

EXPLORING SEXUALITY AND RISK AMONGST COLOURED

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS IN AN ERA OF HIV AND AIDS

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DECLARATION

I, **Karen Monica Christison**, declare that

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As the candidate's supervisor, I agree/do not agree to the submission of this dissertation.

Signed:

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Date:

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Abstract

This study explores constructions of sexuality and understandings of sexual risk amongst a group of Coloured high school girls in Durban, South Africa. In this study qualitative research was employed, as the aim is to obtain meanings of participants' experiences. The study focused on Coloured high school girls between the ages of 16 to 18 years. The participants were from a local school in the area of Wentworth, as this was the research site. The study investigated the reasons for Coloured girls engaging in risky behaviour in an era of HIV and AIDS. It also sought to unearth their understandings of risky behaviour and how this impacted on their constructions of sexuality.

The theory of social construction was used as the elements of this theory converged with the relevance of the study, whereby ideologies we believe to be inherent are socially constructed. For example, people who are Coloured by race are often categorised as people who enjoy partying and drinking alcohol and lack morals, but this is not of genetic origin, it is a social construct. The interpretive paradigm was elected in order to make meaning of participants' points of view.

The methods of data collection were through the use of focus group discussions and semi-structured individual interviews. The focus group discussions provided the opportunity for participants to discuss in an open forum, allowing them to challenge responses through either agreement or disagreement. In the individual interviews participants were allowed to be honest and candid in their responses. The interviews provided rich, authentic data as they produced information from personal experiences as well as observations of peers.

In the findings, participants expressed their knowledge of risky behaviour. They gave possible reasons for young Coloured women continuing to engage in risky behaviour despite having vast knowledge of the risks involved, especially since we live in an era of HIV and AIDS. It was also found that these young women felt that they could assert agency in relationships and not conform to practices of male dominance. The findings also revealed a lack of knowledge of some participants with regard to sexuality. They believe that gaps exist and should be addressed in order for them to make informed decisions.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

According to Hogue (2011) risky sexual behaviour is that which makes one vulnerable to contracting infections such as HIV and AIDS. Examples of risky behaviour, among others, may be engaging in sexual activities without the use of protection, the use of drugs and alcohol and having several sexual encounters, and not being faithful to one partner. Engaging in transactional sex is also risky behaviour. Furthermore, women have a higher HIV infection rate than men in the same 15 to 24-year age group (Hogue, 2011).

My personal motivation for conducting this study includes my concerns as a parent to two teenage children, one of whom is a daughter, growing up in a community where risky sexual behaviour is evident. This study therefore aims to explore the reason for Coloured school girls engaging in risky sexual behaviour, a concern that is shared by Hogue (2011). Also of interest is how this impacts on the girls' lives, in terms of the risk they place themselves in, despite their awareness of the impact of HIV and AIDS. Furthermore, although much research has already been conducted in this area, research on Coloured girls is limited, and I hope to add to existing literature in this regard. Previous studies on Coloured girls included Firmin (2013) who focused on the manner in which girls dress in attention seeking ways, Bhana and Anderson (2013 p. 30) who argued that girls place themselves in positions of 'sexual risk' when they 'attempt to save their relationships' and Gopaldass (2012) who discussed the phenomenon of Transactional sex, in which some girls participate in. [In an article](#) Anderson (2011) ~~who~~ argued that young women can respond on their own terms when it comes to male power. As a parent in this Coloured community of Wentworth, exposure to these behaviours appeared increasingly worrying. Therefore, my identity as a Coloured woman, a mother and an educator motivated me to carry out this research in order to better understand the phenomenon of sexual risk amongst Coloured schoolgirls. Risk-taking behaviour has both long and short term effects for young men and women. Short term, is that this behaviour affects these young women emotionally, while long term effects are early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and diseases, which could be fatal. Some high school girls engage in sexual behaviour continuously, placing them at a heightened risk of infection, this being indicative of underlying problems (Frank, Esterhuizen, Jinabhai, Sullivan and Taylor, 2008).

In this report I will refer to the high school girls in the study as 'Young women'. Decision-making becomes dominated by partners, showing inequality (Reddy and Dunne, 2007).

1.2 Background to the study

I decided that this topic would be of interest as I have observed some risky behaviours within the Coloured community within which I live and teach. Often seen are some young Coloured women who are pregnant, or some are seen in compromising positions, like kissing and touching each other in public, showing disrespect for adults in the community.

Other concerns include the fact that the consequences of risky behaviour, like HIV and AIDS and other STIs are a health concern (Jewkes, Morrell, Skweyiya, Dunkle and Penn-Kekana, 2012). Teenagers from poor backgrounds use their socio-economic and developmental challenges to fuel their vulnerabilities (Akinyemi and Okpechi, 2011). They will even go as far as exchanging gifts of cash, expensive clothing and jewellery in return for sexual favours, a practice called transactional sex (Jewkes *et al.*, 2012). They may feel that their circumstances are to blame, as their parents may be unemployed, and therefore feel that this behaviour is justified.

1.3 Focus and aim of this study

For this particular study the focus is on young Coloured women, between the ages of 16 to 18 years. I chose to focus on young Coloured women, as I am curious about the behaviours observed and displayed by these girls in the local community where I reside. Although there are many young women who are strong-willed and have the ability to show agency when it comes to relationships and dating, there are some who fail to show agency in relationships. These young women may behave in this manner for various reasons. Through this study I hope to gain insight into the reasons for such behaviours.

This study aims to explore these young Coloured women's understandings of risky behaviour as well as the reasons why they engage in risky behaviour in the era of HIV and AIDS. The HIV infection rate and AIDS are a global phenomenon, and although there is research to suggest that there is a decline in the rate of new infections, there are still too many people being infected with the virus. A study by Rehle (2010) suggests the decline of new infections. Among young women in the age group of 15 to 24 years, the infection rate decreased by 60% (Rehle, 2010). According to the World Health Organisation Millennium Development Goals

fact sheet number 290 (2014) sub-Saharan Africa had an HIV infection rate of 70%. As previously mentioned, the facts on HIV clearly show a decline, but there are still too many new infections arising. Hence, the interest in this study on high school girls.

Rehle and Shisana (2009) noted in their research that the main causes of the spread of this disease in South Africa are, firstly, engaging in unprotected sex with several partners and secondly, sexual relations which take place between individuals with a significant age difference. Further stated, between the ages of 15 to 19 years, young women who had partners who were approximately five years their senior showed an increase in HIV infection rate.

The objectives of this study are thus to explore Coloured girls' understandings of risky sexual behaviour, to uncover the reasons for Coloured girls continued behaviour which is risky, whilst aware of the risks of HIV and AIDS and to understand how Coloured girls' constructions of sexuality are related to sexual risk.

In view of the above, the critical questions which form the basis of this study are:

1. What are Coloured high school girls' understandings of risky sexual behaviour in the context of HIV and AIDS?
2. Why do Coloured high school girls engage in risky sex, despite their awareness of the risks of HIV and AIDS?
3. How are Coloured girls' constructions of sexuality related to sexual risk?

1.4 The research site

In order to gain insight and understanding into this phenomenon, I decided to gain access to participants from a local high school. I selected to use a pseudonym for the school, which is Southdale High. The school is co-educational and is situated on the outskirts of Wentworth, a formerly Coloured community which was instituted by the former apartheid regime. Within this area of Wentworth unemployment is prevalent, although there are some moderately well off to affluent individuals, who have gained financial independence by becoming successful businesspeople. Politically the residents are somewhat divided in their affiliations. They often complain of limited resources such as housing, utilities and a lack of recreational facilities for the youth.



www.sa-venues.com

Figure 1. The location of Wentworth, Durban, in KwaZulu Natal.

Many of the participants live in flats similar to the block shown in Figure 2. In the far background the Engen Oil Refinery is visible.



<https://www.google.co.za>

Figure 2. Example of a block of flats in Wentworth.

The photograph displays the poor conditions in which some of the participants reside. Many households are single-parent headed, with the breadwinners generally being the women. These could be the mother in the home or sometimes even the grandmother, who most often is a pensioner. In these homes finances are extremely limited. The father figures are mostly absent.

In some areas of this community the use and abuse of substances like marijuana (commonly known as dagga), ecstasy, cocaine and *whoonga* (a drug which is also known as 'sugars' or 'heroin') and alcohol are prevalent. Recent reports in the media have highlighted the scourge of drugs in the area, as gangsterism and violence continue to plague this community. Gangs continue to fight over the turf to ply their drug trade. All of these incidents take place amidst the rest of the community, who endeavour to provide a safe environment for their children to grow up in. However, this is a tremendous task for community leaders and parents, who strive to discourage the youth from involvement in this type of behaviour. Evident too are the young men and women who engage in risky sexual behaviour.

The school also borders factories with emissions that are harmful to the learners and teachers alike, especially those who suffer from chronic respiratory problems (Sutherland and Scott, 2009). The learners who attend this school hail from an eclectic mix of social backgrounds this means that some of them come from poor to moderate as well as privileged backgrounds.

1.5 Research paradigm and theoretical approach

For this study the nature of the research was such that I decided to use the interpretive paradigm. This was relevant because the purpose of this paradigm is to make meaning of participants' point of view in their understanding of phenomena (Deetz, 1996).

The theoretical approach which I think best suits this study is social constructionism, which was pioneered by Berger and Luckmann (1991) who postulated that knowledge is to be the main focus, whereby this knowledge is inspired by society's notions and beliefs. According to Hacking (1999) the main idea of social construction and that which garners its success, is that it shows how various phenomena which appear to be inherent are actually social constructs. In this approach the ideas that we believe or think we are born with are shown to be actually

socially constructed. This study demonstrates the many facets of social construction that are relevant, including, race, class, reality, sexuality, gender and power.

1.6 Sampling

The sampling was purposive as the study required me to utilise high school Coloured girls between the ages of 16 to 18 years. The size of the sample is not as important as the criteria necessary to complete the study (Wilmot, 2005). The sample was non-probable as there was no need to obtain statistics for the study (Wilmot, 2005). I therefore chose to use a sample size of 12 initially. Due to unforeseen circumstances I used a sample size of 16, which was divided into two focus groups; thereafter 14 high school girls participated in the individual interviews. Gaining access to the participants required that I obtain permission from the school 'gate-keeper' - the principal of the school.

1.7 Ethical considerations

Before sampling and data collection could proceed, I had to obtain Ethical Clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The role of ethics is to ensure that no harm is done and that the focus is on the positive (Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden, 2000). Also of importance is gaining informed consent from participants and parents. The ethical considerations need to include the right to privacy and confidentiality (Shaw, 2014). In this regard the consent letter explained that whatever was discussed in the interviews would not be disclosed to anyone. Thus pseudonyms would be used in the interviews, which would ensure that their right to privacy and anonymity would be respected and maintained (Orb *et al.*, 2000). The interviews would be recorded with the permission of participants and parents. Therefore each participant and their parents or legal guardians were issued with consent forms, which detailed precisely what the study entailed. The letters included the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without any negative consequences. Also included was the Child Protection Act 38 of 2005, which was necessary in order to protect both the participants and the researcher, if it was felt that important information which would place participants at risk was revealed. The contact details of a psychologist were included in the informed consent forms to ensure that should the need arise for assistance at any stage, then a professional would be contacted. The data collection did not proceed until the consent forms were returned signed by participants and parents.

1.8 Methods of data collection

The process of collecting data, as previously mentioned, began with the gate-keeper letter, which was obtained from the principal of the school where the research took place. The gate-keeper letter detailed the study which would take place, in order for the principal to be informed and to grant the permission I needed in order to proceed with the study. Thereafter volunteers were requested to participate in the study.

The methods of data collection involved focus group discussions (FGDs) and individual interviews. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) FGDs are important in order to encourage the participants to be outspoken and thus yield rich data. The interviews needed to be recorded and then transcribed verbatim into text in order to prepare for analysis of the data.

1.9 Methods of data analysis

After the data were collected through every word and gesture being recorded in print, it was necessary to read the collected data a number of times in order to become familiar with it. Thereafter, the data which was yielded had to be coded. I chose to highlight the sections which were common throughout the data. Pope and Mays (2006) speak of the converging of data into themes. I then used the thematic approach as outlined by Lacey and Luff (2007) and arrived at seven themes, which were used to answer the critical questions of the study – bearing in mind that the research method was qualitative, whereby meanings had to be deconstructed in order to be understood (Thorne, 2000).

1.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the background to the study. I have also discussed the focus and aim of the study. This is followed by an outline of the research site, showing a map of the location of Wentworth in Durban, South Africa. The research paradigm of interpretivism was discussed, followed by the theoretical approach of the study, which is the social construction theory. I went on to discuss the sampling method and the ethical considerations involved in

research. The methods of data collection, which included FGDs and individual interviews, were followed by a section on the methods of data analysis.

The outline of the rest of the chapters in this dissertation is as follows:

Chapter 2 discusses the review of literature with reference to this study. Since this chapter is so extensive, I decided to divide it into themes and arrange the literature accordingly. In the introduction I introduce the topic and include literature on HIV and AIDS statistics in South Africa.

I proceed with the themes, beginning with the discussion on race and Coloured identity in South Africa. I then review the literature on sexuality and risky behaviour amongst young adults. Included in this chapter is the theoretical framework of the study. The theory of social constructionism (Burr, 2003) is used, which asserts that the ideas we believe to be inherent are actually socially constructed. I further draw on the works of Schwandt (1993) cited in Andrews (2012) Hacking (1999) Jackson and Penrose (1993) and Flores (2012) among other theorists.

In Chapter 3 I discuss the methodology and the design of the study, as well as the collection of data. I begin with the introduction to the chapter, followed by the research method. This includes qualitative research, which is the research method used, and I include its usefulness to the study. I draw on the work of Mertens (2005) cited in MacKenzie and Knipe (2006) and the meaning of interpretivism. Within this chapter I discuss the research site and sampling, followed by the ethical considerations of the study. This is followed by the research methods. I include the biographical details of my participants. This is followed by a brief description of the data analysis; validity and reliability in research; the limitations to the study; and the conclusion of the chapter.

In Chapter 4 the analysis of data is discussed. After reading through the data several times it was coded and categorised. From this seven themes emerged, as follows: substance abuse and risk; Colouredness and risk; Coloured girls define behavioural risk; women, dress and risk; materiality, poverty and risk; knowledge, sexuality and risk; followed by peer pressure, wanting to 'fit in' and risk. These themes came about in answer to the three critical questions of the study. In this chapter literature is incorporated into the themes as far as possible.

Finally, Chapter 5 is the conclusion of the study which involves an introduction to the chapter, followed by the main findings of the study in answer to the critical questions, possible recommendations and the conclusion.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in this chapter is relevant to this study on sexuality and risk amongst Coloured high school girls in an era of HIV and AIDS.

I begin with a discussion and outline of the prevalence of HIV in South Africa. I then look at the literature on race, particularly Colouredness, and move on to examine the literature on girls and sexuality and risky sexual behaviour.

It is important to discuss the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in South Africa, since this is the context within which the study takes place. According to statistics from Health 24.com, as at 11 February 2012, one in two HIV-positive people was a woman of child-bearing age. This translates to 53% or 2.93 million of the 5.58 million people living with HIV infection (Actuarial Society of South Africa, 2012). In the age bracket 15 to 24 years, these youth account for 13% or 731 000 of those living with HIV infection (Actuarial Society of South Africa, 2012). These statistics, which are public knowledge, are alarming. It is therefore necessary to investigate why the youth continue to engage in risky behaviour, thereby themselves becoming part of the statistics.

This study focuses on a group of Coloured girls in the former Coloured area of Wentworth. The next section looks at the literature on race, particularly Colouredness in South Africa.

2.2 Race: Coloured identity in South Africa

Race refers to characteristics which are common to groups of populations, and differing from group to group (Nittle, 2014). It is unique to the South African context to address a population group as Coloured, whereas in other countries this term is deemed derogatory, even though there is public awareness of how this culture came to be – that is, through inter-racial sexual encounters (everyculture.com, 2014). Johns (2013) believes that Coloured people should embrace their culture and be proud of who they are, even if it means being called Black, African or even mixed race, as at times, many find it difficult to classify the race of some individuals – however it must be borne in mind that Coloured is not determined by skin tone. Khan (2009) proposes that Cape Coloureds came about through the merging of Europeans and

the Khoisan people of the Cape. The Coloured youth believe that they are hopeless in defining exactly where they belong, with an undefined position, believing that they fall between varied racial groups (Fredericks, 2009). For Erasmus (2001) being Coloured meant being in the middle of White and Black, meaning knowing that you were not White, but also that you were in a better position than a Black person.

Coloured identity is seen as a created identity, formed by the previous White government, with the implicit idea to divide the majority of people who were black (Adhikari, 2008). Physical feature characteristics, like the way your nose was shaped and the type of hair you had, were defining attributes of Colouredness (Erasmus, 2001). The quest to attain beauty through attempting to change the crinkly texture of your hair was and continues to form part of Coloured ritual to access beauty on the journey to womanhood (Erasmus, 2001). The Coloured race, in South Africa has its roots strongly embedded in apartheid. In providing an understanding of the Coloured race, it is essential to access some of the history.

In order to be labelled as Coloured in the South African context, both biological parents must be Coloured (McKaiser, 2012). For example, if one parent is Malay and the other white, this is deemed mixed race. Adhikari (2005) defined Coloured as a mixture of races, opposing McKaiser's theory. Adhikari (2005) believes that among academics not much useful work has been put together about Coloured identity post-apartheid. Kitt (2011) believes mixed race people were commonly referred to as Coloured, and goes on to explain that the Dutch East India Company arrived many years before, in 1652. Enslaving people from Southern Africa was forbidden, so slaves were brought from Malaysia and Indonesia. Through miscegenation with the Dutch was born offspring of mixed descent and culture, referred to as Coloured. The then settlers also produced mixed offspring from the KhoiKhoi, San and Xhosa; adding to these, were slaves from West Africa. The term of reference Coloured, was used to identify all people mixed race (Kitt, 2011).

According to Erasmus (2001) Coloured identity is based on a creation of culture, which is moulded by the history of South Africa in terms of the aspects borne of apartheid. Later, in 1948, the then National Party came into power and separated all identified races through the Group Areas Act of 1950, where people of like race were placed together or homogeneously grouped (Trotter, 2009). For example, in Cape Town Coloured, African and Indian people were marginalised and relocated to the outskirts of the city (Jacobs, 2013). Due to the manner and

plan of relocation, these communities remain somewhat entrapped because of the lack of access to structures like roads and shops (Jacobs, 2013).

It must be mentioned that Coloured identities were not only created by the white people in the Apartheid regime, but that these identities continue to be created by Coloured people themselves (Erasmus,2001). Erasmus (2011) states that this is how Coloured people try to understand and make their lives meaningful. It must be borne in mind that the Coloured identity is not simply about a mix of race, but rather involves the use of different forms of culture (Erasmus,2001). Being Coloured therefore involves taking aspects from different cultures, not race groups, to establish an identity.

Salo (2003) mentions that the youth are influenced by global cultures following trends through social media. For Coloured people the language of *slang* (words from other languages or self-made terminology) is part of their common culture, which is used to relate to and identify with each other. Coloured identity is largely influenced by the culture of 'hip-hop', in terms of the choices Coloured people make with regard to clothing, music and even language (Yarwood, 2006). A lot of emphasis is placed on name-branded clothing, and the most up-to-date and relevant smart phones and gadgets (Yarwood, 2006). Coloured youth find it quite easy to identify with hip hop culture, just as African Americans do (Johns, 2013). So popular is this *Colouredness*, that when a group of mixed race students were asked by a researcher if they could change their race for a day, what their choice would be, the majority of them responded that they would choose Coloured (Anderson, 2011).

According to Anderson (2009) Coloured refers to mixed race (neither White, African nor Indian). Stereotypes exist across races, with Coloureds mostly positioned on the lower rungs of society, viewed below standard including their morality (Salo, 2002). In some instances there are Coloureds who do live up to the belief that they are below standard and worthless, with some who do however try to turn this around by striving to improve their positions in society (Anderson, 2009). According to McKaiser (2012), the Coloured community forms part of the lower working class, who are poor. This serves to show that being Coloured already places one at a disadvantage, as this is how Coloureds are viewed. Because of the stereotypes associated with *Colouredness*, individuals continue to see themselves as victims (McKaiser, 2012).

Anderson (2009) as cited in Gopaldass (2012) notes that being Coloured in South Africa is suggestive of poverty and marginalisation. Coloured identities are seen as cultural (Erasmus,

2001). Also, being Coloured is also indicative of shame in a sexualised context, correlated with drunkenness and an inclination to party (Erasmus, 2001).

2.2.1 Young Coloured women in Wentworth: Identity explored

I have referenced a great amount of literature on Coloured identity in South Africa, now I focus on Coloured identity in Wentworth in particular. I attempt to make sense of these young women in my community, as the researcher. My interest lies in what makes them who they are and the external influences which shape their identities, resulting in them engaging in risky behaviour. Considering that literature on Coloured girls is somewhat limited, I hope to add to existing knowledge.

As previously mentioned, Coloured is a derogatory term elsewhere in the world, except in South Africa (everyculture.com, 2014). Johns (2013) asserts that Coloureds should be proud of their identity and culture. Although at times this is seen as a blessing, other times it can be a curse: acceptable in terms of style, fashion, music and dance; a curse when some are challenged with the texture of their hair (Erasmus (2001) refers to this hair type as crinkly. Although most young women in the community have said that embrace *Colouredness*, many spend a great deal of time and money to improve their appearances. Many of the older generation of Coloured women will say that 'a woman's pride is in her hair'. This idea of one's hair been associated with attractiveness or unattractiveness is not a trait we were born with, but a socially constructed phenomenon. This reinforces the social construction theory which is adapted to this study.

In the context of this, much of Coloured identity in Wentworth is influenced by American 'hip-hop' culture (Johns, 2013). Many of the trends these young women follow thus have an American influence. Jackson (2013) asserts that not all rap music influences risky behaviour. As Cohen (2008) mentions, the youth of our country are still going through change and thus enjoy an array of music genres. According to Jackson (2013) some songs the youth listen to contain profanities, and this is worrying for many adults in the community. Jackson (2013) further postulates that the songs suggest and promote fairy-tale images of immense wealth, expensive clothing and jewellery, and therefore these young men and women from impoverished backgrounds use these songs as a means of removing themselves from existing reality. Furthermore, some teenagers listen to specific genres of music because their friends are doing so (Cohen, 2008). These are some of the aspects which contribute to the Coloured identity in Wentworth.

2.3 Girls and sexuality

Being Coloured is perceived to be an identity which is associated with shameful sexualisation (Erasmus, 2001). Research suggests that adolescent sexuality has a large influence on behaviour, with components embedded in gender, race, ethnicity and socio-economic status (Crockett, Raffaelli and Moilanen, 2003).

Sexuality is not just about sex, but also influenced by social and cultural beliefs, embedded in particular contexts and places (Mellor and Epstein, 2006). These authors further state that sexual identities are in fact promoted in educational situations, for example prom which takes place in America and the disco in Britain, which promote couples made up of one of each gender, and that individuals should preferably be partnered with a member of the opposite sex (Mellor and Epstein, 2006). This example also holds true in the South African context of the matric dance.

According to Marston and King (2006) there are several factors that influence adolescents' sexual behaviour, such as the ability to assess possible partners by appearances; the use of a condom having a stigma attached to it; positives and negatives from society for engaging in sexual activities; and behaviour being influenced by sexual partners.

Coloured girls, as is the same with other racial groups, construct their sexuality through varied circumstances. Young men and women engage in many forms of sexual behaviour. Katchadourian (1990) as cited by Crockett *et al.*, (2003) suggest that some teenagers explore their sexuality privately, through imagination and self-stimulation. According to Crockett *et al.* (2003) adolescence in itself is a challenge, as teenagers are going through many physical and psychological challenges as their bodies are changing and they seek to make sense of their newfound attributes. They are viewed differently by the opposite sex; this is where their vulnerability becomes more of a challenge. Social and cultural exposure, influence adolescents' decisions (Crockett *et al.*, 2003). They have demonstrated how hip-hop culture has affected their identities and how they make sense of their lives (Emerson, 2007). According to Bhana and Anderson (2013) teenage girls, through their construction of sexuality, show agency and comply with male power. Gopaldass (2012) cites McPhail and Campbell (2001) who argue that sexuality is not only about engagement in sexual activities but also peoples' knowledge and beliefs about sexual practices.

Clothing also plays a pivotal role in how girls construct sexuality, whereby an outfit revealing too much flesh indicates interest in sex (Bhana and Anderson, 2013). According to Montemurro (2014) who wanted to explore whether a women's clothing influenced her sexuality, it was found that women are stigmatised through dress, but this is subjective. The age of adolescence brings with it the notion of romance whereby these young girls fall in love so easily and will do anything for love, including submission to male power (Bhana, 2013). Mudaly (2012) asserts that teenage girls do want attention in terms of their sexuality, but at the same time do not willingly subscribe to patriarchy.

Irrespective of cultural influence over an individual, the expectations of the girl child are pre-determined, even before birth, where certain norms and standards are expected, showing bias (De la Rey, 1992). According to Mudaly (2013) are seen by many scholars as those giving in easily to sexual advances and as such, do not have morals. According to Stephens' (2007) study of African American adolescents, it was found that they identified with hip-hop culture in terms of sexuality, dress and dance moves, and this association greatly influenced behaviour and attitudes, which were instituted by what their peers adhere to. Sex in Africa was deemed dangerous due to HIV infection and the AIDS pandemic. However, young South Africans have constructed their own sexuality and embraced love and the opportunity to free themselves sexually (Mudaly, 2013). Sexual identity does not stand alone, but is rather intertwined and correlates with race, class and ethnicity (Butler, 1990). Young women resign themselves to subordination in relation to their male counterparts. The reason for this could be that these young women want to preserve and maintain their relationships, even at the cost of their own belief systems. As Butler (1990) asserts, the question of maternal identification places itself in a hegemonic position, thus framing the binary of male and female.

Body image also plays a pivotal role in how Coloured girls construct their sexuality and how this influences their involvement in risky sexual behaviour. It was found that girls who were underweight and sexually active were less likely to use condoms than their peers of normal weight (Health24, 2009). Regarding sexuality, female compliancy with male power often brands these girls negatively, with boys only interested in sexual conquests, thereby heightening their status and popularity, as they celebrate sexual conquests (Bhana and Anderson, 2013). Young girls are able to negotiate sex due to sexual agency. In view of this they are able to attract male attention, but do so in exchange for gifts of money to support their lifestyles, including cellphones (Bhana and Anderson, 2013).

Young women continually place themselves in positions of subordination to men (Singh, 2013). According to Firmin (2013) regarding sexuality power lies mainly with males. Interviews conducted with girls in a black or African township, show that they succumb to violence, sexually, whether they are at school or out of school. They expressed their feelings of being afraid of males, whether these were teachers, their partners or any men in the community, including males in their homes. Although these girls tried to show agency, they were overpowered by gender inequalities, with males showing temperaments tending towards sexual violence (Bhana, 2012). Girls wanting to express their agency, is on the incline and now becoming a human rights issue (Bhana, 2012). In contrast, Peters, Van Driel and Jansen (2013) assert that men's sexual agency is not viewed in the same light as female's sexual agency, in terms of male circumcision being seen as a means to intervene in preventing HIV infection, as opposed to the females using the female condom.

However, it must also be noted that not all Coloured girls use their sexuality for personal gain, because some do have morals which have been instilled by their parents and the community. As Manlove, Logan Moore and Ikramullah (2008) states that adolescents can control sexuality and risky behaviour by living up to the religious values and positive influences from home and peers. In so doing, these girls can control male power over them and assert their stance over sexual submission, thus responding on their own terms (Anderson, 2011). This then is evidence that young women can assert power, but continue to submit by placing themselves at risk – and the question is, why? Perhaps they do so for security, looking for love, peer pressure, or maybe economic gain. These questions need to be answered from their point of view and not through varied assumptions.

A link exists between the media and adolescent sexuality. At the crucial stage of their development, when identities are been formed and they are vulnerable, there is tremendous influence from the media. A vast amount of content viewed contains sexual content, evident in the music industry, showing sexually explicit dance moves and provocative dress sense (Grube and Grube, 2000). Further compounding this ideology is the fact that these adolescents view content they see on television as real. This also extends to the internet and devices such as cellular phones. On social media sites teenagers often offer information of a personal nature, causing alarm in societies; oblivious to the consequences of these actions, they place themselves at risk (Barnes, 2006). This behaviour has consequences of risk involved, like early pregnancy and even STIs, as adolescents act out what they see as real (Grube and Grube, 2000).

Communication regarding sexuality is essential between teenagers and adults. Research has found that through effective communication between 'adolescents and significant adults', the result is 'safer sexual practices' (Namisi, Aaroi, Kaaya, Onya, Wubsand Mathews, 2013).

Adolescents are increasingly submitting to crossing sexual boundaries, as society in general feeds into this notion of supplying young women with fuel to foster permissiveness, with abortion (for example), being freely accessible, with laws in South Africa making abortion legal (Chowles, 2013). Following the westernised cultures, teenagers increasingly feel justified in their choices, thereby increasing the risk of HIV infection (Szabo, 2006).

In the Coloured community the rate of pregnancy among young women is alarmingly high, considering that the number of young women sexually active from an early age is not as high, in comparison to other cultures (Marteletto, Liam and Ranchod, 2008). In the Coloured community of Wentworth, as in many other communities religion is important, and you find many adolescents frequenting the local churches in the area. Research has found that teenagers who have no interest or were not brought up in a religious home were more likely to engage in and initiate behaviour which is risky (Forste and Heaten, 1988, as cited by Crockett *et al.*, 2003).

2.4 Gender, power and violence link to risky behaviour

It is necessary to interrogate the link among gender, power and violence, which is evident in society and is often linked to risky behaviour. Power can negatively influence intimate relationships, as one partner is often submissive, which sometimes compromises self-worth, leading to risky behaviour (Marano, 2014). Sipsma, Callands, Bradley, Harris, Johnson and Hansen (2013) through their research, found that an imbalance of power is a real phenomenon. Boys are often the perpetrators and girls the victims in issues of gender and power, as more girls are inclined to be at the receiving end of various forms of harassment (Finer and Bennett (1999). The World Health Organisation defines domestic violence as various acts of sexually, psychologically and physically forced actions, used to harm adult and adolescent women by their current or former male, intimate partners (Koenig, Zablotska, Lutalo, Nalugoda, Wagman and Gray, 2004). The theory of gender and power instituted by Robert Connell is embodied in sexual inequality. Here an imbalance is evident (Wingood and DiClemente, 2000). In many scenarios it is most often the women who are at risk of dominant male power. According to Alain, Hong and Van der Wiljst (2013) when it comes to negotiation, the

outcomes generally favour men over women. This postulation also holds true for negotiation in sex, relative to HIV infection.

In sub-Saharan Africa for every 10 men who are infected with HIV there are 12–13 women infected, which is a worrying factor as infection of teenage girls is at least five times higher than in boys (Gupta, 2002). According to Machel (2001) young working-class women were more prone to accept that power dynamics in males and females would differ and displayed less independence in relationships. The sad reality is that due to their poor economic status, women have very little power in negotiating the use of protection or asserting power when it comes to sexual activities. Ultimately, vulnerability to HIV and women's reliance or dependence on men is heightened (Gupta, 2002). As Dunkle, Jewkes, Brown, Gray, McIntyre and Harlow (2004) assert, with this imbalance of power, women are also vulnerable to violence, which is perpetrated by men, because of male dominance in relationships. Studies increasingly show that women who are in relationships with dominant males are placed at a higher risk of being infected by HIV (Dunkle *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, in this regard adolescents are also at risk of infection, also due to lack of ability to negotiate in sexual practices, thus making them vulnerable to pregnancy at a young age (Varga, 2004). Adolescents need to take cognizance of their involvement in risky behaviour, as it has adverse effects on all spheres of their lives, especially their future endeavours, where it affects them in all aspects of their lives (Varga, 2004).

When young girls make the decision to engage in risky behaviour, they neglect to protect their reputations, as the girls are viewed in a sub-standard manner, whereas for the male counterparts, this behaviour keeps their reputations unblemished and intact, since a conquest becomes a trophy (Varga, 2004). According to Wingood and DiClemente (1997) when it comes to condom use women are often subjected to abuse – verbal, emotional and in extreme instances even physical – by their partners. When it comes to comparing women in un-abusive relationships, the victims of abusive relationships had more concern or fear of contracting HIV, which is confounded given their circumstances (Varga, 2004).

Pulewitz, Gortmaker and De Jong (2000) agree with this ideology of physical abuse relative to control in relationships and male dominance as proposed by Wingood and DiClemente (1997). Education also plays a pivotal role in negotiating condom use (Pulewitz *et al.*, 2000). Miles (1993) postulates that until men regard HIV and AIDS realistically, practices of safer sex will always be interrupted due to lack of knowledge.

According to Cho and Holroyd (2007) there are many factors which are viewed as serious barriers to condom use, and when interrogated these surface mainly as economic deprivation, intoxication and violence. However, despite these critical barriers some women do benefit economically when they exercise agency in condom use. In view of this, not all hope is lost – it takes persistence. Culturally women are generally associated with HIV risk, as opposed to their male counterparts, who dominate control in relationships, with decisions resting on them in the South African context, thereby fuelling their dominant status (Kaufman, Shefer, Crawford, Simbayi and Kallichman, 2008).

Gage and Hutchinson (2006) cite Kaura and Allen (2004) who assert that men have the notion that to maintain control over their partners, need to express aggression. An individual's character and sometimes their cultural background have great influence over relationships where an imbalance of power prevails (Gage and Hutchinson, 2006).

2.5 Factors influencing risky behaviour

Research has shown that the teenage years are a time of growth and experimentation. According to Boyles (2007) teenagers' brain development plays a significant role in risk-taking behaviour. The different parts of their brain develop at specific times, especially with regard to their ability to make informed decisions (Boyles, 2007). During puberty the parts of their brain responsible for emotions and the manner in which they interact with others appear to go into overdrive (Boyles, 2007; Steinberg, 2008). Recent statistics from the Centres for Disease Control *Adolescent and School Health Journal* (2014) suggest that many youth engage in risky sexual behaviour; in a study in the United States, 46.8% of the youth had engaged in intercourse; 34% had intercourse in the previous 3 months of the study, and of this number 40.9% had not used a condom, and a further 15% had sexual intercourse with four people or more – thereby placing themselves at increased risk of infections which are sexually transmitted.

Drug and alcohol abuse is a major influence of risky behaviour. Adolescents' peers also have a tremendous influence over risky sexual behaviour (Dittus and Jaccard, 2000). According to Potard, Courtois and Rusch (2008) peers do influence risky sexual behaviour. Young men and women usually follow the behaviour of their friends and sometimes this may be negative, in a sense that they may engage in behaviour which is sexual, thus placing them at risk of infections like HIV and AIDS. The use of drugs to enhance mental and academic performance can cause

addiction, leading to risky behaviour (Mercola, 2013). Furthermore, statistics suggest the time frame between 2000 and 2008 saw death due to abuse of prescription drugs exceed a doubling among adolescents (Mercola, 2013). According to Cooper (2002) drinking alcohol was strongly related to the decision to engage in transactional sex to obtain cash, which supports behaviours of drug use (Hedden, Hulbert Cavanaugh, Parry, Moleko and Latimer, 2012). Amongst females, drug use is leading to drug-related risky sexual behaviour (Hedden *et al.*, 2012). According to Bhana and Singh (2012) the HIV epidemic is rife among young women at school; they are subjected to sexual violence and dominated by male power. This makes them vulnerable to HIV infection (Bhana and Singh, 2012).

According to Voisin (2013) a link exists between the manner in which parents control their children and risky sexual behaviour. Parental monitoring is defined as parents' involvement with their children in terms of the places they frequent or their whereabouts, their acquaintances or friends and things they do or activities they show interest in (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000, as cited by Howell, 2001). Howell (2001) speaks of communication between adolescents and their parents with regard to parenting styles and risk-taking behaviour. Howell (2001) acknowledges health concerns in unsafe sexual risk behaviours, and that this behaviour is irresponsible. Parenting styles are essential in relationships between adolescents and their parents (Howell, 2001). In a study exploring race and parenting styles, Clark (2014) found that race was not a factor when it came to parenting styles. Across races, the more authoritative the parenting style the less the adolescents involved themselves in risky behaviour.

Psychologist Baumrind (2011) identifies four parenting styles, namely authoritative – with control in a democratic form; authoritarian – parenting in a strict and dominant environment; permissive parenting – where parents are more the adolescents' companion than the parent; and the uninvolved parenting style – whereby the parent is preoccupied with themselves, rather than the child. All of these styles will affect the adolescent in a different manner, therefore many families prefer to use more than one parenting style at a time. As Howell (2001) states, the structure of the family also plays a significant role in the way parents show interest in their children. This would include the number of parents who are present in the home, especially during the times when adolescents could significantly become mischievous, raising opportunities for risky behaviour.

Adolescent behaviour is influenced by the parenting style and is dependent on how these adolescents view their parents, whether they are lenient, lack the ability to care or pay

attention to them (Howell, 2001). There are differences in communication between parents and adolescents, according to gender. Howell (2001) cites Nolin and Petersen (1992) and Papin, Farmer, Clark, Micka and Barnett (1990) stating that conversations about sex are more prevalent between parent and daughter, as opposed to parent and son. Perhaps if discussions were more balanced, males would treat females differently.

Creating the balance in parental monitoring has shown to decrease risk behaviour, especially for females (Howell, 2001). However, parents are not solely to blame for teenage sexual risk behaviour, as there are negative influences which exist among peers. Among adolescents, as they get older, the influence of parents diminishes and that of their friends increases (Voisin, 2013).

According to Robinson (2010) sexual risk taking has influences on people, the way they view you and vice versa, as well as the current situations people are in and the events of the time. As mentioned in this study, people get themselves involved in these behaviours for many reasons, including economic gain and wanting acceptance by peers, and so forth.

In transactional sex women are exposed to vulnerabilities like STIs and also violence (Jewkes *et al.*, 2012). Violence may occur when these adolescents mistrust each other in relationships (Bray, Gooskens, Kahn, Moses and Seekings, 2010). It is clear that young women may engage in transactional sex for economic survival, as they feel they may not have another means of earning a living (Muula, 2008). For this reason Verheijen (2013) suggests the empowerment of women economically, thereby reducing their involvement in sex for economic gain or the transactional sex paradigm, as referred to in this article. Through this behaviour, there are high levels of HIV infections globally, in developing and developed countries (Muula, 2008).

The mind-sets of young women need to change in this regard, because as it stands, sub-Saharan Africa has more females than males living with HIV infection than anywhere else in the world, with poverty and gender inequality the main protagonists of this pandemic (Verheijen, 2013). In South Africa there is a higher incidence of violence perpetrated by men against women than in any other place in the world (Haysom, 2013). Connell (1995) believes that a masculine hierarchy does exist, especially after interviewing role-players at a school. Connell (1995) also argues, though, that masculinities are not consistent, as these change over time and are influenced by women in the way they relate to 'boys and men'.

Bhana and Anderson (2013) speak of the sugar daddy phenomenon, where young girls flaunt sexuality and enter into relationships for economic gain. Salo (2006) states that Coloured women in Cape Town hang out in areas where they are exposed to the phenomenon of transactional sex, by willingly engaging in relationships of a sexual nature in exchange for gifts or economic gain. These girls were then referred to as “loose”, a term commonly used in the Coloured community. In these situations the men don't respect these girls and there is no promise of a future, as these men use loose girls just for practice or lust (Salo, 2006). The sugar daddy phenomenon according to Dike (2014) is defined as a relationship between a man with lots of money, who is older and a younger woman, the benefit involves cash for the woman and favours of a sexual nature for the male. In these kinds of situations the young women ultimately engage in unprotected sex for fear of no monetary award, and therefore sexual risk is compounded.

There is the perception that the less fortunate or poorer the background, the more vulnerable young women are to risky sexual behaviour (Akinyemi and Okpechi, 2011). As Ku, Sonenstein and Pleck, (1993) cited in Crockett *et al.* (2003) assert, areas of poorer social status are often considered to have higher frequency rates of early pregnancy and significant risky behaviour. In this area of Wentworth, a common mode of transport is the use of a mini-bus, commonly referred to as a taxi. In some instances some Coloured girls will resort to engaging in relationships, sometimes sexual, with the drivers of these taxis just to ride in the taxi without paying (Anderson, 2009, cited in Gopal Dass, 2012).

Hegemonic masculinity, displaying ‘men's power over women’ (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p.832), is relevant in this study as it makes women vulnerable in relationships. Although in contrast, there are some young women who agree to this behaviour (Firmin, 2013) there is an imbalance of power between boys and girls in relationships which places girls at risk when they give in to male domination (Bhana and Anderson, 2013). These girls also become anxious, showing inequality of power as males in the relationship determine condom use (Bhana and Anderson, 2013). Paternal discussions over condom use do not readily occur; however, maternal discussion taking place prior to sexual debut did result in increased condom use, both at first sexual experience and in future sexual associations (Howell, 2001).

Young women are not assertive when it comes to negotiating condom use (Zhou, 2010). In negotiating the use of condoms, the males have the power and go as far as deciding when sex will take place (Bhana and Anderson, 2013). Selikow, Ahmed, Flisher, Mathews and

Mukoma(2009) cited by Gopaldass (2012) refer to unsafe sex as having several sexual partners and not using a condom consistently. According to Gopaldass (2012) risky behaviour potentially increases the spread of STIs and HIV and AIDS, especially amongst the youth in South Africa.

Other factors which influence risky behaviour are popularity, in terms of multiple sexual partners and the fact that discussions about sex are still guarded and not openly spoken about. Communication and attitude should change in this regard (LawoyinandKanthula, 2010). Reservations are in terms of the fact that sex is not a topic which is widely spoken about. Parent attitudes are also influential over their adolescent children. Communication must be ongoing in order to negotiate decisions that adolescents engage in (Bersamin, Todd, Fisher, Hill, Grubeand Walker, 2009).

Sexting – defined as the practice of sending sexual text messages, which includes photographs – also has serious consequences relative to risky sexual behaviour (Kearney, 2012).Winkelman, Smith, Brinkley and Knox (2014) assert that sexting also includes obtaining or sending/forwarding nude or semi-nude photographs and videos, using smart phones. Despite the negative connotations which go along with sexting, teenagers perceive benefits such as an easier method of personal communication as well as the privilege of privacy (Broaddus & Dickson-Gomez, 2013). According to Houck, Barker, Rizzo, Hancock, Nortanand Brown (2014) sexting, including a photograph and a text message, was actually common among youth and runs concurrently with sexual behaviour. Winkelman *et al.* (2014) cite Faulkner and Culwin (2005) where sexting also includes sending messages with sexual innuendos or even flirting, used more frequently in relationships. Therefore a link exists between sexting and engaging in risky behaviour.

Simpson (2013) argues the sexual rights of children and the government's role in protecting them, as paedophilia is rife on the internet. According to Angelides (2013) the pace has increased to put laws in place regarding sexting technology. However, since these have not yet been put in place, some teenagers have been charged for displaying indecent and inappropriate materials by way of sexting. The consequences of sexting are: someone you don't know receiving your pictures without your permission; perhaps being offered gifts or cash in exchange for more pictures to be used on pornographic websites; and developing a negative perception of yourself by others. These are some of the reasons for sexting having a negative connotation.

Thornton and Young-Demarco (2001) cited in Simon (2011) over the years attitudes towards premarital sex have changed, in that this has become common practice in society. Adolescents are more likely to engage in sex before marriage, with their sexual debut experiences taking place during adolescence. According to Simon (2011) almost 50% of youth have reported their involvement in sexual risk behaviour before completing their schooling, that is, before the age of 18.

Another factor which influences risky behaviour is rebellion, where teenagers feel the need to rebel against their parents' belief systems. When parents offer guidance and support, they respond by engaging in activities which are risky (Scarlett, 2010). This risk-taking by adolescents occurs when they test limits. This is more likely to occur when parents are not involved enough to set limits and to ensure that their teenagers are aware of the result of their defiance (Richards-Gustafson, 2014).

2.6 Effects of risky behaviour

Risky behaviour has consequences such as contracting HIV and AIDS and other STIs. Although teenagers are exposed to programmes on HIV and AIDS, for some reason or other they do not respond to these messages, thereby placing themselves at risk of infection (Gopaldass, 2012). UNAIDS (2014) list the ways in which HIV is transmitted is as follows: mostly between heterosexual couples; from mother to child; multiple sexual partners; lack of condom use; alcohol use in abundance; not many males being circumcised, as well as intergenerational sexual relationships, where older men engage in sexual relations with younger women.

As Simbayi, Shisana, Rehle, Onoya, Jooste, Zungu, Labadarios and Zuma (2014) state, it is worrying that HIV infection rates are higher in young women between the ages of 15 to 24 years of age, in comparison to young men in the same age group. Therefore young women who subscribe to the sugar daddy phenomenon continually place themselves at risk of HIV infection in exchange for gifts of materialism. With the deadline for the Millennium Development Goal for 2015 looming, with a target of reducing HIV infection by 75%, this appears to be unattainable given the levels of risky behaviour. Obviously, in these relationships there is an imbalance of power, with the younger partner being vulnerable, thus lacking the foresight to negotiate the timing or use of condoms. On the other hand, the UNAIDS statistics point out

that there is an increase in the use of condoms among those individuals who have multiple partners. According to the Review of the South African HIV and AIDS Epidemic (2011) there is a decrease in the prevalence of HIV infection among young people between the ages of 15 to 19 years.

More recently, according to Statistics South Africa (2014) Coloured females who were infected with HIV constituted 8.9% of the Coloured female population, which amounts to 8.8% of the total population in South Africa. This is an alarming statistic – hence my interest in wanting to explore why Coloured girls continue to engage in risky sexual behaviour despite the detrimental effects on their health and well-being.

Sexual coercion may include being forced to engage in sexual activities; touching of a sexual nature, making one uncomfortable, including harassment of a verbal nature and the exchange of cash or gifts for sexual favours (Wagman *et al.*, 2014). Sexual coercion is also linked to vulnerability to HIV infection, which stems from an imbalance of gender power (Soomar, Flisher and Mathews, 2009). Gender inequalities place young girls in positions of sexual vulnerability. Some girls are under pressure to engage in sexual activities (sexual coercion), because their male counterparts make them aware of the result of delaying sexual practices. Teenage girls will give in to their boyfriends' demands, thus enhancing male power tactics and making it difficult for them to refuse sex (Bhana and Anderson, 2013). According to Koenig *et al.* (2004) 14% of adolescent females have admitted to their first engagement in sexual intercourse being coerced. This has critical consequences on the well-being of these young women, with sexual coercion viewed as a public health problem also associated with behaviours causing risk to one's health (Song, Jia and Agardh, 2014).

Sometimes adolescents may fall pregnant intentionally, as a means of rebelling against their parents for many reasons, such as broken homes through divorce, or even as a means to keeping a partner whom they are afraid of losing (Bray *et al.*, 2010). However, these adolescents fail to comprehend that an early pregnancy affects their schooling to a great extent, such as time away from school, a greater load of schoolwork and child-minding, as well as emotional and physical consequences (Panday, Makiwane, Ranchod and Letsoalo, 2009). According to Chigona and Chetty (2008), when these teenagers are faced with early pregnancy – the consequence of risky behaviour – in most instances they do not get the support they need from home or the community to complete their basic education. This in turn places them at a

disadvantage when it comes to employment, therefore resulting in increased levels of poverty and degradation.

This is a sad reality, as many teenagers are driven by peer acceptance, so more often than not they find themselves in these situations because of the need to satisfy the desire to be accepted socially (Gopnik, 2012). A recent article suggests a need to belong in various facets of society, such as race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age and even religion (Clowes, 2014). In view of this, it is evident that adolescents will go to great lengths for acceptance. Also, Bray *et al.* (2010) assert that once these adolescents themselves become parents in a household, they need to realise that they can no longer be seen as 'a child' anymore, as they now have to assume parental roles.

These teenagers, through their vulnerabilities, expose themselves to practices of hegemony by males who seek to take advantage of these young women (Firmin, 2013).

Because of the good news-bad news phenomenon, where human beings have the idea that they are more prone to positives than negatives, teenagers believe that they can engage in behaviour which is risky and not necessarily have a negative outcome (Mercola, 2013).

Having reviewed some of the literature around Coloured identity in South Africa, girls and sexuality, gender power and violence, factors influencing risky behaviour, and the effects of risky behaviour – both locally and abroad – the next section discusses the theoretical approach of the study.

2.7 Theoretical approach

For this study I chose to employ the social constructionism theoretical approach. This is inspired by Burr (2003) who posits that the ideas we perceive as inherent are actually constructed by society and these social constructions become commonplace in our thinking. According to Schwandt (2003) cited by Andrews (2012, p.40) when talking of social construction, 'view knowledge and truth as created.'

I relate this theoretical approach to this particular study as there are many facets of social construction which are relevant. This study has elements of gender and power, race, class, reality and sexuality. Within these, I hope to add to existing knowledge on how these elements

can be constructed socially. These elements can be perceived as the norm, due to daily experiences and discussions around them (Burr, 2003).

I continue to draw on various theorists who support the theory of social constructionism, such as Hacking (1999) who views social constructionism in two parts. The first part looks at what has already taken place: the history, making it look as though that is what it is. The second part continues from the former, but sees an idea which is not a given, as such. According to Jackson and Penrose (1993) the theory of social construction conceptualises our thoughts and utilises different arenas to box our experiences as well how we make sense of our surroundings. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (1994) assert, the interpretivist/constructionist approach intends to provide understandings of our experiences. In view of this, the purpose of this study is to explore and find meaning through words of how these Coloured high school girls explore their sexuality, as well as their understandings of risky behaviour and why Coloured girls continue to engage in risky behaviour, despite their knowledge of risky behaviour and the consequences thereof. According to Creswell (2003) and Mertens (2005) cited in MacKenzie and Knipe (2006) the setting is naturalistic, hence the decision to conduct the interviews in the participants' natural setting, which is the school they attend.

Flores (2012) posits that social construction deals with the manner in which people in society categorise people into groups. This categorisation is evident in all aspects of race, class and gender. These aspects influence behaviour. Social construction is mostly qualitative in nature. Hacking (1999) talks about a variety of social constructions as he playfully lists an alphabetised version of these. He goes on to discuss the reason for the success of this approach in a qualitative study, as he demonstrates how phenomena which appear to be somewhat the norm, are in fact constructed.

In the ensuing paragraphs I go on to demonstrate the multi-faceted forms of social construction with relevance to this particular study, in terms of young women and power, class, race, reality and sexuality.

2.7.1 The social construction of gender and power

The relevance of this particular approach to the study is that both the young women and young men play an active role in the construction of their identities, and this construction is perceived as "dynamic, on-going, changing, as well as changeable". The construction of gender, thus, is not fixed (Allard *et al.*, 1995).

We actively choose the way we construct gender. According to Lorber (2007) as cited by Flores (2012) the social construction of gender is associated with the visual element of genital origin at birth. That is, whether one is born with male or female sex organs is considered the genesis of gender, as proclaimed by medical practitioners. Society follows this, going as far as associating colours representative of boys and girls, namely blue and pink, respectively. Thus begins the stereotyping by society (Lorber, 2007, in Flores, 2012). This classification has been instilled in all of us, so that we believe this to be true. This study which I am undertaking follows this very path, as I chose to work with girls.

Certain qualities are also associated with the girl child, such as the urge to be emotional and compassionate. Johnson (1997) goes a step further, asserting that women also display characteristics of a willingness to co-operate and show that they are inadequate. He also shows that men are the opposite of women, as they display characteristics of “control, strength and efficiency”, among others, thereby displaying patriarchal characteristics. I then draw on Connell (1987, p.183) who demonstrates further the characteristics of hegemonic masculinities, which are “power, authority, aggression, technical competence and heterosexuality”. All of these characteristics are formed socially and are not inherent. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue that these traits are sound, and further suggest that these together with hierarchical aspects should be viewed in four domains, as follows:

- The agency of women should have greater importance;
- Recognition of masculinities should be more evident in the local arena and abroad;
- ‘privilege and power’ to be embodied specifically; and
- There should be more emphasis on gender equality and freedom.

Flores (2012) cites Johnson (1997) as viewing women in adverse contrast to men, saying that in terms of power, this characteristic is best suited to men as opposed to women. In the past society subscribed to this notion, but today we find women increasingly being recognised as powerful and filling positions normally reserved for men, so society is evolving. This adds to the social construction of gender.

2.7.2 The social construction of class

These groupings have been formulated by society. Hoyt (1999) cited in Flores (2012) identifies three types of social class structure: the upper, middle and lower classes. She defines the upper class as those who are rich; the middle class as those categorised in the average to normal

bracket; and lastly, the lower class, who are people usually associated with poverty. In this study, the focus is on the middle class. The young women researched are neither rich nor poor. These constructions further exacerbate racial identity. This study focuses on Coloured girls. According to Hoyt (1999) cited in Flores (2012) race is relevant to class. Encyclopedia.com (2008) mentions that class is not a constant, but rather differs from one society to another, and likewise these assumptions can change with culture.

2.7.3 The social construction of race intertwined with class

Omi and Winant (2013, p.55) define racial formation as a process which was historically created by society, whereby categories of race were formed, transformed and destroyed. "Society associates the upper class with the White people, who usually live in big houses and are rich, as opposed to people of colour (other racial groups), who would usually be associated with living in flats or apartments, and who live moderately to poorly. Omi and Winant (2013) declared that when a group of students were asked to comment on stereotypes, they were all in agreement, thus adding to the literature that society is responsible for these social constructions. Fonda, Eni and Guimond (2013) cite Patterson (2004) in an American study asserting that sexual norms for women of colour differ from those in women racially classified as White; while motherhood in teenage women of colour is viewed as a cultural norm, if a teenage mother is White this is not viewed culturally, but seen as one who has deviated socially. So the double standards are evident, when it comes to race and class (cited in Fonda, Eni and Guimond, 2004) who also assert that Social construction as defined as a practice promulgated by social groups in a society. In this study, Coloured girls of lower socio-economic class are participants.

2.7.4 The social construction of sexuality

The construction of sexuality is a paramount issue in young women's development as Weinstein and Rosen (1991) assert, during the teenage years there is a heightened interest in sex. Adolescents spend a tremendous amount of time in discussions which are of a sexual nature, such as in their humour and dialogue, as well as passing on reading material in this regard, which they find interesting (Rice and Dolgin, 2005). These are aspects which mould their sexuality, in a social manner. As a matter of interest, adolescents' main way of gaining sexual information is through interaction with their friends and the media (Ward, 2004) cited in Subrahmanyam *et al.*, 2004). These teenagers find that the internet is a safer place to deal with their increased sexuality, as they don't have to experience face-to-face contact (Fraiberg, 2004, cited in Subrahmanyam *et al.*, 2004). In developing their sexuality online, teenagers are

engaging in an activity known as 'cyber-sex', whereby they are aroused sexually without any physical contact.

In this way, girls get to assert their agency in terms of their ability to speak, which is their strength, as opposed to their male counterparts, thus enhancing their sexuality (Clark, 2014). Through these perceptions, these teenagers are tasked with finding and developing themselves (Kroger, 1995). Simultaneously, they get to connect with their friends, as well as using social media, which teenagers enjoy. This behaviour can be interpreted as risky. At this stage, with teenagers developing and exploring their sexuality, this will encourage them to instigate bonds of a romantic nature (Teare, Garrett, Coughlin, Shanahan and Daly, 1995).

Through social constructions with friends they choose to be with, their sexual identities are formed, as ideas and behaviours are shaped (Connolly, Furman and Konarski, 2000). It is a common occurrence for teenagers to develop relationships with individuals who are both male and female (Goff, 1990). It is also common practice for these teenagers in hetero-social friendships to engage in romantic relationships with these friends (Connolly *et al.*, 2000). In formulating their sexuality, teenagers will find it difficult to discuss certain aspects with each other, but online they could choose to remain anonymous and still have a discussion that would otherwise be humiliating under different circumstances (Bouchey and Furman, 2003) in (Subrahmanyam, 2004).

Teenagers, through wanting to express their sexuality, can often open themselves up to sexual vulnerability, especially regarding females, which can sometimes conclude with early pregnancy (Fonda, Eni and Guimond, 2013). According to Fonda *et al.* (2013) this result is often viewed through the lens of socio-economic status as well as being a health concern. In reality though, this is also through non-compliance with social norms as defined by society, and sometimes a lack of parental involvement. However, Fonda *et al.* (2013) cite Regnerus *et al.* (2013) who argue that in a family with a background grounded in religion, these parents would not discuss contraception and would not offer alternatives in this regard, but they will rather encourage and instil morals and values in their children.

Cruikshank (2012) asserts that social constructions deal with varied interactions in relationships or friendships. People create meaning and knowledge acquisition through their experiences (Hoover, 1996, cited in Cruikshank, 2012). It is through this lens that I hope to gain insight into teenagers' understandings of risky behaviour and how they construct their sexuality within a context where HIV infection is rife.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has drawn on a wide body of literature related to race, Coloured identity in South Africa, girls and sexuality, gender power and violence linked to risky behaviour, factors influencing risky behaviour, and the effects of risky behaviour. The chapter concludes with a discussion of social construction as a theoretical approach for this study.

The next chapter outlines the broad methodological approach and the details of the methods used in this study of Coloured girls and risky behaviour in an era of HIV and AIDS.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the broad methodological approach and details of the methods used in this study of Coloured girls and risky behaviour in an era of HIV and AIDS. I begin with the approach to the study, which is qualitative. I then detail the research paradigm of interpretivism. This is followed by an overview of the research site and sampling, ethical considerations, research methods, data analysis, trustworthiness and limitations to the study, and a brief account of the researcher as a Coloured woman and the co-constructedness of data. This is followed by the conclusion. I include literature throughout, to support this research methodology.

3.2 Approach to study: Qualitative

Through this selected research I aim to answer my critical questions. The aim of qualitative research is to give meaning of experiences as seen through the lens of the researched (Wilmot, 2005, p.10). According to O'Leary (2004) qualitative data are concerned with the use of words which is relevant to this study because through the recorded interviews I generated data. Therefore, this method of research will derive meaning from participants as well as explanations for these Coloured high school girls, engaging in risky sexual behaviour as qualitative research gives voices to participants (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) where their experiences and observations are discussed.

According to Maxwell (1998) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) the five factors make Qualitative research useful:

- The ability to make meaning of how the participants engage in the research, through information given. Through this study, the aim is to make meaning of participants points of view in terms of their responses of risky sexual behaviour.
- understanding how their situations affect their behaviour. In this study, through the interview questions, the correlation between the environment and risky sexual behaviour will be explored.

- identifying unexpected occurrences and creating new perceptions> Should unforeseen situations arise in the collection of data, new ideas can be incorporated or adapted.
- understanding the manner in which events occur. In this study, it is essential to understand under which circumstances events occur. There may be underlying reasons why Coloured high school girls engage in risky sexual behaviour, these should emerge during the interviews, as these young women attempt to make meaning of situations.

For these reasons, I find qualitative research appropriate for this study.

3.3 Interpretivist paradigm

This study will be located within an interpretivist paradigm. According to Mertens (2005, p.2) cited in MacKenzie and Knipe (2006) the “exact nature of the definition of research is influenced by the researchers’ theoretical framework.” A theoretical framework can also be referred to as a paradigm (Mertens, 2005; Bogdan and Biklen, 1998). The aspects which encourage the research which is intended, that is, the motivating factors and why the researcher wants to conduct the study, are influenced by the paradigm the researcher chooses. Thus the motivation for conducting this study was influenced by observations of Coloured high school girls in the community. Evident was the rate of teenage pregnancies, which appeared to be on the incline, therefore compounding the idea teenagers were engaging in risky sexual behaviour. There are three aspects which are necessary in determining the paradigm, namely: “a belief of the nature of knowledge; a methodology; and criteria for validity” (MacNaughton, Rolfe and Siraj-Blatchford, 2001, p.32) (cited in MacKenzie and Knipe, 2006).

According to Deetz (1996) the purpose of the interpretivist paradigm is to make meaning of participants’ point of view in their understanding of phenomena. Ontologically, they construct reality by the way they interact and socialise with other people. Therefore, there can be many realities, due to interaction with varied human beings. This is in line with qualitative research, where there are ‘multiple realities’ in assumptions about the world. In the research process, what is discovered or found is through conversation in interviews (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). Of importance is the conversation between the participant and the researcher, so that

understandings are clear and informed. As Deetz (1996) asserts, interpretivism is essential in trying to understand phenomena. Therefore the link between the theoretical framework of social construction and the interpretivist paradigm, complement each other. Interpretivism seeks to make meaning of participants' point of view and the theory of social construction seeks to display the manner in which society creates perceptions, which are actually not inherent.

According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006) interpretivists have a belief in transactional or subjective epistemology, asserting that knowledge and self cannot be separated. Furthermore, the researchers' belief system is evident in all aspects of the research. From an interpretivist point of view, Angen (2000) purports the following criteria for evaluation of research:

- The research question must be systematically thought of; Thus the research question was borne of concerns emanating from issues in the community. Therefore the research topic needed to be clearly presented.
- The investigation is to be conducted in a decent and respectful way; The research would only be conducted once permission from the Ethical Department and gate- keeper letter were obtained. Informed consent from parents and participants had to be obtained in order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality, throughout the research process.
- There must be a clear path which indicates the responsibility of the researcher in the way they understand the dialogue; It is necessary for the researcher to understand and interpret the data obtained from participants. Therefore the interview schedule has to be logical in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the study.
- A written form of what transpired must indicate a logical and credible discussion; The data which is collected must be logically presented in transcript, verbatim form, thus detailing the discussions which took place;
- The validity of the research is rooted morally. The researcher is responsible for ensuring validity of research, which must be morally sound, thus respecting the participants' point of view.

In matching methods, paradigms and tools, the following emerged: as previously mentioned, the method of research is qualitative, and the paradigm is interpretivism within a social construction framework. The tools or methods of data collection are FGDs and individual interviews.

3.4 Research site and sampling

I approached the school principal of a high school, who was more than willing to assist in the study. I explained the nature of my study and what it would entail. I had to bear in mind that a crucial part of my study was to obtain participants in the age group of 16 to 18 years. The participants had to be Coloured by race. It was explained that it was necessary for me to address the Grade 11 school girls, as they fit the criteria which were essential to the study. A letter was drafted in this regard and forwarded to the school principal, who duly provided permission for me to conduct my research at the school, by means of a gate-keeper letter. The gate-keeper controls the access to the school (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). A suitable date, time and venue for me to discuss my study with all Coloured grade 11 girls were discussed with the principal.

For this study the sampling is purposive, indicative of the fact that the criteria had to be specific. For this study, the sampling required that Coloured girls in high school had to be interviewed and they had to be between the ages of 16 to 18 years of age. Teddlie and Yu (2007) as cited by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.156) assert that the relevance of purposive sampling includes the means to obtain participants "to focus on specific, unique issues to generate data". According to Wilmot (2005) the number of participants is not as important as the criteria to be used in selecting the participants. The sample is non-probable, in line with qualitative research, as Wilmot (2005) asserts that the interest does not lie in obtaining statistics from this type of research.

Although it was during the last week of the second school term, the principal was extremely accommodating and went as far as arranging a date when all the girls would be available. Informed consent is necessary in gaining access to the school where the research will be conducted. Bell (1991, p.37) is cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) and asserts that it is essential to have permission granted earlier in the research process. I arrived at the school and waited in the waiting room of the school office, while the deputy principal settled the grade 11 girls in the school hall. As soon as the girls were settled, the secretary escorted me to the school hall.

Upon arrival I was introduced and left alone with the girls. This in itself was quite daunting, as some of the girls were looking at me quite expressionlessly, as though I were there to waste

their valuable time, whilst others seemed genuinely interested in finding out the purpose of my visit. At the same time they seemed to be making mental notes of my dress sense, as they appeared to examine me from head to toe. I had to remain calm and constantly make mental notes to remind myself of the purpose and nature of my visit to the school. I was the researcher, but they were the vehicles, carrying the knowledge I required. Without them, I would have no data.

All qualms and anxiety aside, I proceeded to explain the reason for my visit and how valuable their input was to this study. Copies of informed consent letters for their parents, as well as for them, were read out to the group. The letters included the method of intervention, should that be required. Contact details of a psychologist were inserted, in that regard. Whilst doing so, it was necessary for me to reiterate that anonymity and confidentiality would be ensured. Field and Horse (1992) Kvale (1996) and Munhall (1988) cited in Orb *et al.* (2000) assert that consent can be seen as a binding contract of trust which takes place between the researcher and the participants. The participants are placing their experiences and lives in the hands of the researcher, so they need the reassurance that they will be protected at all times. I also explained the use of pseudonyms, which some of them did not comprehend at first. According to Orb *et al.* (2000) it is advised to use pseudonyms in research, as this protects the identities of the participants. I then asked if they had any questions or reservations regarding the study, of which there were none. It was mentioned that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time, without any negative consequences.

It was then mentioned that if any information emerged which would place them or others at risk, I would have to refer them to a professional. As they were of school-going age, I mentioned the Child Protection Act, to protect them as well as me.

According to the Child Protection Act 38 of 2005, Chapter 7; Protection of children (SS 111-142); 116 Disclosure of information: No person may disclose any information in Part A of the Register except: (1) (a) for the purpose of protecting the interests, safety or well-being of a specific child. In Chapter 1, "child" means a person under the age of 18 years.

It was necessary for me to mention the Child Protection Act in order to safeguard and protect all stakeholders. At that time I asked if any of the girls had any questions in this regard, of which there were none.

A request was then made for volunteers to participate in the study. It became a challenge when none of the girls seemed eager to participate. They had to be reassured of confidentiality, until one girl bravely agreed to participate. Thereafter, I had more than I required. My initial sample size was 12 girls, and I had 30 girls who decided that they would volunteer.

The reason for the study will determine the sample size. Usually in qualitative research the sample size is generally small in comparison to a quantitative study (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.145). Their names and contact details were recorded and they were issued with informed consent letters. This formed part of the ethical considerations. The importance of informed consent was vital. I needed to have parental consent, and the letters outlined all the details of the study, which incorporated the fact that the interviews would be recorded with their consent. They were also informed of the fact that participation was voluntary and that they had the option to withdraw from the study at any time, should they feel the need to do so. Participant consent was also important, so that they would be aware of what the study entailed. It was also mentioned that all of the signed forms would be kept safely.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Firstly I obtained permission through Ethical Clearance from the University of KwaZulu- Natal to carry out this study. According to Orb *et al.* (2000) ethics refers to not causing any negativity or damage and to rather focus on the positives or good; in other words, beneficence. Any harm to participants can be avoided if good ethics are employed. In any form of research, it is of the utmost importance that the participants be protected at all times. As previously mentioned, it was necessary for me to obtain permission from both the parents as well as the participants. Shaw (2014) asserts the importance of informed consent as a means of commitment that all involved will respect each other's privacy. This was done by issuing the informed consent forms to the parents and participants. These forms had to be signed and returned to me for safe-keeping before I could begin the interview process. This was necessary as these forms detailed important and relevant information regarding the research process. Both verbally and in writing, by way of informed consent forms, the participants and parents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, as well as reiterating that participation was voluntary and that a decision to withdraw from the study would be accepted at any time, without any negative consequences.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) suggest that participation in the study is voluntary. In qualitative research there is a relationship dynamic which has to be sincere from the researcher's perspective, with the enthusiasm to confide in the researcher, which will enhance the credibility of the study (Orb *et al.*, 2000). Participants were also asked for permission to have the interviews recorded; this information would remain private and confidential and would remain in safe-keeping. Regarding the interview schedule, participants were informed that they reserve the right to refuse to answer any scheduled questions, should they feel the need to do so. The recordings would be used solely for the purpose of the research and would not be for public use. According to Orb *et al.* (2000) it is suggested that the participants be notified of the manner in which the findings of the research will be published. Here the principle of justice is inferred, with an important element of fairness adopted in the quest to protect the participants from "abuse and exploitation" (Orb *et al.*, 2000, p. 95).

3.6 Data collection

The main methods of data collection used in this study were individual interviews and FGDs (Focus Group Discussions). I chose to use FGDs as well in order to encourage the participants to be more outspoken and thus gain rich data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.436). Individual interviews were also necessary in order to speak with participants one on one and to obtain data which may not have been forthcoming in the FGDs.

A date and time was set for these girls to return with the forms which had to be signed. It was agreed that we would meet in groups at the school, as soon as the school holidays began. The interviews were scheduled to take place in the school hall, as permission had already been granted in this regard. On the actual day, of the 30 girls who had volunteered, only 16 arrived with their Informed Consent forms, which were signed. As my method of data collection was both FGDs and individual interviews, I decided to have two FGDs with eight girls in each group, followed by individual interviews. While the first focus group discussion was in session, the second group of girls were requested to wait in a designated area of the school, away from the school hall. This was done in order to ensure that the group who were waiting would not listen to the discussion taking place in the school hall. A great amount of data can be collected during FGDs, especially if the participants had some aspects which were common among them (Wilmot, 2005).

The FGDs lasted approximately 45 minutes to an hour each. There were minimal disruptions, as some of the Grade 11 and Grade 12 learners were attending a holiday programme to assist them in their studies. A few of the participants had to attend these classes. However, this did not hinder my study, as it ensured that participants were on the school premises and the schedule accommodated each of them extremely well.

I decided to conduct both of the FGDs on the same day, the first day of the school holidays. The individual interviews were staggered throughout the week. I decided that I would use the same girls for the FGDs and individual interviews. The reason was that these girls were available and that although much discussion would emerge from the FGDs, the participants would possibly be more forthcoming and honest in their responses, without the fear of being judged in FGDs. Furthermore, from the outset, it was explained that those who volunteered, would participate in both a FGD and an individual interview. This was explained before they volunteered to participate in the study. I also chose to use almost all the girls who volunteered because my aim was to collect as much rich data as possible. It was necessary for me to complete all interviews during the first week, as the girls had made it quite clear that they needed their school holidays as some of them had made prior arrangements for the rest of the holidays. I respected their decision and was grateful for their valued participation.

All of the 16 girls participated in the FGDs, and I was elated. I was, however, concerned about their attendance at individual interviews, and proactively decided to contact each of them individually to remind them of their specific date and time of interviews. Concern arose when a few of the girls had not responded or were unavailable when called telephonically. However, I was pleasantly surprised when all except two of the girls who had initially agreed to attend, actually arrived for the interviews. This did not hamper my data collection, because I still had 14 girls who participated in this part of the study. I was therefore able to collect rich data from these participants.

For all of the interviews, both FGDs and individual, I followed my interview guide (Appendices 6 and 7) thus working from my scheduled questions. Patton (1980) as cited by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2004) details the strengths of using an interview guide, as being systematic as well as keeping the interview conversational. I presented the questions through this method and participants responded. When necessary, I requested that the girls elaborate for clarity in responses. Somehow the first group appeared a little reserved, in comparison to the second group of girls. I found that they needed probing, whereas the second group had a few girls who

dominated the discussion. I chose to allow them to speak, because in their drawn out responses they did eventually arrive at answering the questions. I was also curious about their experiences and how they interpreted events which occurred around them.

I found that both methods of data collection were important, because in the FGDs the participants had the opportunity to challenge each other by agreeing or disagreeing with each other. In the individual interviews the participants were able to speak their minds without feeling intimidated by the other girls. Whereas they may have been reserved in the group discussions for perhaps a fear of been judged, in the individual interviews they were able to show more honesty and be candid in their responses, without any inhibitions.

I found the girls to be a bit reserved in the individual interviews. Most of the girls appeared nervous at first, as they did not know exactly what to expect. I noticed this and tried my best to allay their fears. One of the girls arrived with her friend and asked if her companion could sit in during the interviews, as she was nervous. I asked what her fear was and she said that she may misinterpret the questions. I assured her that I would explain the questions, so that she would understand them, and that it was important for her friend to wait outside the venue. I also reminded her of privacy and confidentiality. She eventually agreed to remain alone with me in the venue, reassured of my commitment to confidentiality and anonymity.

To collect the data I made use of a recording device on a smartphone, which proved to be extremely useful and reliable. The reason for using the smartphone, a Samsung Galaxy S5, was because I was advised by a reliable source, that it had a tremendous memory capacity. I first obtained the participants' permission to record the interviews. The interviews were not video recorded and none of the girls objected to the interviews being recorded on the voice recorder of the smart phone. No problems were encountered throughout the process. At the end of the FGDs most of the participants appeared to be more relaxed. In some of the individual interviews, as the participants entered the room they appeared to be afraid of the unknown, which was expected. Again, they relaxed more as the interviews proceeded.

I ensured that I had provided refreshments for the participants, including flavoured bottled water, to keep them hydrated, especially since most people get nervous and suddenly require a drink of water when they are put on the spot. However, it must be noted that at no time were the participants rushed into responses. They were assured that they had time to think carefully before responding. I also began to feel quite comfortable with them as well and treated them as though they were my own children and not just participants in my study. The one participant

was on her way out of the door when she turned back to ask if I lived in the area, as she had not met or seen me before, and said that she felt so comfortable with me, especially as I am a teacher, yet I was so easy to talk to. This made me feel good and I was assured of their honest responses.

As the researcher, my duty was to become part of the researched world, in order to make the research trustworthy. In view of this, I was a familiar face at the school although not known to everyone, and had a good relationship with the staff and some of the learners alike, having served a term of three years on the School Governing Body. Besides, I also teach at a local primary school, where they may have had contact with me. Within the group of participants I also noticed familiar faces from the church I attend in the community. Hopefully these were aspects which put the girls at ease, or perhaps intimidated those who appeared apprehensive at first. However, as the interviews progressed the girls appeared to relax more. Through the interviews I got to know quite a bit about the participants' backgrounds. This gave me insight into understanding their responses, as I now knew where they were coming from.

A summary of the biographical details of the participants is as follows:

- **Carol:** She is 17 and her father is a pensioner. Her mother is a manageress for a company in Pinetown. Her parents are very strict and have set a curfew for her.
- **Leona:** She is 16 years old and her mother works at the court. She also lives with her grandmother and an aunt. Leona says that her mother is not too strict and is quite easy to talk to. She has a curfew to be indoors by 6 pm or, as her grandmother says, she must be in the house before the street lights are turned on. Leona earns pocket money by ironing clothing for her aunt.
- **Kim:** A 16-year-old, who lives with her grandmother. Kim says that her mother does come home periodically; she never stays too long, and at the time of the interview she was unemployed. Her grandmother helps out at her uncle's business. She is reasonable, but strict when necessary. Kim also has a curfew.
- **Megan:** She is 16 years old, her mother works as a manageress and her father is a supervisor at a bank. Megan says that her parents are very strict. She has a curfew and has to be indoors by 4 pm daily.
- **Ally:** A 16-year-old whose mother is a housewife and father is a boilermaker. Her parents are strict and she has a curfew to be indoors by 6:30 pm.

- **Zai:**A 17-year-old who lives with her mother who works at a butchery as a manageress. Her second oldest sister also works. Zai says that since her mother stopped drinking (alcohol), she is very strict and shouts a lot. She also has a curfew.
- **Marcia:**She is 18 years old and she lives with her mother and grandparents. Her grandparents are also the breadwinners and both of them are pensioners. Her mother is strict when necessary. Since Marcia does not go out, her mother has not set a curfew for her. As she lives in a flat, she is allowed to stand downstairs. Marcia makes her own pocket money by styling local people's hair.
- **Desiree:**An 18-year-old who has a baby daughter. She lives with her mother who is a safety officer. She says that most of the time her mother is strict. Desiree often stays home, so she does not have a curfew. Her mother is cautious since she has already had a baby.
- **Taslyn:**A 16-year-old girl who lives with both her parents. Her mother works as a safety watch officer on construction and her father is a supervisor. Her father is strict, but her mother is not too strict. Her curfew is 8 pm (on weekdays). Over the weekends and during the holidays her curfew is 9pm.
- **Rashieda:** She is 17 and lives with her parents. Her mother is a secretary and her father owns a signage company. Her parents are somewhat strict, although her mother is a bit lenient. Rasheida's curfew is 7 pm on weekdays and 10 pm on weekends.
- **Samantha:**She is 17 and she lives with her mother and her stepfather. Her mother is a secretary at a local school and her stepfather works at a promotions company. Her parents are very strict and her curfew is 5:30 pm daily.
- **Taniel:** She is 16 years old and lives with her parents. Her mother works and her father works on construction. Her parents are very strict; she does not have a curfew, since she does not go out.
- **Caitlin:** She is 16 years old and lives with her parents. However, her father works in Johannesburg but comes home frequently. Her mother usually works, but the contract for her current job recently ended. She does not have a curfew as she usually stays indoors most of the time.
- **Layla:**She is 17 years old and lives with her grandmother, who is a pensioner. She says that her grandmother is very strict. Since Layla is not allowed to go out, she has no curfew.

3.7 Data analysis

In qualitative research, in order to interpret data meanings have to be deconstructed so as to be understood (Thorne, 2000). The recordings were transcribed verbatim. The textual data had to include everything that was documented in the recordings, which can be an extremely tedious task. Dialogue as well as gestures and sounds needed to be transcribed into the text. The process of analysing data included reading over the scripts several times, in order to become familiar with the discussions. Through the process of sifting, the data had to be categorised into themes for analysis, to determine emerging findings in the research. Pope and Mays (2006) confirm the converging of data into relevant themes. These themes give rise to the intention to answer the 'why, what and how' questions concerned with qualitative research. Lacey and Luff (2007) agree that the approach of thematic analysis is relevant, where all data collected can be coded and viewed in detail. The responses of participants provided a rich collection of data in terms of their experiences, observations and opinions relevant to Coloured girls, risky behaviour, understandings and interpretations of Coloured girls' reputations and perceptions of sexuality.

The preparation for data analysis involves consistency in interpreting the data, by reading through the transcripts many times and becoming familiar with them, to determine coding and emergent themes. This process was extremely challenging, with the chapter having been done and redone several times. It took a long time to code the data. I chose to use different colours to highlight the common elements in the data. From this the actual themes emerged. In qualitative data analysis the aim is to understand and "make sense of participants' input" in the data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.537).

3.8 Trustworthiness in research

As proposed by Lacey and Luff (2007) it is necessary to ensure rigour in validity and reliability in research. In validity, the search for 'truth' will not hold, as there are "multiple realities" (Lacey and Luff, 2007, p.25). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) cite Maxwell (p.181) who argues for five kinds of validity:

- Descriptive: Facts must not be distorted; I needed to use participants' views and not my own. The researcher must not have preconceived notions; even if they have formed their own assumptions, these must not be divulged (Lacey and Luff, 2007). The

researcher can, however, apply a reflective summary of the path taken in the research process in a reflective journal.

- Interpretive: I had to obtain information that was relevant to my study.
- Theoretical: The data had to provide understandings and explanations relevant to this study.
- Generalisability: The outcome of my interviews had to correlate with other relevant studies.
- Evaluative reliability: The findings had to be purposive, natural and credible.

In my study I was not searching for truth, but rather the participants' openness in responses and what their perceptions were. This was effective in the interviews. Validation by respondents is essential. In qualitative research providing feedback to participants is a frequent occurrence, where documented scripts can be issued to the participants for verification of data. This is essential in keeping your participants as part of the process (Lacey and Luff, 2007).

Angen (2000) also asserts that in ethical validity:

- research choices have political and ethical considerations. Political in terms of what input and influence the ward councillors in the community have in place, to keep the youth occupied; as well as the interventions to assist young women in difficult situations; Ethical validity would include informed consent from all stakeholders, thus ensuring anonymity and confidentiality.
- the research is useful to the sample population. The research would be useful as it is reflective of issues in society which plague and concern the participants- the youth in the community.
- there should be another explanation other than what has been found by the researcher. Other explanations could include those aspects which may not have emerged in the data; and
- the interpretivist researcher should question whether any knowledge emerged from the research. The research should be purposeful, in that knowledge obtained, should enhance that which already exists.

Substantive validity should include 'self-reflection' on the research (Angen, 2000).

In terms of reliability, consistency has to be shown in the methods the researcher uses (Lacey and Luff, 2007). It was necessary for me to ensure reliability in my research. I felt that

after I had introduced myself to my participants, they would feel more at ease and comfortable in responding, which was not necessarily the case at first. I had to gain their trust by showing them that I was not superior to them, but just an ordinary, down to earth person, hoping to gain their trust and participation in order to conduct my research, to gain answers to my questions. So, from the outset I let them know about my interest in this study as well as my concerns. I informed the participants that I was also a parent and worried about the young women in the community. I was concerned that there were young women who were indulging in risky sexual behaviour, placing themselves at risk of infections and early pregnancy. My concern was how effective the curriculum was in imparting the necessary life skills to these young women, to enable them to make informed decisions. As the research topic is within the era of HIV and AIDS, it was necessary to make mention of statistics relevant to this. I had to mention that although new infections were not increasing as rapidly as they were previously, the rate of current infection was still alarming.

I was therefore interested in finding out if they understood what risky sexual behaviour was. It was also essential to determine how their portrayal of their sexuality was linked to risky behaviour – and whether they understood these concepts. I was interested as a parent, teacher and researcher. This was my method of gaining their trust. They knew that my concerns were genuine and were therefore more sincere in their responses.

3.9 Limitations to the study

There were few limitations to this study. One was the issue with time, having to ensure that all the interviews were concluded within a specific time frame, which was a week. This was a mutual decision between the participants and I, as we all wanted to complete the interviews within a week. We realised that it would be easier for both participants and I and that the few available days they had left on holiday would be used for them to have fun and unwind before the new term began, as opposed to drawing the interviews out into the new term. This was a sacrifice for both the participants as well as for me as the researcher. Another limitation for me was my typing ability. From the beginning of this study I struggled with this, but it was necessary for me to overcome this issue. I therefore needed the rest of the school holiday to transcribe the data collected. This exercise actually enhanced my typing skills, with an improved ability.

Initially I was concerned about the fact that because the study was such a mammoth task, I would encounter problems in my personal capacity as a wife and mother of two teenage children. Through perseverance though, these limitations were overcome. Besides my personal concerns, I worried about the parents, in terms of them actually consenting to their children's participation in the study. For this reason I decided to contact each participant and I spoke to their parents, informing them of who I was and the purpose of my study, and to reassure them of confidentiality, even though this formed part of the consent form. Had I not received the support of the parents, this would have been an extremely difficult and drawn-out process, as I would have had to try to obtain other willing participants. Fortunately the parents were accommodating and more than willing to assist.

Many of the parents agreed that this study was not only interesting, but necessary as well. The parents also indicated that they would like to read the findings thereof, once the study was complete. The other challenge was ensuring that the participants were available for the interviews, due to time constraints, as some of them had to attend holiday classes. This challenge was overcome by reshuffling the interviews to accommodate all the participants who were willing to take part in the study. Also, two of my participants lived out of the area. This was a concern, so I had to speak directly to their parents, who assured me that they would transport them to the interview venue. I was extremely grateful to these parents who offered their assistance, thus averting a potential problem.

3.10 Researcher's experience as a Coloured woman

In my personal capacity as a Coloured woman who is also an educator in Wentworth, it was somewhat of a daunting task having to approach these young women for my study. I was aware that this kind of research would not necessarily meet their favour but it was necessary for me to obtain their perceptions and understandings. During the collection of data in FGDs and individual interviews, I was surprised at some of the responses to the questions. The participants were very outspoken, and I was pleasantly surprised. I was of the impression that the participants would not be forthcoming in their responses, as I was an educator invading their personal space. However, their knowledge surpassed my expectations in terms of their experiences, which at times was eye opening, but I did not express these emotions.

In terms of the way they spoke of Coloured women and Coloured people in general, I was surprised as they seemed to be more knowledgeable than I was. As young as they were, they had observed and had knowledge of life experiences, some of which I was not aware of. Their knowledge however was useful in the analysis of the data which were collected. Their responses informed the analysis and thus yielded substantive and relevant responses to the critical questions. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.180) the purpose of research is to unearth what others' belief systems are, and which are just as important as our own, and that the researcher is part of the researched world.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter sought to define and outline the process of the research design and the methodologies employed. The chapter went into great detail with regard to qualitative research methods and the interpretivist paradigm. The chapter also highlighted and detailed the journey taken in the research process, from gaining access to the research site and to obtaining consent to conduct the research. The framework of the study was detailed, with relevance to the study, portrayed in each sub-section. This led up to the collection of data and the proposed methods of data analysis, to be discussed in the following chapter. Within this chapter I also detailed the biographical details of the participants. This is useful in having an idea of each of who they are as a bit of background.

The preparation for data analysis involves consistency in interpreting the data, by reading through the transcripts many times and becoming familiar with them, to determine coding and emergent themes. This process was extremely challenging, with the chapter having been done and redone several times. It took a long time to code the data. I chose to use different colours to highlight the common elements in the data. From this, the actual themes emerged.

The next chapter presents and analyses the data, through a discussion of themes that emerged in response to the critical questions.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the data are presented and analysed, through a discussion of themes that emerged in response to the critical questions outlined in Chapter 3.

Through the interpretivist paradigm and the theoretical perspective of social construction, the data became meaningful and comprehensible. As outlined in Chapter 3, in the interpretivist paradigm the aim is to make meaning of participants' point of view, in their understandings of phenomena (Deetz, 1996). To steer the path in this chapter, I also explore Burr (2003) as part of the social construction theoretical framework. In this study, through interviews, I make meaning of these Coloured girls' understanding of risky behaviour. The work of Hacking (1999) is also included, in support of the theory of social construction.

As many of the opinions and experiences of the girls in this study were influenced by societal perceptions, it was also necessary to draw on Flores (2012) who asserts that social construction deals with the manner in which people in society categorise people into different groups. Here this categorisation lends itself to aspects of race, class and gender.

The following themes emerged from the data which were collected:

1. Substance abuse and risk
2. Colouredness and risk
3. Women, dress and risk
4. Materiality, poverty and risk
5. Dating, maturity and risk
6. Knowledge, sexuality and risk
7. Peer pressure, wanting to 'fit in' and risk

As detailed in the previous chapter, in my collection of data 16 high school girls participated in the two FGDs. For the individual interviews, there were 14 high school girls who participated. From the data which was collected, the three critical questions of this study were addressed simultaneously within the themes, since there was considerable overlapping among them. The questions correlate to the themes as follows:

- Question 1: What are Coloured high school girls' understandings of risky sexual behaviour in the context of HIV and AIDS

- Question 2: Why do Coloured high school girls engage in risky sex despite their awareness of the risks of HIV and AIDS?
- Question 3: How are Coloured high school girls' constructions of sexuality related to sexual risk?

4.2 Substance abuse and risk

This theme looks at what the participants' understandings of substance abuse are, as well as the association with risky sexual behaviour, leading to infections like HIV and AIDS. The participants in this study have said that some Coloured people generally have a reputation for enjoying the 'party life'. This includes drinking alcohol, dancing and often participating in substance abuse. Besides smoking cigarettes, the popular drug of choice is marijuana (commonly referred to as dagga) or as the girls refer to it as 'weed'. For example:

Carol: *Well I know they've smoked 'weed' before- and I've tried it.*

Substance abuse is a major influence when it comes to risky behaviour. Gupta (2002) in view of HIV and AIDS infections, says teenage girls' infection rate is five times higher than that of boys. For reasons like this, some participants have attributed the use of substances like drugs and alcohol to risky behaviour:

Ally: *... taking chances... you know what you going into... some girls when they intoxicated and stuff... they go and do it [sex].*

Marcia: *Taking drugs and alcohol... you might end up with a boy... and you don't know that he is HIV-positive.*

It is generally accepted that all drugs have serious effects on an individual's capacity to make informed decisions. In the interviews most of the participants mentioned that they had experimented with the use of alcohol, with some of them indicating that they had tried it once. Others indicated that they regularly drink low content alcohol drinks and that they do however control their intake. A minority had indicated the use of both alcohol and *dagga*. Some participants also spoke of how they felt when they drank alcohol or smoked 'weed'. Carol said that she tried both drugs and alcohol, and had the following to say when I asked in the individual interviews:

Researcher: *How did it make you feel? Did it change you in any way?*

Carol: *Well it just gave that feeling [laughs]... laughing and stuff, but [pause]... normal.*

In response to how she felt after taking alcohol, Leona had the following to say:

Leona: *Nice... like happy. [laughs]*

In the individual interviews it was noted that not all of the participants followed others' behaviours and that they were capable of making their own decisions. Furthermore, none of the participants who indicated that they engaged in substance abuse behaviour were forced into it. It was by choice. Some participants claimed that they were able to assert power, even when they had taken alcohol or drugs:

Desiree: *It made me feel like I'm not... like I wasn't there... it didn't make me feel like doing anything though. [laughs]*

Samantha: *I'm like very- happy. I get energetic. I like to talk with people, make friends, but it doesn't make me forget about things. I'm always alert and I know what's going on.*

This concurs with Varga (2004) who says that adolescents need to take cognizance of their involvement in risky behaviour, as the consequences can adversely affect them. Desiree and Samantha claim that they are always aware and alert showing little understanding of the effects of alcohol and drugs. Desiree, though, realises the mistake she made, as she had a baby at a young age and thus refuses to allow this to happen again.

When I spoke to Kim, she had the following to say regarding participation in drugs and alcohol:

Kim: *Um... it was just to experiment... but it's not my thing... so I'm out!*

As Kim has just demonstrated, it is about the choices individuals make. Some of the participants also mentioned the reason why some people engage in this behaviour. Ally said that although she had never experimented with these substances, some of her friends had done so. Some girls spoke of not being in your right frame of mind when engaging in substance abuse.

Nicole: *The consequences will always be bad. You not in your right frame of mind... not knowing what's happening. The next thing is... maybe you're pregnant... or have STDs...*

Ally: *...They said that they felt 'high', they felt like they had enough confidence to do or say anything.*

Rashieda: *When they do speak of drugs, weed and stuff, they tell us that it's fun and it just makes you feel better and it takes away a lot of stress.*

Some of the participants also indicated regular use of alcohol, but said that it was under control. As Marcia said:

Marcia: *Er... to be honest with you, I don't really drink to get drunk. We just have 1 or 2 ciders and finish. Once we feel tipsy, we stop drinking.*

The discussion above suggests that the participants in this study are aware that young girls are getting involved in risky activity, and decision-making becomes compromised so they begin to engage in risky behaviour. The participants in this study have included the use of drugs and alcohol or substance abuse as part of risky behaviour.

In the individual interview with Taslyn, with regard to substance abuse, I asked the question: 'Have you or any of your friends ever used drugs or alcohol?' She had the following to say in this regard:

Taslyn: *I've used alcohol. Well with my friends... well now most of them... we no more close as a group, because some of them are like on... buttons, cocaine and ecstasy, so like... my father don't want me to be associated with that. So now I sit with boys, but these boys are saved, they in the church.*

Researcher: **These girls that are doing these hard drugs, how do they afford it?**

Taslyn: *Well um... they go with these boys ok... these boys are drug dealers, so... it's easy for them to get these things. 'Cause every time these boys are partying with them like from Sunday to Sunday, coming home 3 o'clock in the morning, drinking, taking all these drugs... and they still in school!*

The participants indicated that girls will go to great lengths in order to support their bad habits and at the same time are placing themselves at risk of infections, including HIV. This is a

possibility, since they share the weed which they smoke. This is passed from one person to the next. Knowledge of the spread of HIV and AIDS suggests that infection can occur if bodily fluids from one infected person is exchanged with that of an uninfected person. Thus, the use of drugs and sharing thereof, potentially places one at risk of infection.

Below you will see how these participants talk about the activities they have witnessed and how some young women who indulge may view this behaviour as desirable. The focus group generated the following discussion:

Taniel: *On BBM you will see like girls chilling on their DP [display picture]. They all got ciders in their hands or something like that. So that's how you can be portrayed as loose.* [The girls begin laughing and chanting: Yes! Yes!]

Taslyn *interjects and says: Where ciders- it's beers!* [The girls start laughing]

Caitlin disagrees with Taniel, and she says the following:

Caitlin: *... not every person that er...drinks and likes to party, is loose. Some people can control themselves and they know their limit.*

On the other hand, Caitlin also had the following to say: *and then others... I don't know... Some people say- I've heard a boy say that Smirnoff makes a girl 'jux'[feel sexy]. I don't know.*

Researcher asks whether many boys shared that same sentiment. All the girls agree.

Caitlin continues: *... and you know, when a boy sees how much you drinking, then obviously- OK, he's gonna come to you, 'cause he thinks, he feels that you're vulnerable...*

Young women engage in risky behaviour, according to the participants, for various reasons, sometimes through the influence of substance abuse. Similarly, Cooper (2002) asserts that drinking alcohol was strongly related to the decision to engage in risky behaviour as well as having multiple or casual partners. Hedden *et al.* (2012) says that drug use is a major factor in risky sexual behaviour.

4.3 Colouredness and risk

The participants in this study speak about Coloured girls in general, and they do not define what a Coloured person is. They refer to Coloured girls in their responses, as they are prompted by the questions in the interview schedule. As the discussions progress, they begin to differentiate themselves from other races. However, within the discussions it emerges that they are aware that the behaviours explained and expressed are not unique to Coloured people, but occur across all races. Said Nicole: *It's not only Coloured girls... it's all races.*

According to Erasmus (2001) the Coloured identity is not simply about 'race' but about using aspects from other cultures to formulate 'Coloured' – which is in line with what the participants say. They assert that the behaviours displayed do occur across all races. For the purpose of this study though, the focus is on Coloured girls. In the FGD the participants spoke about some Coloured girls having a bad reputation and their activities being associated with risk, as follows:

Taniel: *If you go to Roof Top, you go to Tiger, you go to Boulevard [clubs] you mainly see Coloured people. So it's like- this girl, she's in the 'jol'. She's hiring combis with boys and all that- then she's easy. So that's also why Coloured girls are associated with having a bad reputation. Because a lot of us like to party, a lot of us like to drink- so it's like Coloured girls are loose...*

Ally: *Um...yes...er... Coloured girls, I do feel that also other races, do have that reputation. But it's mainly us, it's because as Taniel said, that a few girls may be seen doing these things- these boys may have experienced activities with them- and then every other Coloured girl gets put underneath that umbrella. Oohh... Coloured girls are raw, Coloured girls are just loose, easy, every Coloured girl is just drinking and this and that and that, which is actually not true. Yes and um... I know that 'cause I've experienced that myself.*

Here Taniel and Ally demonstrate that Coloured girls do engage in risky behaviour, but not all of them. Because some of these young women do so, then people categorise and generalise 'all' Coloureds as the same, when that is not true.

A few of the participants had indicated in the individual interviews that they were sexually active or had engaged in risky sexual behaviour at least once. Of this small group, the majority used protection and one of the participants had a baby girl. In all the individual interviews,

where the participants indicated that they were sexually active, all of these cases were consensual.

In the FGDs the following emerged with regard to Coloureds and risk. As the researcher, I wanted to know about the behaviours of young Coloured women, in relation to risk:

Taniel: *...drinking, liking to drink- is associated with Coloured people. Coloured men and women love to drink and love to party...*

Caitlin: *I also think that like...you know...most Coloured girls- some are easy and some aren't. But the boys think that, because they've experienced the easy ones... then when they get to the ones that don't wanna give in easily, they quick to say 'you act for yourself, your standards are too high' and all of that.*

These notions about race and risk are socially constructed, as Burr (2003) asserts that ideas we perceive as inherent are actually constructed by society. Some participants have said that some Coloured girls will often publicly display their partying antics, for everyone to see, in order to gain popularity. Frequently visited places like clubs can also place these girls at risk. In the FGDs the following emerged.

Taniel: *...because they comping [a place named 'the compound'; all the girls begin to laugh]... and they going to the 'jol'.*

I express my surprise that this place still exists after many years. All the girls laugh.

Alexia: *That's the spot!* [meaning that the Compound is the place to be]

All the other girls agree: *Ooh...yes! They braai and all there.*

Since I live in the same area as the participants, from what I have observed, the area which these girls have spoken of (the Compound) is not a very safe place, often frequented by people who are usually intoxicated and under the influence of other drugs. It is situated in an area which is industrialised, surrounded by factories. A hostel is located in very close proximity to this building, and actually borders it. This houses people from far and wide. The area is considered to be unsafe, especially by the local residents of Wentworth. It is unusual that this place is visited by young women from the Wentworth area. Here it is common for risky behaviour to occur, as drugs and alcohol, are easily accessible.

The participants suggest that Coloured people, although they may be seen as the ones who like to party and drink excessively, will often put on a façade. What they portray is not necessarily who they are, according to the participants. In the Coloured community virginity is valued, like in most other races – and most of these young women want to portray this image. This is what the girls had to say in the FGD in this regard:

Taniel:...a lot of Black girls that I know, will even tell you what they do...They have sex. But a Coloured girl- I have yet to meet a Coloured girl that will openly tell you that 'I have had sex and I'm er...not a virgin' and all of that... so Coloured girls hide it more...are not open...about having sex and stuff like that. They'll say 'No, I'm a virgin'. Then 5 weeks down the line, they pregnant, but you a virgin...

A common phenomenon, in the Coloured community, according to the participants, is talking about what other people do, as opposed to talking about themselves.

Caitlin:*It's always the ones that are doing stuff that judge the next person, because they think the people that they are judging ... do not know about them.*

In defence, Kim says that Coloured people also get judged, hence the negative perceptions surrounding the Coloured people. The participants in this study also felt that it is unfair for all Coloured people to be put into a common category, when that is not necessarily all true. In the individual interviews the following emerged:

Kim:...because the majority of them are...like...they do stuff...and then the rest of the people just judge every Coloured girl.

Ally: *It does also...like...embarrass me in a way, because I'm also Coloured. And...um... it also makes the rest of us look bad. Even though there are quite a lot that do engage in risky behaviour- and then the few that do not engage, for example, me...we get classified as 'all' Coloured girls.*

Here you see how Ally shows her embarrassment of some young women who engage in risky behaviour, making all the Coloured people appear to have that kind of reputation. Ally goes as far as saying that she is innocent of this as she does not engage in such behaviour, so it is unfair to her.

Zai:*If you in a group and two girls are like...skanky, then you all get classed as skanky...that's why I feel embarrassed by this reputation of Coloured girls.*

Taslyn: *Being a Coloured girl...we all get put under the same category and it's not fair- because not all of us do the same things, as what other girls do...*

Layla: *...most Coloured girls, here in school, they talk about on Fridays or maybe on a Monday morning, they talking about- they've been to the club over the weekend and who they have been with – and what they were doing and stuff.*

According to Salo (2002) stereotypes exist across all races, but Coloureds are mostly positioned on the bottom rungs of society, and in this study most of the participants shared this sentiment in the way they felt that they – and society – viewed Coloured people.

According to the participants, often in the Coloured community some parents tend to shy away from these discussions on risky behaviour. They feel it is inappropriate for them to engage with their children on this level, and Taniel expressed this sentiment. Bersamin (2009) asserts that when it comes to risky behaviour, parents' attitudes are influential over their adolescent children. Further stated is the fact that communication must be on-going in order to negotiate decisions which adolescents engage in.

In this regard, Taniel acknowledges that: *A lot of Coloured people's parents... don't tell them about um... sex. Sex is taboo.*

Voisin (2013) asserts the importance of parental involvement as there is a link between parents and teenagers' decisions to involve themselves in behaviour which is risky. In contrast though, rebellion can cause teenagers to engage in risky behaviour when parents offer support and guidance (Scarlett, 2010).

4.4 Women, dress and risk

In this section I discuss participants' connections between the way a person dresses and risky behaviour. In the FGDs the girls were very vocal in this regard, especially since the discussion was supported by a picture which demonstrated a style of dressing perceived to be suggestive of risk. Here we see how these participants interpret dress sense.

Carol: *Like... you know... just by the way they dressed... they like 'things' [meaning boys]... It's just making them look more cheap.*

Leona: *Um... they gonna get raped... if they dress like that.*

Megan: *Um... just by the way they dressed, it's like they advertising themselves as sex objects. So they just want that kind of attention.*

Kim: *...They think boys like that, so they dress like that, in order for boys to pay attention... dressing like that would say to guys... aye, I'm loose... so it could be risky behaviour...*

In this discussion Kim says that some girls are of the impression that boys like and are attracted to girls who dress in this manner (the picture displayed girls who were scantily dressed), yet the boys see them as 'easy', that is, in a demeaning way. Salo (2006) says men don't respect girls who display themselves in this way.

The participants continue the discussion on their views of the manner in which the girls in the picture were dressed. The discussions suggest that the participants reproduce the notion that girls who dress provocatively are inviting sexual attention and that girls are to blame for being abused:

Marcia: *They don't realise that the boys... only wanna use them.*

Samantha: *They look very trashy.*

Caitlin: *They look very skanky... looking for attention from boys.*

Taniel: *They don't have self-respect and they seeking attention.*

According to Flores (2012) the theory of social construction employed here is indicative of the manner in which people in society categorise people into groups. In the above excerpts this is evident by the way these participants categorised the girls in the discussion picture according to the way they were dressed. Clothing plays a pivotal role in how girls construct their sexuality, where an outfit revealing too much flesh indicates interest in sex (Bhanaand Anderson, 2013).

In this study the interpretivism paradigm is relevant in trying to understand phenomena, to make meaning of these Coloured girls' understanding of risky behaviour (Deetz, 1996).

Some of the girls felt that women may lack respect for themselves because the bible teaches one to preserve one's body, encouraging sexual purity. From a religious point of view they also disrespect their bodies, according to Alexia. In contrast, Manlove *et al.* (2008) assert that adolescents have the ability to control their sexuality by living up to religious values through positive influences in their lives:

Alexia: *I think that it's prostitution and under the influence of drugs, that makes them do all the things they doing, showing the temple... the body of God [meaning, respect your body, as the temple of God]*

The girls feel that the clothing or fashion of today influences risky behaviour. Girls want to be fashionable and they want to be attractive in their appearance. Samantha states that most girls are guilty of following these trends, as the fashion appears to suggest that short, tight and low-cut clothing gives the perception of 'fashionable'. The participants have also shown that this can gain negative attention:

Samantha: *Yes, but... clothes of today... is those crop tops [short tops], tights, fancy short things... all of us... we all wear it [laughing].*

According to the girls who were interviewed, the way they dress could also allude to the fact that these girls want attention from outsiders, as this is lacking at home. They are insecure and feel that by dressing in that way, it gives them a sense of security – by getting the attention, then they are in charge. They also feel that these girls dress the way they do because of peer pressure, wanting to 'fit in' and do what their friends are doing. In this way, they also construct their sexuality.

Taniel: *I think maybe they're insecure... they need the assurance... and by dressing like that... if they get attention... they'll have assurance.*

In the FGDs the participants demonstrate how the manner in which you dress can send out negative messages, which could lead to risk.

Kim: *According to the picture... er... things like that ... dressing like that... would say to guys... aye... I'm loose – he can do whatever, so it could be rape, risky behaviour and stuff like that.*

As Caitlin said, dressing in a certain way can give the wrong impression and suggest that one wants to be noticed:

Caitlin: *And those girls might have something good about them, but that's not the reflection that people get. So the way they dress is like... to get attention.*

Through the participants' views they have demonstrated a highly contested understanding that the manner in which these young women dress influences risky behaviour. In the same vein,

Bhana and Anderson (2013) write that some of the participants in their study suggested that an outfit which reveals too much flesh indicates an interest in sex. Society has set these standards and constructed these perceptions by which we live. So these participants conform to a socially constructed phenomenon, through the social construction of reality. The website sparknotes.com (2014) asserts that experiences and relationships with other people form the perceptions we have relative to reality.

4.5 Materiality, poverty and risk

Society places a lot of emphasis on materiality. In this study the participants demonstrate how some Coloured people live their lives fuelled by material goods, perhaps at times exacerbated by some degree of poverty – and how this materiality in turn has the ability to influence risky behaviour. In the discussion which took place in the FGDs, the following emerged:

Marcia: *I think Coloured girls do have a reputation, because it's very easy to get influenced by boys with cars and stuff. I've even seen girls jump in different cars and boys saying 'ooh... look at this!!' ...she likes cars. The boys with cars get all the women.*

Taniel: *In terms of Coloured boys... they will tell you that getting a Coloured girl is easy if you wearing a name-brand takkie or your outfit is... you got gold... in your mouth. It's like what most of the Coloured boys think. If they dressed nice, got a fresh haircut, gold in the mouth, a thick gold chain... if you got wheels [a car]... then I believe... the boys think it's easier to get girls. Coloured girls are drawn in by these material things.*

In the discussions the participants expressed their feelings of what the young Coloured women were attracted to. They strongly believe that most young women were influenced by appearances, especially when young men had cars, gold jewellery and name-branded clothing. Another attribute, according to the participants, was if these young men had gold in their mouths, they would be found appealing. They also mentioned that young men were aware of this and knew that it was easier to attract girls if they had all this materiality. Yarwood (2006) concurs with this belief, that much emphasis is placed on material possessions.

Nicole challenges the stereotype of only Coloured girls having a reputation, agreeing with Salo (2002) that stereotypes exist across all races and are not unique to Coloured people. She had the following to say in this regard:

Nicole: *Er... it's not only Coloured girls... it's all races. Because now... the only things that work for most people, is what you have... [meaning materiality]*

Samantha: *Yes, and a boy that walks in his N-10s (he has no car)... it will be very hard for him to get a girl... they [the girls] want to be cruising, you know.*

When I spoke to Samantha in the individual interview, this was the view she had on girls and the extent to which they will go to for materiality, whilst simultaneously placing themselves at risk: ... *the friend got a Lacoste, she can get a Lacoste from this boy that she's sleeping with- telling him aye... I need this- he'll tell her, OK, because you need that, let's do this and that.*

The participants say that some young women are attracted to boys for what they can get out of them. They are interested in gifts which must be fancy and money to buy clothing. They go so far as not even caring about boys' appearances, as long as they get what they want. Some young women may even be abused by these young men, who 'take care' of their needs, but will vehemently refuse to distance themselves from these relationships because of materiality. Marano (2014) asserts that power can negatively affect intimate relationships. Young women are mostly at the receiving end of various forms of harassment (Fineran, 2014).

Caitlin: *But then also I think... boys that have cars are also the ones that are movers. [they go around with other girls- are unfaithful]*

In Caitlin's response she speaks of unfaithfulness and how this can be related to risky behaviour. The boys that are 'movers' are going around with other young women, thereby placing themselves and others at risk of infections like STIs, including HIV and AIDS.

Below the girls demonstrate the dynamic of 'adequate and better', where these girls enjoy materiality, like cars, clothing, and gold, but when the stakes are raised they go for what is more appealing. Here you will see that they want to be spoiled with chocolates and flowers, but not just *any* chocolate or flowers, it must demonstrate being 'expensive', otherwise, it's not good enough. The same applies to cars – they don't want the rusty, old cars, they want the 'expensive- looking' cars.

Taniel: *When a boy has a car and has money and he can buy you stuff... (the girls get fussy)... on Valentine's Day, you don't want a Cadbury chocolate, you want Ferrero Rocher... a huge-'ass' teddy bear. Girls... A lot of girls will tell you that he's got a car, you know. It doesn't even boil down to looks anymore. You can be ugly... and you think... how does he get so many girls? Then you find... he has a car... even if he treats the girl like absolute 'shit'- like she's a piece of rubbish, she will run back to him... she gets to ride in the front seat and she doesn't have to take a taxi.*

Caitlin: *The ugly boys have the best cars and the handsome ones, they driving the rusty ones, so obviously, they not gonna choose it. Coloureds know they've been taken advantage of, they don't value themselves enough.*

Taniel: *A lot of Coloured girls are materialistic... It's those people... working at Engen... after the 'shut' [temporary employment-quick money]and you have a child...they can't afford to look after your child and they leave you... that's why there's so many single Coloured mothers.*

Here, these young women demonstrate how easy it is to fall into a bad situation through risky behaviour, and then you are left with the consequences, perhaps a child or worse still an infection.

Also, the participants indicated that some of these young women fall into a trap, believing these boys have money, but sometimes it's their parents' money. Then when they are tired of the relationship, they leave these young Coloured women and move on. In the individual interviews the participants also spoke about poor home circumstances that influence decisions to date men (referring to them as older guys) to get something out of them, like money, to get the things they cannot afford. This is indicative of the 'sugar daddy phenomenon' – young women who flaunt sexuality and enter into relationships for economic gain (Bhanaand Anderson, 2013). Some of the participants had the following to say in this regard:

Kim: *When they date older guys in their thirties and stuff... to get money and stuff like that.*

Taslyn: *Sometimes in the home when there's not enough finance, the girls look to these boys... they can get things from them. These boys will always give them money.*

The participants mention that home circumstances do influence this type of behaviour. These young women want things which their parents may not be able to afford, so they make these decisions without thinking of the negative consequences.

Layla: *It's materialistic... 'cause most people come from poor backgrounds and stuff- they go for older people- who have got money.*

Taniel: *When your parents are not financially stable and you feel that you wanna keep up, keep up with rest of the girls. You also wanna be looking nice- so you get yourself a 'sugar daddy'- those type of men expect something in return, where... you must sleep with them.*

Taniel is blatant in what she believes the relationship entails. In most cases, this is often a reality.

According to Jackson and Penrose (1993) the theory of social construction conceptualises the way society has influence over the way experiences, such as in this study – of materiality, interlinked with risk. Yarwood (2006) similarly asserts that Coloured people place a lot of emphasis on name-branded clothing, cellular phones and gadgets. In this discussion it was clear that girls are placing themselves at risk for the sake of acquiring goods to benefit their personal status, as well as using this materiality to assess the boys' potential as partners, despite the risks involved.

Risky behaviour has many influences. Sometimes these girls get themselves involved because of their poor economic status, as asserted by some of the participants. Similarly, Machel (2001) asserts that poor economic status leads to vulnerability in relationships, thereby adding to participants' perceptions in this regard. Girls' agency comes into question as they cannot assert themselves in decision- making, thereby becoming vulnerable to hegemonic practices in order to gain from these kinds of relationships. Sipsmaet *al.* (2013) assert that power imbalances are a reality. In their vulnerability, they often get caught up in behaviour which is risky. In the individual interviews, participants had the following to say:

Layla: *Most people who come from poor backgrounds and stuff, they usually go for guys... older people who have got money and can give them stuff that they don't have.*

Taslyn: *Sometimes in the home, when there's not enough finance, financial difficulties, the girls look to these boys... they can get things from them. These boys will always give them money.*

Marcia: *A lot of girls in my area are going out with boys that are selling drugs... so they get drugs for free... also money and clothing.*

The participants have demonstrated how vulnerable situations can place young women at risk. In the above excerpts, where home circumstances are poor, these young women will get themselves involved in relationships where expectations are evident. As these young women yearn for financial stability, they place themselves at risk. The risk presents itself in the form of risky sexual behaviour and substance abuse.

It is therefore perceived that the more poor or less fortunate the background, the more vulnerable young women are, to risky sexual behaviour (AkinyemiandOkpechi, 2011).

4.6 Dating, maturity and risk

Through the experiences of these young women and through the influence of society, they characterise and categorise boys according to their own beliefs and reality. In the following excerpts you will see how girls have constructed this social ideal in relation to the older guys being more mature, as opposed to the younger ones. These young women perceive a real man to be one who is mature; they don't have time for boys their own age. In the FGDs the following emerged:

Carol: *...they date older guys because the older ones are more mature about sexual stuff... the younger boys only know how to tell their friends... they did this or that.*

Leona: *... and they more mature- and they can show you things you didn't know...*

Megan: *I have dated an older guy... 24 years... because he understood me better. He didn't rush me into anything... he doesn't talk to his friends about everything that you're gonna do....*

Kim: *...It's maturity... young girls go out with older guys... So if you walk on the road, you don't wanna be seen with a small child... you wanna be seen with an older guy who knows his stuff.*

Taniel: *In terms of older guys 4, 5, 6 years older... it is maturity... also stability. They can buy you stuff... you can talk to them on an intellectual level... some have more understanding... With older boys, they don't really discuss... It's like with them, all of their friends are having sex... but if you a small boy who had sex with a girl... when you walking past, everyone's looking at you, you know. With small boys... it's an exciting thing to discuss, sex... we spoke about sex, we had sex... So that's also why girls go for older boys.*

According to the young women's experiences and observations with dating older boys or men, they know that there are expectations involved, mostly of a sexual nature. Therefore they place themselves at risk of physical danger. Placing oneself in a position of vulnerability leads to risk. There are consequences, like early pregnancy as well as the risk of infections, not to mention the tarnishing of their self-image. As Shisana *et al.* (2009) warn, the prevalence of HIV is higher where partners are 5 years older or more. Frank *et al.* (2008) also speak of the dangers or risks involved in dating older men, as they most likely may have had several sexual encounters, thus placing these young women at risk of infections. As these young women may be vulnerable due to a lack of basic resources, they may not be able to assert power in safe sex situations (Frank *et al.*, 2008). In this study the majority of the participants indicated that they would date someone older than them, because of their level of maturity and that they were able to hold decent conversations and were more experienced in all aspects of relationships.

Another poignant fact is that the girls are always the ones to get a bad reputation for engaging in risky behaviour, whereas the boys don't usually get categorised negatively – their reputations remain intact. In fact, for the boys it's about a conquest, a trophy, an accolade to be desired.

Taniel: *...Say you 15, he's 20... they say you having sex with him. I mean he's 20. What else is he expecting... It can tarnish your reputation in a way.*

Layla: *With smaller boys, they're immature and they don't understand anything... they don't know about stuff... With older guys, people see it as security and stuff. I would never date a boy that's the same age as me... 'cause I see it as me dating my younger brother. No! I would never want that.*

I spoke to the girls in the individual interviews, and most of them seemed to share the same sentiment. Younger boys are silly and the older ones are mature. These young women speak of their own experiences as well as what they have observed and are aware of:

Carol:... *These small boys are just 'daydown' [silly]... I kissed this one... I kissed that one... this one's an actor... no, that's just immature.*

Kim: ... *and younger people just want sex and stuff like that.*

Megan: ...*the respect that he gives me and... confidentiality. That's the main thing... honesty and all that. Just what a younger boy wouldn't do.*

Rashieda: *The maturity levels are higher- and the intelligence is higher also.*

Taniel: *I would [date] someone older than me, but 2, 4 years older than me. Not like 10 years... it's just too much. The expectations are there... because someone their age will be able to provide 'it' for them. So they gonna expect 'it' from you.*

Zai: *I am dating a older guy.*

Researcher: *Why do you prefer an older guy?*

Zai:*At first I didn't like him...then, I don't know... we just got attached all of a sudden and it's like 3 years now.*

Here the girls have demonstrated the risk involved in dating older guys. They may be more mature, understanding, intelligent – but the risks and expectations are there, according to the participants.

Within this structure of dating older men comes the 'sugar daddy' effect which the participants speak of, where these young women prefer to date older, more mature men in order to gain from it; perhaps they will buy gifts or even give them money. As the participants had mentioned in interviews, Dike (2004) also defines the 'sugar daddy phenomenon' as a relationship between an older man and a younger woman, who benefits from cash or gifts in exchange for sexual favours. This behaviour also places them at risk, as the expectations are great in return for the commodities they have provided. In the FGDs this is what some girls had to say:

Nicole: *I'll talk about the 'sugar daddies'... they [girls] don't have money... they just wanna be depending on someone else. They know that he's gonna give you money at the end of the month. He's getting paid...*

Taniel: *...You wanna be looking nice, you know, so you get a 'sugar daddy'... Those type of men expect something in return... Where... you must sleep with them... and a lot of them are married.*

The young women suggest that these risky relationships are short-lived, as these older men – 'sugar daddies' – will often go back to their wives.

However, these young women continue in these relationships and ultimately engage in risky sexual behaviour for these reasons: they want security, maturity, and they want to be taken care of, they want their needs to be met. In some instances this can be referred to as a practice called transactional sex, because they often receive cash or gifts in exchange for sex. Jewkes *et al.* (2012) assert that in transactional sex women are exposed to vulnerabilities like STIs and also violence.

4.7 Knowledge, sexuality and risk

Participants spoke of their knowledge of risky behaviour. In their responses, most of the participants indicated that they understood what risky behaviour entailed. A minority of the participants were unsure of their responses. Their responses were indicative of their observations and experiences as young Coloured women. In their responses, the participants speak of 'girls'. However, this term has the general connotation of innocence. Although I do not assume that they are not innocent, throughout the study I will refer to them as 'young women' and 'participants'.

Initially in the FGDs the participants were slow to respond; after some probing, most of the participants expressed their understanding and knowledge of risky behaviour as follows: taking drugs, alcohol, engaging in unprotected sex, taking chances – sleeping around, although you may not be conscious of your actions, putting yourself at risk, doing the wrong things, and basically engaging in behaviour which will have negative consequences.

The participants have demonstrated in their responses that they have knowledge and are aware of the outcomes of engaging in risky behaviour, where HIV and AIDS can be a consequence,

which is the focus area of the study. HIV infection and AIDS are rife globally. In the individual interviews the following emerged:

Leona: *It's like if you gonna go out and you know you gonna have sex, it's risky ...because you know you not carrying protection, you not on any injection or anything else.*

Kim: *...with sex, you can get pregnant, AIDS and stuff like that... not using protection.*

It is necessary to determine how these Coloured girls 'constructions of sexuality are related to sexual risk; to investigate how their knowledge or lack thereof influences risky behaviour. The young women in the study were not asked to directly explain or define their sexuality. However, in their responses they alluded to some understanding thereof. During the individual interviews the participants were asked if enough information was disseminated to them with regard to sexuality in their Life Orientation lessons, and most of the participants felt that they were well-informed, but that individuals ultimately made their own decisions, especially in their decisions to engage in risky behaviour.

These young women in the study suggest the use of various modes to demonstrate sexuality, and it can be by the way they dress. Montemurro (2014) revealed that women are stigmatised through the way they dress. As females, they want to feel attractive to the opposite sex. Through their interaction with their peers, both male and female, they discuss interests – such as attracting older male attention. The participants say that some young women flaunt themselves drinking alcohol, and feel that this is attractive to males. They want to be popular and feel accepted. They want to 'fit in' with their fellow peers. According to Gopaldass (2012, p.40) regarding sexuality it is also important to include boys in the discussion, with reference to "girls' experiences around heterosexual relationships and sex".

After speaking to these participants, their knowledge is discovered to be varied. In terms of receiving knowledge from parents, as well as at school, most times they prefer to make choices other than what they were taught to do. They continually engage in risky behaviour. In some instances, as previously mentioned in this chapter, to speak of sex or sexuality is taboo.

The participants demonstrate understandings of risky behaviour, asserting that most often the consequences are bad. It is for this reason that Carol mentions that some parents, like her own, discourage the use of drugs and other substances, as these can adversely affect your judgement.

This concurs with Heddenet *al.* (2012) that drug use is a major factor in sexual risk behaviour amongst females.

Some of the participants felt that they were knowledgeable, as they were taught enough in the Life Orientation curriculum at school. On the other hand, other girls felt that the knowledge they received was inadequate, even going as far as saying that the Life Orientation lesson is just 'free time' at school – they learn nothing and they can do as they please during this time.

In the FGDs the girls had the following to say:

Megan: *I would think that it [knowledge] starts at home. If your parents don't give you attention, love or affection... they go out looking for all of this.*

Nicole: *... and maybe because of unstable parents... and when you have strict parents... and then when you go out, then you just fly like a bird... Your parents know why they not letting you out...*

Leona: *... Girls that do all these things...they have over- protective parents... their parents keep them in the house... locked up one way... They look for excuses [to get out]... like going to church- when they do go out, they don't go to church... they end up kissing boys and then... the church girls are pregnant.*

Megan: *It doesn't mean... your parents haven't spoken to you about this ... you can see what's going on around you... and yet you'll still do it. So I think... they just wanna fit in.*

Caitlin: *...I don't think their parents are to blame ... Some don't have parents telling them- don't do this, don't do that... this is what's gonna happen... So the choice is left with you... whether your parents tell you; your teachers; your friends- whatever! You gonna take that opportunity to do what you want... the choice remains with you.*

Samantha:*Their parents never spoke to them about that- going out, doing drugs, wearing appropriate clothing....*

Most of the participants believe that those who engage in risky behaviour are aware of the consequences thereof. Sometimes they choose to go ahead, whilst others engage in this behaviour because of peer pressure and just wanting to fit in, despite being knowledgeable. The FGDs generated the following discussion:

Layla: *I would say they are aware, but sometimes it's just the insecurity, or the peer pressure, that empowers [sic – overpowers] their knowledge of what they doing... It's also rebellion. 'My mother said I mustn't do this- so OK... I'll show her... I'm gonna do this' even if I know what the outcome is.*

Taniel: *We learn it in Life Orientation... every year. They tell you 'don't have sex, use condoms, you gonna get AIDS, you gonna get STDs, you gonna fall pregnant.' And sometimes, girls... even though aware of that, use ... contraceptives and condoms as an excuse- 'oh, I'm on a contraceptive, we using a condom, I can have sex.'*

On the other hand, some girls felt that they are inadequately equipped to make informed decisions. They feel that there should be more done in order to equip them for the outside world. In the individual interviews the following transpired:

Carol: *They should be teaching us more. 'Cause what they teaching us now- is not even helping. Girls are just doing as they please...*

Leona: *They should add more ... 'cause some things they say, everyone knows it already... and like other things, they don't put in.*

Megan: *...because right now, it's just about studying and life... it's not more about sex... things we should know.*

Zai: *No, I don't think so. [regarding sexuality in Life Orientation lessons at school]*

Taslyn: *No, I think they should be doing more, 'cause like with Life Orientation, we all take it as a free period.*

According to the discussions, whether the girls have knowledge or not they will make their own decisions, irrespective of the consequences. It comes down to wanting to fit in, for acceptance, security and stability.

Samantha: *I think, they wanna learn from their own mistakes.*

Taniel: *They want to have the experience...*

In an attempt to express their sexuality, to show their partners or friends that they desire their acceptance, they sometimes even dress in a certain way to please them. In contrast to this belief, in America, young girls are actually encouraged to participate in a Purity Ball, where

they pledge to remain pure until marriage- and at this ball they are encouraged to dress in their best attire and attend with their fathers who are their dates for the evening, whereby the aim is to develop healthy relationships with the male figures in their lives. Here, they publicly, yet silently pledge to wait until marriage (DeRogatis, 2014). The Bible teaches that your body is the temple of God and that you should respect your body by not defiling it in any way. Many youth who are religious would have been taught about this in the scripture lessons they are taught both at home from their parents, as well as from religious leaders in the community. This thus creates conflicts between religious teachings and the experiences of young women.

In this regard, Caitlin had the following to say: *I think sometimes that it's more of them like proving to others, or possibly like sometimes... their boyfriends or friends want them to dress that way.*

Caitlin added that a boy's appearance could influence the way a girl carries herself around them, in order to gain attention:

Caitlin: *...we each at the prime of our teenage lives. Most of us all want that attention... from boys. So ... the first thing we look at is appearance. So if appearance is not good enough, we not even gonna bother.*

In this theme the girls have demonstrated how they construct their sexuality and what the influences are. They have shown how some of them feel the knowledge they have is sufficient, whilst other girls feel that they are lacking in knowledge to make informed decisions in life. This emerged in both of the FGDs as well as in the individual interviews. Some girls felt that parents should play a greater role in imparting knowledge to their children. We also find that these young girls continually place themselves in vulnerable positions, which puts them at risk. The participants have observed that some girls settle for less sometimes, in order to gain where they can. Singh (2013) asserts that young women continually place themselves in positions of subordination to men.

Some young women also display risky behaviour when they get involved sexually in relationships before getting to know their partners, and habitually proceed to move from one partner to the next, although knowledgeable of the consequences thereof, like STDs, including HIV.

Caitlin: *The 'first time' she [speaking of her former friend] said she didn't [that is, use protection]... and then, with her new boyfriend, I have no idea ... and then now, she's*

with another boy, my brother's friend. He's the type of boy that would just use you. He won't go out with you, if you not willing to have sex with him...

In Caitlin's response she makes it clear as to how some young women can easily fall into the trap of giving into male dominance. She speaks of this particular woman who knowingly involves herself in a relationship with a young man who asserts his power over young women. This young woman demonstrates her inability to assert agency in this relationship. Bhanaand Anderson (2013) assert that teenage girls comply with male power. Anderson (2011) also says, though, that girls can control male power over them and respond on their own terms.

4.8 Peer pressure, wanting to 'fit in' and risk

For most people, not only in the Coloured community, there is that desire to be accepted. In this study, the girls have indicated the various reasons why Coloured girls strive to be accepted and have a yearning for a sense of belonging. In so doing, however, they often place themselves in risky situations – because the need to belong sometimes has a price.

The girls indicated reasons such as peer pressure; just wanting to fit in; lack of attention from home; wanting to do what other people are doing – thereby placing themselves at risk. Risk because they get involved in relationships where perhaps there is an abuse of drugs; the risk of early pregnancy and infections such as HIV and AIDS; there can also be abuse of power, yet they continue to engage in such behaviour.

In the FGDs the following emerged through individuals' observations in society, as well as what they or their peers have experienced:

Leona: *'Cause they wanna be like their friends. They always wanna do what their friends are doing. So the friends is having sex... you also wanna try it.*

Layla: *... there's a lot of reasons why... it could be peer pressure because everybody's doing it... and everybody's behaving that way... so let me go with the flow.*

Taslyn: *Some of them... they looking for attention... Also... some of them are just looking for fame and popularity.*

Caitlin: *... Let's be honest – if you go out and your friends have someone, one of us is definitely gonna feel left out or something... and then when they look at you.... In the*

club – they don't look at you, to say well... oh... she's decent. They looking at you to see if they can get a try with you – and if they can take it beyond that which you actually giving... I think everyone wants a boyfriend. Come on guys...

Layla:*It's the insecurity, or peer pressure... but they still do it. No 'cause I wanna be in the times, go with the flow – I wanna be like everybody, I don't wanna be this one person singled out. No! I rather go with everybody – and do what they doing, just because they doing it.*

Taniel: *... you know... it's a lot of the time when parents are not financially stable and you feel that you wanna keep up with the rest of the girls.*

In the individual interviews the girls voiced their personal opinions as to why they think girls engage in risky behaviour and the lengths they go to for acceptance.

Carol: *... Most of the friends are doing it and they just wanna be like them and fit in.*

Leona also agrees that girls just want to fit in with what their friends are doing.

Kim says perhaps it's past experiences that influence girls to get involved in risky behaviour – and thus be accepted.

Kim: *... maybe they have a bad background... nobody to like tell them and stuff or maybe it's just for the fun of it, to be popular or something or attention.*

Megan feels that peer pressure has a great influence and that girls will do anything to please their friends, especially if their home circumstances were unstable – they are driven to risk.

Taslyn: *They not getting attention, love, affection, from parents.*

Desiree: *They might be having problems at home... or with their partners, maybe they just looking for attention.*

Megan: *Peer pressure... um... parents that aren't always at home, don't treat them right... stuff like that.*

Layla: *Sometimes it's peer pressure, sometimes, you don't know what somebody's going through at home – maybe they might feel like they not good enough and stuff, so they find something to make them feel good about themselves...*

Zai: *I think girls just do it... not even the fun ... maybe 'cause I'm a virgin and my friend's not a virgin – she's doing things, I like the way – how she acts and stuff... I also wanna do that. So she'll also wanna do what her friends are doing. So that is why most of them do what they doing.*

Marcia: *Maybe peer pressure or they just wanna fit in with their friends.*

Rashieda: *Um... I think that... it's peer pressure... they want to impress their friends.*

Samantha: *They doing it because they want to be with their friends, in the same group as their friends...*

Taniel asserts that these girls get themselves involved, leading to risky behaviour, to make their boyfriends happy – to please them: *...sometimes to please a boy and because sometimes... they want to do other things (other than kissing).*

Caitlin: *... they don't have self-worth... they willing to just take whatever comes along...*

This theme consolidates these participants' opinions of why these Coloured girls engage in risky behaviour. They have illustrated the various reasons for these decisions. However, when these girls make these decisions, they are often unaware of the risk attached. They often become vulnerable when they seek attention which they feel they are not receiving at home from their parents and family. We have also seen how wanting to fit in and be accepted by peers can often lead to risky behaviour, just for the sake of wanting to fit in. In some instances though, they will often regret these kinds of decisions, as mentioned in the FGD excerpts below:

Nicole: *Maybe their parents can't give them what they want to have... but then... they doing that because they think they have to. So maybe they will regret doing that.*

Marcia: *...Yes they do regret it.*

Desiree: *I think some may have regrets... when they find themselves in a situation they not happy in. [The other girls agree]*

Taniel: *Sometimes they do regret it because there is a stigma attached to it...*

Caitlin: *So like... some may have regrets... it depends on your situation then... where you find yourself...*

Through the participants' experiences and observations, there are various reasons which encapsulate why the Coloured girls in this study place themselves at risk because they want to be accepted. According to the participants in some instances these girls may not be conscious of the risk they place themselves in, such as wanting to fit in with peers and doing what they do – even just looking for attention because they feel they are neglected at home; a sense of a lack of their needs being fulfilled; the father figures may be absent, or there may be underlying problems of perhaps, abuse which prompts risky behaviour.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, through analysis of the data collected, the aim was to obtain answers to the critical questions. In doing so, data was organised yielded were quite immense. Through this thematic approach understanding the data was more effective in response to the critical questions of the study.

In the first theme, information about substance abuse was obtained, which was relevant to risk, as participants spoke about their personal experiences and their observations.

In the second theme, although the participants were not asked to define what Coloured is, in their responses they referred to Coloured people as prompted by the questions asked in the interview schedule.

The third theme seemed to have really got them going, as this had formed part of the introduction to this study. The participants responded to a stimulus, which was a picture of young girls. They were asked to comment on the way the girls were dressed and the message that it sent out to observers.

The fourth theme divulged excitement in responses, as they were asked about the aspects which attracted girls to boys, with relevance to risk. Their responses were unanimous with regard to the materiality of Coloured girls.

The responses in the fifth theme yielded responses which were also unanimous. The participants were asked about how they felt about dating boys who were their age as well as older, more mature guys.

The sixth theme discussed knowledge, sexuality and risk. Their responses were divided in this theme. Some of the girls felt that the Life Orientation curriculum provided sufficient knowledge for them to make informed decisions and others disagreed.

Finally, in the seventh theme the discussion hinged on acceptance and the risk involved. The participants spoke about the lengths young women would resort to for acceptance, as though oblivious to the risks involved.

In the following chapter I will conclude the study by summarising the main findings and making some recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I consolidate the main findings of this entire study in a meaningful manner, and thus add to existing knowledge and literature in this respect. This study began with an introductory chapter that sought to introduce the topic and the critical questions that formed the backbone of the study. I present a brief summary of the broad methodology and methods used to generate data in response to my three critical questions, and then summarise the main findings and implications of the study.

The critical questions addressed in the study were:

1. What are Coloured high school girls' understandings of risky sexual behaviour in the context of HIV and AIDS?
2. Why do Coloured high school girls engage in risky sex despite their awareness of the risks of HIV and AIDS?
3. How are Coloured high school girls' constructions of sexuality related to sexual risk?

The study was located within an interpretivist paradigm, to make meaning of participants' points of view in their understanding of the phenomena (Deetz, 1996). I used the qualitative method of research to give voice to participants and to discuss their experiences and observations (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

The main findings of the study were discussed within the following themes: substance abuse and risk; Colouredness and risk; women, dress and risk; materiality, poverty and risk; dating, maturity and risk; knowledge, sexuality and risk; and peer pressure, wanting to 'fit in' and risk.

5.2 Main findings of the study

In this section I attempt to deal with each critical question and then detail the findings as discussed with the participants in this study. I also attempt to include literature which my findings either concur with or oppose.

The first critical question was: *What are Coloured high school girls' understandings of risky sexual behaviour in the context of HIV and AIDS?*

From the participants' responses, it appears that they are aware of what risky behaviour is. They gave responses such as some mentioning that they smoked 'weed'; engaging in unprotected sex while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which leads to infections like HIV and AIDS; and substance abuse, taking drugs and alcohol. Although these young women knew what risky behaviour was, some of them had indulged in these types of activities and, from their responses, some are continuing to do so. Some participants stated that they drink alcohol and feel that they can control themselves.

Some of the literature which supports knowledge of risky behaviour includes Marston and King (2006) showing that teenagers are aware that they engage in risky sexual behaviour. They give in to male dominance and do not insist on condom use because this is negatively perceived. Ndebele (2012) asserts that teenagers have a vast amount of knowledge which is relevant to HIV and AIDS, but in contrast, some knowledge falls short. Teenagers are more informed now than in the past, and their awareness has increased (Hall, Holmqvist, Simon and Sherry, 2004).

Literature on lack of awareness amongst teenagers suggests that knowledge is limited in terms of information and the ability to negotiate safer sex practices. Ndebele (2012) cites in this regard Sarker *et al.* (2005) Bareden- O'Fellon *et al.* (2004) Pettifore *et al.* (2004) and Macintyre *et al.* (2004). In other words, the finding was that these Coloured high school girls had knowledge of risky behaviour but that there are still gaps considering that some young women and teenagers at large were still engaging in risky behaviour.

The second critical question in the study was: *Why do Coloured high school girls engage in risky sex, despite their awareness of the risks of HIV and AIDS?*

The responses received were varied in this regard. The participants spoke of personal experiences and peer observations. Some of the reasons cited were peer pressure, as these young women had a desire to fit in with the 'incrowd'; another reason was that instead of being leaders, they were followers – as some participants stated that because some of their friends were engaging in risky behaviour, they wanted to follow suit. Because of poor economic home circumstances, some young women felt that because certain things were lacking, if they got involved in relationships where their needs could be met, then this was acceptable. They get involved in transactional sex practices whereby sex is exchanged for cash or goods. In these instances, they most often get involved with older men or 'sugar daddies', resulting in inter-generational sex – young women dating older men. This leads to risky behaviour, because in

such relationships young women cannot assert agency. The men they date are dominant in the relationships and usually have a history of multiple sexual partners, placing these young women at risk.

Most of the participants indicated that they would never date someone who was the same age as they were. They felt that these young men were immature and would always divulge personal information about their relationships. They would rather date someone who was at least 4 years older than they were. They felt that mature men had more experience and knew how to handle relationships. Also, older partners would provide for their material needs. Thus, poor economic status was also influential in young women continuing to engage in risky behaviour.

The findings concurred with some literature in this regard. Jewkes *et al.* (2012) state that transactional sex exposed young women to vulnerabilities of STIs, and alcohol was strongly related to transactional sex (Hedden *et al.*, 2012). Peers influenced risky behaviour (Potard, Courtois and Rusch, 2008). Bhana and Anderson (2013) speak of economic status leading to the 'sugar daddy' phenomenon. Power imbalances exist in relationships (Dunkle *et al.*, 2004). Young women are powerless in negotiating condom use (Alain, Hong and Van der Wiljst, 2013). However, in the interviews there were some young women who said that even if they had alcohol, which was the minimum, they would still be able to assert agency in the relationship, meaning that these young women would still be in control of their actions and decisions they make.

Ndebele (2012) cites Brook *et al.* (2006) who asserts reasons why young women may continue to engage in risky behaviour, and mentions the following: families, where there are poor value systems such as poor parenting, with a lack of authority; absent parents due to work obligations, and the younger children being looked after by their older brothers and sisters. Often these older siblings are poor role models as they sometimes engage in behaviours which are risky. So these children notice this type of behaviour and the cycle continues. According to Katz and Low-Beer (2008) cited in Ndebele (2012) one of the main causes of HIV spreading at an alarming rate is these young women who continue to date older men who have a history of multiple sexual partners. So these young women are placed at increased risk of infection.

The third critical question was: *How are Coloured high school girls' constructions of sexuality related to sexual risk?*

Most of the participants attributed inappropriate dressing to risky behaviour. The participants spoke about this being a way for these girls to construct their sexuality. They also spoke about drinking alcohol and dressing inappropriately as a means of them portraying themselves as available, thus leading to risky behaviour, as they may be taken advantage of. In this condition, their decision making is compromised.

Very important is the fact that most of the participants said that in the area of sexuality, not much is being done at schools in the Life Orientation lessons to help them make informed decisions in the outside world. Most of the participants felt that this lesson was just free time spent in the classroom, because they did not learn much. Participants indicated that they were taught about careers and safety, and they were also taught about condom use, which they were already aware of. They were not warned about phenomena like transactional sex and 'sugar daddies', so that they could be forewarned of the dangers looming and thus distance themselves from such interactions. By the time they are in these situations there is not much they can do to avert adverse consequences. These participants conclude that more focus should be placed on sexuality at school level, as this is lacking.

Further literature regarding sexuality is a study by Peacock, Redpath, Westen, Evans, Daub and Greig (2008), which states that although South Africans are beginning to change their mind-sets regarding sexuality, both males and females place men in higher regard over women, asserting that the men are those responsible when it comes to decision making in sexual relationships.

Abuse and sexting are common phenomena in relationships with teenagers. The findings in the study concur with the literature, as these phenomena lead to risky behaviour. The lack of knowledge or information regarding sexuality, and the inability to negotiate and assert agency and power in relationships is one of the leading factors in risky behaviour.

5.3 Implications of this study

The findings of this study suggest that there is a need for direct and widespread education about sex and sexuality.

In view of this, parents should play a greater role in educating their children about risky behaviour and informing them of the dangers of outside influences. Voisin (2013) asserts that

when parents are involved, the chances of their teenage children engaging in risky behaviour will be reduced. If parents are open about sexuality and risky behaviour, this may reduce risk among teenagers. Sex, sexuality and risky behaviour are not easily discussed with parents. This mind-set needs to change.

Anderson (2013) states the importance of religion. Studies have shown that those who were exposed to religion would be less likely to engage in any behaviour which is risky. In view of this, the clergy, who include religious leaders like priests, pastors and ministers, amongst others, could play an influential role in the lives of our youth as they are the future leaders. Local churches could collaborate and create programmes which continually encourage abstinence. At some schools the learners get to sign a pledge of abstinence and they vow to remain celibate until marriage, so more of these programmes could be encouraged. However, this is where it often ends. Programmes of this nature should be on-going throughout their schooling as well as in local churches. Besides pledging abstinence, programmes could include activities which will occupy the free time of our youth, such as youth programmes which include field trips and fun activities, which can be chaperoned in order to be effective. Often, when teenagers are bored they get involved in behaviour which is risky, like drug abuse and risky sexual behaviour. Parents could also be encouraged to get involved in these programmes. If parents are involved, this will promote a sense of family and belonging, as this is lacking in many societies. The role of parents needs to be more influential in the lives of their children.

It is also clear that there is a need for stronger policy interventions around risky sexual behaviour and its consequences. The Millennium Development Goal for 2015, instituted by our President Jacob Zuma (2011) is a good initiative, as the goal is to reduce HIV infections by 75%. This is all well and good, but clearly the initiative to promote condom use has not been that effective; in contrast, it seems to have encouraged sexual activities, more so than reducing infections. I do not agree with condoms being handed out at schools, as this just exacerbates the problems that we are faced with.

Regarding condom use and HIV and AIDS, the youth do not appear to understand the ramifications of their choices to engage in risky behaviour. They have received knowledge at school about the risks involved when engaging in this behaviour, but it appears that this is insufficient. Perhaps another intervention needs to be addressed, and a suggestion is that during Life Orientation lessons volunteers or victims of this scourge of HIV and AIDS come and address these high school learners, so that they get to witness first-hand what this disease

entails. That is a suggestion, as we are aware that those infected should not be victimised; therefore they need to volunteer to address learners. The learners will also have to sign a letter of confidentiality outlining that they should not reveal the speakers' identities at any time.

Furthermore, since most of the participants have indicated that not enough is being incorporated into the curriculum regarding sexuality, as well as them not being taught enough to make informed decisions, the Life Orientation curriculum should be addressed to ensure that learners benefit from these lessons, and that it does not continue to be a 'free lesson' where no learning takes place. The topics must be relevant so that learners are more informed, which would mean that when these learners are faced with real challenges, they will be equipped to make informed decisions.

This study, although daunting, was an interesting journey. It gave me insight into many areas which otherwise would have remained unknown to me. My knowledge on this area of education has greatly increased. It was also refreshing to hear these young women's point of view during the interviews, as they had the opportunity to be candid in their responses.

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Appendix 1: Glossary of terms commonly used by Coloured people in the study area

Daydawn: To behave in a silly or stupid manner.

Shutdown: A form of temporary employment which is usually well- paid.

Cruising: To drive around.

Wheels: AReference to cars.

Loose: Girls who portray themselves as easily available to boys.

Skanky: This is similar to 'loose' but also referring to the manner in which some girls dress, usually showing off too much of their skin, wearing very short, tight or revealing clothing.

Appendix 2: Ethical Clearance Certificate



18 June 2014

Ms Karen M Christison (211561042)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/1516/013M

Project title: Exploring sexuality and risk amongst Coloured high school girls, in an era of HIV and AIDS

Dear Ms Christison,

Full Approval Notification – Committee Reviewed Protocol

This letter serves to notify you that your response to our letter dated 18 March 2014 in connection with the above study has now been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study.

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.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisor: Dr Shaklia Singh
cc School Administrator: Mr Thoba Mthembu

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4809 Email: nicibac@ukzn.ac.za / svymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohnp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010

100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Faculty Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix 3: Gate-keeper Consent Letter

54 Assegai Crescent
Austerville
Durban
4052
31 July 2013

The Principal
Southdale High School (A pseudonym)
Wentworth
Durban

Dear Sir

Re: Consent to conduct research at your school

I, Mrs K.M. Christison, a part-time student at the University of Kwazulu Natal (Edgewood Campus), do hereby request permission to conduct research at your school. I am currently studying towards my Master's Degree in Education, Gender studies.

My research topic is: Exploring sexuality and risk amongst Coloured high school girls in an era of HIV and AIDS.

My focus is on a group of 16 to 18 year old Coloured girls. I will therefore need to engage with learners from your school, who fit the criteria. I will require a sample size of 12 girls. Please bear in mind that due to the sensitive nature of my study, I will ensure that confidentiality and privacy is maintained at all times. Important is the fact that the name of your school will not be used during my research, for the sake of anonymity. Furthermore, these learners have the choice to withdraw from my study at any time.

Research will not interfere with contact teaching time, but at the participant's convenience and with written consent from them and their parents. All discussions will be recorded and the details thereof will remain confidential. I would like to conduct my research on the

school premises. Therefore, I humbly request that you please avail a classroom for this purpose. Your co-operation in this regard will be highly appreciated.

The success of my study will depend on your co-operation and that of your learners. Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact my supervisor or me. Our contact details are listed below.

Thank you in anticipation of a favourable response.

Yours faithfully

Mrs K.M. Christison

Email; karenchristison@gmail.com

Cellular: 084 502 2362

Student number: 211561042

Proposed qualification: M.ED (Gender Studies)

UKZN- EDGEWOOD CAMPUS

Supervisor: Dr. Shakila Singh

Email: singhs7@ukzn.ac.za

Telephone: 031 260 7326

The research office contact number: 031 260 3587

Appendix 4: Informed Consent letter for parents



Dear Parent

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Karen Christison. I am a student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, currently studying towards a Master's Degree in Education. For the purpose of my study, I am required to conduct research and have selected your daughter to participate in my study.

The topic of my study is:
Exploring sexuality and risk amongst Coloured high school girls in an era of HIV and AIDS.

Your daughter's participation in my study would involve an interview, both in a focused group as well as an individual interview. There is a possibility that the interview will be audio-recorded. I promise to ensure confidentiality and anonymity throughout the entire process. Your daughter's name will not be used. Participants have the right to withdraw at any time, without any negative consequences. Please be advised that although your daughter has agreed to participate in my study, it is not assumed that she, as an individual, is engaging in risky sexual behaviour. I am merely seeking her insight and point of view.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, my supervisor or the Research Office, at any time, should you have any queries regarding the research.

Our contact details:

I can be contacted as follows:
karenchristison@gmail.com
Tel: 031 4683703

My supervisor's contact details are:
singhs7@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 2607326

You may also contact the Research Office through:
P. Mohun
HSSREC Research Office,
Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (full names of parent) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to my daughter participating in the research project.

I hereby *consent/ do not consent* to an audio recording of the interview. (Please mark your selection with an **X**)

I understand that my daughter is at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should she so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT

DATE

.....

.....

Appendix 5: Informed Consent for participants



Dear Student

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Karen Christison. I am a student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I would like to invite you to participate in a study that I am undertaking.

A brief description of the study follows:

Title: Exploring sexuality and risk amongst Coloured high school girls, in an era of HIV and AIDS.

Through the use of interviews, I hope to gain your insight and understandings of Coloured girls engaging in risky behaviour in this era of HIV and AIDS.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- Your identity will not be revealed in writing or otherwise. Pseudonyms will be used to ensure complete anonymity. You will be informed of the date and time of your interview.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference. Also be aware that the interview will be audio-recorded.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research at any time. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- The results of the study and any publications arising from the study will be offered to you, should you wish to view the outcome of the study.
- The study is not designed in to create any stress or anxiety but if your participation gives rise to any anxiety or stress then you may contact the psychologist who is based at the Edgewood campus: Ms Lindi Ngubane. Her telephone number is 031 2603653 and email address is ngubanel@ukzn.ac.za.

I can be contacted as follows:
karenchristison@gmail.com
Tel: 031 4683703

My supervisor's contact details are:
singhs7@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 2607326

You may also contact the Research Office through:
P. Mohun
HSSREC Research Office,
Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I hereby *consent/ do not consent* to an audio recording of the interview. (Please mark your selection with an X)

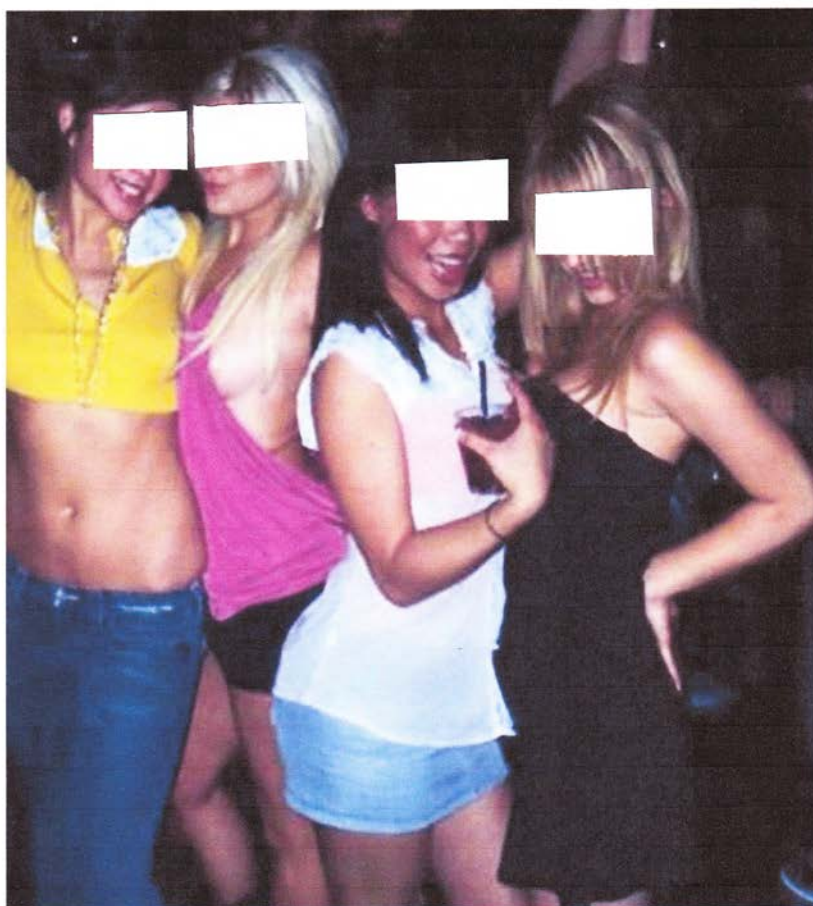
I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Appendix 6: Stimulus Picture (focus group discussion)



Appendix 7: Interview schedule -Focus Group Interview

1. Now, when you look at this picture, what comes to mind immediately?
2. Why do you say so?
3. What message do you think these girls are sending out to us?

- 4.1 What do you understand by risky behaviour?
- 4.2 What are the forms of risky behaviour that girls engage in?
- 4.3 Why do you think they do so?
5. This may sound clichéd, but do you think that Coloured girls have a reputation for engaging in risky behaviour?
6. Why do you say so?
7. Are Coloured girls aware of the consequences of risky behaviour?

8. Do you know of any girls who date older men? Why do you think they do this? Have you done this before?
9. If you know of anyone in this situation, do you think they have any regrets?

Appendix 8: Interview Schedule - Individual interviews

Comment [L1]: move to where it belongs

1. So, how old are you and what grade are you in?
2. Where do you live?
3. Do you live with your parents?
4. Do your parents work? What work do they do?
5. How would you describe your parents: are they strict or easy-going?
6. Have your parents set a curfew for you? In other words, do you have a certain time that you should be home at night?
7. Perhaps you were overwhelmed by the group discussion, now is your opportunity to be openly forthcoming in your responses. Do you understand what risky sexual behaviour is?
8. Do you think that Coloured high school girls have a reputation for engaging in risky sexual behaviour?
9. How does this make you feel? Do you or any of your friends have a boyfriend? Have any of you engaged in any sexual activities? Was it mutual or was anyone pressured into anything?
10. Have you or your friends ever used drugs or alcohol? How did it make you or them feel? Was participation voluntary?
11. Have you or any of your friends had more than one sexual partner? Was protection used?
12. How does this make you feel? Is this behaviour acceptable for girls in school or in the community at large?
13. How would you describe your family and home circumstances? Do your parents provide all your needs? Do they give you the things that you like?
14. Would you ever date a guy older than you? What would make you do this? Would you consider having sex with a guy if he promises you the 'world'?

15. What type of guys do you like? Do you prefer a gentleman or someone rough- a bad boy?
16. Regarding sexuality, do you think that enough is incorporated into the curriculum for teenagers to make informed decisions?
17. Be that as it may, why do Coloured high school girls continue to engage in such risky behaviour?

Appendix 9: Focus Group Transcript

Focus Group 2: (Samantha, Taniel, Caitlin, Ally, Taslyn, Alexia, Desiree & Layla)

Researcher: We are recording now. Good afternoon girls and thank you for coming today. Now I need all of you to be honest in your responses and to really try and participate. Remember our commitment to confidentiality- you cannot take what is said in this room, out to anybody, ok? (Girls agree. Although they look a bit shy and perhaps intimidated by me). So lets begin. Have a look at this picture I brought and please pass it along (there are some pulled faces and giggles as the picture is circulated)

Question 1: Now when you look at this picture, what comes to mind immediately? Please say your name and continue.

Researcher: The way they dressed suggests that they are wild?

Taslyn: Yes.

Layla: I think that... the way they are dressed is making them look...um...How can I put it?... like they looking for things and it's making...and it's opening doors for them to be sex objects...Just by the way that they dressed.

Researcher: Next, your name please?

Samantha: I think they look very trashy and they taking the opportunity for their ex-boyfriends to see...or their boyfriends friends (laughter)...to see how they look.

Desiree: Um... I think it's very revealing and...(pause and laughter)...just to attract boys.

Taniel: I don't think they have any self-respect and they seeking attention. No matter how they get it...whether it's good or bad. As long as they get attention.

Caitlin: I think that they look very skanky and...(she laughs)... they looking for attention from boys as to like (smiling) maybe their faces are not that presentable so they see it body-wise (laughter).

Ally: Uhm...(pause)...To be honest...I thought that maybe they prostitutes or something (all the girls laugh)

Alexia: I think that it's prostitution and under the influence of drugs, that makes them do all the things they doing...showing the temple... the body of God...which they not supposed to...and... they just want the boys to touch what they can see and all (laughter).

Researcher: Ok, thank you for that. Now for our second question.

Question 2: Why do you say so? I think in your response to the first question you have also answered this question. But... is there anyone who wants to add any comments at this time? Don't forget your name.

Taniel: I think that maybe they're insecure...they need the assurance...and by dressing like that...if they get attention...they'll have assurance that they...would be.

Researcher: Are there anymore comments? (background talking) And your name?

Caitlin: I think that is what they want actually. Besides like...pressing and all. Maybe they are looking for it. And instead of actually asking someone for it...they rather show it. You know what I'm saying?

Researcher: Anyone else? (no response) So let's continue then with the next question.

Question 3: What message do you think, these girls are sending out to us? Again previous answers have included this one as well. Does anyone want to add though? (girls- NO)

So the next question is as follows:

Question 4: What do you understand by risky behaviour? Your name?

Caitlin: I think that when someone says 'risky behaviour'...they obviously gonna get that outcome of whatever you doing. So by them doing that... it's either rape, pregnancy, STD's or AIDS. Maybe...um...what's those things um... those Nigerian girls... (fiddling)...what's it called...oh ya...human trafficking maybe. (all laugh)

Researcher: Right. Anyone wants to add?

Layla: I think risky behaviour is as the name...the word...says. It's self-explanatory. Behaviour that's putting yourself at risk...putting your name...your...the way you present yourself and everything- at risk.

Researcher: Can you tell us what you think? Any idea?

Alexia: Like...(fiddling and unsure)...putting your life in danger...anything can happen to you...er... and ...I'm stuck (laughter). (**researcher**-that's fine)

Taniel: I think risky behaviour is putting yourself in a situation that could only have a negative outcome that could either have short term effects or long term effects.

Researcher: Your name and what you think it is.

Taslyn: For me... it's like risky behaviour is...just like putting yourself in danger with drugs, sexual things and that.

Researcher: Any other responses?

Samantha: I think that you can get yourself involved in something that you won't know of and you can be with friends and take drugs...they can know about the drugs and be experts about

it...you a first-timer...and they can say that...and take you to someone... thinking they can buy from you and sell you to this person...and you can go with them...They think you selling, just by what you wearing.

Desiree: Um... risky behaviour is putting yourself in danger without knowing...like in case you take drugs...and you don't know what the outcome will be...and you don't know what can happen.

Taniel: Can I say something else? (laughter). (**Researcher- yes you can**). Taking a risk- there's a 50/50 chance that sometimes nothing can happen to you and you can come out of there... and on the other side, something bad can happen. So taking a risk, for instance- having sex could be like...you could just come out of there having a pleasurable experience or you could fall pregnant. So that's a bad idea. You actually...sometimes nothing will happen to you, but other times it can affect you.

Researcher: Right.

Ally: I would say...I'd also say its taking chances, there's a risk of you getting STD's um... AIDS and all these things. So behaving like that can get you these things.

Researcher: My next question then: **What are the forms of risky behaviour that girls engage in?** Here, as well, this part has already been answered, so the last part of this question is: **Why do you think they do so?** So why do you think girls would put themselves at such risk, by engaging in such behaviour- why do you think?

Layla: Ok...sometimes there's...there's a lot of reasons why...It could be peer pressure because everybody's doing it...and everybody's behaving that way...so let me go with the flow. Or it could be...most of the time, there's a story behind the story. A few years back or when they were still small, they were maybe molested or they been told that they good for nothing or they...aye. So they insecure. Now they want that sense of security. So the only way...the only way that they see it possible...is behaving in that way...doing these things and indulging in such stuff.

Researcher: That's right.

Caitlin: I think sometimes...that it's more of them like proving themselves to others, or possibly like sometimes... their boyfriends or friends want them to dress that way. So they do it and then also... like in terms of having sex like all the time...it's maybe that they don't get that love or affection. They see it as the only way. And maybe they want to keep that person with them...they keep doing what they ask them. They don't think of themselves first. Sometimes after they do it...and like their relationship has ended, they start to regret whatever they have done.

Taniel: I think sometimes...people like just have sex, do drugs for the fun of it... and to say that you've gained experience- you've done the deed...and you've been there, done that, got the t-shirt stuff like that. So I just think um...sometimes you do things to have fun...you drink, take drugs, to feel how it is...experience it...ya.

Taslyn: Some of them...they looking for attention (sneezes), that's why they do it. Also, also...some of them are just looking for fame and popularity. To be known as ...oh she's the girl that does this and she's the 'it'. She's the...I can't say the word (mumbling). Yes ...you do get a bad reputation. Some of them don't want to be known as the girl doing the right thing. Yet they see it better as the girl doing the wrong thing.

Researcher: Just be honest and straightforward girls- this is uncensored. I'm not here to judge you.

Taslyn: I wanted...I wanted to say that um...they say like I'm the 'shit'- the 'it' girl...so that's what they think.

Caitlin: I think like...right now...we each at the prime of our teenage lives. Most of us all want that attention from...um...how can I say it...like...boys. So sometimes you know, obviously for each one of us, the first thing we look at, is appearance. So if appearance is not good enough, we not even gonna bother. And those girls might have something good about them, but that's not the reflection that people get. So the way dress is like...to get attention. But then also,they looking for like maybe.. their friends are good looking and stuff- and they have a boyfriend. So obviously, when they go out...they don't wanna be left out by 'holding candles' (laughing) and we just sitting there. So they do stuff to get attention because honestly...let's be honest- if you go out and your friends have someone, one of us is definitely gonna feel left out something. And then guys...when they look at you, for instance in the club- they don't look at you to say well...oh...um she's decent. They looking at you to see if they can get a try with you. And if they can take it beyond that which you actually giving. You want to give in...you want to give and something. And um...sometimes I think its like- how can I put it. as a girl, I wouldn't wanna give myself away that easily. But then, people also have their reasons for the stuff that they are doing. We may not understand it, but we judge them. I am a victim of that. I judge people by the way they present themselves...and the also...they LIKE to have sex, we don't know. Maybe they like it, they want to be with Tom, Dick and Harry- they want to do it. so maybe um...I don't know, you know that saying: once tasted, never wasted (girls start laughing). They keep wanting to taste it (laughing)

Taniel: It can be rebellion...um..rebellion against their parents and all that. It then also boils down to...it ...it...at the end of the day...it all boils down to attention. Attention is attention- as long as they get what they want.

Researcher: Anyone wants to add? (there's some mumbling). You said you don't actually get the question? The girls that are engaging in risky behaviour, why are they doing that?

Samantha: Because their parents never ever spoke to them about that, going out, doing drugs, wearing the appropriate clothes. Well the clothes...

Researcher: So you saying it's a lack of knowledge.

Samantha: Yes, but...clothes of today... is those crop tops, tights, fancy short things. Us ...all of us...we all wear it (**Participant:** Not me- I can't afford it) (laughter).

Caitlin: Can I add something- I also think like with girls...everyone wants to feel...you know...nobody wants to be left out in today's fashion. I don't really think the parents are to blame, because some parents, some people... they don't have parents always telling them- you know what- don't do this, don't do that. Don't do this...this is what's gonna happen. You can use people as perfect examples around us... to see exactly what happens when they do go in that direction. So- the choice is left with you...whether your parents tell you, your teachers, your friends, whatever- you gonna take that opportunity to do what you want- to feel...I don't know how to put it. But then it...you gonna get the bad outcome of it. so um...it doesn't matter who tells you what or whatever. The choice remains with you. So if you gonna do- because you want to- then do it. But afterwards, don't be like...you know...I shouldn't have done it or whatever. Ok. Because there's lots of girls that are like that. Afterwards, they wanna blame the boys for rape and taking advantage of them and yet they giving themselves willingly.

And then you know also, like...the way I see it... these days, boys don't even worry about the decent girls. They look for girls that are skanky...and then I think that's what also makes the decent girls do the wrong stuff, because they want...I think everyone wants a boyfriend. Come on guys. (girls laughing).

Researcher: That's right. (clears throat)

Caitlin: So they do the stuff with them. When you think of it- when I look at it...like in my situation. If I do all that stuff now...when I'm older- what exactly will I be- when I think back and say...aye...you slept with so many boys, 10 boys maybe, in one month and then boys too- they also culprits, because they lie to girls. But then the girls are stupid enough to believe them. I'm not saying your boyfriends don't love you and whatever else. We may never truly know- only you two know. But like...before you do something, just think about it properly and don't think with your (I don't wanna say it). **Researcher:** say it.

Whoever is doing stuff guys- I'm not judging you...I'm just laying it out. Um...don't think with your 'noonoo' and stuff (girls laugh), you know. Afterwards- I know everyone says it got power. I don't know...but you know what...

Researcher: Is that what they say? (girls- yes, laughing). **Researcher:** really? I need to know more about that.

Caitlin: To put it nicely, every girl has a 'noonoo', right? So that boys can...boys are greedy you know- they can eat you. You don't even know if the same boy's eating you, you or the next person. So if you doing this stuff, at least get protected. You don't want to have regrets and have those funny sores on your private. You don't wanna look at it yourself- or can't wear panties and stuff. Just...look after yourself. That's all I can say. So those girls, they not looking after themselves. They just...like the feeling, you know. (laughing). We all teenagers, we all gonna want the feeling, maybe just wait- you know, just a little while, you don't know the boy. Just wait until you mature enough to say well...you know what you doing- and if you do fall pregnant or if you get an STD, how you gonna tell your mother. 'ma- I got something on me'. It will be hard to even get it out. Your mother's gonna ask...like what were you doing and so forth. So be a bit mature and financially stable- mentally. When it does happen- you can take

yourself to the doctor. Or even if you get a child, you can look after it yourself, even if the boy leaves you and whatever else. You know you can stand on your own two feet. Because sometimes girls only do that to get a boy. I don't know how it works. They think a lot about how they gonna catch a boy. But that child, when you think about it... that boy is only there when they cute and all- you know. And then once they want to, they sending that child packing- to his mother and stuff. Then it's not about you'll two anymore. I'm a selfish person, so I wouldn't want a child to be in my relationship with a boy, 'Cause then now, that child's gonna get more attention than me. I wouldn't want that. So...ya.

Researcher: Ok, is there anyone else? (**Participant:** aye, I just like this topic- laughing). You learnt a lot? I'm learning myself, as well. Ok, so the next question might open up a can of worms, but here goes:

Question 5: This may sound cliché, but do you think that Coloured girls have a reputation for engaging in risky behaviour? You know people look down on us- so do you believe this statement to be true- in your heart of hearts?

Taniel: From an outside opinion...I mean...um...a lot of Coloured boys will tell you that it's harder to throw up a Coloured girl and that white girls are easier. That's like...the stigmata you know.

Researcher: Oh, ok.

Taniel: But er... in terms of Coloured boys...they will tell you that getting a Coloured girl is easy if you wearing a name brand takkie or your outfit is...you got gold, gold in your mouth...

Researcher: You saying if the boys are all dressed like this, then the girls will willingly and easily give in.

Taniel: Ya, you know, that's like what most of the Coloured boys think. If they dressed nice, got a fresh haircut, gold in the mouth, a thick gold chain... (**others talk about the cars**). Yes, yes! Or- if you got wheels...it's gas or ass (laughter)...stuff like that. Um...if you got that, then I believe...the boys think it's easier to get girls. Coloured girls are drawn in by those material things. (**Researcher-** oh, ok?). It's easier to get a Coloured girl when you have all those things.

Samantha: Yes... and a boy that walks in his N-10's (laughing- girls saying: you just like to talk). A boy that walks in his N-10's... it will be very hard for him to get a girl.

Researcher: When you say N-10's, you mean they don't have a car, they are walking? (**girls- YES**). So that's not on, they don't like that? (**girls-** all agree by saying YES and nodding). Oh they want to be in a car.

Samantha: Yes. They want to be cruising you know (girls laugh).

Researcher: Ok...

Caitlin: I also think that like...you know...most Coloured girls- some are easy and some aren't. But the boys think that because they've experienced the easy ones...then when the get

to the ones that don't wanna give in easily, they quick to say you act for yourself, your standards are too high and all of that. But then it's...it's our choice and also for me, I don't think that it's just Coloured girls- it's all races. We never know- 'cause we don't mix with those races. (**Researcher**- OK). But like um... White girls, they have more of the revealing stuff, you know. They have it, they can flaunt it, you know. They have... like...they can wear shorts and stuff. And then, I don't really think Whites get stereotyped in a sense that they easy, when it comes to White boys. But then Coloured boys...um...as they mentioned the car...aye...er...ya...girls don't wanna walk anymore you know (laughing). They phone and say 'pick us up'. But then also I think...boys that have cars are also the ones that are movers.

Taniel: Also you see, when a boy er...has a car and has money and he can buy you stuff- and then- you want to er...On Valentine's Day, you don't want a Cadbury chocolate- you want Ferrero Rocher, you know. You want to...you want to be standing there like – you know in those pictures. The girls with the hundred roses and the huge ass teddy bear, or something like that. You want all of that. You don't want to be like...you don't want those roses you buy in school for R5, you know. So it's like they have a lot of material things- like they can show the boy- as he's walking. He's shining with gold- all of that type of thing, that draws Coloured girls. A lot of Coloured girls will tell you that- he's got a car you know. It doesn't even boil down to looks anymore. You can be ugly – and you think...how does he get so many girls? Then you find- oh he has a car, he has money, he dresses well and stuff like that. Even if he treats the girl like absolute 'shit'- like she's a piece of rubbish- she will run back to him, just because of that appearance- and that she gets to ride in the front seat- and she doesn't have to take a taxi, when she wants to go to Mr Price on the Bluff. (laughter- girls saying 'oohh...'). (researcher- OK).

Caitlin: As she mentioned, the ugliness and stuff, if you think of it, it's always the ugly boys that have the best cars and then the handsome ones, they driving these rusty ones. So obviously, you don't want to be seen in the rusty car. You not gonna choose it- and then I think also sometimes that Coloured girls know they been taken advantage of, they don't value themselves enough, so for the next person that comes along, they think they should just give themselves away as easy as they did the first time. So – ya. I think the girls with past experience will know.

Taniel: Now er... drinking, liking to drink- is associated with Coloured people. A lot of people think that all Coloured people- Coloured men Coloured women- love to drink and love to party- and if you go to clubs a lot. If you go to Roof-Top, you go to Tiger, you go to Boulevard, you mainly see Coloured people. So it's like- this girl, she's in the 'jol' all the time. She's drinking, she's getting dragged out of the 'jol'. She's hiring combi's with boys and all that- then she's easy. So that's also why Coloured girls are associated with having a bad reputation. Because a lot of us like to party, a lot of us like to drink- so it's like Coloured girls are loose...because they comping (going to the Compound) (laughter), and they going to the 'jol'.

Researcher: Gosh! That place still exists! (Girls- yes!!- laughter). Oh my word- down here? (Girls-yes!)oh...ok. (Alexia- That's the spot). And Coloured people go there? (girls- oohh yes! They braai and all there).

Taniel: Yes and on BBM. You'll see like if a girls chilling- on their 'DP' (Display Picture)- they all got some ciders in their hands or something like that. So that's how you can be portrayed as loose. (Girls laughing, saying 'YES, YES') (**Taslyn-** Where ciders- its beers!Laughing).

Caitlin: Also um..., you know... Coloured girls like... we not like... posh, you know, like those White people. So for instance, I stay in a flat, so when girls stand by those walls where everyone's writing and that, they immediately think that... you know...this one here- she's loose or a 'flat cat' ...or something like that. Also, not every person that er...drinks and likes to party, is loose. Some people can control themselves and they know the limit and then others...I don't know...obviously...some people say- I've heard a boy say that Smirnoff makes a girl 'jux'(feel sexy). I don't know. **Researcher:** Do a lot of boys say that? (Girls- YES!). And you know, when a boy sees how much you drinking, then obviously- ok- he's gonna come to you, 'cause he thinks- he feels that you're vulnerable. But if you the type of person, that got a strong mind, you gonna say 'no'.

Ally: Um... yes...er...Coloured girls, I do feel that also- other races, do have that reputation. But it's mainly us, it's because as Taniel said, that a few girls may be seen doing these things- these boys may have experienced activities with them- and the every other girl gets put underneath that umbrella. Oohh...Coloured girls are raw, Coloured girls are just loose, easy, every Coloured girl is just drinking and this and that and that. Which is actually not true. Yes and um...I know that 'cause I've experienced that myself...ya.

Researcher: Ok thank you Ally.

Taniel: You know a lot of the time um...like they say that White girls are more open about having sex. They'll tell you, 'I'm not a virgin'- I have sex. A lot of Black girls that I know, will even tell you what they do- and who they do it with. They have sex. But a Coloured girl- I have yet to meet a Coloured girl that will openly tell you that 'I have had sex and I'm er... not a virgin and all of that. So maybe... because Coloured girls hide it more... that they say that Coloured girls are not open and they'll say all the time that Coloured girls have sex, Coloured girls are raw,- because a lot of the time- they do it- but they won't be open about it. (**Girls-** YES, but they judge). They'll say no- I'm a virgin. Then 5 weeks down the line, they pregnant-but you a vigin. So a lot of the time...like White girls- I have a lot of White friends. They openly tell you- I have sex. First day I met them, I have sex, I'm not a virgin. I've done this, I've done this position, that position. They'll tell you, they open about it. people are not judgemental towards that. And I know that White parents will tell their children- ok- you 13, you having sex, here's your contraceptive. And it's like that- and here I know of people who go for contraceptives to the clinic, before school, after school or whatever they do. And with Coloured girls it's like- even in terms of parents- no Coloured parent will tell their child, here's

a contraceptive. They will never-if the child is having- NO! My child's not having- until your child falls pregnant.

Samantha: They'll tell you to stop it. How you gonna stop once you tasted it? (**Girls-** that's true- laughing).

Caitlin: Coloured girls- you know what's the outcome of having unprotected sex or whatever. I know a lot of boys who say they just wanna feel all of you or whatever else and they don't wanna use the condom. But you know what's gonna happen. Honestly speaking, if I must have sex and I know I'm still in school, I wouldn't even tell my boyfriend that I'm on a contraceptive, 'cause then he'll use it to his advantage. So I'd keep it in secret and I wouldn't still tell him. Honestly, if a boy really respects your wishes- he'd use that condom and he'd make sure that you and him are...you know...protected- and if he has these big dreams, like...I look for a boy with ambition. If he don't have it- sit in a corner. (girls- laughing). Honestly, you don't know how long you might end up with this person... and end up with someone that left school...then like really, you wanna make yourself rich and you know...like you wanna be happy with this nice job, fancy car and big house. Then you must be looking after a man...I don't think that's right. So ...um...the topic again? (laughter). (**Researcher-** do you think Coloured girls have a reputation?)

Yes, so um...Coloured girls also- like they don't...it's always the ones that are doing the stuff that judge the next person because they think the people that they judging...do not know about them. And then also...you know sometimes- you hear about girls doing this position, that position- ok...we understand, you know. I don't know, maybe it's nice. But um...like...think about yourself and the respect...you know...like if you gonna be getting things from the back or whatever else...that's dogs, that's dogs. But like...um...if you respect yourself, I don't think that you will get that reputation. Although people may say you are...but like...some girls...they get offended when people call them bitches. Which I think...if you know you not a bitch, why get offended. If nobody has anything on you, why get offended. You only get offended if these things are true, if people know your business. Girls don't like to say they having sex, I don't know why. They feel bad about it- but when they there doing it- it's all nice- fun times. Then when people talk bad- they like – oh, did you see me doing that? And whatever else.

Taniel: Like I said...you know...a lot of Coloured girls are materialistic, but you know what? It's those people that are working now...they are working at Engen for the six months and when they finished at the 'shut'(temporary employment)- and you have a child- and they can't afford to look after your child and then they leave you- and then that's why there's so many single Coloured mothers. Because you go for...the...better rate. You seeing he can buy all his friends liquor, he can buy you this- but for now he's working in the shut- and the 'shut' doesn't last forever...it's 6 months- and then for a whole 'nother year, he won't be in work- and then he'll leave you when he finds out you have a child- and you end up being a single mother, so if you look and you see boys who have cars and gold chains...it's their parents money. So you getting excited by all of that until its...it's no longer there and you left stuck with this child.

He's left with his gold chain- no ambition, no education, no work, then all your'll have is those pictures of when your'll went to Tiger or your'll went to Roof-Top and a good time.

Researcher: Aye...ok. You've said...you had an opinion? Ok- name?

Layla: Hmm...(clears throat). I would say...yes...that Coloured girls do have a reputation. It's this concept that one rotten fruit or rotten egg- upsets the rest. So just one or a minority of the girls doing the wrong thing and acting loose and stuff like that- will categorise all the Coloured girls under this one category- just because of a few girls doing their own thing.

Researcher: Ok...we getting there, we almost done. Right, so the next question. Which it seems has been answered. **QUESTION 6: Why do you say so?** Anyone wants to add though? (Girls- NO).

Question 7: Are Coloured girls aware of the consequences of risky behaviour? Are they aware- do you think? Don't forget your name.

Layla: I would say- Yes, they are aware, but sometimes it's just the insecurity or the peer pressure that empowers their knowledge of what they doing- is gonna end up been negative- having a negative effect on them. But they still do it. No, 'cause I wanna be in the times, go with the flow- I wanna be like everybody. I don't wanna be this on person singled out. No I rather go with everybody and do what they doing, just because they doing it. Not that I have to know why they doing it. Just so, I can go and have a fun time. I can say I've been there, done that- kind of stuff. And also um... (whispering- and laughter). Question again?

Researcher: Are Coloured girls aware of the consequences of risky behaviour?

Layla: Yes also, um... what I wanted to say? They know about it- but still- they see like- oh...let me just do it. Also, rebellion, ok. My mother said I mustn't do this- so ok...I'll show her...I'm gonna do this- even though I know what the outcome is.

Taniel: Like they said- a lot of Coloured people's parents...don't really tell them about um...sex. Sex is like taboo. We learn it in LO almost every year. They tell you in LO every time...don't have sex, don't have sex, use condoms, use condoms, you gonna get AIDS, you gonna get STD's, you gonna fall pregnant. And sometimes girls, even though aware of that...use...um...contraceptives and condoms as an excuse- oh I'm on a contraceptive, we using a condom. I can have sex. Using a condom is saying like...a policeman using a bullet-proof vest- you can still die if you go in the line of fire. You can still get shot in the head. It doesn't cover your head, like using condoms- it's only 99.9% safe.

Researcher: Would anyone like to add anything. You all agree with this? (Girls- YES). Right, the next question is:

Question 8: Do you know of any girls who date older men? Why do you think they do this? Have you done this before? (laughter in background). Please answer honestly.

Alexia: Why young girls date older men- it's because...they...if their friends are with older men...they want to fit in. And for my point of view, for me...I think it's better been with

someone a bit older than you or bigger than you, because that person got more experience in knowing things or they can tell you what dating is about. (**Researcher**-That's how you feel?). Yes. What they experienced down the line- have seen with other girls...will tell you right from wrong and they more mature. Younger boys are immature. You can go with the boy around the corner- he can talk to you. You won't do anything with that boy- later on, you turn your back- he goes and tell his friends...he did this with you...he kissed you and that. You approach him- he'll say ooh...he never say nothing- he'll call you a bitch or a this or a that. (**Researcher**- So you've dated older guys?). Yes, I have.

Caitlin: As they said like...maturity and stuff and also from what I've seen with older boys...is that- like small boys- all they want from you is sex, because boys feel it's bad to be a virgin and you a teenager. So...older boys...(Researcher- Really?- alarmed!) – (Girls- agree, YES). (**Researcher**- I didn't know that).

Even for us- if we find out a boy is 18 and he's still a virgin...it's a shock. Yoh! (**All girls agree**). And honestly speaking- I would rather be with someone who has experienced stuff- because they wouldn't force anything on me. I...the way I look at it- two virgins there- they don't know- they just want these feelings and stuff and they just gonna take it to the next level. Whereas, if you as a girl- you a virgin...and the boy is...has like experienced sex before...he wouldn't put you into anything that you...he knows you know...what..um...this girl...she doesn't really wanna have sex. She told me that she's not ready etc. then small boys, because they haven't experienced it...they don't wanna be known as susses and whatever else. So they gonna tell...aye...come let's do it and so forth. And also um...

Researcher: You don't think on the other hand they going to want to hold back- because they're scared- they've never done it before- on the other hand?

Caitlin: No those are the greedy ones. The small boys are the greedy ones. They just want everything. (**Researcher**- I'm really shocked). Every single girl that they can lay on their bed. And sometimes... their parents allow them to do that...(Researcher: Really?!)

These are many girls' experience. And then um...when a boy's older...he's just more mature and understand your needs and stuff. Like small boys, they don't see...they don't see that er...like...the reason for been like...um in a serious relationship. They just wanna go out with you...ok they just wanna see what they can get out from you...and the relationship is finished. Whereas a boy that is older...he'd like...he...like...um...will keep the relationship going, depending on your connection and whatever else. He realises that sex is like not everything in a relationship- it's not a necessity...it's an addition to whatever connection you'll do have. Small boys they just want that and afterwards it's like... I have a friend- her boyfriend is like willing to tell other girls or whatever else... he's sleeping with. Which is so wrong. Like that is between you and your girlfriend, even if she tells her friends. Girls are not like boys. Boys...they sit and talk and talk. I have a brother there at home. They sit and talk and talk and talk, about girls...what they doing with them and whatever else. And then you going out with this small boy- you don't know- whatever you'll are doing- he's telling his friends once you gone home. That's how also when you done everything...the same boy like- he's gonna tell

another boy...aye...she's like this, she's like that and whatever else- so – you...(RESEARCHER- So basically I'm getting more or less the same vibe, you feel the same.). Ok so I have another one. I don't want to be seen with her, but her boyfriend's friend...she has a older boyfriend...but her boyfriend's friend actually said in front of her boyfriend and her- he must put his girlfriend in a corner. That is just- yoh! That is just telling her...he's telling his friend that- your girlfriend- she's wild- she must sit in a corner- she's overdoing it. (laughing)

Researcher: You passing, you passing- I won't have any data from you now- come on. You don't want to say anything? Ok – I won't force you.

Taniel: It's also sometimes for security, stability- that's why you'd date someone older than you.

Researcher: When you say 'security' what do you mean? Can you elaborate?

Taniel: Um...they say 'sugar daddies' right and I'm talking about way older.

Researcher: I was waiting to hear those words...

Taniel: When you have um...I understand the reason for having those is um...you know it's a lot of the time when parents are not financially stable and you feel that you wanna keep up with the rest of the girls. You also wanna be looking nice. Whether your clothes are from Mr Price or wherever...yo wanna be looking nice, you know. So you get a 'sugar daddy' those type of men expect something in return. Where...you must sleep with them. And some people um...a lot of them are married and they not getting the same thing out of that. You young, you fresh- you have no stretch marks, nothing is hanging (laughing)...everything is in proportion...is in place. So they want it from you. In terms of older guys...4, 5 years, 6 years older than you...a lot of the time- it is maturity, it's also stability. If someone is 6 years older than you... they either studying or they working and you know they can also provide for you, they can buy you stuff. You can talk to them on an intellectual level. Some of them have more understanding. Here ...you have a boyfriend- you wanna talk about a serious and there he's laughing. He doesn't understand what you saying...making what you say a joke. There you invite him over... he thinks he's gonna get something...he got his 'Trojan' or a 'Choice' (condoms) in his bag. He's coming to you and he's expecting you...one thing. And then, you know with a boy...it's a notch on their belt when they sleep with a girl- and it makes the girl a 'skank' (someone cheap). But then when they break up with you...afterwards it's...aye...that girl...she's a skank. But you slept with her- it's your girlfriend at the end of the day. But now when your'll not together...and it's like that. But with er...older boys, they don't really discuss. It's like with...all of their friends are having sex...so why you wanna tell us you having sex- we know you having sex. We also having sex. Its got nothing to do with us. But if you a small boy who had sex with a girl- when you walking pass- everyone's looking at you- , you know. You did that, you did this. Now it's like you- what position you did, you know. With small boys it's like...it's a...an exciting thing to discuss, sex. We spoke about sex, we had sex, it's like (gestures shock- ohh!! Everyone laughs). That's how it is, but with older

guys- it's...come on now, why you wanna tell us what you doing. NO- we not worried about what you doing. So that's also why people/ girls go for older guys.

Researcher: Right...

Taslyn: The 'sugar daddies'...they always gonna give you money for something.

(**Researcher-** so yo always have to give something to get something? (**Taslyn:YES**) Do you want to add something?

Layla: Yes. With 'sugar daddies'...um...it's because he's gonna take you to this fancy restaurant, you gonna have a nice romantic date...and with smaller guys and all... they immature and they don't understand anything- they just immature and stuff...and they don't know about stuff. And even though they might be experienced- but they still immature in the way they act and stuff. And with dating a older guy- yes some people see it as security and stuff and me for myself- I would never date a boy that's the same age as me or any...not even a...I'm exaggerating a bit ok...not even a day younger than me. 'Cause I see it as me dating my younger brother. No- I would never want that. So the age limit for me is 5 to 6 years, 7 the most. 7 years, the most in age difference.

Researcher: Really? (Girls saying **yes** and some saying**no**). So you don't all share the same sentiment? By a show of hands, who would date an older guy- 4 to 7 years older than them? (Girls- 7 years is too old some say). Hands go up- 7 girls would. The rest of you? The majority say 3 to 4 years. (**Layla-**that's just 'day-dawn'- other girls agree)

Caitlin: I think that when we young, we worry about age, but when you older- if you look at your parents- like some of our parents, they get husbands that are way older- almost grandpas you know- and then- when you in school, it's mostly a biggie- you know- when you going out with this 24 year old. But when you out of school, it doesn't really matter. As they say, age is nothing but a number.

Researcher: Thanks for that girls. Now for the last question.

Question 9: If you know of anyone in this situation, do you think they have any regrets?

Taniel: Sometimes they do regret it because there's a stigma attached to it, by dating a older guy then you...they expect... say you 15...he's 20- they say you having sex with him...I mean his 20. What else is he expecting...I mean sometimes- it can tarnish your reputation in a way...because they looking at you- like outside the...from an outside perspective. They looking at you like...she's 15...he's 20. He's driving a posh car...she's going to Grade 9.

Researcher: So they just assuming...

Taniel: Yes, it looks like- she's having sex with him. What else is he doing with her... I mean...there's girls his age that are built better- that have bigger assets, that are stable, you know...just better.

Caitlin: But also, even the older girls...(girls laughing) Don't worry...one short sentence...I'll finish now. The older girls...the ones that are like studying...and stuff, they don't want

someone that age. Like if you in university and stuff, you know, if you in first year- you not gonna want someone that's first year too...you'll look for someone that's in their last year- so that when you finish-like you know that there's stability. When you are done with your studies like- you not gonna wait for someone after you. There you getting paid now and he's still studying, then it looks like you his mother, looking after him. So like...what I'm saying is...some may not have regrets, dating a older guy. I suppose er...it depends on your situation then...where you find yourself...um...like later and so on.

Researcher: So is there anyone else who wants to add to this? Come on please guys. I would appreciate comments from more of you if possible.

Samantha: I don't think they will um...have regrets. 'Cause like most of them are like gaining...getting something out of it...when they date older guys.

Alexia: Like some of us are saying...er... some like to... to date older men, so I don't think they'll regret it. they like it.

Desiree: I think some may have regrets... when they find themselves in a situation they not happy in. (Girls are agreeing. Then keep quiet.)

Researcher: Ok, thanks for that. Any others feel like commenting? No... alright then. I really want to take this opportunity to thank you again for your comments. Just to remind you, everything we discussed, remains with us. Under no circumstances are you to make comments on what was said in here. You have signed and agreed to confidentiality and to respect each other's views. We don't judge each other. (**Girls are in agreement**).

All that's left is to schedule our one on one interviews.

Appendix 10: Individual Interview Transcript

12. Interview with Taniel(A pseudonym)

Just to remind you that whatever we discuss, stays between us, it won't leave here. I won't discuss it with anybody else. And I need you to be very honest in your responses. So how old are you and what grade are you in?

16 and in grade 11.

Where do you live?

The address?(**no- just where you live**). Wentworth.

Do you live with your parents?

Yes.

Both mum and dad?

Yes.

Do your parents work? (Yes)

Both of them?

Yes, my mother works full time and my father works- like contract work.

How would you describe your parents- are they strict or easy going?

Like in- between. Certain instances, like going out at night, it's like a problem. During the day it's not so much. They not extremely strict, we have like a set of trust but there's a limit to that.

Right um...Have they set a curfew for you?

No.

Because you always within reason? (Yes).

I don't think you were overwhelmed, you were responding nicely in the discussion we had the other day, but if you were, now is your time to be very straight forward, don't hold back. You didn't the other day, so I don't expect you to do so

today. So just be very honest and open in your responses. Do you understand what risky sexual behaviour is?

Risky sexual behaviour is- well all sexual behaviour is risky at this age.

Do you want to elaborate?

No. (laughing). Ok wait, it could be like having sex without protection, because it says 'risky sexual behaviour'. (Yes),

Do you think that Coloured high school girls have a reputation for engaging in risky sexual, behaviour?

Yes, they do, because a lot of them like... like I said, easily influenced by the material things, and boys easily convince them. So a lot of them are naïve, because they see those material things, so they do it- and also to keep the boyfriend. Like whatever he wants to please him, they do, like all those things, even though it's risky.

And then how does this make you feel, being a Coloured girl yourself?

It does give a lot of us a bad reputation and a lot of people think that because certain Coloured girls do that, all Coloured girls do it. But it doesn't really affect me because, I haven't met anybody that's stereotyped Coloured girls, so...

Do you or any of your friends have a boyfriend?

I don't. I do know friends that have. Not close friends, but friends that have.

Have you ever had a boyfriend?

No. that's very honest. (laughing).

And your friends who have boyfriends, do you know if any of them have engaged in any form of sexual activity?

Yes.

To your knowledge, was it mutual?

Yes. It was mutual, but more-so it was them trying to please the boy, to keep him, stuff like that, to keep up. So that no other girls get him and stuff like that. So he doesn't go out looking for those things.

Have you or any of your friends, ever used drugs or alcohol?

Drugs- NO, Alcohol, YES. (Laughing)

How did it make you or your friends feel after you'd had alcohol.

Well it was not a lot, it was during a special occasion. So it's not like we...consumed it to get drunk. So it was just like a...just to relax. I won't say it makes you relax, but while you relaxing it was just that.

And then, was participation voluntary?

Yes.

Have you or any of your friends, not you- your friends, do you know if any of them have had more than one sexual partner?

Uh...yes. Yes they have.

Do you know if they used protection at all times?

Not that I'm aware of, I know at certain...ok I don't know about...but I know at once, this person didn't, but I don't know about the other times if they did.

And how does this make you feel, knowing that?

It's like...it...because it's your friend...how can you be so stupid. You talk to the person...you can take the horse to the water, but you can't make it drink. So it does seem like the person is kind of in a way...just like disrespecting what you say to them. You trying to help them, but they just been oblivious to what you saying... so. Even though they know that they taking a risk by not using protection or even engaging in sexual behaviour, they still do it. it's kind of like a slap in your face then. But then there's nothing you can do about it, because you can't force them not to do it.

Ok. Do you think that this type of behaviour is acceptable for girls your age?

No. because basically we are not at...able to face the consequences...if a girl my age falls pregnant, she is not fully capable to look after that child, no matter what she does. She doesn't have a matric certificate, she cannot go and look for a proper job, that's gonna sustain herself and the child and ensure that the child has all its needs. A baby is quite expensive and you make it your parent's problem. So at this age, I don't think that you should be engaging in behaviour that could have an outcome that you are not able to handle.

How would you describe your family and home circumstances- do your parents provide for all your needs and do you get the things you like?

Yes. A lot of the time because er...like academically I normally I perform...I do well...except for grade 10 and 11, but ya... (laughs). **(are you in stream 1?)** Yes. **(ok, say no more)**. Yes so it's always been like...I make them proud. What they give me I return, it's like give and take. For everything that they give me, I get good marks. I'm not like a badly behaved child, I'm not rebellious or anything. The surroundings is nice, there's no fighting, its just peaceful. A lot of times my parents go to work, my granny's at home, like it's a peaceful circumstance, I can do my homework...

You don't lack anything?

No. Everything- I have.

So now, would you ever date a guy older than you?

Yes. I would, someone older than me but 2, 4 years, 3 years older than me. Not like 10 years older than me, it's just too much. The expectations are there. No matter what they say about maturity, the expectations will always be there. Because someone their age will be able to provide it for them. So they gonna expect it from you.

Of course. Would you consider having sex with a guy if he promises to give you the world?

No. because that's just been like ...stupid. If you believe that – no one can promise you, no-one can give you the world and ensure that he's gonna give you the world. He doesn't know, if he's little bit older than me, it doesn't mean that he's very old, like 4 years older than me. It means that he hasn't started his life yet, he can't ensure that he's gonna give you the world. And if you do fall pregnant, how do you know that he's not gonna run away- and until you are fully – until he has made that promise that's marriage, you can't really know that he's gonna stay with you. Even with marriage they can still leave you. So what's stopping them from- after what they got, just leaving you. So no I wouldn't.

Right so, what type of guys do you like, do you like quiet, gentlemen like type or do you prefer loud, rowdy, rough type of boys.

I wouldn't say quiet, I'm a talkative person so that would just cancel it out, because the person will be just sitting there, I'd be like talking all the time. Yes, respect is a issue, a big thing, because you gotta have mutual respect. And if he can't respect you in front of his friends and all of that there. Because a lot of people are different with their friends how they treat you and when they with you. Also someone who's ambitious, who looks like they aiming for something, they not comfortable with the position they in. no matter, they could be like...their parents could be well to do , could be living a good life, but they shouldn't be comfortable with the situation. They should always try to do better, be ambitious. I'm not asking for someone getting straight A's and all of that,

because I don't get straight A's. but someone who can also connect on an intellectual level, you can have a conversation with. They understand what you saying. Someone who...you see I'm very argumentative in terms of debating and all of that. I'm always debating and all of that. So someone who can hold a debate. Not just give up. People like that. Not someone that's loud and rowdy and infamous for doing certain things. Who feels that wearing a thick chain or picking up numbers makes him a...a...boy, you know. Someone who has friends like that, but is not like that, worried about having all this gold, he can have it ya, but not worried too much. Don't base your life around that. That's your aim, work on the shuts buy yourself a chain, now you happy. People with ambition want to go further in life.

Right ok. Regarding sexuality, do you think that enough is been incorporated into the curriculum for teenagers like yourself to make informed decisions?

Yes. I think from grade 5 we start with the basics, don't let anyone touch you anywhere. They carry on. How better can they put it...practice safe sex, or just abstain. They tell you the risks, what can happen. It's on TV, it's in school it's everywhere. How much more can you be informed? No matter how much information they give you, at the end of the day, kit's your choice what you do. We are informed, there's no need to do anything else. At the end of the day it comes down to the teenager and their decision.

Ok. So basically you also answered the next question which was; why do Coloured girls continue to engage in risky sexual behaviour? It's because you said that they just choose to.

Ya...at the end of the day it's their choice. They want to have the experience. A lot of the time it's not only to fit in, because Coloured girls are not open about what they do- they not open about having sex and stuff like that, but just basically to have the experience. Sometimes to please the boy and because sometimes they just get tired of just kissing the boy and they want to do other things

So thank you Taniel, for your input in my study. I really value every word that you have said and contributed to the success of this study.