate conduct among and within groups and things. That which is socially appropriate, fitting, accepted at a point in time is moral. Morals, therefore, reflect ethical principles, prescribe what we should or ought to do, and change through time. Ethics in marketing is concerned not with what marketing behavior is but with what it ought to be. Its domain is standards of behavior in marketing decisions and actions in the implementation of marketing policies and strategies.

The above still raises the question of whether companies that provide adult content are acting immoral and unethical. In South Africa adult content is seen as being immoral and exposing the youth to it is unacceptable due to religious, social and cultural principles. Is the marketing of this product immoral and unethical when it is being targeted to adults only or is it just immoral and unethical? All the MNOs in South Africa have publicly admitted that they will not be getting involved in providing mobile phone adult content. The concern is that the WASPs are using the MNOs networks as a pipeline to deliver the content either on SMS, WAP, MMS or video. This action by MNOs can be categorized as being unethical which has been the same debate with the ISPs within the internet environment. The MNOs are still making money through revenue sharing models with the WASPs, the difference is that the product is not directly available on their content portals and it's not branded under the MNO.

However morals and ethics are highly arguable subjects "what is the nature and basis of our moral principles? First, they are subjective and reflect experiences and cultural environments. Second, they may be self-imposed or imposed from the outside, as is the case when society establishes the norms in contrast with

the establishment of personal norms. Third, even though they deal with what one ought to do, they do not provide unambiguous, absolute guidelines. In fact several "oughts" may be distinguished the moral ought, the legal ought, the economic ought, and the aesthetic ought they may result in conflicting conclusions" (Kelley and Lazer: 1973)

#### **2.2.4 Implications**

This study argues that there are possible marketing implications to MNOs when they make a strategic decision to provide mobile phone adult content.

- **Positioning and differentiation of the company**

All companies position themselves in the market place so as to take or create a space in the minds of the consumers. Marx and van der Walt (1989) define positioning as the way consumers perceive a product or company in terms of its characteristics and advantages and its competitive position. Positioning comprises of both competitive and customers need consideration. Differentiation relates to the reason why customers prefer one product or company over another. When dealing with mobile adult content the questions that need to be answered are:

- can the provisioning of mobile adult content be used as a differentiator in the marketplace?
- will consumers prefer your company over competitors because of the provisioning of adult content?

This study doesn't believe that the provisioning of adult content is a differentiator in the marketplace; it argues that the provisioning of adult content can create negative perceptions towards the company mainly taking into account the religious, social and culturally factors within South Africa. At the same time it acknowledges that there would be a group of people that would be indifferent to the fact but with number portability which has been introduced where subscribers

can move to another MNO without losing their number it is possible that subscribers that are offended by this can change MNOs.

- **Consumer or societal readiness**

Before a company introduces a product in the market it needs to gather information to determine whether the market is ready for that product or not. For example the introduction of WAP which was seen as a next step from SMS did not take off as was expected. The expectations of the consumers surpassed the product that was introduced with most of the WAP not functioning properly. According to Condos et al (1998) WAP usability left much to be desired and the usability was very poor because the product didn't meet the consumer expectations.

The South African market in the past few years has gone and is still going through a lot of changes politically, economically and socially. Socially the country is faced with a number of challenges ranging from crime, drugs, poverty, child pornography, child and women abuse, scourge of HIV/Aids pandemic to mention a few. All these issues contribute to the well being of the society and what products are being consumed as well as how these can impact or affect the youth. This study below looks at ways how adult content can affect the youth.

- **Corporate reputation**

Company's reputation in the marketplace is a valuable asset that should be protected because it has significant value and use to the entity.

Stewart (2002) defines corporate reputation as an intangible associated with and derived from the following:

- the standard of the goods and services an entity supplies;
- the quality and reputation associated with an entity's:
  - business name(s);

- trade marks, e.g. brand position and evolution; and
- domain names;
- market position and strength and
- the confidential information an entity has, i.e. some confidential information if released or released at the wrong time may damage reputation, e.g. executive salaries, joint venture proposals and controversial marketing plans.

Furthermore he argues that corporate reputation has been referred to as a strategic asset that can:

- be used to; maintain and build,- brand names, customer trust; and public trust.
- manage crisis and adverse publicity;
- maintain share price/investor confidence; and
- determine or change an entity's strategic direction and culture to deal with new markets.

This study questions whether consumers really care about corporate reputation when it comes to purchasing decisions (choosing a product or company to purchase from)? According to Page and Fearn (2005), it is argued that consumers do care, but for most consumers it is just not top of the agenda when shopping. Corporate reputation is related to brand equity and sales. It is clear that while a weak reputation has serious implications for brand perceptions, a good reputation merely creates the opportunity to develop stronger brands, not a guarantee.

What is important is that consumers do expect good from companies, and being seen in the bad light, fairly or unfairly, can cause damage. If consumers have an emotional connection with the company's brands or products that may be eroded if consumers feel bad about buying that brand (if and when they do think about it), it erodes that brand's long-term

equity. If the competitors are marketing themselves on the good of their products this can also lead to consumers doing a competitive comparison and basing their decision on what the companies have to offer.

Maintaining a strong reputation for leadership, innovation, success, and fairness to customers will have a much stronger direct effect on brand equity and sales than ethics. Being seen to fail, or to rip consumers off, is of much more direct relevance to consumers and will have strong effects on the business. For many companies, the budget for consumer communications on ethics may be better spent ensuring the brand experience delivers, or fair pricing, or marketing the individual brands themselves.

A MNO can view the introduction of mobile phone adult content as an innovation and contributing to being a leader in the marketplace. The question that has to be answered is whether the customers view it in the same light because a brand or reputation is not based on what the company says but on what the customers' perceptions are. If the introduction of mobile phone adult content brings negative publicity that will definitely affect the corporate reputation.

- **The Brand**

According to Keller and Aaker (1990) a brand is defined as an asset, simply stated, is a property, with an assumed value that should be consistently maximised by an organisation. A brand is a perceived image residing in the mind of consumers. He furthermore states that a brand has positive (negative) customer-based brand equity if consumers react more (less) favorably to the product or company.

This study does acknowledge that there consumers that have consumer connections with brands and can reach a level of loyalty so intense that it doesn't matter how the company is perceived they will continue being loyal to it. The company can survive poor product performance, scandal, bad publicity, high prices etc. The term "consumer devotion" implies religious fervor and it includes elements of sacredness (Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry 1989). Fans of college football teams provide a convenient context for discussion of this fervor.

- **Public Policy Issues**

This study believes that the provision of mobile phone adult content mainly to the youth falls within a category of marketing of dangerous or otherwise harmful product like tobacco and alcohol. The main issues relate to how the product is being advertised to the relevant target market and how easy is it for the youth to access the product.

The marketing efforts of mobile phone adult content may encourage accessibility by the youth as well as excess consumption by the target market of the product. Government or industry bodies are always expected to intervene so as to set laws and rules to guide against these issues. In the case of movies the age restriction laws are in place but how will government monitor whether in every household that is being upheld, which shows that parents and families need to take more responsibility and that is the same process with regard to the mobile phone adult content except if the product is abolished completely.

## **2.3 Mobile industry, mobile content industry and mobile phones**

Below is an overview of the South African mobile industry. This overview specifies the players, number of users and how much the industry is worth. This information gives an indication of how the industry has grown and evolved in the past decade.

Anon (2004) on the cellular online website gave an overview of the mobile phone industry:

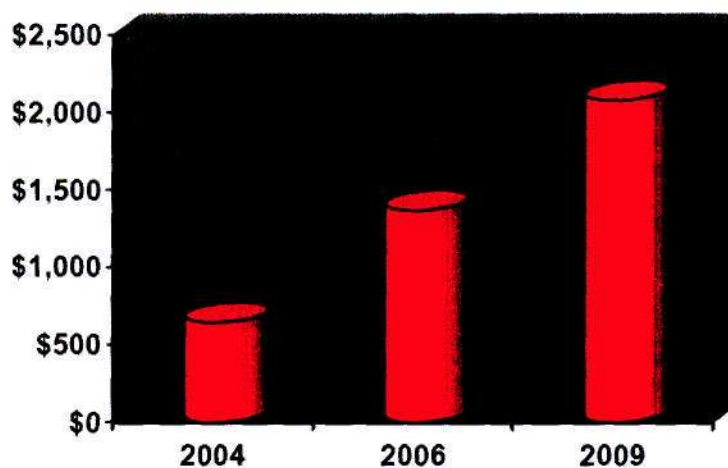
- Market size as of June 2004 was 18.7 million users
- Potential by 2006 is 19 million users
- The market is dominated by Vodacom and MTN who operate at GSM 900 Mhz. A license was awarded in June 2001 to the Cell C Consortium (live from Nov 17 2001). It operates at GSM 900 and 1800 Mhz. Cell C has 3m users. Some 84% or 1.6 million of its subscribers were prepaid users and 16% contract.
- Market share: Vodacom 54% (9.7m), MTN 30% (5.22 m); Cell C 16% (3m) as of June 2004.
- More than 90% of all new connections are prepaid customers.
- Over 9000 users sign up per day (mostly prepaid).
- The SA market is currently worth R23 billion and will grow to around R54 billion by 2007.
- Together the three GSM networks cover more than 71% of the population
- People in previously under-serviced areas are making over 35 million calls (65 million minutes) per month from Vodacom's 2 135 community phone shops.

The mobile content industry which is a part of the mobile industry in South Africa is made up of mobile network operators (MNOs), content providers/aggregators and wireless application service providers (WASP). MNOs are the three main operators - Vodacom, Cell C and MTN. WASPs are any person(s) engaged in the provision of a mobile service, including premium rated services, who signs a WASP contract with the MNO for bearer services enabling the provision of such services e.g. Clickatell, Exactmobile. Content providers or aggregators are individuals or companies that create mobile content and they can sell it to MNOs or to WASPs. These players are providing consumers with mobile content which is supposed to enhance the consumers' lifestyles and offer entertainment. The content ranges from ringtones, sms content, music, games, adult content to name a few. Czernowalow of IT Web (2005) stated that the mobile industry generates R500m revenue in South Africa with 10% of that coming from adult content which equates to R50m.

Juniper Research (2005:3) estimated that the total overall mobile adult content will more than triple over the next five years to nearly US2.1bn by 2009. The figure below illustrates this but they argue that this is a conservative figure; they believe regulatory and cultural issues will have significant effect on this industry. In many countries in the Middle Eastern countries adult content is a criminal offence, possession of soft-core pornography is illegal and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. These countries virtually have no free adult content via mobile wireless and any persons seeking to access it need to engage in some form of commercial transaction which can be traced.



**Figure 3: Total revenues from Adult Mobile Content (US\$). Forecast 2004 – 2009**



Source: Adapted from Juniper Research

Commercial pornography seems to be constantly in the vanguard of exploiting new avenues of distribution. The distribution of adult content has ranged from video cassettes of movies, telephone services using chatlines services, pictures and video clips which can be viewed and downloaded on the Internet. The latest channel is mobile phones. The Internet and mobile phones provide the easiest access yet to pornographic material. Pictures or video clips can be distributed world wide within a short space of time.

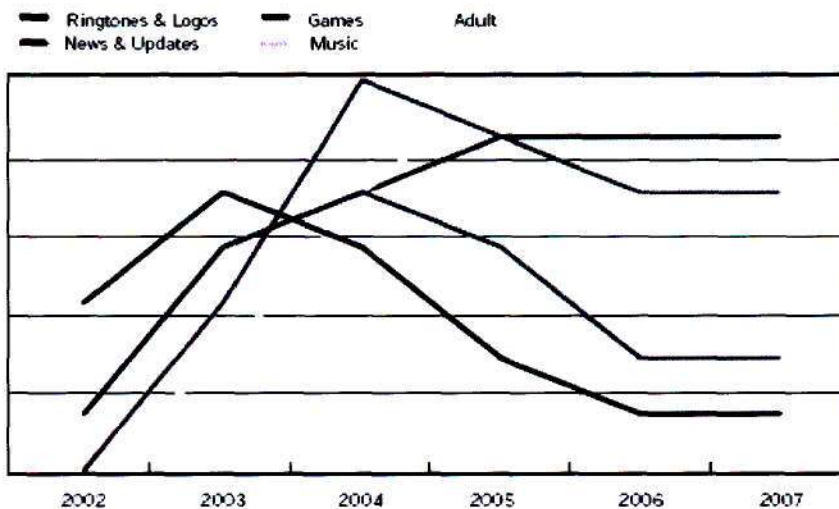
The mobile phone is intrinsically a highly anonymous medium mainly on prepaid within South Africa. Any person can buy the phone without having to give their personal information, and they can only be identified by their cellphone number. Messages and information are passed through the mobile phones without the identification of the party doing the sending. One important consequence of the mobile phones as within the Internet is that anonymity is huge within the market which is made up of more than 90% prepaid customers. It is quite difficult to differentiate between adult and minor users within the mobile phone industry. A

second consequence is that technological approaches that seek to differentiate between adults and minors generally entail some loss of privacy for adults who are legitimate customers of certain adult content materials to which minors do not have legitimate access and this has been experienced by some international operators like Vodafone (Sherriff:2004)

The graph below by Info Insight quoted in the BMI-T Report (2004) illustrates the projections within the industry which indicates that mobile adult content is one of the services within mobile content that is expected to increase in the coming years. The availability of adult content on mobile phones seems to be a reality and it is expected to be a revenue spinner for the players in the market. Is the revenue projected only from adult subscribers or is there a portion of it that relates to revenue from the youth?

**Figure 4: Projected five year mobile content trends**

*Figure 5.5: Projected five-year mobile content trends*



Source: Info Insight

According to Czernowalow quoting Streicher (2005) confirms that mobile technology has advanced to enable the transmission of colour pictures. 3G has also been introduced in the market and this technology gives access to the Internet and ability to download images quickly. The availability of 3G, MMS and mobile adult content increasing in the future is a cause of concern for the general public mainly religious groups and parents. "Children are being exposed to hardcore adult content through the new 3G mobile phones; the problem has even reached the classroom, with youngsters passing around handsets carrying obscene images downloaded from the Internet". (Poulter 2005: 25)

For the industry it is assumed adult content is a huge revenue spinner when taking into account how adult content has performed within the Internet, magazines, videos etc.

These developments within the mobile industry of being able to have wireless access to the Internet which means access anywhere enables users, including children, to escape many forms of local supervision (e.g., someone looking over his or her shoulder). "Individuals will not be as dependent on school, libraries, and work to provide Internet access. Consequently, approaches to Internet protection and safety for children that depend on actions whose effect is limited to a single venue will be increasingly ineffective" (Thornburgh and Ulin 2002:16).

Streaming media, video, and audio are allowing people to watch movies like broadcasts over the mobile phones as well. Any movie that is available in the market may readily become available through the mobile phones. Furthermore with the majority of mobile phones having built-in cameras and being able to record video clips while one might have had difficulty in the past in taking a picture of a couple having sex due to the difficulty in having the film developed), today a mobile phone enables one to do the same in complete privacy.

## **2.4 Internet and mobile phones penetration in SA**

Mobile phones and internet penetration is on the increase in South Africa with mobile phones penetration surpassing internet penetration. The Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) 2000 Report which is a study of youth in South Africa, states that about 15% of young people have access to the Internet compared to 44% who have mobile phones. The ability to use the Internet is particularly low in rural areas equating to 2% whereas in urban areas 25% of the youth are more likely to have access to a computer and the Internet whereas mobile phones are used by a large number of the population in the rural and urban areas.

Young people are able to embrace technology more easily than the older generation. Age, rather than education, appears to be the most important factor, since youth under 20, at all levels of education, are more likely to be able to use a computer and mobile phone compared to older respondents with the same level of education.

In a report by Rideout (2001) it was stated that Internet is mainly used as an education tool, but when searching for any sex or health related topics which could be part of life orientation subjects there is a good chance of being exposed to adult content sites. Furthermore Thornburg and Ulin (2002) quoted the study done by Nielsen/NetRatings (2002) indicated that nearly 16 percent of the visitors to adult-oriented web sites in February 2002 were under the age of 18.

The issues that have faced the Internet environment regarding adult content are now being transferred to the mobile phone industry. The reality is that there are more teenagers who own mobile phones than those who have access to the

internet, which makes this issue even more serious within the mobile industry. Furthermore mobile phones are an individual tool which means the viewing of adult content can be done privately without the next person witnessing it.

## **2.5 What impact and effect does adult content have?**

Impact and effects of adult content are a huge debate from different schools of thought. The debate centres on whether adult content influences people and whether it impacts them in a good or bad way and whether it affects people negatively or positively. The question that arises is if images don't influence people's behaviour or attitude why is there an advertising industry. The same argument can be applied in viewing adult content. The underlying assumption is that each person is affected by adult content differently taking into account the person's background, culture and psyche. The different views are discussed below.

The feminist scholars believe that adult content is the main weapon by which a patriarchal society maintains dominance over women. Adult content enacts male dominance over women, as such, adult content's main effect is to "deny women full equality" (Einsiedal 1988:113). It can therefore be argued that the access and viewing of adult content contributes to the many elements which shape the perceptions of the youth insofar as the role of men and women in society is concerned. In recent years great strides have been made to level the playing fields for gender equality in South Africa, but we still find that the patriarchal system still permeates many spheres of society. It is therefore important to maintain a balance, and where needed, monitor the exposure to those elements, in this case adult content, that might add to a distorted view of men and women's roles in society.

The feminist “anti-porn” also highlights several core concerns: the misogynistic content of pornography and its attendant sex roles, the harm and violence done to women in the production and consumption of adult content, and the impact of pornographic content on men’s attitudes and behaviours.

Religious and political conservatives argue that adult content is destroying their cherished and institutionalized “Judaeo-Christian family values, which stress the virtues of the nuclear family, monogamous sexual relationships within marriage, and the reproductive rather than recreational functions of sexual behaviour” (McNair 1996:49). Since adult content can show orgies this raises issues relating to Christianity and family values where it is expected that one man should have one wife.

Contrasting the other two groups of scholars the liberalists view is based on respect for free speech. Liberals argue that unless a causal relationship can be shown between adult content and harm to women and children then such content should be legal. However Cline (1990) psychiatrist at University of Utah argues that adult content has both a general impact on society and a specific impact on some individuals and for some adult content is a way of life. He continues to summarise a four part progression in the impact of adult content where he states that users become addicted and some will then seek harder and more bizarre material. Offenders then become desensitised to the material they are viewing and find it hard to distinguish between what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Sadly, some then lose satisfaction from viewing material and want to act out the acts they have witnessed.

### 2.5.1 Addiction

As mentioned above one of the first effects of viewing adult content is addiction. This means once involved in obscene materials they keep coming back for more and still more. The material seems to provide a very powerful sexual stimulant or aphrodisiac effect followed by sexual release most often through masturbation. With the research done by Cline (1990) pornography seemed to provide very exciting and powerful fantasies that the participants frequently recalled to mind and elaborated on in their fantasies.

Secondly, there is an escalation effect. Cline (1990) continued to argue that this effect which means that with the passage of time the person requires more explicit, rougher and more deviant of sexual material to get their highs and sexual turn ons. It was reminiscent of those individuals afflicted with drug addictions. Over time, there is nearly always an increasing need for more of the stimulant to get the same effect as one got initially. Marriott (2003) wrote an article about Ted Bundy, the US serial sexual murderer executed for his crimes in January 1989. The night before his death, he explained his addiction to pornography in a radio interview: "It happened in stages, gradually ... My experience with ... pornography that deals on a violent level with sexuality is that, once you become addicted to it, and I look at this as a kind of addiction like other kinds of addiction, I would keep looking for more potent, more explicit, more graphic kinds of material. Like an addiction, you keep craving something which is harder, harder, something which gives you a greater sense of excitement, until you reach the point where the pornography only goes so far" (2003:9)

Based on the above research and cases it can be suggested that even more than adults the youth is vulnerable and susceptible to all sorts of influences.

Therefore, in some cases continued and unhindered access to adult content can contribute to deviant behaviour over time, which may result in anything from broken relationships to more serious issues such as behavioural problems resulting in addiction and at the end of the spectrum more serious sex crimes. It can also be argued that these effects can contribute to the person to expect the same sexual behaviour from their partner and if the partner is not willing this can lead to serious conflicts within relationships.

### **2.5.2 Sexual arousal**

Further to the above-mentioned theories and research it is known that there's a powerful effect of both visual and literary pornography in its ability to sexually arouse males and females. This effect has been shown both mentally and physically. Kinsey (1948) found that males and females reported sexual arousal from material portraying nudity or sexual acts. Further studies have shown that arousal is caused by a combination of cognitive and imaginative processing (Geer and Fuhr, 1976; Prbyla and Byrne, 1984), and that arousal can result from self-generated erotic and non-erotic fantasies (Henson and Rubin, 1971). The question is how the person deals with the effects of sexual arousal mainly a young person. The sexual arousal can lead to thoughts of wanting to explore further or contribute to their sexuality at a later stage where they need to watch adult content to be aroused and this can either have negative or positive impact.

### **2.5.3 Aggression**

Aggression is defined as hostile or violent behaviour or attitudes. There is a view that exposure to adult content leads men to greater levels of aggression towards



women. Donnerstein and Berkowitz (1981) concluded that aggressive adult content can directly influence aggression against women. Malamuth and Donnerstein (1984) also agreed that aggressive pornography is a strong contributor to violence against women and the main factors in this aggressive facilitation; however seems to be the aggressive nature of the content.

The 10-member panel of the United States of America Attorney General's Commission on Pornography (1986) concluded unanimously after reviewing a great volume of clinical and experimental research that "substantial exposure to sexually violent materials (violent pornography) . . . bears a causal relationship to antisocial acts of sexual violence . . ." and "there is a causal relationship between exposure to sexually violent materials and an increase in aggressive behaviour directed towards women". They also commented, "the evidence from formal or informal studies of self-reports of offenders themselves supports the conclusions that the causal connection we identify relates to actual sexual offenses."

South Africa has a high number of aggressions with relation to violence to women and children. There is sixteen days of activism against women and children which gives some context on how huge the problem is. The violence against women and children is associated with a number of issues e.g. masculinity, men not being able to deal with issues of women's rights, poverty, women having opportunity to take care of themselves and their families. Taking this further is there a possibility that adult content, violence on our televisions also contribute to these atrocities happening in our society.

#### **2.5.4 Desensitisation**

As Cline (1990) argued that after sometime the person become desensitise and this means insensitive or non-reactive to a sensitising agent or to extinguish an emotional response to stimuli which formerly induced it, make emotionally insensitive. There is evidence from television research which states that violence on television desensitises children to actual violence.

With reference to adult content it is concluded that after seeing the material over and over again the person becomes indifferent which can affect their own sexual relations at a later stage, possibly resulting in one or more of the above including addiction, aggression, desensitisation, etc.

#### **2.5.5 Attitudes towards women**

The assumption is that more males than females consume adult content. A study done by Luedtke and Virginia (2002:128) indicated that adult content imagery plays a virtually mandatory role in the sexual socialisation of men. Boys come into contact with adult content during the early stages of their sexual maturation. The content of adult media speaks in meaningful ways to young men as they navigate their way into adulthood, whatever it presents to them is experienced as valuable and desirable. Adult content doesn't seem to have a same appeal to young females.

Since there is a wide availability of adult content in our society and its consumption by men can contribute to a general lowering of the attitude towards women and a belief that women are always sexually available. It also promotes the idea of casual sex without love as a nirvana of constant and complete sexual satisfaction. Zillman and Bryant (1982:16) concluded that exposure to violent

adult content seemed to make rape appear as a trivial offence. There's research that shows a link between violent adult content material and antisocial views about women and rape (Malamuth and Check, 1980 and 1985).

### **2.5.6 Decline in family values**

There's a possibility that people massively exposed to adult content will become distrusting partners in extended relationships since their relationships are influenced by adult content that they view. Another likely consequence is a growing dissatisfaction with sexual reality. Similarly, Linz and Malamuth (1993:17) commented that exposure to adult content "fosters a lack of respect for social institutions such as the family and traditional sex roles for women".

## **2.6 Youth and exposure to adult content**

"One of the fundamentals is that children basically want to have fun, the hype around kids growing older younger has given marketers and many parents the false impression that children are more intelligent, mature and sophisticated than ever before. Child developmental psychologist Carol Affleck reminds us that "children still need to go through each of their developmental stages in order to develop properly, they might be more media savvy and technologically literate but a child who is 7 now has the same capacity as a 7 year old in 10 BC, the only difference being the amount of knowledge available to them and their environment." (Kuhne 2005:1)

A number of issues have been identified as those that can have an effect on the youth, including addiction, education, communication, exposure as well as

access to adult content either intentionally or unintentionally. Thornburgh and Lin (2002) said that about half of all sites on the Internet are pornographic or are pornography related. With the opportunity of accessing Internet using 3G phones this has huge repercussions for any discussion on the effect of the adult content on people, especially on young people. In the Internet environment spam emails abound with messages inviting people to their porn sites; banner ads do the same. Whereas with reference to mobile content there are advertisements are all over from classifieds in newspapers, television, on the Internet and spam text messages inviting people to sms a specific number so as to be able to download adult content.

Firchow (2004) argues that child development in the years between pre-adolescence (10-12 years) and late adolescence (16-18 years) can be turbulent times in which the youth struggles to develop their identities. They are eager to be heard, seen, and taken seriously but often lack the experience and maturity to make responsible choices consistently. These ages are still regarded as minors where most of the decisions are being taken by their parents but they test boundaries in developing their emerging adult personalities, and they take risks that adults would deem unwise. They are often socially uncertain, and they value peer approval highly. And, in pre- and early adolescence, hormonal changes generally stimulate their interest in sexual matters. Because of the intensely personal nature of such matters both sexual and social, the nature of Internet and mobile phone communication and the anonymity with which one can seek out a great variety of information on the Internet and mobile phones are highly appealing. There's no person that can prove that you have been accessing adult content except if they catch you viewing it.

The table below illustrates the important dimensions of child development:

**Table 1: Dimension of child development**

Age	Characteristics
Infancy (0-2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preverbal and early language skills emerging</li> <li>▪ Lacks framework for assimilating and understanding sexual concepts</li> <li>▪ Information needs can generally be met by primary care givers and others in child's immediate environment</li> </ul>
Early Childhood (3-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finds it difficult to distinguish between fantasy and reality; more easily frightened by "scary things"</li> <li>▪ Continues to lack cognitive framework for assimilating and understanding sexual concepts, though sexual behaviour such as masturbation may occur</li> <li>▪ Information needs can generally be met by those in child's environment and easily accessible resources such as children's books</li> <li>▪ Begins to have empathy for others</li> </ul>
Childhood (6-9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing ability to distinguish between fantasy and reality</li> <li>▪ Typing and writing skills emerging, but poor at younger ages (e.g., misspellings common)</li> <li>▪ Decision-making skills on the Internet (as in many areas of life) not well-developed</li> <li>▪ Some emerging information needs require reference books and other materials to support research</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>
Preadolescence (10-12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Much better ability to distinguish between fantasy and</li> </ul>

	<p>reality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better able to use inferential reasoning skills</li> <li>▪ Decision-making skills developing in more abstract way due to metamemory skills (knowing about knowing, knowing how to know, i.e., strategy).</li> <li>▪ Typing and spelling skills still problematic</li> <li>▪ Sexual development beginning for many or at least for their peers; sexuality becoming more interesting; likely a sensitive period for exposure to sexual content</li> <li>▪ Information needs expanding and increasingly require materials that are not in the immediate physical environment</li> </ul>
Early adolescence (13-15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abstract cognitive skills in place that are the same as adults, though skill set not fully developed</li> <li>▪ Decision-making skills and reasoning skills better developed than in preadolescence, but often impulsive; faith in own decision-making skills (especially in the face of parental positions) may well exceed actual skill</li> <li>▪ Age of puberty, growing awareness of sexual development and highly curious about his or her own sexuality; some become sexually active with intercourse; most will have some kind of sexual experience (e.g., kissing)</li> <li>▪ Information needs are broader and relate to the world at large, and the availability of some external sources is important</li> </ul>
Late adolescence (16-18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Highly aware personally of sexual issues and may well be sexually active (80 percent have intercourse by age 20; the mean age of first intercourse is approximately 17 1/2 years today)</li> <li>▪ Decision-making skills and reasoning ability improved</li> </ul>

	<p>over early adolescence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physically and cognitively mature</li> <li>▪ Legal rights approaching those of adults, though rights may vary by state</li> <li>▪ Historically, many were married and having children at this age</li> <li>▪ Information needs to be extensive in scope and depth and commonly require access to a wide range of resources beyond the individuals in their immediate environment</li> </ul>
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Source: Adapted from Ulin 2002

### 2.6.1 Psychological theories

These theories look at the developmental impact of exposure to adult content. The theories sometimes conflict but they need to be taken into account whilst studying this topic of adult content. "It is also possible that more than one theory may be valid or useful in understanding psychological phenomena. Furthermore, the impact of such exposure will depend on the individual, the context in which the exposure occurs, and the social structure in which the young person is engaged, as well as other factors" (Ulin 2002:96).

Depending on the person and situation the interpretation of the material is different. The person's own experiences and frame of reference contributes to the way the person interpretes adult content. Thus, while some theories may focus on how content may affect young people in general and can suggest ways in which certain content can lead to positive or negative outcomes, all theories

acknowledge that this is an “interactive process that can yield many different outcomes depending on the person and the situation” (Huston 1998:14)

Several prominent theories discussed below relate to how exposure to adult content within the media context affects young people and how these can be adapted to exposure to adult content within any format. None of these theories suggest that viewing adult content will always have a particular outcome. Rather, they imply that multiple factors, such as children's media use and interpretation of material, affect and greatly complicate the analysis of outcomes. These theories are considered in light of adult content material, though they are by no means limited to this type of content alone.

#### **2.6.1.1 Psychoanalytic theory**

“Psychoanalytic theory predicts potentially positive effects from exposure to sexually explicit material presented in media. In psychoanalytic theory, two major drives are sex and aggression. These drives must be released in some way, and one path that psychoanalytic theory develops for drive reduction is fantasy in the form of catharsis. More specifically, in catharsis, sexual drives can be released through fantasy experiences with sexual material, thereby reducing the drive state” (Hall 1954:48).

#### **2.6.1.2 Arousal theory**

Zillmann's arousal theory (1982) focuses primarily on the immediate effects that adult content may have on behaviour. Television adult content, for example, can



produce emotional and physiological arousal that is activation of the nervous system as opposed to sexual arousal, and increased levels of arousal are likely to produce some type of behaviour. However, Zillmann's theory does not imply what these behavioural outcomes will be. Rather, arousal theory states that the personality of the viewer, the environmental circumstances, and one's frame of reference for interpretation will determine the ensuing behaviour. In the context of Zillmann's theory, arousal is non-specific. Thus, other factors will determine whether adult content will result in behaviour that is sexual, aggressive, or altruistic. In media research, autonomic arousal, which is related to emotional experiences, is often the focus of inquiries.

Furthermore, the arousal theory can be adapted to look at the possible implications of repeated exposure to adult content. According to Cline (1989) one possibility is that, in a similar fashion to desensitisation to violent material, a viewer continually exposed to adult content will habituate to that type of content and become desensitised to it as well. Becoming physiologically or emotionally aroused in the near future would then require different content perhaps more explicit depictions. "An alternative outcome is that a viewer who has habituated to material will simply grow uninterested in it but habituation does wear off, so a viewer might return to similar material once this has occurred, or the viewer might not return to regularly viewing material because the viewer has lost interest." (Calvert 1999:41)

### **2.6.1.3 Social learning theory.**

In Bandura's social learning theory (1971) young people can learn about sexuality from observing others depicted in the media. Specifically, they may observe the mechanics of sexual behaviour, but they will also learn about the

contexts in which behaviours occur, the motives and intentions behind the interactions represented, and the consequences for those participating in those behaviours. The messages implicit in media portrayals of sexuality may be particularly powerful when the participants are attractive, are shown as powerful, are rewarded in some way for their actions, or represent characters with whom the young person identifies. In this theory, the behavioural implications are not short-term reactions; rather, this information is used when the young person becomes engaged in a similar real-world sexual situation. The young person thinking which relation to sexual behaviour can be influenced by what they have observed and what they believe is the reality from the media that have viewed with relation to adult content.

Thornburg and Ulin (2002) cited Calvert 1999 that social learning theory implies three major impacts on an observer: first imitation, in which the observer copies a novel behaviour that has been seen before; second disinhibition, in which a behaviour that was previously inhibited is now acted on because there are no negative consequences for the action; and third response facilitation, in which a socially desirable behaviour increases in frequency as one observes another perform it. Social learning theory separates learning a behaviour from performing it. That is, knowledge about how to act in a certain way does not mean that one will do so. Performance requires some form of reinforcement for action to take place. Therefore, in contrast to cognitive approaches, social learning theory is based on reinforcement and traditional learning theory approaches. For example, for a person to imitate a sexual behaviour or to have a sexual behaviour disinhibited there must be situational contingencies and reinforcements to support the behaviour that has been observed.

According to Calvert (1999) over time, Bandura increasingly incorporated cognitive mechanisms into his theory. Attention to information, retention of that

knowledge, production of the learned behaviour, and the motivation to do so were always key elements of his theory, but he added to it the concept of self-efficacy, the belief that a person can control the events around him or her. He reframed his theory as social cognitive theory to emphasise cognitive elements, but the mechanistic element of reinforcement remained a key facet of his approach.

#### **2.6.1.4 Cognitive approaches: Information processing theory.**

Information processing theories are focused on cognitive constructs that develop as a function of experiences. “Based on experiences, children construct scripts also known as schemas, which are learned expectations that guide perception, memory, and inferences” (Huston et al 1998:248). These scripts are used to predict how one is to act and how others will act. Stereotypes about sexual behaviour are one type of sexual script.

Since young people are still in the process of developing they have very few sexual schemas, but as a growing repertoire of expectations develops, these schemas shape future perceptions, memories, and interpretations. Both sexual content which they view and real life experiences shape an individual's schema. As a result viewing adult content may have a greater impact on individuals who do not have real sexual experiences but are at a stage where they are starting to explore their sexuality. Media that depict sexuality that is safe and positive may help to develop healthy sexual schemas, while content that is permissive of sexual violence or other negative sexual encounters could help to construct sexual schemas that are not beneficial for or may even be harmful to the young person.

Theories on schemas and scripts for sexual interactions suggest that any understanding of how the media shape this type of development must include a careful analysis of the messages conveyed by the circumstances of sexual activity, as well as of the types of communication, negotiation, and decision making that occur before, during, and after depictions of sexuality. It also involves a close examination of the pre-existing schemas that the individual brings to the media situation.

Within the field of communication there is a cultivation theory by Gerbner (1966 and 1972) which was formulated primarily to predict effects of television viewing but can be extended to other media including viewing of adult content. It is described as a paradigm based on how media content interfaces with the person who is experiencing it. Any messages that are often depicted can shape the beliefs of the person viewing, a process that is not unlike the development of schemas. Gerbner introduced two main effects of media exposure and these are mainstreaming and resonance. Mainstreaming is when a dominant cultural message comes to be taken as true, even if it is not. Resonance is when media messages that resonate with one's own experiences have a very strong impact on the viewer. "In this approach, heavy exposure to adult content in the media leads to a view of sexuality based on the predominant media message. If that media message rings true with an individual's own life, that message will be further enhanced"(Calvert 1999:94).

Another theory within the communications area is the uses and gratification theory. This theory emphasises the reasons people have for viewing and interacting with various media content. According to Huston et al (1998) individuals use the media for various needs, including information, entertainment, companionship, escapism, and exploration of various aspects of their own sexuality. Taking into account young people, an understanding will have to be

gathered of why the person is assessing the content and looking at possible effects.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

Many different viewpoints have been expressed by several authors and research reports. In many of these cases conclusive evidence indicate that exposure to adult content on a regular basis could lead to various behavioural patterns which if perpetuated might manifest itself in addiction, aggression and violent sex crimes. However, it is also important to remember that in many cases environmental and psychological factors contribute to these manifestations. If these factors are present and mixed with the young mind of a 13 to 16 year old, which then is exposed to unhindered, uncensored access to adult content, the effect could result in young adults with distorted views on gender, relationships and accountability to name but a few.

## **Chapter 3 - Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

A study by Combs quoted in Griesel-Roux (1995) uses an analogy of a vehicle in describing the qualitative research process. "Much is said when one travels hopefully; research is no exception to this dictum as we explore roads less travelled and learn how to negotiate one turn at a time. Implicit to this enterprise understands what drives our research vehicles" (Combs 1995:6). This chapter contains elements that drive this research study and discusses how the data was gathered, analysed and interpreted to fulfil the purpose of the study.

### **3. 2 Research Design**

Cooper (2003:81) defines research design as the blueprint for fulfilling research objectives and answering questions. The design is equivalent to the strategy which details how the data was collected, who the participants of the study are and how they were chosen, what instruments were used to collect the data and how the data was analysed. Research design can be classified by the approach used to gather the primary data. The two alternatives are observing conditions, behaviours, people or process. Or communicating with people about various topics including participants' attitudes, motivations, intentions and expectations. This study chose the communication approach of surveying people and recording their responses for analysis. The main reason for this approach was because the study needed to understand attitudes and perceptions relating to the topic and this approach brought in some versatility.

### **3.2.1 Nature of the study**

Taking into account the objectives of this study, it can be characterised as an exploratory study. Exploratory research requires the skill to be able to observe, get information and construct explanations. Ghauri et al (1995) indicates that this research design is mainly used when the research problem is badly understood and the approach needs to be flexible.

A qualitative research method is suggested for this particular study. Qualitative research is defined as a technique involving a small number of respondents who provide descriptive information about their thoughts and feelings that are not easily projected to the whole population. Myers (1997) stated that the motivation for doing qualitative research comes from observation that if there is one thing that distinguishes humans from the natural world, it is the ability to talk. Since the study requires the understanding of people social, emotional and cultural context qualitative research method is being used. "Qualitative implies a direct concern with the experience as it is "lived", "felt" or undergone" (Sherman and Webb 1988:7). The main objective was to achieve depth with regard to the study.

The usage of this methodology aimed to identify categories, theme motifs in the perceptions and attitudes emerging from the data. The qualitative approach was to allow participants to express their feelings and attitudes but the findings cannot be generalised.

Ulin et al (2005) argue that the theoretical framework for most qualitative research emerges from an interpretivist perspective, a paradigm that sees the world as constructed, interpreted, and experienced by people in their interactions with each other and with wider social systems. "The methodological substance of the interpretivist framework comprises identifying, sorting and analysing the meaning in relation to objective behaviour. For this study the key components of the framework were taken into account and these are subjective perceptions and

understandings, which arise from experience; objective actions or behaviour; and context” (Ulin et al 2005:17).

### **3.2.2 Sampling and size**

The sample was a non-probability sample using the convenience sample method. Due to the lack of time and sensitive nature of the topic, this method was used since it would be convenient to get permission from parents and participants that were friends and neighbours. The young adult group was randomly selected at El'Corro Shopping Centre which is a nearby shopping centre in Northcliff Ext 9. The potential participants were approached and asked whether they were keen to be part of the study. The purpose and objectives of the study were explained to the potential participants and their phone numbers were requested after they had agreed to participate so as to be able to set up focus groups.

The sample comprised:

- 36 participants, mixture of boys and girls between the ages of 13 and 18 years, 18 from urban area and the other 18 from the rural area. This group was school going children from Grade 8 to 12 classes. There were 6 participants from each grade. The urban area that was chosen was Northcliff Ext 9 suburb in Johannesburg and the rural area was KwaMsane Township in Mtubatuba and Mtubatuba town in KwaZulu Natal.
- 36 young adults between the ages of 21 and 25 years were from Northcliff Ext 9 as well as KwaMsane Township and Mtubatuba town for the young adults focus group. The young adults group was to be used to understand the possible progression of mindsets from teenagers to young adults with reference to mobile adult content.



- Black and white participants i.e. 18 whites and 18 blacks for the ages between 13 and 18; and 18 blacks and 18 whites for the young adults.
- As seen from above there was 50/50 split between male and female participants.
- An inclusion criterion was that participants had to own a mobile phone with MMS, WAP or GPRS compatibility and were familiar with mobile content and different ways of downloading any mobile content.
- An exclusion criterion was the unwillingness to participate in the study and not owning a mobile phone that had the specifications.

### **3.2.3 Data collection**

According to Schurink (1998), questions have to be asked to determine:

- Which data to collect?
- Which data sources have relevant information?
- How to get the information?
- Who to talk to?

These preceding questions were used to decide on how to collect data for this study.

The instrument used for data collection was interviews. A discussion guide was compiled for the triads also known as friendship pairs as well as for the young adults group. The interview method involved discussing or questioning issues with participants. The discussion guide was designed in accordance with the original research objectives. Focus groups were conducted with young adults; there were 4 focus groups with nine persons in each group.

The same discussion guide was used for the different age groups. The discussion guide was used by the interviewer, since both age groups had unstructured interviews, the interviewer had to probe further so as to be able to

get in-depth details and underlying feelings. The discussion guide dealt with perceptions, attitudes and emotional issues that refer to the study and this gave a detailed account of their orientation towards adult content.

For the youth, triads were split into two age groups between 13 and 15 years and between 16 and 18 years. Ages between 13 and 15 are regarded as early adolescence and ages between 16 and 18 years are regarded as late adolescents. The development (as indicated in Table 1 in Chapter 2) of the two age groups is at different stages and this study assumes that the two age groups perceive issues differently. According to Nerz (2001) quoted by Cooper (2003) children's cognitive skills and level of development are very specific to their age; groups should have single gender and members should never be further apart than one grade level or one year in age.

Triads are conducted with two to four participants respectively. There are fewer participants which facilitates higher personal interaction with each respondent to allow for a more in-depth discussion. Triads also provide a 'safe' environment for respondents to voice their truest opinions and this method is mainly suitable for difficult and sensitive topics. This methodology was suitable for this topic particularly since the participants were expected to discuss their orientation towards adult content. Nerz (2001) stated that children need to feel comfortable with each other to be responsive. Triads encourage participants to be a group of friends or individuals that are used to each other.

The triads and focus groups were held at the interviewers' home in Northcliff Ext 9 and the rural interviews were held at the interviewers' relatives' home. A homely environment was chosen so as to make the participants comfortable and safe for the discussion. The interviews for the triads were an hour long and the interviewer had to be focused on research objectives and had to be enticing to keep them interested and try to reveal their thoughts, impressions, and their

attitudes in a very short period of time. The initial step in the process was to get permission from parents, by telling the parents the purpose and objectives of the study and for the interviewer to get some information relating to the child. This included questions about whether the child is shy or outgoing, how the child functioned in a group and whether they were vocal and able to express their opinions to others. If the parent agreed, the child was also screened over the telephone and asked if they were keen to participate after the detailed explanation of what the study was about.

The researcher had to assure the children that the information they were going to disclose was confidential and that their parents were not going to have access to the information, as well as encourage them to speak honestly and tell what they think and how they feel.

**Table 2: Sample and data collection method**

GROUP	RACE	RURAL/ URBAN	MALES	FEMALES	13-15 (triads)	16-18 (triads)	21- 25 focus groups
BM1	Black	Urban	3		1		
BF1	Black	Urban		3		1	
WM1	White	Urban	6		2		
WF1	White	Urban		6		2	
BM2	Black	Rural	6		2		
BF2	Black	Rural		6		2	
WM2	White	Rural	3		1		

WF2	White	Rural		3		1	
BM3	Black	Rural	9				1
BF3	Black	Rural		9			1
WM3	White	Urban	9				1
WF3	White	Urban		9			1
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>6 Triads</b>	<b>6 Triads</b>	<b>4 Focus Groups</b>
			<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>			

The table above illustrates the number of participants showing the race, gender and geographic location dwelling. The data analysis done used some of these variables to do some contradictions and similarities.

In the study done by Morgan (1997) quoted by Griessel-Roux (2005) he warns against the researchers influence on the data. He believed this was an issue in almost all qualitative research and researchers should attend to it as it could influence the quality of data.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) advised that a process of crystallisation should be used when conducting qualitative research. They stated that in employing this process, the researcher should describe the same procedure from different points of view and this might reduce likelihood of misinterpretation. "Crystals grow, change and alter...crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns and arrays, casting off in different directions"

The focus groups were conducted for the young adults group. Initial phone calls were made to arrange times for the focus groups and permission was sought from parents of the minors. The discussion guide was used by the interviewer.

All the focus groups were taped and transcribed verbatim later. The young adults groups found the topic very interesting and the sessions lasted an hour and half to an hour and three quarters. Since the interview was based on a discussion guide and not a structured questionnaire it was useful because the participants were engaging with the interviewer and it was an in-depth discussion with the participants.

### **3.2.4 Data documentation and analysis**

According to Mouton (2001) data is documented mainly as a historical record for oneself and other possible researchers. For this study, all fieldwork was tracked as the process unfolded. It included dates of interviews and how long the interviews were, record of all people who participated, factors that influenced the study and themes that emerged.

All triads and focus groups interviews were tape recorded and transcribed and all the tapes were clearly dated. The transcripts generated from the triads and focus groups formed a basis of a qualitative content and discourse analysis along with the observations and hypotheses generated during fieldwork. According to Kelly (1999) quoted in Griesel-Roux (2005) analysis and interpretation of data would provide possible answers to the research problem and questions. A central goal of analysis and interpretation is the discovery of regular patterns in the data, in terms of this study they are termed as themes. Qualitative analysis emphasis is on how data fit together as a whole, bringing together context and meaning.

### **3.2.4.1 Methods of analysis and interpretation**

There are many approaches to use in the analysis of collected qualitative data. For the purposes of this study the process is detailed below.

#### **3.2.4.1.1 Reading**

According to Charmaz (2000) quoted in Denzin and Lincoln (2000) this process begins with immersion which is reading and rereading text. When using an interpretive method, data is not collected as a mindless technical exercise. The transcripts and written notes had to be read through numerous times to check that the information that was being collected was the information that the study expected to obtain. Notes and mind maps were drawn up so as to find the best way to interpret the data. Whilst reading the transcripts emergent themes were identified. The quality of the transcripts and notes was monitored carefully. Patterns were identified from the themes, sub themes were created and contradictory responses were noted.

#### **3.2.4.1.2 Coding**

Coding is defined as inserting "street signs" into the margins of handwritten notes or transcripts (Ulin 2005:146). Precautions were taken that the data was not coded finely or into detail, where there were possible commonalities of those grouped. Smaller pieces of text were put together, and formed clusters that could be analysed. Clustering themes and coding blended into each other, because the themes tended to change in the process of coding as better understanding of the data was developed (Terre Blanche and Kelly, 1999).

Critical for this study was that themes that were emerging were related to answering or contradicting the research questions or objectives.

#### **3.2.4.1.3 Displaying Data: Distinguishing Nuances of the topic**

Displaying data is defined by Ulin et al (1995) as “means of laying out or taking an inventory of what you know related to the theme; capturing the variation, or richness, of each theme; and noting differences between individuals or among subgroups” (Ulin et al 1995:157). Displaying data helped with analysing the data in detail by analysing the sub themes that emerged from the data and identify reasons and contradictions within the study.

#### **3.2.4.1.4 Data Reduction**

Charmaz (2000) quoted in Denzin and Lincoln (2000) indicated that this is the process of distilling the information to make visible the most essential concepts and relationships. This method assisted comparisons between the urban and rural triads; males and females participants as well as black and white participants.

#### **3.2.4.1.5 Data interpretation**

Chapter four of this study contains in detail, the interpretation. According to Ulin et al (1995) interpretation is the act of identifying and explaining the data's core meaning, it involves communicating the study's essential ideas to a wider audience and remaining faithful to the participants' perspectives. The following aspects formed part of the discussion and interpretation of the data:

- Summary of the themes
- Examples from the transcripts were used to illustrate the themes
- Excerpts from literature were used to support or contradict the findings

### **3.2.5 Ethical considerations**

Qualitative research is defined as a technique involving a small number of participants who provide descriptive information about their thoughts and feelings that are not easily projected to the whole population. Schurink (1998) says that qualitative fieldwork could be compared to a journey into a minefield riddled with potential moral and ethical hazards and this leads to a conclusion that ethical concerns should be an integral part of the planning and implementation of the research.

The principle of autonomy was applied which means the independence of all the participants was respected. The participants were informed that this was voluntary and they had the freedom to withdraw from the research at any time if they felt uncomfortable and felt they did not want to be part of it anymore.

The other principle was that of beneficence. To comply with this principle, the research design had to be such that it would be of benefit to other researchers and participants, even if the benefits were indirect.

### **3.3 Ethical guidelines**

- **Consent**

For the participants between the ages of 13 to 18 years parental consent was obtained from the parents and the participants had to give their consent as well. Even if participants had given voluntary consent, they were still free to withdraw from the research at any time.



- **Confidentiality**

All the participants were assured of confidentiality of their participation. They were informed of the nature of the study, how data would be collected, recorded, stored and processed. The participants between ages of 13 to 18 years were concerned with the information they disclosed going back to their parents and they were guaranteed that this information was confidential and their parents would not be informed of any information they disclose.

- **Conducting research**

No adult content material was shown to the respondents and the study was conducted according to ethical guidelines set out by the South African Market Research Association and University of KwaZulu Natal.

- **Reporting results**

Data for the purposes of this study was not fabricated and there were limitations which have been detailed as well. The identity of participants is concealed and only anonymous quotations are published.

### **3.3.1 Trustworthiness strategies**

This study aimed to achieve credibility in terms of the themes that were discovered. The data need not be generalisable, but should be transferable in the degree to which participants can claim resonance between their thought and inputs and the researcher's interpretation. Transferability was achieved by producing detailed and rich descriptions of contexts. This means that the researchers' understanding of the attitudes and perceptions of the participants can then be transferred to new contexts of other studies to provide a framework for that research.

Dependability which refers to the degree to which the reader is convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher claims they did. This study has the dependability and confirmability since the participants can confirm that the study gives a true account of their input. In qualitative research, trustworthiness is defined by a degree to which the researcher can produce findings or observations that are believable to themselves, the participants in the study and eventually the readers of the study (Durrheim, 1999).

### **3.4 The role of the researcher**

Being an interpretive researcher requires special skills such as listening and interpreting: "in interpretive research it is the researcher who is the primary instrument for both collecting and analysing the data" (Terre Blanche and Kelly 1999:126). The crucial role as a researcher for this study was to have good listening and interpreting skills.

The potential bias of the researcher is one of the main sources of error in qualitative research (Mouton, 2001). Since the researcher was a parent and had worked for a MNO's marketing department, there were certain biases and perceptions about the study. The researcher guarded against these biases by constantly reflecting on the data that she found however the researcher realised that they could never remove themselves completely from the study. The researcher was mindful of their subjectivity when interpreting the data.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter the detail was given on how the study research was designed and the principles or steps that were taken to conduct the research.

## **Chapter 4 – Findings and Interpretation**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the interpretation and the findings of the study. The primary objective of the study was to investigate the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of youth towards the availability of mobile phone adult content.

### **4.2 Methodology**

The triads and focus groups were conducted with males and females between ages 13 to 18 years as well as young adults of ages between 21 to 25 years in two areas: Northcliff Ext 9 in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province and KwaKwaMsane Township in Mtubatuba and Mtubatuba town, KwaZulu Natal Province. The discussions were held over November and December 2005. Respondents were randomly chosen from friends and neighbours, aged between 13 to 18 years and from EL'Corro shopping centre for the young adults. The groups were not gender mixed; triads had maximum three participants and focus groups maximum nine participants.

Only respondents who consented to participate in the focus groups and in case of minors, those whose parents consented, were included in the discussion. Participants were informed fully about the purpose of the discussions.

The focus groups and triads were led by a moderator. The discussions lasted an hour to an hour and three quarters of an hour. They were represented by an equal number of females and males in both areas.

The discussions were conducted in English; however participants were encouraged to use the language with which they felt comfortable. All the

discussions were tape recorded, transcribed verbatim and translated where needed. Thereafter, the discussions were coded according to the themes that emerged.

The transcripts were compiled per response and numbered according to the number of responses per triad. Following, is an example of how transcriptions were compiled.

Triad BF1: F2. I have seen a lot of adverts on TV mainly e-tv late at night and have been curious and downloaded one or two clips.

F3. I have seen adverts on TV but I have been scared to download just in case my parents saw them on my phone.

### 4.3 Emergent Themes

**Table 3: Emergent themes from the youth**

<p>1. Usage of mobile phones</p>	<p>2. Awareness of mobile adult content</p> <p>2.1 What is adult content?</p> <p>2.2 Other mediums of distributing adult content</p>	<p>3. Accessing mobile adult content</p>
<p>4. Communication with parents and friends</p> <p>4.1 Sexuality, adult content and parents</p> <p>4.2 Sexuality, adult content and parents</p>	<p>5. Perceptions and attitudes toward mobile adult content</p>	<p>6. Potential impact on behaviour</p> <p>6.1 Added value of adult content</p> <p>6.2 Impact on behaviour</p>

The level of participation varied between the triads and focus groups. In the KwaZulu triads and focus groups particularly the female groups were a bit shy and didn't engage fully in the discussions. However the Gauteng participants mainly the male triads were livelier, participative, giggled a lot and seemed to take more interest in the topic.

#### **4.4 Discussion and the data**

This section discusses the themes that emerged. The themes summarise issues that were common to all groups and highlight instances where the responses were unique and contradictory. In certain instances, original responses have been used to illustrate how the participants expressed themselves as indicated above. <sup>1</sup>The section below discusses each of the themes and relates these to literature pertaining to these themes.

<b>Theme One: Usage of mobile phones</b>
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The theme of usage of mobile phones gives the foundation of this study and shows the developments within the mobile phone industry.

The following extracts illustrate the overall usage mentioned:

I use my phone for sms, chatting, games, downloading music, ringtones (response 3, page 1 of transcriptions, F: BF1)

I use my phone for chatting, sms, downloading pictures, ringtones and reminders (response 7, page 2 of transcriptions, M: BM1)

My phone is for sms, playing games, accessing Internet (response 10, page 3 of transcriptions, F: WF2)

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<sup>1</sup> F=Female, M= Male, BF1/2/3, BM1/2/3, WM1/2/3, WF1/2/3 = Groups

It is mainly for business for example emails, Internet and for relaxing downloading fun content (response 9, page 4 of transcriptions, M: WM3)

“Young people were largely responsible for the early growth in mobile data services, with SMS leading the way. The emergence of the SMS generation gives us some insight into youth culture” (Andersson et al 2006: 35). The responses above are an indication of what mobile phones are being used for. As seen SMS, downloading pictures, accessing the Internet, downloading fun content were mentioned and all these are possible channels of distributing adult content. The observation made from all the participants; rural, urban, male or female, black or white, young or older was that owning mobile phones was a critical part of their lives and this was a crucial way of keeping in touch with friends.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme Two:</b> <b>Awareness of adult content</b></p>
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**Category 2.1: “What is adult content?”**

An understanding of whether they knew what adult content was and their own understanding of adult content. The majority of the participants knew what adult content was and the following extracts illustrate this point:

It means sex and stuff, nude pictures, video clips of sex (response 6, page 6, M: WM2)

It is pictures of adults doing bad stuff, pictures that show sex and nudity (response 5, page 7, F: BF3)

Its pictures of those naked people (response 10, page 7, F: BF3)

It's those naked girls and pictures of people having sex (response 8, page 8, M: BM1)

It's those disgusting pictures of naked people (response 9, page 8, F: WF2)

It's sexually explicit material (response 12, page 11, F: WF3)

The majority of the respondents had a combination of being shy and were very giggly when they had to respond. They indicated that this is a topic they are not used to discussing and they found it fascinating to be in a position to have this type of discussion. The majority of the participants from the rural area mentioned that they were a bit nervous to be having this discussion and they were concerned that their parents were going to get to know what they were saying in the discussion and be asked how they know about adult content.

### **Category 2.2: Other mediums of distributing adult content**

Thereafter the study had to assess if the respondents knew of the different mediums that distributed adult content and mainly the availability of adult content on mobile phones. All the participants were aware of adult content being available on the Internet, magazines, VHS and the medium that was common from all the participants was television. E-tv's movies on Saturday night were mentioned as an example. The television example contradicts what e-tv has denied in the press release issued 15 November saying that "e-tv emphatically denies that it broadcasts pornography. Its late night erotica slot on Saturday nights is intended for adults only and complies with the Code of Conduct applicable to broadcasters in South Africa".

With the usage that was indicated in theme one by all the respondents, the study wanted to investigate whether the participants were aware that adult content was available on mobile phones or if they have engaged with the adult content. All the respondents were aware of the availability of adult content on mobile phones. The respondents were also aware of adult content from other distribution channels. The following extracts illustrate this point:

It can be accessed on PCs and be watched on television (response 15, page 14, M: WM1)

On the Internet, television and magazines (response 19, page 16, F: WF2)

Television, computers, DVDs, videos, Internet, newspaper mainly classified sections (response 23, page 20, F: BF1)

On telephones, you know those sex chat line, television late nights on Saturdays (response 18, page 15, M: WM1)

Cell phones it always gets advertised on tv (response 25, page 23, M: BM3)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme Three:</b> <b>Accessing mobile adult content</b></p>
--

Adult content can be accessed intentionally or unintentionally mainly within the Internet, mobile phone and television environment. For example when a person uses the Internet to search for sex health related information; they can end up on a website that has adult content. Some respondents mentioned that they have tried to download ringtones using their mobile phones and they have received links that have adult content or they get advertisements that relate to adult content.

Within the participants aged between 13 to 18 years there was a split between the participants that had accessed adult content and those that had not accessed adult content. The reasons for accessing or not accessing mobile adult content varied. The reasons for not accessing ranged from being scared what parents would do to them if they discovered it, to religious reasons which related to adult content being sinful. However, the majority of young adults had accessed adult content at some point in time either intentionally or unintentionally. The majority of the young adults felt that accessing mobile adult content was out of choice and at their age they could make that choice.



I've heard that looking at pictures like that is a sin so I think it's bad (response 27, page 25, M: BM1)

My parents would flip if they saw that on my phone (response 29, page 30, F: BF2)

I'm old enough and I can access the content if I want to, don't have to account to anybody (response 31, page 31, M: WM3)

Some of the younger participants felt that sex was all over and it was making them take sex for granted. They felt that this was decreasing morals within the society. They wanted to be able to watch television without having to cringe because there was sex on screens and they also mentioned that they never knew how to behaviour when their parents were around and there were naked people and sex scenes on television.

There's too much sex on television and everywhere else. Music videos, adverts, movies majority of them have sex (response 35, page 40, F: BF2)

You don't need loads of money to access adult content, just having airtime gets you to download a few video clips (response 40, page 55, M: WM2)

At school most of the kids have adult content on their mobile phones (response 43, page 56, M: WM2)

Boys use their phones to take pictures of girls when walking up the stairs and they peep in toilets and this contributes to adult content (response 47, page 60, F: WF1)

Poulter (2005) reported that the problem of adult content had even reached the classroom in the United Kingdom, with teachers reporting youngsters passing around handsets carrying obscene images downloaded from the Internet. Botes (2005) wrote an article for The Lowvelder newspaper titled "What do pornography and primary school children have in common? The answer seems to be cellphones" (Botes 2005:4), this article indicated that children in a number

of schools within the Nelspruit area had been found with pornographic images on their cellphones. Some of these pictures showed kids urinating. The above quotes show that the issue of availability of adult content on mobile phones is a global issue within the youth, it is not only happening in South Africa.

The comment that was raised about sex being all over in their lives raises concerns on how this impacts behaviour, if it does, in anyway. This is discussed in one of the themes below.

Evidence was also found that some parents don't check their children's mobile phones so parents are not aware of the content that is being downloaded or is stored on their mobile phones. This was contradictory because some of the participants who had not accessed mobile adult content were scared just in case their parents found out what they were accessing and viewing adult content.

I can download anything on my phone and my parents would not know because they never touch my phone. Even when it rings they just shout for me. (response 50, page 65, M: WM1)

At my house I have privacy, my room, my phone, my computer is mine and my parents never look at them (response 53, page 67, F: BF1)

My mother uses my phone sometimes to make calls, when her battery phone is dead or she has no airtime and I have and she will kill me if she could see that stuff on my phone. (response 56, page 69, F: BF3)

There was a huge difference between rural and urban participants with reference to parents. The experiences shared by rural participants was that there was no privacy at home and they had to share bedrooms with their siblings and sometimes their parents would use their phones to make calls if their parents did not have airtime, which meant the possibility of the parent finding adult content was high. Most of the participants from the urban area had their own rooms

which they didn't share and their parents didn't touch their mobile phones. The perception was that they had right the right to privacy.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme Four:</b> <b>Communication with parents and friends</b></p>
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**Category 4.1: Sexuality, adult content and parents**

Discussing sex with parents seems to be an issue. Youngsters are very uncomfortable to discuss sex related issues with their parents; they will rather discuss this with their friends or do their own research which is mainly done on the Internet or by reading books. Teenagers often complain that they cannot talk to their parents and that their parents do not understand them (Hait, 2003).

Some participants commented that maybe watching adult content could be helping in giving them an idea of what sex was about since their parents were rather shy, stubborn or scared to communicate with them with regard to sexuality issues. The question is, is what is portrayed by adult movies the true reflection of how sex is in relationships? The view of this study is that it is not. Adult movies can be violent and in most instances there is no emotion or relationships in these movies. The plot usually centres on beautiful women who meet men and then engage in some sexual activity.

With reference to parents being shy or scared to have discussion about sexuality, this study assumes that this can be due to the fear from parents that talking about sexuality might raise the level of interest in the subject and lead them to experiment in this field.

The participants indicated that they have sex education at school and this helps them to understand, rather than having to spend time and money trying to access adult content. The difficulty of not being able to discuss sexuality with parents

might also be due to South African society and in some cases its traditional views that sexuality and pornography are not topics for discussion. White participants expressed that their parents were a bit relaxed to have sex discussions even if it made them very uncomfortable and they thought it was an embarrassing experience. All the participants could not explain in detail the main reasons why they felt embarrassed and uncomfortable. The comments made were:

It's like my parents think that I'm already having sex if they keep talking to me about it and that makes it very uncomfortable (response 58, page 70, F:WF2)

I think my parents will think I'm already engaging in sex if I raise the issue of sex or pornography with them and that will be very uncomfortable (response 62, page 72, M:WM2)

Contrary to the above some participants mentioned that they would like to have a discussion with their parents in a way that would be comfortable and not judgemental. They indicated that they trusted their parents and such discussions should be done at home. When one examines literature regarding adolescent development, one would think that the teenagers would welcome less involvement from parents (Capuzzi & Gross, 2000). In their study Capuzzi and Gross experienced quite the contrary; the learners revealed that they would like their parents to be more involved and to educate them at home regarding sexuality issues.

I would love to be able to have a discussion with my parents about adult content, about sex, about abortion etc, I think this would make us closer and if they just talk to me and not judge (response 54, page 68, F:BF1)

Evidence was given that parents mainly have discussions with their children telling them what not to do instead of having a positive discussion about issues and what the implications and consequences of engaging in those issues are.

If I get told don't do this, don't do that, I get curious and I want to see why I'm being told not to do those things, you know curiosity killed the cat (response 51, page 57, M:BM1)

You get our parents telling us not to do things and you see the same things happening on tv, at our age you start wondering and questioning what is right and what is wrong - your parents or what you are seeing on television (response 45, page 55, F:WF2)

Extract relating to television raises questions about the content that is being seen by children on television or any other medium. With reference to adult content, the youth can start doubting parents and why parents are telling them not to view the content; especially when they have not been given reasons as to why they cannot view the content.

#### **Category 4.2: Sexuality, adult content and friends**

Most of the participants specified that they would rather discuss such issues with friends. This raises the question: why do they think that their friends know more when they are more or less the same age as them? Few other participants said that they would not discuss it with their friends because their friends would laugh at them and they would rather do their own research on the Internet or books.

I have older friends than me and it makes it better to discuss with them than my parents (response 63, page 70, F: BF2)

My parents are very shy to talk to us about sex and I think it is uncomfortable anyway; I would rather have a discussion with somebody I don't know so I might be less embarrassed or uncomfortable (response 66, page 74, M:BM2)

I think my parents will think I'm already engaging in sex if I raise the issue of sex or pornography with them and that will be very uncomfortable. (response 67, page 74, M: BM2)

The study found evidence that what friends think of you mattered and at the same time the participants knew that some friends influenced them negatively

and others positively. The participants that had accessed adult content related that they accessed the adult content because of peer pressure; they wanted to fit in and contribute to conversations about sex and adult content. It is important to note that peer group relationships become increasingly important during adolescence. Adolescents spend most of their time with peer groups and this has a strong influence, sometimes a very negative one, on their social development and sense of self. Louw et al (2001) argued that social conformity was important for adolescent's social development and this provided a sense of belonging and acceptance. For example conformity is reflected in their hairstyles, clothing, the way they talked, etc.

Friends can have a negative or positive influence and there is a need for the youth to be able to be more assertive towards their peers. The critical issue at this age is being "in" with your friends and not wanting to be the odd one out. However, if an individual has a strong belief about an issue they need to be able to assert themselves without fearing desertion and not being part of the "in" crowd.

#### **Theme Five:**

#### **Perceptions and attitudes toward mobile adult content**

This theme discusses the perceptions and attitudes towards adult content and then specific inferences towards the availability of the content on mobile phones. As mentioned in theme two, participants were aware of a number of mediums that are used as a distribution channel for adult content. This theme discusses what they think and how adult content makes them feel. There were not too many differences of views between rural and urban participants; the differences were between the age groups i.e. ages between 13 to 15 years and ages between 16 to 18 years as well as the young adults group. The religious, moral views were raised and on the other hand other participants felt indifferent and

others did not think there was anything wrong mainly if you were over 18 years of age.

The differences between the age groups:

The general feeling with participants between ages 13 to 15 years they were adamant that it was wrong and if you viewed that type of content you would not want elders to know but you could share it with your friends. The view of sharing with your friends was mainly expressed by the boys.

I think its sick; it's disgusting because you keep seeing people having sex and doing funny things. After watching that, then what do you do? (response 70, page 75, F: BF1)

My view is that it is sinful and it's not part of being a Christian. Its wack, what does it do for morals and our society and our culture? (response 77, page 82, F: WF2)

I can view it with my friends but make sure that my parents never see it and that they never found out (response 74, page 77, M: WM1)

The group aged 16 to 18 years, were split in their views. There were views that adult content was wrong, it led to people wanting to try out, see or watch and since some of their peers were starting to be sexually active they believed that what they saw on those movies was the right way of engaging in sex. The other views were indifference and they did not believe that it was wrong or right. It did not bother them.

I think if you are always watching pornography or other sexually explicit material you would want to get what you see at some point, you know monkey see, monkey get (response 68, page 74, M:BM1)

It doesn't make a difference in my life, it doesn't bother me. (response 73, page 76, M: WM1)

The young adults also had conflicting views where some of them were alright with viewing adult content mentioned that it brought excitement to their sexual encounters and it was out of choice. The other view was that there was too much of sex as it is and they felt it was not good for youngsters and it was leading to moral decay in society. They were also worried about how they would handle this with their children.

It's part of growing up and wanting to explore sexual issues, somebody needs to prove to me how adult content affects the person then maybe I can be convinced that it's wrong (response 78, page 80, M:WM3)

There are no restrictions even 9 year olds can have access to porn, there's no requirement for proof. I think its wrong, I think one day when I have a child would I want my child to be looking as such stuff? (response 80, page 95, F: BF3)

### **Theme Six:**

#### **Potential impact on behaviour**

There are a number of theories which were discussed in Chapter 2 which conclude that viewing of adult content has some impact or effect on young and older people. The majority of the participants believed that viewing adult content has some effect on people that viewed the content whether the effect was negative or positive was a subjective matter. The potential impact on behaviour related to current and future impact on behaviour.

The majority of the participants believed that the people who viewed adult content were prone to wanting to experiment, meaning act out, what they have viewed. They also mentioned the possibility of being addicted to viewing adult content. Some of the participants expressed that it was also dependent on the person, their values and how grounded they were for them to be affected by the viewing of adult content. Hughes (1998) argued that not every child that views



pornography will be harmed and turn out to be a sexual deviant or sex addict. Hughes continued to argue that “since pornography has a new door to the home, school, and library through the Internet, it is important for us to look at the many ways that pornography can potentially harm our children” (1998:2).

### **Category 6.1 – Added value of adult content**

The general feeling from the participants was that adult content did not add value to their lives and it was something they could live without and still turn out well. Some felt that when you are older, it would not be bad and you could use the material for enhancing your sexual life.

It's worthless and useless (response 71, page 75, F: BF1)

There's no value, they will turn into perverts which means we will have lots of horny buggers walking around and that is not good (response 52, page 58, M:BM1)

There's no value...what value...it is just adult entertainment, may be adults see some value to it (response 78, page 83, F: WF2)

The male participants within the young adults groups thought that adult content added some value in their lives; they were also very clear that adult content added value to adults and not children.

It helps me relax and sometimes as guys we sit and just watch and have fun, even when you watch with your girlfriend it is fun (response 79, page 84, M:WM3)

For me it definitely adds value when I want to get naughty with my girlfriend...but I would kill my child if I found him viewing it (response 82, page 86, M: BM3)

The female participants both from rural and urban areas did not think adult content added any value and felt that women were just being abused, which is a feminist view of adult content. According to Dworkin and MacKinnon (1988) anti-

porn feminist scholars, adult content is the main weapon by which a patriarchal society maintains dominance over women.

There's no value, it's embarrassing and annoying, they show women being created as sex slaves and it's disgusting (response 81, page 96, F: BF3)

Religion doesn't agree with adult content so as a Christian it wouldn't add any value to me. (response 53, page 60, F: WF3)

The study shows a contradiction between females and males with reference to the value being added by adult content. The contradiction can be due to the way females are brought up to be conservative about sex related issues. They are not always keen to explore and be adventurous with sexual material.

### **Category 6.2 – Impact on behaviour**

The participants between ages 13 to 18 years felt that adult content had negative impact. They mentioned a few behavioural changes which can be supported by some theories. They believed in the addictive factor of watching and mentioned that they think people that view adult content most of the time end up just getting a kick from it and that becomes the only thing they think about. Research done by Dr Cline (1990) showed that one of the first effects of viewing adult content is addiction. Once involved in obscene materials the person would keep coming back for more and still more. The material seemed to provide a very powerful sexual stimulant or aphrodisiac effect followed by sexual release most often through masturbation. The study done by Davis and Braucht (1970) revealed that among 932 sex addicts, 90 percent of the men and 77 percent of the women reported that pornography was significant to their addiction.

I have a friend who is always showing me adult content on his phone and that's the only thing he talks about; I think he also has magazines at home. (response 83, page 98, M: BM1)

At school there are groups of kids that are always in the bathroom looking at this and when you see them in a group laughing then you know they are viewing some adult content (response 57, page 80, F:WF1)

Concerns from the female participants were that most of the boys want to be sexually active and want to experiment and try out what they have viewed in the different materials. According to Hughes (1998) children often imitate what they've seen, read, or heard. Studies suggest that exposure to pornography can prompt kids to act out sexually against younger, smaller, and more vulnerable children. Experts in the field of childhood sexual abuse report that any premature sexual activity in children always suggests two possible stimulants: experience and exposure. This means that the sexually deviant child may have been molested or simply exposed to sexuality through pornography.

I think that boys that view this content either want to try it out on other kids younger than them or on their girlfriends. You know we have had stories of kids raping each other where does that come from? (response 82, page 97, F: BF3)

Taking into account starting sex early that leads to all sorts of things with all the diseases that we have in South Africa like HIV/AIDS, it is bad. (response 84, page 98, M: WM3)

Another argument of getting sexually active at an early age raises other concerns such as sexual illnesses, unplanned pregnancies and sexual addiction. This study concludes that as children are exposed to adult content they are learning an extremely dangerous message from pornographers that sex without responsibility is acceptable and desirable since adult content can encourage sexual expression without responsibility; it basically endangers children's health. Postman quoted in Hughes (1998) explains that one of the grimmer consequences of adult-like sexual activity among children has been a steady increase in the extent to which youth are afflicted with venereal disease. In the United States about one in four sexually experienced teenagers acquires a sexually transmitted disease (STD) every year, resulting in three million cases of teenage STDs. Infectious syphilis rates have more than doubled among

teenagers since the mid-1980s. More children contract sexually transmitted diseases each year than all the victims of polio in its eleven-year epidemic. Using this information in the context of South Africa where there is a high infection rate of HIV/AIDS, it is of great concern to imagine children being encouraged by adult content to engage in sexual activities. The Nelson Mandela Study results (2002) estimated that 11.4% of all South Africans over the age of 2 years were HIV positive.

Another result of children involved in adult sexual activity is the increased rate of pregnancy among teenagers. Research has shown that males who are exposed to a great deal of erotica before the age of 14 are more sexually active and engage in more varied sexual behaviours as adults than is true for males not so exposed.

Most parents try to instil in their children their own personal values about relationships, intimacy, sex, love and marriage. The question is what do messages that are portrayed within pornographic materials say to these children about these important life issues. We can make a comparison with advertisements that can influence a person whether or not to purchase one product over the other, in some way the messages do shape attitudes, values and with some people, behaviour. Donnerstein (1983) quoted by Hughes (1998) explained that a number of studies have demonstrated that exposure to significant amounts of increasingly graphic forms of pornography has a dramatic effect on how adult consumers view women, sexual abuse, sexual relationships, and sex in general.

These studies are virtually unanimous in their conclusions and the conclusions are; when male subjects were exposed to as little as six weeks' worth of standard hard-core pornography, they developed an increased sexual callousness toward women and began to trivialise rape as a criminal offence or no longer considered it a crime at all. They developed distorted perceptions about sexuality,

developed an appetite for more deviant, bizarre, or violent types of pornography which meant normal sex no longer seemed to do the job and devalued the importance of monogamy, lacked confidence in marriage as either a viable or lasting institution, and viewed non-monogamous relationships as normal and natural behaviour.

The participants also believed that viewing of adult content could lead to effects at a later stage like getting involved in child pornography, rape from watching violent adult content and possibility of not being able to be intimate without using adult content for arousal.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the issues that were raised by participants in response to the discussion guide and were supposed to achieve the purpose of the study.

## **Chapter 5 – Conclusion and recommendations**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to survey the perceptions and attitudes of the youth towards the availability of adult content on mobile phones.

This chapter concludes the study and a brief overview of the study objectives will be discussed taking into account what the key questions were and whether the study achieved those objectives and answered the key questions. Thereafter limitations, recommendations and contributions to this study will be discussed.

### **5.2 Study objectives and questions**

The objectives of this study were:

- To investigate the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of youth towards the availability of mobile phone adult content
- To explore factors that MNOs should consider when working on marketing strategies for this product.

In more detail, the objectives were:

- To establish any awareness of the availability of adult content on mobile phones amongst the youth, and establish whether there is current interaction with mobile phone adult content
- To explore their perceptions and attitudes towards the availability of adult content on mobile phones in order to understand their opinions/viewpoint i.e. do they think it's wrong or right?

- To explore how they think the availability of mobile phone adult content will impact on their behaviour i.e. how likely will they be to engage with mobile phone adult content.
- To explore how they perceive the impact of the availability of mobile phone adult content on them i.e. is the perceived impact positive or negative.

The key questions of the study were:

- Are the youth aware of the availability of adult content on mobile phones?
- What is the current interaction with adult content on mobile phones if there is any?
- What are their perceptions and attitudes of adult content on mobile phones?
- How do they think the availability of adult content on mobile phones will impact on their behaviour?
- What are the marketing implications of the availability of mobile adult content in the market place?
- How is the availability of mobile adult content affecting marketing strategies of the product?

The themes that emerged had some relation to the research questions and objectives.

### **5.2.1 Awareness and interaction with adult content on mobile phones**

The study extracted evidence that all the participants were aware of the availability of adult content on mobile phones. The participants were even aware of other mediums that distributed adult content and the Internet and television were the most prevalent mediums. Amongst the participants most of them did not admit to accessing adult content on mobile phones themselves but had

friends that had showed it to them. Most of the participants had intentionally or unintentionally accessed adult content on television and the internet. They believed that adult content was everywhere and it was very easy to have access to it without identification or proof of age. The few that had accessed adult content preferred mobile phones because it is private, as opposed to the computer where somebody could walk in on you. The worry they had was that their parents could find out but the majority in the urban area indicated that their parents never went through their phones. In the rural areas there were times when parents used their phones to receive or make calls.

With reference to adult content on mobile phones the place of viewing was mainly at school. Since all the participants between ages 13 to 18 years were school going it was apparent that this is when they meet friends and have discussions about adult content.

### **5.2.2 Attitudes and perceptions of adult mobile content**

The thoughts and feelings about mobile adult content varied amongst the participants. There were differences between the younger aged group and the young adults. Religion, culture, feminism, right of choice came up as differentiators from the participants; other participants were indifferent to the availability of mobile adult content and some males indicated that adult content was a fun component of their lives. The participants that were against mobile adult content were disgusted by the fact that a group of people could be sitting together in a public space and one of those people could be watching adult content on their phone without other people being aware. They believed the availability of adult content on mobile phones was lowering values and morals in society.



### **5.2.3 Impact on behaviour**

The general feeling was that adult content had a negative impact on behaviour but most participants agreed the grounding of the person and the person's circumstances does play a significant role in how they engage and get affected by adult content. The impact looked at adult content in general because it doesn't matter which channel is being used. Impact issues that were discussed were addiction, becoming sexually active so as to experiment, shaping of attitudes and values as well as interference with the child's development were major points that were mentioned. Impact on behaviour at a later stage was also raised e.g. getting involved in child pornography and rape as well as difficulty with arousal.

### **5.2.4 Other findings**

Other findings that came out that contributed to the study are summarised below:

- Communication with parents. The participants aged between 13 to 18 years felt the communication with their parents with regard to sexual issues was not good and they were finding themselves intentionally or unintentionally accessing adult content when doing their own research with regard to sex education. They raised an issue that parents always spoke about the don'ts and never gave explanations. When they were told not to, human curiosity would lead them to want to explore what they were told not to do.
- Wanting to be accepted by friends and finding themselves with the wrong crowd – in many cases the “in” crowd. Most participants trusted what their friends told them. This is a concern when it comes to sexually related information since the friends are more or less the same age as them.
- Advertisements of mobile adult content are all over and mainly on television. These advertisements show the content that the person can

download. During school holidays most children go to bed late at night when these advertisements are broadcasted.

- The mindsets of the young adults' participants showed responsibility and they strongly believed in the right of choice in their lives. They also believed that adult content was for adults and had some worries about their own children having access to such content on mobile phones.

### **5.3 Limitations of the study**

The youth in South Africa comes from diverse cultures in terms of race, religion, language and socio-economic status, which limits the study in terms of generalising of results. Although it is a limitation, it was not one of the aims of this study to produce what can be generalisable. Rather, the study revealed that despite the diversity of the participants generally they had the same experiences. The MNOs and WASPs could consult this study as input into how they handle adult content.

The responses of the participants were based on self reporting. These responses might have been affected by participants thinking they might need to provide socially acceptable responses.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000) almost all qualitative studies are always confronted by crisis of representation and this could be a limitation for this study in terms of representation of the youth. The youth that was consulted later about the findings of the study verified that the findings were a satisfactory representation of their views.

### **5.4 Quality**

As mentioned in Chapter 4 this study adhered to the quality criteria in terms of credibility, dependability, crystallisation as well as ethical guidelines.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

One of the findings of the study was that the youth were aware of the availability of mobile adult content and they were accessing the content themselves or their friends were. Most of the participants had viewed adult content either intentionally or unintentionally on mobile phones and either medium. There are different players in the mobile industry and some of these were identified as those who would find value in this study. This study concludes that there is need for suitable regulations and parental control to protect children from adult mobile content.

### **5.5.1 Mobile phone industry**

This study recognises that MNOs can do so much to try to limit access of mobile adult content by minors. The study encourages that MNOs take every possible step to limit accessibility of adult content to minors. The fact is adult content will always be accessible on the Internet and MNOs cannot do much about that. The wireless application service provider's association (WASPA) have to introduce suitable measures to guard against children having access to adult mobile content.

#### **5.5.1.1 Identification and filtering systems**

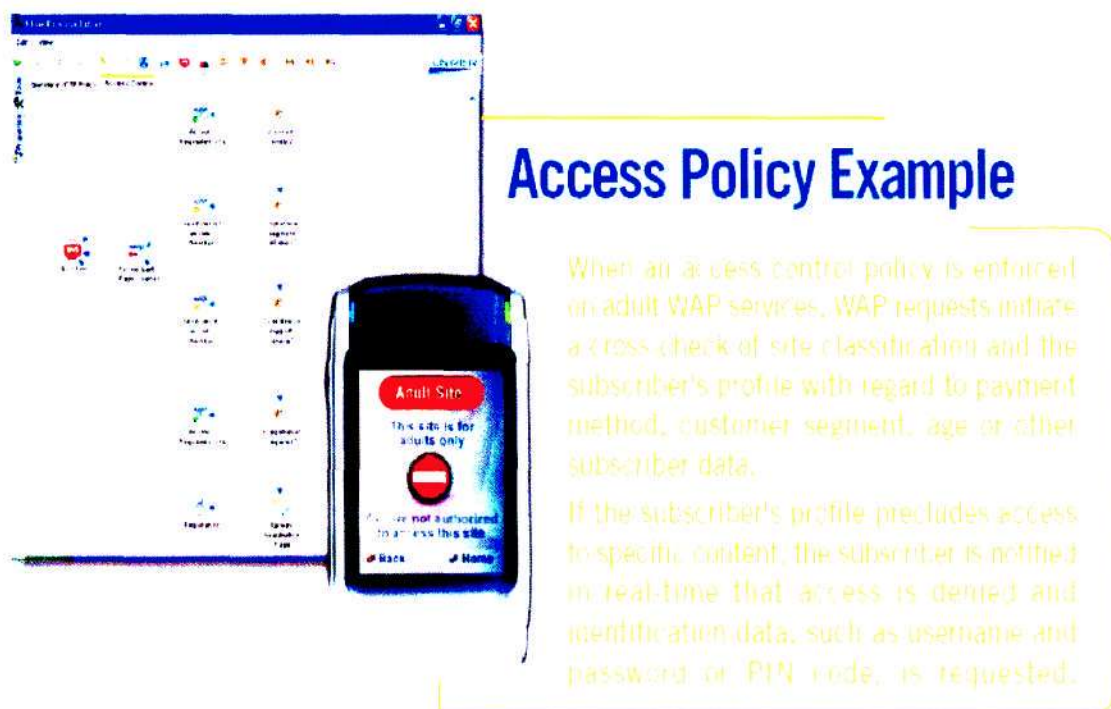
Policies and systems have to be put in place for identification and filtering of adult content. Currently in South Africa a person who buys a prepaid mobile phone doesn't give their personal details and the majority of the youth uses prepaid phones. Some of the youth have contract phones and these are always under the parents name as the people who pay the bill. To be able to download content the person can use multiple channels mobile operators' portal, free mobile Internet browsing, SMS and others. The operators have to control and

filter the content and ensure that subscribers are protected by targeting its delivery.

Policies to control access would be that the access to adult content is blocked until the subscriber is explicitly identified as having consented to be exposed to the content (through a username, ID or PIN code). For content which is external to the operator's portal, some operators may choose to employ content filtering services. MNO's require systems that can enable:

- rapid definition and selective application of a variety of access control policies
- centralised classification of sites and content as adult content
- identification of subscribers and verification of their credentials
- subscribers to change their preferences when eligible to do so
- allow an adult to be able to request on behalf of a child for the child's SIM to be restricted from viewing adult content

**Figure 5: Access Policy Example**



Source: Adapted from [www.unipier.com](http://www.unipier.com)

The diagram above shows an illustration of how the identification and filtering system works.

#### **5.5.1.2 Blocking content**

The MNOs can introduce:

- A process of blocking sites which are carrying illegal content on their networks. Network capability to allow users to block access to specific URLs and MSISDNs
- informally monitoring the types of content delivered through the MNOs network

#### **5.5.2 Government and ICASA**

As mentioned above the prepaid market poses a huge problem for identification purposes. Other countries like France have regulations that a person cannot purchase a mobile phone without providing some identification. This study recommends that government or ICASA looks at the introduction of some of these regulations within the mobile phone industry. The media content classification system that is currently used by films and television has to be introduced as well within the adult mobile content.

This study even goes further and questions why does a society need to have access to adult content? Is there any value that is added by the adult content within society? If the question is no, why is adult content not abolished so that we can protect our children from having access to this material, which can lead to major confusion and wrong portrayal of what sex is supposed to be about, which can lead to abuse of women and children in a society that is already ridden with these issues.

### **5.5.3 Parents**

One of the findings of the study referred to the conclusion that parents were not aware of what their children were doing with their mobile phones because they never checked their children's phones. The movie and computer industries have been able to implement systems to assist parents with control. The movie industry has age restrictions whereas computers have software to block pop-ups, websites etc that might have adult content. Parents have to be given the same systems within the mobile phone industry to be able to control what their children can access on mobile phones. The filtering systems mentioned above should be able to allow parents to control and monitor the content that children are allowed to access.

Parents need to be vigilant and protect their children from harmful media content, the industry can only do so much and most of the responsibility lies with the parent as well.

### **5.5.4 Schools**

The findings of the study indicated that children were showing their friends mobile adult content and were even taking naked pictures of each other at schools. The usage of mobile phones during school hours should be banned and the schools should have strict policies and guidelines relating to the usage of mobile phones at schools and mainly with reference to mobile adult content. Some of the schools in the Nelspruit area have strict policies where the children hand in their mobile phones in the morning and get them in the afternoon when they leave. If the person is found with a mobile phone during school time the phone is confiscated and only returned at the end of the term.

## **5.6 Suggestions for further research**

The following can be considered for future research within mobile adult content industry:

1. The study to investigate customer perceptions of companies that provide and distribute mobile adult content. The study will have to assess whether the brand equity is eroded or not and how providing adult content affect the brand values of the company.
2. Assess financial implications for a company to decide that they will not get involved in mobile adult content taking into account potential revenues that other channels e.g. videos, internet have witnessed.
3. Which need is being satisfied by mobile adult content taking into account the Maslow's hierarchy of needs?
4. A case study of a specific mobile network operator who took a strategic decision to create and distribute mobile adult content.
5. A quantitative study looking at potential revenues that a mobile network operator can make as a distributor and creator of mobile adult content.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

This chapter concludes the study, summarises the findings, makes recommendations to the different players in the market that are affected by adult content as well as suggests future topics for research since there isn't a lot of freely available studies in this area. The limitations were re-iterated and taken into account.

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## **Annexure A - Discussion guide for triads and focus groups.**

Triad / focus groups number \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Race \_\_\_\_\_

Place \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

"Good morning. I am \_\_\_\_\_ (introduce self).

This discussion is being conducted to get your inputs and views regarding the availability of adult content on mobile phones. The questions are in no way a test.

"If it is okay with you, I will be tape recording this discussion. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. The final dissertation will be compiled and will contain all comments from you, but the report will not have any reference to individuals. "

"I will appreciate it if you can answer honestly and please try not to talk at the same time so that I can listen to each person's view or comment. I expect this discussion to last for an hour."

1. What do you use your phone for, besides making voice calls?
2. What type of content would you like to have access to via your mobile phone?
3. Do you think adults have access to other content on their phones besides usual voice and sms?

4. Do you know what adult content is? What do you understand by adult content? (Probe further and explain that it means sexually explicit materials or pornography)
5. Have you accessed adult content via your mobile phone? (If No, Are you aware that adult content can be accessed via mobile phones?)
6. Have you seen any adverts advertising adult mobile content? (Probe further, which media?)
7. Do you know of any other ways adult content can be accessed or viewed?
8. "As mentioned above adult content is sexually explicit material" – what do you think and how do you feel about this information being available on mobile phones? (Depending on answers probe further and understand why?)
9. "People who access mobile adult content are cool and have more information relating to sex"? (Yes/No and probe further why?)
10. Do you think the adult content on mobile phones can influence young people's behaviour? (Probe further, how?)
11. If you were able to access adult content on your mobile phone, would you access and view it?
12. Do you think you can get good advice and tips about sex by viewing adult content? (Probe further)
13. Do you think young people should have freedom to access any content on their mobile phones?
14. Are you aware of young people already accessing adult content on their mobile phones?
15. What do you think the impact of accessing this content will be on the youth of today?
16. What value do you think this content will add to your quality of life? (Probe further)
17. Do you think that viewing this content can affect a person at a later stage? (Probe further depending on answers)

18. Do you discuss sex related topics with your parents and/or friends? (Probe further, the mood of the discussions, comfortability and detail of the discussions)
19. Do you trust information you get from friends regarding sex? (Probe further)
20. Trying to access that information on the internet, have you come across pornography? (Probe further)



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10 APRIL 2006

MS. N NCUBE (901329130)  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dear Ms. Ncube

ETHICAL CLEARANCE: "YOUTH PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE AVAILABILITY OF ADULT ON MOBILE PHONES"

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the above project, but the Committee noted that:

1. Informed consent to parent's as well as for children's should have been obtained in line with standard ethics guidelines
2. The Committee also was concerned with the irregular way in which the project was undertaken, i.e. without the proper informed consent.

APPROVAL NUMBER: 06073A

Yours faithfully

  
.....  
MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA  
RESEARCH OFFICE

PS: The following general condition is applicable to all projects that have been granted ethical clearance:

THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE CONTACTED IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY APPROVAL SHOULD THE RESEARCH INVOLVE UTILIZATION OF SPACE AND/OR FACILITIES AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS/ORGANISATIONS. WHERE QUESTIONNAIRES ARE USED IN THE PROJECT, THE RESEARCHER SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE INCLUDES A SECTION AT THE END WHICH SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY THE PARTICIPANT (PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE) INDICATING THAT HE/SHE WAS INFORMED OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND THAT THE INFORMATION GIVEN WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

cc. Faculty Officer  
cc. Supervisor (Mr. M Phiri)