

**Motivational factors in the practice of having multiple
concurrent sexual partners: A study of students in a South
African university**

Submitted in fulfilment for a Masters of Social Science degree (Psychology)

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DECLARATION

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, declare that:

- a) The research reported in this dissertation, except where stated otherwise is my original work
- b) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university
- c) This dissertation does not entail other people's work unless specifically attributed as such, in which case their words have been rephrased and referenced. However, where their exact words have been used, their writings has been placed in quotation marks and referenced as well.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

We, Dr. Nontobeko Buthelezi and Prof. Augustine Nwoye, confirm that the work reported in this dissertation was carried out by Nereshnee Naidoo under our supervision.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____  _____ Date: _____15/03/19_____

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ABSTRACT

The practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships is not a new phenomenon. It has been reported in many places over the years. Studies show that engaging in such behaviour makes one more likely to contract STIs and STDs. With the current HIV pandemic facing South Africa, motivating factors for engaging in such a risky practice need to be explored.

This research investigated the factors that motivate the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study: 1) What are students' perceptions of the concept of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships? 2) What are students' views on people's motivations for engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnership? 3) To what extent do students believe that there is a gender difference in the practice of having multiple concurrent partnership? What are the students' reasons for holding such opinions? 4) What about masculinity may or may not drive men to have multiple concurrent sexual partnership? In all, 21 participants (13 Males and 8 Females) took part in the research.

Data was collected by 7 individual interviews consisting of 4 female participants and 3 male participants, 1 paired interview consisting of 2 female participants, one all male focus group discussion consisting of 7 male participants and by one mixed-gender focus group discussion consisting of 2 female participants and 3 male participants and was analysed using thematic analysis. Results showed that there are numerous factors such as being intoxicated, the urge of sexual drive, and experimentation amongst others that motivate people to engage in this practice. It was also discovered that some gender differences exist in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners and that masculinity is important socially. The implications of the findings were examined, and recommendations were made for improved policy and practice in this domain.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships have been defined as “overlapping sexual partnerships where intercourse with one partner occurs between two acts of intercourse with another partner” (Garnet, 2009, p.4). However, there has been much debate on the different forms of multiple concurrent sexual behaviour and the reasons for this behaviour. For example, in some contexts polygamy may be classified as having multiple concurrent sexual partners, whilst in another context it may be seen as a customary norm (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001), and such classification will be offensive to the specific culture. The issue of what motivates the practice is of major importance, as having multiple concurrent sexual partners is a significant contributor to the growing pandemic of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in Southern Africa (Gorbach, Stoner, Aral, Whittington & Holmes, 2001). This is to be understood more now than ever as Statistics South Africa has released data that shows HIV/AIDS deaths in South Africa have moved from being ranked sixth in 2012, to third in 2013, with 458,933 registered deaths at the Department of Home Affairs in 2013 (*Statistics South Africa*, 2013). Research done by Morris and Kretzschmar (1997), Shisana et al. (2009) and Epstein and Morris (2011) demonstrates the link between multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and HIV infection.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships is a practice that causes many challenges. Having more sexual partnerships increases the likelihood of people becoming infected with HIV. South Africa, and most importantly, KwaZulu-Natal, has the highest global prevalence of HIV/AIDS. It is also noted that this province has the highest prevalence of engaging in what is referred to as risky sexual behaviour. Other challenges that are caused by multiple concurrent sexual partnerships are societal challenges. People who engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships do not always engage in protected sex. Having more than one sexual partner, where the relationship causes a pregnancy, makes it difficult to identify parental rights where it is initially unclear who the parent could be. Where current partners are not aware of the other partners, some people may find themselves in a situation that becomes violent when they are made aware of the situation. The violence may be directed towards the person who engaged in

the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships or the violence can occur towards the person who had been cheated on, as some find it difficult to come to terms with the situation that they are facing. In some cases, where children are involved, this will also impact on them. As there are many challenges that engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships cause, it is important to understand why people engage in the practice. The study explored the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and aimed to identify reasons that motivate people to engage in this behaviour.

1.3 Purpose of the study

This research explored how students perceived multiple concurrent sexual behaviour and investigated the motives behind having multiple concurrent partners. Having multiple concurrent partners is a problem that South Africa is facing. South Africa is a country with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, which is mainly spread by the practice of having multiple concurrent partnerships (Shisana et al., 2009). It is also evident that there is a gender difference in the practice of multiple concurrent partnerships (Shisana et al., 2009). It is important to investigate what drives these differences; what factors contribute to males being more motivated to have multiple concurrent partners than females? There are many factors that can arise. Some of these factors can be linked to issues surrounding masculinity. Understanding how students perceive the practice of multiple concurrent partnership might assist in explaining it, irrespective of its being associated with the high prevalence of HIV. Understanding what motivates having multiple concurrent partners might assist in intervention designs being formulated and successfully implemented.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were to:

- Explore students' perceptions of the concept of having multiple concurrent sexual partners.
- Explore students' views on what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners.
- Explore if there are any gender differences in the reasons for the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners.
- Determine, from students' perspective, if the factor of masculinity may be related to the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners.

1.5 Research questions

- What are students' perceptions of the concept of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?
- What are students' views on what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners?
- Are there any gender differences in the reasons for the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?
- What are students' perspectives regarding masculinity and the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study was considered significant due to the important data the study was expected to yield towards understanding the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships in contemporary society. The aim and rationale of this study were to explore how students perceive multiple concurrent sexual behaviour and to investigate the motives behind having multiple partners. It was expected that the results of the study would be used to identify factors that are still prevalent currently and could also be used to determine intervention designs in dealing with this issue. The current review on literature did not find any studies on multiple concurrent sexual partnerships that were done in Pietermaritzburg. The lack of research found in the Pietermaritzburg region shows that there was a need for a study to be done on a sample in Pietermaritzburg. The current generation being sampled includes young people from Generation Y (born in the 1980s) and Generation Z (born from 1995), as this is the two generations that have reported the most number of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

The following assumptions are made in the study:

- There are different reasons for why people engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships.
- People are aware that having multiple concurrent sexual partners does make one more at risk of contracting HIV.
- There are gender-related reasons for why males and females engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships.

1.8 Scope and delimitation of the study

The study participants consisted of a sample drawn from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The age group sampled was 20-26 years, as this included the age range where multiple concurrent partnerships are most prominent. The sample used were not requested to disclose if they were in heterosexual or homosexual relationships; however, it is noted that during the discussions, all of the participants spoke about the opposite gender when discussing their sexual behaviour. As the results of the study aimed to explore the perceptions of the sample used, the results cannot be generalised to other populations.

1.9 Operational definitions of terms

Definitions of important terms in the study are provided below:

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS): A disease caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus that causes the immune system to become more prone to contracting infections.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV): A retrovirus that infects and destroys T helper cells in the immune system.

Motivational factors: In the context of this study, this refers to what drives deliberate human behaviour.

Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships: This refers to a person having overlapping sexual partnerships where intercourse with one partner occurs between two acts of intercourse with another partner.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs): A disease that is transmitted by sexual contact.

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs): An infection that is transmitted by sexual contact.

1.10 Summary and overview of the study

Chapter 1 of this dissertation provided the reader with a background into the research topic. It also provided an explanation of the research problem; the objectives and research questions of the study were also disclosed. The reader was made aware of the scope, delimitation and operational definitions and abbreviations of the study.

Chapter 2 provides a review of literature that exists on the issue surrounding multiple concurrent sexual partners. Literature that investigates different motivating factors was investigated.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology used for this study. The chapter highlights the research design, instrumentation, data collection techniques, sampling techniques, data analysis procedures, issues of validity, reliability and rigour, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 provides the research findings from the study, describing the different themes that emerged from the study.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings, as well as the limitations of the study, including the recommendations for further studies in light of the review of literature and the data arising from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

A few decades ago, a terrible disease, previously unknown to the human race, began to kill people in the most alarming and terrifying circumstances. It was as though some primeval beast had surfaced in the collective bloodstream of the human race. Wherever this microscopic beast appeared, it produced panic, fear, guilt, hysteria, accusations, excruciating suffering and always, in the end, death. (Van Wyk, 2001, p. 4)

This “primeval beast” (Van Wyk, 2001, p. 4) is now known as HIV/AIDS. The human immunodeficiency virus attacks the human body’s defence cells namely, the CD4 or the T-helper cells. The human body’s immune system is left vulnerable to opportunistic diseases and unable to fight these diseases. There are three ways that HIV is spread: mother-to-child transmission, blood/body fluid transmission, while the most prominent mode is via sexual transmission. HIV/AIDS is a worldwide phenomenon. Although there has been a great deal of information circulated to the public about HIV/AIDS and the consequences of living with the effects of this virus, many people do not take precautions during sexual activity. People still engage in behaviour that could leave them vulnerable to this terrible virus.

One of these risky behaviours is having multiple concurrent sexual partners, that is, sexual partners who overlap in time (Parker, Makhubele, Ntlabati & Connolly, 2007). Rosenberg, Gurvey, Adler, Dunlop and Ellen (1999) researched concurrent sexual partners and risk for sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents. One of the objectives of the study was to investigate if there was any relationship between multiple concurrent partners and the risk of contracting an STD. The findings of the study were intriguing. Of the participants who were involved in multiple concurrent partners, 26.7% were diagnosed with an STD. Rosenberg et al. (1999) also suggested that social networking research has shown that people who have multiple concurrent partners are likely to choose partners who share similar sexual beliefs. This research suggests it is possible that people who are having multiple concurrent partners are having sexual intercourse with partners who also have multiple concurrent partners. Through each

person having more than one partner, a social network of sexual partners will exist. This increases the risk of contracting STDs, including HIV/AIDS. This can be seen in Figure 1 below (*Multiple and concurrent partnerships: Driving South Africa's HIV epidemic, n.d.*).

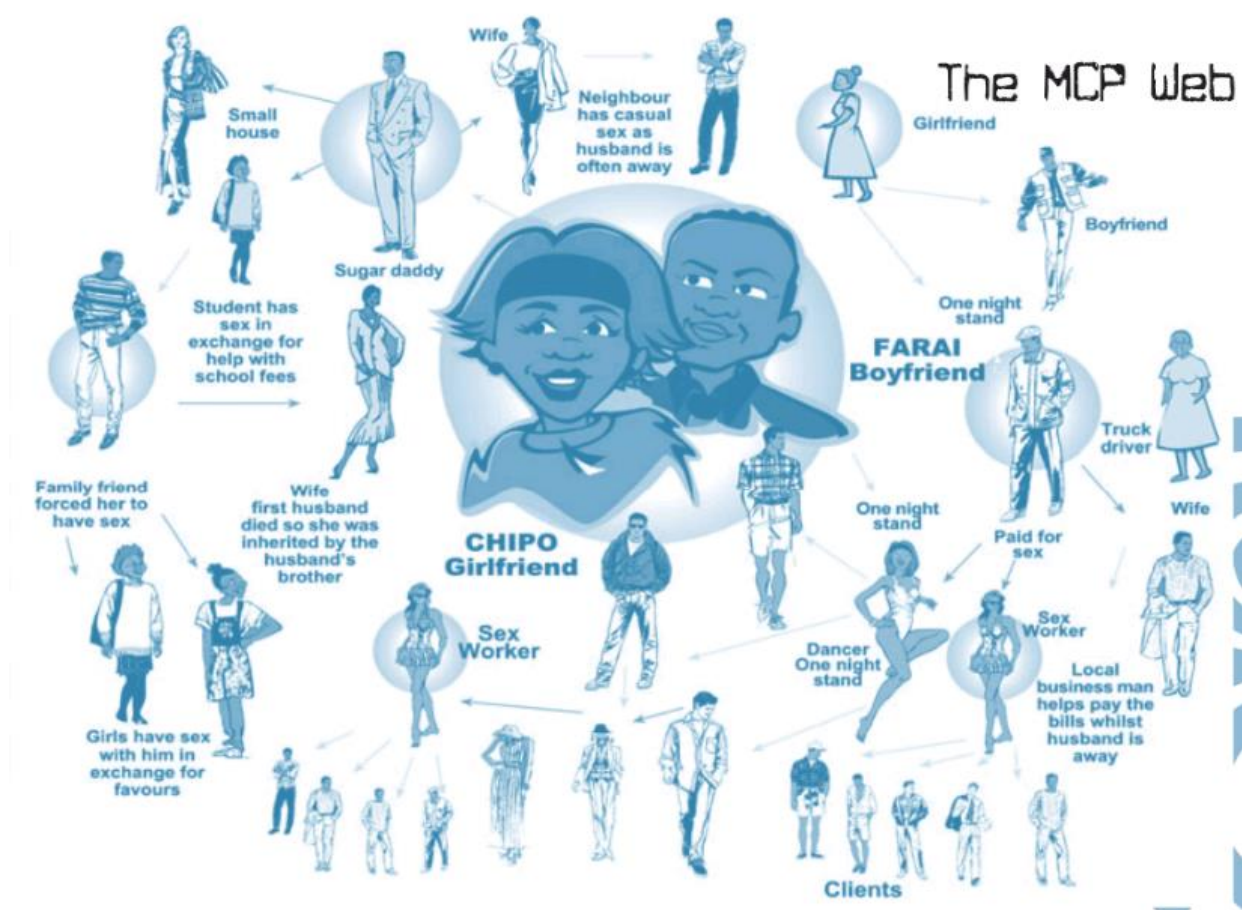


Figure 1: The Multiple Concurrent Partnership Web

A more recent African study done by Kalichman et al. (2007) involved participants living with HIV/AIDS. The study involved an investigation of the risk factors associated with people who are HIV infected. Participants were recruited from support groups for HIV-positive people and from anti-retroviral (ARV) clinics in Botswana (Kalichman et al., 2007). Participants were asked to complete an interview which required demographic and health information, their HIV/AIDS status, and sexual risk and protective behaviour information. The study concluded that the practice of multiple concurrent partners is not uncommon in people who are infected with HIV/AIDS (Kalichman et al., 2007). The study also revealed that people who are infected with the virus may not disclose their HIV status to their sexual partners. It was further discovered that condoms were not used all of the time; therefore, people were put at risk of contracting or re-contracting the virus. This literature review aims to investigate the factors

associated with the practice of having multiple concurrent partners and will also explore studies that illustrate that having multiple concurrent partners increases the likelihood of one contracting or re-contracting HIV.

2.2 Theoretical review of the literature (foreign and local)

It is evident from the studies described above that there is a link between HIV and multiple concurrent partners, as having multiple concurrent partners increases the risk of one contracting the HI virus. This link causes one to think of preventative measures. An important step in establishing preventative measures is to understand why people engage in the practice of multiple concurrent partners. In the search for understanding multiple concurrent partners, theories and studies have tried to provide explanations for what motivates the practice of multiple concurrent partners. For example, when considering how people develop throughout their lifespan, there are many different viewpoints that have been offered. Thus, developmental psychology provides many different theories that try to explain how people change over time.

There are two aspects to development; these are that development occurs in one of two ways: continuous or discontinuous. The continuous process suggests that people gradually develop and gain more of the skills that they have already been predisposed to. This is a gradual and steady change. The discontinuous process suggests that people develop through a series of different stages that can impact them differently (Berk, 2007). Various theorists support one or other of these two aspects.

Another important debate in human development is the nature-versus-nurture debate. The nature-versus-nature debate tries to establish if one's gene pool or one's environment plays a more predominant role in shaping one's development (Berk, 2007). By nature, one is referring to the characteristics people inherit from their parents and by nurture, one refers to the environment that one develops in. There are many different theories that have been developed to assist in understanding development from either of these perspectives. A theory is "an orderly, integrated set of statements that describes, explains, and predicts behaviour" (Berk, 2007, p. 5). There are very well-known theorists that exist in the developmental psychology realm, including Freud, Erikson, Piaget, Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner. These major theories will be explained below, followed by a description of the African paradigm.

2.2.1 Freud's psychosexual theory

Freud believed that children undergo different stages of development which he termed psychosexual stages. These stages take place from birth to adolescence. Freud believed the challenges one faces in each of these stages cause traits in the personality of the adult. The first stage is known as the oral stage and includes the period of development from birth to one year, which involves a baby's feeding activities (Cameron, 1967). Freud believed that if a child's oral needs are not met, then certain behaviours such as thumb-sucking and fingernail-biting will occur in childhood, which will develop into overeating and smoking in later life. The second of the stages was referred to as the anal stage and runs from one to three years (Cameron, 1967). This involves a child's ability to suppress or release urine and faeces. If the child does not meet these needs, messiness and disorder will result. The third stage is referred to as the phallic stage and this is from the ages of three to six years (Cameron, 1967). This involves genital stimulation. Freud believed that this is the stage where the superego is formed and a child will feel guilty if they go against standards that are deemed acceptable by their parents. The fourth stage is the latency stage and occurs from 6 to 11 years (Cameron, 1967). Here the sexual instincts are not as dominant as in the prior stage. This stage involves the child developing new social values from adults and same-sex peers outside of the family. The last stage is known as the genital stage and occurs at adolescence (Cameron, 1967). This is where puberty occurs and sexual impulses begin to arise again. If the child meets the needs of this stage, marriage, and child-rearing occur.

When evaluating this theory in light of the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships, the individual who shows this behaviour can be seen as not having resolved the above stages successfully. The challenges that they faced in each of the stages can cause issues in their relationships and also cause sexual challenges, leading in some cases to the practice of involvement in multiple sexual partnerships. Using Freudian theory one can also suspect that those who engage in multiple sexual partnerships are those with a weak ego, overcome by their urge to indulge their sexual drive and the pleasure principle.

2.2.2 Erikson's psychosocial stages of development

The next theory explained is that of Erik Erikson. Erikson proposed a psychosocial stage theory of development. Erikson believed that there are psychosocial circumstances that one will undergo from birth to late adulthood; how the individual copes with each of these circumstances will shape his or her life pattern in adult life. Like Freud, Erikson identified different stages. However, Erikson's stages were socially inclined. These stages were: basic

trust versus mistrust (birth to 1 year); autonomy versus shame and doubt (1 to 3 years); initiative versus guilt (3 to 6 years); industry versus inferiority (6 to 11 years); identity versus role confusion (adolescence); intimacy versus isolation (early adulthood); generativity versus stagnation (middle adulthood); and lastly ego integrity versus despair (late adulthood) (Shaffer & Kipp, 2014).

It is believed that in the intimacy versus isolation stage of development, adults begin to form long-term relationships. The relationships that develop can either be positive or negative in terms of the feelings and positive attachment evoked. Beyers and Seiffge-Krenke (2010) conducted research investigating if the stage of identity precedes the stage of intimacy in emerging adults of the 21st century. The study showed that early ego development and intimacy in romantic relationships were linked and that Erikson's study is still relevant to today's 21st century adult.

These findings also conform to the study by Weisskirch (2018). A sample of 232 emerging adults were asked to complete a questionnaire that aimed to evaluate their intimacy development and well-being. The study showed that one's identity development, low attachment avoidance, and self-efficacy in romantic relations can determine one's intimacy development. The study also showed that those participants who had high levels of intimacy were happier than those with low intimacy levels.

2.2.3 Piaget's stages of cognitive development

Piaget's is the third developmental theory presented here. Jean Piaget also played a pivotal role in developmental psychology. Piaget also believed that one goes through different stages in one's lifespan. However, Piaget focused on cognitive development rather than psychosexual development or psychosocial development like Freud and Erikson. Piaget held that there are four stages of cognitive development, namely sensorimotor (birth to 2 years); pre-operational (2 to 7 years); concrete operational (7 to 11 years); and lastly formal operational (11 years and onwards). These stages facilitated the logical thought processes of children (Shaffer & Kipp, 2014).

Sibler (1992) stated that sexual behaviour is derived from the transition from the concrete to the formal operational stage. In Talashek, Alba and Patel (2006), abstract reasoning ability is believed to influence risky sexual behaviour. This is also seen in Gfellner (1988). Gfellner

(1988) investigated the relationships between gender, sexual attitudes and sexual behaviour. The study concluded that there was a relationship between one's sexual concept development and sexual attitudes. This demonstrates that one's cognitive processes can impact on sexual behaviour. A deeper understanding on how thought processes affect sexual behaviour needs to be investigated so that a model can be devised to aid in understanding how to change or modify variables that cause a person to engage in risky sexual behaviour. It is argued in this study that people who engage in multiple sexual partnerships are often unable to use their formal operational reasoning to place a control on their urge to engage in multiple sexual partnerships and the health risks that such practice involved.

2.2.4 Vygotsky's social-cognition theory

The social cognition learning model asserts that culture is the prime determinant of individual development. Humans are the only species to have created culture, and every human child develops in the context of a culture. Therefore, a child's learning development is affected in ways large and small by the culture – including the culture of family environment – in which he or she is enmeshed (*Lev Vygotsky and social cognition*, 2011).

The above quotation depicts the basis of Vygotsky's theory on learning. Here, culture is seen as a tool for providing children with the content and the process for acquiring knowledge. Vygotsky introduced the idea of the zone of proximal development, referring to the difference between what children can do unaided and what they can do with the guidance of a more skilled peer or adult. According to Vygotsky, children learn through a process of internalisation. Internalisation is a process whereby meaning is derived from what occurs to an individual socially (Wertsch, 1985). This occurs through two processes. The first is inter-psychological functioning which occurs between the child and the adult (society). The second is intra-psychological functioning, where the child takes in what occurs in society and creates his/her own meaning; the inter-psychological becomes intra-psychological.

Vygotsky's social cognition learning model firmly holds that the being and the physical environment need to be understood together. This implies that sexual behaviour is something that is learnt; the person is exposed to that specific behaviour, either directly or vicariously. However, a research study into the social cognition learning model and the practice of multiple

concurrent sexual partnerships did not yield significant results. The deductive reasoning behind the social cognitive learning model cannot be ignored, thus the focus turned to social modelling (*Lev Vygotsky and social cognition*, 2011).

Chua, Etulle-Tapanan and Uy (2017) stated that social modelling is key to understanding multiple concurrent partnerships in and out of marital relationships. Upon investigating social modelling, Bandura's social learning theory (renamed social cognitive theory) was significant in understanding multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Bandura believed that individuals learn through various processes, including through observation, imitation, and modelling. Bandura (1971) believed that people acted in a way that was influenced by the examples they observed, either directly or vicariously. It is also noted that reinforcements and conditioning processes also ensure that behaviour is repeated.

From the theories of Vygotsky and Erikson, it can be determined that there is a relationship that exists between the social environment and the individual. A theory that also incorporates this is Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory clarified below.

2.2.5 Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory

Bronfenbrenner believed that a person interacts at multiple levels in his/her surroundings. The surroundings can be classified into five levels: microsystem; mesosystem; exosystem; macrosystem and chronosystem. Bronfenbrenner claimed that these influences the child. The microsystem is the most influential, as it is the level closest to the child. Influences at this level may in turn affect the relationships in the mesosystem and so on. The microsystem includes the child's immediate surroundings with which the child has direct contact. This includes the child's immediate family, child care centre or school and the child's neighbourhood. The mesosystem is a connected structure that entails connections between aspects of the child's microsystem, for example, the child's teachers, and spiritual members. The exosystem includes indirect systems where the child does not participate directly but is still affected by them; this includes the parents' workplace, and school or neighbourhood committees. The next system is the macrosystem. The system consists of laws, customs and values. The last system is called the chronosystem. This system involves aspects pertaining to the dimensions of time. It includes aspects that are external to the child, such as the timing of a parent's death, or internal to a child, such as the timing of puberty.

A study by Voisin, DiClemente, Salazar, Crosby and Yarber (2006) investigated the role of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory in understanding factors that are associated with STDs. The findings of the study showed that a higher degree of substance abuse, an individual's attitude to risk-taking, an individual's perception of the degree of parental control, family support, gender roles supporting male dominance, risky peer norms, and lower student-teacher connectedness, were independently associated with increased sexually transmitted diseases risk behaviour. These factors operate at the various levels of Bronfenbrenner's theory. This theory thus encompasses a multi-dimensional approach in understanding the interconnectedness in the environment and the impact this has on an individual.

It is important to note that the above theories are based within the western culture. The participants in the western studies are from first world countries with different social factors that influence them. There may be differences noted in the African continent as Africa has a different culture. Lassiter (2000) argues that there are factors unique to the sub-Saharan continent of Africa compared to the rest of the world, and a theory specific to this continent will be discussed in the next section. Thus, the last of the theories presented here is the Afrocentric paradigm, which will aim to provide a better context to understanding the motivational factors in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships in the African context.

2.2.6 Afrocentric paradigm

The Afrocentric paradigm proposes that any research problem focused on understanding the behaviour of Africans must be undertaken from the perspectives of the Africans themselves. Since the majority of students in the South African university involved in this study are of African origin, following the principle of the Afrocentric paradigm in this study was considered essential. The Afrocentric paradigm believes in the operation of the principle of interdependent ontology and that an individual does not exist in isolation from his or her community. This paradigm also believes in cosmology (Graham, 1999), which entails a balance in social order and an interconnectedness of all elements governing a person. Here, development is a result of the interconnectedness that exists between the individual and the community.

Schiele (1996) also mentions the term Afrocentricity. The term was used to describe the cultural values of individuals belonging to African descent. Schiele (1996) outlines the differences in individuals belonging to this descent and aims to provide a social paradigm in

understanding how cultural values impact individuals. In this regard, having more than one partner is not considered to be taboo but is culturally acceptable. A man will engage in having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships for various reasons, including the higher status and reputation accorded a man having more than one wife.

2.3 Review of foreign empirical studies

There are studies that have been done internationally and aims to understand the motivators of the practice of multiple concurrent partnerships. The themes pertaining to attachment, substance abuse and evolution will be discussed below.

2.3.1 Attachment

In a study on infidelity, Amidona (2007) focused on adult attachment, emotional regulation, gender roles and infidelity. One of Amidona's (2007) hypotheses was that attachment styles can make a person more likely to be unfaithful. Attachment refers to an emotional bond that exists between two people who have mutual affection for each other (Shaffer & Kipp, 2007). It has been hypothesised that adults who have an avoidant attachment style are more likely to be unfaithful as they are not looking for long-term intimacy and are more likely to be involved in casual flings (Amidona, 2007). Amidona (2007) also investigated the understanding of the four different infidelity types: emotional infidelity; physical infidelity; combined infidelity; and anonymous infidelity.

Attachment theory relies on the stages of development to explain why infidelity happens. The theory implies that a person's relationships at any point are determined by the attachment style they developed during the first few years of their life. Attachment theory ignores, to an extent, that humans are social beings who are constantly changing and interacting with one another throughout life. It is therefore vital that other factors are looked at to provide an explanation for infidelity. These factors include alcohol and drugs.

2.3.2 Substance use/abuse

The practice of multiple concurrent partners occurs worldwide. A study done in the United States of America aimed to identify factors which are associated with multiple concurrent

partners (Santelli, Brener, Lowry, Bhatt & Zabin, 1998). The study involved the participation of 8,450 participants, males and females, between the ages of 14 and 22. Participants were required to answer the Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS) to identify the prevalence of and the factors associated with the practice of multiple concurrent partners (Santelli et al., 1998). The study showed that alcohol and drugs influenced people to have multiple concurrent partners. The study further showed that people who engage in sexual practices from an early age are more likely to be involved in the practice of multiple concurrent partners (Santelli et al., 1998).

Although these factors are associated with the practice of multiple concurrent partners, research suggests that there has not been consistency with regard to the association between alcohol and the practice of risky sexual behaviours (Lin et al., 2005). Therefore, individual factors associated with a person should also be considered. This might include an evaluation of an individual's socio-economic circumstances, cultural background, and self-esteem. These will be discussed in later sections.

2.3.3 Evolution

In a study done by Cann, Mangum and Wells (2001), the focus was on gender differences in the way men and women react to emotional infidelity, which is considered to be betraying a deep emotional attachment to another person, and physical infidelity, which is considered as having sexual intercourse with another person. Cann et al. (2001) used the evolutionary model of psychology in order to explain the different responses to this. The evolutionary model of psychology (Platek & Shackelford, 2006) states that men are more distressed when they are confronted with paternal uncertainty (i.e. the consequences of physical infidelity). On the other hand, these authors argue that females need to feel that their male counterparts are committed to the relationship and their offspring. If a man commits emotional infidelity, the woman sees this as a lack of commitment. The security for their offspring is compromised and therefore this type of infidelity causes females to feel more distressed (Platek & Shackelford, 2006). This study suggests that what constitutes acceptable sexual behaviour differs depending on gender, as there is a gender difference in the way men and women react to different kinds of infidelity.

2.4 Review of local empirical studies

Studies done internationally on understanding the motivators of multiple concurrent partnerships may only be applicable to the international population. It is important to also consider studies that have been done locally, in Africa as well as South Africa. This may allow

a better understanding of the factors that motivate for the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships as it pertains to the population in Africa and other variables can be considered.

2.4.1 Social factors

A study showed that the practice of multiple concurrent partners is common among South Africans in the age category of 20-30 years (Parker et al., 2007). The study sought possible reasons for the practice of multiple concurrent partners. The study investigated participants' educational background, poverty and sexual relationships. The results of the study showed that socio-economic and cultural reasons, which are interlinked with a person's self-esteem, are behind this practice (Parker et al., 2007). People reported that having concurrent partners gave them a sense of confidence and the security of having an almost constant emotional support. Participants also referred to a 'need for sex' (Parker et al., 2007). This response included the participants' feeling that they needed to get 'better' sex from another person but were afraid to lose their current partner.

Hunter (2010) also researched the reasons why people have multiple concurrent sexual partners. Hunter's research occurred in one of the places dubbed the "AIDS capital of the province, Mandeni" (*Drum Magazine*, cited in Hunter, 2010). Hunter (2010) noted race, gender, poverty, materiality of everyday sex and the political economy as being the driving forces for the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. Some of the participants in the study stated that they have 'sugar daddies' as well as other younger, poorer boyfriends. The reasons for having 'sugar daddies' were to provide the female participant with gifts, often money, which the poorer boyfriend could not provide. In the study, female participants also referred to their boyfriends as "ministers of finance, transport and entertainment" or "one for money, one for food, and one for rent" (Hunter, 2010, p. 147). Although this study uncovered many factors relating to socio-economic status, cultural background and individual self-esteem, it was conducted in Mandeni, a rural area in KZN. The above factors may or may not be true for the sample used in the current research, where post-modernism is experienced as more people are being shaped by the city environment and influences.

The above study facilitates an understanding of the practice of multiple concurrent partners. However, these factors did not include any gender differences with regard to infidelity associated with the practice of having multiple concurrent partners, as was suggested by the evolutionary model discussed above.

2.4.2 Sexual satisfaction/dissatisfaction

In the above section, the socio-economic status of a person was seen as one of the motives for multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Poverty was one of the reasons why some participants in Hunter's (2010) study had 'sugar daddies'. However, this could cause one to consider that people with a high socio-economic status or people who are highly educated would be less likely to engage in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners. Cruz and Mause (2014) investigated the motives for Mozambican women with high socio-economic status and with high levels of education for engaging in the practice. Here, the female participants also engaged in having multiple concurrent relationships for power and influence over people who could assist them with the advancement of their careers. Other reasons for engaging in the practice included obtaining sexual satisfaction from partners where a spouse could not provide sexual satisfaction and also to cope with male infidelity or male domination.

A study in another African country, Zimbabwe, looked at the prevalence of concurrent sexual partnerships among students in institutions of higher education. Shumba, Mapfumo and Chademana (2011) used a convenience sample of 145 students. From this sample, 85 were female participants and 60 were male participants. The study found that most of the female participants were motivated by the resources that they would receive from the multiple concurrent partners, while sexual satisfaction was one of the other reasons for engaging in the practice. However, most of the male participants were motivated by sexual satisfaction. It has also been noted that both female and male participants engaged in multiple concurrent sexual behaviour with older men and women, respectively. The reasons behind this were the wealth and generosity of the older men and the financial stability of the older female sexual partners.

2.4.3 Gender

In a South African study, the statistics of men and women involved in having multiple concurrent partners were investigated and, according to Shisana et al. (2009), in 2008, 30.8% of males and 6% of females in the 15-24 age category reported having more than one sexual partner. This is a significant gender difference in the practice of multiple concurrent partners, as more males are engaging in multiple concurrent partners than females.

2.4.4 Masculinity

A study by Ragnarsson, Thownsend, Thornson, Chopra and Ekstrom (2009) investigated masculine identities, social structures and sexual networks among men in peri-urban areas. The study found that a male's social identity was derived from his association with male social groups. In the group, a male's dominance was determined by his masculinity. Furthermore, masculinity could only be shown by a male's socio-economic status or his sexual supremacy (Ragnarsson et al., 2009). The male community of an urban area in the study supported sexual supremacy, that is, a man belonging to this social group engaged in multiple concurrent partners with other women in a discrete fashion. It was therefore found that the practice of multiple concurrent partners was linked to masculine identities, as engaging in multiple concurrent partners was necessary to convey a male's dominance (Ragnarsson et al., 2009).

In the article *Masculinities, multiple-sexual-partners, and AIDS: The making and unmaking of isoka in KwaZulu-Natal* (Hunter, 2004) it is also argued that masculinity played a role in the practice of multiple concurrent partners. Hunter (2004) provides a description of what is called an *isoka*. Throughout the years, this term has been redefined from the original definition of 'a man old enough to commence courting' to a meaning that includes a 'young man popular among girls'. Hunter (2004) states that at the centre of a man's manliness was his ability to get married and be the head of the home. Being the head of the home involved a man being able to provide for his family; often this meant being financially responsible for providing for the family's needs. As more men became unemployed and unable to fulfill their assigned role as the sole providers, emphasis had to be placed on a man's ability to not 'waste' women (Hunter, 2004, p. 125). A man's manliness was seen to be associated with multiple concurrent partners or in the traditional meaning, polygamy. The new definition of *isoka* is used as a justification for this practice, and men preferred having many lovers as opposed to having no lover (Hunter, 2004). In another study by Hunter (2010), masculinity was also seen as a motivational factor for having multiple concurrent sexual partners in terms of fathering children, which is believed to improve a man's social status.

Hunter's (2004) study was conducted in a semi-rural area called Ekufundeni but there are other studies that display the belief of the *isoka*, which are not restricted to the semi-rural areas. Varga (1997) researched the sexual decision-making views of black youth from rural and urban parts of KwaZulu-Natal. Here, Varga (1997) found that numerous men felt the *isoka*

characteristic was more desirable. The men also felt that the *isoka* is a natural part of their culture. This is evident by the following extracts from male participants in the study by Varga (1997):

Many girl-friends is an old culture of Africans... My own father had many wives and there was nothing wrong with that... *isoka* is not a promiscuous person. Those two words come from different contexts and they mean different things. (p. 56)

I am a man... I cannot have one affair. I am not *isishimane* [a man who is not successful with women]. For a man to have three girlfriends is very reasonable behaviour. (p.56)

It is striking that the *isoka* persona is not seen in a negative way by people belonging to that culture. It is being seen as a part of their everyday life and is accepted by the community as being a norm. It is interesting to see that the *isoka* persona is highly valued in this community. However, the term *isoka* is used only by the Zulu clan but having multiple concurrent partners is not restricted only to the African Zulu-speaking people. A study done by Parker et al. (2007) involved the recruitment of participants from different provinces. Parker et al. (2007) investigated many areas of sexual behaviour. The study showed that men see the practice of engaging in sexual behaviour with multiple concurrent partners as being the norm. This can be seen by a quote from one of the participants in Parker et al. (2007):

Men have always had multiple partners. I do not want to talk about whether it is wrong or right but it has always happened. It has always been men's affinity to be like that. Almost instinctive. Something like animalistic instinct. Even the most faithful man right now, has been astray once or twice. I am talking about those who feel that they are most faithful to their wives, who never thought they will ever cheat on them... (p. 32)

This extract suggests that some men may view their masculinity as an inescapable force. The notion of having multiple concurrent partners is seen as a norm by this man. However, not only men view this practice as a norm. A female participant reported the following in Parker et al. (2007):

I actually don't know where lack of trust and faithfulness culturally came from. Everywhere – people are just cheating. I don't know where it came from – when cheating and unfaithfulness became the norm, but I think people think they are

invincible. I mean like one of my distant relatives, she fell pregnant and she was like ‘I don’t know who the father is!’. (p. 32)

The above extract suggests that people’s views of the practice of having multiple concurrent partners are evolving. In the 1940s to the 1950s, customary laws were being implemented which banned women from being allowed to have multiple concurrent partners (Hunter, 2005); however, as the participant above suggests, “everywhere - people are just cheating” (Parker et al., 2007, p. 32). This forms an important rationale into investigating masculinity as a justification for the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. Another extract taken from the same study reinforced this rationale (Parker et al., 2007):

For men it is mainly about variety. I do not know if it is in our genetic structure or what. As someone who has done some religious education, when you look at the Bible, it tells that so and so had so many wives... Since the beginning of time, men had wives, concubines, girlfriends... (p. 32)

The notion that concepts of masculinity are derived from one’s culture can be seen in the above study (Parker et al., 2007). Clark (2010) reinforces this notion and states that region is the strongest predictor of having concurrent partners (extra-marital sexual partners). Clark (2010) reports statistics which support this argument. Nationally, in 2009, the reported rates of extra-marital sexual partners among married men ranged from 4.7% in Rwanda to 28.6% in Tanzania (INSR and Marco, 2006; National Bureau of Statistics and Macro, 2005, both in Clark, 2010). In Zambia, men living in the southern and western provinces were significantly more likely to have extra-marital sex than men living elsewhere, while in Malawi, married men are more likely to report having extra-marital sexual partners in the southern region than in the northern region (Clark, 2010). This shows that there is an association between region and practicing risky sexual behaviours. Furthermore, this supports the notion that the culture surrounding the meaning of masculinity in a region could be the reason behind the justification for the practice of having multiple concurrent partners.

However, the above studies surrounding masculinity as a motive for having multiple concurrent partners were done with African or black participants, while the term *isoka* is an isiZulu word. The focus then shifted to research with other racial groups to investigate these motives and if masculinity is one of the motives. The following study was done in Cape Town, South Africa, with participants belonging to different racial groups (Mah, 2008). This study used a cohort,

two-stage sampling method, where the same participants were interviewed to investigate the transition they underwent from adolescence to adulthood in light of the political change experienced in South Africa (Mah, 2008).

In the Cape area, 13% of the adult population have reported concurrent sexual relationships (Mah, 2008). However, in the study, 27% of male participants reported concurrency, while 9% of female participants reported concurrency. There was no significant difference in terms of age groups. Black participants (41% of black male participants and 18% of black female participants) reported higher levels of concurrency than white (5% of white males and 5% of white females) or coloured participants (23% of coloured males and 3% of coloured females) (Mah, 2008). The study further found that individuals who belonged to a religious denomination, had a post-matric qualification, were married, and had a personal income were less likely to report concurrency than their counterparts. Although this study uncovers various personal, cultural and social factors as reasons behind having concurrent partners, it does not include the Indian population in its sample. Mah (2008) also does not elaborate on possible reasons behind the motives. Gender difference is shown but not explained.

Upon evaluating the studies that have been done on having multiple concurrent partners, the above factors are evident as motivational factors for the practice. Further thought could be given to the source of these factors.

2.5 Summary and synthesis of the review

As discussed previously, it can be seen that having multiple concurrent partners is a threat to one's health, as having multiple concurrent partners increases the likelihood of one contracting HIV (Rosenberg et al., 1999). As HIV/AIDS deaths have moved from being ranked sixth in 2012 to third in 2013 (*Statistics South Africa*, 2013), investigating the factors that cause a person to practice the risky sexual behaviour of having multiple concurrent partners can be regarded as beneficial, as this will deepen the understanding of this behaviour and facilitate intervention plans which can be used to control the HIV pandemic. The research literature

provided shows that attachment, substance use/abuse, evolution, social factors, sexual satisfaction/dissatisfaction, gender, and masculinity are among some of the contributing factors of which motivates people in engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships.

2.6 Research/operational hypotheses

The hypotheses being investigated are: 1) there is an understanding of the concept of multiple concurrent partners amongst the sample population of the study; 2) participants hold similar reasons to those identified by the studies mentioned in this literature review; 3) there is a gender difference in responses from participants; and 4) masculinity is still presented as a mitigating factor for the practice of multiple concurrent partners.

2.7 Conceptual framework

There have been numerous explanations why people have multiple concurrent sexual partners. Some theories suggest that having multiple concurrent sexual partners is a form of infidelity and state that there exists a developmental explanation for being unfaithful (Amidona, 2007), whilst others may believe there are social (Parker et al., 2007) or biological (Cann et al., 2001) reasons behind the practice. Although the different theories have contributed to explaining and understanding multiple concurrent sexual partners, the evolutionary theory forms a stepping stone in providing an explanation for this practice. This stepping stone is to look at masculinity to discover what underlies the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. The studies cited encompass the notion of humans as socially constructed. The studies show that a different perspective can be taken by interpreting how having multiple concurrent sexual partners has been constructed and motivated for in society. The evolution theory is only one of the guiding frameworks that will be used. The social constructivism theory also provides a basis for some of the concepts that will be investigated. When investigating what motivates human behaviour, motivational theorists can also provide a framework into guiding one's understanding in the factors that motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners.

A well sourced theory on motivation is Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. This theory states that there are five levels of needs. Human behaviour is driven by the need for self-actualisation. In order to reach self-actualisation, one needs to have acquired the other four levels of needs. The first level of the needs identified as the most basic of the needs, is physiological needs. Physiological needs include basic survival needs of a person viz; breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis and excretion (Adeyinka and Abdul-Rahman, 2013). The second level of

the needs identified is safety needs which includes security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of the family, of health and of property. The third level needs identified is social needs which includes friendship, family and sexual intimacy (Adeyinka and Abdul-Rahman, 2013) and this is followed by the fourth level needs identified as esteem needs. Self-esteem needs includes confidence, achievement, respect of others and respect by others. Lastly, the highest of the needs identified is self-actualisation which includes morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, and lack of prejudice and acceptance of facts (Adeyinka and Abdul-Rahman, 2013). Applied in this study, it is possible that some students' who engage in the practice of having multiple sexual partnerships are those drawn by excessive need for sex (an aspect of Maslow's physiological need) and for self-actualisation.

2.8 Summary

This chapter elaborated on the theories of psychology and the different studies that have been done to assist in understanding the reasons for why people engage in multiple concurrent sexual partners.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design implemented to carry out this study. It also provides an explanation of the sampling techniques, instruments used, as well as a consideration of the ethical conduct surrounding the study.

3.2 Paradigm and research design of the study

An interpretive paradigm was used for the research study as the researcher aimed to understand the factors that motivate people to engage in the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. The researcher aimed to understand the participants' subjective experiences (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). The most suitable approach for implementing the study was a qualitative survey. This was considered relevant given that the aim of the study was to explore participants' perspectives (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Kelly, 2006) on factors influencing university students' tendency to engage in the act of having multiple concurrent sexual partners.

3.3 Location of the study

The venue for the interviews and focus groups was in a quiet area at the local campus in the Audio-visual Room located in the library on the main campus. The venue used was not a venue that was hidden, and this venue was used to allow participants to feel that they were not required to sneak about and meet in secret to talk about this topic. The Audio-visual Room is well lit, ventilated, spacious and the tables were set in a round circle so that the focus group participants could interact and hear one another more efficiently.

3.4 Study population

The study population consists of all students' ages 18-24 years that are studying at the university. As this is a qualitative study, the purpose of which was to explore motivational factors in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners rather than generalizing its findings; a small sample was drawn of which details are provided in the paragraphs below.

3.4.1 Sample characteristics

The sample characteristic criterion is essential so that a sample that will benefit the study can be chosen. Initially, the sample was to include 18-24 year olds who had experienced multiple concurrent sexual partnerships or had known of people who had experienced multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. This was to ensure that informed consent could have been obtained directly from the participants as well as to investigate the reasons given for multiple concurrent sexual partnerships from the sample population being identified as having experienced the most accounts of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships according to Shisana et al., 2009). The study sample consisted of University students 20 to 26 years old.

3.4.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Participants needed to have been in a sexual relationship as the aim of the study was to draw on the experiences of participants in order to understand the practice of multiple concurrent partners. The university's population consists of males and females coming from different racial backgrounds. It was intended that the sample would consist of males and females coming from different racial backgrounds, so that any gender differences or racial differences on the phenomena could be determined. It was hoped this could provide an explanation for the reason behind the difference in the number of men having multiple concurrent sexual partners compared to the number of women. It could also provide, if any, an understanding into the different factors given according to race. It could also provide a basis for new research into investigating relationships between race, multiple concurrent partners and HIV.

3.5 Sampling techniques and sample size

3.5.1 Sample size

A sample of 21 participants, both males and females, was used for the main study. Having a sample of 21 participants may not be considered a large enough sample. However, the purpose of the study was to uncover motivational factors in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners at a South African university. It was not to uncover all possible motivational factors that exist. Data collection continued until the same themes emerged from other participants. It was decided that the data was saturated and the sample size used was sufficient.

3.5.2 Sampling method

The purposive or criterion sampling method was used to recruit the sample for the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability convenience sampling type (Durrheim & Painter, 2006). The volunteers for this study were recruited according to their suitability for offering rich data for the research. Suitability was determined according to the participants' closeness to the topic of multiple concurrent partners. Unfortunately, the researcher could not generate enough participant interest in the topic and not many participants responded to the advert. The researcher had to use the snowball sampling method, which allowed for a focus group discussion to be formed (Durrheim & Painter, 2006).

3.5.3 Sampling Process

Advertisements were put up on notice boards around campus to invite possible participants to volunteer (advert attached in Appendix G). With the approval of a lecturer (permission letter attached in Appendix F), the researcher also spoke to several classes on the research topic and contact details for the researcher were given. The researcher also sent a follow-up email to the students who indicated to their lecturer their interest in participating in the study. However, the data collection coincided with assignment submissions, and many of the students who were interested in participating in the study cancelled on the focus group discussion that was scheduled.

The researcher also advertised on the student central site and requested that those interested in participating in a study on relationships should email the address given. There were a few emails that were received from students of the Indian race group but when the researcher explained the topic and purpose of the study to the students, they no longer wished to participate.

The date and time for the data collection were negotiated with the participants, to determine a suitable time when they were available. Although more focus group discussions were planned, finding a suitable time for all participants was problematic as the participants who responded to the advert were not studying the same programmes and were not available at the same time. It was then determined to conduct interviews based on the availability of participants. The duration of the interviews was approximately 20-30 minutes, and nine participants were interviewed. Interviews were used as this was sufficient to obtain pivotal information regarding the practice of multiple concurrent partners, and it also allowed the researcher to ask more sensitive questions regarding a participant's experience. Furthermore, as noted previously, the

objective of the research was not to generalise findings to a broader population but to understand the factors as they were revealed by the current sample.

Many of the participants who responded to the advert had first-hand experiences of having multiple concurrent partners and the individual interviews suited them. This also allowed confidentiality to be protected to a higher standard. The researcher initially did schedule two focus groups; however, initially only two participants arrived for the focus group discussion and these participants requested to continue with a paired interview rather than re-scheduling the discussion or conducting individual interviews. The other focus group discussion did occur successfully. The focus group discussion consisted of 7 males and was approximately 24 minutes long. There was a later interest in an additional focus group discussion being scheduled. The focus group discussion was 55 minutes long. The focus group participants comprised five males and two females.

In the focus group discussions, confidentiality was maintained by participants signing a confidentiality pledge agreement (attached in Appendix J), as well as the use of pseudonyms when referring to participants during the group discussions. Participants were made aware that a pseudonym is a fictitious name (Hawkins et al., 1998). Participants received name tags on which they could write their chosen pseudonym. The use of a pseudonym aimed to protect a participant's true identity and contributions to the study. The participants' ages were also noted.

3.6 Research instrument

An interview schedule developed by the researcher was used for the paired interview, the individual interviews (Appendix B) and the focus group discussion (Appendix C). The questions had been generated to meet the aims of the study. An individual interview is a dialogue between the researcher and the participant (Kelly, 2006). Probing occurred in the interviews, and participants were asked to respond to questions asked by the researcher. The types of questions that were asked in the individual interviews were semi-structured as the interviews were a two-way conversation, and the participants could engage actively in the discussion.

The questions for the focus group discussions had been generated for participants to provide an overview of multiple concurrent partners and aimed to address the research objectives. Questions were generated to focus on how participants perceived the practice and how they

justified it. Some of the questions had been adapted from Volle, Foreit, Letsatsi, and Tan (2009). The questions which had been devised aimed to determine if there are any different views on multiple concurrent partners according to participants' gender and race (focus group questions attached in Appendix C). The questions asked in the focus group discussions and the interviews were tested for validity and reliability in the pilot study.

3.7 Pilot study

Participants were meant to be recruited using an advert which was placed on various main notice boards at the University. This proved to be insufficient as after two weeks, no one had responded to the adverts. The researcher then decided to use word-of-mouth and social media to let people know about the study and to find out if they knew students who were interested in participating.

The pilot study consisted of a sample of four males and five females. It was the aim to have participants belonging to the four major race groups of South Africa: African, Indian, coloured, and white so as to determine if there were any differences in responses according to race. However, at this stage, the researcher only had African participants. This also led into recommendations at the end of the study for further research into race and sexual discourse to be done to find out if there were other underlying reasons for only African participants being more willing to participate in the study.

The pilot study took place in the Audio-visual Room in the Cecil Renaud Library on the main campus. The library is located in a quiet area on main campus and the Audio-visual Room is used for different things which made the participants at ease. At the beginning of the focus group and individual interviews, the researcher read through the information sheet (Appendix H), consent form (Appendix E) and confidentiality pledge (Appendix J) for the focus group discussion, to ensure that the participants understood the study and what they would be consenting to. Participants were asked if they had any questions that needed to be answered before the discussion could occur; no participant had any questions to ask. Each participant then signed the information sheet, a consent form, and a confidentiality pledge for the focus group discussion. Participants were also reassured that although their details were on the informed consent form, a pseudonym would be used to ensure that the participant's identity was protected. They were also requested to write their participant number on the information sheet for easier referencing during the data analysis procedure.

Discussions were recorded as consent of the participants was obtained for this (attached in Appendix E). These discussions were transcribed verbatim and analysis occurred using a thematic analysis. The analysis of the pilot study showed no inconsistencies with the instruments, and the researcher was satisfied with the instruments' validity and reliability.

The recommendation derived from the pilot study for the main study was that the recruitment method needed to be revised. The recruiting methods for obtaining a wider sample for the main study needed to be more rigorous, and the researcher decided to hand out information sheets about the study personally to students on campus to investigate if there were any other race groups that were willing to participate in the study. A class visit was also scheduled.

3.8 Data collection

When people contacted the researcher to participate in the study, the researcher found out if the person had first-hand experience of engaging in multiple concurrent partners and to what extent. Depending on the response from the individuals, the individuals were either placed in a focus group or, if they had first-hand explicit experience with engaging in multiple concurrent partners, then they were placed in an individual interview. More explicit first-hand accounts behind the reasons for having multiple concurrent sexual partners were targeted in the individual interviews. To ensure that the phrasing of questions was not offensive, participants were told that at any point of the study they could state if they were uncomfortable answering a question.

The focus group discussions and the individual interviews were audio recorded. The participants were required to give consent to the recording of the discussion prior to the start of the discussions (see Appendix I). The audio-recorded cassette has been kept in a locked cabinet with the transcripts of the discussion and will remain in the locked cabinet for a period of five years before it can be destroyed.

3.9 Validity and reliability

In a qualitative study, reliability and validity can be determined by the concept of trustworthiness (Morse, Barret, Mayon & Spiers, 2002). Trustworthiness includes four aspects:

credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Maree, 2011); these are discussed in the following sections.

3.9.1 Credibility

The researcher used triangulation of the data collection methods and data analysis to ensure that there were no discrepancies in the findings. Triangulation occurred by data being collected by two methods: focus groups and individual interviews (Maree, 2011). The verbatim transcripts from the participants were analysed for comparisons and inconsistencies. Probing questions were also asked to determine if the information given was accurate.

3.9.2 Transferability

The aim of the study was not to generalise to the greater population but rather to explore or survey participants' perspectives on factors influencing university students' tendency to engage in the act of having multiple concurrent sexual partners. However, the researcher provided a thorough description of the sample that was involved in the study (Maree, 2011).

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability of the research was achieved by the researcher carrying out member checks and triangulation of data received in focus groups and interviews (Maree, 2011). When participants said anything ambiguous or unclear to the researcher, the researcher checked for clarity by rephrasing it herself or stating what she had understood from the participant's response.

3.9.4 Confirmability

The research was also subject to peer briefing. The researcher also remained in contact with the supervisors of the research and feedback was consistently provided. This was done so that the inferences from the research could be confirmed as being logical should the same study be carried out by another researcher (Maree, 2011).

3.10 Data analysis

The study used an interpretive analysis. An interpretive analysis aims to provide a rich source of information on phenomena (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). An interpretive analysis was conducted by using a thematic analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006) outline 6 steps involved in conducting a thematic analysis. These steps are:

1. Familiarising yourself with your data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

These steps were followed in conducting the thematic analysis of the study. An audio-recorder was used to record the discussions from the focus group and interviews, with the consent of the participants. The researcher transcribed the data into a verbatim report. This was checked against the audio-recording as to determine the accuracy of the transcription. The researcher then familiarised herself with the data by immersing herself in the data by constantly reading over the transcribed data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). After familiarising herself with the data, the researcher was able to have an initial idea of the characteristics of the codes that began to emerge from the data. These codes were then further categorised and this gave rise to particular main themes and sub themes. These main and sub themes were then reviewed as to determine if they can be refined into other themes and if the themes that were categorised together can meaningfully be applied to the research findings. A thematic map was then developed and represented in the form of a table where the themes were organised in a coherent manner. The final step entailed the exercise of writing the report of the study organised according to the themes isolated through the thematic analysis process described above (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The use of thematic analysis approach was considered well suited for the study as it allowed for discovering what motivates the practice of the phenomenon being studied. This approach allowed for a convincing account of the phenomenon (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

3.11 Ethical considerations

Participants were made aware of the favourable risk/benefit ratio of participating in the study and dissemination of the results. A favourable risk/benefit ratio is achieved when the risk involved does not out-weigh the benefits achieved (Emanuel, Wendler & Grady, 2000). The

risk the study had for participants was that some participants may have had unresolved feelings as result of a possible experience of having multiple concurrent sexual partners. Participants' identity and experiences may have also been revealed by other participants in the study. However, the benefit of the study was that volunteers would be helping the community by sharing experiences regarding the practice of having multiple concurrent partners.

The risks involved were minimised by the confidentiality pledge agreement as well as the use of a pseudonym. Participants were made aware that a pseudonym is a fictitious name (Hawkins et al., 1998) and would replace their actual names. The use of a pseudonym aimed to protect a participant's true identity and contributions to the study. The participants were also made aware that if they had experienced any psychosocial harm through the discussion on the research topic, the Student Counselling Centre would be able to provide them with counselling. Permission to refer participants to the Student Counselling Centre had been requested and granted (attached Appendix K).

Dissemination of results occurs through publishing, examination, presentations of research and making the results available to colleagues. As a researcher, there is an obligation to provide data and findings that are accurate. The researcher is not obligated to provide the participants with this information as participants may not view the results of the study as being a 'true' reflection of what was said in the study. However, as the research also aimed to add social value to people around the world and cause no harm to participants in the study, a presentation was held for the dissemination of results, and participants were invited to attend. Also, through member checks, it was less likely that the participants would feel that the research did not reflect what was said in the discussions.

There are also indirect benefits to the sample for this study. Understanding the motivational factors of the practice of having multiple sexual partners helps researchers to understand how people make their sexual choices. This can inform intervention programmes and may decrease the risk of people contracting HIV by sexual contact with multiple concurrent partners. Possible harm to participants was evaluated before the study was carried out, as the proposal for this study was sent for approval to the university's Ethics Committee and approval from the committee was obtained (attached Appendix A).

3.12 Summary

This chapter described the research methodology used for the study in establishing the results that will be presented in the next chapter. The researcher highlighted the reasons for the paradigm and design of the study that was used, a description of the study population for the research was given, an explanation of the instruments that were used was provided, issues of validity and reliability were also dealt with, the manner in which the data were analysed was also explained and lastly the issues pertaining to ethical considerations were elaborated upon.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. The chapter depicts the perceptions of the participants in understanding the concept of multiple concurrent sexual partnership. The chapter will also report the participants' views on the motivating factors for the practice of multiple concurrent partnership. The responses given will also be evaluated to determine if there were any gender differences in the participants' views as to why people engage in multiple concurrent partnership. Lastly, the chapter presents the results of the study on the concept of masculinity and multiple concurrent partners.

4.2 Descriptive analysis of distribution of respondents

The main study consisted of a sample of 21 participants. None of the participants had opted to leave after the informed consent was requested to be completed.

Table 1: Description of participants

Age range	Male	Female	Race
20-26	13	8	African

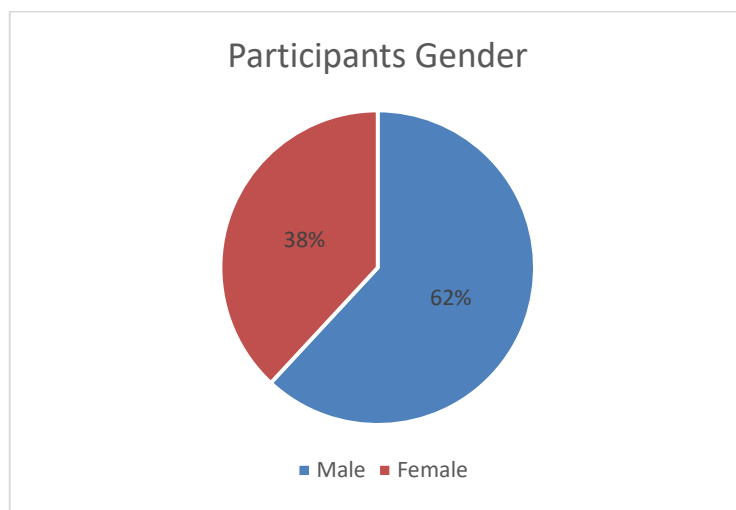


Figure 2: Ratio of Male: Female Participants

4.3 Presentation of results, research question by research question

The results for the four research questions will be presented below.

4.3.1 What are students' perceptions of the concept of multiple concurrent sexual partners?

Having multiple concurrent sexual partners is not always spoken about openly. It is important to understand how people perceive the meaning behind the practice. The participants were asked if they had heard of the concept of multiple concurrent sexual partners; some of the responses are noted below:

“Maybe like having more than one boyfriend or dating sugar daddies.”

“You have more than one partner that you have sex with.”

“I think it is dating more than one person at a time and probably having sexual relationships with both or all of them at once.”

“More than one sexual partners at the same time.”

Another female participant also responded in a similar way when asked if she understood the concept: “All they ever called this was ho’s”. A male participant also responded using slang terminology with: “If you a guy you are a player...if you a girl you are a ho”.

When asked if the participants understood the concept, most of the participants first laughed before providing an explanation. The laughter could be due to sexuality not being viewed as an easy topic to speak about.

4.3.2 What are students’ views on what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners?

Motivation is a driving force responsible for people’s actions. As people are different, some of the motivating factors will also differ. When this research question was put to the participants, a number of themes emerged; these are discussed in the following sections.

4.3.2.1 Emotional attachment

Emotional attachment has positive and negative consequences. Some of the consequences raised by participants included fear of commitment, lack of emotional attachment, insecurity, trust and mistrust, peer pressure, not being attached to someone, and benefits. These are described in the sections below.

Fear of commitment

One of the female participants stated:

“I cannot be in a relationship personally because I am deadly afraid of commitment...deadly...I think I could probably... [laughs] deadly afraid of commitment”.

The female participant stated: “It helps me...you know...I don’t have to get too close to anybody”.

A lack of attachment while developing has been a reason for why some people engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. However, the need for emotional attachment was also given by a participant for her having multiple concurrent partnerships.

Insecurity

Another participant had not wanted to get attached to a person so she had engaged in sexual encounters with different people because of her insecurity and fear of commitment:

“Because sometimes, maybe I really did not want to get attached to whoever I was dating, so I was like, no, let me not get too attached to this person and then I would just casually just have something with someone else.”

Trust and mistrust

One participant raised the issue of trust:

“I have a very difficult time trusting someone as is it. I have a very difficult time. I think also my insecurities also come and I cannot get myself to sometimes commit to a relationship”

The participant further explained that her trust issues come from the relationship she had with her mother:

“I think it’s mostly because back in high school I would say, I was already kind of insecure. It was really at its strongest then and I had no one to turn to. I did not have a relationship with my mom. I could not... I wanted to trust her but I couldn’t. From that stage on, it has been difficult in trying to confide in someone. To tell them what is happening and what is going on. So maybe I do not know how to get to that level of trying to trust someone.”

The participant also stated that if she had a relationship with her mother, her trust issues would not be as bad: “Maybe not trust easily but it would have been better.”

In the all-male focus group discussion, attachment also was mentioned: “Perhaps it can be a mental issue even from childhood?” The participant was asked to elaborate and he mentioned: “Mother issues. Like a young boy who grew up without a mother.”

Two other participants felt that the issue could have been either of the parents and not only the mother:

“It could be the dad”.

Peer pressure

Peer pressure is a theme that emerged only once and is where individuals accept and confirm to their peers behaviour. A participant in the individual interview stated that peer pressure was a reason that made him and his friends engage in multiple concurrent sexual partners:

“I can say it was pressure from my friends. Because you also feel you want to fit in with your friends and have what they are having. That was my reason at that particular time that made me have more than one partner.”

“Other people do it because of peer pressure and some people just can’t say no when someone asks them out.”

Another participant stated that: “Like when people start talking about something all the time, eventually you like, maybe it is not that bad”, whilst other participants felt that there is not much pressure experienced by peers to have multiple concurrent partners.

Not all young adults make decisions on their own; they are impacted by their surroundings as Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory states. These surroundings can include the friends that people interact with. Friends, like the other people in one’s microsystem, are important influences.

Lack of emotional attachment

It is important to note that attachment was a theme that was significant for many of the participants, particularly the female participants. One female participant said:

“Yes, it was because I felt like he believed it was all about money... if he gives me money, then I am happy...I am satisfied...but for me it was not about that. As much as I love that, at the end of the day I also need a bit of emotional attachment type of thing.”

Attachment is also a reason given for having multiple concurrent partners in other studies in the literature that has been reviewed. When considering Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, attachment issues could be seen as a result of the challenges faced in the microsystem. Attachment issues can also be explained using Freud's psychosexual stages of development.

Not being attached to someone

When a male participant was asked in the individual interview about the reasons for him having multiple concurrent partners, he commented:

“Reason being, I believe when I had my multiple concurrent sexual partners...it...it is when I am single so I am not out there thinking to myself, this is mine and mine alone and I'm hers to have...I like to be upfront. I'm like, yoh dude...I'm single...I like to believe you single...you not with anyone. I am not with anyone...would you like to engage sexually”.

This participant also stated that he prefers engaging in multiple concurrent partnerships with single girls:

“Preferably, cos you don't...I don't wanna say you don't want the backlash but I have seen multiple instances where a guy went hey I know you have a boyfriend but let's make this happen? Then it happens and next thing you know is the girl is attached emotionally and the girl is willing to breakup with her boyfriend for this boy but this boy did not want the emotional part and then now it looks like the girl is crazy losing her mind...”

Another participant had stated that she had very casual relationships and because it was not formal, she engaged in sexual intercourse with other people:

“Sometimes it was not dating people per se; it was people I know just as a friend and one thing leads to another on some day and then we have sex and then so on and I might have sex with him for the next few weeks. At the same time, I might have met someone else and the cycle just goes on.”

It is evident that people who are not in monogamous relationships, more likely to engage in sexual encounters with different people.

4.3.2.2 Benefits

There are different advantages of having multiple concurrent sexual partners. These include social, physical, emotional, sexual and financial factors. This theme emerged in many of the discussions. A female participant from the mixed gender focus group in the study stated: “Like if you have one boyfriend and you have another boyfriend who is a blesser”.

A female participant from an individual interview stated that she had more than one partner: “like each person has their own role you know” and she has open relationships that the male partners do not know about: “[I] am the one with the open relationships...I cannot tell them I am sleeping with three or four other guys on the side”. However, she seemed to expect fidelity on their part: “They cannot have sexual intercourse with other girls.”

The female participant mentioned what she receives from her ‘situationships’:

“Some of them I can never have a conversation with. I can call them and say I want to have sex and they be like ok fine and they will come we have sex and they will drop me off and we go off with our days. There are people that I can genuinely have conversations and we can sit and just speak. You know. Just sit and speak and then there are others that...look, they all give me something different.”

The female participant also provided a lot of detail about her early life, saying she was bullied and never had anybody:

“I don’t have a relationship with my mother because my mother and I we do not get along at all at all - we don’t speak. My dad lives in Durban so I used to see him and you know usually he would come...I just never had close... you know....it is only now that I am in university, I have my aunt who is really worried about me. She is genuinely really worried about all this stuff that I am doing. She just is like ‘I don’t think this is healthy’.”

The participant also stated: “Going out. Yeh. Going out. Paying for things buying things...I will never say no to that... I won’t say no to do so if you want to genuinely spoil me, it’s like ok”

Another participant stated that: “Maybe you have an actual boyfriend...the one you are dating and then you will have another one. Maybe who will take care of you financially or ya”.

This theme also emerged in a discussion with another participant:

“You know you have someone when you want lunch, you have this guy, and when you want transport money, you have another guy who is going to take you home. Ya...maybe for monthly allowance. Well, last year I was doing my first year at another institution. I was away from home and I can say it was hard. Like having multiple partners was the best thing I could do to get more money.”

Monetary benefit is not the only benefit that was reported. A participant revealed that having multiple concurrent partners provided her with a companion so she is not lonely:

“I was so lonely and after that I had to start another relationship so now I said fine I have more than one relationship. If this one messes up, at least I have the other one.”

“I am so scared of loneliness. I am so so so scared of loneliness. So, if I have more than one partner and I know if this one messes up or this one does not call me... I know this one would call me. If the other one does not call me, I know this one will call me.”

The number of partner's one participant had also depended on what benefits were received by the partner. Below are excerpts from different participants that support the above:

“But I did things with different people that I didn't do with the others...you know what I am saying. Like I would do certain things with this person and do certain things with this person. Different people focused on different things.”

“Like I would see this guy because I know he is getting me air time, paying for my transport, picking me up after campus, taking me to the movies.”

“The first guy that I was actually with...the guy that I cheated on, he bought me a lot of things. Gave me money. Like I said before, I think he believed as long as he gives me money and you know all those material, then it's fine. With him it was that. At first I thought I was getting somewhere, but then I realised that this is the only thing that I am getting from this guy. It was actually hard for me to leave him. You know, I have gotten used to this life of actually getting everything that I ask for from him and if I leave him I will have problems because these are the guys that would not offer that.”

“Love. Satisfaction. Communication.”

“The one was the girl he loved the most and the other one was more for pleasure because I think the one that he loved the most was kind of those good girls. The one that focuses on school, you know those good girls. But the other was kind of a bad girl. I think that is why. He found something in the other one that he cannot get from the other girl.”

“Because you find men with wives going to children and like. The term blessers...all of those are married people but they still want to have more. I think with older people...especially men, you find a wife...it’s true but. You have a wife, but you are still looking for that pleasure you got in the older days when you was a teenager. You are looking for that fantasy, then you are going to go to a school girl or a varsity girl, promising them money. You want to experience that again which goes to show you men sometimes are immature.”

“Which is why have two. The other is the good one and you know you will have a side that will do everything that you want.”

Exchanges that occur for the sexual experience do not only need to occur because a person is economically unstable; other reasons can also be that emotionally, they are longing for something.

4.3.2.3 Sexual satisfaction/dissatisfaction

This theme was prominent in the dialogue with the participants. The need for sexual satisfaction and the existence of sexual dissatisfaction were equally important.

No sexual intercourse

A male participant in the individual interview commented that:

“And on the other end of the scale...I mean its lack of satisfaction...erm...mind you I do not mean that anyone should be blamed for the lack of satisfaction but, for example, me and like I said the girl was a virgin, I had to wait for her...not like I had to...I chose to wait for her...since it was my choice, I should be okay with not having sex with anyone else. I should have been okay with not trying to find sex anywhere else, cos I committed myself to the relationship which meant also committing myself to her

entirely. So if I am not satisfied with that...the most likely option is who is willing to let me get some on the side...so yeh...that lack of satisfaction is what I mean..”

Sexual satisfaction has also been distanced from emotions. A male participant in the individual interview stated:

“If you are okay with it and not involve ourselves emotionally, so we do not get hurt...it’s just for pure pleasurable satisfaction and at the end of it; there’s no attachment per se”.

Another female participant also stated:

“Take for instance a relationship that is on the rocks between a guy and a girl. A relationship that is bad would definitely most of the time lead to the guy or the girl having a multiple partner because they are not getting the satisfaction within the relationship they are in and they go out and seek that in other places whilst doing that they have more partners.”

Experimentation

Participants in the focus group felt that people engaged in multiple concurrent partnerships for satisfaction and to explore: “Maybe one person does not satisfy them” and “More like to explore”.

The participants also stated that, if one person is boring, then they are more likely to engage in multiple concurrent partnerships. A male participant from the focus group stated that boring for him is: “You do the same thing all the time, so you go out to get different; you know...like you cannot eat pap every day”.

In the focus group discussion, more females stated that they would engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships to gain experience and to know what is out there before they settle down with one person:

“If you have not experienced it, you want to do it all at the same time. Like before you have to settle down with someone, you want to experience something different.”

“Yah, to know that this one is the best.”

“Some people want to have their cake and eat it at the same time.”

“One partner you not satisfied. Like let’s say. Okay. I am not sure if I can say this but say you see a yellow bone and tomorrow you maybe want to try out a chocolate...you start looking at the physical parts of the opposite gender. Then that results in you, without even realising, you engaging in different partners and ya.”

“Sometimes as a guy, you do not intend to have multiple sexual partners. It just happens. That maybe that partner of yours, well not all women do it but some use sex to put men in line and maybe they don’t want to have sex with them as often as they should just because the guy is a drinker or something else which then causes the guy to do have sexual intercourse with other people while the wife is home because the wife is depriving the guy of his right. Also when it comes to marriage, we use this metaphor that we cannot for the rest of our lives eat one meal. We will have chicken for the rest...we have to have beef...”

The need for experimentation was very pivotal in the discussions. Another participant responded as follows:

“It seems people get tired of sleeping with the same person and they just want something new and when they find something new, they want something new again and again and again. I don’t really know what they are looking for but it seems as though they are searching for something. I don’t know. I don’t understand why they have to sleep with multiple people. I don’t know what they are looking for”

“They do. They look for younger guys so they can also experience the same thing or is it something different?”

“I guess it was just for experiment. To see if I could handle the pressure from everybody.”

One participant was also in a long-distance relationship which allowed her to have more than one sexual partner: “I just wanted to try it out for myself.”

Some male participants emphasised the need to experiment as follows:

“You are practicing for yourself for your future wife. Like gym. You are training yourself for your future wife. Maybe you would want to experiment with a girl that is rich. Like maybe your future wife will be coming from a background that is rich...she is very rich and you will want to experiment with someone like a rural girl so you won't have problems with someone who is coming from a background of being poor. So you just want to know all the sides.”

“Experimentation plays a big role in having multiple partners because you want to know there are some other kind of flavours you want to try out.”

“You want to tick all of the boxes as a young man. Call it a bucket list. Like let me just take for example a girl from another race. It is in my bucket list and I want to, so my current girlfriend now, because she is black, she is screwed either way. I still have to tick the box. I am just experimenting.”

“If you look at the older generation, the ones who are married. If they did it correctly like how we are saying we are practising, then we won't have divorces and stuff but it is happening in our families. We guys screw up things. We end up divorcing.”

Freud's psychosexual theory of development and development of the libido can be used in explaining the sexual satisfaction reason for engaging in multiple concurrent partners. The libido is seen as the driving force of behaviour. Many of the participants stated that if they were not happy sexually, they would engage in sexual intercourse with other people. Participants also stated that they get different things from different people, which reinforces the need for sexual satisfaction as a motive for multiple concurrent sexual relationships.

Desire for more sexual intercourse

This theme emerged from an individual interview with a male participant. He stated: “Probably 95% of the time when you look at a girl and the first thing you think of is what you can do to her sexually...it is never ooh she is nice...ooh she has a great personality...like wow...would she ever let me get with her...erm...so I think it is greed.”

A male participant from the individual interviews stated that his friends who had multiple concurrent partners also did it for greed: “It is literally just to hit it and now I'm out”.

A female participant from the focus group felt that males are never satisfied with what they have: “Yes they just do it. They are never satisfied”. However, greed is not only a male habit; some female participants from the focus group stated that there are females who also have greed.

“But there are girls like that [another participant interjected: ‘Yes true’]; they just go sleeping around they do not get emotionally attached like some do.”

Some participants felt that having multiple concurrent partnerships is something that is not always planned; the sexual interaction can just occur: “It depends...it is possible but sometimes you on a night out and you feel like doing it.”

“Sometimes you do not plan it...you just in a certain place.”

“You go with the flow.”

A participant who had his first sexual encounter in grade 9 stated:

“Wanting to have something. Wanting to have something, more basically. Not getting”

The participant stated that having multiple concurrent sexual partners had nothing to do with the other person or what they may or may have not done or if he is happy or unhappy in the relationship:

“You can be happy and choose not to do something. You can be happy and still choose to do something as well.”

“That is in an ideal world but that is not what happens and you cannot just stay faithful to one girl. You will get a guy that has a good girlfriend but they still want more. So, in an ideal world, it is wrong but it is happening and you cannot stop it.”

“Because maybe the reason for maybe why we have one partner so all that you are getting from that partner maybe you can get from another partner. Twice the fun.”

Greed can be equated to people wanting more and not being satisfied with what one has. Freud’s concept of the libido can also be used to explain how greed can come about.

4.3.2.5 Sexual risk

One of the participants in an individual interview stated that he would experiment with things that do not put his life in danger.

“Seriously homosexual and open-minded...very open-minded...so if my life is not in danger...I do not think there should be a problem as to why not. We should experiment with it or try it out if it has not been already tried out before...oh...and I am very inquisitive...extremely inquisitive.”

The participant further stated: “I believe if, hey, if you are happy with whatever you are doing and it does not affect anyone’s health, go ahead”.

The participant further stated that having multiple concurrent partners is dangerous in two ways:

“It’s either dangerous if you involve yourself emotionally, right, cos you get hurt as a person the moment you think you are exclusive to that person and that person is exclusive to you and once you have that preconceived notion, then you know it’s gonna fall upon when you find out that that is not the case...or physically, if once again you think you exclusive to that person and you take away the protective stuff like the condoms and the contraceptives.”

Other views are that HIV and STIs are not considered as much as getting pregnant and ‘catching emotions’. This is prevalent in all three discussions. A male participant from an individual interview stated that:

“It is scary when you actually realise how many people are thinking of, oh my gosh, she is going to get pregnant...oh my gosh, she is going to catch feelings if we have sex...it’s never, oh my gosh, I might get AIDS...I am not going to lie, I have been around a number of guys and we talk about girls a lot but no one is going to say I am going to get AIDS. I can’t necessary name names of course but given a week I can give you a list of at least 50 guys that they can tell you they have sex raw and, personally, it scares me...it scares me cos you have so much faith you know...they call it having a good pull-out game...pull out before you ejaculate...I’m like fine, you have a great pull-out game but have you thought of AIDS...and they like, nah, she does not have AIDS; she is always looking clean. But it is not like when you get AIDS, it is written on your

forehead...unfortunately guys do not think about that...I can't blame it on anyone else but they do not think of the AIDS anymore and that is hell scary."

The above excerpt mentions 'raw sex', a 'great pull-out game', 'she does not have AIDS, she is always looking clean'; these are significant factors which would warrant further research.

The focus group participants were also asked if they believed that multiple concurrent sexual partnerships increase one's chances of getting HIV and the following responses are noted:

"But you can use protection."

"99% safe."

"The more partners you have, the pool gets bigger of getting the thing."

"Do know about it but they think it won't happen to them."

Other participants stated that: "People think more about getting pregnant". A male participant from the focus group stated: "I do not care about my status" ... "I will be worried if a girl tells me she is pregnant not HIV positive" ... "I rather be sick than have a kid, bro". A participant disagreed with him and stated: "We can deal with pregnancy", but the first participant's response was: "You can live with HIV...you have to stay with the kid for the rest of your life". The female participants stated that the child could have been aborted and another male participant stated that: "Once every six months, you can take the pill; it's not as bad".

Participants later mentioned other types of contraceptives that can be used. Many females mentioned the injection as a preferred contraceptive, whilst male participants mentioned implants and to 'pull out' before ejaculation.

When a female participant was asked about HIV/AIDS, she stated that she tries her best to stay safe and use protection every time she has sexual intercourse. However, this participant also stated that she does not consider STIs as much as people consider HIV/AIDS:

"I think once you have HIV it's like...ooooooooo you dying you dying...I think that people don't understand that with STDs and STIs, you can also die."

Another participant stated that: “The only thing we worry about is, I am going to get pregnant. We do not worry about HIV.” This is similar to the view shared by another participant, who stated: “I think people are more worried about getting pregnant because you can treat being HIV positive than having a baby”. The participant further stated that:

“I would not mind having HIV but I would mind having a baby and being negative...HIV negative. Because I know having a baby...laughs...it’s a job like for real. HIV is no longer a big issue. Most people are not afraid of getting HIV. They are more of having a baby.”

The belief that having a baby is more severe than getting HIV is seen in other responses from participants, illustrated in the quotes below:

“The thing is like when you are having a baby, it’s visible. Everyone would know you are sleeping around. Your family. It will be a disappointment. Now you are going to school and now you are having a baby. But if you are having HIV, it is up to you to disclose.”

It is also important to note that some of the participants disclosed that they do not always use means of protection:

“I trusted him. I can see now that he was the only one for me but what if I was not the only one for him...I looked at it as he was my only boyfriend and what is the use for protection, so I was not using protection”.

A participant also stated that when they had engaged in sexual practices with multiple partners, they had not used any protection. A possible reason for such was due to immaturity: “Maybe I was childish because I did not even think about it”. Although another participant did use protection, she did contract an STI but she still continued with the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships:

“I told myself I always use protection so I told myself I am covered. I always use protection. However, I did contract an STI from one of the guys and I sorted it out and that was it.”

It is also important to note that the above participant had no friends who did not have multiple concurrent sexual partnerships: “None of my friends actually had one guy and they focused on that one guy at that time.”

Another participant only stopped having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships when he had impregnated someone:

“The actual reason was that I actually impregnated someone. That was the reason that made me realise that what I was doing was not right.”

The perception of sexual risk in terms of multiple concurrent sexual relationships has not been a reason in any other studies that have been reviewed in the literature. More research should be conducted into this and also to see how people view HIV/AIDS currently. There seems to be less concern about this risk from the feedback received from the participants on contracting HIV/AIDS; therefore, some of them continue engaging in the practice. It is also important to note that two participants had stopped engaging in the practice when they contracted an STI. They viewed continuing having multiple concurrent sexual partners as a risky behaviour as they could contract an STI again.

Immaturity

Immaturity is seen as characteristic of a phase people pass through as they get older. A participant stated that:

“I think that it is changing because there are people that are looking for just one partner and not wanting to be the player anymore or they growing out of that phase now and they want more stable relationships, so I think it is sort of changing slowly. It is getting there.”

The youth are seen to engage in games of getting girls and create a competition for it, as illustrated in the following quotes:

“The guys so it was more a competition between them. These two friends of mine. It was a competition to see who will have more girls. It was more...what can I say, man challenge. Who is the bigger guy challenge in terms of how many girls they got.”

“I considered myself a player I think. I was still foolish. I was still a child.”

“And age factor plays a role because now we are in varsity and we are still young and we have a mind that is, no I won't get married anytime soon, so I can just sleep with whoever I want...”

“I think that there are a lot of reasons but I think the main one will be that they immature maybe. They usually say they still teenagers and they still want to experience life. All of those things. I think it is being immature.”

“I think it is sexual maturity. Mental maturity. Emotional maturity. Your age.”

From most of the theories discussed earlier, it can be seen that there are many different stages that people will pass through as they develops in their life. One grows as time goes by and this causes one to be more mature. The participants in the study have noted that immaturity is a reason for many engaging in the practice of multiple concurrent partners. This also causes one to consider the age at which many of them started engaging in sexual intercourse. It causes one to question when a person is really ready to engage in sexual encounters. As the literature states, people are also social beings; thus, it is not surprising that a few motivating factors given were factors arising from social reasons.

4.3.2.4 Social factors

According to the participants, there has been a change in how people define their relationships. One of the factors arose from the meaning given to the term ‘relationship’.

Social discourse on the term ‘relationship’

The participants perceived relationships as different things. A male participant in an individual interview stated that he is not in a relationship, although his significant other believes that they are still in a relationship:

“That’s a bit of difficult to describe...I will say no...If I may...the reason or rather the most recent relationship I was in...erm...my partner cheated on me...yeh...and then I kinda found out about it...I just haven’t confronted them with it or terminate the relationship...so the relationship or whatever you want to call it has taken a strain but we haven’t officiated it being terminated and neither is it continuing in my head”.

A female participant in an individual interview also had a different opinion of a relationship and she had referred it as a 'situationship': "No. I don't call them relationships. I call them situationships."

There is also seemed to be confusion about what a sexual relationship is as a sexual relationship may not be viewed as a relationship but as an encounter of sex. A male participant in an individual interview was asked if he had been in a sexual relationship of which he had responded:

"Where it is just sex?"

There also seems to be confusion in terms of multiple concurrent relationships. One participant from the focus group thought it meant engaging in sexual encounters at the same time. The female participant had never heard of the term 'multiple concurrent partners'. When explained to her, she responded: "All they ever called this was ho's."

Relationships are sometimes arranged. This is evident in one participant stating that her friend had an arranged wedding proposal with another person, which had caused her to seek love from yet another person:

"I think it is mostly pressure and like people expecting you to love someone when you actually don't love them. So when you are forced to love them and forced to say you love them but you don't and then you find someone who you truly love and then that complicates things and sometimes you may do things that you don't want and since the first one you got involved with, you don't love them, you love the other one just to be happy."

These responses imply that conceptualisation plays a pivotal role in how people behave towards one another. One's conceptualisation of a relationship is derived from the meaning that one has given to that relationship. The participant in the above quote did not assign much meaning to the relationship that was arranged. This can also be a critique of the cultural norms where marriages are arranged by elders in the family and accepted by an individual. The individual does not make their own choice. It is also noted in the Afrocentric paradigm that the individual and the community co-exist and this will be seen as no deviation from what is acceptable practice.

Relationship problems

A male participant in an individual interview had his trust broken by the person he was in a relationship with. This caused him to have a loosely termed 'relationship' with another person.

A female participant from the focus group discussion also stated that:

“If your boyfriend makes you angry or you find out he is cheating, so you want to get some other flavour”.

This was also agreed upon by the other female participants from the focus group:

“Girls, when it is something missing from the relationship”.

Another male participant from the focus group discussion stated that the more he has sexual encounters with someone, the more disinterested he becomes:

“You feel the more you have sex with a girl, the more disinterested you are...that's why we go for different people”.

In another interview, relationship problems also emerged. The issue of trust is seen in instances where people could not trust the relationship they were in - the feeling of insecurity was imminent. This is seen in the response from a participant who disclosed the reason for her friend engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships, even though the friend loves her boyfriend:

“Just for fun. She does not do it for financial security. Her actual boyfriend is repeating his matric. The other guys are here at varsity and she sees them as more successful than him and what if it does not work it her boyfriend, so she has other partners to look over.”

The above theme also emerged in a conversation with a third participant. The participant had given the reasons for her having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships:

“I was unhappy. I was not happy. I was not satisfied. There was something that was missing”.

When asked to elaborate on the dissatisfaction she had experienced, she stated that she required more attention. The participant further elaborated on the unhappiness she felt in the relationship, putting blame onto the other person in the relationship which are provided in the below excerpts:

“[He] was not sensitive to my feelings and stuff like that. The person was totally different from me. We wanted different things. I wanted love, passion, something serious and he wanted...probably just wanted something not that serious. Maybe he was not ready to get into something serious. So...I guess that’s why I felt unsatisfied and unhappy.”

“I don’t think he realised that he was doing something that would drive me to go to seek something else from another person.”

“Once we had a disagreement about something or maybe she’s done something; for instance, she has been with somebody else and I actually find out about it, then I might as well do something to comfort myself that you know that happened but I still happen to be with someone else.”

“Even though it was not her choice to be engaged to this guy because she was forced by her family and the norms and values of the community. She was a church goer at home and when she came here she got involved in this new environment of being her own independent person and explore some new ideas.”

“I also think that she was looking for comfort I think. Because her fiancé, they were not close. They were more like ‘you are going to be my wife and I am going to be your husband’ kind of relationship. It was not that close. They were not friends. They were not talking every day and things like that. I guess with this guy, she found comfort and they were more like friends.”

“The other person I saw, when I look at things right now. I think I saw an escape zone of some sort. I look back and I realise that the previous relationship, at first we were happy and everything was well. A few months down the line, it become a little bit toxic. There were fights. Almost every day and ya. I wasn’t as happy as I was in the beginning. I felt being controlled in a way. I felt a lot of feelings and she also felt a lot of feelings and not one of us wanted to end things. You know, we still hoped that it will work out. Let’s try, you know, but as soon as the other one came along, you know, my my my my efforts of me trying to to to get this relationship to work vanished. It went away. I was

like, I am tired, and I eventually told her and ended things and started with the new one.”

“Some do it because they just can’t...can’t be in one relationship with one person.”

“I think girls tend to have that tendency like, if you have children and you are old, you not really into those things.”

“From my perception from what I have seen, even with some of my own family, is that some men tend to when they older, they more into careers and more into having money than having time for their family. It is no more those romantic days. Where you bring your wife flowers and you take her out on a date or spend time with them. I have had aunts that have actually looked for something elsewhere because they were doing that.”

“Lack of emotional connection.”

“Fidelity problems.”

This was evident in many of the responses received. Using Erikson’s psychosocial stages of development, trust versus mistrust is one of the stages that one undergoes. If people do not complete the stage successfully and have a crisis that is not overcome correctly, they might experience issues in their adulthood surrounding trust. It is also important to note that a participant engaged in multiple concurrent partnerships due to trust being broken in a relationship when the participant was cheated on. The participant had in turn sought ‘revenge’ by doing the same thing to the significant other.

Social norms

A number of participants mentioned aspects that relate to the norms and expectations of society. One participant stated that: “But for a man...to like have multiple concurrent partners, it means that you are man enough. It is okay for you to have more than one girlfriend”. However, the same participant also revealed that:

“As for me and my age, the most girls that I know it seems like it’s a trend having multiple partners. You seem cool for having multiple partners. As I am a girl, especially

if you can keep it a secret. Ya [laughs]...It seems cool. Ya... they can call you names..." but, "it like depends on where you live."

The participant also states that:

"Being called a slut gives you motivation to have more multiple partners. Maybe you just have two partners and then they start calling you a slut... and then you like and when they start calling you a slut when I just have two partners, why I don't just carry on...maybe add two more or yaa..."

Another participant made reference to culture and the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships: "It is not safe anymore. Maybe it was safe in the ancient times but not now." One of the participants stated that sexual intercourse had made her feel wanted and she engaged in sexual encounters with many people because of that:

"I'd always been, well back then, always been insecure about who I am as a person. The thing about sex is that it makes you feel wanted by someone. That validation that you are beautiful to someone else. That is what used to happen. That is what I looked for when I engaged."

Gender differences were seen by another participant who stated that the reason for such differences is society:

"I think it is the way society...the society we grow up in. You know it is alright for a man to have multiple partners? It is more accepted if a guy has multiple partners compared to if it a woman has multiple partners. You get labelled so many other names that is different from what a man would get labelled."

In the all-male focus group discussion, a participant stated that:

"I know growing up I used to look up to the older guys who used to date multiple women at the same time and it also plays a factor. Growing up and knowing that having multiple partners being the only thing that is being done. You grow up with that and you find that as acceptable because it is the norm. You are used to it from a young age."

The male participants in this group also felt that females cannot do the same:

"If it was opposite or the other way around where it was the female that was doing as such, then no" because "it is the norm."

“I think for some cultures, you have multiple wives and I think that maybe is how it came about. You have your first wife, and you not satisfied, then you also feel the same way for the other”

“I think, with a guy too it boosts your confidence if you know you are capable of getting any girl. You do it more often. You just forget about the moral of it, like being wrong. You forget that it is wrong. You carry on.”

“You feel good about yourself.”

“It’s more like girls love these players...”

“Wanting attention. A woman always wants attention, whether it is a young person or older person. They look for attention.”

“In things we do. It is to draw attention to us. But we do it unnoticingly. We do not notice that we are actually doing this to gain popularity. It happens naturally.”

One participant mentioned that having more than one wife was accepted and easy to do years ago in the days of King Shaka. The participant had asked how come having more than one wife then was easier to manage than it is now, as wives ‘come with drama’. The participant stated that:

“Think these days it is more 50:50. Those days it was a man who had a say in everything. Where you can sleep, if you can eat and what not. Women have a say now.”

Other responses included a male respondent who stated that: “I mean you should not be limited to what society thinks is right...everyone should find who they are and then see what is right for them and not what is right for society”. He also stated: “I have heard that it [multiple concurrent partnerships] is wrong in most circles...apparently...er...and others are okay with it...that is what I heard I guess.”

The participant above is of African ethnicity. He further commented:

“You find that, for example, conservative girls are okay with sharing a guy due to the fact that olden days Zulu men were known for having multiple girlfriends or multiple wives. Polygamous relationships.”

Having multiple concurrent partners is still viewed as being acceptable for males. A male participant in an individual interview stated that:

“With females...er...yeh...that is just females saying guys can have multiple partners but with the way guys see a girl...the moment they have more than one...the moment she cheats, it is a bit of a problem. Which I perceive as being...er...I forgot what the word is...er...having a double standard”.

The participant also felt that you cannot categorise people who have multiple concurrent sexual partners as:

“You will have some people that are open to the idea of let’s go out, find yourself, you can have multiple partners. Then you have some people that are yoh...that is dangerous cos of the stuff like AIDS and so forth...erm...ya...it is quite difficult...”

There also appears to be a change in social norms. A male participant from an individual interview commented:

“I feel as much as yeh fine we all trying to be equal...conservative, but we also being more open-minded...you find less people being in relationships and more people being in open relationships, more trying to figure out who they are as opposed to who they are in another person...”

One has to also consider other changes in social norms. Many people are now having intercourse much earlier on in life. A male participant from an individual interview stated that: “Most of the guys I am friends with lost theirs in Grade 10 or Grade 11. I told them matric; they were like, how? What were you waiting for?” He also felt that: “I think right now we live in a messed up time, cos it’s not the same now; we do not care anymore as a generation.”

A female participant from the individual interviews stated that:

“No one has ever looked at me ... I was always the friend who had friends who were in relationship. I always had people around me who was in relationships. I always give the best advice. Always the one with tissues. Always watched my friends in relationships and always sort of had the third bird’s eye as to okay.”

Here, many of the male participants had given social factors as a reason for them engaging in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. Social factors were also a reason for some female participants, where they needed the items that they were exchanging for sexual intercourse. Cultural reasons were also a reason given by the participants for why they felt people engage in the practice. The term *isoka* was not well known by the participants. However, a more modern term ('play boy' or 'player') was well known. Polygamy is also viewed as the norm by some participants and is socially accepted in certain cultures. One will argue that nurture is more prevalent in this factor than nature. Vygotsky's concept of internalisation can also be used in explaining how what occurs within a culture can be internalised and viewed as the norm.

4.3.2.5 Characteristics/traits of people who are likely to engage in multiple concurrent sexual partners

People are also individuals, thus some factors influencing multiple concurrent sexual activity are likely to relate to personal or individual traits.

Personality traits

This is also one of the themes that emerged during individual interviews. Both individuals who were interviewed individually in the pilot study were asked if they could describe themselves.

“Crazy, very talkative...er outgoing...er...I would like to believe I am...how do I describe myself...I do not know...I think out of the box...er...and I'm...I...I...I...tend to. It's not being competitive but it's not going...it's not being conservative...it's forgot what the opposite of being conservative is...”

“Very outgoing. I am not an introvert. I am an extrovert. I...I... like to have fun. I am very loud. I am just really...sometimes I can be in your face but at the same time I do like my own space. I do enjoy the company of myself. Just as much as you know I like to be with people and so forth, I am very outgoing and outspoken and so forth. I do enjoy the calm and the quiet and just being alone. Just outspoken. Very opinionated. Ya...outspoken, opinionated, loud.”

“I think it does play a part because if you are strict and you do not tolerate that, then you will not do it.”

Personal traits were also seen as a reason by another participant:

“When they get drunk, they lose themselves. Some don’t. It depends on the person.”

“I would call it personality, I had at their age you know. They are doing anything to gain pleasure. They are not thinking of what they are doing or what consequence what they are doing might have and ya..There is no and I think that is it. It is just for fun and pleasure. They have no commitments. They have no intentions of committing. Those are the friends I keep.”

“They do not think of tomorrow. They think of now. They don’t think that they can impregnate their partners or their sexual partners if I may call it that. Sexual partners. Ya. Erm... they don’t think of themselves really because it is not just HIV/AIDS. There are other infections that they can get. Other illnesses to be aware of during sexual intercourse.”

“If you find those decent girls, then you shouldn’t play around with her. You should find another girl that will do the same thing that you would do. That will be acceptable.”

The traits that constitute a person’s personality are the result of both nature and nurture factors. Participants felt that a certain type of person engages in the practice of having multiple sexual partners. It is important to note that the reviewed literature did not include distinguishing characteristics of people who engage in the practice of having multiple concurrent partnerships. However, this is a possible topic for future research to determine if there are any significant characteristics worth noting.

Hereditary factors

The evolutionary model suggests that males engage in multiple concurrent partnerships for sexual reasons whilst females engage in multiple concurrent partners for emotional reasons. However, some female participants in the focus group stated that sexual satisfaction is more

important than emotional satisfaction: “It is sexually...that is a bonus, but you cannot be with someone that”.

Other female participants stated that you need both: “Guys, I’m trying to explain that you can have someone that satisfies you sexually but not emotionally; there is something missing”.

Another participant mentioned that there is always someone better:

“But you know when you are with someone there is always going to be someone better, so you always meet someone better, so you want to bring them in the game, you understand”.

Another response was: “I think it has to do with the make-up of the guy, especially as a boy, because knowing me as a guy being satisfied with one thing might be hard as being compared to...that’s why I will have multiple partners. Because being a guy you get like...your eyes are quick. You see things you like you move on you go. That is what I can say. Also being a guy, it’s in you. It is heredity. Like, it is a gene. It is genetic. If you do take notice of it, every guy has an eye that is too busy.” Others agreed that it is “genetic” and “We are animals”.

4.3.2.6 Accessibility

Physical distance between respective people in the relationship

Being in situations that allow multiple concurrent sexual partnerships to flourish is one of the themes that participants thought promotes the practice. A participant stated that:

“It is more easier because the other ones, we both stay in PMB and the other one we in a long-distance relationship. He is far away from PMB. We not both staying in one place. But the other one stays away from PMB and the other one stays here.”

Distance between partners can also cause multiple concurrent sexual partnerships to stop, as a participant states:

“I was in a long-distance relationship last year. Well, that was the last time I had multiple partners. Since I moved here and he is living here, I now only have one partner.”

Another participant gave an account of her roommate who had engaged in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships while she was on campus and her fiancé was not close by:

“I think she got overwhelmed by the university life and the parties and she fell in love with another guy from our residence.”

Lifestyle and entertainment

A person’s lifestyle and entertainment activities are also contributing factors in concurrent sexual activity. A male participant said:

“Me not having time for girlfriends but I had desire for sexual intercourse, so working behind the bar socialising with people who were intoxicated, it was easy for me to get what I want. You know, so I lived quite a while, for a year or two, with no girlfriend whatsoever but sleeping with multiple partners all over the place.”

If a person is close by, there seems to be a fear that they may find out about the other relationship. The behaviour is more risky. The need for sexual intercourse is also seen and situations that are deemed as easy allow for these encounters to occur more frequently. Participants in the focus group also stated that they see people being intimate in different places on campus: “Sometimes they do...”; “DSLIT”, “You walk in and it’s getting heated” and “parking lot”. Another participant stated that it (the risk of discovery) “makes it more exciting”.

4.3.2.7 The role of substance use in sexual relationships

Substance use/misuse plays a part in a person engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and using protection. It depends on the environment or condition one finds oneself in.

Drugs and alcohol as modes of socialising

Drugs and alcohol are used in many close circles as a way to relax and socialise. However, this practice has effects that may be negative and/or positive to the individual. A participant stated that:

“When you are drunk, it is a different situation and when you are sober, it is a different situation as well. Because when you are drunk, you actually do not have the time to go to the shop and come again.”

“Usually when they are drinking, the girl[s] are around and something is bound to happen. Okay, not bound, but if it does happen, it does happen and you keep on moving.”

“Usually when we are drinking, that’s [multiple concurrent sexual relationships?] what usually happens.”

Substance consumption can also lead to people experimenting with different things. The concept of ‘drunk sex’ emerged in the study. ‘Drunk sex’ is a concept that was known by many in the focus group discussion. Participants stated that they were ‘more comfortable’ during drunk sex and the sex is “better”. Another participant stated that: “You do not have to switch off the lights”. Another participant stated that: “Maybe if you are sober, you will think about it more”, whilst another participant re-emphasised this notion: “Whatever was stopping you when you were not drunk is not stopping you now”.

Within the focus group, the researcher explored the frequency of alcohol consumption. The participants stated that they drink mostly during weekends, whilst others stated: “Depends what is going on...you cannot drink when you have tests and assignments due next week”; “Yes, we drink everyday now since the strike”; “Wednesday to Sunday”; “From Thursday”.

Places that promote substance use/misuse

It seems as if clubs and the use of substances are linked. This could be due to clubs selling alcohol as recreational drinks. One participant mentioned:

“Maybe people go to clubs...hook up with one person there and next morning wake up with another, so that I would not say it was voluntary, cos you are drunk.”

This participant does not only associate clubs with alcohol; the participant implies that decision-making is impaired when intoxicated. Here, Piaget’s cognitive development theory can be used to explain the reason for substance use and abuse being a factor in people engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Cognition has been distorted by substances, resulting in people acting in ways that are normally deemed as risky behaviour. In addition, the unknown leads some people to want to find out and make the unknown known. Experimentation was the reason for many of the above participants having engaged in multiple concurrent partners. It can also be linked to one’s cognition and to one’s social interactions within the microsystem.

4.3.3 Are there any gender differences in the reasons for the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?

From the themes that emerged above, it is obvious that there were some gender differences identified. For example, a male participant from an individual interview felt that there are changes with how females look at sex. He stated that high school girls are having sexual intercourse, “trying to have sex with university students in third or fourth year; how are you in Grade 11 and preparing for your final exams but losing their virginity”. He also questioned what they are learning in school: “What are they learning and who are they talking to...whatever it is, it is scary”. He also stated that there is a list of ‘varsity guys’ that these girls want to have sexual intercourse with:

“A hit list of guys that they want to smash; so it is like there is a group of girls and they are like, ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah, we are all smashing you...it is a group of girls in high school that are talking about guys in varsity.”

The participants from the focus group also stated that there are gender differences with regard to why one has multiple concurrent partners. One female participant stated that she feels: “Even if a male is satisfied, he will still go to the next just”. This also ties in with the theme of ‘greed’.

Another participant stated that there are no gender differences between males and females having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships now. He stated that: “Especially in high school, you find most of the girls are dating more than one partner. One from school and one from outside.”

4.3.4 What are students’ perspectives regarding masculinity and the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?

Male participants revealed that being a ‘player’ is something to be proud of, showing that it is a masculine trait to have. However, not only males have multiple concurrent partners. On the other hand, female participants stated that it is something that they cannot share with others. When a male participant was asked what he had understood from the term multiple concurrent sexual partners, the participant responded: “If you a guy you are a player. If you a girl you are a ho”. The participant also stated: “For a guy, it is okay apparently to have multiple concurrent partners; for a girl...” and “with guys if you get a girl, it’s kinda of yoh...you won the lotto, bru...”.

Another participant stated:

“If you a guy and you have multiple girlfriends, you the man. Being the big dog is a good thing. Being the big dog as a girl is a bad thing - you a bitch, you a ho. You have all these names that are derogatory for girls...for guys...what do you call a guy with multiple girlfriends...he is a player...a good player...up until we see each other as equal, we cannot say of it, is right or wrong.”

A female participant also believed that masculinity still exists, “Why are men encouraged to have many partners and we are just, no stay pure for yourself?” She also feels that females cannot be seen as sexual beings:

“It is so horrible for us as women who cannot be sexual beings. Men are sexual beings. It is okay for a man to sleep with three four five women, then he is like yes...everyone gives him a hands up...as soon as I say I am sleeping with three guys, it is like, what?”

“But you, some guy even said if a guy comes and he has impregnated five girls...it is not as bad as I would come and say I am pregnant and I do not know who the father is. That is shamed upon.”

Another female participant also reported:

“But others just keep it a secret because you can’t go around and say I have three partners...I myself have two...three...two boyfriends but it is not something I can say, I have two boyfriends you see, because my peers will see my like someone who is like a bad girl, so they like keep it a secret”. The participant feels that for boys it is something positive: “Ya, for boys you are cool.”

The term *isoka* was known by some participants but they referred to it as “a fuck boy”. Other participants also stated that there are “fuck girls” and referred to them as snakes. One female participant stated that the girls do not want to be known as “fuck girls”, but males do want to be known as “fuck boys”.

The term *isoka* is not known by many of the participants. When explained the term, most participants equates this to the term ‘player’:

“We all want to be players. Because I also called myself a player. Because I can say, I thought I was good at my game, but the results was actually not good.”

Many of the female participants felt that they had to hide the fact that they had more than one sexual partner:

“Because I knew what I was doing was wrong. Completely wrong and it is against society. I mean, it is okay if one guy has many partners, but the moment it is a girl that has a lot of partners, then it is a problem. A guy is called a man and the girl ...ey”

“Men will always be men. Boys will always be boys. I don’t think that they have one specific reason other than they think it is fun for them having more than one partner”

In the all-male focus group discussion, the male participants had also not known what the term *isoka* was. When explained, they too equated it to being a player. The male participant stated that it was: “People usually feel cool if they’re involved with a lot of relationships” and “especially for the guys”.

Other quotes included:

“Yes having multiple concurrent sexual partners at the same time would give you that image of being the Dawn.”

“It’s like you are the alpha male you know”

“King of the jungle”

“Multiple girlfriends. To us it is something else when you take it to the other side. The women has multiple partners, then it becomes another story. With us, we see it as you have been painted with this greatness in our eyes, with your five wives beside you. But once a women does it, then it is another thing. I don’t know. That is how life has portrayed it to me.”

“It’s like how she said, I think women do it because they have a reason. They are not getting enough of love. Sometimes men just do it not because you are not getting enough of love but because you think you must have a lot of girlfriends. Because you are a man.”

“Me, I will say that females need attention, that emotional thingy; guys want to feel like they are the men.”

“With a man, it has to always be about sex.”

“One thing I can guarantee with us, especially native men, no relationship will ever last if there is no sexual intercourse involved. We might tell ourselves in the beginning of the relationship okay, you know what, let me give her a chance. Let me actually wait for her. But knowing the actual nature of a native man like myself, it takes major strength to do such.”

4.4 Summary of findings

The table below depicts a collated summary of the themes that have emerged from the study.

Table 2: Students’ perceptions of the concept of having multiple concurrent sexual partners

1. Definitions of multiple concurrent sexual partners	
1. Dating more than one person	8. Same as having a polygamous relationship
2. More than one sexual partner	9. Behaviour that is also practiced by conservative yet cultural female
3. Sexual encounters in a relationship	10. Behaviour that is risky because you can contract Aids and have emotional consequences
4. Socially constructed	11. A behaviour that is learnt
5. Behaviour that is socially accepted or socially not accepted	12. A behaviour that is practiced by ‘snake-ish’ (appear to be what they are not) people
6. A situation one is in for that specific period in time	13. A behaviour that is driven by wants
7. A term that is positive for males but negative for females	14. Sexual overlapping of sexual partners

4.4.1 What are students’ perceptions on the concept of multiple concurrent sexual partners?

The participants understood what is meant by multiple concurrent sexual partners.

4.4.2 What are students' views on what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners?

There were a variety of themes that emerged from the discussions. Peer pressure was the least motivating factor identified with benefits being more of a common factor, identified by many participants.

4.4.3 Are there any gender differences in the reasons for the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?

Yes. Gender differences were evident in the different responses given by the participants.

4.4.4 What are students' perspectives regarding masculinity and the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?

Both male and female participants responded that masculinity is still a driving force for males engaging in multiple concurrent partners and this is socially accepted.

4.5 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the results of the study in light of the four objectives the study aimed to achieve. The themes discussed in the objectives of this study are summarised in the table below.

Table 3: Summary of themes in objectives 2-4 of the study

3. Gender Differences	2. Motivation Factors	4. Ideologies of Masculinity
<p>Presentation according gender</p> <p>Insecurity - financial</p> <p>Women at risk - called names, pregnancy</p> <p>Social status - player</p> <p>Societal normal of courtship i.e. males supposed to start the courtship relationship</p> <p>Contracting disease</p> <p>Most females engage in MCP when something is missing in the relationship, whereas males will engage in MCP even if nothing is missing</p>	<p>Emotional attachment</p> <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of commitment • Lack of emotional attachment • Trust and mistrust • Angry with your partner • Need for revenge • Insecurity • Immaturity • Being bullied in school • Peer pressure <p>Positive/Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of belonging • Social status • Validation • Friendships • Belonging • Not being attached <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No commitment ○ No responsibility ○ No respect for boundaries 	<p>Avoid emotional attachment when having multiple concurrent partners.</p> <p>Emotional and Sexual compatibility is important in a relationship.</p> <p>A gender that is never satisfied with the current circumstance.</p> <p>Similar to animal instincts.</p>
	<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social exchange ○ Physical ○ Emotional ○ Sexual ○ Financial 	
<p>Future and present</p> <p>Who is most likely to prepare for future status/fear of embarrassment?</p> <p>Females now prefer younger partners: Age of sexual partners and the sexual encounter</p>	<p>Sexual (dis)satisfaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender differences in sexual intimacy and emotion intimacy due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of love • Unhappiness • Arranged relationships • Wanting an improvement in the relationship (Interest, Insecurity, Infidelity) • Blaming partner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of effort in making a relationship work ○ Lack of passion ○ Unhappiness ○ Lack of mutual respect • Lack of sexual satisfaction • No sexual encounters • Celibacy of a partner 	<p>‘Players’</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Drive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Same type of sexual encounter ○ To explore other types of sexual encounters ○ To explore sexual encounters with others ○ Automatic feeling of desire to someone you find physically attractive (law of attraction) ○ To add a person to the number of partners one has had • To gain experience before committing to one person <p>Issue on sexual (dis)satisfaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional risk • Sexual risk diminishes due to morning-after pill, abortions, ARVs • Physical risk diminishes due to morning-after pill, abortions, ARVs • Experimentation • Naïve (about how HIV is contracted) 	
Men in particular complain about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention • Popularity/validation 	<p>Socialisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social acceptable norm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stigma ○ Validation • Attention • Popularity • Open-minded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Change in relationships ○ Change in self thought ○ Change in age of sexual intercourse • Familial influences 	<p>Normalisation for community 50/50 however, expectations for females and males are culture bound (Social acceptable norm)</p> <p>Males are the authoritative decision-maker in courtship</p>
Gender-specific traits such as heredity	<p>Characteristics/traits of people who are likely to engage in multiple sexual partners</p> <p>Individual traits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinions • Personality traits • Introverted/extroverted • Conservative • Lifestyle • Decision-making • Heredity 	Defiance of cultural bias
	<p>Accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance between respective people in the relationship • Lifestyle • Entertainment 	

<p>Social acceptable norms determine how men and women should behave.</p> <p>Pregnancy</p>	<p>The role of substance use/misuse in sexual relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places/environment that promote the use of substances • Drugs and alcohol as modes of socialising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Effect and consequences (negative/positive): more comfortable ○ Cognitive impairment and decision-making ○ Risk of contracting diseases ○ Experimentation of drug sex 	<p>Normalisation for community 50/50; however, expectations for females and males are culture bound (social acceptable norm).</p>
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CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the results presented in the preceding chapter in conjunction with the literature that was reviewed in Chapter 2. The chapter will also provide recommendations for further research and recommendations for policy and practice.

5.2 Discussion of results, research question by research question

5.2.1 What are students' perceptions of the concept of multiple concurrent sexual partners?

Perceptions are said to have “direct and pervasive impact on overt behaviour” (Dijksterhuis & Knippenberg, 1998, p. 865). Lowenstein (1996) argued that people will behave in a manner that is not in accordance with their self-interest if their behaviour is perceived as satisfying their visceral factors such as sexual desire and desire for substance use.

In the current study, the participants understood what multiple concurrent sexual partners meant. The participants in the study often equated this to the slang term used. It is important to also note that many of the participants had laughed initially when asked if they knew what the term meant. This could be due to the stigma attached to sexual behaviour and the unwritten rule that sexual behaviour is not commonly spoken about. All participants felt that it is easier for males to have multiple concurrent partners than it is for females to engage in the practice.

The study by Parker et al. (2007) reinforces this. The reason behind this could be the social status of men compared to that of women and the inequity that previously existed.

It is also important to note that the participants were able to understand the risk of contracting STDs and STIs by engaging in the practice but they continued as they felt contracting STDs and STIs is treatable. This causes one to think that people no longer view HIV as a life-altering risk. Some of the female participants felt that people protect more against pregnancy than they do from contracting HIV/AIDs. The sexual networks that exist in multiple concurrent partnerships were not something to be considered by participants.

When noting how the participants had defined multiple concurrent partners, it is important to note that they understood that having multiple concurrent sexual partners entails dating more than one person or having more than one sexual partner, with overlap of sexual partners. Participants felt that this behaviour is socially constructed and learnt from others. It is socially accepted to a greater or lesser degree. It seems to be a practice that is favoured for males whilst not favoured for females. Some felt it was the same as a polygamous relationship or a behaviour that is practiced by conservative yet 'cultural' females. It is a behaviour that is driven by people's wants but it is risky because one can contract HIV and it has an emotional effect on people.

The above are not all negative perceptions toward multiple concurrent sexual partners as some participants stated that the behaviour is acceptable for males. When another participant responded that it is dating more than one person, it could suggest that the participant's relationships could be sexual in nature. A research study on the factors that influence the decision to engage in sexual intercourse may be a good starting point in understanding the participant's perception better. All participants interviewed were African South Africans. Most of the participants stated that polygamy involves having multiple concurrent sexual partners. It was also vital to note that these participants did not all view polygamy in a positive way but they had a more favourable approach to multiple concurrent sexual partnerships in general.

5.2.2 What are students' views on what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners?

In the current study, a variety of themes emerged, including emotional attachment, sexual satisfaction, sexual risk, social factors, accessibility, substance use/abuse, and individual differences.

When identifying emotional attachment reasons for engaging in the practice, only two female participants stated that they had poor relationships with their parents whilst growing up. They stated that this had led them to have intimacy challenges and to be afraid of committed relationships and also of being alone. In the study by Amidona (2007), the different attachment styles were investigated and if an insecure or ambivalent attachment style was evident, the person would be more susceptible to having multiple casual relationships. This could be the reason why the participants responded the way they did when asked the reasons for why they engaged in the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. One of the two participants stated that she does not like to be alone, so she has many partners. She stated that if she was at home alone and someone had to message her, she would meet that person and engage in sexual intercourse with them. She also stated that, sometimes, she would meet with more than one person a day. It would be interesting to have included an attachment survey that could be used to assess if indeed the relationship between the participants and their parents affected their romantic/sexual relationships.

The term ‘situationship’ instead of ‘relationship’ that was used by a participant could be due to the relationship between her parents and herself as well. The participant’s fear of labelling a relationship as such could emanate from deep-seated, unresolved feelings that the participant may have. It seems as if the participant does not want to get too close to the person they are involved with because of the fear of the relationship not working.

Peer pressure was a factor that did emerge from the discussion. However, it was only mentioned as a motivating factor by one participant. The participant stated that he wanted to fit in, so he engaged in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. This makes one wonder if males are more susceptible or impressionable than females or it could also make one wonder if the reason behind a male participant feeling peer pressure to engage in such practice is because of the connotations for males that are attributed to having many sexual partners.

The emotional attachment reasons provided show that there are some gender differences that occur between males and females, in terms of the reasons behind what motivates them to have

multiple concurrent sexual partners. However, other motivating factors also need to be explained and understood. Apart from the possible explanations surrounding attachment, it was also shown that people are sexual and social beings.

When evaluating the responses in light of genetic make-up and the social constructivism theory, it seems that the male and female participants did respond accordingly, to a certain degree. There were male participants who responded in a manner showing that they are more motivated by sexual satisfaction and there were female participants who responded with reasons that aligned more with their emotional needs. This reinforces the evolution/genetic theory. One can conclude that females prioritise their emotional side more than they do their sexual drive, and that males prioritise their sexual drive more than their emotional side. Singer (1977) has long stated that there should be a new theory for understanding sexuality and this should be by understanding androgyny, a combination of masculine and feminine characteristics. That is a wise belief as it will also allow an unpacking of understandings of sexuality. Singer (1977) made this statement many years ago and women have become more liberated since then. This can be seen in the responses received from some of the female participants. Not all females responded with emotional reasons as the only reason for why they engaged in the practice; socio-economic reasons were also evident. Female participants received different things from their different sexual partners. These social exchanges provided them with things such as money and transportation, suggesting that these female participants do not have the ability to provide these for themselves.

However, one does not have to have a low socio-economic status to engage in this social exchange. As Cruz and Mause (2014) concluded in their study, females who had a higher socio-economic status and were educated also engaged in multiple concurrent partnerships, in this case to gain power and influence for their career advancements. Here, the social exchange is not something that is tangible. The two different views show that both tangible and intangible gains may be made through the social exchange. However, the tangible and intangible items are things that are desired by females. Johnson (1976) investigated sex-role stereotyping and power use, which can assist in understanding how females use sex to gain power and influence their career. Johnson (1976) states that women have less access to resources and competence in their work environment and will seek power and influence by other means. Presently, over four decades have passed since this statement was made; however, there are still females who

use their sexuality to gain power and influence. This makes one wonder how much transformation has really happened in terms of gender equality.

Most of the male participants responded that they 'are sexual beings' and that is what drives their behaviour. Some mentioned that there is a need for having more sexual encounters and more experiences with different types of girls. Some of the male participants also stated that they have different types of girlfriends as there are different things that can be done with these girlfriends. It is also important to note that experimentation was a theme that emerged with many of the male participants. This reinforces the evolutionary model that argues that males are driven by sexual desire. When evaluating the responses regarding sexual risk, the participants did not seem to consider the practice of engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships as particularly risky behaviour. This could be due to the treatment now available for STDs and STIs, including HIV. A research question that could have been asked, or can be included in future research, would be about possible deterrents for the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships.

When investigating social exchanges (transactional sex), not one male participant stated that they had engaged in multiple concurrent sexual partners because of material benefits they would gain. It would have been interesting to have included the financial background of the participants to determine if the male participants were from families that were more financially stable. This would have allowed for the elimination of extraneous variables that could be the reason for the differences in responses. However, the male participants did mention that some of them gain popularity by engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partners. They also showed excitement and the different experiments they have with their sexual practices, which seems to be cultivated by adrenalin or the thrill that it provides.

The different themes that emerged are very much social factors. Upon finding individual factors, we will discuss the findings surrounding personal opinions, personality traits, decision making and lifestyle.

A particular participant, who had known of instances where people engaged in multiple sexual partnerships, stated that she goes to church and engaging in sexual intercourse is against her religion. She stated that this is the reason why she has not become sexually active. She also described herself as introverted. However, other participants have also stated that some people

they know seem to be introverted and quiet but they do engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Another participant stated that multiple concurrent sexual partnerships are practised by conservative people. By the difference in opinions and the difference in personality described by the participants, it can be concluded that it does not necessarily mean that there is a particular personality profile for a person who engages in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. However, when looking into the comments around decision-making, it seems as if people will behave in a way that they perceive to be acceptable or in a way that they feel they will not be exposed for.

Engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships also depends on people's current circumstances. Participants mentioned that when they are in a certain situation that favours or provides them with the opportunity to engage in the practice of multiple concurrent partners, they are more likely to do so. A participant mentioned that, where it is easy to have sexual intercourse with people, it is more likely that they will have multiple concurrent sexual partners. Other participants confirmed that accessibility to sexual intercourse is an important factor. The participants also stated that when intoxicated, one is also more likely to have sexual intercourse with someone, as one's decision-making may be impaired or one may be more comfortable with having sex than one would 'normally', when sober.

A number of the male participants also mentioned that having sexual intercourse while drunk is a popular activity and they refer to it as 'drunk sex'. The participants mentioned that sexual intercourse feels better when intoxicated because of the comfort and ease that exists when people are in that state. This makes one question if people who engage in multiple concurrent sexual partners when intoxicated are those who are less confident to behave sexually when they are sober. A research question that could be posed would be one that seeks to determine if participants who have multiple concurrent sexual partners regularly consume alcohol. One should also research further and investigate the reasons for consumption. It would provide information on whether people drink because they just want to unwind or if people consume alcohol with the objective of becoming intoxicated?

From the above discussion on the themes that emerged, it is evident that the themes interlink with one another. In order to gain a better understanding of the factors that motivate the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partners, some leading questions should be developed with the aim of understanding the background of the person who is providing the information. This

would allow for a more thorough understanding. However, from the current research, it can be seen that there are trends in how the participants view multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. The following section will discuss the gender differences that were described in Chapter 4.

5.2.3 Are there any gender differences in the reasons for the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?

The current study shows that there are gender differences between the responses received for the factors that motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners. In the study by Shumba et al. (2011), males had also stated that they had a need for sexual satisfaction which elicited the behaviour of having multiple concurrent sexual partners, a theme that also emerged in the current study.

However, the difference in responses in the current study showed that male participants did not engage in the practice due to the monetary benefits the other partner provided. This was only true for the female participants of the current study. The study by Shumba et al. (2011) showed that both males and females engaged in multiple concurrent sexual partners for monetary reasons. The potential reason for this difference could be the economic status of the participants in the study by Shumba et al. (2011). The study was carried out in Zimbabwe where the economic status of participants is likely to be much lower than that of the sample chosen for the current study. This difference does, however, suggest the possibility of other factors being identified by people from different demographics and a recommendation is made for future studies to investigate this. One also needs to be aware that, in South Africa, affirmative action is prevalent. There is a demand for more women to be employed which will ultimately yield them to be in a better financial situation. However, there is still a big economical difference between males and females that still exists in the generation of the baby boomers or Generation X. These will be the two generations that have children around the age of the participants in the study.

Another study by Flom et al. (2001) revealed that people who had engaged in substance abuse were more likely to engage in multiple concurrent sexual partners. Substance abuse did motivate the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partners in this study. It is important to not only look at having sex education but to also have interventions on substance use/abuse. Most of the male participants mentioned 'drunk sex'. One of the male participants also mentioned that he worked as a barman and that was an opportunity for him to engage in multiple

concurrent sexual partners, as he was exposed to a lot of females who were intoxicated. This also makes one wonder how many intoxicated males have found themselves in a similar situation where they are the ones' having drunk sex with a sober women.

Another difference that occurred is that male participants were more driven by sexual desire than females to engage in sexual activities. Females mainly had emotional reasons for engaging in sexual activities. As males and females are different genetically (i.e. the Y chromosome that exists in males), one could also investigate what is particularly different about the Y chromosome that makes males men different to females, apart from physical attributes.

5.2.4 What are students' perspectives regarding masculinity and the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners?

Both male and female participants in the current study indicated that masculinity does play an important role in the reason behind people engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partners. Males are seen to be more dominant if they have multiple concurrent sexual partners. A study by Hunter (2004) also shows that masculinity is very important in other contexts. Males were considered manly if they had multiple concurrent sexual partners. Another study by Hunter (2010) also showed that males would have multiple concurrent partners as this increased their chances of fathering children. The number of children a man had was linked to his social status. Although both of the studies by Hunter were done in rural Africa, another study was done in a peri-urban area and also proved this true. In the study carried out by Ragnarsson et al. (2009), a male's social identity was found to have been derived from the social groups they formed. In this study, the participants often spoke about their parents and what was the norm in their social group. It is evident that this concept of social identity is still prevalent.

When the participants in the current study were asked about their perspectives on the above, they felt that although masculinity does play a role in the practice of multiple concurrent partners, they would not want to engage in such practices when they are older. The reason provided was that it was hard to maintain more than one partner at the same time and now that they are young, they would do this. Another factor which emerged was maturity and one could wonder if the same questions were put to an older sample, if the same themes would have emerged.

The above factors could be due to the currently changing society or the impact of westernisation. Some people are no longer being told how to react or behave according to their gender. More females are working and more males are staying at home. The dynamics that occur in this modern-day society do play an important role. Women's day and the month of August are examples of a different societal attitude towards women and their liberation. Movies such as *Look like a women, think like a man* show that society does feel that women can operate in a previously male-dominated world. Although some still label women with derogatory terms for having multiple concurrent sexual partners, more males are saying that there should be equal rights and expectations for males and females. This shows that in the near future, 'being a player' may not necessarily portray a positive image for males only.

5.3 Summary of the study

Having multiple concurrent sexual partners is a practice which is perceived differently by people. Some view it as a practice that is not socially accepted whilst, to others, it is a way of life. In a context where having multiple concurrent sexual partners is not culturally correct, investigating the factors encourage the behaviour is important in understanding why it occurs. The responses derived from the study are primarily based on wants and needs, including a feeling of belonging, sexual satisfaction, greed, and benefits. One's personality and social interactions are also contributory factors. Alcohol consumption and drug use also make it easier for people to get into situations that they would normally avoid whilst sober.

5.4 Conclusions/implications of the study

Themes that emerged from the literature reviewed and the findings of the study have shown that there is a wide range of factors that condition young people to engage in the practice of having multiple sexual partners. These factors are not only sexual or physiological in nature but are also social, environmental, and cognitive. This trend showed that the research questions investigated have been answered and the results showed that there are numerous motivating factors encouraging young people to engage in this venture. In addition, some gender differences in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners were discovered; the trend showing that young female students are becoming more sexually active than their counterparts in the past. While in the past male students went in pursuit of female lovers for sexual escapades; these days, from the account of participants in this study, this trend is changing, as more females (particularly high school female students) are now the pursuers rather than the pursued.

5.5 Recommendations for policy and practice

Many of the factors identified in this study are social factors. They underline the gender and socio-economic inequality that still exists in society. Female respondents were the only respondents who stated they engaged in multiple concurrent partnerships due to the different things they get from someone, in terms of emotional satisfaction or material benefits (e.g. money; clothes; food; airtime). Susser (2009) states that South Africa is a “middle-income, industrialized state at the tip of poor, under-industrialized continent” (p. 103); he also argues that “government has had much less success in reducing the enormous gaps between rich and poor that they inherited from the apartheid regime”. This may still be true in 2018. Thus, it is clearly important for national policy to work towards reducing socio-economic inequality. It is also important to note that this study was done with university students who did not mention prostitution. However, the participants did mention that exchanges do occur for sex, even if they did not link it to the behaviour carried out by prostitutes.

In regard to sexual risk, most of participants felt that STDs and STIs (including HIV/AIDS) are no longer a deterrent as one can lead a seemingly healthy lifestyle with no one finding out about the STD/STI, due to the medications that are now available.

Considering the results and discussion of this study, the following are recommended:

1. Policy should be put into place at an education level to not only educate youth but to also attempt to transform beliefs about sexual behaviour and age of sexual debut. It is alarming that the age of first sexual encounter is now very young. The way the youth perceive sexual activities and desire for such activities should be investigated.
2. Behaviour change projects should also occur and the involvement of parents is needed. It is important to note that two of the participants in the study who had had multiple concurrent partners, stated that they did so when they were young and immature. This also reaffirms the need to educate and transform the lives of the youth.

Recommendations for further studies are to include an analysis of the demographics of the sample and to include household income as one of the variables. This will allow one to investigate further the responses given by the participants. The sample size was also very small as the aim of the study was not to generalise but to explore and to understand the factors that motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. However, an open-ended

questionnaire could also be considered as it may yield responses that people may not have wanted to communicate verbally to someone.

5.6 Limitations of the study

There have been prior studies on multiple concurrent sexual partners but there is insufficient recent studies on multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and has impacted the literature review. Although studies have been done, the researcher has not seen research done with the sample size and on sample group being used here. It is important to note that the findings of the research arose from very few participants and participants belonging to only one racial category. The study is not to generalise to a population but is merely to provide insight and add to the literature that exists. The study is also qualitative in nature, and demographic details have not being taken into account in this study; this could have had an impact in the participants' responses. The research also did not specify between people in heterosexual or homosexual relationships. There were also more male participants than female participants in the study (approximately three times more male participants than female participants).

5.7 Recommendations for further research

For future studies, it will be valuable to find a means that will promote autonomy better and to increase the sample size of the study. This would allow participants to be more direct with their responses as they may be able to disclose even more, without the fear of being judged or being remembered for what has been disclosed. This could be done by using alternative data collection methods such as anonymous surveys, where a drop-off box could be used to collect information. Other research methodologies that could be used are telephonic interviews as some people may feel more at ease knowing that their identity is hidden.

A demographic questionnaire could also be given to participants to determine if any trends can be seen with regard to their demographic variables. Especially, the financial and economic status of participants should be included, as this will allow consideration of the socio-economic status of participants. One would be able to determine if there is an actual need for transactional sex or if it is more of an emotional interchange. Other demographic variables that could be

included are: parents' presence in participants' life, to determine attachment style; participants' religion, to determine if it impacts on the lifestyle one chooses; participants' substance consumption and reasons behind substance use, to determine self-confidence or self-control. The participants should also provide with a schematic diagram of their close community so that a researcher can determine the relationships that exist. It was interesting to find that only African students participated in the study. Race should also be investigated in further studies to determine if there are any racial differences in speaking about sexual behaviour.

A further research study should also focus on the age of first sexual encounter, to determine if there could be a relationship between duration of sexually active years and likelihood of engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partners. It may also allow research to determine if multiple sexual encounters are part of 'youthful experimentation'.

Lastly, the research did not request participants to disclose their sexual preference between heterosexuality and homosexuality. It would be interesting to investigate if there are differences in response due to sexual orientation.

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Appendix A: Ethical clearance



4 July 2015

Mrs Nereshnee Naidoo (Moodley) 207501477
School of Applied Human Sciences – Psychology
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Naidoo

Protocol reference number : HSS/0834/015M

Project title: Motivational factors in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners: A study of students of a South African university.

Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

In response to your application received 02 July 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

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

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shehuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Mrs N Buthelezi & Professor A Nwoye
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor D Wassenaar
cc School Administrator: Ms Nondumiso Khanyile

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shehuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/6365/4667 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4800 Email: ethics@ukzn.ac.za / ethics@ukzn.ac.za / ethics@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Faculty Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix B: Individual interview questions

1. Could you tell me how old you are?
2. How would you describe your personality?
3. Are you currently in a relationship? Could you describe your current relationship?
4. Could you describe your romantic relationships?
5. If you are no longer in a relationship how long did your relationships last?
6. How old were you when you first had sexual intercourse?
7. Have all of your recent relationships been sexual?
8. What made you decide to have these sexual relationships?
9. Could you describe the relationships you had above?
10. What do you understand about multiple concurrent partners?
11. Would you consider that the practice of multiple concurrent partners as a form of infidelity? Please explain.
12. Why do you consider it as/not a form of infidelity?
13. Has anyone told you they have had multiple concurrent partners? How did you react or how would you react to this information?
14. If yes to above, what is your relationship with the people mentioned above?
15. If yes to the above, have people who had multiple concurrent partners shared with you the reasons behind what motivated their behaviour?
16. What is your view on the belief that there may be a gender difference with regard to having multiple concurrent partners?
17. What do you think motivates multiple behaviour?
18. Have you engaged in sex with multiple concurrent partners?
19. If yes, what made you have multiple concurrent partners?
20. If yes, when was the last time you had multiple concurrent partners?
21. If no, why have you not had multiple concurrent partners?
22. How long did these relationships last?
23. How do you view multiple concurrent sexual partners and the belief that it can increase your chance of contracting HIV?

Appendix C: Focus group questions

1. What is your opinion on sexual relationships?
2. Do you believe that people should have one sexual partner?
3. What do you know about multiple concurrent partners?
4. Why do you think students engage in multiple sexual partners?
5. Do you feel that one gender is more prone to having multiple concurrent partners than the other gender?
6. Would you say that a having multiple concurrent sexual partners can increase your chance of contracting HIV? Justify your response.

Appendix D: Advert for pilot study

Research Volunteers

Required

PILOT STUDY

Are you between the ages of 18-24?

and

have you had multiple concurrent sexual partners?

or

know of anyone that has had multiple concurrent partners?

Would you be interested in participating in a discussion on

The motivational factors of having multiple concurrent partners?

All interested participants please contact Nereshnee

with your name and contact details to

nereshnee@yahoo.com

OR

SMS/Call: 074 603 7330

NERESHNEE 074 603 7330 Nereshnee@yahoo.com	NERESHNEE 074 603 7330 Nereshnee@yahoo.com	NERESHNEE 074 603 7330 Nereshnee@yahoo.com	NERESHNEE 074 603 7330 Nereshnee@yahoo.com	NERESHNEE 074 603 7330 Nereshnee@yahoo.com
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Appendix E: Informed consent form for pilot study

Dear Participant

I am Nereshnee Naidoo. I am from the University of KwaZulu-Natal studying towards a Masters degree in Psychology. This letter serves to inform you about the pilot study you have volunteered to participate in as well as to obtain your consent for participation and consent for digital recording of the study.

This pilot study will explore how students perceive the practice of having multiple concurrent partners, and the motivational factors that influence the practice and is also used to test the instruments that is used in the study.

This pilot study involves individual interviews and focus group sessions. You will be placed in either one of these data collection methods. The interview will be approximately 45-60 minutes long whilst the focus group session will take approximately 60-90 minutes. The discussions will be recorded by the use of an audio recorder which will be kept in a secure cabinet for a period of 5 years. Thereafter, it will be incinerated. The risks and benefits involved in the pilot study is that multiple concurrent sexual relationships can be seen as a sensitive topic. Each participant sign a confidentiality pledge agreement which ensures the protection of participant's identity. A pseudonym will also be used on transcripts which will replace participants' actual name with a fictitious name. Having participated in the pilot study, the research study on which the pilot study is based on, an awareness of the practice of multiple concurrent partners can be obtained which can add to the pool of other studies which aims to understand the practice of multiple concurrent partners. Please also be aware that this study can be used for other research studies.

Please be advised that participation is voluntary and you are able to opt out of the study at any point without any penalties held against you. Should you also require any psychosocial support you may be referred to the UKZN Student Counseling Centre.

Participants initial	
-------------------------	--

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Researcher : Nereshnee Naidoo (074 603 7330)
Supervisors : Dr N Buthelezi and Prof. A Nwoye (033 260 5100)
HSSREC Research Office : Dr S Singh (031 260 3587/8350/4557)

CONSENT

I (Name)_____ have been informed about the pilot study entitled Motivational Factors in the Practice of Having Multiple Concurrent Sexual Partners: A Study of Students of a South African University by Nereshnee Naidoo.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study as mentioned on the attached informed consent page initialed by myself.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any treatment or care that I would usually be entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at nereshnee@yahoo.com or 074 603 7330

If I have any queries, concerns or complaints about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact the researcher, the supervisors listed below, or the HSSREC Research Office.

Consent to Study Participation (Sign and tick): Signature: _____

Y	N
---	---

Consent to Digital Recording (Sign and tick): Signature: _____

Y	N
---	---

Signature of Witness

Date

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Researcher : Nereshnee Naidoo (074 603 7330)

Supervisors : Dr N Buthelezi and Prof. A Nwoye (033 260 5100)

HSSREC Research Office : Dr S Singh (031 260 3587/8350/4557)

Confidentiality Pledge Agreement for Pilot Study

I, _____, hereby pledge that I will respect the privacy of other participants in the focus group by not disclosing any information such as their identity and the any aspect of the discussions that arise to others.

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix F: Letters to lecturers

5 Meade Heights
18 Lyngary Road
Lincoln Meade
Pietermaritzburg
3201

31 July 2016

To the Head of the School of Education

R.E.: Permission to recruit participants from lectures

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, am a Psychology Masters student being supervised by Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye. My research project involves understanding how students perceive the practice multiple concurrent sexual partners which might assist in understanding the motivational factors for the practice despite the high HIV prevalence.

In order to recruit participants for this research study, with your permission, I wish to announce my research study in various lectures in the School. I would consult with the lecturers who are involved in the specific modules in which I wish to announce my research study. I would briefly introduce my research study to the class which would not take up more than 5 minutes of the lecture. If you need any further details regarding my research study please feel free contact to contact me on 074 603 7330 or my supervisors Dr N Buthelezi (Buthelezin@ukzn.co.za or 033 260 5100 and Prof A Nwoye (Nwoye@ukzn.ac.za or 033 260 5100).

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

5 Meade Heights
18 Lyngary Road
Lincoln Meade
Pietermaritzburg
3201

31 July 2016

To the Head of the School of Management, IT and Governance

R.E.: Permission to recruit participants from lectures

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, am a Psychology Masters student being supervised by Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye. My research project involves understanding how students perceive the practice multiple concurrent sexual partners which might assist in understanding the motivational factors for the practice despite the high HIV prevalence.

In order to recruit participants for this research study, with your permission, I wish to announce my research study in various lectures in the School. I would consult with the lecturers who are involved in the specific modules in which I wish to announce my research study. I would briefly introduce my research study to the class which would not take up more than 5 minutes of the lecture. If you need any further details regarding my research study please feel free contact to contact me on 074 603 7330 or my supervisors Dr N Buthelezi (Buthelezin@ukzn.co.za) or 033 260 5100 and Prof A Nwoye (Nwoye@ukzn.ac.za) or 033 260 5100).

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

5 Meade Heights
18 Lyngary Road
Lincoln Meade
Pietermaritzburg
3201

31 July 2016

To the Head of the School of Applied Human Science

R.E.: Permission to recruit participants from lectures

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, am a Psychology Masters student being supervised by Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye. My research project involves understanding how students perceive the practice multiple concurrent sexual partners which might assist in understanding the motivational factors for the practice despite the high HIV prevalence.

In order to recruit participants for this research study, with your permission, I wish to announce my research study in various lectures in the School. I would consult with the lecturers who are involved in the specific modules in which I wish to announce my research study. I would briefly introduce my research study to the class which would not take up more than 5 minutes of the lecture. If you need any further details regarding my research study please feel free contact to contact me on 074 603 7330 or my supervisors Dr N Buthelezi (Buthelezin@ukzn.co.za) or 033 260 5100 and Prof A Nwoye (Nwoye@ukzn.ac.za) or 033 260 5100).

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

5 Meade Heights

18 Lyngary Road
Lincoln Meade
Pietermaritzburg
3201

31 July 2016

To the Head of the School of Social Science

R.E.: Permission to recruit participants from lectures

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, am a Psychology Masters student being supervised by Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye. My research project involves understanding how students perceive the practice multiple concurrent sexual partners which might assist in understanding the motivational factors for the practice despite the high HIV prevalence.

In order to recruit participants for this research study, with your permission, I wish to announce my research study in various lectures in the School. I would consult with the lecturers who are involved in the specific modules in which I wish to announce my research study. I would briefly introduce my research study to the class which would not take up more than 5 minutes of the lecture. If you need any further details regarding my research study please feel free contact to contact me on 074 603 7330 or my supervisors Dr N Buthelezi (Buthelezin@ukzn.co.za or 033 260 5100 and Prof A Nwoye (Nwoye@ukzn.ac.za or 033 260 5100).

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

5 Meade Heights
18 Lyngary Road

Lincoln Meade
Pietermaritzburg
3201

31 July 2016

To the Head of the School of Arts

R.E.: Permission to recruit participants from lectures

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, am a Psychology Masters student being supervised by Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye. My research project involves understanding how students perceive the practice multiple concurrent sexual partners which might assist in understanding the motivational factors for the practice despite the high HIV prevalence.

In order to recruit participants for this research study, with your permission, I wish to announce my research study in various lectures in the School. I would consult with the lecturers who are involved in the specific modules in which I wish to announce my research study. I would briefly introduce my research study to the class which would not take up more than 5 minutes of the lecture. If you need any further details regarding my research study please feel free contact to contact me on 074 603 7330 or my supervisors Dr N Buthelezi (Buthelezin@ukzn.co.za or 033 260 5100 and Prof A Nwoye (Nwoye@ukzn.ac.za or 033 260 5100).

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

5 Meade Heights
18 Lyngary Road

Lincoln Meade
Pietermaritzburg
3201

31 July 2016

To the Head of the School of Accounting, Economics and Finance

R.E.: Permission to recruit participants from lectures

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, am a Psychology Masters student being supervised by Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye. My research project involves understanding how students perceive the practice multiple concurrent sexual partners which might assist in understanding the motivational factors for the practice despite the high HIV prevalence.

In order to recruit participants for this research study, with your permission, I wish to announce my research study in various lectures in the School. I would consult with the lecturers who are involved in the specific modules in which I wish to announce my research study. I would briefly introduce my research study to the class which would not take up more than 5 minutes of the lecture. If you need any further details regarding my research study please feel free contact to contact me on 074 603 7330 or my supervisors Dr N Buthelezi (Buthelezin@ukzn.co.za) or 033 260 5100 and Prof A Nwoye (Nwoye@ukzn.ac.za) or 033 260 5100).

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

Appendix G: Advert for study

Research Volunteers

Required

Are you between the ages of 18-24?

and

have you had multiple concurrent sexual partners?

or

know of anyone that has had multiple concurrent partners?

Would you be interested in participating in a discussion on

The motivational factors of having multiple concurrent partners?

All interested participants please contact Nereshnee

with your name and contact details to

nereshnee@yahoo.com

OR

SMS/Call: 074 603 7330

Appendix H

INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY

Dear Participant

I am Nereshnee Naidoo. I am from the University of KwaZulu-Natal studying towards a Masters degree in Psychology. This letter serves to inform you about the research you have volunteered to participate in as well as to obtain your consent for participation and consent for digital recording of the study.

This research will explore how students perceive the practice of having multiple concurrent partners, and the motivational factors that influence the practice.

This research process involves individual interviews and focus group sessions. You will be placed in either one of these data collection methods. The interview will be approximately 45-60 minutes long whilst the focus group session will take approximately 60-90 minutes. The discussions will be recorded by the use of an audio recorder which will be kept in a secure cabinet for a period of 5 years. Thereafter, it will be incinerated. The risks and benefits involved in the study is that multiple concurrent sexual relationships can be seen as a sensitive topic. Each participant sign a confidentiality pledge agreement which ensures the protection of participant's identity. A pseudonym will also be used on transcripts which will replace participants' actual name with a fictitious name. Having participated in the study awareness of the practice of multiple concurrent partners can be obtained which can add to the pool of other studies which aims to understand the practice of multiple concurrent partners. Please also be aware that this study can be used for other research studies.

Please be advised that participation is voluntary and you are able to opt out of the study at any point without any penalties held against you. The recordings of the study would be kept with my supervisor, for a period of five years, in a locked cabinet and then be destroyed. Kindly also note that should you require any psycho-social counseling, arrangements has been made with the UKZN Student Counselling Centre.

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Researcher: Nereshnee Naidoo (074 603 7330)

Supervisors: Dr N Buthelezi and Prof. A Nwoye (033 260 5100)

HSSREC Research Office: Dr S Singh (031 260 3587/8350/4557)

Participant's initial	
--------------------------	--

Appendix I
CONSENT

I (name)_____ have been informed about the study entitled Motivational Factors in the Practice of Having Multiple Concurrent Sexual Partners: A Study of Students of a South African University by Nereshnee Naidoo.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study as mentioned on the attached informed consent page initialed by myself.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any treatment or care that I would usually be entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at nereshnee@yahoo.com or 074 603 7330

If I have any queries, concerns or complaints about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact the researcher, the supervisors listed below, or the HSSREC Research Office.

Consent to Study Participation (Sign and tick): Signature: _____

Y	N
Y	N

Consent to Digital Recording (Sign and tick): Signature: _____

Signature of Witness Date

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Researcher : Nereshnee Naidoo (074 603 7330)

Supervisors : Dr N Buthelezi and Prof. A Nwoye (033 260 5100)

HSSREC Research Office : Dr S Singh (031 260 3587/8350/4557)

Appendix J

Confidentiality Pledge Agreement

I, _____, hereby pledge that I will respect the privacy of other participants in the focus group by not disclosing any information such as their identity and the any aspect of the discussions that arise to others.

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix K

5 Meade Heights
18 Lyngary Road
Lincoln Meade
Pietermaritzburg
3201

18 August 2015

To the Student Counselling Centre

R.E.: Permission to refer research participants to the Student Counselling Centre if required

I, Nereshnee Naidoo, am a Psychology Masters student being supervised by Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye. My research project involves understanding how students perceive the practice multiple concurrent sexual partners which might assist in understanding the motivational factors for the practice despite the high HIV prevalence.

Some of the questions in my study may be sensitive as it aims to understand what motivates people to engage in multiple concurrent sexual practices by conducting focus group discussions and individual interviews. With your permission, I wish to refer participants that may require psycho-social support through counselling. If you need any further details regarding my research study please feel free contact to contact me on 074 603 7330 or my supervisors Dr N Buthelezi and Prof A Nwoye on 033 260 5100.

Yours sincerely

Nereshnee Naidoo