

**INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR, RISK AND  
PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND THEIR RESPONSES TO THE  
SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN  
AT UNIVERSITIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

**Given Chigaya Mutinta  
Student Number - 208502317**

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**Supervised**

**By**

**Prof. Keyan Tomaselli**

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**DECLARATION**

I, Given Chigaya Mutinta, declare that this thesis is the result of independent investigation. Wherever the work is indebted to the work of others, it has been duly acknowledged. I declare that it has not been accepted in substance for any other degree, nor is it concurrently being submitted in Candidature for any other degree.

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**Given Chigaya Mutinta**

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**DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Chuma and to those we may beget through God's providence whom my pursuit of academic achievement meant three years of being in marriage without a husband's total care, love and presence. You have a special place in my heart and I will always strive to make up to you through my constant and unconditional love.

**ABSTRACT**

## ABSTRACT

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The high levels of HIV prevalence amongst young people in sub-Saharan African countries, have led to the clarion call for researchers to investigate the determinants to young people's sexual risk-taking behaviour while others are exploring the usage of entertainment education (EE) so that effective prevention and interventions may be developed.

One critical aspect is that research efforts so far have been hampered by the adoption of models and perspectives that are narrow and do not adequately capture the complexity associated with young people's sexual experiences. The distinctiveness of this study is therefore grounded in the focus on the risky sexual practices students engage in and their underlying risk and protective multisystemic factors and their response to the EE interventions, in particular the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. Thus, using the Problem Behaviour Theory, Reception Theory and the Social Cognitive Learning Theory, this study investigates the phenomena of students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus campaign.

The study is situated within the interpretative paradigm. It used a hermeneutic phenomenological methodology underpinned by in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation and field notes to draw data for this study. The study sample included students and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers. Findings of this study sustain the conclusion that students' sexual risk behaviour is influenced by interrelated, interactional and transactional factors from the multisystemic factors: biological, environmental/social, behavioural and personality domains that either instigate or buffer against students' sexual risk behaviour. However, Scrutinise Campus campaign's messages do not fully address students' sexual risk practices and their underlying factors as experienced by students.

It is critical to employ a comprehensive and continuum of EE interventions that are broad in scope and target factors from multiple systems of influence including the multisystemic factors. Most significantly, sources of protective influence should not be ignored when designing and implementing EE prevention programmes and, to the extent possible, both risk and protective factors should be addressed in the interventions. This may help to effectively address students' sexual-risk taking behaviour in universities.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAG	AIDS Advisory Group
AAHA	Applied Arts for Awareness of HIV/AIDS
AAU	Association of African Universities
ABC	Abstinence, Be Faithful and Condom Use
ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
ADEA	The Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
ARV	Antiretroviral Treatment
ATIC	AIDS Training and Information Centres
CADRE	Centre for AIDS Development, Research and Evaluation
CCMS	Centre for Communication and Media Society
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CODES	Communication, Design and Evaluation Systems
CTP	Committee of Technikon Principals
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DramAidE	Drama in AIDS Education
DUT	Durban University of Technology
EE	Entertainment Education
HEAIDS	The Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme
HEARD	Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division

HTV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HTVAN	Centre for HIV/AIDS Networking
HP	Health Promoter
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
HST	Health Systems Trust
JHHESA	Johns Hopkins Health Education in South Africa
JKFF	John Kaiser Family Foundation
KAPB	Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Beliefs
MRCSA	Medical Research Council of South Africa
NACC	National AIDS Control Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PPASA	Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANAC	South African National AIDS Council
SAUVCA	South African Universities' Vice-Chancellors' Association
SFH	Society for Family Planning
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNAIDS	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
WGHE	Working Group on Higher Education
WHO	World Health Organisation
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **STUDENTS' SEXUAL RISK-TAKING AND PREVENTION COMMUNICATION**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a general review of the research problem that the study seeks to address. It introduces the study by providing the background and the rationale with which the study was conceived. The overall objectives and the main research questions that guided the study are also outlined in this chapter.

The chapter starts with an overview on the phenomena of risk and sexual risk behaviour among South African students. It demonstrates how the problem of sexual risk-taking behaviour among South African University students is propelling the risk of HIV infection. Briefly, the chapter draws attention to the sexual practices assumed to be fuelling the HIV epidemic on campuses and expounds on the challenges of the prevention communication programmes in addressing students' sexual risk behaviour so as to engender the most needed behavioural transformation. This is followed by a brief discussion of the response of South African universities; the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and the Durban University of Technology (DUT) under study. It probes the prevention communication strategies that are utilising the entertainment education (EE) strategy in particular the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

The chapter also provides a brief outline of the strategy for the study. Then the aims and objectives are outlined, followed by the main research questions, the scope and significance of the study. An outline is provided to show the specific direction of this thesis. The chapter concludes with a short summary of the major issues that have been highlighted within the chapter.

#### **Background and rationale of the study**

For many students in KwaZulu-Natal Universities, like in other parts of the world, life is characterised by risk taking. As a general experience of human behaviour, risk can be understood

according to three perspectives: as an action, as a potentiality that is unclear in its outcome, and as pathway towards achieving some desired goal, even if this pathway entails possible harm (Jessor, 1991: 45). As part of students' development, risk adopts a special significance. In one sense, students' risk does not differ characteristically from general human behaviour. However, at the same time students are most likely to lack experience and a subsequent ability to either identify that an activity or behaviour does in fact contain risk, or to remain in control of the identified risk. Dorrington et al (2001:11) found that "markers of students' development underlie the extent of this capacity". While these markers identify that most of the students in universities in South Africa are people moving into adulthood, at the same time they indicate a need to learn new strategies for coping effectively with university's life encounters. For instance, students are required to sort through an onslaught of information from various technological sources, many of which include sexual suggestions in a major transitional life stage as they start to disengage from their families and spend more time with their peers. Therefore, the potential to become involved in risky behaviour becomes a reality for students on campuses.

As observed by Dorrington et al (2001) and Eleazar (2009), students are eager to achieve independence through risky actions. As such, they are often times characterised as risk takers and pleasure seekers with sex as one of the array of risky behaviour that they engage in. What makes students' behaviour risky is the increasing prevalence of sex among them and the increase of risky sexual practices or behaviour such as unprotected sex and transactional sex (HEAIDS, 2010: 13). Leclerc-Madlala (2002) and Parker et al (2007) state that desire for sexual pleasure, pursuit of modernity and cultural scripts are among the underlying factors to students' sexual risk behaviour (see also Hallman, 2004). The sexual practices students engage in are associated with a host of harmful consequences including sexually transmitted diseases and infections such as HIV that severely and permanently compromise students' health, education and general wellbeing (HEAIDS, 2010: 11; Mulwo, 2010:223).

Negative conditions on campuses influence some students to reach a point where they think that they have little to personally lose and engage in high risk-taking sexual practices (HEAIDS, 2010: 14). Thus, there is a need to understand the phenomenon of students' sexual risk behaviour as a multisystemic construction that needs to be grasped within the campus context in which it is

practiced. There is a need to shift in focus, to address risk and protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour rather than just focusing on risky practices (Spooner et al., 2001: 20).

Many studies have focused on prevention or interventions that stop the spread or acquiring of HIV for instance by promoting condom use and male circumcision. They have also focused on how to deal with risky sexual conditions on campuses by promoting prevention through condom use or partner reduction overlooking protection. Thus, students were not discouraged from engaging in sex but encouraged to use condoms correctly and consistently or reduce the number of sexual partners to prevent HIV infection or transmission. Protection unlike prevention keeps HIV from being transmitted or acquired by reducing the likelihood of sexual risk behaviour arising altogether. Thus, protection or protective factors prevent risky sexual behaviour from taking place by acting as safeguards or „shock absorbers“ of sexual risk-taking behaviour (Bonnie, 1996: 34). Protection deals with the inner empowerment of a person for example encouraging values, beliefs and ideas that discourage people from engaging in sex before marriage or making a decision to associate with friends who are not sexually active or who do not abuse drugs. The emphasis of protection is on refraining from risky behaviour using one's inner and outer resources such as personal values.

### **Statement of the Problem**

A joint research project or omnibus survey is being undertaken in the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS) at UKZN supported by JHHESA (Johns Hopkins Health and Education South Africa). The ultimate objective is to develop an advocacy framework that will influence policy and practice for the prevention of infection with HIV among KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) university students. For the first phase of the project a survey was conducted at seven campuses namely, five campuses from UKZN and one each from Durban University of Technology (DUT) and the University of Zululand (UNIZUL) by three PhD students: Mulwo (2010) analysed students' responses to the Abstinence, Being faithful, and Condom use (ABC) and Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) messages. Lengwe (2010) investigated students' „talk“ as a new HIV prevention approach, Pule (forthcoming) is analysing students' perceptions of the ABC prevention approach through print media. Masters student Moodley (2007) assessed students' sexual practices and their participation in HIV/AIDS message design. The second

phase, or rather the current study, was conducted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College and Pietermaritzburg Campus) and the Durban University of Technology (Steve Biko and ML Sultan Campuses) and investigates students' sexual risk behaviour in relation to their response to EE prevention programmes. The entire project drew on one thousand four hundred questionnaires employed for the survey.

The survey provides data about the Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs, and Practices (KABP) of university students. Mulwo (2010) highlights the risk of multiple partnerships, negative attitudes towards condoms, and students' perceptions of abstinence, being faithful, fatalistic attitudes, dangerous myths about HIV/AIDS and condoms linked to and maintained by universities' sociosexual culture that impedes behaviour change. Lengwe (2010) found that many students engage in high-risk sexual behaviour. He found that many female students do not only engage in risky sexual activities such as age-disparate sexual relationships, and multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships to meet their basic needs such as money, food and clothing, but also to satisfy wants such as having expensive cell phones, high-class jewelry and riding in luxury cars.

According to Pule (forthcoming), students in some campuses are under intense pressure to engage in unprotected sex, age-disparate sex and other sexual risk behaviour in order to meet their financial goals and to be loved. In addition, this situation is exacerbated by the gender power inequalities in most campuses, where forced sex is common and often goes unreported (ibid.). Moodley (2007) pointed out that in some campuses, male students' involvement in pre-marital sexual activities is considered healthy, with the belief that men have a voracious desire for sex. She concluded that students are not given space to participate in the design and implementation of prevention programmes. Involvement of students would make campus interventions more effective in addressing students' sexual risk behaviour (Moodley, 2007).

The HEAIDS (2010:13) survey reports that students account for 3.4% for cases of HIV infection nationally in South African Universities. Behaviour that puts students at risk of HIV infection is common and it occurs at all universities. HIV prevalence amongst students increases sharply with age as they progress from their late teens to early 20s and even more so after the 25-year mark. Only 60% of sexually active students had used a condom the last time they had sex. The survey shows that 19% of male students had slept with more than one partner in the last month.

About 1 out of 20 sexually active students had a partner more than 10 years older (HEAIDS, 2010: 14).

Both male and female students had a similar rate of being involved with sexual partners more than 10 years older than them. The rates are 6% and 7% respectively. HIV prevalence between the sexes varied sharply, however. Among females it was more than double that of males. It was 4.7% compared to 2.0% (HEAIDS, 2010: 15). The survey found that students arrived at university with funding for their studies and residence. However, they had little funding for food. The lack of disposable income encourages risky behaviour. These practices include multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships and transactional sexual relationships.

However, there is increasing data in South Africa that where HIV/AIDS education and awareness are succeeding, it is the use of EE that is making young people grasp the messages communicated and spur them into action. Many prevention strategies using different approaches have been employed in universities with different outcomes. Some employ drama, music, dances, and other approaches. One such EE prevention programme is the Scrutinise Campus Campaign that was created to support the Scrutinise Campaign created in partnership with United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Johns Hopkins Health Education in South Africa (JHHESA), and designer jeans label Levi. The aims of the Scrutinise Campaign are to encourage and equip young people to take responsibility to reduce their risk of HIV infection (Spina, 2009). The campaign, which was launched in 2008, involves a series of short animated commercials known as animerts. It uses animated township characters who illustrate daily life encounters that place young people at risk of HIV infection.

The animerts, which are intended for 18-32 year-olds in South Africa, aim to equip viewers with a HIV insight to help them examine their own risky behaviours and beliefs. The main topics addressed by the series are perceptions of risk, multiple and concurrent partnerships, faithfulness, condom use and safety, transactional intergenerational sex, and alcohol and sex (JHHESA, Facilitator and Community Action Guide, 2009). The animerts are broadcast on national television and are used to stimulate discussions in a series of organised youth conversations. The campaign focuses on youth in South Africa's black urban townships, because their research found that they engage in multiple and concurrent partners making the spread of HIV/AIDS rife (Spina, 2009).

Since Scrutinise Campaign messages were found to be suitable for young people they were adapted to inform the Scrutinize Campus Campaign prevention programme. It is a programme of performances and educational events held on South African campuses. The campaign is aimed to support the Scutinize Campaign and sought to reinforce its objectives by promoting abstinence and faithfulness and other prevention measures (Drama in AIDS Education Annual Report, 2008). The aim is also to encourage and equip students to take responsibility to reduce their risk of HIV infection. Thus, the campaign was designed to raise awareness about high risk sexual behaviour, provide opportunity to students to engage with their peers to unpack issues of risk and create learning moments for students to examine or “scrutinise” their own behaviour in the context of risk (Spina, 2009).

The creation of the Scrutinise Campus campaign was a partnered project. DramAidE, as part of its Health Promoter project funded by JHHESA and supported by the Centre for HIV/AIDS Networking (HIVAN) created a toolkit for use by campus stakeholders. DramAidE then trained Health Promoters and peer educators to run arts and culture festivals around the key themes in conjunction with Scrutinise campaign (DramAidE Annual Report, 2008). The Scrutinise Campus campaign key themes includes multiple and concurrent partnerships, condom use and safety, perceptions of risk, faithfulness, alcohol, and transactional intergenerational sex. The researcher has chosen to explore the Scrutinise Campus Campaign prevention strategy for a number of reasons; it uses different forms of EE strategies, it is implemented by students, it is popular among students and the most widely applied.

Nevertheless, a critical element often missed in these studies is the failure to investigate students’ risk and protective factors to their sexual risk-taking behaviour. In addition, students’ responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign within campus settings are not addressed by the existing research. Therefore, in an attempt to grasp the apparent failure or success of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to influence the desired behavioural change, it is important to understand students’ sexual risky practices, their risk and protective factors, and how students respond to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. It is also critical to explore if the Scrutinise Campus Campaign messages are addressing sexual risk behaviour as reported by students.

In addition, there is no study that I am aware of that explores the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign at KZN Universities. By investigating the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour, this study pursues a question that has received little attention in the study of students' sexual risk behaviour and prevention communication strategies and the question is, „what are the reasons why students chose not to engage in sexual risk behaviour even when they are exposed to circumstances that make their peers to engage in sexual risk behaviour?“ As a result of exploring this question, this study investigates the opportunities for broadening the framework in which the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and other EE prevention programmes at KZN Universities are designed and implemented.

Drawing from Reception Theory, this study explores students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign messages offered to them on campuses. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory is used to investigate students' response to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign messages on their sexual risk behaviour. The study employed interviews, document collection, field notes, observation techniques, and benefited from the omnibus survey by making use of five data sets on; students sexual risk behaviour, attitudes, knowledge, practices, and social norms. The omnibus survey is a research on a project entitled, *Understanding responses to the Abstinence, Be faithful and use of Condom (ABC) strategy in the Higher Education Sector in South Africa; towards an advocacy framework to influence policy and practice for the prevention of infection with HIV among university students*. The aim of this project is to understand how HIV/AIDS information is communicated to students in South African universities and students' reception of the HIV/AIDS messages. The first phase of the project was conducted by Abraham Mulwo, John-Eudes Lengwe Kunda, Irene Pule and Eliza Moodley. They managed this research as a team. The second phase of the project is my study and intersects with a composite ABC project. My qualitative study drew on this omnibus study in so far as it indicates students' experiences of sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages.

## **Aims of the study**

The broad aim of this study is to establish the sexual risk practices engaged in by students at DUT and UKZN and the environmental/social, behavioural, biological and personality factors that encourage and discourage students' sexual risk practices. The study will also explore students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign aimed to address their sexual risk practices and the underlying factors; in particular the risk and protective influences.

## **Objectives of the study**

The study covers the following specific objectives:

- To ascertain the risky sexual practices students at KZN universities engage in.
- To determine what influences KZN students to engage or not to engage in sexual risk behaviour.
- To ascertain the messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign prevention programme and the relationship between students' risky sexual practices, risk and protective factors.
- To broaden the framework in which EE interventions including the Scrutinise Campus Campaign are developed for students in an attempt to address their sexual risk-taking behaviour by using complementary theoretical perspectives underpinning this study.

## **Critical research questions**

The study intends to answer the following critical research questions:

- What risky sexual practices or behaviour do students at KZN universities engage in?
- Why do KZN students engage (risk factors) in sexual risk behaviour?
- Why do KZN students not engage (protective factors) in sexual risk behaviour?
- What are the messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign prevention programme?
- What is the relationship between students' risky sexual practices, risk and protective factors, and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign prevention programme?

## **The scope of the study**

The main focus of this study is on EE interventions in particular the Scrutinise Campus Campaign facilitated on the campuses of DUT and UKZN. It is the mostly widely applied EE campaign on South African campuses. The three campuses selected were those that are using the EE approach and run the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. It is a qualitative study aimed at gathering an in-depth understanding of students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages for HIV prevention. Smaller but focused samples were used rather than large random samples. This study builds on the omnibus study (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007) therefore, data sets from the omnibus study related to the main research questions in my study were used.

## **Significance of the study**

This study is important because it explores the phenomena of students' sexual risk practices and their underlying risk and protective conditions. This will be determined by analysing students' responses to how they perceive their sexual risk-taking behaviour. It also investigates students' response to the Scrutinise Campus campaign's messages intended to address their sexual risk practices and their causes. This will be ascertained by analysing students' responses to how they experience or perceive the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in relation to their sexual risk behaviour. There is no study I am aware of that has specifically investigated why students who have not had sex they have remained abstinent. Thus, this study will throw light on the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour, promoting students' sexual health and well being. It is important because it explores attributes that serve as buffers or safeguards; helping students to find sexual resources, support and coping strategies on campuses.

Though this study is not meant to pass judgement on students' sexual risk behaviour, by exploring the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour, it contributes to highlighting protective factors that should be promoted to enhance sexual moral regeneration supported by South African initiatives and processes meant to entrench positive values (Rauch, 2006). The study is also important because it contributes knowledge to the understanding sexual risk

behaviour to be addressed if we are to have effective EE strategies for HIV prevention on campuses.

## **Thesis Structure**

*Chapter One:* offers the background to the study and spells out the aim of research and the kind of questions that the study is set to answer.

*Chapter Two:* highlights and locates the risk of HIV/AIDS. It explores the perspective of HIV/AIDS on the national level. The study is narrowed down to the condition of HIV/AIDS among young people in South Africa and further narrowed down to institutions of higher learning. Then, the chapter investigates the national response: communication as a response paying attention to government and Non-Governmental Organisations" (NGOs) prevention communication strategies while highlighting EE strategies. The chapter further investigates higher education institutions" responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and narrows down to UKZN and DUT.

*Chapter Three:* critically examines literature on South African University students" sexual risk behaviour. Due to the dearth of literature on South African University students" sexual risk behaviour, the scope for literature review was expanded to include young people"s sexual risk behaviour in South Africa. Thus, guided by Jessor"s theoretical framework this chapter reviews literature on the underlying factors to young people"s sexual risk behaviour. It pays attention to the systems of influence held to be the most important contributors to young people"s sexual behaviour.

*Chapter Four:* examines literature on the influence of EE prevention strategies in South African Universities. It starts by defining EE and then reviews the literature on the history of EE and explains its importance in behaviour change processes by reviewing the literature on the earliest or first generation of EE. The chapter then explores the second generation of EE interventions in South Africa. It also reviews EE interventions offered to students in South African Universities. This is done by examining programmes offered by the University of Zambia in conjunction with the University of the Western Cape (ZAWECA), the Stellenbosch University programme, the University of Pretoria programme, and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

*Chapter Five:* analyses in detail the theories underpinning this study. The study is sustained by three theoretical views: the Problem Behaviour Theory, Reception Theory, and the Social Learning Cognitive Theory. The Problem Behaviour Theory is used to investigate students' sexual risk practices and the underlying risk and protective factors to their behaviour. Reception Theory is used to analyse students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages aimed at addressing their sexual risk behaviour. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory is used to explore students' response to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on their behaviour change. The chapter concludes with a summary of the synergies between the three theoretical perspectives in researching students' sexual risk behaviour and students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages.

*Chapter Six:* explains the paradigm, methodology and design used. The chapter wraps up with a review of the validity and reliability of the strategies used to generate data and the ethical issues that were considered during research.

*Chapter Seven:* presents descriptive data on students' sexual risk practices, and factors that encourage their sexual risk-taking behaviour on campuses guided by the Problem Behaviour Theory. Findings in this chapter will be related to findings on students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. The aim is to ascertain from students' view point the appropriateness of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in addressing their sexual risk practices and the underlying risk factors identified in this chapter.

*Chapter Eight:* presents data on students' protective sexual factors that buffer against their sexual risk-taking behaviour on campuses. The descriptive presentation and discussion is steered by the Problem Behaviour Theory. Findings in this chapter will be analysed against findings on students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. The objective is to find out from students' perspective the aptness of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in promoting their protective factors identified in this chapter.

*Chapter Nine:* presents data on students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign in relation to their sexual risk practices and causes guided by Reception Theory. It also explores

students' response to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on their sexual risk behaviour change guided by the Social Cognitive Learning Theory.

*Chapter Ten:* presents a critique of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign in relation to students' responses to its prevention messages. It shows the gaps in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in addressing sexual risk-taking behaviour among students on campuses. Areas that need further study are highlighted.

*Chapter Eleven:* presents the broad conclusion of this thesis by summarising the key findings and stating the key conceptual and methodological contributions of the study.

### **Definition of concepts**

*Sexual risk and protective factors:* these are factors that encourage and discourage one or more behaviour that might lead to pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease or encourage behaviour that might prevent sexual risk behaviour (Jessor, 1991).

*Young people:* the United Nations definition of young people (15 to 24 years) has been adopted for the purposes of this study. However, regardless of the age definition of a country, young people should be recognised as a distinct group in transition to adulthood with specific needs and potential (UNAIDS, 2008).

*Entertainment-education:* this is the intentional placement of educational content in entertainment messages and explains that communication formats like drama, dance, theatre, music, poetry, and others that engage the emotions can be used as tools to inform audiences and change attitudes, behaviour, and social norms so as to live safer, healthier, and happy lives (Singhal et al., 1999 and Singhal and Brown, 1996).

*Behaviour change:* "behaviour change" is a phrase that is often used in discourses related to HIV prevention, to refer to adoption of behaviour that reduces the risk of the HIV infection.

*Phenomena:* these are pre-reflective experiences and feelings or rather structures of consciousness which appear in acts of consciousness. The consciousness takes place from a highly modified "first person" viewpoint (Moustakas, 1992:34).

*Epistemology*: is “the philosophy and theory of knowledge, which seeks to define it, distinguish its principal varieties, identify its sources, and establish its limits” (Bullock and Trombley, 2000: 279).

*Multisystemic factors*: are biological, environmental/social, behavioural, and personality variables associated with an increased or decreased risk of disease or infection (Jessor, 1991:11).

*HIV prevention*: refers to practices carried out to avert the spread of HIV for instance correct and consistent condom use. Prevention practices may be done by individuals to protect their own health and the health of those in their community, or may be instituted by governments or other organizations as public health policies (UNAIDS, 2008).

## **Summary**

Earlier studies on young people’s sexual risk behaviour and prevention strategies especially those using the EE strategy have tended to focus on the risk factors at the expense of protective factors (Jessor et al., 1998; Finlay, 2003). More recently studies have been focused on students’ attitudes, knowledge and beliefs relating to HIV/AIDS. The distinctiveness of this study is that it seeks to generate an understanding of students’ protective factors that buffer against their sexual risk behaviour which is a broader and presumably reliable approach for HIV prevention. All students take risks as a normal part of growing up. Risk taking is the tool students use to define and develop their identity, and healthy risk taking is a valuable experience. Regrettably, latest studies show that South African University students engage in negative risk taking behaviours that are dangerous in spite of a number of programmes some using the EE strategy, such as the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, that have been put in place to influence sexual behavioural change on campuses (Lengwe, 2010; Mulwo, 2010).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE RISK OF HIV/AIDS AND THE RESPONSE OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents a detailed background to the study by situating the risk of HIV/AIDS. It starts by exploring the perspective of HIV/AIDS on the national level. The study is then narrowed down to the condition of HIV/AIDS among young people in South Africa and further narrowed down to institutions of higher learning. The chapter then investigates the national prevention communication response paying particular attention to the government and Non-Governmental Organisations' (NGOs) prevention communication strategies highlighting the EE strategies including the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. The chapter further investigates higher education institutions' responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and narrows down to UKZN and DUT. An account is provided of the HIV/AIDS policies aimed at reducing the risk of HIV.

#### **The HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa**

South Africa is located within the sub-region which is described as the epicentre of the epidemic (WHO, 2007). HIV data from antenatal clinics suggest that the country's epidemic might be stabilising (South African Department of Health, 2007), but there is no evidence yet of major changes in the sexual risk behaviour making people susceptible to HIV. The estimated 5.7 million South Africans living with HIV in 2007 make this the largest HIV epidemic in the world. Over 60% of the infections in South Africa occur before the age of 25 (WHO, 2007). The National Survey of 14 to 24 year olds on HIV and sexual behaviour found that general knowledge about HIV/AIDS is high (Pettifor et al., 2004). The South African National HIV Prevalence Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey (2009) revealed that young people between the ages of 15 to 24 years are the most threatened by the HIV epidemic. Most of the infections occur through heterosexual intercourse (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008; UNAIDS, 2008).

## **HIV/AIDS among young people in South Africa**

More than 40% of the South African population are between the ages of 14 and 35 (Pettifor et al., 2004). This period is considered as a time of human development characterised by corporeal and emotional changes that begin at puberty (Leclerc-Madlala, 2005). Thus, threat to young people implies a threat to the nucleus of the South African society. Besides, young people live at a transitional period characterised by greater sexual desires, expression and experimentation, socio-cultural norms and peer pressure (UNAIDS, 2008:12).

Surveys conducted between 2002 and 2005 on HIV incidence and prevalence rates in South Africa show a rising movement in the infection rate among young people aged between 15 and 24 in spite of the numerous programmes employed to curtail the spread of the epidemic. The national infection rate of young people aged between 15 and 24 years at 9.3% (Shisana et. al., 2002). The study recorded a higher prevalence among young females (12.0%) put side by side to their male counterparts (6.1%).

One in every ten (10.2%) South African young people are infected with HIV (Pettifor et al., 2004). The prevalence was higher among 20 and 24 year-olds (16.5%) and lower among 15 and 19 year-olds (4.8%) indicating an increase in sexual activity as young people grew older. Young women were also found to be overly affected at 77% of those infected. Two years later the Human Sciences Research Council conducted another study that found a national HIV prevalence rate among young people aged between 15 and 24 years at 10.3% (Shisana et. al., 2005). As in the previous study, the rate of infection among females was found to be almost four times higher than that of males (16.9% versus 4.4%).

According to Leclerc-Madlala (2005), this could be in all probability a result of age-disparate sex. A decrease in the age is another possibility. The Human Science Research Council (HSRC) Survey of 2002 noted a trend towards earlier sexual debut amongst younger respondents. The median age among the 35 and 44 year-olds was found to be 18 years, 17 years among 25 and 34 year-olds and 16 years among the 15 and 24 year-olds. In the 2003 national survey, 48% of 15 and 19 year-olds and 89% of 20 and 24 year-olds surveyed reported to have had sexual intercourse (Pettifor, 2004). One in every 10 (8%) respondents reported having had sex at the age of 14 years or younger. The HSRC survey indicates that 27% of the respondents, who had had

sex in the previous 12 months, reported having more than one sexual partner and only a third (33%) of them reported having used condoms.

In the 2005 Human Sciences Research Council national survey, the average age among the 15 and 24 year-olds was found to be 17 years, although more youths (57.9%), compared to the 2002 survey's (56.8%), had ever engaged in sex (Shisana et al., 2005). In South Africa, it is estimated that 30% of females aged 20 and 24 years have given birth by the age of 20 (Avert, 2007) and an estimated 80% of AIDS patients are youths in their early twenties (Whiteside and Sunter, 2000). It is also estimated that over 60% of HIV infections in South Africa occur before the age of 25 and that South African youth are among the high-risk groups for HIV infection in the world (Leclerc-Madlala, 2002).

### **HIV/AIDS among students in South African universities: picturing the HIV tide**

The current survey by the Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme (HEAIDS, 2010) of almost 24,000 students done at twenty one of South Africa's twenty three universities found a national HIV prevalence rate among university students of about 3%. The survey also found that prevalence rates were about three times higher in students more than 25 years in age and that female students were hardest hit, exhibiting a prevalence rate of 4.7% more than double the 2% rate found among their male peers. To some extent, the survey is reassuring that HIV among students and staff at higher education institutions is less common than in the general population (HEAIDS, 2010:12).

The HEAIDS survey also revealed that about 60% of sexually active students had been tested for HIV before, and a similar percentage reported using a condom the last time they had sex. The survey also found that 6% of male students had same sex relationships. About 8% of all students reported engaging in anal sex and some participants mistakenly perceived anal sex as less risky than vaginal intercourse. The research found that 6.4% of Eastern Cape students were infected with the disease, followed by 6.1% in KwaZulu-Natal. The Free State had the third highest incidence, with 5.3%. In Gauteng, Limpopo and North West the incidence was 2.2%. Western Cape registered the lowest infection rate, 1.1%. The study reflected variations according to race, with the highest prevalence of HIV occurring among African students (5.6%) but only 0.1% of

white students. Only 0.8% of coloured and 0.3% of Indian students were found to be HIV positive (HEAIDS, 2010).

### **The National response to the HIV epidemic: Communication**

Health communication takes on strategic tools that render communication effective, so that meaning is shared (Mody, 1991). In the context of South Africa, it is apparent from the media landscape that the tools for health communication have been comprehensive. Government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have played a key role in creating awareness and trying to influence behaviour change amongst their audiences.

#### ***Government's response***

Government's communication initiatives include the Beyond Awareness campaigns (1998-2001) that had a multifaceted approach to meeting the communication needs of the epidemic. This programme was commissioned by the Department of Health, adopted a comprehensive umbrella strategy with a multi-faceted approach to meeting the communication needs in this era of the epidemic. Its approaches included, inter alia, pamphlets, murals, and posters and promoting of the making of the South African AIDS Memorial Quit (Tomaselli et al., 1999). Beyond Awareness I and II had a much stronger strategy that extended beyond the traditional boundaries of the mass media and involved working partnerships between government and civil society. Beyond Awareness II was a two-year campaign that ended in October 2000 (Coulson, 2002). *Khomanani*, meaning "caring together" is an HIV/AIDS awareness campaign run by the AIDS Communication Team (ACT), a consortium responsible for the Department of Health's HIV/AIDS and TB information, education and communications media (Bhengu, 2010). It uses the mass media to broadcast its messages aimed at raising awareness on the risk factors in order to increase personal risk perception as a means towards behaviour change. *Khomanani* also seeks to influence positive social norms and values as well as advocate for safe sexual practices (ibid.). In 2007 *Khomanani* campaign was re-launched and its campaign focuses on accelerated HIV/AIDS prevention. However, following allegations of financial discrepancies and the

termination of government funding in March 2010, this campaign appears to have been significantly downgraded (Bhengu, 2010).

### ***Non-Governmental Organisations' (NGOs) response***

Notable among NGOs are those using entertainment education (EE) programmes such as DramAidE (Drama in AIDS Education) established in 1992. The project uses drama methodologies to critically engage young people to communicate effectively about issues relating to sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS. DramAidE aims to equip young people with increased knowledge about HIV/AIDS and the skills to inform and communicate with others about sexual health (Dalrymple, 2006). One of DramAidE's major projects is the Health Promoter's Project based in Higher Education Institutions. Health promoters (young people living openly and positively with HIV), are recruited and trained to conduct interactive workshops and campaigns on prevention of HIV and also issues relating to living openly, testing for HIV (Dalrymple, 2005).

Another NGO is Soul City established in 1992. It is an EE based media intervention that promotes health through the use of television drama review of the effectiveness of mass communication programmes to change HIV/AIDS-related behaviours in developing countries (Bertrand et al., 2006). Soul City's programmes explore health and development issues (Soul City, 2007). Another NGO response is LoveLife a multimedia communication based intervention tailored for various youth. LoveLife was established in 1998 by a conglomerate of NGOs dealing with adolescent reproductive health in South Africa (Parker, 2002). LoveLife aims to encourage the public to talk about issues around HIV/AIDS in order to confront the epidemic. In 2005, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria withdrew funding for LoveLife, questioning its performance, accounting procedures, and governance structure among other aspects (Bhengu, 2010). *Tsha Tsha* is another EE campaign that started in 2003 and was produced by the Centre for Aids Development, Research, and Evaluation (CADRE), and Curious Pictures (Parker et al., 2005). *Tsha Tsha* uses multi-part television drama series and focuses on young people living in rural areas affected by HIV/AIDS and other social problems (Hajjiyiannis, 2007). The Scrutinise Campus campaign is a recent EE campaign that was created from the

Scrutinise campaign created in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Johns Hopkins Health Education in South Africa (JHHESA), and the designer jeans label Levi. The aim of the Scrutinise campaign is to encourage and equip young people to take responsibility for reducing their risk of HIV infection (Delate, 2009). The campaign, involves showing a series of short animated commercials on television known as “animerts”.

### **The Higher Education Institutions’ response to HIV/AIDS**

The adverse effects of HIV/AIDS on staff and students in higher education institutions led to the generation of several initiatives to curb the epidemic. The response was triggered by a number of factors.

#### ***Tertiary Institutions’ Conference Against AIDS***

In 1999 the Minister of Education called for the development of HIV/AIDS policy by tertiary institutions at the “Tertiary Institutions Against AIDS” conference. At this time only one university had already produced a comprehensive policy document. The speech by Kader Asmal (2002), the Minister of Education, challenged tertiary institutions to come up with policy documents on HIV/AIDS. At the conference it was reported that three technikons, the Natal and Peninsula Technikons and Technikon South Africa (TSA) had already adopted policies. Only one university, Cape Town (UCT) had already produced a policy statement at that time (Asmal, 2002).

#### ***South African Vice Chancellors’ Association (SAUVCA)***

By 2000 the South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA) conducted a study examining the South African University sector’s response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic (Chetty, 2006). The study noted that there was theoretical awareness of HIV/AIDS but universities had not taken specific steps to address the predicament. It was also found that stigma and discrimination against those who were HIV positive was common. No more than four out of

twenty one universities represented under SAUVCA had adopted HIV/AIDS policy. Another ten universities had a draft policy, while the remaining seven had no policy whatsoever (Chetty, 2000). A few universities had approved a budget for HIV/AIDS related activities. The study also noted a remarkable growth in the range and scale of interventions aimed at dealing with HIV/AIDS at universities. Nevertheless, it pointed out that the programmes were uneven in their coverage across the higher education sector.

### ***Higher Education South Africa (HESA)***

In 2001 the Higher Education South Africa (HESA) was formed as the successor to the two statutory representative organisations for universities and universities of technology, SAUVCA and the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP). The launch of HESA was in part motivated by the reformation of the higher education sector, which resulted in the establishment of new institutional types, but also by the need for a strong, unified body of leadership. HESA represents all 23 public universities and universities of technology in South Africa. HESA led to development of many programmes aimed at dealing with HIV/AIDS in the higher education sector (Chetty and Michel, 2005)

### ***Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme (HEAIDS)***

In 2006 the Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme (HEAIDS) was established. HEAIDS is a nationally co-ordinated initiative aimed at developing and strengthening the capacity of South Africa's higher education sector to respond comprehensively to the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS and to play a leadership role in the South African HIV/AIDS response (HEAIDS, 2006). HEAIDS is an initiative of the Department of Education (DoE) and is undertaken on behalf of the Department by HESA. The programme aims to enable institutions to address HIV/AIDS through their mandate to: undertake advanced teaching and prepare graduates for responsible roles in the world of work (HEAIDS, 2006). It does this through primary research on aspects of HIV/AIDS pertinent to the sector and through the development of policy frameworks. HEAIDS has also allocated financial assistance to institutions of higher education to help them upgrade or develop their HIV/AIDS programmes (HEAIDS, 2006).

## **The response of two KZN Universities to HIV/AIDS**

### ***University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) HIV/AIDS prevention responses***

In 2000, the University of Natal commissioned Abt Associates to undertake a situation analysis of HIV/AIDS on its campuses in order to guide the development of a strategic approach to dealing with HIV/AIDS at the University. The University of Natal (before the merger) developed a policy on HIV/AIDS through its AIDS Committee (University of Natal, 2002). The policy outlined the need to institutionalise within the curricula, education aimed at creating awareness for both students and staff (University of Natal, 2002). An integrated response to HIV/AIDS within the curricula of the University was to be developed with the appropriate assistance and guidance of national norms and standards. The policy was then developed through a consultative process with other tertiary institutions and those with expertise within the University (ibid.).

University of Durban-Westville (UDW) had a programme entitled „sex and risk“ which was aimed at developing confidence among students in their ability to deal with sexuality. It was meant to give them an opening to be aware of the processes involved in their sexuality. This was a module targeted at students and was offered to first years on issues relating to their sexuality, self-esteem needs and practices of safe sex and increasing knowledge of HIV/AIDS. The programme was abandoned after the merger of the universities because it had become difficult to keep going with the increase in the number of students (Bhagwanjee, 2006).

In 2008/9, HEAIDS conducted a national survey at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in South Africa to determine the prevalence of HIV infection among staff and students. Blood was obtained following informed consent by finger prick from 1 317 staff and students at UKZN and tested. The overall response rate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal among those who arrived at the testing venues was 77.0%. Findings show that the overall prevalence of HIV among students and staff was 2.8%. The prevalence of students living with HIV was 2.4% (HEAIDS, 2010: 23).

It was estimated that a total of 675 students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal were living with HIV. All cases of HIV among students were only among African students were HIV positive, only 0.5% of other students were HIV positive. More female students (2.8%) than male students (1.8%) were HIV positive (ibid.). The underlying factors to this situation are not known. My

study takes this finding further. It investigates the causes of high HIV infection rate among African students.

Slightly less than 60% of all students reported that they had ever had sex. Less than a third of students aged 18 had ever had sex but this rose to 59% among those aged 20, and to 75% among those older than 20 years (HEAIDS, 2010: 25). This seems to imply that younger students are likely to have their first sex encounter during the period that they are at university. My study explores why majority of students have sexual debut during the period that they are at university, and why others do not engage in sex altogether during the period that they are at university.

More male students reported having had more than one sexual partner in the past year (51%) in comparison to females (26%). Around 26% of male students reported more than one partner in the past month, many times higher than female students and male students, where this was 2%, and 7% respectively (ibid.). HIV prevalence was higher among male and female students who reported more than one partner in the past month in comparison with those who did not (HEAIDS, 2010: 26). This current study explores the underlying factors to the differences in the number of sexual partners male and female students have, and the instigators of multiple sexual partnering.

Findings indicate that it was common to have multiple partners, either in short-term relationships or concurrently. Around 78% of students had been tested in the past year (HEAIDS, 2010: 26). My study explores the reasons some test for HIV and others do not.

About 44% of students both sexes reported never drinking. While half of all students reported drinking once a week, around 32% of all students reported being drunk in the past month (HEAIDS, 2010: 26). Data suggests that there is a campus culture of excessive drinking on weekends. This study explores the risk of alcohol and drug abuse of campuses.

### *HIV/AIDS Policy*

In 2005, a year after the merger, UKZN reaffirmed its policy through a revised policy document (UKZN HIV/AIDS Policy, 2005). The University therefore, through this policy is committed to ensuring that its interventions of prevention, treatment, care, support and research actively

address the ravages of the epidemic and help both staff and students to deal with its impact in a realistic and meaningful way. UKZN aims to:

*Ameliorate the impact of HIV/AIDS within the University, and within the broader community. It will develop policies and practices based on principles of respect for human rights and dignity of people. The fundamental principle at UKZN is that of a comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS with educational and preventive interventions as the foundation activities to safeguard the interests of the UKZN, its staff and students (UKZN HIV/AIDS Policy, 2005:3).*

This policy further expresses the University's recognition of its responsibility to facilitating access to HIV and AIDS information, prevention, treatment, care and support services for all staff and students, including direct provision of these services where available when resources permit (UKZN HIV/AIDS Policy, 2005: 3). This policy is the University's dedication to the formation of a working and learning environment that is free from discrimination, stigmatisation of HIV, and where people living with HIV/AIDS are guaranteed of their rights being supported and protected (ibid.).

The University of KwaZulu-Natal has also positioned itself as one of the country's leading research institutes in respect to HIV/AIDS, and the research competence of the University is enhanced by the good standing of trained and esteemed researchers and academics, who produce research that is of outstandingly high standard and is widely published (UKZN History, 2009). In 2002, the UKZN AIDS Programme conducted an assessment of all HIV/AIDS-related research from Masters level, and upwards, and of all staff HIV/AIDS research initiatives, across all five campuses. This is the most comprehensive reflection of the University's research initiatives in HIV/AIDS research. The database is aimed at supporting researchers in identifying gaps in research programmes and at encouraging multidisciplinary and concerted research efforts (ibid.).

#### *Implementation of the HIV/AIDS Policy*

UKZN has an HIV/AIDS programme based in the Research office in Westville. The Director of the programme effects operations in the University and is responsible for annual reports,

leadership development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policy and plan. This is done together with the AIDS committee responsible for policy advice and implementation. The AIDS committee is advised by the AIDS strategy development committee and campus HIV/AIDS working groups to identify areas of concern that require future intervention. Campus HIV/AIDS coordinators are responsible of HIV/AIDS activities on campus level. This is done in conjunction with campus HIV/AIDS working groups. In each campus there is a primary health care nurse (UKZN HIV/AIDS policy, 2005).

### ***The Durban University of Technology HIV/AIDS prevention responses***

The University of Technology (DUT) has also put in place an HIV/AIDS Policy to guide its fight against HIV/AIDS. In 2003 it established an HIV and AIDS Centre to ensure effective and efficient functioning of the AIDS programmes in the institution. It was formed by different structures within the institution; academic faculties, students, human resources management, union, executive management office, student counseling office, Health Promoter, and others (DUT, *Izwi lako*, 2008). The aim of the HIV and AIDS Centre is to transform DUT community into a community that is empowered with effective knowledge and skills for HIV prevention.

Between 2008/9 HEAIDS conducted a national survey aimed to establish the prevalence of HIV infection among staff and students. About 1 103 staff and students at DUT tested for HIV of which 900 were students. The overall response rate at DUT among those who arrived at the testing venues was 75%. The overall prevalence of HIV among students and staff was 2.7%. The prevalence of students living with HIV was 2.1%. It was estimated that a total of 700 students at DUT were living with HIV (HEAIDS, 2010: 29).

Data shows that 4.7% of African students were HIV positive, only 0.7% of other students were HIV positive. More female students (2.9%) than male students (1.7%) were HIV positive. About 63% of all students reported that they had ever had sex. About 29% of students aged 17 had ever had sex but this rose to 58% among those aged 27, and to 74% among those older than 19 years. This suggests that younger students are likely to have their sexual debut during the period that they are at university making early sex initiation a sexual risk factor. This study will investigate

how joining university as adolescents and early sexual debut put students at the risk of HIV infection.

More male students reported having had more than one sexual partner in the past year (50%) in comparison to females (25%). Around 26% of male students reported more than one partner in the past month, many times higher than female students and male and female staff, where this was 3%, 8%, and 8% respectively. Findings indicate that multiple and concurrent partners were common. HIV prevalence was higher among male and female students who reported more than one partner in the past month in comparison with those who did not (2.8% versus 1.1% for male students; 15% versus 7.7% for female students) (HEAIDS, 2010: 23). This study explores both risk and protective factors to multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships on campuses.

About 43% of students both sexes reported never drinking, while 31% of all students reported being drunk in the past month (HEAIDS, 2010: 31). In this study, the risk of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, age-disparate sex, drug abuse, and other sexual risk practices and the underlying factors to these are explored in detail. The aim is to have a better understanding of students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

### *HIV/AIDS Policy*

The core aim of the DUT HIV/AIDS policy (2008) is to provide a framework for addressing HIV/AIDS within the University. In a nutshell, the policy endeavours to ensure that the DUT community academics, university employees, student's organisation and unions respond with responsible behaviour towards HIV/AIDS (DUT HIV/AIDS Policy, 2008).

DUT is also committed to contribute to the national efforts through education, research, awareness promotion, behavioural change and innovative initiatives in line with the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS (NSPHIV/AIDS). The DUT affirms its recognition of the responsibility that exists for the provision of access to information and prevention for all employees and students, in so far as it is reasonably possible (DUT HIV/AIDS Policy, 2008). The University further affirms its commitment to the development of an environment that is free from discrimination by promoting behavioural change (ibid.).

## Summary

This chapter has presented a detailed background to the study by contextualising the HIV/AIDS situation. South Africa is the epicentre of the epidemic and young people are the most affected. Universities students are also affected. Students engage in high sexual risk behaviour including having multiple and concurrent sexual partners, transactional and intergenerational sexual relationships. High sexual risk behaviour is driven by pursuit of modernity, poverty, social status, peer influence, and other influences (Lengwe, 2010; HEAIDS, 2010). Several national prevention strategies have been initiated by the government and NGOs to deal with the epidemic and some are using the EE approach. The response, however, to HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa has not been smooth sailing.

Current studies revealed that the national prevalence for the HIV/AIDS pandemic among South African University students is about 4.7% (HEAIDS, 2010). South African Universities have also taken concrete steps to address the HIV/AIDS challenge among its constituents. The adverse effects of HIV/AIDS led to the establishment of HEAIDS which has been instrumental in coordinating responses to HIV/AIDS at South African Institutions of Higher learning. For instance, HEAIDS encouraged the development of HIV/AIDS responses that are unique to each university, but which are situated within the broader HEAIDS framework. It also encouraged the usage of entertainment education (EE) and peer education (PE). As a result, the majority of universities including UKZN and DUT have developed HIV/AIDS policies that outline how HIV/AIDS issues are approached.

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**  
**YOUNG PEOPLE’S SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**Introduction**

This chapter examines literature on young people’s sexual risk behaviour. The following literature will be reviewed in order to provide a context and rationale for this study: (a) the concept of risk as a construct; (b) the notion of risk and protective factors (c) the risk of HIV/AIDS in health promotion activities; (d) The notion of the instigators of risk and protective behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Jessor et al., 1998). Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Jessor et al.’s (1998) theoretical lenses posit that the social/environmental, personality, biological and behavioural factors are the main underlying domains to young people’s sexual risk behaviour. Main factors from Jessor and Bronfenbrenner’s domains will be explored including individual, family, neighbourhood, gender, age, and pubertal development to find out how they influence students’ sexual risk behaviour.

This chapter wraps up with a conclusion on the main theoretical and methodological gaps in the previous studies reviewed, and how they will be addressed in this study.

**The concept of risk**

The term risk, according to Freitas (2001), carries in itself the presupposed possibility of previewing certain situations or events through knowledge or, at least, the possibility of knowledge of probability distribution parameters for future happenings. Thus, its original meaning is neutral referring to probability of an event occurring that could relate to positive or negative outcome (ibid.). The term has evolved such that it is used to presuppose the possibility of incurring misfortune or loss or being vulnerable or being involved in danger or peril. For instance, the risk cover industry uses risk to mean uncertainty of the outcome of an event, probability of loss, and danger (Freitas, 2001).

Risk is also defined as the possibility that an event will occur, for example that an individual will become ill or die within a stated period of time or age (Last, 1999). Risk is also defined as a non technical term encompassing a variety of measures of the probability of a (generally) unfavourable outcome (Meacham, 2004). Kirby (2002) labelled factors as risky if those factors increase the likelihood of negative health behaviour and outcomes, or discourage positive behaviour that might prevent negative health problems. In more simplified terms, Wilder and Watt (2002) define risky behaviour as those that jeopardise one's physical well-being.

Some suggest a problematising approach to the question of risk. For example, Adams (1999:14) states that all people have "thermostats" which evaluate risk. This risk "thermostat" notion suggests that everyone has a predilection to take risks. However, this inclination differs from one individual to another. The inclination to take risk is influenced by the potential reward of taking the risk (ibid.). The way people view risk is influenced by losses they have experienced in the past. According to Adams (1999) a person's risk-taking decision represents a balancing of interests between a potential risk and a potential return, in which the person is also thinking his own views of risk.

A classification of the risk types is presented by Adams (2003). Directly perceptible risks are managed using commonsense or rather a combination of instinct, intuition and experience. Risks are perceived with the help of science where scientists help people to see and manage what is not seen with the naked eye. Risks virtually perceived include risks whose probabilities are not known. In the health sector risk is perceived as a happening that compromises health, state of complete physical, mental and social well being (Meacham, 2004: 23).

### **The notion of risk and protective factors in young people's behaviour**

The finding by Jessor et al (1977) and Jessor (1998) indicate that young people's involvement in harmful risk-related activity results from the direct and indirect interaction of certain antecedent factors, and the extent to which young people have been exposed to these factors. Jessor's (1991) definition of a risk factor seems more aligned with sexual behaviour outcomes. According to Jessor (1991:21), a risk factor can be defined as agent or condition that is linked to an increased probability of outcomes that compromise health, quality of life, or life itself. For example, the

abuse of drugs can influence a man to engage in sex with a commercial sex worker without using a condom, making him susceptible to HIV infection. On the other hand, protective factors are conditions that reduce or completely obliterate the probability of outcomes that compromise health or rather buffer against risky behaviour (Meacham, 2004:23). For example, a staunch religious student who believes that sex outside and before marriage is wrong is protected or safeguarded by his or her religious belief from getting infected with HIV because he or she does not engage in sex altogether.

Risk factors extend far beyond global areas such as a general propensity towards risk-taking to incorporate a variety of risk domains that compromise health, emotional and psychological well-being and social performance (Jessor, 1998). While exposure to risk factors increase young people's vulnerability to being harmed by the outcome of engaging in harmful behaviour, or reduces the impact of its harmful outcome (ibid.). The role of protective factors is therefore to act as a cushion between young people's exposure to and involvement in risk behaviour, rather than blanketing young people from any involvement in risk behaviour (Jessor, 1998).

The literature reviewed shows the interplay between risk and protective factors in the quest to explain the potential for young people to engage in behaviour that can place them in a state of personal harm (Jessor et al., 1995; Cooper et al., 1992). This behaviour may be interpreted as "problem behaviour", and takes place within the personal, biological, psychological, social and environmental context of young people's life experiences. Problem behaviour, as an expression of how young people conduct their life, demonstrates either an adaptive or maladaptive influence in young people's development (Jessor, 1995). These contexts, along with their associated behaviour, are not isolated from each other. Rather they tend to covary in a complex and influential matrix of interrelationships (Jessor et al., 1995). For example, a young person who has grown up in the midst of an unstable and unhappy family environment and impoverished socio-economic context, and whose early university drop out has resulted from years of trouble and failure, is likely to model peers who engage in deviant, illegal and anti-social behaviour. Each aspect of this maladaptive scenario has its own part to play, while at the same time interacting with a constellation of mutual influence (Jessor, 1991).

Protective factors are found in the governing roles of parents and similar figures of authority, as well as other authoritative aspects of control such as community sanctions. Protective factors

also result from involvement in activity that is incompatible with or opposed to problem behaviour, as well as commitment to conventional institutions such as school and church organisation (Cooper et al., 2001; last, 1999). For young people who are exposed to situations of risky behaviour, being “at risk” means that they have entered a path away from these protective influences towards behaviour that are potentially deviant, and that therefore compromise their quality of life and health (ibid.). While risk-related exploration is a normal part of adaptive young people’s risk behaviour, problems begin when the exploratory nature of this behaviour leads into commitment to the behaviour (Wilder and Watt, 2002).

If young people’s risky behaviour is left unchecked, there is a possibility that this progression will ultimately lead into a state of high-risk problem behaviour. Clearly, the optimum environment to strive after is one where protective factors predominantly outweigh risk factors.

### **Risk of HIV/AIDS in health promotion activities**

Risk is perceived as putting oneself in a dangerous situation. In addition, risk is equated to an attitude of not showing care to one’s way of life, referred to as “risky behaviour”. One study identified sexual risk behaviour as a sexual activity done when one is stirred up by substances such as drugs and alcohol (Parry, 2000). In addition to Parry’s (2000) findings, Parker et al (2007) argues that sexual risk behaviour is when one is forced to have sex or rather against one’s will. According to Kotchick et al (2001), the definition of risky sexual behaviour should take into account the issue of failure to consistently use contraceptive methods, abuse of substances such as alcohol before engaging in sex and having many sexual partners.

Researchers such as Cooper et al (2003) contributed extensive knowledge towards the understanding of sexual risk behaviour among young people. They explained that sexual risk behaviour should be understood in terms of the number of sexual partners one has, the number of sexual risk practices one is and has been involved in and the sexual risky outcomes one has experienced.

A study by Langer et al (2001) explains that the definition of sexual risk behaviour should include the consideration if one had sex before, had used substances prior to engaging in sex, the

kind of sexual practices one is engaging in, the number of partners one has or have had and the number of pregnancies one have had or the number of women one has made pregnant.

Other researchers such as Shrier et al (1996) define sexual risk behaviour in a comparative way. They argue that sexual risk behaviour should be perceived as failure to use a condom at the last sexual act and engaging in sex that results in one be infected with sexually transmitted infections. As for Langer et al (2001), sexual risk behaviour is having multiple and concurrent sexual partners, engaging in one-night-stands, using condoms inconsistently, engaging in age disparity sexual relationships and transactional sex. To build on this study, my study explores the sexual risk practices students engage to determine their risk to HIV infection.

However, Langer et al's (2001) understanding of sexual risk behaviour was criticized by that it does not "take into account the issue of early sexual debut and abuse of drugs prior to engaging in sex" (Parry 2002: 9). It was also criticized that it does not consider the other well known sexual behavioural practices such as open and casual sexual relationships that equally put young people at risk of HIV infection (Hallman, 2005).

A study by Jessor (1991) suggests that sexual risk behaviour should be understood in terms of the extent of risk linked to engaging in a sexual risk activity. He explained that in order to understand the extent of a person's sexual risk, researchers should take into account the degree of a person's involvement in sexual risk behaviour. According to Jessor (1998), this should include addressing the age at which a person started engaging in sexual risk behaviour and the number of sexual risk behaviour one has or had. He further explains that to understand young people's sexual risk behaviour research efforts should explore the extent of the presence of protective influences that work against the decision to engage in sexual risk behaviour for example having friends who believe in abstinence. My study takes Jessor's (1991) recommendation by exploring the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour.

Bronfenbrenner (1979:47) argues that to understand human behaviour for instance, sexual risk behaviour one needs to know that there are four domains that are at play. The first is the *microsystem* which holds that a person is influenced by roles society has ascribed to him or her. In other words, norms influence people's behaviour. The second is the *mesosystem* under which

Bronfenbrenner (1979:47) holds that human behaviour is influenced by social systems in which people interact. He also argues that the human development is influenced by the *exosystem*. This system explains that behaviour and development are influenced by settings an individual does not interact directly in but affects his or her behaviour or development. The fourth system is the *macrosystem* which explains that human development is influenced by cultural values or rather the larger system. Taking the different systems that influence behaviour into account, the current study explores the different underlying factors to students' sexual risk behaviour.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model was criticized that it is not so much concerned with human development. Several researchers argue that it is concerned with conditions within which development takes place and this development is mostly influenced from the outside to the inside (Langer et al., 2001; Kotchick et al., 2001; Jessor, 1998). In other words, Bronfenbrenner (1977) argues that human development is influenced by the interactions between systems. He explains that it is difficult to investigate sexual risk behaviour because of complicated environmental structures, different processes taking place within and between systems. In other words, systems of behavioural influence are connected and interconnected such that there is no single system that is not influenced or that does not influence other systems.

Thus, Bronfenbrenner (1977) argument is that any study on people's development or behaviour should take into account the different conditions or subsystems associated with salient effects that exist or could exist across settings. For him any human development for sexual initiation is influenced by the interplay of different conditions. This means that there are mutual interactions of processes between and across systems of higher order systems.

In the nutshell, Bronfenbrenner (1977) holds that human development cannot be explained by an individual system alone as there are other systems that contribute to human development. Thus, the systems approach is the best way of investigating human behaviour such as drug abuse and sexual risk behaviour. Hallman (2004) explored the influence of the individual sphere versus the social on young people's sexual risk behaviour in South Africa. In this study on young people were aged between 15 and 29 found that their protective and risk behaviour was mainly instigated by the social sphere. This is to say, the individual sphere or factors were less influential on young people's sexual risk behaviour when compared to the social sphere.

A study by Langer et al (2005) used the multi-systematic theoretical framework to investigate protective and risk factors to young people's sexual behaviour. The study explored the issue of neighbourhood, family, peers, school environment and other factors. The findings of the study show that the family and peer influences were strong in influencing young people's sexual risk behaviour followed by school contexts. This shows that there was an interaction of different factors influencing young people's sexual risk behaviour. The current study explored different factors to ascertain the different conditions that influence students' sexual risk behaviour.

Another study by Pettifor (2004) in South Africa investigated adolescents' sexual risk behaviour. The study found that their sexual behaviour was influenced by religiosity and communication between parents and their children. However, the study argues that there was a weak link between religiosity and communication and young people's sexual attitudes. In other words, religiosity and communication were not found to influence young people's sexual attitudes. Instead, there was link between communication between parents and their children in the sense that they influenced students' decision making process to engage or not to engage in sexual risk behaviour. My study explores the influence of religiosity and communication between parents and their children.

Using the ecological system framework Blum and Mmari (2005) conducted a meta analysis on the risk and protected influences associated with young people's sexual behaviour in African developing nations. The study found that 87% of the risk and protective conditions at different system levels were similar to those reported in developed countries. The studies to some extent suggest that young people's decisions to engage in sex were influenced by similar factors such as peers, beliefs and community environment. Taking this finding into account, my study explores how peers, beliefs, community settings and others influence students' sexual risk behaviour.

A study by Kotchick et al (2001) reviewed literature on young people's sexual risk behaviour using a multisystemic framework. Their findings suggests that to understand young people's sexual risk behaviour both individual and social factors should be investigated because they play a critical role in influencing decisions to engage or not engage in sexual behaviour. They argued

that both individual and environmental influences are critical in influencing young people's protective or risk sexual behaviour.

Using the ecological systems theoretical model, Corcoran et al's (2001) study compared non pregnant and pregnant, and parenting and non parenting youth. There were three factors that guided the study: the individual system; included stress, self-esteem and depression, the mesosystem; that included family functioning, school, encounters with friends and family structure, and the environmental/social system; that included race, parents' jobs and household income. The study found that these three systems played an important role in young people's decision-making to engage or avoid sexual risk behaviour.

In other words, Bronfenbrenner's (1997) ecological system framework is to some extent in agreement with Jessor's approach to human behaviour. Jessor (1991) argues that to have a good understanding of young people's sexual risk behaviour researchers should investigate the factors or rather the microsystem, perceived environment/social behaviour or rather macrosystem and the exosystem. Jessor and Bronfenbrenner's notions have implications for prevention campaigns. Their theoretical constructs point to where interventions should be focused on particular factors and lifestyles that influence young people's decision making. Specifically, Jessor's (1991) findings suggest a comprehensive approach to prevention efforts that they should target various system levels; the social/environmental, individual, behavioural and biological so as to effectively influence behaviour change. Due to the comprehensiveness of Jessor's (1991) findings my study will use his theory (Problem Behaviour Theory) to investigate students' sexual risk behaviour (see page 70).

## **Underlying influences to young people's sexual risk behaviour**

### ***Family form***

A study conducted by Bhana (2004) in South Africa among young people aged between 15 and 29 drawn from the urban areas of Gauteng Province found that family form is one of the underlying factors to young people's behaviour. The findings show that 76% of young people reported that family forms or rather fundamental social groups in society usually made up of one

or two parents provided them with support they needed. Bhana's (2004) found that 66% reported that family forms enabled them to have people to supervise them on how to live a constructive life while 55% said that availability of family members acted as source of control to their sexual behaviour. What this study is suggesting is that family form was found to be a protective condition to young people's behaviour in general. This study will take this finding further to explore how family forms influence students' sexual behaviour.

The study by Eaton (2003) found that children with single parents were prone to pregnancy compared to those with both parents while Bhana (2004) found that young people with single parents engaged in high risk sexual behaviour including unprotected sex. Blum and Mmari's study (2005) found that young people living with a single parent especially girls were susceptible to having unprotected sex compared to young people who had a privilege of growing in a home with both parents.

A study conducted by Paruk et al (2005) reported that young people with single parents were more adventurous in seeking pleasure and were sexually experienced. This is in contrast to Blum and Mmari's (2005) study that reviewed sixteen studies on young people's sexual risk behaviour and found that young people who lived with both parents were less prone to engage in sexual risk behaviour and that most of them were not sexually active. Building on this study, the current study explores young people's protective influence of having both parents.

In addition, Blum and Mmari's (2005) literature review found that the presence of a responsible biological father encouraged girls to delay their sexual debut. This is supported by Dittus et al (1999) who found that the attitude of the figure towards premarital sex played an important role in influencing girls' sexual behaviour. They found that girls with father figures who were against premarital sex were less likely to engage in premarital sex and experience unplanned pregnancy compared to those with father figures who had sexually permissive attitudes and those without fathers. In the same context, Loving's (1993) study on 200 subjects found that warm relationships between fathers and their daughters played an important role in delaying young girls' sexual initiation. My study therefore explores the influence of warm relationships between parents and their children on students' sexual behaviour.

### ***Social economic status***

A study by Hallman (2004) in South Africa found that low income families contributed to worst physical health among young people in both rural and urban areas. The study found that 84% of young people from low income families mentioned that their poor physical healths were triggered by modicum family income. Therefore, their health was compromised because they were unable to meet their basic needs. The same study reported that 34% of mental health problems among young people in particular urban areas were associated with low income or rather economic hardships. The study therefore argues that low income in families influenced ill physical health and mental health and accounted for young people's decision to engage in risky sexual behaviour in trying to make ends meet.

The study by Hallman (2004) specifically shows that low income in families influenced early sexual behaviour and unprotected sex. In addition, the study compared pregnancy and frequency drop out from school of young people from low income and high income families and found that young people from low income families had high pregnancy rates (67%) compared to 17% of those from high family income. The school drop out in low income families was 77% compared to 9% of those from high income families (Hallman 2004). The same study found that young people in high socio-economic (SES) environments were most likely to use condoms compared to those from low SES. This was attributed to access and lack of access to update information on the risk of HIV infection and HIV prevention respectively. My study will build on this finding to explore the influence of social status on students' sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Parents' education level***

A study by Hallman (2001) and Varga (1997) found that the level of parents' education was critical in influencing young people sexual behaviour. For example, Varga's (1997) study found that young people with parents with university education were less likely to engage in high risk sexual behaviour compared to young people with parents with primary school education. This was attributed to parental modeling which plays an important role in influencing sexual behaviour either positive or negative. In the current study the influence of parents' education on students' sexual behaviour whether protective or risk is explored.

### *Parental supervision*

Several studies reviewed associate parental supervision to young people's sexual behaviour in South Africa (Paruk et al., 2005; Hallman, 2004; Moorosi et al., 2009). Specifically, Bhana et al (2004) and Paruk et al (2005) found that greater monitoring by parents on young people's behaviour influenced them to delay their sexual debut. For example, in Bhana et al's (2004) study 39% of young people who were not sexually active mentioned rigorous parental monitoring as the underlying factor that made them to refrain from engaging in sexual activities. The study also found that monitoring influenced young people not to engage in high risk sexual practices and reduce the frequency of engaging in sex and reduce the practice of having two or more partnerships that overlap in time. It was also reported that parental control increased condom use among young people. This was attributed to parents who were against pregnancy before marriage or before completing school (Paruk et al., 2005).

Several studies reported that permissive parental attitude increased young people's sexual risk behaviour (Leclerc-Madlala, 1999; Rose et al., 2005; Mulwo, 2010). For instance, a study by (Leclerc-Madlala, 1999) found that excessive „forbearing“ influenced young people to engage in early sexual activity. As for Rose et al (2005), warm family ties played an important role in procrastinating early sexual involvement. Miller et al (1998) and Crosby et al (2002) found that parental monitoring encouraged young people to avoid pregnancy by being consistent in using condoms in their sexual relationships.

However, a study by Miller et al (2005) also found that it is not parental supervision that matters but young people's perceptions of parental supervision. This was attributed to the findings that though parental supervision is needed, the study found that 39% of young people perceived it as suppressive and engaged in sexual risk behaviour and abused drugs as a way of reacting to intensive supervision. The same study shows that 18% of young people perceived parental supervision as good and they reported that it helped them to delay their sexual debut. A study by East (1999) investigated young pregnant mothers and found that 76% came from homes where there was less parental monitoring. The findings suggest that when girls are monitored they are less likely to engage in sex or unprotected sex. Thus, parental monitoring depending on how it is perceived by young people can dissuade or influence young people to engage in sexual risk

behaviour. For this reason, the current study explores the influence of parental supervision on students' sexual behaviour.

### ***Parental warmth***

A study by Paruk et al (2005) found that warm relationships between parents and their children influenced children's sexual behaviour. In particular, the study found that parents who talked with their children on issues pertaining to their lives including sex and gave young people room to make correct decision on their own made them feel trusted, loved and valued. This encouraged young people to live responsible lives. In agreement with this finding, Whitebeck et al (1993) found a link between sexual behaviour and parental support. They found that young people who reported warm relationships with their parents had a high sense of responsibility for example reducing the frequency of engaging in sex, reducing the number of sexual partners and enforcing willingness to postpone sexual debut. This justifies the assertion by Makgati et al (2005) that warm and supportive parents who engaged in good communication with their children that was open and reciprocal encouraged their children to be sexually conservative.

A study by Makgati et al (2005) further argues that parental warmth and open interactions encouraged young people's positive attitudes towards sexual health behaviour and encouraged them to develop negative attitudes towards premarital sex. The study shows that young people with parents who were emotionally distant were prone to early initiation of sexual activity and at high risk of victimization (ibid.). The argument advanced by studies reviewed under this section is that communication barriers between parents and their children result to early sexual initiation and frequency of sexual intercourse. It was therefore important that the current study investigated the influence of parent warmth on students' sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Peer subsystem***

A study by Williams et al (2000) argues that adolescent is a stage when young people are prone to risky behaviour. This is because it is a phase when they start to rely on their friends as source of knowledge, perceptions and beliefs. In other words, it is a time when what young people share takes precedence over other sources of information and knowledge. Interestingly, from the

studies reviewed it is not yet clear if young people imitate fellow peers in their sexual behaviour or it is that after engaging in sex they tend to associate themselves with those who are sexually active or at least perceived sexually active (Mulwo, 2010).

Studies suggest that young people's sexual activity is influenced by their peers especially those who were sexually active (Moodley, 2007; Lengwe, 2010; Blum and Mmari, 2005). Evidence also show that girls with friends who have children are more likely to initiate sex, engage in high risk sexual practices and even get pregnant. What these studies are suggesting is that young people tend to adopt their friends' sexual behavioural practices or rather characteristics. A study by Lengwe (2010) also reported that young people with friends that are actively dating and with high social approval for sexual involvement were likely to engage in sexual risk behaviour more frequent overtime. This finding is related to the study by Mulwo (2010) that found that young people's association with older males influence them to engage in high risk sexual activities. Lengwe (2010) found that having older friends encouraged young people to have early initiation of sex because they are not able to withstand older friends' encouragement to engage in sex or resist intimate sexual discussions such that they were tempted to put into actions what they discussed. The same study found that young females who were developing faster than their chronological age were found to be easily persuaded to engage into sexual risk behaviour by older partners.

A study by Gowen et al (2004) found that older females' sexual behaviour differed considerably with young people with same age partners. More specifically, the study found that young people with older partners were more likely to engage in intimate sexual activities and support beliefs that would seriously comprise their health. The same study shows that young people with older partners were more likely to engage in risky sexual activities and accommodate sexual demands from older partners compared to their counterparts with same age partners. According the findings, young females in particular engaged in sex to sustain their relationships with their supportive older partners. Younger female partners reported that having supportive older partners gave them social status and self-fulfillment. Gowen et al.,s (2004) study also found that young partners engaged in sex to please their partners who were regarded as powerful due to their economic muscle or rather privilege. To build on this finding, the current study explored the influence of age differences in relationships on students' sexual behaviour.

The study by Abell (2005) argues that young people who associate with friends who always talk about sex and abuse drugs during their socialization time had less belief in themselves that they were able to abstain from sex. As a result, they were reluctant to use condoms thus more likely to engage in high risk sexual behaviour. In my study, drug explored to ascertain the underlying factors to students' sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Perceptions that young people have sex***

A study by Eleazar (2009) argues that young people's beliefs and perceptions of their peers encourage them to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Three studies specifically explored the link between young peoples' perceptions of the number of sexual partners and the perception that their peers were engaging in sex. All three studies reported a noticeable relationship or rather link (Parker et al., 2007; Pengpid et al., 2008; Eleazar, 2009). The phenomenon of the influence of students' perceptions of their peers did not only work at the individual level but at the group level as well. This suggests that peer group expectations influence young people both individual and as group or society.

A study by Pengpid et al (2008) on young people aged between 19 and 35 found that peers influenced others to engage in risky behaviour. For instance, the study reported that young people influenced others to frequently visit deviance places likes night clubs and taverns. The study also found that young people influenced their peers to abuse drugs and engage in sexual risk behaviour including having many sexual partners and engaging in unproductive sex. The current will explore this factor further so as to understand if peers influence each other's sexual behaviour and determine the kind of sexual risk practices they engaged in.

In order to ascertain young people's perceptions of their peers' sexual risk behaviour, Letseka (2009) conducted a study on 200 young people in South Africa. The study found that 76% had a perception that their peers were sexually active, 65% perceived their peers to be engaging in unprotected sex, and 61% reported that their friends had many sexual partners and 78% felt that their peers had older sexual partners seven years older or more. This study will therefore investigate the sexual risk practices students' engage in influenced by their perceptions of their peers.

### ***Early pubertal maturity***

Early pubertal maturity has been found to relate to earlier ages of sexual debut. In South Africa a study by Peltzer (2003) on young black young students in universities found that early pubertal maturity influenced young people both male and females to engage in risky sexual activities such as casual sex. Wildschut (2008) examined the effect of early pubertal timing on young people's sexual risk behaviour. The study by Wildschut revealed that age at menarche was strongly linked with affiliation with an adult boyfriend and sexual risk behaviour. However, none of the two studies show if age at menarche moderates the relation between having an older boyfriend and sexual risk behaviour. Studies by Flisher et al (2001) and Parker et al (2007) found that early sexual debut among youths is related to multiple aspects of sexual risk behaviour such as inconsistent condom use, and having many sexual partners.

These findings mentioned above have been shown across other studies as well, where adults who were younger at the initiation of sexual activity reported less condom use at first intercourse (Michelo, 2006; Smith, 2007). Flisher et al (2001) and Parker et al (2007) show higher rates of pregnancy among peers who were older at sexual initiation. However, they do not show how the number of sexual partners is inversely related to condom use. Neither do they show how the number of years young people have been sexually active is negatively correlated to a variety of risky sexual practices, an area that is addressed in my study. Though literature reviewed on early sexual debut indicates that many risky behavioural practices are associated to it, the findings do not adequately indicate the early sexual debut variables that are commonly believed to have an influence on young people's sexual behaviour. Most notably, the relation between young people's sexual risk behaviour and early debut risk factors are not well understood. Chapter Seven will examine the pathways through which early debut variables encourage or discourage students to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Age's influence on young people's sexual risk behaviour***

Literature reviewed indicates that age influences young people's sexual risk behaviour. A study by Letseka et al (2008) on young people in South African Universities found that young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years reported more risky sexual activity. This same study also

found high pregnancy rates among young people that also contributed to the high university drop out rates. This is in agreement with Parker et al's (2007) finding that sexual risk behaviour is higher among South African youths than in any other group of people. They argue that age for instance, made female youths to engage in age-disparate sexual relationships in which they find it hard to negotiate for safer sex. The literature review in this study yielded no studies that clearly tackled this concern.

A study Preston et al (1991) explored why young people aged between 15 and 24 years engage in behaviour that put them at risk of HIV infection. From their research it was first concluded that youth under the age of twenty-five had a misconception about their possible risk of contracting HIV as the majority thought HIV only infected older people. Of those youth who identified themselves as "sexually active" and engaged in at least one act of intercourse, just under half of males believed that their sexual organs were not fully developed therefore would not exert pressure to cause wounds that would facilitate the spreading or acquiring of HIV.

In South Africa age was also found to directly impact individuals' decisions regarding sexual risk behaviour. Adolescents were more likely to engage in risky behaviour than older adults because they had a more "nothing to lose" approach and unrealistic view of the potential risks of unprotected sex (Parker et al., 2007). Age was found to be directly linked to overall health and preventive behaviour, because youth aged between 15 and 24 were not with their parents as they spent most of their time at school. Thus, they had less routine guidance (Levine and Ross, 2002). A study by the Health Research Unit of the University of Witwatersrand in a mixed sample between students (Pettifor et al., 2004) found that older females were more likely than younger females to use some form of protection. The underlying factors to this happening are not explained therefore raising more questions than answers on the influence of age on students' sexual risk behaviour, an area this study also explores in.

### ***Low perception of the risk of HIV***

A study by Harrison (2005) found that young people engage in sexual risk behaviour because of their low perception of the risk of HIV. According to Harrison (2005: 12), regardless of biological sex or race, young people who engaged in risky behaviour typically did so because of

a sense that there was “nothing to lose” and that they are in some way invincible. Further they found that even though young people engaged in risky behaviour such as unprotected sex, they often did so after calculating the perceived risk. The study demonstrated that young people actually calculated the gain they thought would be realised (sexual pleasure). They also compared it to the perceived health. In many situations young people failed to understand the risk and engaged in risky activities (see also Kelly, 2001).

With regards young people and changes that take place in their perceptions of sexual risk behaviour in institutions of higher learning, ZAWECA (2005) reported that adolescents perceived benefits linked to unprotected sex than they perceived possible negative aspects such as getting infected with HIV. In other words, when condom use was measured they found that in all three measures, students in universities pointed out the risk involved in engaging in unprotected sex, how said that the benefits of engaging in unprotected sex exceeded the risk. ZAWECA (2005) also found risk behaviour among students was influenced by students’ temptation and needed to be addressed seriously as prominent sexual risk factor. Their study argues that students who struggled less in wanting to engage in unprotected sex had no sexual partners (ibid.). This study will take this finding further to explore how having a sexual partner or long term partner influences students to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Influence of race on sexual risk behaviour***

A study by Pettifor et al (2004) on youths in general found that HIV prevalence taking into consideration variables such as age, race, and gender on average was 13.3% of young South Africans aged between 15 and 49 were living with HIV. The study found important differences by gender and race. For example, Black females had the soaring HIV infection rate at 19.5 %. As for Black males they had a little lesser rate at 17%. This disparity is attributed to the finding that in heterosexual sexual encounter women are more susceptible to HIV infection than their counterparts due to the nature of their biology which makes them easily bruised and other factors (UNAIDS, 2008).

Interestingly, Moorosi et al’s (2009) study on young undergraduates shows that race is an important biological factor associated with patterns of students’ risky behaviour. However, there

is no study that has been able to draw reliable conclusions about differences in sexual risk behaviour among young people of different races. The results of the study that found such differences depended on comparing racial groups and risk behaviour being considered. For instance, a study by Lengwe (2010) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal found that Coloureds appear to use condoms less consistently than Indians. Blacks reported higher levels of risk behaviour than other race groups, and black females were more inclined to report having multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships than Whites and other race groups. Breier (2010) found that the incidence of South African students' pregnancy rate was higher among black female students than other race groups. However, this study did not control for social groups that may account for the observed differences. Thus, observed racial differences in many sexual risk practices may be baffled by factors such as socio-economic status, education and other demographics that are not taken into consideration in the literature reviewed.

Racial disparities in strategies aimed at risk-reduction have been found to differ by gender. Letseka et al (2008) compared Black and White females in universities and found that White females used condom less. This information was reported by their male partners. In the same way, being White and male was linked to more correct and consistent condom (see Nuntsu, 2004). Flisher and Chalton (2005) argued that immorality was the main cause of high HIV infection rates among young people. The gap in their argument is that they ignored the well document fact that young people's sexual risk behaviour is in part a reflection of the higher incidence of poverty among Blacks than other races. This situation was inherited from apartheid-era policies (Hallman, 2005). The major pitfall in Flisher and Chalton (2005)'s study is that they emphasised individual factors neglecting the social context that has great influence on young people's sexual behaviour. Thus, there is a need to explore the influence of the social context on students' sexual risk behaviour to fill in the gaps in existing knowledge with regards underlying factors to their sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Substance use/abuse***

The study on young people in the university of the North suggest that sexual risk behaviour is associated with other problem behaviour, such as substance use especially alcohol (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2005). There is no mention of specific domains that influence students to abuse

substances and then engage in sexual risk behaviour. Substances young people misuses are an outcome not only of early childhood histories but as well as being characteristic of families where parental bonding with young people and effectiveness of parental discipline style is poor (see also Kotchick et al., 2001). The problem in the findings by Phaswana-Mafuya's study (2005) is that there is insubstantial evidence to support the association between young people's sexual risk behaviour and problem drug use behaviour a notion this study will pursue in detail.

Another study by Kotchick et al (2001) established that young people who become fathers are also likely to engage in a constellation of other problem behaviour such as noncriminal misbehaviour, and drug use. The link between young people who are fathers with other risky behaviour has been established by Hallman (2004). However, there is no clear and comprehensive evidence of the factors that put young people at risk for becoming mothers or fathers while they are still teenagers. Thus, this study explored the precursors of students' sexual risk behaviour because those who engage in sexual risk behaviour create immediate consequences for themselves and for those around them. In the review (see Phaswana-Mafuya, 2005), substance abuse emerged as predictor of rapid repeated pregnancies among young people at Cape Town University. However, there is no clear evidence on what kinds of substances encourage students to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

The Ministry of Health in South Africa (2002) found that high-risk sexual practices, for instance, non-use of condom at last intercourse were most prevalent among young people who had used illicit substances during the past year. This is supported by Oladimeji et al (2004) who found that substance use among Nigerian university students and black and white South Africans co-occurred with other sexual risk behaviour like one night stands and sensational sex seeking. Other studies in South Africa found that a history of alcohol and drug use correlate with inconsistent condom use (see Varga, 1997; Flisher et al., 2001). However, these studies did not specify the kind of youths who are vulnerable to risky sexual practices due to substance abuse.

I will investigate the groups that are more vulnerable to sexual risk behaviour due to substance abuse. This is because segmentation is very important when dealing with students' sexual risk behaviour. For instance, evidence shows that most effective communication programmes for risk reduction in universities are those that divide students according to their age and context (see Moodley, 2007).

The use of drugs immediately prior to or during sexual encounters among young people in South African universities is also related to decreased condom use (see Peltzer, 2003). Peltzer's finding is in agreement with the study by Breier (2010) who found that young South Africans in universities who abused alcohol were less likely to use condoms. He also found that students with a high frequency of having sex under the influence of drugs were more likely to have a greater number of sexual partners.

### ***Uneven development: puberty and menarche***

Physiological factors have been implicated in the predisposition of young people towards sexual risk behaviour. However, only one study by Wilbraham (2005) indicates that uneven development influences young people's sexual risk behaviour. That is, where physical development precedes cognitive development, young people will appear to others to be more mature than they actually are. This makes young people more readily acceptable to older friends. Due to uneven development young people also tend to associate with an older group where sexual risk behaviour is considered normative making them susceptible to sexual risk behaviour (see also Kelly, 2001.). It is therefore critical that this study should explore the influence of uneven development on students' sexual risk behaviour. This will be done in Chapter Seven under the biological domain.

### ***Sensation seeking***

Sensation seeking has been labeled as one trait that influences young people to take risks for the sake of varied, novel, complex, and intense sexual experiences (Zuckerman, 1994). Zuckerman also found that young people use sex as an escape from other behavioural problems, such as loneliness, depression, anxiety and stress. Parker et al (2007:11) agree with the findings from Zuckerman's study that young people engage in sexual risk behaviour because they lack self-control strategies. Unfortunately, there is only one study by Breier (2010) on young people in university that found con-occurrence of sensational seeking with other potentially harmful sexual behaviour.

### *Young people's intelligence*

Intelligence is yet another aspect that has been implicated in young people's development from childhood towards sexual risk behaviour. Studies show that young people who engage in sexual risk behaviour generally record lower IQs, particularly in the arena of verbal IQ, than young people who do not engage in sexual risk behaviour (Rodgers 1999, and Aggleton 1995). Rodgers (1995) found that the relationship between IQ plus individual differences in psychological functioning and risky sexual activity holds true when IQ is measured before the first appearance of sexual risk behaviour. This relationship also holds after controlling for socio-economic status, race, academic achievement, and motivation during testing. However, cognitive competence, as measured by academic performance, is a variable that has occupied a prominent position in the prediction of young people's involvement in risky sexual activity (see Jessor et al., 1991; East, 1998). However, there is no study that I am aware of that has examined the association between academic performance and sexual risk behaviour among young people in South Africa. Only Spooner et al's (2001) study found that grade point averages among sophomores significantly predicted sexual risk status, with lower-risk and sexually abstinent youth reported higher grade-point averages than high-risk youth. In the context of South African Universities, it is not known how students' good or poor performance influences their sexual behaviour.

### *Stress*

Young people's personal experience, including high levels of stress and frustration, and alienation from the protective values and mores of society has been flagged as sexual risk factors (Dube and Ocholla, 2005; Peltzer, 2005). In particular, Peltzer's (2005) study among young black people in South Africa, found that witnessed violence was among the most powerful risk factors for disorders in sexual risk behaviour. A study by Bopape et al (2004) on first year university undergraduates in South Africa found that various indicators of psychological distress relate to young people's sexual risk behaviour with elevated levels of distress being linked to sexual activity. Interestingly, there is no study in the literature reviewed that elaborated the forms of stress or witnessed violence that is associated with sexual risk taking behaviour. Thus, this

study investigates sexual risk behaviour in this direction and pays attention to how students' emotional and physical statuses influence their sexual behaviour.

### ***Profession of faith***

Young people in KZN universities who reported being religious had a reduced probability of engaging in sex (see Mulwo, 2010). This is supported by Parker et al's (2007) study on South African youths. However, religiosity is not reliable in predicting sexual risk behaviour. For instance, a study by Peltzer (2005) on black students in South Africa found that in some contexts students who professed a faith were engaging in sexual risk behaviour more than students who did not profess any faith. Therefore, religiosity *per se* is not a reliable fact unless it is linked to personal commitment. Reddy (2005) found that young people who very religious used condoms during sex than those who were not or less religious. One issue that is not highlighted in the study is that the relationship was only insignificant once age and family structure were considered. Thus, there is need to explore students' religiosity to elicit if they are able to rely on their religious teachings and beliefs in times of sexual challenges. My study explores the level of religiosity, and religious teachings that discourage students from engaging in sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Self-efficacy and knowledge***

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to achieve a goal or an outcome. A study by Dube and Ocholla (2005) on young people in South African universities found that self-efficacy played an important role in promoting safer sexual behaviour. They found that students who believed that they use condoms during sex to avoid HIV infection had less sexual partners and used condoms than their friends who had a lower self-efficacy score. However, it is not explained for instance how low self-efficacy encourages sexual risk behaviour and high self-efficacy discourages sexual risk behaviour. Of particular interest is a study by Peltzer et al (2006) that found that young people at a university in Gauteng, South Africa cited knowledge as one protective sexual factor. Lengwe (2010) found that higher levels of moral reasoning mediate the

relationship between increased sexual knowledge, and increased and decreased sexual risk-taking.

However, Lengwe (2010) and Peltzer et al (2006)'s study did not show the determinants of what is termed as the higher levels of moral reasoning or knowledge. Even after making an attempt to explore the relationship between knowledge for sexual risk behaviour the findings were significantly associated with mixed results of little and more sex indulgence. One challenge is lack of agreement on the subject of the relation between accurate knowledge of sexuality and sexual risk behaviour. Generally, this is true because knowledge alone does not relate to behaviour change unless it supported other factors. Chapter Seven builds on these findings by investigating the influence of knowledge on students' sexual behaviour.

### **Methodological pitfalls**

Previous studies examined in this study indicate some methodological weaknesses related to their design. Studies reviewed concerning the correlates of young people's sexual risk behaviour used cross-sectional designs (Miller et al., 1998; Varga, 1997). Such studies allow for the identification of variables related to sexual behaviour but not for the specification of the direction of those relationships. Causal implications drawn from cross-sectional studies are useful to consider and discuss, as long as the limitations of the data used to draw them are made clear. In fact, the results of many of these cross-sectional correlational studies have been used to develop prevention programmes, some of which have been highly effective in reducing young people's sexual risk-taking behaviour (see Riga, 2003; ZAWECA, 2005). However, there is a need for longitudinal or prospective studies that can elucidate these bi-directional relationships to identify the true "influencing" factors that may be the active ingredients in effective intervention efforts.

Three additional design issues pertain to how variables were selected and analysed in studies on young people's sexual risk-taking behaviour. Many studies reviewed examined variables one at a time to determine their independent effects on the outcome variable without consideration of how factors may be organised into larger, more descriptive categories or systems. Notable exceptions include the following studies: Varga (1997), Parker et al (2007) and Breier (2010) who explored the link between familial, individual and extrafamilial domains and outcomes of

sexual risk behaviour. Other exceptions are; Viswannath et al (2002) and Astatke et al (2000) who investigated the influence of familial, individual, and school factors. The last one is Miller et al (1998), who investigated the influence of family, self and extrafamilial factors with the aim to ascertain if they are linked to a number of sexual behaviour outcomes, including sex debut, condom use and education.

### **Theoretical weaknesses**

One major problem identified in the literature reviewed is that most of the studies used cognitive theories to explore young people's sexual risk behaviour. Cognitive theories mainly explore the influence of individual factors. They have been criticised for addressing individual influence of behaviour at the expense of other factors such as the biological, environmental/social, and behavioural instigators of behaviour (Kotchick et al., 2001; Jessor, 1991). Thus, there is a need to structure studies that use theories such as the Problem Behaviour Theory that take into account multisystemic factors that influence young people's sexual behaviour. The following are some of the questions that are not answered by literature examined on young people's sexual risk behaviour: What are the situations that instigate sexual risk-taking or protective behaviour? In what way do they wield indirect or direct results on each other and on young people's sexual risk behaviour? Thus, this study (see pages 125-200) explores these issues so as to have an understanding of students' sexual risk behaviour.

The following are questions concerning protective factors and students' sexuality on campuses that are not dealt with: What are the underlying factors that prevent students from engaging in risky sexual activity? What school, community and family characteristics envisage protective sexual behaviour to sexual pressure? What environmental and cultural assets influence students not to engage in risky sexual behaviour? All these issues are explored in Chapter Seven.

### **Summary**

This chapter presented the literature review on young people's sexual risk behaviour. The literature reviewed is on young people in general however with special reference to South

African university students. It is general due to the scarcity of data in the area of this study. The literature examined focused on young people's sexual risk behaviour as a construct, and the most important contributors to young people's sexual risk behaviour. The literature review presented suggests that young people's sexual behaviour is shaped by interrelated factors such as peer pressure, drug abuse, poor family relationships, and others. It also shows that there are few variables known related to young people's sexual risk behaviour. Thus, it is not well known what buffers and motivates sexual risk behaviour respectively. For this reason, this gap is addressed in my study so as to have a better understanding of the determinants of students' sexual risk behaviour.

The literature review has shown that there is research interest on young people's risky sexual behaviour. However, there is dearth of studies that specifically investigated sexual risk practices and underlying factors to students' sexual behaviour, which has led to the unclear understanding of the multisystemic factors that influence individuals' sexual behaviour or practices in universities. This study not only seeks to understand students' sexual risk practices and the underlying factors, but also seeks to comprehend the source of these factors and how they influence sexual risk behaviour on campuses. More importantly, this study seeks to understand the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour, their sources and influence on students' sexuality.

Finally, the review of previous studies has identified an evolving trend in investigating sexual risk behaviour, which utilises mainly cognitive behavioural theories. These theories include the Health Belief Model, the Social Cognitive Theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action/Planned Behaviour, and others. The major weakness of behavioural theories informing studies on students' sexual risk behaviour is that they often explore the individual cognitive processes leading to students' sexual risk behaviour. The new approach in this study is based on the Problem Behaviour Theory and aims to move away from the cognitive tendency of understanding influences to young people's sexual behaviour, towards a multisystemic exhaustive analysis that addresses sexual risk practices, risk and protective motivations for students' sexual risk-taking behaviour.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH INTO ENTERTAINMENT EDUCATION AND ITS USAGE**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter examines literature on Entertainment Education (EE) interventions offered to students in South African Universities. It begins by reviewing the literature on the history of EE and explains its relevance in behaviour change processes by reviewing the literature on the first phase or generation of EE. The chapter then explores the second generation of EE interventions in South Africa. It then narrows down the review to EE interventions offered to students in South African Universities by examining the joint programme between the University of Zambia and the University of the Western Cape (ZAWECA), the Stellenbosch University programme, the University of Pretoria programme, and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. The main aim is to find out the influence of these EE interventions in raising awareness, increasing knowledge, creating favourable attitudes, and ultimately motivating students to take sexually responsible actions in their own lives.

#### **Entertainment Education**

Entertainment education is a strategy used to transmit media messages aimed at bringing behavioural and attitude change (Sabido, 2004; Singhal and Rogers, 1999). It relays important messages in a form of entertainment (Sabido, 2004). Several studies (Piotrow et al., 1992; Singhal and Rogers, 1999; Sood et al., 1996; Servaes, 1999; Tufte, 2002) assert that entertainment education is concerned with social change at individual and community levels. However, other studies hold that entertainment media can be used to transmit messages that can result in pro-social behaviour (Sabido, 2004; Sherry, 2002).

It is also argued that the starting point of EE is based on an understanding that populations in the world are widely exposed to entertainment media content (Sabido, 2004; Servaes, 1999, Sherry, 2002; and, Singhal and Rogers, 1999). Thus, entertainment media provides opportunities and

capacity to communicate messages that could help people in solving a myriad of problems faced in life (Piotrow et al., 1992). The basic assumption is that is that education does not have to be dull and boring but can be incorporated into entertainment formats to generate pro-social attitudes and behaviour (Singhal and Rogers, 1999; Tufte, 2001). To this effect, Sherry (2002), and Singhal and Rogers (1999), state that the characteristics of entertainment media should be examined and analysed for the potential of entertainment to educate the public in an engaging manner.

Entertainment education falls within the theory of communication of sender-channel-message-receiver of the diffusion theory trunk (Singhal and Rogers, 1999). It is based on Bandura's 1997 social learning theory whose framework is currently dominant in health promotion (Sabido, 2004). Some scholars (Piotrow et al., 1992; Singhal and Rogers, 1999; and, Tufte, 2002) state that entertainment education assumes that individuals learn behaviour through observation of role models especially in the mass media. Therefore, imitation and influence are expected outcomes of interventions. Bandura's (1991) model of cognitive sub processes: attention, retention, production, and motivational processes help understand why individuals imitate socially desirable behaviour (Singhal and Rogers, 1999). Bandura (1999) asserts that this process is dependent on existence of role models in the entertaining media such as good models, bad models and those that transition from bad to good. Besides social learning, EE strategies are based on the idea that expected changes result from self-efficacy, the belief of individuals that they can complete specific tasks (Bandura, 1994; Maibach and Murphy, 1995).

According to Sabido (2004), EE has been applied in sectors such as Environment, Development and Health. In whichever sector of the economy entertainment education has been applied to, the interventions adopted vary in terms of the degree to which they utilise formative research as well as the power and aptitude with which the strategies are implemented (Piotrow et al., 1992). The way EE is used in social change campaigns or agriculture or breast cancer awareness campaigns varies according because each situation is unique.

## **The First Phase of Entertainment Education Initiatives**

It is believed that EE was developed in the mid-1970s in Mexico for transmitting literacy, agriculture development, family planning, sexual behaviour, and other health related messages (Singhal and Rogers, 1999). However, it is argued that though not intentional, EE was developed in 1969 from a Peruvian telenova, which had significant pro-social effects (Singhal and Rogers, 1991; Kincaid, 2005; Tufte, 2002; Sood et al., 1996; Sabido, 2004). It must be noted here that the use of entertainment for social purposes has been in use for centuries. However, what is novel is the use of systematic research and implementation of educational pro-social messages in entertainment media in the developed world (Singhal and Rogers, 1999; Sabido, 2004).

The earliest form of EE was mainly through television but later moved to music and music videos, and radio (Sabido, 2004). Early EE campaigns (such as those implemented in Mexico during the 1980s) resulted in increased freedom to discuss social issues which were previously hard to discuss, sensitisation to messages delivered, increased demand of the advertised products, reinforced positive behaviour, change in knowledge, attitude and behaviour (Singhal and Rogers, 1999). In addition, such programmes contributed to self-efficacy and social learning.

## **The Second Phase of Entertainment Education Initiatives**

The second-generation phase of EE (that is during the period 1990 to 2000) saw an increased acknowledgement of the importance to have an impact at the structural level (Tufte, 2002). It was characterised by acknowledgement that marketing of individual behaviour change was limited to developments in one particular targeted area. A growing recognition of the underlying social complexity behind many of these issues compelled a reformulation in the general approach to development communications (Sabido, 2004). The result was more participatory approaches were introduced in EE.

## **The Third Phase EE initiatives in South Africa**

This is a stage when EE started to be used in the mass media, traditional and inter-personal communication as means to empower communities to visualise aspirations and discover

solutions to their development problems and issues. In other words, it is a time when EE emphasised the issues of participation and development in the theories and practices of communication so as to involve people in the decision-making of the development processes.

### ***Soul City among young people***

Soul City is a television drama series produced by the Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication. It was initiated in 1990 to disseminate basic health training and knowledge on issues such as childcare, contraception, and HIV. A study by Bertrand et al (2006) evaluating Soul City in South Africa found that it was effective in promoting health among young people through the use of soap operas. The impact on the audience was both on the individual and community level. It was for instance found that young people's knowledge of HIV transmission after watching an educational theatre performance significantly increased (ibid.). This made young people to dismiss incorrect modes of transmission, such as using second hand clothes from a person living with AIDS (Bertrand et al., 2006). The study shows that young people's knowledge increased from 48% to 68% (ibid.). This study will build on these studies and investigate the influence of EE prevention programmes in promoting awareness or increasing knowledge about the risk of HIV infection.

### ***DramAidE and applied theatre in South Africa***

The project uses drama methodologies to critically engage young people to communicate effectively about issues relating to sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS (Dalrymple, 2005). In the study "Understanding and measuring the impact of applied theatre with young people in the South African context", Dalrymple (2006) found that emotional messages in drama, music, and humour used in EE approaches were more readily accepted by young people. The study shows that EE approaches are more likely to lead to behaviour change than messages with little emotional content. It is thus realistic to assume that the EE approach is useful in raising young people's consciousness about HIV/AIDS. In another study evaluating the use of drama in HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness in schools, Dalrymple (2005) found that drama has an impact on both the social and physical school environments. However, she was cautious to say

that it is difficult to argue that the impact of drama in her study was a determinant of sustained healthy sexual behaviour. She further argued that stigma attached to HIV infection and the dread that this produces makes such a study very difficult to undertake. This is in agreement with Roger et al's study (1999) that found EE to be effective in influencing young people's behaviour change. However the study further shows that it is difficult to reach comprehensive conclusions about the effectiveness of EE. Hence, this study will seek to understand the influence of EE prevention programmes on students' behaviour change.

### ***The influence of Tsha Tsha***

*Tsha Tsha* is a multi-part entertainment education television drama series commissioned by the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) Education division and produced by CADRE and Curious Pictures (Kincaid, 2005). It is one of the EE programmes watched by the majority of the young people in rural settings. It focuses on young people living in a world affected by HIV/AIDS and other social problems such as drug abuse and violence. A study by Kincaid (2005) measured the impact of *Tsha Tsha* a multi part EE television drama series aimed at exploring young people's issues relating to community life including their marginalisation, and issues related to HIV/AIDS. The study found that from a national sample assessment of about 7,000 men and woman age between 15 and 25, half (14 million viewers) of the respondents in the survey had watched *Tsha Tsha* (ibid.). Out of those, 30% had watched at least half of the programmes. The study demonstrates that condom use improved with increasing exposure to *Tsha Tsha*. The study also shows that 42% of males who had not watched *Tsha Tsha* used condoms to prevent HIV, compared with 57% who had seen less than half the episodes, and 72% for those who had seen half or more (Kincaid, (2005). The survey shows that 29% of female respondents who had not watched any episodes were using condoms to stop HIV infection. Findings show that this increased to 43% among those who watched less than half of *Tsha Tsha*, and 55% of those who had seen half or more.

*Tsha Tsha* was found to be influencing people's attitudes and behaviour related to the HIV and AIDS pandemic (ibid.). It influenced the percentage of condom use to prevent HIV, discussion on HIV test with sexual partners and seeing ARV as treatment for HIV. In addition, it influenced

young people to care for people living with HIV and AIDS and increased knowledge and use of AIDS telephone help services (Kincaid, 2005).

### ***Just About Education (JAE)***

A study by Finlay (2003) in South Africa evaluating a project called Just About Education (JAE) an HIV/AIDS information tour meant to educate young people found the EE approach to be effective in addressing the risk of HIV/AIDS. The JAE project benefited from the stardom of Jae, a pop star well known among young people in South African (ibid.). As a role model and AIDS activist, Jae communicates with learners about HIV/AIDS and positive lifestyles in South African schools. In addition, the organisers of the programme engaged popular actors and radio disc jockeys to teach learners about HIV/AIDS. They communicated their messages through songs, dances, narrations and drama, emphasising the message on the risk of HIV/AIDS (Finlay, 2003).

With Jae at the helm, the production visited schools and a total of 18,000 learners were reached. The programme is reported to have been successful in knowledge retention among young people though criticised for its weak design and implementation processes (Finlay, 2003). One weakness of the JAE project is that it lacked force in its messages to move young people out of their comfortable zones of sexual risk behaviour as it appealed more to entertainment than education and behaviour change (ibid.). In view of this finding, this study will explore the development and implementation of EE prevention programmes offered to students to find out the rigour of their response to be able to deal with students' sexual risk behaviour.

### ***iLife radio drama series in South Africa***

A study by Batabile (2009) evaluated *ilife*, a radio drama series, produced by ABC *Ulwazi* with support from the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) found drama to be effective in behaviour change among young people. *Ilife* a radio drama series has been developed on EE principles which are described by ABC *Ulwazi* as the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate (ibid.). The aim is to increase young people's knowledge about health issues, generate positive attitudes,

change social customs, and influence the open behaviour of both individuals and communities for the better (Batabile, 2009). *Ilife* “edudrama” addresses several HIV prevention issues including transactional sex, multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, condom use, intergenerational partnerships, and HIV testing (ibid.).

The study found that the campaign is successful in catching the attention of large audiences of young people and initiating interpersonal communication about issues and lessons from the drama. The study also shows that drama and comedy were effective in both involving and motivating persons to change their sexual risk behaviour and support changes among their peers (ibid.). Besides, findings show that the broadcast increased young listeners’ sense of self-efficacy from 13% to 36 and approval of contraceptive use from 23% to 66%. This study will explore further the influence of EE on students’ sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

### **The usage of entertainment education in Southern African campuses**

#### ***University of Zambia and the University of the Western Cape (ZAWECA) project***

The University of Zambia and the University of the Western Cape (ZAWECA) HIV/AIDS Peer Education Project was a two-year collaborative project between the University of the Western Cape and the University of Zambia (ZAWECA, 2004). The specific objectives of ZAWECA were to create official links between the two institutions so as to build capacity in sphere of HIV/AIDS peer education, and develop and implement appropriate university based prevention measures (ibid.).

HIV/AIDS peer education programmes were aimed at changing student attitudes and perceptions, and developing appropriate life skills. It was also aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the peer education programmes through a process of joint monitoring and evaluation; and disseminate information and research relating to the project (ZAWECA, 2004). The ZAWECA project was a direct response to the challenge of HIV/AIDS at the two participating tertiary institutions and linked with their respective mission statements and broader institutional responses to the epidemic (ibid.). The main aim of the ZAWECA project was to

develop peer education programmes at the two universities based on solid research in order to develop best practice models (ZAWECA, 2004).

An assessment of the ZAWECA peer education project shows that it uses the EE strategy (ZAWECA, 2004). The approaches used include interactive drama, poetry, and others (ibid.). A study conducted by ZAWECA evaluating the impact of the project on students found that their knowledge of the risk of HIV/AIDS increased twice when compared to the time before the intervention was employed with new idea of condom use. However, ZAWECA was criticised for its emphasis on prevention messages, especially condom use, neglecting other strategies such as abstinence, circumcision, and faithfulness that can help to reduce the risk of HIV infection (ZAWECA, 2004). Thus, the issue of capacities or rather individual and social environmental defences that would reduce students' sexual risk behaviour are not part of the menu promoted by ZAWECA. Lack of balance between prevention and protection messages promoted compromises the effectiveness of the project in risk reduction.

### ***Stellenbosch University edutainment campaign***

The campaign was implemented to promote sexual restraint among Stellenbosch University students and used drama, poems, and songs featuring popular young male and female singers (ibid.). An evaluation study by Mzimela (2007) concluded that the campaign had a number of positive results. Students felt freer to talk about sex, became more sensitised about the relevance of sex and messages encouraged students who already practiced abstinence. Referring to the same campaign, the Africa Centre for HIV/AIDS Management (2007) at the same university found that it increased condom use by 7%, knowledge of the specific facts of HIV/AIDS and STIs, their transmission and prevention by 23%, and appreciation of the development and implementation of prevention programmes in particular peer education by 30%. The same study indicates students' estimation of their personal risk of becoming infected with HIV and STIs slightly increased from 7% to 11%. These findings seem to suggest that EE prevention programmes are effective in addressing students' sexual risk behaviour if carefully designed and implemented.

This study will use these findings as a platform to examine students' responses to EE prevention strategies used on campuses and the influence of involving students and models in the interventions.

### ***Pretoria University's entertainment education peer led campaign programme***

The peer led campaign was intended to influence positive attitudes towards condom use. In a longitudinal study at the University of Pretoria, the first study found that students were indifferent to condom use. Students were then divided into intervention and control groups to evaluate the impact of peer education on sexual behaviour (Harrison, 2005). Young people in the experimental group were exposed to EE peer intervention whose content was developed to affect attitudes. Nine months later a second study was conducted and the results showed that young people from the experimental group positively modified their sexual behaviour with regards postponing sexual intercourse and condom use (Harrison, 2005). In a similar context, a similar longitudinal study was conducted with students at the University of South Africa investigating the influence of peer led entertainment education on their sexual behaviour patterns (Hallman, 2004). Findings indicate increased sexual abstinence as a result of the exposure to the university health peer led entertainment education programme. The percentage of young people who revealed that they were sexually active fell from 43% to 11% in the intervention group while no significant change was observed in the control group (Hallman, 2004). This shows that if well implemented, EE would be an effective strategy for behaviour change among students. In the light of these findings this study will explore the influence of EE prevention programmes on students' sexual risk behaviour.

### ***The Scrutinise Campus Campaign***

The Scrutinise Campus campaign was created from the Scrutinise campaign that was created in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Johns Hopkins Health Education in South Africa (JHHESA), and the designer jeans label Levi. It is informed by the Social Ecological Model that argues that behaviour is influenced by environmental, social, psychological and behavioural factors. The aim of the Scrutinise campaign is to support and equip young people to take responsibility for reducing their risk of

HIV infection (Delate, 2009). The campaign, involves showing a series of short animated commercials known as “animerts”. Scrutinise campaign’s messages were seen as exceptionally suitable for young students, the campaign team created the Scrutinise Campus campaign (DramAidE Annual Report, 2008). It is a programme of performances and educational events held on campuses around the country. The primary objectives of the Scrutinise Campus campaign are to: increase students’ awareness of HIV infection risk due to multiple and concurrent partners, delay students’ beginning of sexual activity, reduce the number of multiple and concurrent partners, promote correct and consistent condom usage with all partners, and increase the number of students who test for HIV on a regular basis.

A study by Spina (2009) on the Scrutinise campaign found that it was effective in behaviour change. Spina (2009) found that the Scrutinise campaign has been able to reach 98% of the intended target audience, with an average of 90 viewings per person. This means that approximately 6.7 million young people aged between 18 and 32 years have seen the campaign of health messages conveyed through “animerts” (ibid.). Two weeks after the Scrutinise campaign broadcasting began, CADRE conducted audience research to assess how young people were responding to the “animerts”. The research found that the “animerts” were seen as relevant and educational, depicting contexts and situations that were familiar to the viewers (Spina, 2009). The animerts prompted young people to think about their risk and question their sexual behaviour (Delate, 2009).

Though the Scrutinise campaign has been explored, there is no study I am aware of that explored the effectiveness of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign in influencing students’ sexual behaviour change on campuses.

### **Gaps in the literature on Entertainment Education**

Evidence from the literature reviewed shows that the EE approach is effective in raising awareness and stimulating debate on issues of sex and the risk of HIV/AIDS. However, there are very few studies on the influence of EE strategies on behaviour change among students. Most of the studies examined documented the cognitive influence of the EE prevention programmes.

However, this does not entail behaviour change unless the cognitive influence is translated into life supporting actions, practices, and behaviour.

The review of previous studies shows that most of the EE interventions are informed by behavioural theories such as the Health Belief Model, the Social Cognitive Theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action/Planned Behaviour, the Social Ecological Model and others. The major limitation of behavioural theories informing EE models is that they often focus on personal cognitive processes for developing prevention strategies, overlooking the multisystemic factors. For example, the Social Ecological Model informing the Scrutinise Campus Campaign has been criticised for not addressing the genetic or rather biological influences to people's behaviour (Jessor, 1998). This study explored the biological factors that influence people's behaviour to ascertain if they are not addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

Using this literature review, my study investigates students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign at UKZN and DUT. The aim is to ascertain its influence on students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses. This is achieved through interviews with students and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers.

## **Summary**

This chapter has examined the literature on the origin, rationale, and first generation, second and third generations of EE in South Africa. The study also examines the literature on the use of EE interventions in South African Universities. The literature in the field is characterised by gaps and inconsistencies as it does not clearly show the effectiveness of the EE interventions in influencing behaviour change. Deducing from the literature examined, EE prevention programmes contribute to making young people engage or rather talk about HIV/AIDS, prevention and their beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their sexual risk behaviour.

However, the literature examined does not show that prevention programmes effectively influence students' attitude and behaviour to refrain from sexual risk behaviour. There is also a dearth in the knowledge on students' response to EE prevention programmes such as the

Scrutinise Campus Campaign aimed at addressing their sexual risk behaviour and its causes. Thus, there is need to investigate students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages offered to students at universities in KwaZulu-Natal.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING THE RESEARCH PROJECT

#### Introduction

This chapter explores theories used in this study to investigate students' sexual risk behaviour, risk and protective factors and their responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. The study is underpinned by three complementary theoretical views: Problem Behaviour Theory, Reception Theory and Social Cognitive Learning Theory. The Problem Behaviour Theory is specifically used to understand students' sexual risk practices and the determinants of their sexual risk behaviour. Reception Theory is used to investigate students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory is particularly useful in analysing students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's influence on students' sexual risk behaviour.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section deals with the paradigm shifts in the understanding of the determinants of sexual risk practices and sexual risk behaviour. This section traces the emergence of the Problem Behaviour Theory and explains its relevance to understanding sexual risk practices, risk and protective factors to sexual risk behaviour. The second section traces and deals with the change in the understanding of the relationship between media messages and media users. This section traces the emergence of Reception Theory and explains its relevance to understanding the meaning making processes of encoding among producers of texts and decoding among media audiences. The third section deals the Social Cognitive Learning Theory and explains its significance to understanding the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on students' sexual risk behaviour change.

The fourth and last section explores the synergies between the theories in conceptualising students' phenomena of sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

## **The Problem Behaviour Theory**

To investigate students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses I used Jessor's (1991) Problem Behaviour Theory. This theory emerged from the concepts of the Social Learning Theory (Merlon, 1957; Rotter, 1954). The Problem Behaviour Theory describes risky behaviour as resulting from an interaction of various risk factors arising from **biological, personality, environmental/social and behavioural domains** also known **multisystemic factors** (Jessor, 199:12), a term will use in my study to mean these four systems of influence. In particular, Jessor et al (1977) addressed young people's behavioural problem areas of alcohol and drug misuse. The research that gave birth to the Problem Behaviour Theory concerned a five year longitudinal study involving high school and college youth. The Problem Behaviour Theory was found to account for approximately 50% of the variance in the composite measure of young people's problem behaviour and in some cases more than 60% of this variance. From this point, the Problem Behaviour Theory has continued to develop within a social-psychological framework.

The Problem Behaviour Theory was applied to post 1977 research into adolescent problem drinking as a means of successfully replicating the original findings (Donovan et al., 1993) and as a means of determining the role or influence of risk and protective factors at work in young people's initiation into problem drinking (Costa et al., 1997; Jessor et al., 1995) and marijuana use (Jessor et al., 1986). A link has also been drawn between adolescent conventional and unconventional behaviour and young people's health related behaviour (Jessor et al., 1995). The study on problem drinking and marijuana use mentioned above found that young people's risk behaviour was principally influenced by multisystemic factors (Jessor, 1998).

### ***The appeal of the problem behaviour theory for this research***

The attractive nature of the Problem Behaviour Theory as a theoretical basis for the study on students' sexual risk behaviour arose from its portrayal of the complex and varied nature of young people's behaviour. According to the Problem Behaviour Theory, no single component or domain of young people's behaviour can of itself explain or account for the situational or behavioural influences that surround young people's activity (Jessor, 1991). Problem behaviour is conceived as an underlying syndrome or constellation of interrelated unconventional

behaviour instigated by multisystemic factors with the young people taking central position within this constellation. Young people are the **actors** of the behaviour, and the **recipient** of the consequences resulting from the problematic covariation of the impact of risky behaviour.

The focus of Problem Behaviour Theory is therefore primarily upon young people who **act**, with young people's behaviour manifesting the **motivation underlying** that behaviour or actions. The focus of the Problem Behaviour Theory is placed on the **acts performed** that lead to risk and protective behaviour and their **underlying influence** to young people's behaviour without making any **moral** judgment about young people's personal attributes. In the present research, I understand the risk and protective nature of young people's behaviour from the perspective of determinants or purpose rather than as an indication of the "goodness" or "badness" of young people.

### *The conceptual framework of the Problem Behaviour Theory*

The conceptual framework of the Problem Behaviour Theory is essentially formed around the basic tenet that all learned behaviour is functional, purposeful, and instrumental towards achieving some desired goal. The norms and expectations of wider social culture and the day-to-day experiences of the young people shape the expressions of their behaviour (Jessor et al., 1977, and Jessor, 1991). The research focus of Jessor et al (1977) was centred on the notion of problem behaviour in youth, and included drug use, sexual behaviour, use of alcohol, and the type of behaviour associated with excessive drinking, protest behaviour, and general deviance such as aggression, stealing and lying. From a psychosocial perspective, dysfunctional and functional behaviour linked to these domains was seen to extend to social aspects of young people as well as beyond the nature of the behaviour itself. The conceptual model is behaviorally inclusive, and so by definition would apply to a full range of behaviour indicative of young people's lifestyle.

The definition of problem behaviour presented by Jessor et al (1977) describes the type of behaviour that incurs the control or sanction of the society in which it occurs, ranging from reproof to incarceration. The purposeful nature of young people's behaviour and the developmentally related needs of young people can lead to this behaviour becoming problematic (ibid.).

Young people who engage in potentially harmful behaviour are not necessarily pathological, irrational or perverse. Rather, engaging in behaviour such as sexual activity and drinking are an indication of young people's desire to affirm their maturity and entry into adulthood (Jessor, 1991). When a risky behaviour occurs at an age appropriate time and within the ordered context of a protective environment, it may be considered as normal and developmentally adaptive (Jessor et al., 1977). It becomes a problem when this type of behaviour is neither age appropriate nor buffered by a protective environment, and consequently leads the adolescent into arenas of self harm and maladaptive development, for example, sexual risk behaviour, alcohol misuse and unwanted pregnancy.

Age inappropriate behaviour also becomes a problem when it represents young people's desire to satisfy unattainable goals in a roundabout way (Jessor, 1991). For instance, young female students who feel controlled by parents and so unable to gain autonomy from them might engage in precocious sexual activity and even become pregnant to compensate for this unfulfilled desire for autonomy. In this situation, there would be a high likelihood that the problem was initiated by inappropriate parental management, although at the same time **acted out** by young people who **chose** pregnancy as a means of coping with their perception of over controlling parents.

### *The concept of proneness in the Problem Behaviour Theory*

One might imagine young people's behaviour as a fluid continuum, with unconventional problem behaviour lying at one end, and socially acceptable behaviour lying at the other (Donovan et al., 1993). The fluidity between both points of the continuum is translated into a behavioural tension between conventionality and unconventionality. This tension may then be conceptualised as the underlying orientation towards a behavioural profile reflecting both an involvement and eventual commitment to socially acceptable values or behaviour that is opposed to these values (ibid.). According to the Problem Behaviour Theory, young people's trajectory towards engaging in risky behaviour is described as **proneness**. Young people's proneness towards problem behaviour occurs within the framework of risk behaviour.

Proneness is fundamental to the Problem Behaviour Theory, and can be contextually defined according to **multisystemic domains** (Jessor et al., 1997). The variables within each system

comprise proneness towards problem behaviour, and they exercise a mutual, rather than a discrete, influence upon behaviour. As a result, proneness is the dynamic state generated by this mutually interconnected influence of factors. The dynamic nature of this state means that the variables belonging to each systemic domain will either instigate or set the necessary scene for an individual's behaviour to become problematic or control against the individual's involvement in risky behaviour. When all systems are taken as an influential unity, then one may speak of young people as being in a state of proneness either **towards** or **away** from behavioural transgression (Jessor, 1991).

In the everyday reality of life, proneness is characterised by the **presence** or **absence** of risk factors such as poor parenting, poor socioeconomic status, involvement with a dysfunctional peer group, academic failure, and so on (Jessor, 1998). Furthermore, proneness is reflected by a covariance of risk factors rather than representing a series of discrete risk factors. Proneness is therefore a more complex notion than the more conventional understanding of viewing risk as pertaining to discrete instances in young people's life. The essential notion of the Problem Behaviour Theory is that proneness emerges from the interaction of the person and the environment, within which one systemic domain influences the other in either a positive or a negative direction.

### ***Direct and indirect factors***

In trying to understand the causes of risky behaviour, Jessor et al (1977) identified **direct** and **indirect** factors. They argue that all variables exercise either a direct or indirect influence on young people's behaviour. Direct variables by virtue of the directness of their impact would yield the stronger influence, with indirect variables being less evident though still influential in their impact. Jessor et al (1977) described indirect variables as often being of greater theoretical influence because their sway was not so obvious, always managing to stay just out of sight and yet still able to exercise influence over young people's behaviour. That is, while direct variables might be readily noticeable, the influence of indirect variables is present though not immediately evident (ibid.).

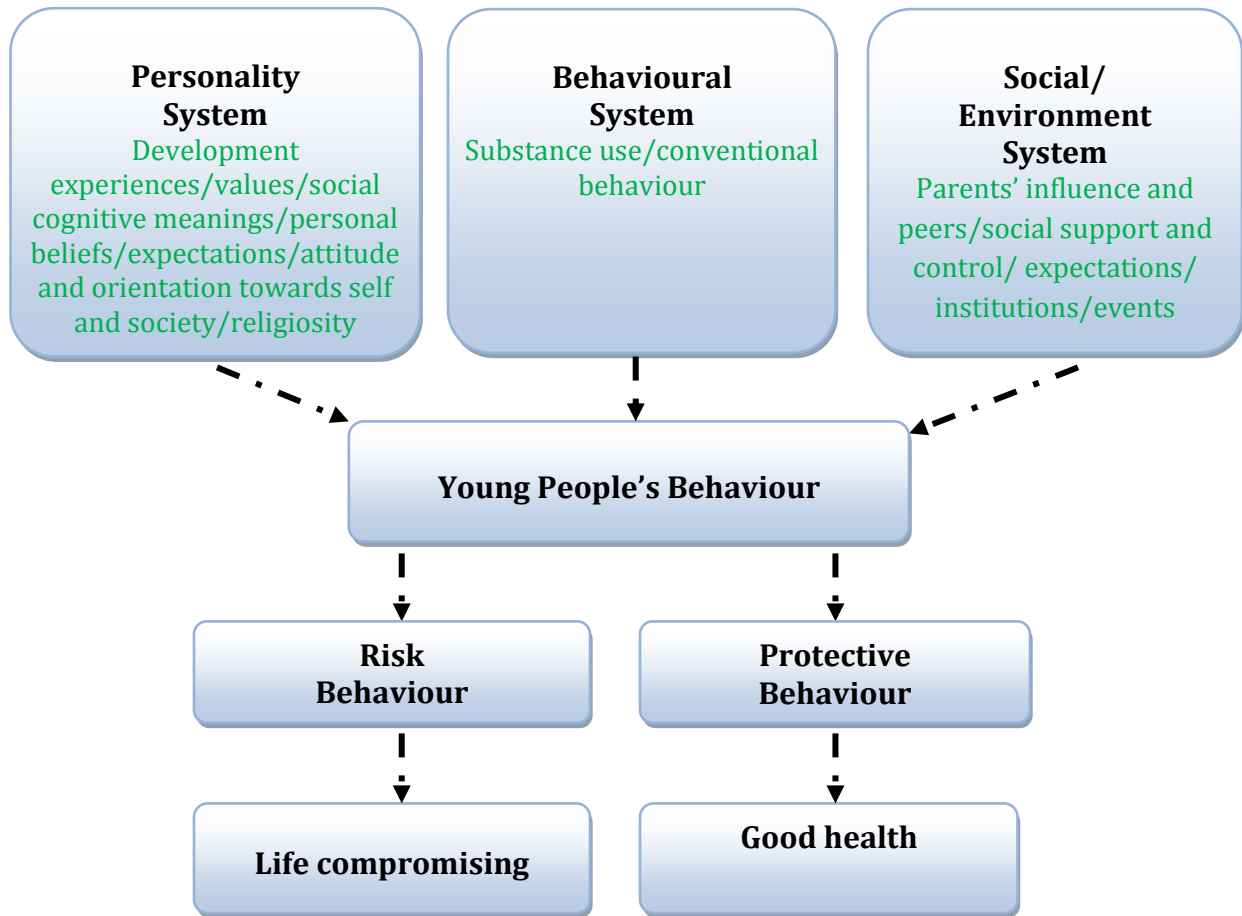
### *The main constructs of the Problem Behaviour Theory*

The initial Problem Behaviour Theory, before being elaborated by Jessor et al (1997) had three main constructs; the **personality**, **environment/social** and the **behavioural** systems. Jessor's (1991) explains that young people's behaviour is influenced by **personality factors**. Variables that constitute the personality system lie at the sociocognitive level and reflect social meanings and developmental experiences of young people such as expectations, attitudes, beliefs, and values orientated towards self and others. Therefore, young people who for instance, experience low expectation for achieving goals, who experience low self-esteem, high external control and high social criticism would most likely experience personality proneness towards risky behaviour. While young people who experience high expectation for achieving goals, who experience high self-esteem, and appropriate external control would most likely experience personality proneness away from risky behaviour.

The milieu underlying the **perceived environment/social** system comprises significant persons, institutions, and events that exercise social support and control, and social expectations. Factors in the environment/social system influence young people to engage or not to engage in risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991). For example, appropriate parental control may buffer against their children's risky behaviour while having parents who abuse drugs may influence children to abuse drugs and engage in sexual risk behaviour.

Variables within the **behavioural system** include addictions, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse and reveal the extent to which young people's behaviour either depicts them as either a contributive or detrimental presence within society. In this latter situation, the young people's behavioural pattern indicates that proneness towards problem behaviour has now reached the point of being risky behaviour. The figure below shows a summary of Jessor's original conceptual framework that was developed from a longitudinal study that confirmed the relationship between protective and risk factors.

Figure 1: The initial Problem Behaviour Conceptual Model (Jessor, 1991:23)



***Criticism and summary of the Problem Behaviour Theory***

According to Jessor (1991), young people’s risky behaviour is influenced by interrelated factors in the personality, environment/social and behavioural systems. However, the Problem Behaviour Theory was criticised by Donovan et al (1993) for not accounting for the **biological/genetic** determinants of young people’s risky behaviour. Jessor et al (1997) reworked the theory to include biological systems encompassing the influence of age and physical development on behaviour. Benson (1998) criticised the Problem Behaviour Theory for “compartmentalising” young people’s behaviour arguing that they are no pure biological, environmental/social, behavioural and personality instigators of behaviour that are not influenced

by other factors. In other words, he argued that the underlying systems to young people's behaviour both risk or protective factors are interactional (Benson, 1998:24). Even after criticising Jessor's initial theory, Donovan et al (1993) acknowledged that the additional of the biological system was by no means an exhaustive system, so that any domain that functions to serve as a negative or positive influence would be worthy of inclusion.

In order to explore the students' sexual risk behaviour, this study used Jessor et al's (1997) theoretical framework that takes in account the biological/genetic factors that influence young people's sexual risk behaviour in addition to the environmental/social, behavioural and personality factors. In using Jessor's theoretical or multisystemic framework I am aware that the interrelations of the four main domains represent either instigations or controls that result in proneness: the likelihood that a risk or protective behaviour will occur (Donovan et al., 1993). Weakening instigators or strengthening controls helps decrease young people's overall proneness for problem behaviour (Jessor, 1991). A longitudinal study by Donovan et al (1993) confirmed the significant inverse relationship between protective and risk factors: the greater the protection, the less the problem behaviour.

### ***Applicability of the Problem Behaviour Theory***

Interestingly, Jessor et al's (1997) framework is from the discipline of psychology but I did not carry out a psychology study, instead I used Jessor's theoretical framework and conducted a qualitative study on students' sexual risk practices young people "**act out**" (See Jessor, 1991:45) and the **determinants** or risk and protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. I used the construct of acting out to explore students' sexual risky practices on campuses, and used the construct of determinants to investigate the underlying factors or causes of students' sexual risk practices or risky sexual acts they act out. Borrowing theories from other disciplines is not new in the field of communication studies especially when it makes a value-added contribution to the discipline, is reflective of seasoned thinking, conveying completeness and thoroughness of a phenomenon, and above all of contemporary interest to scholars. This is the case with the Problem Behaviour Theory. For instance, Scott (2006) and Brown et al (2004) used Jessor's theoretical framework and explored the influence of the media on adolescents' sexual lifestyles, and Mileant (2001) and Strasburger (1995) adapted it and explored the influence of music on

sexual risk behaviour respectively. It was developed in the west but has been successfully tested in many parts of the world including Africa. For example, the applicability of Jessor's model has been confirmed by a study on sexual behaviour of Ethiopian adolescents (Astatke et al., 2000), and on young people's development in Eurasia (Chen et al., 2008).

### *Attractiveness of the Problem Behaviour Theory*

The attractiveness of the Problem Behaviour Theory for this research was twofold. Firstly, as indicated earlier, the Problem Behaviour Theory places its primary focus upon young people as subjects that **act out** the behaviour rather than upon the behaviour itself. This set the basis for me to investigate the sexual risk behaviour students on campuses engage in or **act out**. Secondly, the Problem Behaviour Theory explains behaviour as a covariance of behavioural variables rather than as individual discrete behaviour. Thus, it suggests that a study on young people's behaviour should take into account the overall underlying factors to their behaviour. This enabled me to explore the determinants of students' sexual risk behaviour from a multisystemic perspective (Scheier et al., 1997). The Problem Behaviour Theory does not provide a framework to assess students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and this falls within the realm of Reception Theory.

### **The Reception Theory**

Reception Theory introduces the concept of reader involvement and how text and reader converge in a process of literary experience and meaning production (Tilley, 1991). Extending the concept of an active audience still further, in the 1980s and 1990s a lot of work was done on the way individuals received and interpreted a text, and how their individual circumstances such as gender, class, age, and ethnicity affected their reading (ibid.). This work was based on Stuart Hall's (1996) encoding and decoding model of the relationship between text and audience - the text is encoded by the producer, and decoded by the reader, and there may be major differences between two different readings of the same code. However, by using recognised codes and conventions, and by drawing upon audience expectations relating to aspects such as genre and

use of stars; the producers can position the audience and thus create a certain amount of agreement on what the code means which is known as a “preferred reading” (Meyer, 2000:56).

A theorist Holub (1984:45) argued that Reception Theory as “a general shift in concern from the author and the work to the text and the reader.” Reception Theory reflects a paradigm shift in the history of literature, and it is considered as a reaction to social, intellectual, and literary developments in West Germany during the late 1960s. According to Holub (1984), Reception Theory was a revolutionary approach to contemporary literary criticism. This new paradigm of literary criticism pays attention to the function of the reader in a process of literary experience. Hans Robert Jauss (1921-1997), one of the main contributors to Reception Theory, published an essay, “The Change in the Paradigm of Literary Scholarship” in 1969 (Taylor, 1995). In this essay, Jauss points out the rise of the new paradigm and emphasises the importance of interpretation by the reader, replacing the obsolete literary scholarship methodology which involved the studies of accumulated facts. Jauss’ theory views literature from the perspective of the active reader or consumer and actively treats literature as a dialectical process of production and reception (ibid.).

### ***Audience as producer of meaning***

According to Hall (1996:48) and Fiske (1994:23), audiences are active producers of meaning communicated to them through various channels of communication such as radio, television, print media, and others. In other words, the audiences are not simply absorbers or consumers of whatever messages or texts they receive. Corner (1980) and Hall (1996) expounded that the audiences make sense of the meaning messages or media texts according to their social position and their gender, age, class, race, and others. Their argument is that audiences are not passive but active recipients of texts (Corner, 1980 and Hall, 1996).

In addition, Hall (1996) explains assumptions of how people make sense of media texts through decoding. He elucidated that people decode texts according to their „preferred reading“ in a media. The different social situations people find themselves in influence them to decode texts in different ways. Hall (1996) explained that „negotiated“ readings are produced by those who inflect the preferred reading to take account of their social position; and „oppositional“ readings

are produced by those whose societal position puts them into direct conflict with the preferred reading. In other words, Hall (1996) model invites researchers and analysts to classify texts as „oppositional“, „dominant“ or „negotiated“. These three assume that media messages are vehicles of dominant ideology (see also Schröder et al., 1992: 15). In a nutshell, Hall (1996) argues that audiences are no longer seen as consumers of messages or texts instead they are producers of meaning.

### *Interpretive communities*

The interpretive community is Fiske's (1994:23) theoretical idea from the notion of reader-response criticism. According to Fiske's concept messages or rather media texts only have meanings inside of a collection of cultural beliefs regarding the meaning of characters and how the audience decode or rather interpret them. Fiske (1994) found that people decode messages due to the fact that they are part of an interpretive community. This community provides the deposit that is specific on how to read the message that is communicated to them using different channels of communication.

He further argues that it not easy to tell whether a person is one of the people in the interpretive community or not (Fiske, 1994). He attributed this to the fact that any communication activities people would engage in to ascertain whether other people are part of the same interpretive community would have to be interpreted. Fiske (1994) linked this to the finding that people cannot escape their interpretive community and it is not easy to know the limits of the interpretive community in decoding messages.

The concept of interpretive community has been both important and controversial in reader-response criticism. Mainly this concept is interpreted as a relativistic standpoint that holds that people's words have no meaning. However, the meaning behind Fiske's (1994) concept is that readings of a text are culturally constructed. Therefore, you need to understand the culture of a community to understand the "resources" that helps them in meaning making.

The researcher used the concept of interpretive community to complement Reception Theory in developing an elaborative and comprehensive framework for analysing how audiences

experience or perceive the Scrutinise Campus Campaign within their lived realities. Specifically, the idea of audiences as active producer of meanings was employed in analysing students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign texts. However, Reception Theory does not offer a satisfactory basis to analyse students' interpretation of the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on students' cognitive means that determines behaviour change. It does not alone provide a sufficient framework to investigate the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on students' behaviour change. For this reason, I complemented it with the Social Cognitive Learning Theory that has an adequate framework for investigating behaviour.

### **Social Cognitive Learning Theory**

The Social Cognitive Learning Theory postulated by Albert Bandura, has evolved from the Social Learning Theory. The primary assertion of the Social Learning Theory is that individuals learn by observing the actions of others, and the benefits of engaging in such actions (Glanz and Rimer, 2005). The three basic tenets of the Social Learning Theory, as discussed by Stone (1999) are that of response consequences in the form of a reward or punishment; observation, whereby the individual learns vicariously; and identification, where the extent to which a behaviour will be modelled is dependent on the extent to which the individual can identify with the given behaviour.

The similarities between the Social Cognitive Learning Theory and the Social Learning Theory are evident; with the distinguishing difference being that the Social Cognitive Learning Theory includes the effect of self-efficacy. Luszczynska and Schwarzer (2005) explain that the factor of self efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her ability to perform the necessary actions to bring about a change in behaviour. An individual bearing a greater degree of self-efficacy is deemed as being more likely to change his or her behaviour, than an individual who has low self-efficacy.

The Social Cognitive Learning Theory of Bandura describes a process in which personal factors, environmental factors, and human behaviour exert influence upon each other (Glanz and Rimer, 2005). Glanz and Rimer (2005) note that the constructs central to the Social Cognitive learning Theory, are that of reciprocal determinism, behavioural capability, expectations, self-efficacy,

observational learning or modelling focusing on; attention, retention, production and motivation, and reinforcements.

### ***Reciprocal determinism***

Glanz and Rimer (2005) explain that individual behaviour change is not dependant on just the actions of an individual. The relationship between an individual and his or her environment is mutually influential, with an individual influencing and being influenced by the actions of those surrounding him or her. Therefore, in attempting behaviour change, environmental factors and the influence of environmental factors in facilitating or hindering change, must be taken into consideration.

### ***Behavioural Capability***

According to Bandura (2004), knowledge stimulates change. To this end, he explains that in order for an individual to deem it necessary that a change be made, it is imperative that this individual is aware of the potential negative consequences of his or her current actions or behaviour, and how such consequences may be rectified or avoided. In order that this be possible, the individual needs to be properly informed, and equipped with the necessary knowledge.

In addition to the reciprocal determinism addressed above, Bandura (2004) explains that individuals learn from their interactions and observations, and named the dynamics that are vital to this process: *reciprocal determinism* - which purports that behaviour and conduct of a person is influenced by his or her social environment and personal factors. This same behaviour has potential to create an impact on his or her surroundings because a person has his or her own attitude inside that can be either strong or very weak; *symbolizing capability* - explains that people make symbols for understanding and experiencing the environment. Symbols communicate thought, meaning, form, and contiguity to their experiences.

According to Bandura (2004) a person can process and transform past experiences by means of language and images that lead to judgment and action; *vicarious capability* - this process refers

to the human capability to learn from others as well as own experiences; *forethought capabilities* - refers to expected outcome that will occur in the future before the behaviour is performed from previous experiences. For this Bandura (2004) argues that anticipation about behavioural outcome in the future instigates the possibility of behavioural occurrence; *self-regulatory capabilities* - holds that people develop self-directive goals and behaviour gradually as they grow older. On this Bandura (2004) explains that a person makes a decision with the contact between an interior controls and exterior sanction, and mandate to adjust to society in proper way. Internal standards and self-sanction keep people internally enthused to make an effort to achieve self-directed goals; and *self-reflective capabilities* - is the capability for reflective self-consciousness. This concept holds that people can reflect on their acts, and assess them, and make a progress plan for the next step (Bandura, 2004)

### ***Expectations***

A factor that influences the behaviour adopted by an individual is the expectations or expected outcomes from having adopted the behaviour patterns of the role model (Petersen and Govender, 2010). Luszczynska and Schwarzer (2005), further explain that the expected outcomes may relate to an area of consequence, a positive or negative consequence, and a long or short-term consequence. These authors note that the area of consequence includes a physical outcome expectation e.g. disease or discomfort; social outcome expectation, for example disapproval from friends or family; and a self-evaluative outcome expectation e.g. pride or satisfaction due to one's actions.

### ***Self-efficacy***

This is a person's belief in their own competence. The concept of self efficacy is a central tenet of the Social Cognitive Learning Theory. Self efficacy is reaching beyond the advantages offered by having high self confidence (Bandura, 2004). It is developed and enhanced by setting goals, as well as monitoring and reinforcing behaviour. It is this aspect of self-efficacy, which allows an individual to continue in his or her attempt at making behavioural changes, despite the challenges and obstacles that he or she may be faced with (Petersen and Govender, 2010).

### ***Observational learning or modelling***

Petersen and Govender (2010) explain that an individual learns through the processes of observational learning or modelling; which involves viewing the reaction with which the behaviours of others are met, and then choosing to adopt similar behaviour patterns or not. In doing so, the individual learns vicariously through the actions of others. Stone (1999) notes that a benefit of observational learning is that it allows an individual to learn patterns of behaviour quickly, without enduring the process of trial and error; as well as avoiding the mistakes associated with such action

### ***Reinforcements***

Maintenance of the adopted behaviour is determined by reinforcements, which may be positive or negative. To this end, these reinforcements or rather rewards may facilitate or impede behaviour change (Luszczynska and Schwarzer, 2005). The extent to which these facilitating or impeding factors influence behaviour change, is significantly dependant on the individual's self efficacy. An individual with a high self-efficacy is more likely to embrace and address the impeding factors, rather than be overwhelmed by them (Bandura, 2004).

### **Benefits of using the Social Cognitive Learning Theory**

There are undoubtedly significant benefits to the employment of this theory in this study. Firstly, unlike many other theories, this theory acknowledges the role of self-efficacy. The extent to which the theory relies on self-efficacy may be criticized; however, notwithstanding this the role of self-efficacy is indeed crucial to behaviour change. In addition, this theory highlights the role of knowledge. Without sufficient knowledge of the intended behaviour change, the consequences and benefits of such change, and the experiences that should be expected; changing the intended behaviour may be viewed as an insurmountable task. Also, the acknowledgement of the intended outcomes of the behaviour change is a key consideration of this theory. It allows the individual to weigh the costs and benefits of the process of changing the behaviour and the outcomes that will result thereof, and determine whether it is feasible

and/or beneficial to change the behaviour or not. In instances when the benefits outweigh the costs, these benefits will serve as motivation to get the individual through the difficult experiences he or she may endure during the experience of behaviour change.

I will use Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory in particular the constructs of unique capabilities; forethought, self-regulatory systems and self-reflective power (see page 76) to investigate students' response to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on their sexual risk behaviour change.

### ***Formulating a complementary theoretical lens for the study***

The aim of this study was to investigate students' experiences of sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. I used observation, field notes, and interviews involving 96 students to collect data on the phenomenon under study.

The fundamental objective of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is to communicate information that would influence students to change their sexual behaviour. The campaign uses EE approaches to try to resolve sexual risk problems. However, as has been pointed out in previous studies (Mulwo, 2010), such campaigns are often designed using the uni-directional process of diffusion models in which the senders present a message to a receptive audience. Mulwo (2010) and Tomaselli (1997) argue that the top-down imposition of messages makes those targeted by prevention programmes disinterested to the life-supporting and life-enhancing messages. Consequently, this leads to the failure of the communication programmes. Therefore, the crucial question in this study is whether the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages being offered to students are well developed, implemented and adhere to the participatory bottom-up approach where those who provide HIV interventions take the needs and wishes of the students as their starting point to be able to effectively address their sexual risk practices, underlying risk and protective factors. This is central because effective planning and design enables prevention programmes to be effective in influencing the desired sexual behaviour change.

Secondly, it is important to understand if students comprehend or perceive the messages conveyed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign in the same way programme developers do, and the other way round. The main characteristic of the theoretical framework used in this study is

aimed at finding out students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign aimed at addressing their sexual risk behaviour and their causes on campuses. The basis of doing this is to explore the juncture or disjuncture between the actual sexual risk practices students engage in and their causes, and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

The study also deems it critical to explore students' response to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on their behaviour change. A clear understanding of students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign texts, therefore, requires an in-depth analysis of their experiences of the campaign's messages. The understanding of students' sexual risk behaviour and their causes requires a comprehensive analysis of the campus conditions within which they are shaped and carried out.

In due course, this analysis would enable EE prevention campaigns to be effective in understanding and subsequently influencing behaviour change on campuses. To achieve the main aim of the study, the Problem Behaviour Theory, Reception Theory and the Social Cognitive Learning Theory provided a complementary framework within which this study was conceptually developed.

As discussed above, the Problem Behaviour Theory was devised so as to comprehend the sexual risk practices engage in or rather "act out" (Jessor et al., 1997:23) and the underlying influence to their sexual risk-taking behaviour. It is established on the notion that risky behaviour is influenced by individual, perceived environmental, behavioural, and biological systems that contribute directly or indirectly to decisions to either engage in risky behaviour or not. The Problem Behaviour Theory thus highlights how multiple systems of influence interact to shape young people's behaviour that is acted out. Thus, it is specific in stating the underlying factors or rather conditions that instigate young people's behaviour or acts (Jessor, 1991). Nevertheless, the Problem Behaviour Theory is mainly oriented towards the process of identifying acts or behaviour and identifying the underlying influences to behaviour, and as such, fails to provide an adequate framework for analysing the audience's response to the media.

The Reception Theory was formulated in order to understand the audiences' experiences of the media, which are increasingly becoming interactive. It highlights the dialectical nature of the relationship between the media and its audience. The Reception Theory was explored to

specifically understand students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages with a view to find out the nature of the messages communicated. Whether they are addressing students' sexual risk behaviour, and risk and protective factors explored using the Problem Behaviour Theory. Consequently, the analysis should also explore students' responses to the influence of the campaign's messages on their sexual risk behaviour change.

The Social Cognitive Learning Theory provides a more comprehensive approach to understanding processes of behaviour change. Thus, the Social Cognitive Learning Theory is explored to understand the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on students' sexual risk behaviour change from their perspective. Specifically, it was used to explore students' responses to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign texts through symbolising, vicarious, forethought and self-regulatory capabilities that provide humans with cognitive means by which to determine behaviour.

## **Summary**

The chapter shows that the Problem Behaviour Theory is primarily concerned with young people's sexual behaviour and their underlying factors; positive and negative influences. It explains that young people's acts or behaviour is influenced by the multisystemic domains: personality, behavioural, environmental/social and biological factors. My study used the Problem Behaviour Theory to investigate students' sexual risk practices and their causes.

Reception Theory is used to provide a framework for understanding students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages especially if they deal with their sexual risk practices and the underlying influences to their sexual risk-taking behaviour on campuses identified using Jessor's Theory.

The Social Cognitive Learning Theory framework is used to investigate students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and its influence on their sexual risk behaviour change.

Thus, the Problem Behaviour Theory, Reception Theory and the Social Cognitive Learning Theory formed a useful complementarity that enabled a detailed investigation of students'

sexual risk behaviour, risk and protective factors and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **RESEARCH STRATEGIES**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the research paradigm and its philosophical assumptions and framework, the methodology and the research design that encompasses strategies used to collect data for this study. This is underpinned by criteria chosen to ensure quality in interpretive research; rigour (Lincoln and Guba, 2000) and credibility (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Koch and Harrington, 1998). The chapter closes by paying attention to the ethical conduct of the research.

Qualitative researchers may proceed from many different paradigms depending on the nature of their studies. Interpretive research paradigm was chosen as an appropriate paradigm for this study. The investigating the phenomena of students' sexual risk behaviour in relation to their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is a unique undertaking that needed comprehensive and focused research strategies. The nature of the inquiry and nature of the phenomenon being studied should determine the most suitable strategy. Consequently, the strategy evolves from a theoretical lens, which has many dimensions and required scientific procedural techniques to embrace all the components of the study.

#### **Research Paradigm**

The aim of this research is to understand the phenomena of students' sexual risk practices and factors that encourage and discourage their sexual risk-taking behaviour, and to ascertain students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. This goal fits with the philosophy, strategies, and intentions of the interpretive research paradigm. The interpretive research paradigm is based on the epistemology of idealism. In idealism, knowledge is viewed as a social construction and encompasses a number of research approaches, which have a central goal of seeking to interpret the social world (Higgs, 2001). The investigative approaches of Dilthey (1833-1911) and Weber (1864-1920) are focused on interpretive understanding, to access the meanings of respondents' experiences as opposed to explaining or predicting their behaviour,

which is the goal of the empirico-analytical paradigm or quantitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

According to the interpretive paradigm, meanings are constructed by human beings in unique ways, depending on their context and personal frames of reference as they engage with the world they are interpreting (Crotty, 1998). This is the notion of multiple constructed realities (ibid.). Higgs (2001) notes that the philosophy of Interpretivism holds that our knowledge of reality is a social construction by human actors. As a result, value-free data cannot be obtained because the enquirer uses his or her preconceptions in order to guide the process of enquiry, changing the position of both parties (Bryman and Bell, 2003). The philosophy of Interpretivism is appropriate in the study of students' sexual risk practices, risk and protective factors, and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. This is because Interpretivism emphasises the ways that people being studied make sense of and how they talk about, their world or experiences.

However, Interpretivists argue that generalisability is not of crucial importance. Although the aim of my study is not to generalise, implicitly it would be useful to understand future students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on the basis of the findings of this study. In addition, it is argued that campuses or universities are constantly changing and evolving and so therefore some of the value of generalisation would be lost during these changes (Sanders et al., 2005).

Realism as an epistemology of social constructionism is based on the belief that a reality exists which is independent of human thoughts and beliefs (Burrell and Morgan, 1997). Lincoln and Guba (2000) would argue how the two approaches can be combined, given that realism is directly opposed to interpretivism. Postmodern researchers argue that these approaches are not necessarily opposed (Smith, 1997).

My argument is that we need to understand both risk and protective external and internal forces that influence students' sexual behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. This is important if we are to grasp the meanings behind students' sexual risk behaviour and students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. What this means is that

there are multiple and large-scale factors and processes that influence students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign that students may be aware or not of the existence of such forces, their influence and interpretations and behaviour. In this respect, realism shares some philosophical aspects of positivism in that it acknowledges the existence of external and internal objective nature of some aspects of society and their impact on how individuals perceive the world (Titchen and Edwards, 2003).

The purpose of interpretivism is to understand human behaviour. This paradigm was developed by philosophers during the last half century and is largely in reaction to the application of positivism to the social sciences (Smith, 1997). Social constructionism stems from the view that "reality" is not objective, but is socially constructed and given meaning by people. The idea of social constructionism as developed by Shotter (1993) and companions focuses on the way that people make sense of the world especially through sharing their experiences with others via the medium of language. With this research approach, the idea of "reality" is determined by people rather than by objective factors. In this type of research, findings emerge from the interactions between the researcher and the participants as the research progresses (Creswell, 1998). Therefore, subjectivity is valued; there is acknowledgement that humans are incapable of total objectivity because they are situated in a reality constructed by subjective experiences. Further, the research is value-bound by the nature of the questions being asked, the values held by the researcher, and the ways findings are generated and interpreted (Ajjawi and Higgs, 2007).

In choosing a particular paradigm, certain assumptions and perspectives are accepted. Students' sexual risk behaviours and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign are cognitive and interactive processes that are tacit and sometimes subconscious and occur in context. These phenomena cannot maintain their essential and embedded features if reduced or measured as in quantitative research. The phenomena are complex involving multiple strategies, purposes, and interpretations.

The Interpretive paradigm was viewed as the most suitable for this research because of its potential to generate new understandings of complex multidimensional human phenomena, such as those investigated in this research. Specifically, practical knowledge was sought, which is embedded in the world of meanings and of students' interactions.

Interpretivism is also appropriate to this study because it enabled me to understand the web of meanings in which students act. It facilitated the understanding of how the particular systems of meaning of students' sexual behaviour are being understood and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. Key to this capacity was that interpretivism allowed me to walk a mile in students' shoes by embracing their subjective world through their eyes. Figures 2 and 3 present an overview of the research approach and the various decision points and actions taken in conducting this research adapted from Ajjawi and Higgs (2007).

Figure 2: **First stage:** Overview of the research strategy paradigm and methodology (Ajjawi and Higgs, 2007:13).

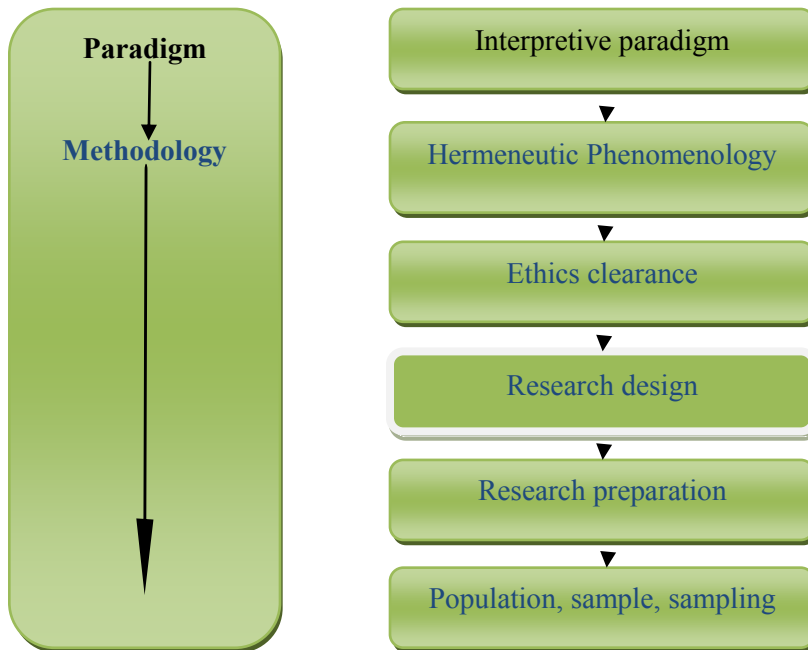
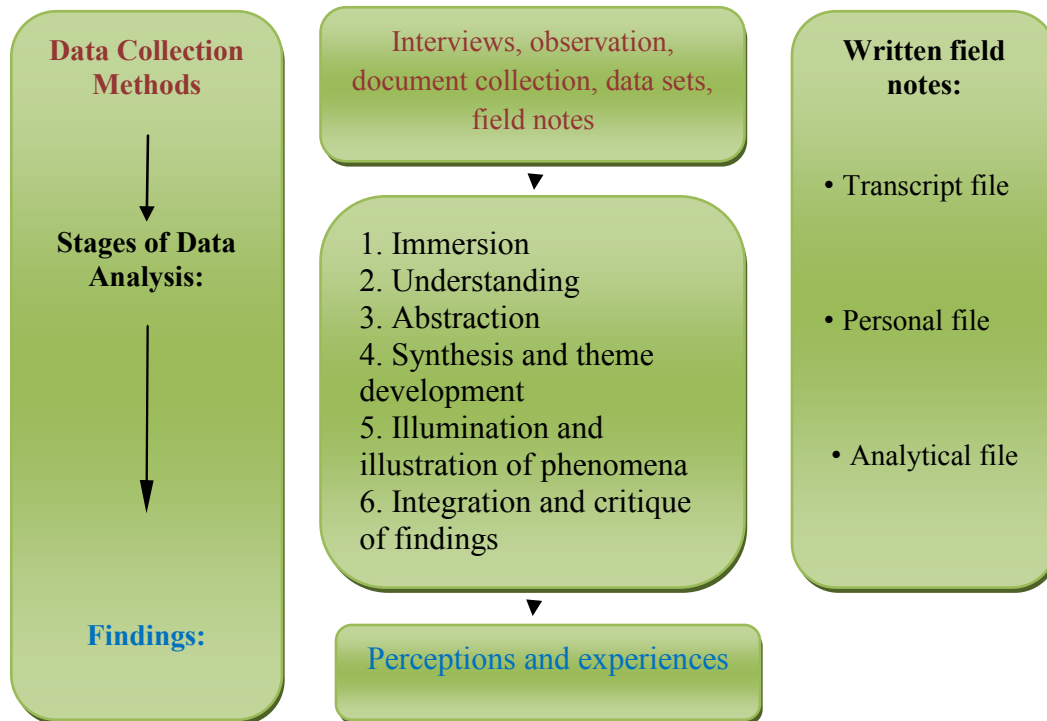


Figure 3: **Second stage:** research strategy for data collection, analysis and findings (Ajjawi and Higgs, 2007:13).



### **Hermeneutic Phenomenology methodology**

Hermeneutic Phenomenology is attentive to the philosophies underpinning both Hermeneutics and Phenomenology (van Manen, 1997:34). It is a “research methodology aimed at producing rich textual descriptions of the experiencing of selected phenomena in the lifeworld of individuals that are able to connect with the experience of all of us collectively” (Smith, 1997: 80). From identification of the experience of phenomena, a deeper understanding of the meaning of that experience is sought (Smith, 1997). This occurs through increasingly deeper and layered reflection by the use of rich descriptive language. The research methodology chosen depends on the research questions and the philosophical perspectives from which the questions are to be investigated (Gwyer, 2000). Research devised to understand the nature of the phenomena of students’ sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, in public health communication, lends itself to phenomenological research. Phenomenology is concerned

with lived experience, and is thus ideal for investigating students sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. However, the main focus of Phenomenology is with pre-reflective experiences and feelings (the essence of a phenomenon), and a key aspect of this research is exploring students' experiences of their sexual risk practices, underlying factors, and messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. The use of hermeneutic Phenomenology enabled the exploration of participants' experiences with further abstraction and interpretation by the researcher based on the researcher's theoretical lens underpinning this study and personal knowledge. Hermeneutics adds the interpretive element to explicate meanings and assumptions in the participants' texts that participants themselves may have difficulty in articulating, for example, tacit practice knowledge (Crotty, 1998). The phenomena of students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign are intertwined and hermeneutics offers a way of understanding such human experiences captured through language and in context (van Manen, 1997).

## **Research Design**

This study employed a cross-sectional research design. Three campuses in KZN Universities were selected from which data were collected to help answer the main research questions. It is termed cross-sectional because the information about the research problem was gathered from different campuses to represent students' sexual risk practices, the underlying factors to their sexual risk practices and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. The study is descriptive in that it answers the question on "what" is happening in KZN Universities with regards to students' sexual risk behaviour by providing insights on risky sexual practices students are engaging in and their causes (Berg, 1995). The study is explanatory in the sense that it answers the question on "why" KZN University students are engaging in sexual risk behaviour and "why" there is a juncture or disjuncture between students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages aimed at addressing sexual risk-taking behaviour on campuses. In other words, it is explanatory in the sense that it elaborates on students' sexual risk practices and reasons they engage in sexual risk behaviour, and how they experience the Scrutinise Campus Campaign in dealing or failing to deal with their sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

A combination of qualitative techniques was employed in order to develop a clear understanding of the phenomena under study. The main thrust of the study was to develop an interpretive phenomenological analysis on research material text. Interviews were designed to generate textual experiential narratives to give nuance to the findings. This data was then complemented by data collected using observations, data sets from the omnibus survey, field notes and documents collected.

### **Research preparation processes**

The first stage of study was the development and testing of data collection instruments. Interview questions and observation schedules were developed. The second stage involved the sampling procedures for the respondents for the pilot study. The sampling and testing of data collection instruments were done on the same day at an EE prevention event held by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. My pilot study involved one hundred students selected from Steve Biko Campus, DUT, and questions that appeared ambiguous or repetitive were identified. The findings of the study were then analysed to identify information gaps and questions that were either repetitive or misunderstood. This enabled the revision of the study instrument, which involved the deleting or reframing of some questions and addition of new questions, to bridge the information gap. Having revised the data collection instruments, I recruited respondents over a period of up to two weeks, four from one class (first, second, third year, and post-graduate class).

### **Population, Sample and Sampling size**

#### ***Study population***

The study population refers to students from two universities of KZN: Durban University of Technology (DUT) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The DUT is a technical University that was formed in 2002 by the merger of Technikon Natal and ML Sultan Technikon and was previously known as the Durban Institute of Technology (DIT). It has four campuses in Durban (ML Sultan Campus, City Campus, Ritson Campus, Steve Biko Campus, Brickfield

Campus and two in Pietermaritzburg (Indumiso Campus and Riverside Campus) and has more than 20 000 students.

UKZN was formed in 2004 after the merger between the University of Natal and the University of Durban-Westville. It has five campuses: Howard College, Westville Campus, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Edgewood Campus, and the Nelson Mandela Medical School. The university hosts about 40, 000 students. However, this study was conducted at three campuses: Howard College and Pietermaritzburg Campuses of UKZN, and Steve Biko Campus of DUT. They were purposively selected because they offer students EE prevention programmes. It was also financially and technically impossible for the researcher to cover all the campuses in KZN Universities or those in DUT and UKZN.

The demographics of the Universities under study vary. They are multi-cultural and international universities comprising black African students, students of Indian origin, Coloureds, and Whites. Students come from within South Africa, other African countries, Asia, Europe and the United States of America. Some live on campus, while others are day students. Some students live in rented houses outside the universities. The neighbourhoods are closely-joined however with at times different racial lines in socialisation. Majority of the students are aged between 18 and 25 years.

### ***Sample size and sampling strategy***

Sampling according to Crabtree et al (1999), is the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population. In my study 96 students were sampled for data collection. To select students for interviews in my study stratified and purposive sampling methods were used (Jeffrey and Troman, 2004). However, as recommended by audience research scholars (Bryman, 2004; Coolican, 1994) measures were taken to ensure that the major diversities observed among students at the two universities were taken into account. These diversities included the location of the respondents, gender, race, and year of study.

The location of the respondent was seen to have a significant bearing on the respondent's experiences of sexual risk behaviour as well as their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, since each campus had its own campaign event. It was assumed, therefore, that the

different campaign events that students at different campuses were exposed to might influence the kind of responses generated.

Similarly, the respondents' year of study was perceived to have a significant level of influence on their experiences of sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. Those who were in third year, for instance, could have been exposed to a wider variety of campaign strategies, having been at the university for longer periods, compared to their first year and second year colleagues; hence, their response to the campaign could differ significantly. Lastly, the gendered and racialised nature of social norms was also perceived to have an important influence on their experiences of sexual risk behaviour and the relevance of interventions among male and female students from different racial groups. These characteristics, therefore, formed the basis with which I selected a sample of 96 respondents for my study to participate in the interviews.

With the intricate mixture of the study population as elucidated above, deciding sampling criteria was equally a "thorny" exercise. Because of the differences in terms of population sizes of each of the three campuses, I selected sixteen respondents for my interviews from each of the three campuses with comparatively large population sizes: Durban University of Technology (Steve Biko Campus randomly selected for the study from five campuses), and at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the Howard College and Pietermaritzburg campuses. Each of the four levels of study, that is, first year, second year, third year except for fourth year and post graduate levels that were represented by 5 students each (Fourth year, Honours, Masters and Doctoral), the rest were represented by four respondents. The table below shows the study approach I used to sample students for my study.

Table 1: Sampling Criteria for Student Interviews

Campus	Level of study/Year	Male	Female	Races			
				Black	White	Indian	Coloured
Steve Biko	1 <sup>st</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	4 <sup>th</sup>	3	2	2	1	1	1
	Honours	2	3	1	2	1	1
	Masters	3	2	1	1	2	1
	Doctorate	2	3	1	1	1	2
Campus	Level of study/Year	Male	Female	Races			
				Black	White	Indian	Coloured
Howard College	1 <sup>st</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	4 <sup>th</sup>	3	2	2	1	1	1
	Honours	2	3	1	2	1	1
	Masters	3	2	1	1	2	1
	Doctorate	2	3	1	1	1	2
Campus	Level of study/Year	Male	Female	Races			
				Black	White	Indian	Coloured
Pietermaritzburg	1 <sup>st</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2	2	1	1	1	1
	4 <sup>th</sup>	3	2	2	1	1	1
	Honours	2	3	1	2	1	1
	Masters	3	2	1	1	2	1
	Doctorate	2	3	1	1	1	2

As demonstrated in the table above, the sample was distributed to reflect the racial diversities among the study population and further divided into equal proportions of male and female respondents.

## Data collection methods used

In my study, I employed six qualitative techniques: focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, data sets from the omnibus survey, observation, document collection and field notes. This was to enable a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomena under investigation. Qualitative techniques were perceived to be complementary, in the sense that each of the six techniques was suitable for generating data that were relevant to the study. Figure 2 and 3 above illustrates the sequence of these activities. These strategies were chosen because they are congruent with the philosophical framework of the research paradigm and methodology, and enabled access to participants' perceptions and experiences (Higgs, 2001). I conducted the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, did the observation, collected documents and field notes, and selected data sets from the omnibus survey. The table below shows the stages followed to conduct my study.

Table 2: Stages for data collection

In-depth interviews		Focus Group Discussions	Observations		Document Content Analysis	Data sets
Campaign officers	Students	Steve Biko Campus Howard College Pietermaritzburg	Campaign events	Workshops	Manuals Brochures Leaflets Magazines Posters Video Cassettes etc	Knowledge Attitudes Perceptions Behaviour Social norms
6	96	6	3	2	11	5

The study was conducted in five phases; the first phase was interviews with Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers, and in-depth interviews with 96 respondents, selected from across three campuses, the second was focus group discussions, the third were observations of Scrutinise Campus Campaign activities taking place at each of the three campuses supported by field notes. I witnessed three campus campaign events at Pietermaritzburg, Steve Biko and Howard College. The campaign events were held between 2008 and 2009. I also attended two Scrutinise Campus Campaign's training workshops at Pietermaritzburg Campus and three planning meetings at

Balmoral Hotel in Durban. The fourth stage was document content analysis, and the fifth and final phase was data sets analysis.

### ***Interviews***

Interviews serve very specific purposes. First, they are used as a means for investigating and gathering of narratives of lived experiences. Second, it is a vehicle by which to develop a conversational relationship with participants about the meaning of experiences. This may be achieved through reflection with participants on the topic at hand (van Manen, 1997). Interviews also allow participants to share their experiences in their own words. There are various ways of conducting research interviews. A semi-structured interview format was to provide the advantages of both structured and unstructured interviews. Semi-structured interviews provide greater breadth or richness in data compared with structured interviews, and allow participants freedom to respond to questions and probes, and to narrate their experiences without being tied down to specific answers (Morse and Field, 1995). A further advantage over unstructured interviews is the ability to compare across interviews because some of the questions are standard (Minichiello et al., 1999).

Broadly, my interview schedule explored the following topics; the risky sexual practices or behaviour students at KZN universities engage in, why KZN students engage in sexual risk behaviour, the messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, students' responses to the campaign's messages, and the relationship between students' risky sexual practices, risk and protective factors, and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. Out of 96 participants 3 declined to talk about their experiences and opted to talk about their perceptions. I conducted all the interviews with students which took place between July 2008 and September 2009.

### ***Semi-structured in-depth interviews with students***

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were designed to draw out how students understand their sexual risk practices and the underlying factors to their sexual risk-taking behaviour. In addition, in-depth interviews were meant to generate students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. The aim was to ascertain from students' view how the Scrutinise Campus

Campaign in addressing students' sexual risk practices and the underlying factors to their sexual risk-taking behaviour. (Appendix I for guidelines for semi-structured in-depth interviews with students is attached).

### ***Interviews with Scrutinise Campus Campaign Officers***

Interviews with Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers (JHHESA staff and peer educators) took the form of a conversation. Following these conversations, I took notes that served to add further detail to conversations and clarify events that occurred during my observations. I used semi-structured interviews so as to elicit rich and focused data. However, I allowed the interviews to "stray" a little at times but still felt a need to ensure that they remained "on task". The interview questions were given to programme officers three weeks before the interview as a guide to the topics to be covered (Coolican, 1994). The interviews were directed at investigating the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers' understanding of the messages promoted by the campaign. Interviews with the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers were also intended to engender how they perceive students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages and its effectiveness in addressing students' sexual risk practices and the underlying factors to their sexual risk-taking behaviour. Major themes emerging from the findings of the omnibus survey were also pursued during this interview. A total of six Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers were interviewed. (Appendix II for guidelines for interviews with programme officers is attached).

### ***Focus group discussions***

Interviews were intended to generate an understanding of students' sexual risk practices and the cause of their sexual risk-taking behaviour on campuses from students' reports. The discussions were also aimed at investigating students' response to the messages promoted by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. Focus group discussions were also meant to explore students' responses to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on students' sexual risk behaviour change; by exploring how it addresses their sexual risk practices, risk and protective factors (Appendix III for guidelines for focus group discussion with students is attached). The duration of one

interview on an average was 45 minutes to 1 hour. All the interviews were audio recorded with consent from interviewees.

### ***Direct observation***

During my data collection period, (2008 to 2009) I attended a number of Scrutinise Campus Campaign events on each campus and observed how these campaigns respond, including the messages being presented, the level of students' participation and attendance. The main objective of the participant observation was to cross-check the findings of my interviews. Specific sources and the nature of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages were noted and the level of attendance at live campaign events, and workshops was estimated. During observations I made brief notes of the campaign events in relation to prevention strategies and added detail to the notes following the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events. As mentioned earlier, I also spent time observing students' sexual behaviour in the following ways:

- I immersed myself in the cultures of the campuses and the lives of the students from the first day of the semester to the last. I spent time at residences and in the surrounding area, such as volleyball and netball courts, gym, football fields, and sports halls.
- I spent time at students' eating and drinking places, restaurants, classrooms, public lectures and discussions, attended talks and evening parties in students' residences.
- I was able to forge relationships with students quickly because of the links with several courses I was tutoring.
- I have been visiting and talking with members of staff providing HIV prevention and awareness programmes in KZN Universities. This gave me an opportunity to engage them on a number of issues especially on students' response to the prevention programmes in relation to their sexual risk behaviour.
- I participated in the implementation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign in and outside campuses.
- I participated in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign training workshops for peer educators.
- I "conversated" with students during the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events for HIV prevention and awareness.

- I took photographs and made video, audio recordings and notebook notes of Scrutinise Campus Campaign events.

Observation was used to access the phenomena of students' sexual risk practices and their causes, and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. Prompting on observed behaviour served to stimulate students' recall and awareness of thinking, to verbalise their reasoning, reflect upon it, and explain the rationale for it. This was utilised in interviews when I asked students about observed encounters. Observation was also used to note other people interacting with the students on campuses. These observations were used to add nuance to my data. They also provided points of reference for interpretation of findings.

### ***Document content analysis***

Throughout the study, a range of documentary evidence was collected from each campus, and Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers provided sources of contextual information. A purposive sampling technique was applied to retrieve specific documents that could be reviewed to provide answers to the research problem. All available materials and resources relevant to the study, such as manuals, brochures, leaflets, pamphlets, magazines, posters, wall charts, annual reports, newsletters, video cassettes, and souvenirs designed for students or documents on the activities of campuses and HIV prevention programme officers were accessed. The documents were selected in relation to: (1) Policy documents, operations and manuals; (2) and awareness and education material on sexual risk behaviour in relation to HIV/AIDS.

### ***Data sets from the omnibus survey***

This study also benefited from the omnibus survey (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). From the survey I selected five data sets on: students' knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of sex, the risk of HIV/AIDS; and students' views of the social norms that influence their sexual behaviour. I then aligned each data set to the themes I generated from my qualitative data. My themes were guided by my main research questions. Then I analysed the data sets together with my qualitative

findings to reinforce my own findings. Data sets were not very useful because my study had different research questions and objectives compared to the omnibus survey.

### ***Field Notes***

Any observable evidence of students' sexual risk practices, the underlying factors to their sexual risk-taking behaviour and their response to the messages promoted by the campaign, were recorded. "Field notes are one means employed by qualitative researchers whose main objective of any research is to try and understand the true perspectives of the subject being studied" (Berg, 1995: 34). Field notes allowed me to access the research subject and record what I observed in an unobtrusive and descriptive manner.

### **Enacted reflexivity**

To ensure that this study was reliable and valid it was critical that before, during and after my research I reflected on who I am as a researcher. Before starting my doctoral studies I studied philosophy for three years and theology for six years. Thus, I have strong philosophical and theological background that influences the way I view the world. By being aware of this, I was able to avoid moralistic judgement in the way I dealt with students' responses. In addition, I am a Zambian national not fluent in isiZulu. However, being a researcher and a student at the same University I conducted my study gave me several advantages. It helped to facilitate trust and confidence in the researcher-participant relationship and allowed me to establish rapport with the participants early in the data gathering process, providing access into their sexual world, thoughts, perceptions and experiences.

Specific jargon may be a code that is hard for non-members to understand (Fontana and Frey, 2000). Having been on campus for almost three years, my proficiency in isiZulu is fair, which provided greater access to students' world without the need to constantly ask for clarification during my observations. There was also no need for me to translate data collected through interviews and neither was there need to ask for clarification because interviews were held in English.

As mentioned earlier, my philosophical and theological background strongly influences things I see and do not see, what I hear and do not hear, what I like and do not like, what I value and do not value, and so on. Thus, it was possible that “who I am” would have an impact on my study. I realised the impossibility of remaining “outside of” my research problem while conducting my research (Ajjawi and Higgs, 2007). In order to be reflexive by being aware of my contribution to the construction of meanings to the study, I deliberately developed a critical reflexive awareness. The aim was to develop heightened self-awareness and be able to reflect on events, before, during and after my study. Reflexivity helped me to be aware of my inner self and always conscious of forces that that would influence my research.

Since it is not always easy to be fully conscious of all the nuances of my motives, self-reflection coupled with awareness of the more common forms of distorted managerial behaviour was my first step in making myself conscious of my theoretical and philosophical background how it would impact on my data collection, analysis, and conclusions. To achieve this I engaged in retrospective reflection by mulling over, thinking, evaluating and recapturing experiences. To undertake a reflexive practice I kept a research diary in which I recorded my reflections. My research diary was separated into four sections: (1) observational notes - this was a descriptive note of Scrutinise Campus Campaign events, interviews, encounters and observations. Notes in this section contained as little interpretation as possible and were as reliable as I could construct them; (2) methodological notes – this was a place where I reflected on the methodological aspects of my research and my actions in undertaking interviews, observations and so forth. I reflected on how interviews were conducted and my role within interviews; (3) theoretical notes- I used this section to write how I was making meaning of my data. I wrote the initial explanations and even what data was talking to me; and (4) analytical memo - I used this place to bring several inferences together. I reviewed my theoretical notes which helped me to see patterns and recurrent themes in my data. I also used this place to link my analysis to the literature in my study.

In addition, several times I engaged in face-to-face discussions with my supervisor to discuss the wider relevance of the setting of my study and topic, the theoretical framework, my integrity as a researcher and critically assessed my data. It is this approach that helped me to have the composure, awareness of my inside and outside influences and determination needed to conduct

valid research. I also maintained “hermeneutics alertness”, which occurs in situations where researchers step back to reflect on the meanings of situations rather than accepting their preconceptions and interpretations at face value (Ajjawi and Higgs, 2007). Thus, reflexivity was viewed as an important dimension in designing and implementing this research. In other words, throughout the research, opportunities for thoughtful analysis of the research experience, and my relationship with participants, and the research were built into the research process to avoid bias.

## **Data Analysis and Processing**

### ***Thematic Analysis***

Thematic analysis is a qualitative method of analysis used for identifying, analysing and reporting themes within data (Braun et al., 2006: 80). It allows for qualitative data to be understood and described by quantitative means (Boyatzis, 1998), if this is desired by the researcher. It involves a process of encoding qualitative information, and the creation of an explicit code. A code is “the most basic segment of raw data that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon” (Boyatzis 1998: 63). The process of coding can be described as a way of relating the data to ideas about the data (ibid.). It allows researchers to think about their data, and make the categories themselves points of analysis. As part of the analytical process it involves the decision that a category is relevant for thinking about with regards to the project; and the choice of which data segments “belong” in a category (Ely et al., 1997).

The coding process may result in the formation of a list of themes, organised in either a complex or simple fashion. A theme is a pattern identified in the data, at minimum it organises and describes your observations (Braun et al., 2006: 79), and at maximum “interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998: 4). Coding is an active process, and even if the researcher chooses to make their analysis a data-driven one, concentrating on the data when creating themes rather than theoretical expectations dictating what they should be looking for, this is still the case. The researchers’ theoretical framework, as well as the context in which the data were created and analysed cannot be ignored. Themes do not naturally emerge out of the data, there is often a misconception that “themes reside in the data, and if we look hard enough they will

emerge. If themes “reside” anywhere, they reside in our heads from thinking about our data and creating links as we understand them (Ely et al., 1997: 205).

### ***Phenomenological thematic data analysis***

In keeping with the methodology adopted in this research, data analysis methods were developed from phenomenological principles, theoretical lens underpinning the study and from guidelines in the literature about systematic, useful ways of interpreting ethnographic data. All the data collected was transformed into material text. This was to ensure that the methods I used were specific to this research, but also drew on the experience and knowledge of experts in the field of interpretive research. Throughout all stages of the data analysis there was ongoing interpretation of the research material text and the phenomena of students’ sexual risk practices, the underlying factors to their sexual risk-taking behaviour. I also continuously reflected on students’ response to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign’s messages on their sexual risk behaviour.

In addition, I continually tested my pre-research assumptions about the phenomena under study by comparing and contrasting these assumptions with the findings in the research material text. In this way, I was able to address any prejudices developed from the literature and personal experience. By constantly cross-checking my interpretations with the original transcripts I sought to maintain closeness or “faithfulness” to the participants’ constructs, grounding interpretations in the data. This strategy to maintain authenticity was suggested by Lincoln and Guba (2000). Dialogue with my supervisor, participants, Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers and fellow postgraduate students about emerging findings served to further check the authenticity to the ethnographic data. Van Manes (1997) and Titchen et al (2003) suggest that a data analysis technique should have at least three general stages; stage one, dealing with sample and design issues, stage two dealing with the development of themes and codes, and stage three dealing with the validation and use of code. Table 3 is my application of van Manen (1997) and Titchen et al (2003) stages of data analysis.

Table 3: Stages of Data Analysis Developed for this Research

STAGE	TASKS COMPLETED
<b>1. Immersion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organising the data-set into texts</li> <li>• Iterative reading of texts</li> <li>• Preliminary interpretation of texts to facilitate coding</li> </ul>
<b>2. Understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying first order (participant) constructs</li> <li>• Coding of data using NVivo software</li> </ul>
<b>3. Abstraction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying second order (researcher) constructs</li> <li>• Grouping second order constructs into sub-themes</li> </ul>
<b>4. Synthesis and theme development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grouping sub-themes into themes</li> <li>• Further elaboration of themes</li> <li>• Comparing themes across sub-discipline groups</li> </ul>
<b>5. Illumination and illustration of phenomena</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking the literature to the themes identified above</li> <li>• Reconstructing interpretations into stories</li> </ul>
<b>6. Contrast and comparative analysis for the main findings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students' sexual risk practices and the underlying factors to students' sexual risk behaviour in relation to the messages communicated and their influence on students' sexual risk behaviour change</li> </ul>
<b>7. Integration and critique</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critique of the themes by the researchers and externally</li> <li>• Reporting final interpretation of the research</li> <li>• Findings</li> </ul>

### *Phenomenological Strategies*

The aim of phenomenological data analysis is to “transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful” (van Manen, 1997:36). Text may be viewed as both the data and product of phenomenological research (Smith, 1997). The aim of researchers using phenomenology is to construct an animating, evocative description (text) of

human actions, behaviours, intentions, perceptions and experiences as we meet them in the *lifeworld*. Phenomenological descriptions are rich and evocative, invoking in readers the phenomenological nod in recognition of a phenomenon “so richly described that they too may have experienced” (Smith, 1997:27). The product of phenomenological research should be simple and straightforward, such that readers who have experienced the phenomenon may analyse their own reality with the identified themes (Swanson-Kauffman and Schonwald, 1988). Phenomenological themes may be understood as structures of experience and offer a thick description of phenomena (Smith, 1997). This study explored students’ experiences of sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

In this research, a systematic method of thematic data analysis was adopted, as informed by van Manen (1997) and Titchen et al (2003). This method allowed for systematic identification of participants’ interpretations and constructs (first order constructs), which were then layered with the researchers’ own understandings, interpretations, and constructs (second order).

### ***Hermeneutic Strategies***

The hermeneutic circle and dialogue of question and answer were two key strategies drawn from the material text in this research. The hermeneutic circle is a metaphor for understanding and interpretation, which is viewed as a movement between parts of data and whole (evolving understanding of the phenomena under study), each giving meaning to the other such that understanding is circular and iterative (Ajajawi and Higgs, 2007). Therefore, the researcher remained open to questions that emerged from the study of the phenomena and allowed the ethnographic data transformed in material text to speak. This was to allow answers to the main research questions to generate from the research material text. In this context, the material text was a creation by the researcher from data collected from participants. Understanding emerges in the process of dialogue between the researcher, respondents and the data of the research. The act of interpretation itself represents a gradual convergence of insight on the part of the researcher and the data (Bontekoe, 1996:7).

Coding transformed the interviews, field notes, collected documents and observations into raw data. The initial stages of developing a coding system were manually done, and thereafter,

through the qualitative data analysis programme NVivo software version 2.0. To process and analyse my data I deliberately developed a tabulated response to help me build stage by stage the hermeneutic phenomenological thematic and coding analysis. Table 4 below shows the initial stages of my data analysis.

Table 4: Initial stages followed in processing and analysing data

Pseudo Name	Year of study	Race	Campus	Research questions	First order response (participant)	Second order response (researchers' tools)
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I started by entering students' pseudo names, level of study, campus, research questions and the first and second order response respectively. This stage enabled me to easily calculate percentages presented in the study. All percentages presented are from the data I collected from a sample of 96 respondents. The following section provides details on how data was processed and analysed.

*Stage one: Immersion - Organising the texts*

As shown in the table above, texts were constructed for each participant from the interview transcripts and field notes. I read and re-read all written texts in order to become very familiar with the text set. I also listened repeatedly to the voice recording of the interviews along with the relevant field notes. This process is often referred to as immersion in the data (van Manen, 1997) and involves engaging with the meaning of the texts, where the aim is to get a "sense" or preliminary interpretation of the texts, which then facilitates coding. Field notes were written while spending time with students. Observation and interaction with the participants were used to facilitate the recreation of the context in which students' sexual risk behaviour and prevention communication occurred, which were important part of data interpretation. Prof. Dalrymple, my

supervisor, read segments of the transcripts to become familiar with the texts and to enable dialogue between me and her during supervision sessions about the emergent coding frameworks. Dialogue with my supervisor served as a vehicle for reflection on emerging ideas and to help develop and expand these ideas. Such dialogue was valuable for providing insight, considering alternative interpretations and contradictions, and thoroughness in interrogating the data (Barbour, 2001).

*Stage two: Understanding - Identifying first order constructs*

First order constructs refer to participants' ideas expressed in their own words or phrases, which capture the precise detail of what the person is saying (Titchen and McIntyre, 1993). These constructs were related to the research questions linked to students' sexual risk practices and underlying factors to their sexual risk-taking behaviour, messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, students' response to the prevention messages and the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on students' sexual risk behaviour change. First order constructs were identified first according to students' level of study (first year, second, third, fourth and postgraduates). Constructs for Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers were also identified. Constructs were identified with a constant process of checking for appropriateness and completeness of these constructs. As mentioned earlier, texts were coded (using NVivo software version 2.0) to identify the first and second order constructs.

During this stage, I questioned the relevance of the constructs, identifying overlap and/or connections between the first order constructs. My understanding of the participants' first order constructs was checked at each stage with the participants by feeding back to the participants ideas raised in previous phases and by probing questions during interviews. This form of iterative member checking provided a progressively richer and deeper understanding of the phenomena under study, and was a central aspect of producing findings from the interactions with participants as the research progressed.

*Stage three: Abstraction - Identifying second order constructs and grouping to create themes and sub-themes*

Second order constructs were then generated using my theoretical and personal knowledge; these were abstractions of the first order constructs. A computer file was created for each second order construct and all relevant extracts from the transcripts and comments from the analytical log were copied into that file using the first order construct as a label. If a second order construct was very similar to an existing one, then all the data were copied into the existing file. Interpretation of each interview transcript was used to form a picture of that participant's data as a whole, which then informed understanding of each transcript such that a richer, deeper understanding of the phenomena evolved. In the same way, a composite data-set for each subgroup was formulated that was used to understand each participant's data and to seek any similarities between the subgroups. Thus, at the end of stage three all relevant text material was grouped under each relevant construct for each subgroup, in order to answer the main research questions in this study (see page 8).

*Stage four: Synthesis and theme development*

There are two main types of thematic analysis; inductive, data-driven analysis, and deductive, theory-driven analysis. For this study I mainly used a semi-deductive approach complemented by manifest and latent levels. A semi-deductive approach narrows its gaze to identifying themes generated mainly from the theoretical lens, and a few from research questions underpinning the study and categories from data collected (Braun et al., 2006).

Using a semi-deductive approach makes terms easier to identify and code for other researchers and increases the chances for replicability and reliability (Braun et al., 2006). Ely et al (1997:23) states that a semi-deductive approach allows the researcher to code data in a "guided and logical way". As mentioned earlier, the decision to coding process was also influenced by the manifest or surface level and latent or interpretive level. The manifest level was the "visible or apparent content of something" (Boyatzis 1998: 16), for instance how many times words arose explaining "the sexual risky practices students engage in". The latent level involved the discourse around "the underlying factors to students' sexual risk behaviour" on campuses. It meant anything that

instigates participants' sexual risk behaviour on campuses. The latent level looks at the underlying factors of the occurrence being investigated (Boyatzis 1998: 16). It was also used to identify "the messages communicated by the Campus Campaign" and "the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on students' sexual risk behaviour". The latent level accounts for most of the participants' actual words and sentiments presented in my findings. This was done in order to better understand participants' interpretation of the phenomena under study within the circumference of the main themes that are theory based. In other words, varying the approach to theme development helped me to reach the diverse data issues bearing in mind that data were collected using more than four instruments (Patton, 2002).

To come up with themes presented in this study, material text was first grouped into categories of the main research questions. Then main themes were identified from each theory underpinning the main questions. Material text in each category of the main research questions was grouped into the different themes and sub themes identified under each question. As mentioned earlier, the decision to code was also influenced by manifest and latent or interpretive levels.

To generate main themes on material text answering the first research question on students' sexual risk practices, the Problem Behaviour Theory's concept that posits that young people are the "actors of risk behaviour and recipients of the consequences" (Jessor, 1991:11) was used to search data for the risky sexual practices that they "act out" or engage in. Jessor's "actor concept" was informed by material text for this study, my personal theoretical knowledge and the literature review on students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

Themes on the material text answering the second research question on the underlying risk and protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour were generated from the main constructs of the Problem Behaviour Theory. The Problem Behaviour Theory explains that young people's risky behaviour is influenced by four transactional and interrelated domains: the biological, environmental/social, behavioural and personality factors. Thus, the material text was grouped into four main themes stemming from the four domains of the Problem Behaviour Theory. In other words, data was piled into the four domains. Sub themes were generated from Jessor's domains, the material text and literature review. Table 5 shows the main themes and a few examples of the sub themes generated to answer the question on the risk and protective instigators to students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

Table 5: Selected themes stemming from the Problem Behaviour Theory and material text

Personality factors	Environmental/ social factors	Behavioural factors	Biological factors
Students' cognitive competence, sensational seeking, self-efficacy, distress, religiosity, negative health outcomes, lack of knowledge, perceptions of personal risk, and attitudes towards sex	Students' social economic status, parental education, living with parents, institutions, peer groups, parental monitoring and supervision, parental communication and relationships, campus conditions, and influence of lecturers	Risk behaviour, alcohol abuse, drug abuse and other indices of sexual activity	Students' age, pubertal development, beauty, and gender

The main constructs for Reception Theory were used to develop themes from the material text grouped to answer the question on the messages promoted by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. To answer the research question on the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages, students' responses to the messages were developed from Reception Theory; (1) audiences as producer of meaning; and (2) interpretive communities were the main themes with different issues discussed under each theme.

To answer the question exploring the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, themes were generated from the Social Cognitive Learning Theory and then the data were grouped according to the themes identified. Thus, themes from the Social Cognitive Learning Theory provided the analysis framework by which to determine behaviour change influenced by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

Themes and sub-themes were discussed with three Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers and with ten students (two from each level of study) to gain feedback on the fit and credibility of themes and sub themes, and transferability of the findings to the settings of the students who

were not respondents (Barbour, 2001). The value of discussing the research findings was in the ensuing feedback and discussions about the research topic that helped to refine or further develop the presentation of the research themes. Most importantly, it was an opportunity for me to reflect on my emerging interpretations in the process of writing and articulating the research process and content. These discussions provided supplementary feedback to the participants' input and reflections. It challenged the emerging interpretations through broader lenses and encouraged refinement of explanations and arguments. Finlay (2003:108) argues that reflexivity in a research sense is the "process of continually reflecting upon our interpretations of both our experiences and the phenomena being studied so as to move beyond the partiality of our previous understandings." In addition, consideration of the applicability of findings to other students' contexts was important in highlighting the perceived value of research findings for future understanding of students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to EE prevention programmes.

*Stage five: Illuminating and illustrating the rationale of the phenomena*

In this stage I examined the literature for links to the themes and sub-themes identified from the entire data set. I also looked for links between the main themes in each category of the main questions to support further theoretical development. Using the themes, sub-themes, and their interrelationships as a basis, I reconstructed data on students' sexual risk practices and their underlying factors. I also reconstructed data on students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and the influence of the campaign on students' sexual risk behaviour change. The aim was to illuminate the key findings from the data. I then re-examined the quality of the themes to ensure that the constructed themes were reliable to participants' perception/experiences of the phenomenon.

To further illuminate and illustrate the phenomena under study, a relational (contrast and comparative) analysis table was formulated between themes on students sexual risk practices and their underlying factors. Themes were also formulated on the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages and their influence on students' sexual risk behaviour. The aim was to address the main research problem in this study. In this stage, themes and sub-themes were further elaborated and their relationship clarified by reading and re-reading all the data. This stage

involved continuously moving backwards and forwards between the literature, the material text and the earlier analysis, moving from parts to whole. From this process I managed to relate students' sexual risk behaviour, the underlying factors, and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages intended to address sexual risk-taking behaviour on campuses. The relational analysis process enabled me to understand the phenomena under study and establish the relationship between students' sexual risk behaviour, and their response to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on their sexual risk behaviour change.

#### *Stage six: Integration - Testing and refining the themes*

The final stage of data analysis involved my critique, through critical debate, of the main themes along with a final review of the literature for key developments that could impact on or increase my understanding of students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. In addition, the themes and an interpretation were presented at one postgraduate residence as a talk to students on HIV/AIDS on July 2009 and received a lot of comments. All chapters in this thesis were presented at a regular postgraduate seminar held every Friday at my Department attended by students and lecturers. The presentation of the phenomenological findings from this research sought to check their verisimilitude (i.e., the fit of findings with others engendering recognition of the familiarity or resonance of these findings with their own experiences). This was seen as a further critique of the clarity and meaningfulness of the findings. I also presented my findings to researchers, academics, and health professionals at a seminar held monthly at Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division (HEARD). The aim was to test the relevance of the findings in a community of those who might use these findings in their teaching, research or practice. Comments received were incorporated into the interpretation and subtle adjustments were made, where necessary.

#### **Measures to address issues of reliability and validity**

Validity is seen as "concerned with how accurately the observable measures actually represent the concept in the question or whether, in fact, they represent something else" (Tricoglus, 2001:23). Reliability was estimated by assessing the similarity of students' responses in in-depth

and focus group interviews. Validity was measured by accessing conclusions and inferences from the data collected from in-depth and focus group interviews. Further draft instruments were prepared and pretested among students and a final version was developed based on the outcomes of the “test study”. The mechanism ensured that the research instruments produced corresponding results in all the settings that lead to high reliability. A checklist was developed for direct observations of the activities specifying exactly what the researcher was observing in relation to the objectives and focus of the study. Throughout the study I maintained a research diary that served many purposes: to record my thoughts and research processes, to provide material for reflection, and to record the development of my research skills. With this in mind my diary ensured that I remained focused on my role as a researcher and frequently became a “sounding board” for ideas and thoughts.

The theoretical frameworks served as useful protocols of format to ensure that relevant concepts were addressed in each of the cases, thus contributing to the reliability of the whole study. To uphold internal consistency, with respect to the interviews all of them were audio taped and were transcribed and compared with hand written notes.

To ensure external validity I compared results with those reported in literature and there is a considerable degree of agreement with the findings from this study. Murtagh (2007:5) describes how the theoretical constructions that a researcher brings to or develops during a study need to be grounded in “a broad, comparative perspective on literature”. The theoretical validity of the study is grounded in the detailed review of literature in the area of the study that is presented in earlier chapters.

As advised by my supervisor data was transcribed and written up while my observations were fresh in my mind. In addition, I triangulated my methods through the use of observations, interviews, and documentation.

### **Ethical Conduct of the Research**

Ethical approval for this research was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Ethics Committee and from relevant ethics committees at each campus site from which data were collected. Ethical considerations raised by this research were concerned with obtaining informed

consent and maintaining participant confidentiality. Informed consent is defined as “the voluntary and revocable agreement of a competent individual to participate in a therapeutic or research procedure, based on an adequate understanding of its nature, purpose, and implications” (Sim, 1986:584). Informed consent may be broken down into four constituent elements: disclosure (providing adequate information), comprehension (understanding of information), competence (ability of participants to make a rational decision), and “voluntariness” (no coercion) (Sim, 1998: 23).

All participants were provided with information sheets detailing the aims of the research and the research process. These information sheets were provided to the participants directly. All participants were given the opportunity to ask questions about the research, and were aware that they could withdraw from this research at any time without negative consequences. Written consent was obtained from each volunteer prior to commencement of data collection (see Appendix IV for a copy of the consent form). There were no existing power relations between me and the participants that could be perceived as coercion. A verbal explanation and information statements were also provided to all students and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers. Written consent was obtained from these participants before commencement of data collection activities. Maintaining participants’ confidentiality is often a major ethical concern of interpretive research because of the personal nature of the research and the type of questions the participants are asked. Confidentiality was maintained through the use of pseudonyms in the research reporting and by changing specific contextual details that could have revealed the identity of the participant.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### STUDENTS' RISKY SEXUAL PRACTICES AND THE UNDERLYING FACTORS TO THEIR SEXUAL RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOUR ON CAMPUSES

#### Introduction

This chapter presents descriptive data on students' sexual risk practices and their underlying factors. Data in this chapter and Chapter Eight are presented using a phenomenological interpretive thematic approach. This was viewed to be effective and suitable because it provides a trail of evidence of data collected in the study by closely referring to respondents' actual words and experiences. This approach increases the extent of dependability of the discussion and analysis. It gives an opportunity to show the richness of the data collected in relation to the main research questions and the theoretical framework underpinning the study.

The data was obtained through in-depth interviews involving 96 students, and three focus group discussions I conducted with students. Findings in this study are complemented by other data collection techniques namely observations, field notes, documented information, and a few data sets selected from the omnibus survey (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). In a few places where data sets from the omnibus survey are used (accounting to 1% of the data presented) they are appropriately acknowledged. It is noteworthy that 99% of the data presented is from my study. The presentation and analysis is guided by the Problem Behaviour Theory. Jessor (1991:47) posits that young people's sexual risk behaviour is the product of complex interactions between biological, environment/social, personality and behavioural factors, also referred to as multisystemic factors (Jessor, 1991:50)

The chapter is divided into two sections. Section One presents and discusses data on both students' perceptions and experiences of their sexual risk practices as reported by students themselves. This enabled the study to set the scene and basis for the investigation of the underlying factors to students' risky and protective sexual behaviour on campuses. Section Two discusses the underlying risk factors to students' sexual risk behaviour using Jessor's (1991) multisystemic factors as key themes.

Findings in this chapter and Chapter Eight will be used as “measuring rods” to assess the efficacy of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign’s messages in addressing or failing to address both students’ sexual risk behaviour and factors that promote or dissuade sexual risk behaviour identified in this chapter and Chapter Eight.

### **Students’ perceptions and experiences of sexual risk practices on campuses**

The Problem Behaviour Theory posits that young people are both “actors of risky behaviour and recipients of consequences” (Jessor, 1991:56). It explains that young people’s behaviour, the “objects of the acts” or rather the things they do are influenced by the end or purpose intended by young people themselves. Young people’s behaviour is also influenced by the circumstances of time; place and the young people involved (ibid). Thus, this section investigates the sexual risk practices students “act out”, and the “objects of their sexual behaviour” that make them recipients of “life compromising consequences” (Jessor, 1991:59). The overall aim was to generate an understanding of the risky sexual practices students engage in and how these make them susceptible to the risk of HIV infection. The main question posed to students was on the sexual risk practices or “acts” they engage in on campuses. Respondents were not obliged to respond to each question and therefore information provided was absolutely voluntary.

### ***Transactional sex***

The Problem Behaviour Theory explains that an “object of an act” or actions performed by young people make them compromise their health (Jessor, 1991:23). Along the same line, Shelton (2004:34) argues that young people’s actions are the “vehicles” that expose them to risky situations, for instance engaging in casual sex without using a condom. In this study, transactional sex has been identified as one of the risky behaviours students engage in on campuses. It is a key driver of the HIV epidemic among students (HEAIDS, 2010:14).

My study found that transactional sexual relationships on campuses are defined by the exchange of goods or money for sexual services and propel the risk of HIV/AIDS on campuses. I found that 66% of the respondents said that this is due to gendered inequalities in social and economic

welfare which makes female students most commonly hold the weaker negotiating positions for their relationships. Moreover, 60% of the respondents reported that the notion of transactional sex or sexual-economic relations on campuses often carry a sense of moral contempt, particularly for female students. My study found that 72% of the students said that this is because transactional sex is associated with “promiscuity” or “unmanageable sexuality” or “looseness”. A silence therefore shrouds the issue of transactional sexual relationships on campuses. Respondents said that female students are particularly in danger of entering into sexual economic exchanges from disadvantaged positions, and thus hold little real power with which to negotiate safe sex:

*When he made advances to me I accepted because I needed cash to meet my basic needs. Barely two months of meeting him, I started developing intimate feelings towards him and we stopped using condoms. I am not sure if he feels the same way as I do or he still wants us to continue relating on the sexual-economic level (Kanyile, a black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

This experience gives the impression that notions of love and intimacy may distort the economic meaning of transactional sexual relationships and exclude the idea of having to use protection against infection through sexual intercourse. The findings seem to suggest that for most female students, familiarity and intimacy with the sexual partner, or love, is reason enough not to feel at risk. All this seems to start from the fact that older partners have more powers to make sexual decisions (see also Eleazar, 2009; Moodley, 2007; Mulwo, 2010; Lengwe, 2010; HEAIDS, 2010). Students’ responses in the omnibus survey show that transactional sexual relationships are common on campuses. In my study 94% of the respondents said that they know students who are engaging in transactional sex.

In my own study, this is supported by Thembisa, a female black undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus who said:

*Everyone would think I am naïve to deny the prevalence of transactional sexual relationships on campuses. This practice is common here especially among us female students. I sometimes engage in sex for material gain (Shyly looks away*

from the researcher). *Some of us have no parents to provide our university needs but want to be here (at the university), and to be here I need money to pay for my residence fee, tuition fee, and daily upkeep you know, otherwise I wouldn't be here. I have limited choices you know, that is the situation for most of us female students here at varsity* (interview 2009).

Thembisa's response seems to suggest that economic reasons for sexual involvement with older partners remain an important factor in understanding transactional sexual relationships on campuses. The mention that the phenomena of transactional sexual relationships is common among girls seem to suggest that constructions of gender are also significant in that they influence and structure the material possibilities and opportunities for female students differently from those of men.

In my study sample of 96 students, there was no student who was surprised to hear about transactional sex on campuses. My study found that more than 62% of the respondents said that relationships that involve some sort of exchange are either "rampant" or "widespread" or "common" on campuses. However, respondents explained that there is a distinction between transactional sex practiced by students and prostitution. Students said that those who engage in transactional sex are not hired like sex workers *per se* but are in romantic relationships with their "buyers" but without serious commitment. Students explained that they have different sexual partners for various needs. Students who engage in transactional sex are more concerned about having their needs met now without thinking about the risk of HIV. I found that 72% of the respondents in the sample, thus, practically viewed transactional sex as a viable and efficient way of meeting their needs and wants.

Respondents, especially female students also explained that in most cases they engage in transactional sex as "arm pit lovers" or "undercover lovers." These are sexual partners not known to the stable or main sexual partners, and are unable to negotiate for condom usage. Transactional sex gives partners who have money, power over students most often receivers of gifts. My study found that 85% of female students interviewed said that by engaging in transactional sex they perceive themselves as clever and lucky to be created as females because they are able to exploit their sexuality to the full. Some female students explained that transactional sex makes them demand for payment that can be financial or goods such as clothes.

In my study, 81% of the students who engage in transactional sexual relationships perceived it as a sign of power over men. While others see transactional sex as an opportunity to exploit men because they are made to pay for “goods” (sex) they are not able to take away.

My observations seem to suggest that many students do not realise that transactional sex makes particular people attractive as sexual partners who given the current distribution of HIV are at high risk of HIV infection for instance, older partners (see also HEARD, 2010). Inferring from the data collected using in-depth interviews, it is not true to say that all students who engage in transactional sex are victims of the gender inequality and livelihood insecurity. Female students’ responses seem to suggest that many use their sexual appeal and potency as a way to get what they want. This is in agreement with the Problem Behaviour Theory that explains that young people are sometimes “free actors” of the behaviour that compromise their health (Jessor, 1991:29). Jessor’s argument is that regardless of the circumstances young people perform sexual acts, either performed with knowledge and freedom also known as “human sexual acts” or performed in ignorance and under coercion as “sexual acts of human” they put themselves at risk of HIV infection (ibid.).

The finding that students engage in transactional sexual relationships should not come as a surprise. Societal institutions in many places treat sexuality and its outcomes as an economic commodity to be exchanged or sold (Shelton, 2004; Halperin and Epstein, 2007; Soul City Institute, 2008). For example, in the province where this study was conducted marriages involve financial transactions or barter system on the bride’s virginity or proven fertility (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008). Thus, the behaviour of students is a mere reflection of this same ethic.

### ***“Towing” on campuses***

Data collected from all three campuses under study shows that students are engaging in what they call “towing” or one-night stands. Engaging in “towing” is what is referred to as behaviour “acted out” in the Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991: 34). My study shows that 60% of the respondents said that “towing” is common among students. “Towing” is a sexual behaviour where students bring males or females to their rooms and engage in spontaneous sexual interaction despite not being in traditional romantic relationships with each other. It is derived

from the process of pulling or drawing behind a chain, or some other form of coupling as done by road vehicles. Respondents explained that there are no premeditated arrangements regarding what behaviour would occur, and there is clearly no pledge of any subsequent intimate relationship. Thus, it is a behaviour in which students engage in sex just for a night. “Towing” is reported to occur at students’ parties, drinking places, and residences.

Mkhize, a black male undergraduate student engaging in “towing” from Pietermaritzburg Campus, explained that:

*Towing is widespread on campuses especially on weekends. I have done it but not many times and there is no promise whatsoever of continuing interactions or relationships. After doing it (having sex) we both go our own ways, no calls, no text messages, no emails, no face book contact, no greetings, and no nothing. It just ends with a sexual act (interview 2009).*

This response suggests that students engage in single sexual encounters where they have no immediate expectation or intent of starting long-term sexual or romantic relationships. A partner who is hired for an overnight sexual encounter on campus or off campus is regarded as “cargo” or client. Students engaging in “towing” do not know each other well because they have minimal time to get to know each other before indulging in sex. Masilela, a black female postgraduate student from Howard College explained that knowing each other is not part of the practice especially that they do not care and love each other (interview 2009). Respondents said that “towing” on campuses can be with the same partner, but is on an irregular basis.

My study confirms Eleazar’s (2009) finding that one-night stands are common in South African campuses and expose students to the risk of HIV infection (see also Breier, 2010; Nuntsu, 2004). This finding also supports Jessor’s Problem Behaviour Theory (1991) who posits that young people are not only “actors” of risky behaviour but “recipients” as well of the consequences of the behaviour in this case HIV infection. An evaluation of respondents’ responses shows that 55% of the female respondents said that “towing” makes them feel socially humiliated and sexually “used” and “abused”. Thus, though female students engage in one-night stands, they feel negative emotions after, and this seems to suggest that more female students than males find

it difficult to have casual sex on campuses. These differences highlight cultural differences in sexual morals and preferences between males and females. Cultural rules for instance, require that women remain celibate until they get married, and then monogamous thereafter. Thus, female students seem to be raised to equate personal worth with sexual virtue hence tend to be much more likely than males, who are not under such restrictions, to feel bad and used in one-night stands. This explains why my study found that 80% of the male respondents who have had one-night stands had positive feelings about it, feeling greater sexual satisfaction and a sense of contentment.

### *Age-disparate sexual relationships*

The Problem Behaviour Theory posits that an “object” of an act is the behaviour performed (Jessor, 1991:14). In reality, an “object” is not distinct from the act itself. For instance, engaging in sex with a person ten years younger than oneself is an “object of an act” (Jessor, 1991: 23). About 81% of the respondents in this study explained that students engage in age-disparate sex. They explained that any student in a relationship with a partner older or younger by five years is considered to be engaging in an age-disparate sexual relationship (see also Eleazar, 2009; Mulwo, 2010). In agreement, 83% of the respondents in the omnibus survey said that age-disparate sexual relationships are the order of the day on campuses (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). The major problem in age-disparate sexual relationships on campuses is that many students seems they are not aware that older partners are most likely that they have been sexually active for many years and have or have had many sexual partners.

I found that 67% of the students said that older partners have low risk of HIV infection because most of them are married therefore in stable relationships. Students’ perceptions are contrary to data from the omnibus survey that found that the probability of older partners having been exposed to HIV and being HIV positive is higher than when young people have same age partners (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). Same age partners are not likely to have been sexually active for a long time. This finding is also in agreement with Gobarch et al (2005) who found that some level of age mixing has to occur for HIV to spread. Their argument seem to hold that if students who were infected only formed sexual partnerships with partners of the same age,

and then the epidemic would die out as the individuals of the infected birth cohort aged and passed away. Also, if the age difference between all sexual partnerships in the population was constant, then the same thing would happen.

Interestingly, the omnibus survey (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007) found out the degree of transgenerational sex among students that 75% of respondents' most recent sexual partners were either five years younger (33%) or older (38%) than the participant. Only 25% of the respondents said they were aged the same as their most recent sexual partner.

Data from study shows that 81% of the respondents explained that the big age gap allows older partners to have more power and control over relationships, including condom usage. This puts students at high risk of being infected with HIV, since many are not able to bargain for condom usage. Mphela, a black male postgraduate student from the Pietermaritzburg Campus, with two sexual partners both nine years younger than him boasted that his economic "muscle" makes it easy for him to have any girl he wants. He also said that he has power to dictate the nature of relationships they will have (interview 2008). This suggests that due to gendered asymmetries in social and economic power, some female students are taken advantage of by men because some sexual economic activities and relations are lodged in females' needs and desires for material things. Inferring from students' experiences, the big age gap makes it likely that both partners have other partners making the sexual network complicated and risky (see also Mah and Halperin, 2008).

### ***Multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships***

Students have multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, where a student is engaged in sexual relationships with more than one person at the same time or over the same period of time. Multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships contrasts with the pattern of sexual partnerships in which one sexual relationship ends before another begins and individuals are in only one sexual relationship at any one time; commonly described as serial monogamy (Lengwe, 2010; Parker et al., 2007). Concurrent partnerships pose risk because they link students together in sexual networks; when a student with HIV is introduced into a network where students or other people engage in overlapping sexual partnerships, it makes the virus to spread rapidly between partners

(Mah and Halperin, 2008). Thus, having concurrent sexual partners is a behaviour that compromises good health, making it qualify into what the Problem Behaviour Theory calls “a high risk object of an act” or practice able to compromise life permanently (Jessor, 1991: 34). Thus, any sexual behaviour performed by students regardless of the circumstances has the potential to put life at risk of HIV infection if not well guided.

Interestingly, 60% of the respondents reported that with regular partners, they tend not to use condoms arguing that they trust each other. Respondents explained that this practice is exacerbated by the fact that students spend more than seven years in the university to finish both their undergraduate and postgraduate studies. They explained that they are on campuses for a long time and have sex with more than one partner over the years they are doing their studies. This makes it easy for students to pass the virus to other partners.

This study found that multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships are perceived as ordinary behaviour. However, when they were asked if multiple partnering put them at risk of HIV, 83% of the respondents said that they are aware of the risk that they connect them to high risk sexual networks, increase the size of the HIV epidemic, the speed at which it infects them and its persistence with on campuses. In spite of the knowledge about the risk of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships students still practice the behaviour. This is in agreement with Lengwe (2010) who found that insatiable appetite for sex makes students to have a chain of sexual partners overlooking the risk of HIV infection. Mulwo (2010) said that students’ sexual liaisons with multiple partners serve to increase the size and diversity of their sexual and social network and therefore increases their social capital and the risk of HIV infection.

### ***Unprotected sex***

Data from my in-depth interviews from the three campuses under study shows that 76% of the students have engaged in sex at the university without using condoms. I asked students to tell me if they have engaged in unprotected sex before and the reasons why. Respondents reported that students engage in many forms of unprotected sex including anal, oral and vaginal. These are forms of behaviour Jessor (1991: 23) refers to as “health compromising practices”. They can compromise good health temporally or permanently. Findings in my study show that

experiences from both male and female students show that trust for each other makes them find it easy to engage in unprotected sex especially if they are living on the same campus. They are more committed to using contraception and not condoms. This seems to suggest that female students are more concerned of falling pregnant while males are concerned of impregnating their partners than HIV (see also Lengwe, 2010). My study found that 70% of the respondents' reasoning seems to suggest that it is important to prevent a pregnancy because it can be seen by friends and parents making them feel embarrassed especially on campus. It also seems that students are more concerned about a pregnancy than HIV infection as this may make them to be chastised from their parents' homes. It is thus logical to argue that lack of proper discernment to grasp and realise the risk of engaging in sex without using a condom leads students to engage in life compromising sexual activities.

### ***Open sexual relationships***

Another form of behaviour young people "perform" (Jessor, 1991:53) that compromises their good health is open sexual relationships. In all three campuses under study, data shows that students engage in open sexual relationships. Sibulelo, a black male undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, said that open sexual relationships are "socially acceptable" phenomenon among sexually active students (interview 2009). Sexual partners mutually agree to pursue other relationships while they are still sexually engaged with each other. Respondents explained that open sexual relationships contrasts with cheating, where an individual relates with other sexual partners without his or her partner's knowledge. Trevor, a white male postgraduate student at Steve Biko Campus, explained the nature of open sexual relationships among students:

*One thing you need to understand here is that open sexual relationships are part of campus life, people consciously decide to pursue a relationship with each other, where they are physically and emotionally attached, but the clause is that they actively pursue other partners, whilst being in the main relationship. Sexual relationships between Jim, Jane and Jack are common; it is the way it is on campus (interview 2008).*

Trevor's response seems to suggest that sex outside the main relationship is allowed in open sexual relationships. Nelly, a coloured female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, said:

*I prefer open sexual relationships because some ways there is just a lot of security in it, you never have to worry about your partner cheating and if you meet Mr. Super and-too-hot-to-resist you do not have to resist it. I have heard of many students who have open sexual relationships, and they seem to be happy (interview 2009).*

One finding that can be deduced from this response is that students have open sexual relationships to make them confront insecurities like jealousy, body image, and others, in a way that monogamous relationships do not. I found that 83% of the respondents in open sexual relationships reported that it makes them become more independent. Others said it gives them time apart from a particular loved one to pursue their individual interests. However, 91% of the respondents said that open sexual relationships require a lot of forethought and preparation if one wants to do it right.

Philani, a black male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, said that he is currently in an open relationship with an unspecified number of sexual partners (declined to reveal the number). He was asked to explain how the notion of faithfulness applied to him as an individual and responded that it does not apply because it is not in his vocabulary as he has never trusted any of his sexual partners. This is because many of the partners he have had told him that they had other partners as well. In addition, Philani vowed that:

*I will never engage in long-term and monogamous relationship with anybody, and I do not have time for a serious relationship. I was monogamous in the past but we were not able to get any quality time together in there. I believe every relationship is an investment of time and energy, and I am someone who finds monogamous relationships more draining than rewarding (interview 2009).*

Philani's experience seems to suggest that experiences of the past count for the major reasons for

fear of commitment in relationships to prefer open sexual relationships. When a relationship does not work, many students seem to lose faith over the concepts of love, and monogamy. However, loss of individual or personal freedom also seems to be one of the prime reasons for engaging in open sexual relationships. It seems students, on campuses want to secure their personal interests and well being before thinking of others. This finding points to a culture on campuses where students are not willing to make a compromise and they want to live their life on their own terms. In addition, Philani's response shows that students with a playful sexual nature have a preference for open sexual relationships because they are afraid of committing to any sort of relationship. This can be figured out in his response that he is not interested in long and lasting relationships. What this seems to entail is that the day such students find other partners, they just stop interacting with their current partners and start with the new partners. One can therefore argue that through open sexual relationships, students want to ensure that there is no problem while ending the relationship and they can easily do what they wish. Open sexual relationships promote multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships making students susceptible to HIV infection.

Other respondents explained that open sexual relationships often occur among individuals who are engaged in sexual relationship for companionship, fun, or financial reasons, but less often among those who saw their relationship as being geared towards marriage. Sibulelo, a black male student from Pietermaritzburg Campus in an open relationship with three females, explained that in this kind of relationship, there is always one partner considered as the main girlfriend or boyfriend, who acts as a fallback in case other partners decide to leave him or her. The key factor in this relationship is that it includes three or more people in a primary relationship in which all are equal partners. Instead of a couple having priority and control in the relationship, all relationships are considered primary, or have the potential of becoming primary. Students' responses seem to indicate that each partner has equal power to negotiate for what they want in the relationship, in terms of time, commitment, living situation and sex. This behaviour is risky because it creates networks of sexual relationships where it is easy to transmit or acquire sexually transmitted infections.

## ***Cohabitation***

As the Problem Behaviour Theory explains, a behaviour “acted out” has either negative or positive results (Jessor, 1991: 32). Half of the respondents in this study said that cohabitation is common and it is socially acceptable behaviour in students’ residences. My study found that 79% of the respondents define cohabitation as a physical, emotional, and intellectually intimate relationship which includes living together in one room on campus. This relationship exists without the benefit of legal permission from parents and university students’ housing department. I found that 82% of the students interviewed said that they know partners who are cohabiting. Students reported that cohabitation may last for some months or years. Respondents reported that both married and unmarried students engage in cohabitation. Respondents said that cohabitation among students does not guarantee monogamous relationships. My study found that 70% expressed concern that those who are cohabiting get unwanted pregnancies. Pamela, a black female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus living with HIV explained the source of her concern:

*When I was an undergraduate in 2002 to 2006 I lived with my boyfriend, I was fooled into believing that the relationship will lead into marriage. But the reality proved me wrong. The results were very pathetic. After his university studies he did not only dismiss the relationship, but left me with an embarrassing and uncomfortable parting gift: I got an unwanted pregnancy and I am HIV positive and he is responsible because he is the only guy I used to sleep with from the time I became sexually active at varsity (interview 2008).*

This response highlights how cohabitation on campuses reflects that legacy of ambiguity, leaving female students especially vulnerable to HIV infection. According to Pamela’s experience, cohabitation makes it more difficult to read men’s intentions, exposing female students to risks in forming unions with less than ideal partners.

Sara, a coloured female undergraduate student from Howard College put the practice of open sexual relationships into context:

**Interviewer:** *Do we have students who are cohabiting on campus?*

**Interviewee:** *They are so many, so many, even among us here in this focus group. I did it before. Some are actually married and yet they live with other women or men. We decide to live with our partners without formally telling our parents.*

**Interviewer:** *Tell me, why do you cohabit?*

**Interviewee:** *Sometimes your partner happens to have money, so you go there strategically and pretend to loving him and he gives you everything you need for school, now what is wrong with that? Life is very difficult here on campus so even getting him to love you is to be lucky. Some cohabit because they are afraid of loneliness, some is simply because of lust, and others is because they would like to marry the guy (interview 2009).*

On a denotative level cohabitation seem to be represented as mere rebellious behaviour espoused by students. But this culture operates within a modern cultural sphere of liberated expressions of sexuality. Sets of rules and laws seem to be interpreted as arbitrary. Cohabitation signifies the tension that exists between living together and subsequent intentions for marriage (Lengwe, 2010).

As reported earlier by respondents, cohabitation on campuses does not guarantee monogamy. Thus, what makes cohabitation sexual risk behaviour in relation to the explanation of the Problem Behaviour Theory is that partners who are cohabiting have other partners on and off campuses. In addition, they do not use condoms, saying that they are “married” and trust each other making students susceptible to HIV infection. The study also found that cohabitation heightens students’ coital frequency putting faithful partners at high risk. In addition, even after living like married people the study found that very few couples, 14.7% of the respondents, said that students who are cohabiting translate their relationships into marriage as many relationships end with the finishing of studies.

### **Underlying factors to students’ sexual risk practices**

Risk factors are conditions that increase the probability that a person will engage in an activity that will make her or him suffer harm (Jessor, 1991:33). In this section, I present descriptive data on students’ sexual risk factors that increase their probability to engage in risky sexual practices identified in the above section. The Problem Behaviour Theory’s four domains; the

environmental/social, biological, behavioural and personality are used as the umbrella themes for the presentation and discussion on the factors that encourage students' sexual risk behaviour.

### ***Environment/social sexual risk factors***

The Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991) explains that social/environmental factors contribute to the onset and maintenance of risky behaviour. However, there are no environmental/social factors that have been shown to be either necessary or sufficient for risky behaviour to occur. Like other factors that influence risky behaviour, social/environmental factors exert their influence in the context of a complex and dynamic multi-factor system. According to the Problem Behaviour Theory, young people's social/environmental factors include their educational background, communities they are part of, sexual beliefs and practices, social status, peer pressure, home environmental stimulation, campus environments, social reactions to failure, critical life events and other factors (Jessor, 1991: 56). This section is a descriptive discussion on what encourages students' sexual risk behaviour using the environmental/social domain from the Problem Behaviour Theory as a theoretical lens.

### ***Experience of coming from rural backgrounds and single sex schools***

The Problem Behaviour Theory explains that home and learning climate are strong instigators of young people's risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991: 87). They play important roles in determining the outcome of young people's behaviour (ibid.). Interestingly, this study found that 76% of the respondents mentioned that coming from rural backgrounds and single-sex schools make students to engage in sexual risk behaviour because they tend to be naïve. Respondents said that in their naivety they yield to pressure of having unprotected sex with senior students and older partners. They also explained that those who are from rural areas and schools also lack exposure to "modern life" and therefore they are easily excited and influenced into sexual risk-taking behaviour. My study shows that 93% of the respondents argued that some students are immature and get carried away easily with campus life. Phumulo, a postgraduate a black female student from Steve Biko Campus from a rural area explained:

*Some of us in this university come from rural backgrounds. When we come to the university we change in order to fit into the so-called campus life. One stupid thing I have observed is that we do not want to look grungy for fear of being called names like ibhinca or rather villagers. So we quickly but unskillfully adapt to campus life without fully understanding what it entails just to find that we are engaging in risky sexual activities for financial reasons which most of us regret months after coming to understand campus life better (interview 2008).*

Phumulo's view suggests that in wanting to look "up-to-date" or rather "cool" students engage in risky sexual relationships in search for financial support to keep up appearances. Most of students tend to regret after they compromised their health permanently by for instance acquiring HIV.

In addition, 81% of the students reported that coming from single schools influence their sexual risk behaviour. Ayanda, a black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus said:

*I feel for students who come from single-sex schools because when they join universities, they are excited by female and male students. Straightaway they get partners and before they know it they are already doing it (having sex). They are at high risk of contracting HIV than some of us who have been studying in co-education schools throughout our lives and we cannot be deceived like doves and fooled (interview 2008).*

Deducing from respondents' reports, coming from rural areas and single-sex schools are strong underlying factors to students' sexual risk practices. My finding builds on Lengwe's (2010:78) study that found that many young people when they join university get exposed to "new life" and naively pursue sexual images and ideas largely created by the media and globalisation.

Students' responses also suggest that they engage in sexual risk behaviour because campus life introduces them into life where sexual moral behaviour is defined differently from what they know in rural areas. This finding suggests that when students join the university they are suddenly hit by a culture that extols sexual risk behaviour, and risky sexual practices become normal behaviour to them.

Ayanda's response seems to suggest that the effect of what students encounter when they come to the university from rural areas disorients their sexual behaviour. Thus students are exposed to cultural differences in their new campus environment such that their values are challenged because they meet people with very different views of sex from theirs. Deducing from students responses in my study and Lengwe's (2010) study, students seem to be shocked and distressed to find that their fellow young people do not share some of their mostly deeply appreciated sexual ideas for instance of abstinence and having one sexual partner.

Some respondents said that students from rural background engage in sexual risk behaviour because they come to the university taking their core values and beliefs for granted, and assume they are universally held. The culture shock that students experience disturbs their power of discernment and adopts the new campus culture without really understanding how parts of campus culture fit in a coherent whole. Thus, lack of understanding of campus life makes students fail to see how campus environment encourages sexual risk behaviour. I found that 85% of the respondents realise how risky the campus environment is after they have already compromised their sexual values. This finding confirms the Problem Behaviour Theory and the literature review's explanation that people's backgrounds and exposure to "new life" is a strong instigator for young people's sexual risk behaviour (Jessor, 1991: 34; Kotchick et al., 2001).

*Conceptualisation of masculinity: without sex, you are not a real man*

When investigating students' sexual risk behaviour, my study revealed that for many of the male students, having sex was equated with manhood. The pressure to prove manhood took precedence over the need to protect them from, or to prevent the spread of a sexually transmitted disease. Contrary to findings from earlier studies, Mulwo (2010) and Lengwe (2010), where females were considered by males to be the main carriers of HIV/AIDS, students in this study acknowledged the role played by males. For instance, Sibili, a black female postgraduate student from Howard College said:

*It is the guys you know, they are so used to sex they can't live without it. They want it (sex) flesh on flesh. They say condoms are a disturbance (students*

laughed). *Guys like playing with girls and sleep with them because it makes them feel as real men and that is how they spread this virus* (interview 2009).

Deducing from Sibisi's response, and Lengwe (2010) and Mulwo (2010)'s findings, it is reasonable to argue that the majority of the students on campuses are aware how masculinity or gender identity are interpreted as the degree to which male students can have sex with many females, and without using a condom. It seems masculinity on campuses is rooted in the social or rather student's gender rather than the biological or student's sex. In my interviews 76% of the male respondents said that having sex with many females or having unprotected sex is what being a real male means. From a sociological perspective, my study is suggesting that gender identity on campuses involves all the meanings that are applied to students on the basis of their gender identification. In turn, these self-meanings are a source of motivation for gender-related sexual risk behaviour on campuses. This suggests that students with masculine identity are expected to act more masculine, that is, engage in sex with many sexual partners. It seems it is not male students' engagement in sex with many partners, and without a condom that are important, but the meanings implied by these sexual behaviour.

Pamela, an Indian female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, said that: *guys tend to have many girlfriends on campus and even boast about it. They openly tell each other that I had live sex (sex without using a condom) with this and that girl*'' (the majority of male students laughed in agreement some saying those are real men or top dogs). It seems male students' gender attitudes make them speak proudly about having many sexual partners, and having sex without a condom demonstrating the meanings they attribute to themselves as masculine. Clearly, students' responses show that male students' interpretation of masculinity does indeed contribute to the spread of HIV on campuses. Their belief that they cannot live without sex, and the perception that condoms are obstacles to sexual enjoyment, presents much cause for concern. The expression "playing with the girls" positions male students as having the power to manipulate female students to satisfy their own sexual desires. Similar to findings by Mulwo (2010) and Lengwe (2010), the comments highlight the notion of unmanaged male sexuality that leads to having multiple sexual partners.

Students' responses further suggest that the identity of male students on campuses is defined through their sexual ability and accomplishment. This conclusion is confirmed by Mulwo

(2010:234) who found that within the collective peer identity of male students, part of striving for masculinity included boasting about sexual performance. Students' perception that male students who cannot handle several women are not real men may be reinforced, as pointed out by the omnibus survey (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). In the light of the above findings, it is worth noting that the survey by the Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme (HEAIDS, 2010) documented that among 15-24 year olds 32% of male students reported that they had multiple partners as compared to 12% of the female students. It is therefore founded to state that students' multiple partnerships create social networks defined by the sexual relationships among students and facilitate the transmission of HIV infection.

While female students' subordination to males increases their risk of HIV infection, researchers such as Peacock et al (2009) draw attention to the fact that men also experience harmful gender norms. For instance, perceptions of manhood require that men behave in ways that heighten their risk of HIV infection. A major concern, according to Peacock et al (2009:120) is that "studies repeatedly show that men who adhere to rigid notions of manhood, who equate masculinity with risk-taking, dominance and sexual conquest, and who view health seeking behaviour as a sign of weakness experienced a range of poor health outcomes."

Data from the omnibus survey shows that students tend to overlook the fact that unhealthy attitudes and behaviour on the part of male students affect both them and their female partners (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). This is reflected by the respondents in my study, Martin, a coloured male postgraduate student at Pietermaritzburg Campus, explained:

*There is a tendency of saying to each other that if you don't have sex with your girlfriend, then you are not a real man. And you will find that someone else will have sex with the very same girl and come to tell you that he has done it without a condom and then you will get angry and want to do it without a condom like your friend has said and you will also get HIV (interview 2009).*

This reaction represents the views of 76% of the male students my study sample of 96 students whose comments suggest that sex often occurred in an emotional vacuum and is not linked to intimacy, between the male and female students: *Most of us engage in casual sex as a pastime*

*and not essentially as a lifetime choice. The chances on campuses are good that it is easy to get in a relationship just to service our sexual desire without being intimate* (Sabelo, male undergraduate student at Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009). Another male student, Sifiso, an undergraduate student at Howard College said: *I feel defeated not only in failing to win more than two girls, but also in failing as a man* (interview 2009).

These two responses seem to suggest that competition amongst male students to demonstrate sexual prowess exceeded their fear of HIV infection, demonstrating that risky behaviour is indeed a hallmark of masculinity.

Further evidence of this trend was highlighted by the omnibus survey that found that the need to present as physically, sexually and emotionally tough took precedence over taking heed of the risks associated with unsafe sexual practices (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). Some mixed responses were also noted, for example, the following responses during a focus group discussion at Howard College that points to female and male students being responsible for the spread of the disease:

**Interviewee:** *You know students are the same - you can't say it's the male or the female because when it comes to us as guys, we want to prove a point to each other that we are real men, and there are girls who are like that, who just sleep with anyone they see and find it interesting. As we are doing this, risky behaviour is growing* (Moonsay, an Indian female undergraduate student at Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).

Cailin, a female undergraduate student at Steve Biko Campus, said: *The other thing is that there are girls whose beauty has gone up to their mind and have many boyfriends and also sleep around and spread HIV* (interview 2009). It stands to reason to argue that both male and female students decide what being male or female means through sexual activities they choose to perform some which leads them to sexual risk behaviour.

Although abstinence emerged as a possible way to prevent infection, the comments made suggested that this was not easy, especially for the male students. The following responses were noted from black male students at Howard College:

**Interviewer:** *What do you think of abstaining from sex as a way of protecting yourself from infection?*

**Interviewee:** *Abstinence, hey wena (you), it will be a hard thing for me do. Why have a girlfriend if you do not have sex with her?* (Sabelo, male undergraduate student, interview 2009).

**Interviewee:** *It will be hard for me to refrain from sex, because as a guy there will be things that really tempt you... and you will want that thing...* (Sifiso, male undergraduate student, interview 2009).

**Interviewee:** *It is hard because the girls will say that you know nothing about sex* (Thabo, a black male undergraduate student, interview 2009).

This interaction brings to the fore several aspects regarding male identity. First, the purpose of having a girlfriend is to have sex. Second, male students find it hard to resist sex and for them immediate sexual gratification is important. Third, sexual performance is a significant marker of masculine success and male peer group positioning. Such comments may be viewed against Parker et al's (2007) suggestion that viewing women as sexual objects and viewing sex from a performance-oriented perspective often begins in adolescence and may continue into adulthood. On the other hand, Leclerc-Madlala (2008) cautions that in groups, boys may perform masculinity by talking outrageously about girls as objects used primarily for sexual gratification and showing no element of commitment. However, as individuals, they may display a deeper sense of care and commitment to their relationships with girls.

In this regard, my study shows that sexuality is influenced by a complex set of actions, emotions and relationships nested with certain social and cultural realities. It emphasises that levels of sexual coercion and male students' domination in sexual relationships ensure that female students are not in a position to abstain. However, both Mulwo (2010) and Lengwe (2010) maintain that abstinence is meaningless as sexual desire is natural and abstinence should be a choice among many other options. Leclerc-Madlala (2008) acknowledged that turning around sexual and gender stereotypes that promote high risk behaviour are crucial, but difficult to achieve.

*Virginity is not „cool“*

My study found that 72% of students who had not engaged in sex prior to joining university had their sexual initiation during their first year of study at the university. This finding is also supported by Mulwo (2010) who found that the average age at sexual debut at 17, the average age of the majority of first year respondents in this study. My study shows that students are under enormous pressure from their peers to engage in sexual activities. Thabo, a black male undergraduate student at Steve Biko Campus, who has been engaging in sex with many partners since he joined university in 2005, explained that one reason they engage in sex especially as boys is that they tend to talk about their girlfriends and how they enjoy sex. These discussions make them engage in sex so that they have something to talk about with their friends (see also Mulwo, 2010). Thus, respondents' responses suggest that students perceive sex as "cool" hence those who abstain from sex are socially unpopular as they are considered as "backward". For this reason, some students indulge in sex in order to gain social acceptance by proving that they are also "cool". This is in agreement with the Problem Behaviour Theory's social/environmental domain that posits that beliefs, norms and culture instigate risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991: 89).

Findings in this study and Mulwo's (2010) findings suggest that sex is a practice through which students are initiated into a new culture, where they are able to openly talk about having sex with peers:

*It is not cool to be a virgin here in campus, to be honest with you. If you are a virgin, you are perceived like a creature from space and people tend to be distant, you know* (Sithole, black male postgraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).

It seems students value sex and often link being a virgin with being outdated. The problem lies both on campus environments and in students. In my interviews 67% of students said that while on campus they are pressured into fulfilling their sexual gender roles by friends and once they have gone against the campus "norms" in favour of sex they are ridiculed by their friends as archaic. Thandiwe, a black female undergraduate student at Pietermaritzburg Campus, said:

*Sex?.....yeah, it is great and I enjoy it because it makes me be who I am, a sexually alive person. So when you are ready for it...and while some guys are interested, go for it, it is your life, not someone's You are taking the lead to be yourself, and not following others who think it is a crime to have sex (interview, 2009).*

This suggests that some students engage in sex as a way of asserting themselves. Interestingly, female students who are not approached by males are considered to be unattractive. Close to 85% of the female students reported that they engage in sex, and 26% lost their virginity in order to prove to their peers that they are also attractive to males. This seems to suggest that female students are expected to be attractive. If male students do not approach them then they do not feel attractive, like others who get more attention. This perception encourages female students to make themselves sexually available to prove that they are also attractive and capable of charming male students: *It is difficult to be proud of your virginity here....it haunts you and makes you feel there is something wrong about it*” (Khumalo, female postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2008).

Khumalo’s response implicitly suggests that stigmatisation of virginity is detrimental to the HIV/AIDS interventions promoting abstinence on campuses. Stigmatisation of virginity makes students internalise the stigma of “being virgins”. It encourages students to lose their virginity as they are made to feel that their virginity is “worthless”. Stigmatisation of virginity further seems to reinforce students’ denial of their virginity and lack of courage to openly talk about it. My study found that 70% of the students reported that stigmatisation of virginity engenders a feeling of being archaic or *ibhinca* a “villager” in those perceived to be virgins. Some students suspected of being virgins or have disclosed that they are virgins are isolated by those who are engaging in sex, and consequently are subjected to prejudice or made fun of. For example, some females are given names such as “nuns” while males are called “chief priests”:

*Fellow students make fun of you on campus for being a virgin and call you all sorts of silly names such as monk or nun, guru or chief priest or rabbi just because you are a virgin and so you end up spending time in solitude and feel insecure of being a virgin (Thandiwe, a black female undergraduate student, interview 2009).*

Similar findings were also noted in a recent national study among students conducted by HEAIDS (2010). What is significant in my study is that there are students who consider sex as cool and abstinence as abnormal, and those who consider sex outside marriage as uncalled for and abstinence as necessary. The second category is composed mainly of students who consider themselves religious or traditionalist or both. Thus, students who perceive sex as cool both on campuses and outside find it easy to have sex as they see no wrong in engaging in sex. This makes them susceptible to HIV infection as they take less precaution.

### *Culture of “gold rush” on campuses*

The Problem Behaviour Theory explains that culture influences behaviour (Jessor, 1991: 11). In agreement, Shobo (2007:23) argues that young people’s “way of life” influence their thoughts, perceptions and actions. Interestingly, discussions in all three focus group discussions show that students engage in sexual risk behaviour because of a culture called “gold rush”. This is a practice whereby when first-year female students (freshers) join universities, senior students rush into a relationship with them:

*Immediately I joined varsity I had several advances from senior students promising me true love, this and that. But soon I realised that guys who were rushing to me had other girlfriends and wanted to take advantage of my inexperience of campus life to rip off my sexual innocence and purity (Sindisiwe, black female undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009).*

Respondents explained that senior students either dump their partners for the “gold” new students or date both concurrently:

*The old-fashioned beliefs on campus of one-guy, one-girl relationship are long gone and replaced by get-as many freshers as you can immediately they join varsity. The theory of and practice of free love with first years reigns supreme on campuses (Schaba, black female undergraduate student at Steve Biko, interview 2009).*

Students who are not able to get new sexual partners at the beginning of the academic year are branded as religious fanatics.

In my study, 60% of the respondents mentioned that students engage in gold rush because the sex composition of the student body has a constant effect on sexual relationships experiences. This finding is depicted in my observation. During one meal at Students' Choice Restaurant at Howard College, I listened to a male student complain about his girlfriend to a friend. He compared female students to cars and he said that:

*If she doesn't open her legs for you think about it this way bro, just get a new model. Trade her in for a new one, BMW, Mercedes Benz, Audi, Chrysler, Jaguar or Toyota Fortuner (I remember saying to myself, wow!). We have many female students on campuses than males for you to be able to make a better choice, why starve yourself? (Researcher's observation, 2009).*

This response confirms 78% of female students who said that they are less likely to expect much from men and reported that their relationships do not work because they are few men on campuses. Students' responses seem to suggest that the number of male students on campuses with a shortage of the number males is more likely to make male students to have more than one sexual partner than those in places with more balanced sex ratios. Thus male shortage is associated with having many sexual partners an indication that students are risk of HIV infection. The causal assessment among these associations seem to point out to one possibility that low sex ratios lead male students to have more sexual partners by increasing female partner availability.

Students' responses indicate that new female students are "rushed to" by senior male students and seem to have no problem with having boyfriends who have other sexual partners. This finding seems to suggest that new female students are influenced to engage in multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships because it is difficult to find partners who are single. Deducing from this point of view, male student shortage can be viewed as a factor that makes new female students to accept multiple and concurrent sexual relationships. This phenomenon increases the bargaining power of male students and reduces female students' in intimate relationships. This is because it reduces the available alternative relationships for new female students.

The “gold rush” also increases the available alternative relationships for male students. Competition among female students reduces the cost for male students to have sexual partnerships with females, while the cost for females to have sexual partnerships with males becomes minimal. Thus, students’ responses seem to suggest that the culture of “gold rush” is also instigated by the sexual ratio factor. This means that male students can only exclusively date one female student (typically) but they have sex with many of them making themselves susceptible to HIV infection. To a certain extent, this study suggests that unbalanced students’ ratios on campuses contribute to the risky sexual climate on campuses.

The finding on the “gold rush” also suggests that the sexual ratio on campuses is an appropriate and useful approach to understanding sexual risk behaviour on campuses. It validates the Problem Behaviour Theory’s argument that environmental/social factors influence young people’s risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991:34). Some studies that have explored students’ sexual relationships ignore campus conditions and how they shape sexual relationships (Eleazar, 2009; Satande, 2008). These studies treat students as actors whose decisions have no bearing on the decisions of other students, but this is not the case.

As the Problem Behaviour Theory posits, campuses are also environments and social systems, and students’ behaviour is conditioned by their characteristics. Furthermore, my study shows that university authorities play a critical role of “campus brokers.” University authorities structure the campus environments by their decisions regarding campus policies and who to admit such that there are sexual ratio imbalances. Essentially, the finding supports the Problem Behaviour Theory that pays attention to environmental/social factors that instigate risky behaviour among young people (Jessor, 1991).

#### *Negative peer pressure*

A theorist Jessor (1991) identified peer pressure as a strong environmental/social factor that influences young people’s risk behaviour. In agreement, Mulwo (2010) argues that the social context is critical when investigating students’ sexual risk behaviour. It explains the pervasive economic situation, lack of campus recreation, boredom, and resultant substance abuse. The

results of in-depth interviews with students showed that the majority of the students who belong to anti-social groups are more likely to have sex, to have more sexual partners, and to become pregnant. It is not clear whether belonging to groups that favour sex produces this elevated risk or simply the fact that, students in groups that tolerate sex have other risk factors as well. However, 82% of the respondents said that it is easy to engage in sexual risk behaviour if their best friends are sexually active and have more permissive attitudes towards sex.

Tabisile, a female black undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, explained how she lost her virginity two months after joining university:

*I lost it (virginity) a long time ago. When your best friends tell you that sex is thrilling and hot, and they encourage you to do it even once, you get tempted to have a personal experience of what they are telling you and that is how he broke me (lost my virginity). We should not pretend that there is no peer pressure to engage in sex on campuses, come on guys let us be realistic and stop being naive, many of us are engaging in sex because of peer influence (interview 2008).*

Respondents explained that to be pressured to engage in sex they do not necessarily need friends to ask or coerce them. Rather pressure to engage in sex comes when they start thinking that indulging in sex would make them “fit in” and make more friends. The data thus suggest that students who are naïve about campus life end up altering their protective sexual behaviour just to fit in. Thus, the findings seem to suggest that peer negative influence makes it very difficult for many students to keep the act up.

Some students argue that it is so easy for them to engage in sexual risk behaviour if they have friends who like them but do not respect their convictions. This makes them find it difficult to keep their “zip and pants up” because many of their friends are engaging in sex and they want everyone to follow suit. Nishal, an Indian male undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, puts it this way:

*It is hard to refrain from sex when you know that a lot of your close friends are having sex. As you chill around (socialise) they encourage you to indulge in sex; it*

*is difficult, really difficult, I lost because peer pressure, you can't be an island in campus unless otherwise (interview 2008).*

Some respondents said that they worry that other students may make fun of them if they do not go along with the so called "campus life". The bone of contention which is supported by Jessor (1991) is that young people with sexually active friends seem to be influenced by their friends' risky sexual attitudes. My found that 73% of the respondents reported that students are more likely to have sex if their best friends and peers are older, use alcohol or drugs, or engage in other risky behaviour. This is agreement with Mulwo's (2010) finding that students are more likely to have sex if their friends have more permissive values about sex. This is supported by the findings of the omnibus survey that students who have difficulties with fitting in campus life and have friends who favour sex are likely to engage in sexual risk behaviour (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). Therefore, it stands to reason to say that friendships students have on campuses would create sexual pressure especially that everyone wants to belong to a group (see also Mulwo, 2010; Lengwe, 2010). This seems to suggest that there are groups of students on campuses that influence others to make risky sexual decisions a confirmation of Jessor's Problem Behaviour Theory (1991:45) that singles out peer influence as a critical risk factor.

### *Sexual harassment on campuses*

The Problem Behaviour Theory posits that young people engage in risky behaviour due to coercion that can be verbal or physical (Jessor et al., 1998:11). In other words, Jessor argues that depending on the circumstance, "force" can make young people engage in risky behaviour because violence and the threat of violence dramatically increases the vulnerability especially of young females, to engage in risky activities (ibid.). In my study, 69% of the respondents noted sexual harassment as one underlying factor to their sexual risk behaviour.

In my interviews 71% of the respondents, with the majority as females, explained that they engage in sexual risk behaviour because they are sexually harassed by lecturers. Students said that fear of failing tests or examinations make them to engage in sexual risk behaviour with lecturers:

*I went to collect my assignment and he told me to come to his office. When I got there he started chatting with me and in no time his ugly hands were on my breasts. So I told him to stop it though with fear and difficulty. I had no clue on how to handle it because I was afraid that he would make me fail my tests and exams if I took the issue the university authority (Vulile, female undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2008).*

Respondents also reported that unwelcome requests for sexual favours in form of verbal conduct, and hostile learning environment through sexual overtones are common. Sandile, a black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, put her experience of sexual harassment in context:

*One day I was very disappointed, my lecturer found me at the department offices dropping my assignments into the box for marking and he came near me and lowered his voice and started talking about us getting together. At first, I was so numb how this old man would want to go out with me. Then he said, and you will not tell, would you. This went on for a number of months. Then one day, I was in the resource room and he came in and tried to grab me. I was shocked. I basically tried not to anger him and left as fast as I could. Eventually, I left the department altogether and I would not want to do my honours degree there (interview 2008).*

In my study 54% of the respondents claimed that it is difficult for many students to report to the administration for fear that they would create more problems for themselves. Respondents also explained that it is hard to report cases of sexual harassment because they are easily sensationalised. Besides, they argued that issues of sexual harassment take long battles before the law can visit the guilty party. In my interviews 60% of students said that lecturers have better support from their influential colleagues in the universities' administration structures such that the probability of students losing the case is big compared to that of lecturers. Fear of losing out in terms of education also makes students to push issues of sexual harassment under the carpet.

My study further suggests that sexual harassment is also common among students themselves:

*The first time I was harassed I was from Westville Campus for lectures in the shuttle and I happened to sit next to a guy I did not know well but of course knew that he was a student. He greeted me and asked me if I had a boyfriend and I told him that I had. Suddenly he started putting his hands between my legs. It made me very uncomfortable, but instead of saying something, I just moved my legs away and pushed his hands away but it did not seem to work very well. I told him to stop it or I was going to scream for help but he could not stop so that is how I left my seat and went and sat in the front seat near the driver (Nale, black female undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2008).*

Deducing from students' experiences presented, it stands to reason to say that sexual harassment somehow puts students at risk of being infected by HIV. This is because the age gap between students and lecturers is big and most of the lecturers have stable relations while others are married. Therefore, the chances that lecturers have been sexually active for a long time and have been exposed to HIV or are HIV positive are high. In addition, students also have same age boyfriends. This practice links students to high risk sexual networks lecturers may be connected to or the other way round.

In addition, my study found that sexual harassment on campuses increase the vulnerability of female students to HIV:

*When I was in my first year, I was coerced to have sex and I did not enjoy it whatsoever. I blame myself because I went to his office at an awkward time. He over powered me but I said to myself it is not worth reporting to anyone because the gifts he used to give me maybe made him to think that his sexual action was legitimate. Anyway, I did not consent but it happened, we had sex without a condom, and got pregnant and this somehow facilitated the process for us to quickly get married (Sheila, black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko, interview 2008).*

Thus, coercion makes it difficult or impossible for female students to abstain from sex, to get their partners to be faithful, or to use a condom leaving them vulnerable to HIV infection.

### *Fusion of sexually permissive cultures*

The environmental/social system is one important construct of the Problem Behaviour Theory. It explains that community environments exert strong influence on young people's risk behaviour (Jessor et al., 1998). Data from in-depth interviews from all campuses under study indicates that a fusion of sexually permissive cultures on campuses influences students' sexual risk behaviour. I also found 78% of the students said that campuses are disorganised communities where there are high rates of alcohol abuse, sexual violence, and hunger making it easy for them to engage in sexual risk behaviour, and fall pregnant.

Respondents explained that in all campus residences under study there were several pregnant students. This finding may reflect the permissive sexual values of local or foreign students or both. The multi-culturality of students' residences was mentioned as a strong underlying sexual risk influence. Students explained that when students from different cultures meet at the university their cultures impact on each other's sexual beliefs, norms, ideas and practices. The data seem to put forward an idea that when students join the university, they are fascinated by campus life. They meet people from everywhere across the globe. This somehow makes students to become exposed to so many cultures as a result they engage in sexual risk behaviour: *My experience is that exposure to different cultures makes us want to do crazy things such as abusing alcohol and drugs, and having sex without protection* (Musa, a black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). For instance, students report that they go to parties, and stay up late with friends drinking and engaging in risky sexual activities.

Respondents' experiences suggest that the fusion of many cultures makes them lose their sexual values by adopting sexually permissive cultures. Thus, the failure to retain their protective sexual values from their cultures upon joining university makes them susceptible to sexual risk behaviour. Respondents also explained that students with cultures that are sexually permissive upon joining university are made to encounter other sexually permissive cultures and this amplifies their orientation to sexual risk behaviour:

*I have been here for three years and I have seen students struggle with steadiness with good values, principles, beliefs, and even faith in God because of their general lack of discipline. On one hand many want to keep their good values and principles for instance to be committed Christians, but their lack of consistency due to the influence of many cultures at play on campuses hinder their desires. The fusion of many cultures makes students to live a life where they continuously seek immediate pleasure including sex. Social interaction with different people serves as a distraction from their moral and spiritual pursuits (Thierry, a white male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview, August 2008).*

This response suggests that students on campuses find themselves struggling between engaging in risk and protective behaviour. Students seem to lack strategies that can encourage them to effectively deal with the issues of social pursuit and sexual pleasure that makes them vulnerable to HIV infection. The fact that students move back and forth from pursuing risky and protective behaviour shows that they lack discipline to influence how they behave when faced with the influence of social pursuit and pleasure. Students' responses show that they lack inner controls that encourage the constructive use of personal power and autonomy on campuses. The guidance system that keeps students in check seem to be weak and not integrated into students' whole personalities to enable them to be responsible, respectful and resourceful on campuses.

Deducing from students' responses and my own observations, the fusion of many cultures facilitates the process of problematic sexual relationships. The critical problem this study found is that many students do not allow positive influences in their cultures to guide their adaptation when they join the university. Thus, they find it hard to maintain their protective sexual values to cope with all sexual challenges and opportunities that emanate due to the fusion of many cultures. In other words, there is an exchange of cultural features when groups of students having different cultures come into continuous first hand contact. In my interviews, 74% of the respondents said that the fusion of sexually permissive cultures creates campus environments where risky sexual practices are normalised putting many students at risk of HIV infection.

### *Social status on campuses*

The Problem Behaviour Theory identified social status as a strong underlying risk factor (Jessor, 1991:9). Jessor maintains that social status is a pervasive and important dimension in young people's life, yet it seems to be one of the least understood constructs in the life psychology of young people. Jessor (1991:56) further argues that often social status is treated as a singular variable, used to infer a person's thinking, rather than as one part of a person's lived experience. Thus, he claims that social status is linked to almost every part of a young person's life, affecting educational achievement, among other areas of life.

When students were asked what they thought were the underlying factors to their sexual risk behaviour, 67% of the respondents (64 out the 96) mentioned social status as a strong sexual risk factor. Social status on campuses is understood by students as the degree of honour attached to their positions among peers. Respondents reported that social stratification for male students is associated with the ability to have "cash", beautiful sexual partners, and a "key" or car, as one male student put it:

*For many students social status is dressing in those fancy clothes, going out with many girls, partying all the times, driving those fancy cars, and listening to rap and house music, really loud. It is weird status for spoiled students behaving like Bill Gates on campuses. And I don't do any of those things. Being well and showing off is one thing about many students campuses (Stephen, a white postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2008).*

Thus, for most male students, having more sexual partners, partying and driving latest cars is considered a sign of success. Thabo, a postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus said that male students' pride is in the number of sexual partners they have. They conceptualise for instance having many sexual relationships as competition or fun. Sex, to them, is seen as a game in which individuals compete on the basis of the number of women they have sex with. Nelson's response advances an idea that students rarely talk about abstinence:

*I am 21 years old and I am just wondering why it is such a big deal to some people that the physical act of sex must be reserved for legal marriage or other times. What*

*happens if I don't want to get married till I am 30 years? So I should be just a 30 year old virgin? People are getting married later in this generation. So as long as you love and care about the person what does it matter?* (White male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).

This further suggests that students think abstinence is outdated. They said that times have changed, and those older generations are the ones pushing for the promotion of abstinence. My study shows that 67% of the respondents said that abstinence is not realistic on campuses and sheer waste of time when many students are talking about how they enjoy sleeping with different partners: *Abstinence is a non start because having many sexual partners and sex is perceived as a competition where we have to outdo each other* (Musa, a black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). This perception makes students vulnerable to HIV infection.

On campuses, the purpose of sexual relationships mainly informs an individual's decision to engage in sexual risk behaviour. For instance, 60% of the respondents explained that multiple partnerships are highly approved of and seen as a competition for superiority. For male students, faithfulness is not considered a desirable option since they are not in relationships for marital purposes or love, but because of the desire to prove their ability to have any number of girls they want. Engaging in sex so often and with many partners, for students is a source of delight. This is indicative of traditions in South Africa for instance among the Xhosas and Zulus where multiple sexual partnerships among men are celebrated as a symbol of success (Leclerc-Madlala, 2005; Parker et al., 2007).

For most females, however, engagement in risky sexual relationship is not driven by competition, but by other factors, such as material needs and sexual experimentation. My study found that 82% of the respondents said that among female students social status is acquired through their access to the "latest" items like phones, clothes, and the ability to go for outings, and eat nice food. In my interviews 79% of the students said that the pursuit of high-class lifestyles among female students is influenced by a culture of consumerism:

*At university we are easily influenced by what others are doing around us. And if others are going out and are spending lots of money buying latest items and*

*alcohol, we want to do this whether we have the money or not, I think that is how risky sexual behaviour starts* (Peggy, white female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

Thus, in wanting to acquire financial support for their “luxuries”, students end up engaging in sexual risk behaviour. It was also reported that there are some girls who randomly go out to campus cafeterias and do not pay for a single drink or a meal because the men they meet at restaurants settle their bills and then go to their rooms and sleep with them as payment for settling the bills: *Some female students are poor and can't pay for their meals so they offer guys sex in exchange for a meal* (Sheila, black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko, interview 2009). Similar findings were noted in previous studies in universities (see HEAIDS, 2010, and Mulwo, 2010) and in the communities (see Hunters, 2004; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Parker et al., 2007).

Data from all three campuses shows that students with high social status are valued more than those with low social status. In general, materially dominant students are seen as of a higher social class. Students said that they do not want to be at the bottom of the campus social hierarchy. Respondents explained that occupying high social status due to having a posh car, cash, good clothes, and having good meals means that on the basis of those differences, they are seen as trendsetters, and “cool”.

#### *Living in different locations with partners*

Jessor (1991:22) argues that both community and relational conditions influence young people's risk behaviour. He explains that risk community and relational conditions comprise risk factors exogenous to the individual. It takes into account both the type and the level of community and relational conditions influence. This study found that students living in different locations with their sexual partners are prone to sexual risk behaviour. My study found that 57% of the respondents said that they engage in multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships for convenience. Milingo, a black undergraduate male student from Pietermaritzburg Campus for example, explained that he engages in multiple and concurrent sexual relationships and transactional sexual relationships to avoid boredom. Milingo also reported that he does not trust

long distance relationships hence he has other relationships in case some of his girlfriends left him:

*On campus at the moment I have one.....and my other girlfriends are, one is in Johannesburg, one is in Pretoria, and one is in Polokwane. You know, it is really easy to have many girlfriends, for instance, like I am here on campus maybe I meet someone from Cape Town and she becomes my girlfriend. Then I go back home in Polokwane and she also goes back home, so the only contact I have is via cell phones, then I become lonely and then I get another girlfriend at home and then go back to campus and pick it up where we left with the campus one and life goes on (interview 2009).*

This response indicates that students think long distance relationships cannot enhance maturity, bonding and growth. Their perception makes it difficult to be honest to partners, and show respect and trust for each other. Since there is no day-to-day interaction with each other, this makes them insecure about their relationships. This makes it easy to have other sexual partners putting themselves at risk of HIV infection.

Kanyiso, a postgraduate black male student at Steve Biko Campus, also has many girlfriends and two of them are older partners located in Durban:

**Interviewer:** *So, you said that you have many partners in your life. What do you mean by many?*

**Interviewee:** *I consider myself a multiplayer because I have three girlfriends. Recently, I broke up with the fourth older partner because she discovered that I had a younger partner. But I know she will come back soon because I hear she is already lonely.*

**Interviewer:** *Where are your girlfriends?*

**Interviewer:** *Ha ha ha ha, aibo, you want me to tell you their residences (laughs)?*

**Interviewer:** *Yes, if you do not mind?*

**Interviewee:** *Eish, one is here with me at Steve Biko Campus and the other one in Joburg, my new catch, and the other one lives in Pine Town (interview 2009).*

Kanyiso's response suggests that students engage in sex because long distance relationships are

difficult to make them work. Failure to maintain long distance relationships make students to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

Students' reports suggest that many fail to be faithful to their partners because they do not trust their partners: *Long distance relationships suck, they make me always worry if she is being faithful and this drives me crazy* (Siyabonga, black male undergraduate student from Howard College Campus, interview 2009). Interestingly, some students said that they engage in sexual risk behaviour because their partners cannot know what they are doing: *My girlfriend is in Johannesburg. Since we cannot be together I have another chick here, what she won't know won't hurt her you know* (Sylvester, white male undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

This response implies that students think that they can play away from their partners and get away with it. Critically, it seems students fail to tell their partners that their relationships come to an end even when they know that they have lost faith in their relationships due to long distances and insecurities. Thus, they continue to be in long distance relationship while they have other partners where they are located putting them at risk of HIV infection.

#### *Freedom from parental control*

In my study 77% of the respondents said that they perceive freedom from parental control as one strong factor to students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses. This confirms Jessor's (1991:12) finding that both "perceived and experienced freedom" from parental or guardian control influence young people to engage in risky behaviour. My study suggest that students, who felt that they did not enjoy the freedom to engage in sex due to parental control prior to joining university, indulged in sexual activities during their first year.

In my study, Jenny, a third year White female student from Howard College argued that engaging in sex for such students symbolically represented freedom from parental control. This is related to the finding by Mulwo (2010) who found that when young people come to university they are not involved in any way sexually but barely a month of being on campus a lot of things change such that they feel freedom to do things they were not able to do at home.

This finding seems to point out that it is not that students are merely irresponsible. Instead, campus lifestyles and educational change give students a hard time to adapt to university lifestyles. What many studies seem not to point out is that new students do not understand that university life is very different from high school life where they come from. At the university students have to learn to manage their time on their own. When they join university, they find that there are many new developments in their lives that make concentrating on academic work difficult such as being away from family, being on their own and independent, having boyfriends and girlfriends, and having parties. Thus, campus life seems to make students find self-discipline difficult such that they engage in sexual risk behaviour.

Findings from my interviews show that 83% of the respondents said that they engage in sexual risk behaviour because of huge blocks of unstructured time. They said that they attend lectures twelve to sixteen hours per week the rest of the time is their own to go to parties, or explore the new environment outside their campus fences, and make new sexual relationships. *The sudden experience of freedom from parental control after long years of being under lock and key hits us out of the way and what do you expect?* (Nkune, black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). This response seems to suggest that away from home and their parents' watchful eyes students tend to experiment with things, sleeping with their boyfriends and girlfriends, and drinking alcohol things parents would not approve.

### *Gender and cultural scripts*

The Problem Behaviour Theory explains that the interaction between biology and culture and their influence on behaviour is complex. Jessor (1991) argues that the communication between gender and cultural predispositions initiates culturally informed developmental pathways. Thus, gender, biological heritage and the cultural present are components of the same developmental processes for young people. His view postulates „transactional relations“ between gender, biology and environment, rejecting any simplistic determinism (ibid.). Jessor (1991) further posits that behavioural development is geared at encompassing developmental tasks, which have specific functions during the life histories of individuals. Thus, development is understood as a

teleonomic process instead of pursuing overarching teleological goals. It is argued, that the early social experiences of young people with their caregivers set the stage for developmental trajectories that lead to ontogenetic adaptation

Guided by Jessor's theory, my study found that the commonly shared expectations and norms about appropriate male and female behaviour within the communities students come from, determine their sexual risk behaviour. I found that 59% of respondents said that from childhood they are conditioned to follow different codes of conduct in gender relations. For instance, adolescent males are taught to display aggressiveness, masculinity and sexual prowess, in order to establish their status among peers. Adolescent females are moulded to have a passive and submissive disposition in their social relations with males and elders:

*As females we are told that a real woman should be meek, docile, compliant and obedient. Our respect and dignity seems to be defined by the way we adhere to the cultural gender roles and we are told that a well cultured woman does not talk anyhow about matters of sex (Siyaya, undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

Also common is the belief that *only bad or uncultured females talk* (Sheila, black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko, interview 2009). Female students explained that culture makes them feel that they are not supposed to go against their partners' wishes. This influences female students to think that yielding to sexual demands is the only way to gain affection, love and commitment: *Sometimes I feel that I am not worth loving therefore, I need to avail myself sexually for me to be loved* (Sibeso, black female undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009). My findings suggest that students' cultural orientation makes female students powerless to an extent where they are not able to tell or advise their partners on matters of sex even when they are engaging in sexual activities that would put them at risk of HIV infection. As "scripted" by gender, and armoured by culture 65% of the female students said that they find it difficult in their relationships to address the issue of faithfulness, condom usage, the risk of HIV, and others to their partners especially those in age-disparate relationships.

The argument advanced by this study is that, sexual desires, silence on issues of sex, and unequal power relations between male and females provide fertile grounds for sexual risk behaviour

among students. This study also found that females are not expected to show any interest in sexual matters, lest they are considered promiscuous. Besides, the fact that cultural norms for instance among the Zulus, Xhosas, and Swazis allows men to marry many women promotes sexual risk behaviour as male students tend to carry on this practice, putting themselves and others at risk of HIV infection (see also Leclerc-Madlala, 2004).

### *Sex as barter for basic needs*

Reports from students show that they engage in risky sexual activities as a way of earning a living, such as Ayanda, a black female postgraduate student at Howard College, who reported engaging in transactional sexual relationships:

*To be frank, one of the outstanding motives is purely economic and I am a kind of person who comes from a family that cannot afford to support my studies, but the thing is, I always strive for independence, you know, and try very hard to meet my needs. But at times no matter how much I try, things do not work out well so I am obligated to engage in this behaviour (interview 2008).*

Interestingly, this study found that 93% of the respondents think that females engage in risky sexual relationships for material gain than males. Therefore, the explanation by Jessor (1991) that the socioeconomic status (SES) influences risk behaviour is valid. He said that SES may negatively influence adolescents' health by limiting their social and educational opportunities and even to access to health care. Thus, SES is a powerful predictor of sexual risk behaviour because students reported that economic inequalities or basic needs contribute to female students' decisions to engage in risky sexual relationships.

My study found that 77% of the respondents said that risky sexual practices such as transactional sexual relationships are perceived as readily available ways through which students meet their material needs, affirm self-worth, achieve social goals, increase longer-term life chances and add value and enjoyment to life (see also Leclerc-Madlala, 2001). Reading from the data presented above, students' perceptions of sex plays an important role in the formation of sexual risk patterns making universities hyper-epidemic environments for risky sexual activities.

### ***Biological sexual risk factors***

The Problem Behaviour Theory explains that young people's risk behaviour is influenced by their biology captured in their individual genetics or heredity (Jessor, 1991:23). The biological system in the Problem Behaviour Theory identified age, physical maturity, gender, physical appearance, puberty, and others as strong reasons that influence young people engage to in risky behaviour. In this section, I present descriptive data on the biological reasons students on campuses engage in sexual risk behaviour using the Problem Behaviour Theory's biological system as my theoretical lens.

### ***Joining universities as adolescents***

The Problem Behaviour Theory identifies age as a strong underlying factor to young people's risky behaviour. Jessor (1991) argues that the interaction between age and sex establishes behavioural and developmental norms and expectations regarding normal behaviour. Similarly, the omnibus survey suggests that one cannot talk about sexual risk behaviour on campuses without addressing the influence of age (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). In study 67% of the respondents said that joining universities as adolescents is one reason that makes students engage in sexual risk behaviour. Students said that being adolescent they lack the bargaining power for protected sex due to lack of communication skills and experience on how to deal with senior students and older partners. I also found that 87% of the respondents explained that students use condoms at the beginning of their relationships and stop after two to three months. Evidence shows that girls do not insist on condom use for fear of losing their so called university boyfriends:

*One thing I have seen is that both male and female students especially those who are still adolescent experience incredible pressure to get partners once they have joined the universities. Some are not psychologically ready but get into sexual relationship because of being immature. They also cannot withstand older partners' opposition to condom use therefore end up engaging in unprotected sex*

(Anina, postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview, August 2008).

Evidence also suggests that when adolescents come to the university most of them are biologically ready for procreation with all associated instinctive drives. However, society does not condone activation of their sexual drives until wedlock: *At home I may feel the drive to have sex but society still sees me as a kid and this makes me live in the den of unsatisfied sexual feelings* (Ayanda, a black female postgraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). This response shows that when students come to the university, some are not sexually active though they have reached biological maturity. Thus, entering the university gives them freedom to engage in sex they are not allowed at home because they have not reached societal adulthood.

Most of the postgraduate respondents said that students engage in sexual risk behaviour because they feel that although they are adolescents they have a concrete thought process as opposed to abstract thinking. Thus, they tend to focus on the here and now and cannot appreciate the future consequences of their sexual behaviour. Data collected from all three campuses seems to suggest that the time students enter the university is the same period in their life they are in search for identity and independence which by nature involves denial of risks: *It is time most of us get exposed and we what to explore life, you know* (Sifiso, a black male undergraduate student at Howard College, interview). Lengwe (2010: 157) found that this is the time students experiment with drugs and sex (see also Mulwo, 2010: 234).

Data from this study also shows that being adolescents many students are not serious with their relationships, and that they do not go beyond the university “gates” as girlfriends and boyfriends. Respondents explained that lack of experience of campus life makes it easy for them to believe what is told to them by their partners, who have other partners within and outside university. In my interviews 76% of the respondents said that upon joining universities they find that they have more space than they had before. The increased freedom accompanied by peer pressure from senior students and older partners make young students prone to sexual risk behaviour. Thus, students end up in immature and risky sexual relationships not based on true love but simple naivety because they are too young to understand university life.

### *Physical beauty*

Respondents identified physical beauty as a strong underlying factor to young people's sexual risky behaviour. This is also identified in the biological domain of the Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991: 47), which explains that although most people recognise the fallacy of placing too great a value on appearance, our desire for physical beauty is so ingrained that some people cannot disassociate themselves from it. People's desire for physical beauty is an original human feeling like the desire for food (Jessor, 1991:48). Physical beauty is programmed into people's brains as a means of staying alive and furthering our life (ibid.). A natural precursor to the desire for sex and procreation, which exists in every society, is indicators of attraction (Jessor, 1991:48).

My study shows that 80% of the respondents said that male students have a tendency of wanting to relate with beautiful girls they meet, a tendency referred to as *uyithatha* in isiZulu. Students' responses show that many males end up engaging in sexual risk behaviour because they think that physically beautiful girls make them enjoy sex. This encourages students to have many sexual partners:

*There is a huge difference in the sexual pleasure I feel with different nice looking girls. With some I experience little pleasure, and with others it is so pleasurable such that it blows off my mind (students laughed). I used to think that "tightness" is the only aspect that makes sex pleasurable, but there is more to it than "tightness" (students laughed). I enjoy sex when a girl is both physically attractive and makes me get the sexual thrill I need. I wonder why sex feels so different even amongst girls who are all beautiful. When I think about girls who give me good sex, the thrill I get from each girl is different. I know there must be some factors that make one better than the other, but what really amazes me is how beautiful girls feel equally fantastic but yet very different? (Siphumelele, postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

Siphumelele's response seem to suggest that that male students who have many sexual partners are inclined to have more other partners because they increasingly become discontent with their sexual partners as they meet other beautiful girls. Findings on the concept of beauty (see page

156) show that campus culture has a role to play in defining how a beautiful female or handsome male student looks like. When students were asked about the underlying factors to their sexual risk behaviour, 78% reported physical attraction. Further students were probed on the forms of attractions that lead them engage in sex. In my interviews, 61% of the respondents mentioned visual attraction such as type of hair, dental formula, shape of the back, skin colour, height, size of the breasts, and others. However, 82% of the students argued that the issue of beauty and handsomeness are complex issues on campuses. For instance, Tau said that:

*The pursuit of beautiful girls on campuses is like chasing after the wind because beauty is understood differently by different cultures, and it makes students move from one partner to another without finding what they are searching for except HIV*  
(Black undergraduate male student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).

Tau's account suggests that the pursuit of beautiful females or handsome males is somehow encouraging serial monogamy as it makes students move from one partner to another making them susceptible to HIV infection. In addition, Eleazar (2009) argues that pursuit of beautiful female students is an unattainable practice because beauty is an "inside job" meaning that it is how one is and feels inside what matters not the outside. This interpretation of beauty reinforces my finding that the search for beautiful and handsome partners is a complicated and dynamic concept without standard understanding making it difficult to pursue. What this study suggests is that physical beauty maintains a marginal significance in students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

#### *"Plastics" reduce sexual pleasure*

Data from my in-depth and focus group interviews supports Mulwo's (2010) finding that condom use for most students is erratic and that some students do not use condoms at all. Kanyile a black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus said that students engage in sex often, but rarely use condoms. This is because they are not used to "having rubbers around" them while engaging in sex. More male respondents than females said that having sex using a condom reduces sexual pleasure. This is supported by Kanyile's experience who said that

she does like condoms and I rarely use them. She argued that people who use condoms always “do not know how cool sex is and what they are missing” (interview 2009).

Kanyile also reported that he has two sexual partners and condom use is unnatural. I found that 67% of male students reported the use of condoms as a hindrance to intimacy that is experienced through “skin to skin” condomless sex. For Motsamai, having sex without a condom was like sharing your body with one’s sexual partner. To him, condomless sex draws one closer to their sexual partner because their biological connection is uninterrupted. This is in agreement with Mulwo (2010) who found that students do not use condoms because there is intimacy in having sex in a natural way.

For some students, like Siphso, a black male undergraduate student at Steve Biko Campus, he engages in unprotected sex because condoms reduce sexual pleasure:

*Tell me if it is a good experience to eat your favourite chocolate lunch bar wrapped in a paper, let us be serious guys, most of us we find condoms very irritating and distort the biological rhythm of sex so we decide to roll the dice and take our chances (interview 2009).*

In other words, students do not like sex using condoms because they believe that they cause unnecessary distraction during sexual intercourse, hence some students prefer sex without a condom what is also known as “live sex” or “direct injection”. I found that 63% of the respondents feel that condoms distract from their sexual rhythm. This seems to suggest that students would prefer to engage in sexual risk behaviour where the rhythm is uninterrupted than engage in safer sex using a condom and not enjoy sex. Thus, sexual joy seems to override good health.

Interestingly, the thought that a sexual partner may change his or her mind during the process of looking for a condom also influences the decision to engage in condomless sex: *If you happen to delay as you search for a condom, she may change her mind and miss the opportunity to have sex* (Silume, a black male postgraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). Similar views were noted in Eleazar’s (2009) study where young men noted that sex should be

biological, natural, uncontrollable and free of reflective considerations that come from using condoms (ibid.).

The message underlying the male students' comments is that sexual pleasure takes priority over risk of HIV infection. Such responses are attributed to the belief in myths regarding condoms reducing sensitivity and pleasure. The issue is aggravated by the fact that negotiation of condom use is complex, limited by gendered power relations and may be seen as a barrier to male sexual dominance (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008).

### *Physical health*

The biological system in the Problem Behaviour Theory explains that physical development and appearance influence young people's risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991: 23). In my interviews, 57% of the respondents in this study, both male and female explained that the decision to engage or not engage for instance in unprotected sex largely depends on their perception of the health status of their sexual partners. A student like Khumalo, who has sexual relationships with married men, at times judges the health of her sexual partners, based on their physical appearance or children of her boyfriend (see also Mulwo, 2010):

*You know, when you look at the guy, he is loaded (rich), we are made to hold on to them. The other thing is that when you look at the guy, his wife and children are healthy, so get convinced that he is safe to go out with. It is just that evident of the fact that the man is healthy so, you have no fear especially if you like or love the man (Black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

This response seems to suggest that students find it easy to have sex if their partners have healthy physical appearances. In Khumalo's account, it appears that students do not consider partners who look healthy to be at risk of HIV. My study found that 77% of the respondents said that they only use condoms when the health status of the sexual partner is in serious doubt, for instance when one has sores or looks "abnormally" thin.

In relation to condom use, some respondents said that they engage in sexual risk behaviour because even though they wanted to use condoms consistently in their sexual relationships, they were not always available in dispenser boxes. In some instances, individuals are sexually aroused but they realise that they could not get condoms in dispenser boxes, and thus end up having condomless sex. One participant explained her experience:

*Some time back we had condom boxes in our blocks and flats and it was so easy to quickly chip in for one or two but nowadays they are not readily available. They are only empty boxes and when you find like one then you are really lucky and then you ask yourself why there are no condoms because there supposed to be condoms? (Siyaya, undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2008).*

My observation of students' discussions, and condom supply at DUT residences supported this participant's claim. I noticed that though condoms were often available at DUT, supply was inconsistent, such that condoms would be on hand in some residences regularly, while not there in others. However, condoms were found to be common in ablution blocks at UKZN campuses. Even when condoms are available, 71% of respondents said that students prefer to have unprotected sex if their partners look physically healthy and beautiful.

#### *Sexual "fit" as a sexual risk factor*

Inferring from the biological domain of the Problem Behaviour Theory, sexual fit can be classified as a biological instigator of young people's risky behaviour. Jessor (1991) states that biological factors involved arousal and response are fundamental to human experience and need to be taken into account when trying to understand and explain the complexities and problems as well as the positive aspects of the human condition.

In my interviews 58% of the respondents said that sexual "fit" is important in sexual relationships. It emerged that male students prefer females with "tight" vaginas. If their partners' vaginas were not tight enough to fit theirs, they look for other partners whose sizes are more compatible with their own: *It's because you find that hers does not "grip" you the way you want*

*so you go and look for the one who has a “G cramp” (tight vagina) (Sadebe, a black male undergraduate student at Howard College, interview).* It was also explained by both male and female students that female students want males with big enough penises to sexually satisfy them. my study shows that 75% of the respondents said that they would leave their partners if they were not able to satisfy them sexually due to incompatible private parts: *I want someone who would make me feel complete; it can be very hard for me to live with a guy who is sexually not of my fit* (Ayanda, a black female postgraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). Therefore, among students both male and female the size of private parts matters in their relationships when it comes to attaining physical and psychological sexual satisfaction or rather what they call “good sex”.

This is a risky and tricky behaviour in the sense that female students think that big penises cause sexual satisfaction therefore they search for men with big penises. When they find them, logically it means that they will no longer have tight vaginas. On the other hand, male students seek females with tight vaginas who are not easy to find because the same males with big penises have made females to lose the tightness of their vaginas. These perceptions among students create an unachievable and highly risky search for partners because it is not easy for students to find what they are looking for.

### *Early penetrative sex*

The influence of engaging in early penetrative sex was reported to lead students into sexual risk behaviour. Respondents reported that those who have been sexually active for a long time find it difficult to accommodate calls for abstinence. Students argued that it is difficult to refrain from sex once one has indulged in it than when one is a virgin because a virgin does not know how thrilling sex is and what she or he is missing.

Respondents’ responses from in-depth interviews illustrate that 65% of the female students said that they find it easy to refrain from sex and would stay as first or second virgins for a longer time than male students. In addition, students who initiated penetrative sex earlier for instance before joining the university reported less propensity to use condoms. Sbu, black male undergraduate student from Howard College said:

*I have been sexually active for more than eleven years and there are more times I have engaged in unprotected sex than protected sex. It is difficult to be consistent with condom use because situations that lead to sex are different and above all the practice tends to be unnatural and monotonous to me. Some situations are so sudden and do not allow me to think of protection (interview 2009).*

Deducing from the data presented, early penetrative sex seems to make it difficult for students to be abstinent. This is partially attributed to the fact that the more students engage in sex for pleasure the more cumbersome condom usage becomes to them (Dube and Ocholla, 2005). This finding is in agreement with the Problem Behaviour Theory that explains that young people who engage in early penetrative sex are more susceptible to sexual risk behaviour. Early penetrative sex makes young people continuously tempted to engage in sex than those who have no experience of penetrative sex (Jessor et al., 1998). Pettifor (2004) argues that early coital debut (especially non-use of condoms) exposes young people to HIV and may set the precedent for future behaviour that elevates HIV risk (see also Jessor et al., 1991). Interestingly, findings from the omnibus survey associated early coital debut with increased risks of other STIs and pregnancy among students. Data from the omnibus survey indicates that early sexual debut among students is part of the transition to adulthood and it is influenced by the environment, context and cultures students grow up in (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007).

*Lack of good sex: "I do not get aroused"*

The Problem Behaviour Theory categorises sexual arousal under biological factors (Jessor, 1991). Kotchick et al (2001) found that sexual arousal is a strong individual factor that encourages young people to engage in sexual risk behaviour. My study argues that lack of "good sex" is an underlying factor to students' sexual risk behaviour. Respondents explained that male students generally do not romance their partners before sex, but rather physically rush into sex and stop when they are satisfied. Female students said that they are usually not very passionate about sex like their boyfriends but they have sex when their boyfriends ask for it. However, they

become frustrated when their boyfriends fail to adequately attend to their emotional and physical needs.

Respondents' responses show that when female students do not consistently reach orgasm (a critical issue among female students) with their partners, they are easily tempted to seek other men to achieve it.

*The thing is that most of our boyfriends do not play with us (meaning having foreplay) so that we are also get there you know (one student interjected saying where?) I mean we do not get aroused so that we can begin the mulabala (game) together. Most guys do not know where to touch us but just climb on top and jump up and down like horses, finish and they leave (students laughed). So we are left on the way and guys do not know what it means to be left on the way all the times. We all need physical and emotional sexual satisfaction (Liphilwe, black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview, August 2008).*

Data shows that 25% of the female respondents and 74% of the male respondents said that lack of conjugal satisfaction, especially physical and emotional makes them to look for other partners. I found that 91% of the female students associated good sex with physiological and psychological satisfaction. Able to have sex slowly, taking time to create a sex feedback loop; where they touch each other gently and feel their partner's body, and achieving vagina lubrication triggered by physiological and psychological changes were cited as determinants of good sex. My study indicates that 94% of the respondents mentioned sustained excitement as good sex, and 90% especially male students cited orgasm as a determinant of good sex. The findings in this study show that students have different interpretations of what good sex is. However, one common denominator among students is that "good sex" should involve both physiological and psychological experiences.

### ***Behavioural sexual risk factors***

The third domain in Jessor's Problem Behaviour Theory is the behavioural system. Jessor et al (1998) argues that behavioural factors play an important role in influencing young people's risky

behaviour. They state that the manner in which young people react to life situations can affect how they behave when with other people. According to Jessor (1991) behavioural factors are important in understanding young people's risky behaviour. This section presents descriptive data on the behavioural factors that encourage students on campuses to engage in sexual risk behaviour. The behavioural system in the Problem Behaviour Theory will be used as my theoretical lens.

### *Drug abuse among students*

Jessor (1991) identifies drug abuse as a strong risk behavioural factor to young people's behaviour. He argues that behavioural variables such as drugs are important factors that lead to risky behaviour. They lead to severe consequences or adverse outcomes of abuse (Jessor, 1991). Interestingly, respondents explained that abuse of drugs is common on campuses. Students explained that it is illegal to be in possession of drugs on campuses. However, students still find ways of bringing in drugs. Most of the drugs that are popular on campuses are severely addictive. Some students explained that they always have some kind of drugs on campuses:

*You just have to know your game otherwise all types of drugs are accessible here. It is truly no big deal, some use drugs once in a while for a wild time and others it has become a way of life, an escape from personal pain, you know. For me, I think the problem is that as students we tend to have an exceedingly ambitious standard of what it means to have a good time. Sometimes we set the bar too high and end up indulging in drugs and in risky sexual behaviour (Lungela, black male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus 2009).*

Drugs abused range from dagga (cannabis), crack cocaine, cocaine (powder) and heroin. Respondents said that many students who are substance users are poly-substance users meaning that they use other drugs in combination. The majority of drug abusers are males and abuse drugs as a means to escape from dilemmas like academic pressure, financial stress or boredom. My study is also in agreement with Lengwe (2010) and Mulwo (2010) who also established the frequency of drug use on campuses.

Having calculated students' response manually from the first stage of processing and analysing data (See Table 2, page 103), study also revealed that 89% of the respondents admitted that "to feel good" is a strong reason why they use drugs, 78% of the students stated "availability" as the reason why students take drugs, and 70% of the students see "parental influence" as a reason for drug abuse, while 49% of the students see "sibling influence" as a factor that predispose them to abuse drugs. Also, 94% of the students stated that to "relieve stress" is a reason why they abuse drug, and 68% of the students see "campus friends" influence" as another possible reason. Data from the omnibus survey shows that 49% of the respondents see "to sleep" as another factor and 74% of the students see "to keep awake" as a factor, and 18% of the students see to "enhance sex" as another factor responsible for drug abuse and 25% of the students did not advance any reason why they abuse drugs (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007).

My findings and the findings of the omnibus survey and are in line with psychological mechanisms underlying drug abuse (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). They are in agreement with the learning perspective. People often use drugs because in doing so, they feel good. They see the effects of drug use as rewarding (Parry, 2002). Similarly people also use drugs to remove discomfort from their lives (ibid.). These findings are also in agreement with the Problem Behaviour Theory especially the behavioural and social domains, that contend that parental influence, sibling influence, school influence, and peer influence take high prominence in students overall motive to abuse drugs. In line with this view, students, use consciousness-altering drugs because they are generally in fashion (Mulwo, 2010: 237).

#### *Having paid work*

Data collected from all campuses under study indicates that students with paying jobs either on or off campus are more likely to have sex, to have sex more often and to have more sexual partners. This justifies the Problem Behaviour Theory's explanation that economic and sociological combined total measure of people's work experience and of people's or families' economic and social positions relative to others are strong instigators of behaviour either positive or negative (Jessor, 1991).

Findings in this study suggest that students with paid work have easy access to alcohol. My data shows that 65% of the respondents said that paid work may increase students' sense of independence, their mobility, and their opportunities to have sex. The majority of the male students said that having paid work means: *easy access to sex and having better sex* (Sifiso, a black male undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). In the omnibus survey, three quarters of the male students cited more frequent sex and greater variety of partners as the primary benefits of having paid work, revealing a fascination with quantity (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). By contrast the majority of female students placed significantly less value on the volume of sexual interactions and partners they have than the overall excellence of the "experience". Thus, some female students cited high quality sex as the greatest benefit of having paid work.

#### *Alcohol and condom use*

Studies support the Problem Behaviour Theory's identification of alcohol as a strong underlying factor to young people's risky behaviour (Parker et al., 2007; Lengwe, 2010; Mulwo, 2010). Jessor's (1991) risky behaviour theory states that alcohol and drug consumption can affect judgment and may contribute towards an increased likelihood of engaging in risky behaviour. In this current study alcohol was mentioned in the data from all three campuses under study. In all campuses, students agreed that going to parties and consuming alcohol were strong factors influencing unsafe sexual practices. Interestingly, 75% of the respondents said that in a drunken state they find it difficult to use condoms. Students' responses also show that those who engage in alcohol abuse have social, economic, relational, health and academic problems as well. Thus, students turn to alcohol in trying to momentarily forget their problems.

Ndulu, a black male undergraduate student from Howard College put the perception into context:

*I have been drinking alcohol even before I came to university and I know the thoughts people have in their minds when they have taken some liquor especially if there are ladies around. When under the influence of substances the abnormal becomes normal, and what do you expect from this state of being? Nothing, but disaster! When drunk it is not possible to think of condoms. Sexual drives know no*

*protection when you are drunk. Under the influence, eish, protection is a nightmare bafwetu (friends). You only think of protection the following morning when it is all done and completely done and you cannot reverse it (interview, August 2008).*

Thus, students' experiences demonstrate that alcohol abuse to some extent influences them to engage in unsafe sex. Mulauzi, a black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, elaborated further:

*Alcohol abuse is common on and off campuses. Have you not seen that more than fifty percent of the dirty thrown in our rubbish bins especially on weekends are empty packs and bottles of alcohol? For many of us here ten drinks is pre-partying. We drink here almost every night. I have friends that drink every night and go for lectures stoned (drunk) (interview 2009).*

Male students were pointed out as more vulnerable than females because they are the greater consumers of alcohol. As with drugs, students said that they use alcohol to briefly forget their problems. These responses indicate that the students do realize that alcohol is likely to cloud judgment. Despite this knowledge, it appeared that alcohol was used by male students as a tool to secure sexual achievement, again constructing themselves as being manipulators of female sexual behaviour. My observation noted that the tone during this part of the focus group discussions was quite relaxed and light-hearted. This was due to the fact that many students were open enough to talk about their personal experiences about alcohol and condom use. The association of alcohol and sexual temptation, as well as the assumption that men have an enormous sex drive over which they have little control after drinking was confirmed by male students in my study who agreed that: *They (boys) are at risk because they go to parties, they get drunk and have sex anyhow* (Mutwe, a black female undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). This finding builds Maharaji's (2006:23) finding that alcohol intoxication impairs nearly every aspect of information processing, the ability to abstract and conceptualise.

In support, Shobo's (2007:45) study argues that alcohol weakens the ability to encode large numbers of situational cues, the ability to use several cues at the same time, the use of the active

and systematic encoding strategies, and the cognitive elaboration needed to encode meaning from incoming information. While the students maintained that males and females consume alcohol, Pattman's (2005) study of men found that male drinking is construed as being a defining part of male culture, while females who drink are perceived to be „loose“ and engage freely in sexual relationships. The suggestion by Melvis, a coloured female undergraduate student at Howard College, that: *some girls wear something to seduce guys* (interview 2009) places blame on the girls for the males not being able to control their feelings. The significance of alcohol as a strong influence, along with the objectification of women as sexual providers in exchange for material gain: *a guy cannot feed a horse he won't ride and I cannot give myself for nothing* (Katarina, a black female undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). This kind of behaviour makes students vulnerable to infection. This, according to Lengwe (2010) is another way in which norms about manhood harm both female and male's health.

Data presented from all three campuses under study correlate heavy alcohol use with a lifetime tendency toward high risk sexual behaviour such as having multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, one-night stands, casual sex, unprotected sex, and others. This is in agreement with Peltzer's (2006) findings that students who regularly consume alcohol or use drugs are more likely to engage in high-risk sexual behaviour. Pithey et al (2002) found that 50% of both male and female South African adolescents had been drinking at the time of their first sexual experience. It is therefore logical to state that alcohol may lower inhibitions, diminish the ability to assess risks, or increase sexual aggression, thus accounting for the measured relationship between alcohol and students' sexual activity (see also Peltzer, 2006).

### *Extensive sexual experience*

In relation to the explanation of the Problem Behavioural Theory that past events influence risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991), this study found that students' extensive sexual experience influences them to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Though prior sexual experience is viewed as good in terms of students knowing how to sexually satisfy their partners, 67% said that it is problematic because it creates sexual performance benchmarks. Many primary partners with less experience feel that their sexual performance is compared negatively to that of previous partners. In such

situations experienced partners tend not to be satisfied with their partners' performance and opt to have other partners in pursuit of sexual satisfaction.

Pardun (2008) found that young people with extensive sexual experience prefer to relate to other sexually experienced partners. Interestingly, my study also found that 73% of the respondents said that sexually experienced students do not leave the inexperienced partners even when they have found experienced partners. Thus, in as much as students like experienced sexual partners they also like inexperienced partners. This is because they feel good to lead the way in their sexual explorations. This somehow demonstrates the complexity of and selfishness in students' sexual relationships.

### *Disappointment in relationships*

According to Jessor (1991), young people have negative experiences which can be very hurtful. These experiences sometimes have a significant and long-term effect and influence young people's risk behaviour. In this study it emerged that disappointment in relationships influences students to engage in sexual risk behaviour. In data 80% of the female students explained that hurt and disappointment, resulting from discovering that their partners were cheating on them, makes them do things they would not do under normal circumstances.

Lubilo, a female undergraduate student from Howard College shared her personal experience:

*I was in love with one good-looking guy and I loved him so much. It was my first time to love a guy in the way I did. I think he also knew that I loved him a lot but he disappointed me. I caught him red-handed with another student.....worse still, my own friend.....I could not believe it.....this made me sick for many months and think of having another lover as well (interview, August 2008).*

In such situations, students explained that the aggrieved partners often look for other partners themselves. Male students also get disappointed when they discover that their new girlfriends are not virgins though they may not be virgins themselves:

*When you meet her she claims to be a virgin and when we have sex you discover that she is a brand new second hand body. The body is good looking but the engine is dead (she is not a virgin), she lost it a long time ago (Sisulo, postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

Thus, cheating in relationships makes students feel frustrated and hurt that they search for other partners who can be committed to them. More female students than males said that they are deeply hurt and find it difficult to move on upon discovering that their partners are cheating on them. According to my study, 94% of the male respondents said that it is easy for them to immediately move on and find other partners, while 90% of the female respondents said it is not easy to move on. This to some extent shows that males tend to be “mechanical” in their relationships therefore find it easy to move on while females find it difficult when they have invested themselves emotionally and physically in the relationship.

*“I will not suffer and die alone”: HIV infection rampage*

The study that led to the formation of the Problem Behaviour Theory found that both personal and communal experiences young people have influence their behaviour (Jessor, 1977). Some experiences are bad enough to cause post traumatic stress in people (Jessor, 1991:23). My study found that an experience of being HIV positive make students engage in risk sexual behaviour. My data also revealed that 45% of the students engage in sexual risk behaviour upon discovering that they are HIV positive. By being HIV positive, students are hurt and angered such that they engage in sexual risk behaviour to spread the virus hoping this would help them feel less alone:

*Eish, some students are terrorists. They get tested for HIV and the results come out positive and they start sleeping around to infect others. They claim that they did not buy the disease so they will not suffer and die alone. (Vulile, postgraduate student from Steve Biko, interview 2009).*

My study found that 55% of the respondents reported that HIV positive students do not want to use condoms: *Some of our friends do not use condoms because they want to maximise the chance*

*to infect many* (Sifiso, a black male undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). Deducing from this perception, it is realistic to argue that out of frustration some students make decisions to embark on a mission to infect other students with the virus. This study shows that male students are more prone to go on a “rampage” to infect others than females. This was attributed to the interplay of factors including abuse of drugs, morality, lack of psychological and social support, and others.

### *Sexual Addiction*

Respondents discussed sexual addiction as one strong underlying factor to students’ sexual risk behaviour. Students explained that sexual addiction on campuses takes on many forms, from the use of pornography and masturbation to repeated sexual affairs, patronising prostitutes, and voyeurism. In extreme cases, respondents said that sexual addiction involves sexual harassment, molestation and rape. My findings show that 57% of the respondents from the three campuses under study said that sexual addiction is difficult to understand on campuses and has one thing in common, the behaviour is done in secret, and sex addicts become skilled in hiding this secret life from their fellow students. However, 23% of the respondents reported that they know students who were addicted and some encouraged them to go for counseling.

A study by Herkov (2006) found that sexual addiction is due to chemicals released into the brain and as the mind becomes accustomed to the release of these chemicals, it searches out for instance, continued sources of sexual stimuli regardless the situation. This justifies Jessor’s (1991) claims that young people’s established customs influence them to engage in risky behaviour. Young people’s risk is high due to the subconscious occurrence of behaviour (Jessor et al., 1998: 11). Interestingly, respondents attributed sexual addiction to the practice of open sexual relationships, one-night stands and other sexual behaviour that makes sex easily accessible on campuses.

### *Personality sexual risk factors*

The Problem Behaviour Theory explains that personality factors instigate young people’s risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991: 11). The presence and influence of personality traits is well supported

by a wide variety of research (Spooner et al., 2001; Shrier et al., 1996; Lonning, 1993). This section presents descriptive data on the personality factors that influence students' sexual risk behaviour. Jessor et al (1998: 46) identified among others anxiety, angry hostility, depression, excitement seeking, lack of self-discipline, selfishness, gregariousness, feelings, fantasy, and a lack of trust as strong underlying personality factors to young people's risky behaviour.

*Denialism: "HIV/AIDS is not for me"*

The theme of students' experience of the risk of HIV/AIDS was explained as one strong reason students engage in sexual risk behaviour. Students' experiences show for instance, that the majority do not want to know their HIV status for fear of being stigmatised. This leads to low risk perceptions: .....*not knowing my HIV status makes me to be at peace and feel safe, and I like it this way especially when I know I have played around* (Kau, black male postgraduate student at Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

Trust of their partners was the most recurrent theme students used to justify their perceived safety: *I trust him so much, he is a good guy and this makes me feel secure* (Castridah, a black female postgraduate student at Howard College Students, interview 2009). Students also downplay the risk of HIV arguing that they do not have concurrent sexual partners. Some students argued that they are not sick: *I do not have AIDS* (Emmanuel, black male undergraduate student at Steve Biko, interview 2009), thus many students perceive themselves as safe.

My study found that 56% of the respondents said that university life has more pressing issues that needed urgent attentions than HIV/AIDS. Thobeka, a black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, explained:

*Students here do not perceive HIV/AIDS as a big problem because we have not lost many students due to HIV/AIDS. If we were losing many students it probably would be of concern to us* (interview 2009).

Within the student population, HIV/AIDS appears less visible and this makes students feel safe. Evidence from my study show that 62% of the students do not perceive HIV/AIDS as their

immediate problem as they are preoccupied with buying books, stationery and other basic needs they could not afford:

*As long I am not sick I cannot start worrying myself about HIV/AIDS. Moreover, I have other major fears of more immediate concern such as beating deadlines for my essays, proposals, chapters, and failing course work, tests, and final exams. So, I can only think of HIV/AIDS if I was to develop symptoms for AIDS. Otherwise, HIV/AIDS is not an issue to me, never* (Ken, postgraduate male student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

Deducing from students' responses it seems there are few students who have died of AIDS while on campus. However, respondents said that students withdraw from the university when they discover that they have AIDS. This was attributed to stigma and discrimination. Data collected from in-depth interviews shows that students perceived unplanned pregnancy as a much more serious problem than HIV/AIDS. To them the unplanned pregnancy: *that can be seen by parents and friends*, was more real than contracting HIV. Ndlela, a participant substantiated this perspective:

*When I have unprotected sex the only thing that worries me the next day is whether I am pregnant. Once I have my next menses, then I am relieved that we did not create life. The whole issue of whether am I HIV positive normally does not actually come into my mind, it is actually the last thing I would ever think about unless otherwise* (Postgraduate black female student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

This feeling of invulnerability was also commonly supported by the view that HIV/AIDS was a disease for ordinary, poor people. Hlato, a second year black male student at Steve Biko Campus explained that it was a widespread notion that many students did not take HIV/AIDS seriously enough, *"It is something we know about but we think we can never get it"* (interview 2009). Mulwo's (2010) findings support this perception. He found that many students thought HIV/AIDS is for other people.

To further elaborate their responses that the majority of students do not take HIV/AIDS seriously, 66% of respondents in my study cited the high number of pregnancy cases as evidence of low levels of condom use (see also page). Sbu, a third year Black male student at Pietermaritzburg Campus, pointed out that the number of pregnancies on campuses was an alarming indication that students do not practice abstinence, do not use condoms, and do not take HIV/AIDS seriously. Deducing from data collected from interviews, it was evident that students' perceptions of low risk is influenced by the discourses of denialism proliferated by some South African leaders such as former South African President, Thabo Mbeki. As indicated in Hlato's response above, students seem to believe that AIDS is for other people.

Mulwo (2010) also found that student denied the existence of HIV/AIDS. This confirmed by my findings that found that some students like Ndlela, engage in sexual risk behaviour because he does not believe in the existence of HIV/AIDS: "*...there are so many theories of conspiracy therefore I do not believe that there is something like HIV/AIDS*" (Black male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009). This view was quite common among the Black male and female respondents, but the Indian, Coloured and Whites did not seem to share such a view.

Some respondents, such as Annemarie, a second year White female student at Howard College said that many students have heard so much about HIV/AIDS that the epidemic no longer scares them. Others said that they engage in sexual risk behaviour because they do not care about HIV/AIDS especially that death is inevitable. For them, death is certain whether or not one had HIV, hence there was no need to worry about becoming infected with HIV but enjoy sex here and now. Thus, the Problem Behaviour Theory's explanation that personality factors are strong instigators of young people's risky behaviour is supported by empirical evidence in this current study (see also Mulwo, 2010; Lengwe, 2010).

### *Lack of satisfaction*

Jessor (1991: 29) elaborates that lack of gratification or rather failure to receive what is desired in life influences young people's risky behaviour. Shobo (2007) found that young people's failure to achieve their desired outcomes in an effective and systematic manner makes them

distressed and unstable in their behaviour. Interestingly, in all three Campuses respondents discussed at great length and with much feeling on the subject of dissatisfaction in relationships. Discussions cut across a number of themes that emerged in the research.

Dissatisfaction in relationships appeared to contribute prominently to students' sexual risk behaviour. It was explained that after a while in relationships, especially age-disparate relationships, students get bored and look for other partners. Students said that lack of social and sexual gratification due to partners who are not sexually adventurous instigates their sexual risk behaviour:

*It happens that you are going out with an older partner. After a while you will meet friends telling you how they enjoy sex and going out with same-age boyfriends and this will make me think that I am missing out so much and I will end up having another relationship with a younger partner to experience sexual satisfaction my friends are talking about (Tsole, undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

What this seems to suggest is that when students realise that they are not socially and sexually satisfied they tend seek other partners to satisfy them. This promotes a culture whereby students have different sexual partners to meet their different needs. Out of the 96 respondents, 50 said that lack of satisfaction in a relationship would make students to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

#### *Nagging and arguments in relationships*

Studies show that abusive relationships encourage rebellious behaviour (Jessor's et al., 1998; Parry, 2002). My study identified nagging and arguments as one of the instigators of students' sexual risk behaviour. Students said that arguments and nagging in relationships can be exhausting such that they are made to look for other partners for solace. Interestingly, students do not leave partners who are irritating but simply begin additional relationships:

*The problem is that sometimes your partner tends to argue a lot over silly things. Because of nagging each other you end up stopping treating each other well you know. You then start going out with someone else because you tend to feel that*

*there someone out there who can love you better and that is how we end up in engaging in risky sexual behaviour (Zihle, black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

My study found that 70% of students in the focus group discussions said that arguments and nagging are incidental factors that make them engage in sexual risk behaviour. Abuse in primary relationships was identified as another significant reason students engage in sexual risk behaviour. In cases where students are abused by their partners they are made to start additional relationships. Malibokwe, an undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus said:

*You will find that your partner is abusive and that is his personality and when you tell another guy about your situation he feels pity and comforts you. In that way a relationship can start because he is giving you the attention and love you need. Obviously you will not tell your boyfriend that there is a student out there who hugs and comforts you when you have been abused (students laughed). So that is how we end up in risky sexual behaviour (interview 2009).*

Data collected shows that 55% of the respondents said that physical, sexual, material and emotional abuse is common in relationships. A few male respondents said that they are encouraged to have other partners because they feel abused by their partners who are always demanding monetary and material support. Therefore, they prefer to spend time with girlfriends who are not fashion obsessed and therefore less demanding.

#### *Lack of trust for partners*

The notion of “trust”, which was associated with serious relationships, was seen as a determining factor in choosing whether to be faithful to one partner or not. In this account, the concept of trust seemed to carry an ambivalent meaning. At one level, trust is associated with the partner’s fidelity. Trust is also associated with the sexual partner’s commitment to a long term relationship. A sexual partner could be trusted only when he or she is considered to be prepared for marriage in future. Those who were not considered to be serious with the relationship were not trusted, hence there was no reason to be faithful to them.

The danger here seems to refer to the possibility of the sexual relationship breaking, in which case, a concurrent sexual relationship, though risky, was considered a fallback option. This finding confirms Jessor's (1991:10) finding that the "agreeableness and disagreeableness" in life situations, for instance in relationships, influence young people to engage in risky behaviour.

### *Lack of attention*

According to the personality domain, lack of emotion of strong affection and personal attachment can influence young people to engage in risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991:23). Mulwo (2010) argues that lack of warmth in sexual relationships influence students to try out with other partners. Findings from study show that 82% of the female respondents said that lack of attention from one's partner influences students' sexual risk behaviour. Lack of concern from their partners makes them look for other partners to fulfil their need to be appreciated and loved. Thus, students especially females are influenced to engage in sexual risk behaviour when their partners stop being loving and caring engage in sex often, but rarely use condoms:

*You find that she or he no longer pays attention to you and stops saying nakutanda kakulu, (I love you so much), and you will think maybe he or she no longer loves you (Mulilo, black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

This perception illustrates that the concern or rather love and care for one's partner is perceived as an important component in students' relationships especially among females. Thus, it is not enough for females to be in relationships and have sex as they also need to feel appreciated and loved. Generally, students' responses show that both male and female students want partners who would value them. However, data presented in this study indicates that female students treasure more emotional satisfaction such that lack of this would be enough reason for them to end their relationships and look for other partners. Unlike their counterparts, female students (85%) prefer leaving their uncaring lover and then find another one without engaging in concurrent sexual relationships.

*Personal belief: why should I stick to one person?*

Jessor (1991) found that young people's ideas, beliefs, perceptions, "values" and feelings influence their risky behaviour. For example, young people tend to follow new ideas without comprehending what they entail to their life (ibid.). It was noteworthy that 66% of the respondents explained that students engage in sexual risk behaviour because of a cultural shift that permanent unions with one person are perceived as outdated. Motsamai, an undergraduate male student from Steve Biko Campus said:

*Why should I stick to one person when I do not intend to get married? Marriage is old-fashioned, today people get married tomorrow they are signing divorce papers. I would rather live like a wicked person, rather than get into a marriage that will end quicker than it started. Spare us from the prisons of permanent relationships (interview 2009).*

My study found that 67% of the respondents said believe that not being in a permanent relationship is better than marriage where most people are not happy. Heartache, pain, stress and psychological disturbance due to the breakdown of marriages make students view fluid relationships as lesser evil than marriage:

*It is unreasonable to expect couples to stay together in relationships for a lifetime in this day and age. There is more social pressure than ever before to be happy and this outweighs the necessity to make permanent relationships work. For instance, there is already too much unfaithfulness going on in permanent relationships (marriages). Why should we make people continue to be unfaithful by encouraging them to stick to one person? Society has long accepted that marriage is out of fashion therefore fluid sexual relationships are fine (Susan, postgraduate student from the Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

Interestingly, students also argued that it is old-fashioned to think permanent relationships are the only alternatives to being single. They believe that civilised society is offering options to suit the temperaments of individuals who neither wish to stay single nor commit to one person for the rest of their lives. Thus, permanent relationships are seen to have lost their social purpose. Anna

a white undergraduate student said: *till death do us apart on campuses has been replaced by as long as I am happy with you*. For this reason students said that they opt for what they call live-in relationships that by their very nature imply a lower level of commitment.

Close to 78% of the respondents said that the most important thing in live-in relationships is the freedom couples have. Students prefer live-in relationships because they do not surrender any rights or accept any responsibilities. There is an attitude of: *you scratch my back, I scratch yours and both of us enjoy while it lasts* (Sibusiso, a black male postgraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009). This means that live-in relationships last as long as both partners are happy with each other. Thus, the common denominator holding the relationship together is happiness perceived differently. Some find happiness in material possession, others in pursuit of their sexuality, for still others happiness could mean chatting away in the company of good friends, drinking, having outings, and others.

Students argued that permanent relationships or rather marriage is restrictive, limiting their freedom to express themselves. Therefore, students want relationships that allow greater freedom, offering the sexual and emotional closeness of marriage while retaining the autonomy of singleness. This makes students' relationships not to last long because partners are free to walk away at any time. This attitude explains why sequential monogamy is common among students. Unfortunately, many students do not perceive serial monogamy as sexual risk behaviour.

#### *Sex a chance to try out variety*

Findings by Jessor et al (1998) and Kotchick et al (2001) show that young people's experiences and perceptions are strong risk factors. In the same vein, Parker et al (2007) argues that young people's unguided experiences and perceptions account for high risk behaviour in South Africa. Findings from in-depth interviews show that students engage in sexual risk behaviour in trying to have sexual experience and fun with different people. When asked why students engage in sexual risk behaviour, Susan, who also reports to be in sexual relationships with older and younger partners (declined to specify the number), replied: *I think sexual risk behaviour is also part of having not really grown up, you know, and just wanting to experience the different things*

*with different people* (Black female postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009). A similar view is presented by Paul, a postgraduate Coloured male student at Howard College, who reported how he started engaging in risky sexual practices with different people simply because he wanted to try out variety:

*You find that you are doing it the right way by having one girlfriend, but suddenly you meet another cinderella (attractive girl) and you are overwhelmed by how different and beautiful she is from your main cinderella. You find that she has nice features such as milky eyes, small chins, full lips, nice back view, and other attractive features you know what I mean (students laughed). So you are made to think that sex with her would be thrilling. So, you make a move and get her as well. At the end of the day I am engaging in risky sexual behaviour for fun you know (interview 2009).*

In my study, 57% of the black South African female students interviewed explained that they engage in sexual risk behaviour because they are influenced by a notion that international students are better partners than local students. This is based on the perception that international male students prefer permanent relationships that lead to marriage while local male students do not want to be committed or get married soon. Thus, many black girls are dating many male students, local and those from different nationalities.

#### *A drive for material wealth*

The findings in this study indicate that passion for material wealth encourages students to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Data shows that in some cases, males disclosed their sexual partners to their girlfriends but expected those girlfriends to remain faithful. In the perspective of the males, females were considered to be jealous of men and were thus, according to Bongani, willing to share a man: *“My friend has an open relationship and we actually live in the same residence where he has one girlfriend. That girlfriend knew that this guy has more than two girlfriends”* (Black male postgraduate student from the Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009). This finding is supported by Mulwo (2010) who found that some girls in open relationships did not want to share their boyfriend with the other girlfriends.

According to Bongile and Sibiyi, postgraduate students from the same campus, the willingness to share a man emerges out of the desire for a man's material wealth. Men are seen to attract more women through their material wealth, such as cars, clothes and money. Respondents explained that if a person has got fancy cars, clothes, and works in a well known company or organisation, many girlfriends would like to share that guy even if one of them was aware of other girls. Thus, this finding seems to suggest that what students care about is the fancy cars, clothes, guys, and not the risk of HIV/AIDS. The finding above bolsters the explanation by the Problem Behaviour Theory that the SES is a strong instigator of young people's risk behaviour (Jessor, 1991). It also strengthens the finding from Mulwo (2010 and Lengwe (2010) that students' sexual risk behaviour cannot be explained without addressing the structural economic issues on campuses.

#### *Explicit sexual lyrics*

Music falls under what Jessor (1991) refers to as leisure pursuit or hobbies in the personality domain. He explains that "pastime activities" if not well managed can be high risk factors to young people's behaviour. Thus, the HEAIDS (2010: 23) survey found that activities students engage in for relaxation account for their sexual risk behaviour. Findings in my study show that listening to music is one of the pastime activities students do. Interestingly, this study further shows that music to a certain degree influence students' sexual risk behaviour. In my findings, 72% of the respondents said that popular music has explicit lyrics of sexual invitation and conquest:

*Music like house has an encouragement towards sex, don't you know that the beat sometimes matches the body's rhythms, and the lyrics can reinforce sex. Haven't you wondered why students in our residences play very loud music? There is more to it than entertainment (Undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview, August 2008).*

The findings seem to suggest that students do not just listen to music but it influences their thinking, emotions and behaviour. It seems many students are persuaded by what they hear and see.

Interestingly, in all three focus group discussions, students argued that it is rare for music alone to make them to engage in sexual risk behaviour unless it is factored by other influences, for instance, listening to sexual lyrics with one's partner or a person one is attracted to, or while drinking alcohol. I found that 85% of the respondents said that most of the music students listen to is saturated with sexual references that are very hard to ignore especially as the language used is explicit. Thus, sexual lyrics load students' minds and influence their sexual behaviour. Students think that music has power to influence their belief system and sexual conduct especially when it is made by people they like:

*I am inclined to believe that musicians can have good and bad influence on students' behaviour. I have seen many fellow students idolise musicians. What starts as admiration for musical ability, easily expands to idolising the musicians' looks, fame, and sexual lifestyles. So, it is so easy to get blown away with music when combined with other factors (Sikulume, postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

Students also said that most of the music they listen to communicate specific things for instance, the appropriate sexual roles for females and males. Music also portrays men as "hunters" and this makes it easy for students to accept these messages and eventually enact these stereotyped gender roles in their sexual behaviour. Out of the 96 respondents, 60 said that music helps them to facilitate friendships and social interaction and create personal identity. There is no doubt that references to relationships, romance, and sexual behaviour are commonplace in the music that is most popular with students on campuses.

Eleazar (2009) described degrading sex music as twice as likely to influence students to have sexual intercourse than those who have no ear for degrading music. He found that exposure to sex in media messages is one of the risk factors for sexual involvement among South African

university students. However, Eleazar (2009) was careful to say that sex music is a sexual risk influence when combined with other factors that instigate sexual risk behaviour.

### *Pursuit of long-term goals of marriage*

The personality system posits that consciousness or lack of consciousness influences young people's behaviour (Jessor, 1991). Further Jessor et al (1998) argue that striving for achievement, though positive in itself, can lead young people to engage in risky behaviour. In this study, students' experiences indicate that many females engage in sexual risk behaviour in pursuit of long-term goals of marriage:

*Some students have same-age boyfriends and older men simultaneously because older men are more serious and better potential marriage partners than same-age boyfriends who are not stable. Many male students are not ready to be committed to support relationships. Most of them are Vasco da Gamas (students laughed and the interviewer asked what she meant). I mean Vasco da Gama the Portuguese explorer because they still want to explore with many girls. To be in a relationship with a same-age boyfriend is chasing after the wind and investing in the wrong place. Therefore, having many sexual partners is good because it gives one an opportunity to carefully choose a life partner (Lyabonga, black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

Some respondents explained that one needs to "experience" a partner before marrying her or him: *you try on a pair of shoes to see if they fit before you buy them or test drive a car, so why not do the same with relationships as you seek a lifelong partner?* (Mark, a coloured male undergraduate student from the Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). In a conscious search of lifelong partners students engage in sexual risk behaviour especially that it takes long before one can find a "compatible partner". Students articulated that it is not easy to find a companionable partner: *One can have more than seven sexual relationships before settling down for marriage* (Winfridah, black female postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

Students' responses seem to suggest that the long time spent searching for partners allows students to learn about compatibility issues, because they do not want to commit to marriage and later realise that they are not the best fit for each other. Thus, the search for good marriage partners makes students engage in serial monogamy. My data also shows that 67% of the respondents interviewed mentioned that one would have more than seven sexual partners on average before meeting the "suitable" partner. I found that 78% of the students said that by the time they have found suitable partners they have also acquired HIV. Thus, the inevitable and noble search for lifelong partners makes students to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

## **Summary**

This chapter has presented and discussed data on students' sexual risk practices and their underlying risk factors. Findings indicate that students at KZN Universities engage in several risky sexual practices including unprotected sex, transactional sex, age-disparate sex, multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, towing, open sexual relationships and cohabitation. Students' sexual risk behaviour increases the risk of contracting or transmitting diseases or infections like HIV.

Further it shows that there are several domains influencing students' sexual risk behaviour: environmental/social, behavioural, personality, and biological factors that are interrelational and difficult to separate. The interrelations of the sexual risk factors influence students' sexual risk behaviour and lifestyles. In other words, interrelations of these variables represent instigations that results in proneness: the likelihood that sexual risk behaviour will occur, and compromises physical health. The findings presented in this chapter reinforce Jessor's (1991) theoretical argument that environmental/social, behavioural, personality and biological factors are the main systems that shape sexual risk behaviour.

Thus, the Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991) provides a good theoretical framework for understanding students' sexual risk factors and would form a strong theoretical basis to inform EE prevention programmes on what to address in the fight against HIV/AIDS in South African universities. Sexual risk factors could inform EE programmes so as to reduce sexual risk-taking behaviour among students on campuses. Findings in this chapter will be compared and

contrasted with the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages to find out if they address students' sexual risk practices and their underlying risk influences as reported by students.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### PROTECTIVE FACTORS TO STUDENTS' SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents descriptive data on the protective factors to students sexual risk behaviour. It deals with conditions on campuses which, when present, increase the sexual health and well-being of students. The attributes presented and discussed serve as buffers, helping students to find support or coping strategies that allow them to live sexually responsible lives, even under stress. The presentation and discussion is guided by the Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991). Jessor (1991:47) argues that young people's protective behaviour is the product of complex interactions between multisystemic factors.

The chapter is divided into four sections. Section One presents the protective personality factors, Section two explores the protective environmental/social factors, Section Three deals with protective biological factors, and Section Four explores the protective behavioural factors to students' sexual behaviour as reported by students themselves.

#### ***Personality sexual protective factors***

The Problem Behaviour Theory suggests that personality factors protect young people from engaging in sexual risk behaviour (Jessor, 1991). The Problem Behaviour Theory's personality domain is supported by Astatke et al (2000:13) who argue that "personality factors are inevitable factors to young people's sexual risk behaviour". In this section I present descriptive data on the protective personality factors to students' sexual risk behaviour.

#### ***Religiosity***

According to Jessor et al (1998), religiosity is one of the strong factors that buffer against young people's risky behaviour. The omnibus survey also identified religion as one of the important protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. In my study, students elaborated that by

being faithful to their religions they are able to overcome the “pull” to engage in sexual risk behaviour (CCMS Omnibus Survey, 2007). Data in my study shows that religious students avoid engaging in sex because their religious beliefs are against sex before and outside marriage. This study found that it is in fact students’ commitment to religion that protects them from engaging in sexual risk behaviour. Khomoso, a Christian and undergraduate student from Howard College, explained her religious belief, representing many Christian students’ experiences:

*As a Christian I have no right to engage in premarital sex. I would rather lose my boyfriend for saying no to sex before marriage than compromise my Christian values and defile myself. I will wait until marriage, I have come a long way and there is nothing that can make me engage in immoral and risky sexual behaviour. If my boyfriend is not willing to wait until marriage so that heaven can be happy as well as we make love for the first time, then let him go, he is surely not meant for me. (Students laughed and some said amen sister!). Someone meant for me will respect my faith and wait for the wedding night (interview 2009).*

Findings show that 75% of the respondents who were religious, especially Christians and Moslems, said that their faith helps them to refrain from sexual risk behaviour. Ahmed a male Moslem student said that sex is a gift from Allah (God), designed to be enjoyed by married people. Thus, religious students believe that sex before and outside marriage is not only risky but immoral. Pauline, a white postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, puts it well when she said:

*My conscience cannot allow me to engage in risky and immoral sexual activities. I just can’t do it because it is against my Christian conscience. Some people call us religious fanatics but that will not make me throw my Christian values to the wind and indulge sex. Let them call me any names, at the end of the day I know what I want ..... there is something greater than sex in life, and that is my faith in God (interview 2009).*

Pauline’s response seem to suggest that religiosity helps students to form solid consciences that enable them to desist from engaging in premarital and sex outside marriage. It is however

important to note that religious students do not perceive sex *per se* as evil: *I am not saying sex is evil but that it is a preserve for the legally married couples* (Thelma, a white female undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009). This account suggests that students' religiosity cultivates in them a trained ability of judging between right and wrong, of their actions. Therefore, religious students' conscience coupled with faith enables them grasp what is pleasing or displeasing to themselves and others. This is in agreement with Taylor (1990) who said that in a religious world conscience is the mind of a person governed by religious rules and values. About 89% of religious students said that the critical part of conscience is that it facilitates them to judge particular choices of sexual behaviour, approving those that are good and disapproving those that are evil. Therefore, religious students' perceptions of their faith as a protective factor from immoral and sexual risk behaviour is a dictum more firmly entrenched in religious life where conscience must always be obeyed by exercising the virtue of justice, prudence, fortitude and temperament (ibid.).

Interestingly, data collected found that 85% of the religious respondents said that mosque or church attendance makes them less comfortable because they are reminded of their sexual wrongs. Students further explained that when they are not able to withstand the reprimand from their conscience either stop or lessen going to church.

Out of the 96 respondents, 80 reported that religiosity helps them to be good to themselves and other people. Khena, a black male undergraduate student from Howard College, said that: *From the time I became a Christian I have cultivated personal qualities to control my everyday desires. I am more just and prudent, in my actions* (interview 2009). Another black male undergraduate student Sifiso from Howard College, said:

*My faith has changed my life completely. I never thought that one day I would stand for temperament and exhibit fortitude in almost everything I do. Sometimes people tell me that I have changed a lot, and I tell them that it is God's grace* (interview 2009).

Further investigation found before converting to Christianity Sifiso was an atheist, he denied the existence of God or supreme beings and abused alcohol, drugs and engaged in sexual risk

behaviour for self-aggrandisement. Students' responses seem to suggest that the virtue of justice makes them feel a religious sense that inclines them to choose always that which tends to their true good and the attainment of their goals as students (see also Nina, 1994). Thus, religiosity seems to help students not to compromise their life to the passion of sex. As such the protective factor or rather the virtue of justice inclines students to give or rather treat themselves, God, and others with respect and dignity by not condoning immoral and sexual risk behaviour.

Respondents also said that religiosity through the virtue of prudence protects them from sexual risk activities. About 81% of the religious students interviewed said that prudence "perfects" their intellect by directing it to discern on all occasions what is best suited for the attainment of their goals despite high levels of sexual risk behaviour on campuses. Interestingly, 89% of the religious respondents said that prudence protects them by promoting quick and accurate perceptions of the true value of the means to an end that is not seen in sex. My findings show that 96% of the respondents said that prudence protects them by encouraging them to take time to notice the immorality and risk of engaging in sexual risk-taking behaviour. This perception is reflected in Mabhuza's experience: *My experience is that the virtue of prudence provides against my self-distrust which makes me to carefully examine matters of sex with care, and to accept the advice of my pastor* (Black male postgraduate student from the Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009). Thus, prudence seems to be a strong protective factor in religious students.

Religious students interviewed mentioned the virtue of temperance as another endowment that protects them from engaging in sexual risk behaviour. Religious students explained that temperance regulates their desires for sex by governing their sexual appetites or pleasures that lead to immoral and sexual risk behaviour. Many religious students said that they acquire this virtue through their spiritual practices such as prayer and fasting and these bring "inner harmony" that other "secular" students lack. This seems to entail that religious commitment brings order in students' lives, and as such religiosity contributes to their protection from immoral and sexual risk behaviour. Lengwe (2010) found that religiosity makes students cultivate self-discipline and Mulwo (2010) said that it helps them to develop an element of self-mastery in matters of sex.

Noticeably, 93% of the religious students interviewed said that religiosity builds in them a character of fortitude: *It makes me firm in times of difficulties and constant in the pursuit of what is good in freedom* (Isabel, female undergraduate student from the Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). Deducing from students' responses, religiosity therefore empowers them not to engage in sex before and outside marriage.

Most interesting in this finding is that 80% of the religious students interviewed mentioned that they do not engage in sex as a religious virtue of fortitude and not unreflected or irrational action or fear of HIV/AIDS. It therefore holds to reason to say that religiosity empowers students to refrain from sex. However, it should be noted that according to students, religiosity does not "shield" them from sexual risk behaviour. Instead, it enables religious students to constantly hold in check their sexual cravings and to choose not to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

#### *Cognitive and personality traits*

This study found that 67% of the respondents mentioned that higher cognitive development helps them not to engage in sexual risk behaviour. About 56 out of the 96 respondents said that their cognitive traits empower them not to have sex, and 55% felt that personality traits help them to use contraception if they have sex. Students reported that their greater internal locus of control rather than external events control their lives, and enable them to have sex less frequently, and use condoms more frequently. A few respondents said that they do not engage in sex because they have no experience of sex therefore they are not "fanatical" about sex and neither do they miss it. All these factors may be causal. My findings therefore are in agreement with the Problem Behaviour Theory that explains that cognitive and personality traits protect young people from risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991: 56). Findings in this account are supported by the HEAIDS (2010) study that also found that cognitive and personality traits such as self-esteem and positive self-concept are protective factors against initiation of sex. However, Lengwe (2010) found that self-esteem and self-concept are not significantly related to sexual behaviour. Eleazar (2009) found self-esteem to be protective only for female students especially undergraduates as opposed to postgraduate students. This seems so because postgraduates have other strategies of protecting themselves against sexual risk behaviour.

### *Sexual beliefs and attitudes*

Jessor et al (1998) and Astatke et al (2000) found that young people feel protected when they have greater confidence in their ability to demand and use condoms to avoid pregnancy and HIV. Confidence in their ability emanates from their beliefs and attitudes (Jessor, 1991: 45). Findings in my study show that the strongest protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour are their own sexual beliefs and attitudes: *I am not ready for sex because I am not married. I would want to risk my life by sleeping around. Sex, ah ah not now* (Penisile, female undergraduate student from the Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009). About 43% of the respondents said that they do not engage in sexual risk behaviour because they always use a condom to avoid HIV infection. Out of the 96 respondents, 46 said they do not engage in sex because AIDS cannot be cured therefore they would not want to risk their lives. About 50 respondents said that they do not engage in sex because they believe in the benefits that accrue from not engaging in sex such as not worrying about one's health. Students' responses seem to suggest that of these beliefs and attitudes can be considered as protective sexual factors because they influence protective behaviour directly among students.

### *Practice of abstinence*

Data from the in-depth interviews conducted with students shows that 15 out of the 96 respondents were not engaging in sex. When asked why they were not engaging in sex they explained that they have promised themselves to wait for the right time. Right time was interpreted differently by respondents. For some, it meant the time they will finish their studies, get a good job, when they will be independent from parental support, and for some it meant when they get married. In addition, some said that abstinence is the only way to prevent HIV/AIDS. This finding supports the Problem Behaviour Theory's explanation that good practices young people carry out in their life protect them from risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991; Jessor et al., 1998). Thus, students do not engage in sex because they interpret being abstinent as a value and measure to help them wait for the right time and avoid STIs.

### *Environmental/Social sexual protective factors*

The Problem Behaviour Theory posits that social/environmental factors influence protective behaviour (Jessor, 1991:25). The Problem Behaviour Theory (1991) identified community settings, sexual values and practices, peer influence, good guardianship and monitoring, high expectation, sports, home climate, school conditions, and social reactions to success as strong protective factors. Using the environmental/social domain from the Problem Behaviour Theory as a theoretical lens this section presents descriptive data on the environmental/social protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour.

#### *Campus environments and academic work*

The environmental/social domain from the Problem Behaviour Theory identified school environments and school work as young people's strong buffers against risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991). In this study, 50% of the respondents reported that when they stay on campuses, they feel connected to their universities, earn good marks and do not fall behind in universities. This finding seems to contract the earlier finding that freedom in campuses makes students susceptible to sexual risk behaviour. The finding this study is advancing is that campus environments can both promote positive development and resilience in students not to engage in sexual risk behaviour, and can also influence risky decision-making to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

My study found that 45% of the respondents said that campuses help them to cultivate plans for higher education and big careers and initiate sex later. I also noted that 71% of the respondents said that involvement in university organisations make them avoid sexual risk behaviour. However, students said that simply belonging to university organisations has no impact on students' sexual risk behaviour. According to the collected data, substantial involvement in university based groups such as prayer and career groups among blacks was related to lower rates of sexual risk behaviour.

My data analysis shows that 56% of the respondents said that time spent doing their academic work creates an environment that discourages them from indulging in sexual risk behaviour:

*I am usually busy with academic work and this gives me an opportunity to interact with mature adults from whom I learn good values. Campus environment has increased my belief in the future and helped me to plan for my further studies and career, my sense of self-worth, and a need to live a sexual responsible life (Nale, black female undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).*

Nearly 50% of the Black respondents said that the campus environment is a protective factor because it provides them with access to education and information that is not available to their families. The campus environment is also seen as protective because students acquire valuable knowledge about life and their sexuality, since their parents vary widely in their own knowledge of these. This seem to suggests that campus environments may act as protective factors by providing students with resources they need buffer against sexual risk behaviour. This may as well be enhanced by other aspects of the campus environment such as students' commitment, beliefs, values, and skills that may serve protective functions.

#### *Living with parents and enjoying close relationships*

The Problem Behaviour Theory draws special attention to the influence of family processes (Jessor, 1991: 23). It views individuals' behaviour as being determined and sustained by the dynamics and demands of the key people with whom they interact (ibid.). This study found that 70% of the respondents said that living with parents and enjoying close relationships is one strong protective factor. Students explained that living with parents and enjoying close relationships creates social protection such that they do not think of seeking emotional warmth outside their families. This means that students are less likely to engage in sex to find emotional warmth as they feel provided for and sustained by their families.

My study also found that 76% of the respondents said that their parents' education protected them from engaging in sex. I also found that 57% of the respondents reported that their parents' education makes them postpone sexual intercourse or use contraception if tempted to engage in sex. This finding seems to suggest that educated parents are more informed about sex due to "exposure" to technology. In addition, students with educated parents said that they begin affairs not out desperation for love and resources since these are provided for by their parents.

Interestingly, 69% of female students said they do not engage in sexual risk behaviour because their parents do not tolerate pregnancy. This account may reflect the fact that education in many South African families is now perceived as an important family value.

Students also explained that family income is also a protective factor: the majority of students (82 out of 96) reported that students in families with higher incomes were less likely to become pregnant or to bear children while studying. These findings regarding parents' education and income may reflect the emphasis that many such parents place on obtaining an education, pursuing a career, and avoiding early childbearing, as well as, to some extent, the greater resources available to support students in these pursuits. Finding therefore seem to suggest that if students experience considerable parental support and feel connected to their parents, they are less likely to initiate sex at an early age, and they have sex less frequently.

#### *Appropriate monitoring and supervision*

The Problem Behaviour Theory proposes that families and other social networks develop "rules" of interaction that can prevent and sustain good behaviour (Jessor et al., 1998). An evaluation of data collected from all three campuses under study indicates that appropriate monitoring and supervision discourage students from engaging in sexual risk behaviour. More than 81% of the respondents, (76 out of 96), said that appropriate monitoring and supervision makes them focus on their education and make better choices in life. Related to parental appropriate monitoring and supervision is parent child communication. About 89% of the respondents said that good communication with their parents about sex and related matters, in particular before becoming sexually active is a protective factor: *communication with my parents on issues pertaining to sex and HIV/AIDS helped me to postpone my initiation of sex otherwise I would have been sexually active* (Shaista, Indian female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). The rationale in this finding suggests that students feel that knowledge about sex and the risk of HIV given to them before becoming sexually active influences them to make decisions to refrain from sex or use condoms consistently and correctly. However, Pillay (2003) said that this occurs when young people and their parents feel connected to one another and able to discuss sexuality in an open and comfortable manner.

### *Parental disapproval*

Out of the 96 respondents, 81 reported that parental disapproval of their having sex reduces the chances that they will have sex, and parental support of contraceptive use increases the chances that they will use contraception if they do have sex:

*My parents have disapproved every guy I have ever dated in my first two years on campus. I talked to them, and asked why they did not want me to have a boyfriend. They told me that they wanted me to focus on my studies first. I agreed with them and took their considerations into mind. I will soon finish my studies without having engaged in sex and I am really proud of myself (Harriet, a coloured female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

This experience is in agreement with the Problem Behaviour Theory posits that when parents have conversations with their children, for instance, about sex and contraception well before the children become sexually active, the initiation of sex may be delayed and the use of condoms or other contraceptives increased (Jessor et al., 1998). However, 56% of the respondents said that parental disapproval functions as protective factor when students and their parents feel connected to one another, when the parents disapprove of students having sex or support contraceptive use, and when parents can talk about sex openly.

### *Positive influence*

When respondents were asked to identify their protective sexual factors, 78% mentioned positive influence on campuses. The results of in-depth interviews with students showed that 67% of students who have morally upright friends are not likely to engage in sex. Respondents explained that having good friends produces elevated protection and simply the fact that they are good friends they have other protective factors as well. I also found that 66% of the respondents said that it is not easy to engage in sex if their best friends are not sexually active. Msire, a female postgraduate student and virgin from Howard College explained how she has managed to be abstinent:

*When you have good friends who tell you that sex is a risk and they encourage you to abstain, you cannot give in to sexual pressure because the good encouragement keeps you on the toes. So really, to me campus life can be positive depending on people one hangs out with. Sometimes I feel I would have not made it this far in my abstinence without positive peer influence found on campuses (interview 2009).*

This is in agreement with Jessor's (1991) findings that young people with peers that uphold good morals are not easily made to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Students' responses suggest that friendships they have on campuses can create sexual resilience in students.

### *Home-grown sex education*

One of the strong constructs of the Problem Behaviour Theory from the environmental/social domain is that education is a protective factor to young people's risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991). Interestingly, students' responses show that education given by indigenous institutions protects them from engaging in sexual risk behaviour. Many black students said that their cultures have traditional educators on matters of sex, respect, and others. For instance, students reported that among the Zulus and Xhosas the role of traditional educators is held by the fathers' sisters known as "udade bo bawo" or "ubaba". Students also said that traditional educators act as counsellors and conduits by socialising students into sex and marriage. Interestingly, students reported that in some communities traditional educators have been trained in contemporary health sex education to offer HIV related counselling. This finding suggests that traditional sex educators provide a protective middle road between traditional sex and modern sex education that seems to be appealing to students. About 76% of the respondents mostly blacks said that traditional educators help them to have knowledge, attitudes and strategies to avoid sexual risk behaviour. Students however explained that the success of these traditional sex educators in influencing their sexual behaviour is attributed to the high support traditional educators get from their community.

### *High expectations from parents and lecturers*

Jessor et al (1998) found that responsible and mature adults inspire young people to reduce likelihood of involvement in risk behaviour. They argue that if young people are exposed to models, this can reinforce young people's protective behaviour as they tend to emulate the models (ibid.). About 78% of the respondents said that the high expectations that elders, especially parents and lecturers, have for them, positively affects their sexual behaviour. Data from interviews shows that students tend to internalise the beliefs that for instance lecturers have about their ability. Dube, a black male postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, explained:

*When lecturers refuse to alter their attitudes or expectations for me regardless of my race or ethnicity, life experiences and interests, and family wealth or stability it makes me work more harder than before. When a lot is expected of me as a student I rise to the level of the expectation of my parents and lecturers. When they believe in me, I believe in myself that, yes, I can do it just like they did. Therefore, I cannot do anything silly to compromise my education and health (interview 2009).*

Thus, when people who have excelled in their education, for instance, professors believe in students, it enhances their self-esteem and gives them a desire to succeed. *You know, lecturers are our celebrities on campuses because they foster a feeling in us of being connected to the university* (Shaista, Indian female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). Thus, students' responses suggest that supportive lecturers and parents instil in students the sense of self worth that enables them to resist negative peer pressure.

### *Involvement in sports*

Out of the 96 respondents, 40 said that participation in sports helps them to have less frequent sex, and lower pregnancy rates. About 66% of the female respondents said that participation in sports motivates them to be active and provides them a constructive way of spending time and think less about sex. Jessor (1991:44) explains that perhaps it is because students who engage

involve themselves in sports are more likely to be young, and better educated, characteristics that reduce their risk of becoming pregnant (see also Astatke et al., 2000).

### ***Biological sexual protective factors***

According to the Problem Behaviour Theory, biological factors influence young people's risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991). He identified age, physical maturity, and others as strong protective factors (Jessor, 1991:77). This section presents descriptive data on the biological reasons students do not engage in sexual risk behaviour using the biological system as my theoretical lens (Jessor, 1991).

#### *Virginity testing: "I do not want to lose it"*

Data collected from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions show that biology also plays a significant role in influencing students, especially female students not to indulge in sexual risk behaviour. This supports the Problem Behaviour Theory that holds that biology can work as a protective factor to young people's risky behaviour (Jessor, 1991). The considerable number of students on campuses under study is drawn from within KwaZulu-Natal where virginity preservation as a cultural teaching is practiced and celebrated. For instance, Cecilia explained that her desire not to engage in sexual risk behaviour is mainly driven by the need to preserve her virginity, rather than preventing HIV infection. She elaborated that she was still a virgin and did not want to lose it because her parents would disown her (Black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

To prove that she is still a virgin, Sibiya undergoes "*ukuhlowa kwezintombi*" virginity testing every year, which is ascertained by the physical integrity of the hymen. It seems that the practice of not engaging in risky sexual activities, is not out of personal choice to avoid HIV infection, but is motivated by the fear of embarrassing herself and her parents. In in-depth interviews, students explained that in Zulu traditions, the chief would demand a fine from the father whose daughter was found during virginity testing to have lost her virginity. Such a girl is considered to have "polluted the community" by losing her virginity.

It is worth noting that some female students also perceive virginity testing as a protective factor from engaging in sexual risk behaviour. Other students said that they do not engage in sex for the reason that they want to keep their virginity so as to enjoy the status that goes along with being a virgin. In some cultures, only virgins are allowed to visit shrines and offer sacrifices on behalf of their communities to appease the spirits in times of trouble (Petros et al., 2008). About 15% of the respondents said that they do not engage in sexual risk behaviour because being married as virgins brings honour and economic benefits to the family as more dowry is paid for girls who get married as virgins than for those who are not virgins.

### *Non-penetrative thigh sex*

Non-penetrative thigh sex known as “ukusoma” in Zulu was mentioned by 76% of the respondents their protective factor. Inferring from the deposit of the Problem Behaviour Theory, non-penetrative thigh sex can be categorised as both biological and social protective factor. A few female students (4%) revealed that non-penetrative sex makes their life easy as they are able to gratify their sexual needs in love relationships, but without penetrative sex:

*I am not ready to engage in penetrative sex. I came here for studies and that is where my focus is, not sex. Time will come for me to enjoy sex. Quite well I am seeing someone and we kiss and touch but I have never allowed him to “have it” (sex) but he always ejaculates in my thighs and this is how far we can go as for now. If he wants it (sex) let him hung around for the right time and I will give it to him just the way he likes it (Khanyile, undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

Students however explained that non-penetrative sex is practiced not with the traditional nuance but as a physical measure to prevent pregnancy and HIV infection. Students, especially females, reported that they engage in non penetrative sex because they are not ready to have penetrative sex but at the same time they are aware that they need to make their partners sexually happy to keep up their relationships. This study shows that at the beginning of many non-penetrative sexual relationships students adhere to the practice. However, they report that they drop the

practice and engage in penetrative sex after they have grown to “trust” their partners. Many students drop the practice because they find it to be sexually unsatisfying and frustrating. About 87% of the respondents who are not practicing non-penetrative argued that students who practice it are unlikely to use barrier methods of protection the day they are tempted to have sex. However, who are practicing non-penetrative sex said that it is a lesser moral evil with low risk when compared to penetrative sex. The finding my study is advancing is that while students have positive values and behaviours that protect them from engaging in risk sexual behaviour such as non-penetrative thigh sex to ensure that they still gratified their physical needs in their love relationships, this study is not calling for the revival of traditional cultural practises, but it highlights that some students are still practicing it as a protective strategy to prevent HIV infection.

#### *Entering university as teenagers*

Respondents said that joining universities as teenagers is one reason that makes some students on campuses not to engage in sexual risk behaviour. This is in agreement with the Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991) which explains that age may young people from risky behaviour. Students reported that being teenagers they are perceived by senior students as people who are not yet sexually active and biologically not ready for sex. This prevents sexually active students from pressuring them into sex. About 56 respondents out of the 96 said that that they are afraid to approach them because they would be charged for “child abuse” as some look like young people in their early teens. Data also shows that the sensitiveness of the issue of sexual abuse and the firm university rules on sexual crimes protect teenagers from sexual risk behaviour.

#### *Protection in disguise: “Men do not approach me”*

About 12% of the respondents reported that some students do not engage in sex because they have no sexual partners. Respondents said that many men have a tendency of wanting to relate only with nice looking girls. They believe that this tendency ensures that students who are not gifted with good looks are not approached by men and therefore, do not have sexual relationships. This shows the pressure campus life and society in general has on men to have

beautiful women. A critical analysis of the concept of “not being beautiful” on campuses shows that the main types of features that make female students unattractive include a crooked dental formulae, flat backs, diseased skin, being skinny, lack of curved hips, flat chest and others. For male students being tiny, lack of muscles, having feminine voices, and others make them not to be accepted by girls. Thus, students who lack features upon which “beauty” and “handsomeness” is judged on campuses are not approached by men or not accepted by women.

### ***Behavioural sexual protective factors***

The Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991) posits that behavioural factors play an important role in protecting young people from risky behaviour. He proposes that the way young people react to life experiences can be source of protection. Thus, behavioural factors are essential in understanding young people’s protective behaviour. This section presents and discusses data on the behavioural factors that protect students from engaging in sexual risk behaviour. The theoretical lens to this section is the behavioural system from the Problem Behaviour Theory.

### ***Hurt and Disappointments***

When respondents who do not engage in sex were asked to explain the reasons they do not engage in sex (see interview guide I), 27% of the abstinent students reported that they do not engage in sex because they were once disappointed by their partners and thus have vowed not to engage in sexual relationships. Some female students explained that hurt and disappointment in their earlier relationships has made them lose interest in sexual relationships and felt that they should instead dedicate their life to studying the main reason they are on campus. This finding seems to suggest that the emotional and physical hurt students experience in their relationships prevents them from getting into relationships. They seem to hold on to previous grudges and hurt and see no need to open their hearts to love again.

### *Fear of HIV/AIDS*

My study found that 9% of the respondents reported that they do not engage in sex because they are afraid of being infected with HIV/AIDS. Their fear seems to emanate from the belief that HIV/AIDS has no cure. Respondents who do not engage in sex explained that some HIV positive students are hurt and angered by their status such that they engage in sexual risk behaviour to spread the virus hoping this would help them feel less alone. Thus, for the fear of contracting the virus from such people, they abstain from sex. Both Lengwe (2010) and Mulwo (2010) found that some students refrain from engaging in sex because they are afraid of contracting HIV.

### *Lack of money*

This study also found that some male students do not engage in sex because they do not have money to entice women with as they are not employed: *I have no money to attract chicks. You know on campuses, no money no sex, money really talks here* (Kandwe, male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009). This finding seems to suggest that sex on campuses is commercialized. Thus, the less money one has, the less frequent sex and the less variety of sexual partners. In other words, students who do not have access to money cannot easily engage in sex, as rightly put by Kandwe, „*money talks*“.

### **Summary**

This chapter has presented and discussed data on students“ protective sexual factors. Findings indicate that not all students at KZN Universities engage in sexual risk behaviour. Students“ protective sexual factors reduce the likelihood of them having sex and the risk of contracting or transmitting diseases or infections like HIV, thus increasing their sexual health and welfare.

It shows that environmental/social, behavioural, personality, behavioural and biological factors influence students“ protective sexual behaviour. Findings also suggest that the underlying factors to students“ protective sexual behaviour are interrelational. Interrelations of these variables

represent controls that result in the probability that a sexual protective behaviour will occur. Thus, it is hard to have “absolutely” biological, environmental/social, personality and behavioural sexual protective factors.

Thus, the Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor, 1991) provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding students’ protective sexual behaviour. It also provides a theoretical foundation that can adequately inform EE prevention programmes such as the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to promote students’ sexual protective-taking behaviour on campuses.

## CHAPTER NINE

### STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO THE SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN'S MESSAGES

#### Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section explores students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, an Entertainment Education (EE) intervention facilitated on the campuses of DUT and UKZN. Students' response to the campaign's messages are analysed using Reception Theory. It describes how the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages address students' sexual risk practices and their causes. This will be achieved by examining students' experiences and perceptions of the messages. Section Two, using the Social Learning Cognitive Theory analyses the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on students' sexual risk behaviour change.

The overall aim of this chapter is to establish from students' responses if the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are tailored in such a way that they address students' sexual risk practices and their underlying factors identified in Chapter Seven of this study. Thus, Chapter Seven and Eight are used as "measuring rods" to ascertain the appropriateness of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in dealing with students' sexual risk-taking behaviour on campuses.

#### The Scrutinise Campus Campaign

The Scrutinise Campus Campaign is a communication prevention strategy that was launched in 2008. It uses applied arts to communicate HIV prevention messages to students in university campuses in South Africa (Delate, 2009). The creation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign was a partnered project. DramAidE, as part of its Health Promoter project funded by JHHESA and supported by the Centre for HIV/AIDS Networking (HIVAN) created a toolkit for use by campus stakeholders. DramAidE then trained Health Promoters and peer educators to run arts and culture festivals around the key themes in conjunction with Scrutinise campaign (Delate, 2009). The figure below shows peer educators trained by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

Figure 4: Pietermaritzburg Campus peer educators who are part of the 375 peer educators trained by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign (August, 2009).



As its contribution towards the creation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, ABC Ulna trained campus radio Disc Jockeys (DJs) to generate campus discussions around the key themes of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. Matchboxology organised the involvement of celebrities and musicians and the logistics for the campus events (Drama in AIDS Education Annual Report, 2008). Then, peer trained educators, animerts stars, comedians, and musicians organised a big concert to bring the campaigns’ messages to students. New Start, a nonprofit HIV counselling, testing, and referral service, offered HIV testing to students (Delate, 2009).

The Scrutinise Campus Campaign’s main goal was to address the risk of HIV transmission from sexual risk behaviour especially multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships (Spina, 2009). The aim is to encourage and equip students to take responsibility to reduce their risk of HIV infection. Thus, the campaign was designed to raise awareness about high risk sexual behaviour, provide opportunity to students to engage with their peers to unpack issues of risk and create learning moments for students to “scrutinise” their own behaviour in the context of risk (Spina, 2009:3). In particular, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign’s main themes are meant to address the issue of sexual risk, condom efficacy, faithfulness/multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships,

early stage infection, sexual networks, alcohol abuse, transactional sex, and intergenerational sex (JHHESA, Scrutinise Campaign community training manual, 2009:6).

### **Interpretive communities**

In the theoretical framework underpinning this study, Fish (1980) argues that an interpretive community is a group of like-minded individuals who share similar assumptions about how a text should be read. Guided by this concept, this study explores students' interpretations of and responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. This section will explore the following subject topics: examine the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's themes so as to ascertain if students received the intended messages, what they recalled, the differences and similarities in the interpretation of the messages between students and the campaign, how students felt about the messages, and how appropriate or inappropriate the messages are to students on campuses. Data was elicited through interviews with 96 students, three Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers, and from my observations of three campaign events and two workshops.

#### *Consistent and correct condom use*

Messages from both the Scrutinise Campus Campaign drama and animated commercials addressed condom efficacy in the prevention of HIV infection. At the Scrutinise Campus Campaign event held at Howard College, students said that it was dramatised that there are male and female condoms and if properly used can prevent HIV infection:

*We are told to use the rubbers (condoms) because they can block the HIV ninja. They are effective and can protect you from HIV infection. They said that the goodness of the rubber has been scrutinised (tested) and evidence shows that they can protect us, so, we need to scrutinise and use them (Kesh, Indian, male postgraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).*

This response seems to suggest that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages promote the efficacy and effectiveness of condoms. In addition, Kesh's response seems to distinguish the protection students would get under actual or real life conditions that depends on the quality of

the condoms, and the influence of students' behaviour in making the condom work effectively. Thus, condom effectiveness in the campaign's message is used to refer to the level of protection against HIV when condoms are used consistently and correctly.

About 87% of the respondents said that they know that condoms can prevent HIV infection but their problem is using them:

*They told us that condoms can be ninety percent efficacious in reducing the risk of HIV infection, but our problem on campuses is to use them all the times we have sex, we get the message but our challenge is to use them you see* (Samuel, black male undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

This response shows that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on condom use are appropriate for students on campuses because they engage in unprotected sex. In spite of this, students' interpretation of the condom messages highlights one part of the message on the effectiveness of the condoms to prevent HIV. Thus, their interpretation leaves out the aspect of consistent and correct condom use. Only 9% of the respondents recalled the aspect of using condoms correctly and consistently with all partners as critical in the prevention of HIV. Thus, it can be argued that the majority (91%) of the respondents seem not to grasp the comprehensive message intended by the campaign that condoms are effective in preventing HIV infection if used correctly and consistently. The high number of students who did not recall the second part of the message supports the theory of the Interpretive Communities that explains that communities are interpretive entities with their own lenses of perceiving and interpreting a phenomenon. Simply put, communities in this case are campuses that are a collectivity of students who have their own way of interpreting condom messages. A black female undergraduate student at a campaign that was held at Steve Biko Campus supports this finding when she said:

*These messages on condoms are good because many students on campuses engage in high-risk sexual practices, but eishi, very few use condoms because ijazi lomkhwe-nyane lichipisa ukujabulela ucansi* (condoms reduce the pleasure of sex) (students laughed) (Thembile, interview 2009).

This response represents many other students who seem to believe in the effectiveness of condoms on the ideal level and not in real life because they do not use them saying they reduce sexual pleasure. This finding is in agreement with the finding in Chapter Seven where students argued that having sex using a condom reduces sexual pleasure and makes sex unnatural. At the Scrutinise Campus Campaign event that was held at Pietermaritzburg Campus, 78% of the respondents said that they do not use condoms because they trust their partners. This seems to suggest that once students have developed trust for each other they do not use condoms making the question of consistent and correct condom use null and void. In addition, this study in Chapter Seven found that students are more concerned about pregnancy which can be seen by people and may make them feel embarrassed on campuses. About 77% of the female respondents, mostly Indians said that they are more concerned about pregnancy than HIV infection because it can make their parents throw them out from their homes. Thus, students use pregnancy prevention pills and have unprotected sex because their main concern is dealt with the pill.

Out of the 96 respondents, 7 recalled that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign deals with myths that make students not to use condoms. During the public interactive discussion that followed the animated commercial on condom use at the Scrutinise Campus Campaign event at Steve Biko Campus, I observed the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers debunking condom myths and told students to use condoms consistently and correctly. This finding somehow shows how misguided the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are on condom use. They do not address students' main concern that condoms reduce sexual pleasure hence engage in unprotected sex. This finding suggests that students' desire for sexual pleasure is given primacy than the risk of HIV infection.

During the Scrutinise Campus Campaign event in Pietermaritzburg, both drama and interactive public discussion messages encouraged students especially females to use condoms even when on pregnancy prevention pills: *Use condoms even when on pills to prevent HIV since pills are for preventing pregnancy. We must scrutinise HIV and flip it to victory* (Male drama performer, live event 2009). Interestingly, 85% of the female respondents interviewed recalled this message compared to 11% males who did. This seems to insinuate that messages on pills are not meaningful to male students because they do not affect them directly compared to their

counterparts. Students seem to remember messages that are closer to their interests, than those that are far from their immediate welfare. This echoes the need for audience segmentation so that the campaign can effectively target specific populations of students and attenuate their sexual risk behaviour. My findings seem to suggest that segmentation of students' population can help determine which students' subpopulations to target, and then provide useful data on preferences, values, and lifestyles of the individuals in these subpopulations. For instance, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign can specifically target freshers or rather first years who are ignorant about the risk of HIV on campuses or target senior students who take advantage of first year students. The campaign should also target gay students and other subgroups in campuses. By viewing students in this context, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign can create appealing messages about the effectiveness of condoms and resonate with students engaging in unprotected sex.

The low percentage of male students who recalled the pill message seem to resonate the finding in Chapter Seven where students explained that they do not perceive sex without using a condom risky because their decision to have or not have sex is based on the physical appearance of a partner. About 76% of the respondents mentioned that condoms are not appealing to students because they loosen their grip and slip off, and sometimes break even when used carefully.

On the whole, messages on correct and consistent condom use are reasonable because in Chapter Seven this study found that students engage in unprotected sex making them susceptible to HIV infection (see page 113). However, students' concern is that they engage in unprotected sex because they believe that condoms lessen sexual pleasure. Other students said that unprotected sex is what defines their gender identity as real men. This study seem to suggest that in as much as the Scrutinise Campus Campaign addresses the efficacy and effectiveness of condoms, it does not address the reasons student do not use condoms or engage in unprotected sex. The fact that students reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages promote condom use shows that somehow it is addressing the importance of condom use.

### *Secret sexual partners*

When students were asked to recall the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages, 70% reported that they are informed that in South Africa there are many people who are not faithful to their

sexual partners. Students said that through comedy and drama they were informed that unfaithfulness leads to multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships making them susceptible to HIV infection:

*I think the Scrutinise Campus Campaign message is clear. It informs us that having many sexual partners puts us at risk of HIV infection. Thus, I strongly feel that there is a need for us to be faithful to our partners because if we are infected then our partners will be at risk as well. For me this message is challenging our sexual lifestyles on campuses (Anderson, coloured male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).*

This perception shows that some students are now aware of the risk of having many sexual partners. About 91% of the respondents recalled that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign teaches them about the risk of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships:

*The campaign is underscoring the risk of having many sexual partnerships especially those that overlap over time. Some of us have sexual relationships that begin before the other ends. I totally agree with the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages because there are many students who have multiple and concurrent sexual partners on campuses. There is just too much cheating and double crossing of partners (Thobile, black female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

Thobile's perspective is in agreement with Fish's (1980:23) explanation that when the majority of the community interpret a text in a particular way then it is aware of what is happening at that time and its repercussion, if there is any.

Interestingly, 78% of the students mentioned that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign teaches them that HIV is like a computer virus, once it has entered into a computer network it spreads rapidly from one computer to the next unless one has a powerful virus protection programme:

*Ngokwami (for me) the message is telling us to have an ESET NOD32 Antivirus (University of KwaZulu-Natal antivirus software) by having one exclusive sexual*

*partner and using condoms* (Fontein, black male postgraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009)

Fontein's response suggests that students have their own way of interpreting and recounting the messages on undercover lovers that is different from the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's perspective. The bottom line is that the campaign's messages are appropriate to students on campuses because they address undercover sexual relationships that make students susceptible to HIV infection. Besides, in Chapter Seven this study identified multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships as high-risk sexual behaviour students engage in (see page 114). However, the way students interpret faithfulness and multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships suggest that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are negotiated or misconstrued. Bernard, a black postgraduate student from Howard College put students' interpretation into context:

*The Scrutinise Campus Campaign's message on sexual partnering is good, however I should mention that on campuses to be faithful to your partner does not mean to have one sexual partner as portrayed by the campaign (I probed further for more insight). To be faithful on campuses means that you have one main partner who is publicly recognised by your fellow students, but you can still have another or other secreete partners not known to your main partner (interview 2009).*

This interpretation seems to suggest that as long as the main partner does not know that their boyfriend or girlfriend has another partner, then one is faithful to the main partner. Being faithful is take to mean being able to keep the other relationship secret from the main partner (see also Mulwo, 2010). Similarly, students said that one is not said to have multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships if other partners are not known by the main partner. In other words, if the cheating partner keeps the other relationship/s secret, still consider herself or himself faithful to the main partner. This is related to the finding in Chapter Seven where students reported that they have open sexual relationships where a partner is free to tell or not tell his or her main partner about their other partners. The same applies to being single. Interestingly, 67% of the respondents reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign dramatised the advantages of being single:

*We are informed about the benefits to flying solo (being single) as well that it saves one from worrying about HIV infection because you are not in a relationship with anyone (Teddy, white male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

Interestingly, respondents explained that to be single on campuses does not mean that a student is not dating someone or not having sex as interpreted by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. Students said to be single means that they are not married, living together or going steady with someone, but they may have many different types of sexual partnerships:

*To be single means not being in a relationship with a particular person such that I have the liberty of doing anything and going anywhere without having to check-in with anyone. It is an opportunity to takeaway (having sex with any person one wants) and time to get to know my sexuality (Chadiwe, female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

The finding on how students interpret being single resonates with the explanation of the Interpretive Community Theory that individuals are not passive and do not just accept messages communicated but interpret the message according to their own understanding of the message and their behaviour. This is what Hall (1980) in the theoretical framework underpinning this study calls the negotiated meaning because students negotiate the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. In other words, students tend to agree with the idea of the risk of secrete sexual partners but also disagree with it because they interpret it a way that reduces their perception of the risk involved.

It is important to note that drama messages and public interaction discussions attributes multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships mainly to economic contexts:

*Undercover lover partnerships are common on campuses because of economic considerations and substance abuse. Students have undercover lovers because they want to have access to cash, clothes, and red carpet life (The Scrutinise Campus Campaign officer at Steve Biko Campus, public interaction discussion, 2009).*

When students were asked about the underlying factors the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is addressing that prompts undercover lover relationships, 65% of the respondents said it addresses students' pursuit for material wealth, and 67% mentioned abuse of alcohol and drugs. This is in agreement with the response of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officer who mentioned economic consideration and substance abuse as instigators of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships. In addition, students in Chapter Seven reported multisystemic factors including desire for physical beauty, sexual pleasure, incompatible private parts, unfaithfulness, lack of trust, lack of good sex, pursuit for long term relationships, sex ratios, fusion of cultures, negative peer influence, competition for social status, among others that influence students' sexual risk-taking behaviour. My findings suggest that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages do not comprehensively address the instigators of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships among students on campuses.

#### *Deceitful love words*

About 57% of the respondents reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign highlights the risk of deceitful love words. Ayanda, a black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, said that:

*The campaign is about scrutinising (examining) love words because what is true for one person may not be true for another. We are easily deceived you know by people who claim to have money and promise us endless care and love that is not achievable. So, to me the message is just what we need to hear so that we can challenge deceptive men (interview 2009).*

This account suggests that both the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and students perceive deceitful words to be sexual risk factors. About 51% of the respondents were able to recall that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign teaches them to be cautious with love words people use. Julia, a white female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg interpreted the message this way:

*We were informed to examine the crafty words people use to charm others into sexual relationships. I like the message because older people use sweet words to*

*get sex from students. We have an epidemic of treacherous partners especially men. Keep it up scrutinise, maybe we can learn to be careful not be swept off into the hands of older partners (interview 2009).*

This finding suggests that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign encourages students not to fall prey to love words that can place pressure on them to have sex. My findings show that 60% of the respondents said that the campaign's messages on deceitful love words are appropriate because a lot of students are unfaithful to their partners: *There are few students who are really committed to monogamous relationships. The majority of us are big cheats and first class sexual con artists* (Sifiso, black male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009). This reinforces our earlier finding that students cheat in relationships hence interpret faithfulness to mean different things not promoted by the campaign. This confirms students' responses in Chapter Seven that they cheat their partners as a way of settling scores with their partners who are cheating on them. In other words, whatever the circumstance, cheating seems to be common on campuses. Another component to this kind of sexual risk behaviour is that upon discovering that their partners are cheating on them they get hurt and revenge by getting another sexual partner without breaking up with the first partner.

I also found that 61% of the respondents reported that they are informed on how unfaithfulness is triggered by being lonely, not being satisfied within their existing relationships, and due to negative peer influence. About 56% of the respondents mentioned disappointment by their partners as a risk factor to deceitful sexual behaviour being addressed by the campaign:

*Eishi, the campaign? It deals with the issue of disappointment in relationships. But it is too simplistic in addressing risk factors to deceitful words. I feel there is more than what is communicated in the messages (some students intruded that the campaign was good. I butt in and told them that he was entitled to his opinion) Lyabonga (thanks), what was I saying? (students laughed and some said aibo! I again interjected and reminded the respondent what he was talking about) Yes, you see the messages are too basic, the issue of ubungagala (masculinity), access to imali (money), and desire for sexual pleasure are not addressed (Peter, a black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

This response suggests that there are other risk factors to students' deceitful words not addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. This finding resonates with Chapter Seven where multisystemic risk factors including the risk of competition for social status, influence of living in different locations with their partners, lack of basic needs, and alcohol are mentioned as strong influences to their deceitful sexual behaviour.

The Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on deceitful love words are appropriate for students on campuses because the majority of students in Chapter Seven reported that cheating in relationships is rampant on campuses. Nevertheless, the fact that students reported several instigators of their deceitful behaviour not addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign shows that its messages are lacking in content. This suggests that the campaign is more focused in addressing risk practices, and fails to effectively deal with risk factors to students' deceitful sexual behaviour.

#### *Alcohol abuse*

My study found that 87% of the respondents reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign underscores the risk of alcohol abuse. Students said that the campaign encourages them to desist from abusing alcohol because it influences their sexual risk behaviour:

*Well, I don't know how to say it. I heard the usual things that alcohol affects our brain that controls reasoning and judgment such that we engage in high-risk sex. I appreciate the message but come on, everyone says this, and no one dares find out why we drink the way we do, or at least give us strategies to overcome drinking rather sing about the risk we know (Martin, a coloured male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

This view suggests that the messages on alcohol present nothing new to students because they are already aware that alcohol sedates their inhibitory abilities. Thus, they would rather be informed on how to deal with their risky drinking habits. About 73% of the students recalled that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign informs them that alcohol abuse can influence them to have many sexual partners, 70% said that alcohol can make them more likely to have casual sex, and

80% recalled that the campaign said that alcohol can influence them to less likely use condoms and more likely to be exposed to HIV:

*I remember the sketch on how alcohol can lead us to do certain things we cannot do when sober. This message iraiti (is alright) because I know the things I have done under the influence of ibucwala (alcohol) that I wouldn't want to share to everyone here (Students laughed and saying, tell us umfanyana (boy). Alcohol makes you fail to think rationally and have less fear of getting infected with HIV. After taking more than enough of heineken or guinness you can sleep with several girls without using condoms, it does not matter at that time (Thabo, a black male undergraduate student at Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

Thabo's experience suggests that students agree to the campaign's messages that alcohol abuse leads to sexual risk behaviour. The agreement in the risk involved in alcohol abuse supports what Hall (1980) calls dominant reading in the sense that students take away the meaning from the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. However, agreeing is not equals to translating messages into action because only a handful of the respondents, 7% said that they drink with moderation after being exposed to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages.

An examination of students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages addressing the underlying influences to their sexual risk behaviour instigated by alcohol abuse shows that, 67% remembered negative peer influence, and 78% recalled attending late night parties. Factors found to instigate students' alcohol abuse in Chapter Seven include the influence of having paid work which means extra money to spend, and belief that the majority of student drink, and belief that alcohol is a quick destressor. The finding this study is advancing is that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign addresses the risk of alcohol abuse but fails to deal with some of the underlying risk factors to alcohol abuse. Furthermore, it does not explore and inform students on strategies for overcoming alcohol abuse. This demonstrates that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages to some extent do connect with students' drinking behaviour on campuses.

### *Age-disparate sexual relationships*

Data collected from students through in-depth and focus group interviews show that 86% of the respondents said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign deals with the practice of having sexual relationships with older partners. In an interactive public discussion at Pietermaritzburg Campus, I observed that students were informed about the risk of age-disparate sexual relationships. Students were told not exchange sex for money or material goods promised to them by older partners because they make them vulnerable to HIV infection. This is in agreement with what Vulile who has attended two campaign events said:

*At all the two campaign events I attended they dramatised the high-risk of age-disparate sexual relationships, and I am in agreement with the message because experience has taught me the risk involved in age disparate sex. I have had multiple age-disparate sexual relationships one on campus and two off campus. Poor health made to go for HIV test and my results are positive. I was damn depressed, and I did no want to live anymore. I am not blaming anyone but myself because I was so naïve about university life. The message is well-timed because sometimes as female students we think we are HIV invincible and use sex as a valued resource and strategy to gain gifts and favours from older partners (Black female undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).*

Vulile's view represents many other students who recalled that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages deal with the risk of age disparate sex. To some extent, this finding suggests that students are not coerced to engage in age-disparate sexual relationships. For instance, about 69% of the female respondents argued that they are not pressurised into age-disparate sexual relationship. Instead, they choose to use their sexuality as a way of maintaining control over their older partners. This finding reiterates students' reports in Chapter Seven that they are not passive victims, but consciously engage in sex with older partners to meet both their needs and wants.

In addition, students identified different underlying factors to age-disparate sexual relationships addressed by the campaign including drive for material wealth (87%), belief that sex offers an

opportunity to try out a range of men or women (56%), negative peer influence (89%), competition for social status (90%), and lack of attention (58%) as strong risk factors. In Chapter Seven this study also identified other risk factors to age-disparate sexual relationships in addition to those addressed by the campaign. These include desire for wealth, dissatisfaction and nagging in relationships, shift in the understanding of sexual relationships, lack of trust, lack of care, joining universities as adolescents, and other multisystemic factors that encourage age-disparate sexual relationships.

The argument this study is advancing is that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages deal with the practice of age-disparate sexual relationships and more than half of their underlying factors. This shows that messages offered to students on the risk of age-disparate sexual relationships are comprehensive. On the other hand, there is need for the campaign to widen its scope so as to deal with other risk factors identified in Chapter Seven that are in the same way strong factors that encourage age-disparate sexual relationships on campuses.

#### *Undercover HIV*

About 70% of the respondents recalled that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign communicates messages on how HIV invades the body. Nale, a black female undergraduate student from Howard College represents 85% of the respondents' responses, said:

*They explained to us how HIV gets into the body and that the first two to six weeks after infection a person might think he or she has flu or might feel and look completely fine. This is because the virus is undercover marching into, and attacking the body (interview 2009).*

This suggests that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign addresses the risk of HIV in particular its effect on the human immunological system. Students also said that they are informed on how the immune system recognises HIV, leads the defence strategy of the body through antibodies. Sifiso, a black male undergraduate student from Howard College put this finding in perspective:

*Umyalezo onyukhumbulayo ukuthi HIV (the message I remember most is that HIV) can be found in the body fluids such as igazi (blood), idlozi (semen),*

*isibumbhu or nkomozi (vagina) and other fluids containing blood. The campaign also highlights the behaviour that can place us at risk of HIV such as having sex with more than one sexual partner, having one night stands, and having sex without using a condom what some of us do (interview 2009).*

This response suggests the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's message on undercover HIV address the fact of where is found.

When students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are compared to the objective of the campaign to address risk of injecting of illegal drugs, 86% of the respondents were not able recall whether the campaign addresses the risk of sharing needles when injecting drugs. Students were also not able to remember if the campaign deals with the risk of campus rape in spite being one focus area of the campaign. This may be attributed to the fact that these risk practices are not rampant on campuses when compared to multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships. Thus, injecting of illegal drugs and campus rape may not be perceived as students' real concern on campuses.

It is noteworthy that 82% of the respondents recalled that the virus is depicted by a ninja-like character though in reality HIV cannot be seen. Sibusiso, a black male postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interpreted the undercover HIV message this way:

*Eishi, wena (hey, you) the Scrutinise Campus Campaign has a lot of messages. What I remember and like most is the "ninja" notion that in the first six weeks of the infection it is very easy for a person to pass on the virus if he or she has sex without a condom because of the high amount of virus in the body. The virus is usually in hiding until the immune system has developed "ninjas" to fight HIV. So, "ngiyabona" (you see) if the "ninjas" have not been developed even if a person was to go for an HIV test he/she may not test positive because the HIV test looks for the "ninjas" that the immune system produces to fight HIV (interview 2009).*

The majority of the students seem to remember this message because of the analogy used to explain the immunological defence system. Students said that it helped them to understand the meaning of the message.

Students also explained that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign teaches them about the importance of re-testing for HIV after three months as a way of ensuring that they know their status. When asked why they thought it was important to re-test after three months, 72% of the respondents were able to explain that it takes about three months for the immune system to recognise the infection through antibodies that are produced. Zulu, a third year male undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign educates them that shortly after being infected the viral load is low (interview 2009). The high percentage of students able recall messages on undercover HIV seems to suggest that students are able to grasp the messages intended to make them understand how a person’s immune system defends the body from germs and viruses.

Interestingly, 79% of the respondents recalled that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign addresses the issue of CD4 cell count. This seems to suggest that students’ level of knowledge about HIV is high. For instance, 78% of the respondents recalled that HIV positive people may continue to look well without symptoms and only begin to feel unwell when the virus has “looted” the defence system. Sheila, a black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko put it well when she said: *We are told that a person may still look well but it is possible to pass the virus to someone else if they had unprotected sex* (interview 2009). The high recall rate (78%) indicates that the messages promoted by Scrutinise Campus Campaign are grasped by students.

Figure 5: Students showing the red side of Scrutinise Campus Campaign cards acknowledging the risk of HIV/AIDS (Steve Biko, July 2009).



In addition, about 66% of the respondents recalled that once the immune system is very weak a person is likely to develop serious diseases such as pneumonia, tuberculosis, cancer, fungal infections, and others. Students also said during this time a person is more likely to infect others if they have unprotected sex because of the high levels of the virus in the body. Nearly 70% of the respondents recalled the message concerning AIDS. Philani, a second year undergraduate student from Howard College put it well:

*The message concerning AIDS communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is that when a person has developed Ubhubhane/isandulela ngculazi (AIDS) there are fewer than the needed “ninjas” left in the body while there are a lot of “dissident ninjas” that are unstoppable. To me really I feel this is a hopeless stage because it is a stage whereby soon or later a person will die (interview 2009).*

This seems to be the preferred interpretation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign message because the majority of the respondents used the ninja analogy when recounting the undercover HIV messages.

My observations made at the Scrutinise Campus Campaign event at Pietermaritzburg Campus seem to suggest that students are “edutained” on the possibility that a person living with HIV can delay the beginning of AIDS. This can be so by adopting healthy lifestyles such as eating healthy food, exercising, avoiding drugs and taking vitamins that boost the immune system. Students are also informed about the ability of antiretroviral drugs to prolong life and that they are to be taken for the rest of a person’s life since stopping would make one sick again. Then again, more than 70% of the respondents were able to recall these messages. Vuyo, a male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, said:

*Scrutinise is addressing the issue of embracing a healthy lifestyles for instance of avoiding substance abuse especially boozing that can both make our bodies weak to fight the virus, and make us engage in sexual risk practices a phenomenon that is common on campuses. To me really, the message is sensible and the campaign must be supported (interview 2009).*

The high percentage of students able to recall these messages may be attributed to the symbolisms used to communicate the undercover HIV messages making it easy for students to retain the core messages. The levels of students' knowledge on the undercover HIV are high. However, not the same can be said about translating this knowledge into practice to use condoms correctly and consistently to prevent the undercover HIV infection. This study in Chapter Seven found that students' decision to have sex are based on the physical beauty of their partner not that they know that they are HIV negative. In addition, students reported that they rarely use condoms because they reduce the pleasure of sex. In spite of students' technical knowledge on undercover HIV, they engage in high-risk sexual behaviour. This seems to suggest that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is effective in information dissemination and not in behaviour change.

### ***Students' responses to the promotion of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages***

Data collected through interviews with students and my observations of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events shows that the campaign used several promotional items. Respondents recalled that the campaign used bar coasters (66%), stickers (51%), umbrellas (34%), hats (69%), risk cards (68%), and T-shirts (89%). Students said that Levi's Scrutinise T-shirts were on high demand among students for their quality and original design. This explains the high recall rate for T-shirts. The figure below shows Steve Biko students in T-shirts, caps, and with posters promoting the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

Figure 6: Students in T-shirts, caps, and with posters promoting the campaign (July, 2009).



Other students said that they were attracted to the campaign because they wanted to meet the animert stars (47%), comedians (61%), and musicians and music (91%). Sifiso's response summarises well students' responses, when he said:

*I would be lying to you if I said there is one particular thing that attracts me to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. For me it is the whole package of the campaign that attracts me. The most important thing is that the campaign through drama, music and dance, comedy or should I just say its creativity connects my minds with my body, and then connects me with life on campuses. To me the whole package makes learning at the scrutinise campaign to take place so easily. So the promotional tactics used meet with my physical experiences, I identify and explore the messages communicated to be learned by actually acting them out (Black male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).*

This reinforces the earlier finding that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign used several approaches of communication to get to the diverse community of students on campuses. However, it should be noted that the high attraction rate to musicians and music may be attributed to the fact that students like music and perceive popular musicians as their celebrities. In Chapter Seven this study found that 82% of students like music especially house and kwaito, and easily follow behaviour promoted by their celebrated musicians. About 78% of the respondents were attracted to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because it developed a significant and interactive internet presence. The responses below represent most of students' perceptions of the Scrutinise's face book profile:

*You know what, Victor Scrutinise, the leading animert star's profile on face book had more than one thousand friends. His profile helped us connect with students in other universities, and enabled us to post comments or questions on sex and HIV (Thobile, postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). Another female student said: It helped us to be up-to-date about the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events because it is easy to use (Khanyile, undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

Thus, students like the Scrutinise Campus Campaign face book profile because it created a social network for students across the country in which they shared knowledge about the risk of HIV.

Students also said that they liked the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because it captured their minds using communication strategies such as drama (81%) and dances (76%). The findings in this section suggest that mixed communication strategies were used by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and helped to increase students' response to the campaign. The approach used by the campaign is in agreement with Kincaid (2005:9) who argues that the message of a campaign should be promoted using different strategies that are readily understood, and when receipt is most desired. By and large, students' responses seem to suggest that the promotional channels used by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign were persuasive, credible and beneficial to them.

### ***Students' responses to the sites for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events***

When students were asked about their perceptions of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, 70% said that they liked it for its attention paid to the sites for the campaign events. They reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign used to change the appearance of the campaign sites by putting posters and banners. This made sites for the campaign events attractive and conducive for the presentation of the campaign's messages: *These guys are good at attracting us, they posted banners, posters, big screens, and erected good platforms for the performers making the place look different and fantastic* (Mkhize, black male undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus). About 79% of the respondents said that most of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events were held on Friday afternoon allotted for social activities on campuses, making it easy for many students to attend and access its messages and services:

*They conduct their campaigns right in our campuses. I do not need to jump on a taxi to get to the arena and moreover I do not have "ching ching" money. And when the campaign is taking place you cannot stay in your room because the frenzy of the campaign is electrifying with people dancing and yelling so you are forced to attend you know* (Melvis, black female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).

Melvis' response seems to suggest that students like the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because it offered its messages to them at the right place (on campuses) and at the right time. In relation to this finding, Kincaid (2005) argues that to have a good response to a product or behaviour change, the service or materials should be located where the users are most likely to find them. For instance, if the potential users of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are students, then the optimum location for giving information should be campuses. The strategy of using campuses as event sites seems to have made the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages and services accessible to many students.

### **Audiences as producer of meanings**

In the theoretical framework supporting this study, Fiske (1994:23) posits that audiences are the producer of meanings. He argues that texts need audiences in order to realise their potential for meaning. So a text does not have a single meaning but rather a range of possibilities which are defined by both the text and by its audiences. The meaning is not in the text, but in the reading. Thus, audiences are not blank sheets of paper on which media messages can be written; members of an audience will have prior attitudes and beliefs which will determine how influential media messages are (Fiske, 1996). Using Reception Theory, this section explores students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus campaign's messages.

### **Positive interpretations of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages**

My data analysis indicates that 78% of the respondents said that it was their first time to see an HIV prevention campaign able to draw a lot of students. Jabulani, a black male postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus could not hide his incredulity:

*Students are difficult to bring together and worse still to make them concentrate. But I am surprised that whenever there is a Scrutinise Campus Campaign event almost the whole campus attends. This Campaign is really something, I am really stunned. I like their approach in equipping us with new HIV/AIDS facts and insights to help us scrutinise our own risky sexual behaviour and beliefs. The combination of drama, comedy, music, and dances is powerful and appealing to us (interview 2009).*

This seems to mean that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is informative and amusing by putting forward very important topics about sex and the risk of HIV. It gives students information to think critically about their risk at the same time giving them entertainment. The majority of the respondents mentioned that they like the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because of the good music and dances presented to them. This finding is in agreement with my earlier finding (see page 222) where 91% of the respondent said that music and dances were among the promotional channels used by the campaign. In addition, in Chapter Seven students said that music is a strong instigator of their sexual risk behaviour (see page 114). Conversely, in this chapter, students' responses suggest that music can be used to bring them together, and encourage protective behaviour by promoting messages buffering against sexual risk behaviour. The common denominator to these findings is that depending on how music is used, it can encourage risk or protective sexual behaviour among students.

Figure 7: Celebrated musicians Lebo and "Magesh" performing live on stage while students sing along with great excitement (Steve Biko, July 2009).



A visibly elated postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus said:

*The Scrutinise Campus Campaign is really a cutting edge campaign or I should say a “movement”. I like the blend of music especially House and Kwaito, dance and drama it lights the serious subject of sex and the risk of HIV/AIDS and makes it entertaining while giving powerful messages. Issues of sex and HIV/AIDS are heavy to discuss such that we tend to sweep them under the carpet. But the Scrutinise Campus Campaign makes it very easy for us to openly talk about sex and the risk of HIV/AIDS. I laugh and dance a lot during campaigns (Musa, black male, interview 2009).*

Some students explained that the campaign is good with great fun and serious at the same time. Students explained that they have never experienced such a campaign that is so exhilarating, electrifying, and thrilling but at the same time challenging their sexual risk behaviour:

*I don’t know what to say, all I can say is that this campaign is a mother bomb of entertainment and very serious education. I like it big time (Mike, black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

Figure 8: Popular musicians singing and dancing to a song called “Campus life” absorbing students’ attention (August 2008).



Data collected from all three campuses: Steve Biko, 90 out of 96 respondents; Pietermaritzburg, 94 out of 96 respondents, and Howard, 93 out of 96 respondents said that they like the Scrutinise Campus

Campaign for its messages, and its theatrical creativity. Amanda, a black female postgraduate student from Steve Biko said:

*The campaign is a “banker buster” (I interjected for clarification on the terminology used). I mean that it is powerful; it gets you wherever you are with inspiring and challenging messages. It causes “havoc” to our risky sexual behaviour. But more importantly, it is a campaign with profound messages on the risk of multiple and concurrent sexual partners interspersed with amazing local music by our favourite musicians, and dance and great humour from our comedians. The Scrutinise campaign is a stepping out campaign doing a good job that gets us to participate rather than being bottle fed and lectured to on HIV/AIDS. I really like the interaction between the presenters and the crowd. I am sure this approach will help us scrutinise our sexual behaviour (interview 2009).*

Several students said that they like the satirical approach of addressing the risk of HIV/AIDS because it makes the performance real to their life experiences on campuses. Lubiwe, a black female student from Pietermaritzburg Campus said:

*The Scrutinise Campus Campaign is the best HIV/AIDS campaign I have ever seen. It is wonderful stuff. An enjoyment and education on matters of “low risk” (waves and shows the green side of the card) and “high risk” (shows the red side of the card) (interview 2009).*

Other respondents reported that they liked the warmth of the campaign that it is less judgemental while others like it for its cleverness in talking about their sexual practices in a humorous way that goes with the superb performance giving them something to think and do. To some students, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is entertaining and educative and they do not get bored as it is usually the case at other HIV prevention campaigns. Lubuna, an Indian female undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, said: *the campaign is thought-provoking and messages are clearly put across and keep jogging my mind especially on condom use (interview 2009).* Data from my study further show that 79% of the respondents reported that the campaign is a rare opportunity for them to have drama, live music and comedy especially that there is little

entertainment on campuses. Others said that it engages them by addressing so many questions and worries they have. Sibongile, a black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg, explained:

*The Scrutinise Campus Campaign has messages we students need to hear because there is so much sexing on campuses. I really enjoy the campaign. I like the music they play, funny DJs, dancers and drama. It is usually great up to the very end and I enjoy the mix of serious issues that make us think deeply and the thrill of drama (interview 2009).*

Students also explained that through the campaign they are challenged to deal with their stigmatising and discriminatory behavior towards people living with HIV/AIDS. This finding resonates the finding in Chapter Seven where 78% of the respondents said that HIV is not their problem on campus but other people's. However, the finding that the campaign's messages are challenging their negative attitudes towards people living with HIV/AIDS seems to suggest that it is making students realise that HIV is also infecting them on campuses and this may therefore reduce the "denial" risk factor reported in Chapter Seven.

Some students said they like the campaign because they are able to relate to what happens in live drama. In addition, they said that when they see the campaign's performers they feel that what has happened to them can happen to them too in reality. Thus, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages seem to make students reflect on their denial as a risk factor. Sibusiso, a black male undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, said:

*I like the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because it is for students and by students. Our fellow students perform to us and share experiences that are familiar. Therefore, they address issues happening right in our campuses. At last we have a student driven campaign for HIV/AIDS prevention on campuses (interview 2009).*

This account suggests that students like the campaign because it uses fellow students as agents of their own change. They said that it gives them ownership of the campaign to bring up more talents and passion for the HIV/AIDS education issues. Maureen, a white female undergraduate student from Howard College, said that she likes the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because it

communicates information through live performance, demonstrating sexual risk behaviour and consequences in a visual way.

Out of 96 respondents, 70 (72.9%) said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign offers them an education experience that is participatory and learner centred. They said that it allows them to actively explore problems of sexual risk behaviour and develop sexual risk behaviour solving skills by role-playing various options:

*Thumbs up to scrutinise, it teaches us communication and negotiation skills to examine and then resist risky sexual behaviour. It also helps us to participate in finding solutions to the HIV/AIDS problem (Thierry, a white male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).*

This finding seems to suggest that the campaign provides students a way of discussing values without dictating on them. Other students reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign motivates them to develop a positive way of thinking and behaving as they watch what is being exhibited on the stage and interpret it according to what is happening on campuses. This is in agreement with Social Cognitive Learning Theory that explains that learning can occur as a function of observing, retaining and replicating novel behavior executed by others. It is also in agreement with the theory of Interpretative Communities that posits that contexts people live in has influence on the interpretation of the text and which responses one will partake in, and the actual acquisition of the new responses.

Data collected from the three campuses demonstrates that about 88% of the respondents on average (Steve Biko 90%, Howard College 85%, and Pietermaritzburg 90%) like the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because they are able to dance, sing, copy dance moves from the performers, and chant with performers:

*It is ayoba (good) and ayobalicious (very good). It prompts intellectual and bodily activity you know. Its activities require active participation. Concentration is also often required and it is not easy for a student to stay passive at the campaign. Situations are created for us to share our experiences and this motivates us towards participation. Scrutinise is so powerful that it draws the less*

*motivated students into its live activities making them learn one or two things* (Kanyiso, a black male postgraduate student at Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).

This perception shows that by allowing students to participate, the campaign allows the use of its campaign events as opportunities to learn about healthy sexual life. It seems the way the campaign officers interact with students, both verbally and non-verbally, motivates students to participate. Kanyiso's response also suggests that the campaign allowed students to participate in different ways. This is important because different people learn well using different strategies.

About 86% of the respondents said that they like the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because it is dynamic and emotionally intense. Anina, a black female postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, put it this way:

*Scrutinise drama tells fascinating narratives about sexual risk practices that sometimes I feel are confrontational in their influence. Its stories generate emotions that make me break down and encourage me to re-enact the risk of sexual risk behaviour illustrated in drama and resolve it in a similar way in my own real life on campus* (interview 2009).

This response suggests that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign has an explicit emotion construct in its structures, which may be an important omission in other campaigns. Makoena, a black male undergraduate student from Howard College, said: *Drama helps me to go one step further reflecting deeply on my own life with the likable and relatable characters making me to decide and build who I want to be in my life* (interview 2009). Students' responses show that emotions are central components of their reactions to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. Kincaid (2005) argues that emotions can directly cue specific behaviour, as well as indirectly influence behaviour by their effect on physiological, cognitive, or social processes. For these reasons, attempts to influence behaviour change may require that emotions also be changed, as is often the case with interventions. Dalrymple (1994) gives a persuasive reason for concern with emotions by saying that emotions are a crossing point that mediates between environmental input

and behavioural output. This interface has strong ties to motivational and implementation systems and helps ensure that the central needs of an organism or social system are met.

### **Negative interpretation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages**

The Theory of Interpretive Community states that human behaviour relates to media in more complex ways than passive acceptance (Fish, 1980:12). He criticised the assumption that human beings were "uniformly controlled" by their biologically based instincts and that they react more or less uniformly to whatever stimuli came along (Fish, 1980:17). This is in agreement with Hall's (1980) explanation that there are sometimes oppositional meanings in the way people interpret messages. They can disagree with or dismiss the meaning of the message. In agreement with this, this study found that not all students had positive responses to the campaign, as some challenged the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages.

Respondents from all three campuses under study (Howard College 43%, Pietermaritzburg Campus 39%, and Steve Biko Campus 45%) said that the problem they have with the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is that some students are trying to practice the bad ideas they watch in drama to find out if what they are told can be real: *The imaginary situations of sexual risk behaviour drama portrays are explored by some students to find out if what is dramatised is real. So, they try the tricks they learn from drama performance* (Sifiso, a black male undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009). This response suggests that some students feel that drama can be dangerous especially if the imaginary bad character acts so well than other imaginary characters who are promoting positive values. Thus, some students, especially males, try to be like bad characters and use their trickery traits in real life to deceive others into sex. Students therefore feel that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's presentation may be working against its efforts to reduce sexual risk behaviour.

Surprisingly, more than 80 respondents out of the 96 (83%) said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign was entertaining, but less than 58% said that it was educative. This may signal the fact that many students may be attracted to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign for its entertainment value. Other students said that the campaign's messages contained numerous messages, making it difficult for them to know the main messages the campaign is advancing:

*I think the campaign is overloaded with messages that lack clarity, using a language that is sometimes confusing in meaning and can be easily misinterpreted* (Siphumelele, black male postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).

This relation seems to suggest that even if students like the language used by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign especially animated commercials at campus events, they find it difficult to understand the messages when one first hears about it. Students explained that one has to listen now and again to grasp the core of the message.

My data show that 65% of the respondents said that the campaign's messages were creating irrational fears about sex and otherness by over-emphasising the role of social networks in facilitating HIV infections:

*When I first heard the message on multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships I said to myself, we will all get infected. I felt as if anyone who is in a sexual relationship is connected to high-risk sexual networks and made me to hate social life as the cause of deviant lifestyles* (Tau, a black undergraduate male student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).

What this seems to imply is that the campaign's messages made students to think that social networks were critical to HIV infection than individual, and behavioural factors. This suggests that prevention campaigns should not over-emphasise the risk from the social domain at the expense of other factors from different domains that also influence students' sexual risk behaviour. In agreement Jessor (1991:34) argues that young people's risky behaviour is instigated by multisystemic factors from behavioural, environmental/social, personality, and behavioural domains.

Interestingly, 78% of the students living with HIV argued that in as much as the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is full of insights into sexual risk behaviour and HIV/AIDS, they fail to relate its messages to their lives. Students said that messages communicated do not address their experiences, for instance encouraging them to live positively: *There are no messages for us students living with HIV and one wonders if this is not another form of discrimination. This does not only make it more hard for students trying to come to terms with HIV and manage their*

*illness on a personal level, but it also hinder efforts to fight the AIDS epidemic as a whole on campuses* (Pamela, a black female postgraduate student from Steve Biko Campus living with HIV, interview 2009). This seems to suggest that the campaign focuses largely on efforts to encourage prevention among students who are HIV negative; hence primary prevention messages targeting HIV positive people are less prioritised. As a result, relatively little is said in the campaign to educate and encourage HIV positive students. Motsamai, another HIV positive student said:

*Healthy living messages for the HIV positive students are not prioritised. The messages are biased towards HIV negative students. There is no single message I heard at the campaign event, nothing, this campaign is biased* (Black male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).

Other positive students said that they want to hear on how they can get infected with another strain of HIV that may be different from the strain they already have. Others want to hear about certain mutations or genetic changes in HIV that they have heard in the media that can make it resistant to some HIV medications. This suggests that prevention messages for students living with HIV/AIDS are needed and very important if the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is to reduce the spread of new HIV infection on campuses.

I also found that 59% of the respondents who are not sexually active or are not in sexual relationships said that they fail to identify themselves with the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. They reported that messages promoted do not address abstinence from sex. They said that the campaign is for students who are indulging in sex not the abstinent as it has nothing to offer them. This finding re-echoes the finding in Chapter Eight that not all students are engaging in sexual risk behaviour (see page 185) because it is buffered against by multisystemic protective factors. Regrettably, protective factors are not promoted by the campaign.

Others felt that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is: *old wine in the new skin* (Silume, a black male postgraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009) meaning that it is promoting the same old messages they know from other past campaigns but using different strategies. This seems to suggest that students are not learning anything new *per se* because they already know for instance, the practices that fuel the risk of HIV/AIDS on campuses.

Data collected from interviews from the three campuses under study indicates that 91% of the gay students did not like the campaign because its messages do not address sexual relationship between members of the same sex. By way of illustration, one gay respondent said that:

*At every campaign event when peer educators talked about sex, it was sex between males and females. Is the risk of HIV infection only about the penetration of the fu.....penis into the vagina, tell me is it? Their messages are extremely biased and leave us out. Their messages are a big let down. The campaign should come into terms with the fact that we exist and are relevant to campus life like anybody else (Siyaya, black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009).*

The fact that all campuses under study reported dissatisfaction of the gay students with regards messages communicated shows that there is need in the campaign efforts to acknowledge that in almost every group of students, there are gay students. Therefore, HIV prevention messages should acknowledge and address their needs and experiences. Moreover, all students, whether gay or heterosexual, need to know about and understand the experiences and particular risks that young gay students may encounter. This can help reduce stigma and prejudices which still exist about gay students.

### **Learning by observing models**

According to Bandura (1994), people learn from observing role models in day-to-day life. Modelling influences learning primarily through its informative functions. Observers retain a symbolic representation of the modelled behaviour, which then serves as a blueprint for the behaviour (ibid.). This section explores students' responses to the modelling approach used by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign aimed at influencing students' sexual risk behaviour change.

### **Students' interpretation of the influence of celebrities**

Students reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign used top celebrities that included Joey Rasdien comedian known as "Victor the taxi driver" the leading character in the Scrutinise series

and Campus campaign events. Others include Darren Maule comedian and television personality, Kedibone Mulaudzi nationwide celebrated master of ceremony, Sophie Ndaba and Welile Tembe actors from Generations soap opera, and musicians such as waRona, Rudeboy, Mjava, Lebo, and Cleo, and others to talk to students on the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages:

*We are using celebrities because we want to make use of their influence and charisma. They have helped us so much in breaking the long-existing taboo where people can't talk about sex in public. Celebrities have immensely helped to increase campus consciousness about the risk of HIV infection. They have also promoted Voluntary Counselling among students, and other prevention messages. We are working with many young celebrities who are now ambassadors for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign against risky sexual behaviour and HIV/AIDS (Male Scrutinise Campus Campaign officer, interview 2009).*

Joey Rasdien, comedian at a campaign event that was held at Steve Biko Campus, said that celebrities should feel "obliged" to get involved because HIV/AIDS prevention is a public welfare issue not to be left to governments and non governmental organisations. He said that social figures especially those in the field of performing arts, can draw many students' attention to the campaign and reduce the risk of HIV infection:

*I am participating because I believe that leading figures in society from sports, literature, arts, performing arts and other fields have an important role as well to play in disseminating information on the risk of HIV/AIDS. We should help to eliminate HIV among young people who are our next leaders. I believe that the campaign should have the participation of all sections of society rather than leaving the onus to NGOs and governments alone. So, I want to use my influence to bring behaviour change and Scrutinise HIV to H.I. Victory (interview 2009).*

This response suggests that celebrities involved in the campaign were aware that would provide students with insights into sexual risk behaviour. Students revealed that some celebrities involved in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign helped them to shape their attitudes and

assumptions about sexual relationships. Some said that the campaign through celebrities created notions of what is sexually expected and normative.

Findings in this study show that the influence of celebrities had a “magnetic” influence on students. About 65% of the respondents said that they attended the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events because they wanted to see their celebrities face to face as they were used of seeing them on television. Bandura (1998) explained that people imitate behaviour they have observed insofar as that behaviour is perceived to have functional value. The likelihood of imitation increases when the model is perceived as attractive or similar to the self.

Interestingly, 80% of the respondents said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign helped students to pay attention to the expected behaviour:

*Scrutinise encouraged me to adopt less risk sexual practices because the desired behaviour was well communicated by our celebrities and campaign officers. I really felt motivated to embrace best sexual practices (Sadebe, a black male undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009).*

This implies that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign’s celebrities made retention of the prevention messages easy and encouraged students to live healthy sexual lives.

Figure 9: Comedian Joey on the left and two top celebrities, Lindiwe and Sizwe (Steve Biko, July 2009).



Further, Bandura (1994) argues that effective retention should include symbolic coding, mental images, cognition organisation, and other strategies. Out of the 96 respondents, 80 said that they liked the Scrutinise Campus Campaign because it made representation of prevention behaviour learnt in verbal and image form remain in their mind. This seems to suggest that through modelling, students were empowered to reproduce the desired behaviour. Data from study shows that 74% of the respondents felt that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign reinforced their overt performance of protective sexual behaviour promoted in the campaigns: *I felt empowered to do what I though was impossible* (Sbu, black male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009). In other words, exposure to models helped students to inhibit their sexual risk behaviour.

#### *Interpersonal and public interactive communication strategy*

In addition to modelling, 72% of the respondents reported that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign used interpersonal communication and public interactive communication to propagate its messages. Scholars have highlighted the importance of incorporating interpersonal communication in EE programmes for health to achieve new knowledge, change attitudes, or adopt new behaviour (Sabido, 2004). Rogers et al (1997) argued that incorporating interpersonal and public interactive communication is more influential than mass-mediated messages. At the Scrutinise Campus Campaign events, students said that campaign officers engaged students in interpersonal and interactive communication on messages ranging from multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, transactional sex, age-disparate sex, alcohol abuse, and others.

Out of the 96 respondents, 72 said that interpersonal and public interactive communication gave them an opportunity to ask questions on a number of issues that were bothering them: *I was helped to overcome my doubts on sexual issues that were troubling me for a long time and share my knowledge on sexual risk behaviour* (Liphilwe, black female undergraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

This response seems to suggest that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign gave students an opportunity to share on issues of sex and HIV that were on their minds. It is reasonable to argue that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign used interpersonal communication and dialogue as an

educational form that opened up students to share their knowledge and experiences on the risk of HIV.

Figure 10: Comedian Joey at the centre engaging students into a live interactive public discussion (Pietermaritzburg, August 2008).



In relation to interpersonal and public interactive communication strategies, Tufte (2001) argues that education happens in the process of dialogue when people appreciate that they are involved in a mutual quest for knowledge and insight. However, this only occurs when people involved in a dialogue realise that dialogue is communication between equals (Piotrow et al., 1992). Students reported that interpersonal and public interactive communication made the campaign attractive because Scrutinise Campus Campaign officers and the students were equals in the sense that they were both students from the same campuses.

### **Bandura's concept of unique capabilities: the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's influence**

Bandura posits that individuals learn from their interactions and observations, and named the dynamics that are vital to this process: reciprocal determinism, symbolising capability, vicarious capability, forethought capability, self-regulatory capability, and self-reflective capability

(Bandura, 1986). This section explores the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's influence on students' sexual risk behaviour using Bandura's concept of unique dynamics to guide the discussion.

### *A mechanism for thinking*

The Social Cognitive Theory asserts that most outside influences affect behaviour through cognitive processes (Bandura, 1999). Bandura suggests that it is symbols that serve as the instruments for thought. Through the formation of symbols, such as images or words, humans are able to give meaning, form, and contiguity to their experiences (ibid.). Data collected from in-depth and focus group interviews indicates that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages presented through drama, comedy, singing, dancing, and other forms serve as students' mechanisms for thought on their sexual risk behaviour. More than 75% of the respondents (72 out of 96) said that by forming and using symbols especially words or phrases such as "scrutinise", "risk game", "exponential growth", "undercover lover" "ninja" and other images depicted through comedy and drama the Scrutinise Campus Campaign helps students to be able to give meaning, form, and closeness in space and time to their sexual experiences on campuses:

*One thing about the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is that its messages are haunting us. They keep on racing in our minds. And wherever you go students are saying "S-c-r-u-t-i-n-i-s-e" such that you cannot ignore the messages, and even if you were to ignore them your heart will trouble you because soon you will meet friends saying "S-c-r-u-t-i-n-i-s-e" (Jubu, a black female undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).*

In addition, 65% of the respondents said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages help students to save information in their memory and use it to guide their sexual behaviour. For instance, some students said that they are now using condoms with all their sexual partners because they feel "haunted" by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. By using their memories students said they are able to model the observed behaviour presented to them during Scrutinise Campus events. Thus, the symbolisms of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages provide students with a system that allows for cognitive problem solving and engaging in foresightful activities:

*After attending the campaign, I now plan my courses of action, anticipate the likely consequences of my sexual behaviour, and set goals and challenges for myself to motivate, guide and regulate my sexual activities. It is my life and my choice.* Lungela, black male postgraduate student from Pietermaritzburg Campus, interview 2009).

Thus, through foresight capabilities it seems many students are now able to think through the consequences of sexual risk behaviour.

Findings suggest that the majority of students' connection with the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages is language based and this can be seen from the fact that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages have become common language used by many students. There seems to be a connection between students' cognitive development and acquisition of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages or the language used during Scrutinise Campus Campaign events. This finding is in agreement with the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officer's words: *wherever you go in South Africa, young people are saying scrutinise* (public interaction discussion at Steve Biko campus, 2009). This suggests that the Scrutinise Campaign symbolisms have become popular slogans among students.

### ***Power to learn new desired behaviour***

In the theoretical framework underpinning this study, Bandura (1994) explains that human beings have the ability to learn not only from direct experience, but also from the observation of others. Observational learning allows one to develop an idea of how a new behaviour is formed without actually performing the behaviour oneself (ibid.). Interestingly, students' responses indicate that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign enables them to learn not only from direct experience, but also from observing peer educators and other celebrities that are involved in the campaign events.

My study found that 82% of the respondents said that through observational learning, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign has allowed them to cultivate thoughts of how new sexual behaviour and practices advocated by the campaign are formed without actually performing the

behaviour themselves. This suggest that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign makes it easy for messages communicated to be coded and used by students to guide their actions. It is therefore, valid to say that there is a relationship between the response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and students' sexual behaviour. About 68% of the respondents said that they are learning how to form patterns of safe sexual behaviour for instance by reducing the number of their sexual partners so as to avoid the risk of HIV infection: *I am now very careful in the way I handle my sexuality, no more sexual partnering and condomless sex because I am scrutinising* (Ndulu, a black male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009). This seems to indicate that the campaign is keeping students from risking costly and potentially sexual risk behaviour such as having many sexual partners.

### ***Forethought capability***

According to the Social Cognitive Learning Theory, most human behaviour is purposive and regulated by forethought. Forethought is people's capability to motivate themselves and guide their actions anticipatorily (Bandura, 1994). In support of the concept of forethought capability, out of the 96 interviewed students, 67 said that they feel encouraged by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages to think about the risk of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships. Students feel that they would be equally affected if their partners were to get infected with HIV.

However, findings show that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are not "robotically" linked to students' positive responses. Thus, there are mediating influences such as positive peer influence, parental support, high expectation from lecturers and parents, and others. Nevertheless, 78% of the respondents said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages enable them to manage well their sexual behaviour based on campaign expectations that allow them to critically think about the consequences of sexual risk behaviour. This to some extent explains why some students said that they do not engage in sexual risk behaviour because they do not want to compromise their life. In other words, they want to be successful like their professors and celebrities. Bandura (2001) argues that discernment of sexual behaviour is workable because people have the aptitude to symbolise or rather process the consequence of their actions. Thus, it seems that the process of forming the Scrutinise Campus Campaign

symbols, it allows students to represent future events cognitively in the present. In this way, students' sexual behaviour is then influenced when forethought is interpreted into incentives and action through the self-regulatory mechanism.

### ***Power to regulate thoughts and behaviour***

In the theoretical framework guiding this study, Bandura (1999) proposes that self-regulatory systems mediate external influences and provide a basis for purposeful action. This allows people to have personal control over their own thoughts, feelings, motivations, and actions. Self-regulation is an internal control mechanism that governs what behaviour is performed, and the self-imposed consequences for that behaviour. In relation to this concept, this study found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages provide the foundation for students to acquire social and moral standards that guide their interactions with their partners on campuses. Some male students in the study sample said that they used to engage in sex without using condoms, especially if a partner was beautiful and young:

*I used to be wild and I mean crazy wild ok. But today I am scrutinised and born again in the campaign sense (smiles). I had many sexual partners off and on campus, you know what I mean, it was my way of life then. I was like someone who as obsessed with sex and may be I was, but today my story is different because I am "Scrutinised". I only have one and I mean one girl friend out of five. But I am yet to know my HIV status (Moses, black male undergraduate student from Howard College, interview 2009).*

Moses' response seems to imply that exposure to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages, make students to develop personal control over their own sexual thoughts, feelings, motivations, and behaviour. For example, 7% of the male respondents said that they had been cheating on their partners and they have decided to quit cheating and they are gradually winning. This is attributed to the fact that the campaign is influencing them to develop self-control over sex something 67% of students said they lost in the first semester of joining the university.

However, cases of behaviour change expressed by students are not exclusively attributed to the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages alone, as there are some interactions of personal and external sources of influence. For instance, this study in Chapter Eight found that protective sexual behaviour is influenced by positive peers, parental disapproval, religiosity, mutual communication between students and parents, and communal and personal beliefs. It found that 76% of the respondents said that they believe that it is possible for them to change their sexual risk behaviour, especially if they were to continue to receive messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. It seems messages challenge students' sexual risk behaviour through self-criticism. This suggests that there is need for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's sustained interventions and follow-up to see how students are maturing and thriving in redirecting their sexual risk behaviour.

### *Self-reflective capability*

In Chapter Five, I have discussed how Bandura (1999) theorises that self-reflection enables people to analyse their experiences, think about their own thought processes, and alter their thinking accordingly. One of the most important types of self-reflection is self-efficacy, an individual's belief that he or she will be able to complete tasks, acquire knowledge, or achieve goals (ibid.). This study found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are perceived as a force that enables students to have time for self-reflection and to analyse their sexual risk experiences and change their thinking fittingly.

My data analysis indicates that 75% of the respondents explained that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are making them think twice about their sexual risk behaviour. Findings from my study also show that 60% of the students said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages help them to reflect and evaluate their sexual risk behaviour. Interestingly, 56% of the students in my interviews reported that it influences them to make progress plans for their future lives after engaging in high-risk sexual behaviour. A few students, 7% mentioned that the campaign's messages encourage them to go for HIV tests so as to deal with their worries. The low percentage of students encouraged to test for HIV is in agreement with the earlier finding in this chapter that very few students were able to recall the campaign's message on the need to test

for HIV. Deducing from students' reported experiences, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages make students seriously reflect on the effects of sexual risk behaviour. In other words, the campaign influences students to engage in a process in which they are advancing through cognitive judgment and self-evaluation about their capabilities to address sexual risk behaviour and the risk of HIV infection.

### *A force for dialogue in sexual partnerships*

The Social Cognitive Learning Theory underpinning this study explains that dialogue is critical in promoting health, social, and behavioural messages because it focuses on the principles of effective speech communication in a group and one-to-one relationships. Bandura (1999) posits that dialogue makes it easy to share messages because it addresses the issue of perceptions, self-concept, listening, language, and nonverbal communication as they relate to interpersonal relationships. For the most part, it requires subject matter expertise as well as a solid understanding of the fellow dialogue partner so that communication resonates with his or her needs and concerns (ibid.).

Responses from both male and female students show that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is influencing them to discuss, debate, and dialogue on their sexual risk behaviour. About 78% of the respondents said that the campaign provokes debates among students, between friends, among different groups, and partners within campuses. Though students feel motivated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to talk about the risk of HIV/AIDS in their relationships, 46 out of the 96 respondents said that they still find it difficult to dialogue with their partners. This study found that male students find it more difficult than females to talk about their sexual behaviour: *It is not easy to discuss our sexuality with our partners. One thing I have noticed is that girls tend to be over suspicious and this makes us close the door for dialogue* (Mulauzi, a black male undergraduate student from Steve Biko Campus, interview 2009). On the other hand, Theresa, a black female undergraduate student from Howard College representing many other female students said: *We fail to engage in dialogue with our partners because they become aggressive on matters of sex. So, we just keep quiet to save our relationships* (interview 2009). This perception was attributed to the belief that more male students tend to find it difficult in campus contexts where there is substantial imbalance in gender ratios among students. This influences

male students to find it hard to be faithful to their partners than females, therefore perceive interpersonal discussions as a direct challenge to their sexual risk behaviour. Some students said that through ongoing discussion on sexual risk behaviour on campuses, they have been motivated to make firm and safe decisions with regards their sexual behaviour.

Students also explained that they no longer find it chic or “cool” to boast to their friends about meeting new sexual partners, because they have become aware that this behaviour puts them at risk of HIV infection. This counters our earlier report in Chapter Seven where students said that they perceive having many sexual partners as what defines a “real man” (see page 113). In addition, students reported that having many sexual partners was perceived as a competition on campuses. Thus, the response that many students no longer boast about the numbers of their sexual partners suggests that they have realized the risk of having many sexual partners.

Some students, especially females, said that they are threatened with physical abuse or being “dumped” by their partners for discussing issues being raised by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign:

*We are threatened that the campaign is feeding us with information that is challenging their roles as men and they tell us to go and get married to the campaign that is teaching us stupid ideas* (Mutwe, a black female undergraduate student at Howard College, interview 2009).

This response seems to suggest that some of the messages that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is leaving students with are dangerous in that they challenge gender relations. This suggests the need for a gentle but effective way of addressing sexual risks promoted by cultural gender roles. The findings also seem to indicate the need perhaps for some support afterwards for students.

This finding affirms Bandura and Buber (1998:34)’s finding that dialogue important in behaviour change because it evolves through communication whereby parties achieve a “connection of each other”. This connection between partners allows them to potentially change the other, or be changed by the other. Therefore, it stands to reason to state that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign created the “I-thou relationship” between partners which is a relationship that has the ability to produce dialogue between parties. This study suggests that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is stimulating a wave of discussions on sexual risk behaviour among sexual partners on campuses.

## Summary

This chapter explored students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages offered to them on the campuses of DUT and UKZN. Student's responses to the campaign's messages are analysed using Reception Theory. Findings show that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages address majority of the risky sexual practices identified by students in Chapter Seven. However, the campaign only addresses a few of the causes of these risky behaviours. Findings in this chapter are generated by examining respondents' experiences of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. Using the Social Learning Cognitive Theory to analyse students' responses on the influence of the campaign's messages, this study found negative and positive responses. The study also found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are empowering students with unique capabilities.

Thus, by analysing students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages this chapter shows that messages are tailored in such a way that they address most of students' sexual risk practices and some of their underlying factors especially those identified in Chapter Seven of this study. However, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages do not address the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour identified in Chapter Eight. Thus, Chapter Seven and Eight helped to ascertain the relationship between the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages and students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

## CHAPTER TEN

### A CRITIQUE OF THE GAPS IN THE SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN'S MESSAGES

#### **Introduction**

This Chapter demonstrates gaps in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in spite of its objective to deal with students' sexual risk behaviour. Data on students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages shows that they do not exhaustively deal with students' sexual risk practices and their causes. The chapter is divided into three sections. Section One discusses the gaps in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages addressing students' sexual risk practices. Section Two explores the gaps in the messages dealing with the underlying risk and protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. The third section presents a brief critique of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. Themes highlighted in this chapter need attention if the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is to be more effective in influencing behaviour change on campuses. Areas that need further study are also highlighted.

#### ***Open sexual relationships and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages***

When investigating students' sexual risk practices in Chapter Seven, this study found that some couples engage in open sexual relationships where they are free to engage in sexual activities with other partners (see page 113). Students said that open sexual relationships give them an opportunity to experience sex and love without experiencing problems found in "permanent" and monogamous sexual relationships. Students reported that open sexual relationships save them from disappointment when they discover that their boyfriends or girlfriends have other partners. They also said that open sexual relationships make it easy for them to move away from their partner whenever they feel like and find other partners.

Open sexual relationships put students at high risk of HIV infection because they tend to have multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships that increase the risk of contracting HIV as each new relationship introduces another pathway for HIV transmission. However, an analysis of students'

responses to the messages offered by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign in relation to their sexual risk behaviour shows that messages communicated do not address the issue of open sexual relationships. This is a gap in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's effort to address students' sexual risk behaviour because the phenomenon of open sexual relationships is widespread and put many at risk of HIV infection on campuses. Green et al (2009:23) found that open sexual relationships put couples at risk of HIV, make couples to be jealous of each other, and deny them the chance to gain full benefits of an exclusive relationship such as knowing that your partner has chosen you above all others and is faithful to you. Until open sexual relationships are addressed, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's prevention messages will not be able to influence students' sexual behaviour change needed on campuses because these relationships overwhelmingly value freedom and sexual variety that fan the embers of the HIV epidemic.

### *Living arrangements and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages*

This study found that students on campus residences engage in relationships that may be referred to as "cohabiting" as differentiated from marriage (see page 125). Despite university regulations which ban co-sharing of rooms, the practice is common on campuses within restricted residences. These affairs seem to ignore the rules in order to meet relational needs. On a symbolic level this practice seems to reflect mutinous behaviour by students. But this practice operates within a modern-day cultural space of liberated expressions of sexuality (See also Lengwe, 2010).

Despite the evidence of the sexual risk behaviour promoted through cohabitation, an analysis of students' responses shows that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages do not address the risky practice of cohabitation. The danger of not addressing the practice where students who are not married to each other live together while involved in a romantic or intimate relationship is that it will continue to make students vulnerable to HIV infection. This is because in cohabitation there is usually no faithfulness and this allows students to have other sexual partners making them susceptible to HIV infection.

## **Students' sexual risk factors in relation to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages**

In addition to dealing with some of the sexual risk practices students engage in, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is meant to address factors that motivate students' sexual risk behaviour (Delate, 2009). This section demonstrates the gaps in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in dealing with students' sexual risk factors.

When respondents were asked to converse on the sexual risk factors that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages address, they mentioned **environmental/social factors** including peer influence, community and campus environments, and social status (see page 191). However, some strong environmental/social risk factors identified in Chapter Seven are not addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. These include the influence of coming from rural backgrounds, stigmatisation of virginity, the culture of "gold rush", sexual harassment, conceptualisation of masculinity, living in different locations, influence of gender and culture, blending of sexually permissive cultures, and influence of freedom from parental control. The problem of not addressing these environmental/social risk factors is that they create fertile soil on campuses for students to engage in high risk sexual practices.

Green et al (2009) and Parker et al (2007) found that environmental/social risk factors fuel the risk of HIV among young people in South Africa. Thus, there is a need to revisit the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages so that they can address these strong environment/social sexual risk factors. This is one way the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages can keep pace with the dynamics of the causes of students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

An analysis of students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages shows that it only addressed a few **biological factors** that instigate students' sexual risk behaviour. In Chapter Seven, joining universities as adolescents, pursuit of physical beauty, physical health, sexual fit, lack of good sex and early sexual debut are among the critical biological factors students reported that they influence their sexual risk behaviour. However, an assessment of students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages shows that they do not address these risk factors. There is need for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to broaden the scope of its messages so as to address especially the issue of early initiation to sex because they influence students' decision-making to engage in sexual practices that expose them to HIV infection. Thus,

the promotion of delay of sexual debut should be considered as one important tactic in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages because it results in fewer years at high risk (Opio et al., 2008). Several national demographic surveys have found a correlation between early onset of sexual activity and higher HIV prevalence among young people, who may not be biologically or psychologically ready for sex (Stringer et al., 2008; Gelmon et al., 2009). In fact, older age at first sex appears to be one contributing factor in the decline of HIV prevalence among youth in African countries with generalized epidemics (UNAIDS, 2008).

Efforts to delay sexual debut should be incorporated into the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages offering age-appropriate messages over time. Messages should reinforce positive individual and group norms; teach safer sex practices for students who are already sexually active; and offer opportunities to practice skills in refusing sex. Studies show that such programmes can help to achieve desired behaviour changes without leading to an increase in young people's sexual activity (Mermin et al., 2008; Stringer et al., 2008). The failure by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to address the risk factors mentioned above in particular early sexual debut was confirmed by a senior campaign officer who said that in their 2011 HIV prevention programme they will focus among other issues on highlighting the risk of early sex initiation. This is because they have realised that early sex initiation is a strong biological sexual risk factor (see Delate, 2010). In addition, the failure to address the biological risk factors is attributed to the Social Ecological Model (SEM) underpinning the campaign messages. The SEM does not take into account the biological variables that influence human behaviour.

This study also found that some students engage in sexual risk behaviour because of **behavioural risk factors**. For instance, some who are HIV positive consciously engage in sexual risk behaviour to infect others. Some students said they engage in sexual risk behaviour because they have no faith that secondary abstinence is possible, influence of access to extra money through their paid work, due to extensive sexual experiences, and influence of sexual addiction. Despite the fact that these risk factor are strong instigators of sexual risk behaviour, students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in Chapter Nine show that they are not addressed. The few risk factors addressed include alcohol and drug abuse.

Thus, there is a need for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to remodel its prevention and education messages so as to adequately address the large scope of strong behavioural sexual risk factors identified in this study as high risk factors. The danger of not addressing behavioural sexual risk factors is that they will increase students' chances of getting infected with HIV.

When students were asked to elaborate on the reasons they engage in sexual risk behaviour, they mentioned the influence of **personality risk factors** and these included lack of trust, care and attention, denialist attitudes, lack of satisfaction, lack of attention, personal beliefs and attitudes, pursuit for long term goals, explicit sexual lyrics, and nagging in relationships as strong instigators (see page 171). Interestingly, when students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in Chapter Eight were compared to their sexual risk behaviour reported in Chapter Seven, this study found that the campaign's messages only address a few personality risk factors such as lack of trust, personal beliefs and attitudes, and drive for material wealth.

Recent studies on students confirm findings in my study. For instance, Eleazar (2009) argues that sexual lyrics when combined with other influences instigate sexual risk behaviour. Mulwo (2010) found that lack of attention in relationships expose students to HIV, and Lengwe (2010) identified pursuit of potential marriage partners as a determinant of sexual risk behaviour. Thus, failure to address these strong personality risk conditions identified in this study shows that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages do not connect well with students' sexual lifestyles on campuses. The danger of not addressing the personality sexual risk factors identified in this study is that they increase the likelihood that students will be exposed to HIV.

Findings presented in this study show that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are more focused on educating students on the sexual practices that put them at the risk of HIV infection. There is little focus on the instigators of students' sexual risk behaviour. Deducing from students' responses the scope for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages is not all-encompassing. It leaves out critical sexual risk practices and their causes from the multisystemic factors that interact to influence students' sexual risk behaviour.

## **Students' sexual protective factors in relation to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages**

This section discusses protective factors to students sexual risk behaviour in relation to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. It demonstrates the gaps in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in addressing students' multisystemic factors that prevent or reduce vulnerability for the development of sexual risk behaviour.

An analysis of data elicited in this study indicates that some students do not engage in sexual risk behaviour due to **protective personality factors**. My findings show that 82% of the religious students reported that through their commitment to their faith they are empowered to overcome encouragements to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Findings in this study suggest that religiosity cultivates in students skilled abilities of judging between right and wrong, and between protective and risk actions. Findings suggest that religious beliefs help students to always conform to their religious conscience in their daily actions.

Interestingly, data presented when exploring the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in relation to students' sexual risk behaviour shows that religiosity is not addressed by the campaign in spite being one of the strongest protective factors.

Respondents also explained that having a higher cognitive development makes them less likely to have sex and more likely to use contraception. Students said that the internal locus of control makes them to manage events that would make them engage in sexual risk behaviour. This study also found that students do not engage in sexual risk behaviour because of their strong sexual beliefs, values, attitudes, and practice of abstinence (see page 190).

The Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages do not address any of the personality protective factors identified in this study. Mishra et al (2009) found that personality factors contribute to young people's decision not to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Going by this finding, one can argue that prevention messages do not promote personality protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. The danger of not addressing the influence of the personality protective factors is that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign cannot effectively bring behaviour change needed on

campuses. This is because the messages do not address a vital domain that instigates individual decision making not to engage in sexual risk behaviour.

When students were asked the reasons they do not engage in sexual risk behaviour they identified **environmental/social** influences as their protective factors. Some students reported that staying on campuses protects them from sexual risk behaviour (see page 191). I found that 76% of the students explained that campus environments provide them access to valuable protective education and information about life and their sexuality.

Students also reported that living with parents and enjoying close relationships, parents' education level, appropriate monitoring and supervision, good parental communication about sex and related matters in particular before starting engaging in sex encouraged them not to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Students said that these factors make them to focus on their education and to make right choices in life (see page 191). Students also reported that, parental disapproval of sex, having friends with good morals, education given by indigenous institutions, high expectations from parents and lecturers, and participation in sports encourage them to avoid sexual risk behaviour. An assessment of students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in relation to their sexual risk behaviour shows that they do not address the protective factors identified above that buffer against their sexual risk behaviour. It is important to address the environmental/social protective factors because they enhance the sexual health and well-being of students. By addressing the environmental/social protective factors students may be able to develop their own defence systems that help find strategies of effectively dealing with sexual risk behaviour even under difficult situations.

Students reported that they do not engage in sex for **biological reasons**. For instance, some female students explained that they undergo virginity testing every year determined by the bodily integrity of the hymen. Other respondents said that they do not engage in sex because they enjoy the status that goes along with being virgins. Some students said they do not engage in sex because of the practice of non-penetrative thigh sex, due to entering university as teenagers, and some female students said that they are not approached by men. Data presented in Chapter Nine when exploring students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in relation to their sexual risk behaviour shows that these protective factors are not addressed. This is not a

surprise because the Social Ecological Model informing the Scrutinise Campus Campaign does not take into account the biological factors that are critical in influencing people's behaviour.

Interestingly, when students were asked the reasons they do not engage in sexual risk behaviour they identified **behavioural reasons**. For instance, some said that they were once disappointed by their partners and vowed not to engage in sexual relationships. Others do not engage in sex because they are afraid of being infected with HIV. Some male respondents reported that they have no resources to entice women with. The findings also show that students do not engage in sexual risk behaviour because they were once hurt by their deceitful partners (see page 200). When students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages were analysed against their protective factors reported by students in Chapter Eight, findings show that the messages do not address the protective behavioural factors.

Inferring from students' responses, this study found that protective factors counter risk-producing conditions by promoting the development of students' strengths and coping mechanisms. An analysis of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages through students' responses shows that they do not address the protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. This is a big gap in the campaign efforts to empower students with knowledge and skills to prevent HIV infection on campuses. This suggests need for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to promote efforts to enhance sexual protection factors among students on campuses.

## **A Critique of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages**

### ***Sexual risky practices, risk and protective factors not addressed***

The primary goal of the Scrutinize Campaign was to address the risk of HIV transmission from sexual risk behaviour (Spina, 2009). The findings of my study show that students engage in high-risk sexual practices including multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, cohabitation, open sexual relationships, transactional sexual relationships, age-disparate sexual relationships and unprotected sex. The analysis on students' responses to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on students' sexual risk practices show that they address most of the sexual risk practices reported by students. This shows that the campaign connects with students' sexual risk practices on campuses. However, towing, cohabitation and open sexual relationships are not

addressed, and this demonstrates that there is need to revisit the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages so that they can address all high-risk sexual practices that propel the HIV epidemic on campuses.

Findings in this study suggests that the risk of HIV infection in universities should not be limited to countering sexual risk practices and underlying factors as demonstrated in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages. Instead, there is need to stimulate protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. The value of promoting protective factors would promote full development of efforts that represent ends such as health lives that are valued in and of themselves and to which most of students aspire.

Regrettably, the multisystemic sexual protective factors identified in this study are not addressed. This is partially due to the fact that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are more inclined to promoting HIV prevention; condom use and partner reduction than protection strategies that buffer against sexual risk behaviour. Protective factors are important for identifying interventions that are likely to work on campuses. Thus, it is not overstretching the findings to state that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign mainly deals with students' sexual risk practices, and a few underlying risk factors, neglecting the protective influences.

The Scrutinise Campus Campaign's failure to promote protective factors makes this study stand vindicated to say that it is less likely to succeed in changing behaviour because of its gaps. This is because it overlooks the interplay of multiple protective risk and protective factors that encourage and buffer against sexual risk behaviour respectively. For the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to be very effective, it should address both risk and protective factors to ensure the well being of students. Focusing on promoting protective factors is a more productive approach than reducing risk factors alone. Enhancing protective factors can reduce the likelihood of sexual risk behaviour amongst young people (see also Bonnie, 1996). Thus, the fact that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign does not address protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour shows that it in some way fails to connect with students, a disjuncture that need to be addressed.

### ***Lack of attention on abstinent students***

Besides, evidence suggests that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign focuses on students who are sexually active, paying little attention, if any, to those who are abstinent. HIV prevention efforts cannot be successful by emphasising safer sex and risk reduction messages at the expense of abstinence the best way to prevent HIV infection. This suggests a need to balance the messages between sexually active students and those who are abstinent so that no group of students' population is left out. One-sided messages make students who are not sexually active, fail to connect with the prevention campaigns texts. What would messages for instance on the risk of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, unprotected sex, transactional sex, age-disparate sex, and one-night stands communicate to students who are not sexually active? Thus, there is need to expand the framework for the Scrutinise Campus Campaign to accommodate protective factors that buffer against sexual risk behaviour to engender full and responsible development of students.

### ***Lack of messages on gay students' sexual risk behaviour***

This study found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign does not address gay students' sexual risk behaviour. Messages are biased towards heterosexual students when in every campus there are students who have romantic and/or sexual attraction or behaviour between members of their same sex or gender. There are also students with a sexual orientation to an enduring pattern of or disposition to experience sexual or romantic attractions primarily or exclusively to people of the same sex or to an individual's sense of personal and social identity. Students' responses show that the campaign does not address the segment of this population, and has no specific messages that could support gay students. As long this population is not addressed, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages will not be successful in influencing behavioural change needed on campuses.

### ***Biased messages towards HIV negative people***

Evidence in this study shows that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are biased towards HIV negative people. As a result, they do not effectively promote students' knowledge

and skills as a way of supporting positive living. This makes students who are HIV positive fail to relate with the campaign because they feel it is not beneficial to them. The campaign should tailor its messages in such a way that it is able to raise awareness in aid of halting the wave of HIV and AIDS related discrimination and stigma throughout South African universities.

### *Gender imbalances on campuses*

The findings in this study show that there are gender imbalances on campuses biased towards female students. As a result, female students are facing self-esteem issues and are compromising their values as they face stiff competition to catch the attention of males. This gender imbalance is part of the university trend on campuses under study. Although this gender imbalance reflects well on the education progress females have made in the universities, it leads to difficulties in operational sex ratio because it influences sexual partnering habits due to females outnumbering male students.

This study found that some male students are both aware of their advantage in this ratio and are taking advantage of it to have many female sexual partners, and are less committed in their relationships. This puts students' lives at risk of HIV infection. The Scrutinise Campus Campaign does not address this environmental/social risk factor. The campaign should inform students about gender imbalances so that they are aware of how it influences their sexual partnering behaviour and take precaution. However, trying to maintain healthy relationships between the genders is also a challenge to the university admissions officers. They should find a way of granting admissions preferences to men, not that they would call them preferences but as a strategy to deal with gender imbalances because it is fuelling the HIV epidemic on campuses. This seem to suggest that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages should not only address students but all university staff because they draw large, overlapping circles to how the admission policy is developed and implemented that in the end, it admits more females than male students.

### ***Messages on HIV testing***

This study found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are very clear in explaining the human immunological system and encouraging students to get tested for HIV. This message is important because students who are infected with the virus can have it detected earlier and can have better prognosis. The problem with so many students is that they do not want to get tested because they think that HIV is for other people. By the time they discover that they are HIV positive they are into the later stages of the virus and are more likely to experience the complications associated with AIDS. Thus, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on HIV testing allows students who are infected to have a chance to take control of their infection early on which changes their prognosis from a life threatening infection to a chronic disease that can be managed.

### ***The influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages***

This study found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages influence students": (1) self-regulatory capability making students thoughtful in making decisions about their sexual behaviour by considering their values and beliefs before engaging in any form of sexual behaviour. They help students to regulate their sexual actions based on the standards they hold for themselves and for society. For example some students are now using condoms with all partners; (2) Self-reflective capability by giving students enough self-awareness on the risk of HIV to figure out what their own abilities and limitations are, and to use this knowledge to make decisions about what sexual behaviour they will engage in. For instance, some students said that they are now reducing the number of their sexual partners; (3) Vicarious capability by making students live through other people such as drama performers and are able to learn by observing the consequences of their sexual behaviour. The study found that some students have reduced the number of their age-disparate sexual relationships; (4) Symbolizing capability by enabling students to form symbols of the messages communicated, place meaning on these symbols and then store them for future use in making decisions about guiding out their sexual behaviour. The study found the slogan "scrutinise" remind them of the risk of HIV; (5) and forethought capability by enabling students to use foresight in making decisions; they said that they are able

to think critically through the consequences of their sexual behaviour on campuses before they perform them.

### ***The usage of the PE approach***

Data presented in this study shows that students like the campaign because it was mostly peer-led. Thus, PE should be used extensively because students feel relaxed when sharing HIV/AIDS related issues with fellow students. Deducing from students' participation in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign, students feel free to discuss pertinent issues about sex with their peers. The Scrutinise Campus Campaign is peer driven starting from peer trainers and peer educators. This contributes in making the Scrutinise Campus Campaign popular in universities and many students want to be identified with the campaign. Thus, the peer-led approach should be used extensively in prevention programmes.

### ***The usage of the EE approach***

This study found that edutainment makes it easy to raise students' awareness, increase their knowledge, create favourable attitudes, and ultimately motivate them to take responsible actions in their own lives. For instance, some students said that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages empowered them with forethought, self-regulatory mechanism, self-regulatory and self-reflective capabilities to pursue healthy sexual lives. The appeal of edutainment is evidenced in the huge numbers of students who used to attend Scrutinise Campus Campaign events. About 90% of the respondents said that they like the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. The Scrutinise Campus Campaign's strategies included drama, music, comedy, dances, and others. Thus, a mix of entertainment and education interactively engaged students.

In spite of edutainment being liked by students, very few HIV prevention programmes at DUT and UKZN are making use of the EE strategy (Delate, 2009). HIV/AIDS Support Units and Centres should use more EE for health promotion on campuses. Time is now to move beyond trying to prove the influence of EE in knowledge retention and explore its ability to mobilise and challenge students to change their sexual risk behaviour that propels the risk of HIV epidemics on campuses.

### ***Theoretical quandary***

A critical analysis of the substance of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages indicates that it is informed by the Social Ecological Model Theory which has major limitations especially that it does not account for the biological/genetic influences to students' behaviour. In addition, it does not account for the influence of protective factors to people's behaviour. Therefore, there are hardly any messages on protection to promote values, norms, attitudes, practices, beliefs, and principles that encourage students not to engage in sexual risk behaviour. Instead, messages are inclined to educating students on sexual risk behaviour, thus promoting prevention at the expense of protection. There is need to have balanced prevention messages on risk and protective factors. Focussing mainly on risk factors seems to imply that all students are sexually active and are engaging in sexual risk behaviour which is a fallacy of generalisation.

Well-timed prevention programmes in universities are those designed to promote protective factors. Promoting health development is the other side of the coin, and when both sides are addressed, risk and protective factors; resilient behaviour, individual assets, and health sexual behaviour in students would be engendered. It is therefore critical that EE interventions should be informed by theories that account for biological, environmental/social, personality and behavioural sexual risk and protective factors. These domains should be addressed because they represent the "web of causation" for students sexual risk behaviour. Each system is composed of variables that serve either as instigators or inhibitors of sexual risk behaviour.

### **Summary**

This chapter has established the gaps in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in dealing with students' sexual risk behaviour. Students' responses to the campaign's messages were analysed, and findings show that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign deals with nearly every one of the sexual practices students engage in on campuses. The sexual risk practices addressed are; age-disparate sexual relationships multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, transactional sexual relationships, and unprotected sex. Those not addressed include towing, open sexual relationships and cohabitation. Nevertheless, despite not being dealt with the 82% of the students

said that towing, cohabitation and open sexual relations are common, and make students susceptible to HIV infection.

Findings in this chapter demonstrate that the multisystemic risk factors to students' sexual risk behaviour are not effectively addressed by the campaign. Evidence in this study associated these factors with an increased risk of HIV infection. More importantly the Scrutinise Campus Campaign does not address the multisystemic protective factors to students' sexual behaviour in spite being safeguards against sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

This chapter also points out that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are more beneficial to sexually active students than to the abstinent. This is because the campaign's messages are focused on addressing students' sexual risk practices and their causes by promoting prevention through partner reduction and condom use. Thus, fail to address protective sexual behaviour that decreases students' risk for HIV.

In addition, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are not addressing gay sexual risk behaviour, and the welfare of HIV positive students making them feel left out by the campaign. It does not as well address the problem of gender imbalances that instigate sexual risk behaviour.

However, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are clear in encouraging students to get tested for HIV. The campaign is also empowering students with unique capabilities to deal with the risk of HIV.

However, there are a number of issues that are not exhaustively addressed by my study. For example, there is need to study the chronological sequence of events that influence students' sexual behaviour both risk and protective. There is need to understand the how factors identified as correlates of students' sexual risk behaviour are related, and the manner they exert direct and indirect effects on each other and on students' sexual risk behaviour. There is need to investigate students' most preferred form of EE used in the Scrutinise Campus Campaign and the extent students learn and retain messages communicated. There is also a need for an evaluative organisational communication research to address among other things, the planning, designing and implementation processes of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.

In general, the study found that the use of the entertainment education and peer education strategies in HIV prevention programmes make the programmes appealing to students, on target in addressing their sexual risk sexual behaviour, and effective in influencing behaviour change.

However, future EE interventions could be improved by employing a comprehensive and continuum of EE interventions that are broad in scope and target multisystemic factors: biological, environmental/social, behavioural and personality domains that either instigate or buffer against students' sexual risk behaviour. Most significantly, sources of protective influence should not be ignored when designing and implementing EE prevention programmes and, to the extent possible, both risk and protective factors should be addressed in the interventions.

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

### **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

This chapter presents the general conclusion of this thesis. The chapter starts with an elaboration on the key aims and objectives of the study, followed by a review of the main findings. The chapter wraps up with a discussion of the theoretical and methodological contributions of the study towards understanding students' sexual risk behaviour in relation to the response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages for HIV prevention.

#### **Aims and objectives**

The broad aim of this study was to investigate students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages for HIV prevention offered at KZN Universities. The objectives were: to identify the sexual risk practices students engage in, to ascertain the risk and protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour, to identify the messages communicated to students and how students perceive the messages in relation to their sexual risk practices and their underlying factors. It was also intended to broaden the framework in which EE interventions are developed for students by using three complementary theoretical perspectives: The Problem Behaviour Theory, Reception Theory and the Social Cognitive Learning Theory.

#### ***Students' sexual risk practices***

Data on students sexual risk practices was collected through interviews and observations. The interviews were conducted with students drawn from each of the three campuses under study. The focus area at each campus of the three campuses was to investigate the nature of sexual risk practices students engage in. Observations were focused on how students relate and talk about their sexual risk behaviour. The findings of the study illustrate that many students engage in high-risk sexual practices including multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, cohabitation, open sexual relationships, towing, transactional sexual relationships, age-disparate sexual relationships and unprotected sex.

### ***The underlying factors to students' sexual risk practices***

Data on the underlying factors to students' sexual risk practices was collected through interviews and observation. The aim was to investigate the determinants of students' sexual behaviour by exploring both the risk and protective factors.

The investigation found multisystemic factors that influence students' sexual risk behaviour with reciprocal relations. Findings in this study show that students' sexual risk behaviour is influenced by the multisystemic factors. These factors may contribute to the decision to become sexually active and, subsequently, the decision to engage in risk-promoting or risk-reducing sexual behaviour. These factors also interact with each other, such that risks or resources from one serve to either potentiate or buffer against the effects of others. Besides, each system influences other systems such that one system may serve as a partial or full mediator of the effects of other systems or factors within other systems on behaviour. In addition, sexual risk behaviour may also exert some influence on students' sexual behaviour in a feedback mechanism that continually shapes and reshapes the relations among the systems.

### ***Students' sexual risk practices vis-à-vis the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages***

Data on the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages and their links to students' sexual risk practices was collected through observation and interviews. The main aim was to find out through students' responses how the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages address sexual risk practices. The overall objective was to find out students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages in addressing their sexual risk practices.

This study found several elements demonstrating a link and relationship between students' sexual risk behaviour and the content of the campaign's messages. The study found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages address more than half of the sexual risk practices students engage in, these are multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, unprotected sex, transactional sexual relationships, and age-disparate sexual relationships. However, messages do not address the risk of open sexual relationships, cohabitation, and "towing" found to be high-risk sexual practices on campuses. The danger of ignoring these practices is that they counter

HIV prevention efforts by fuelling the rise of HIV infection predisposing many students to the epidemic.

***Determinants of students' sexual risk practices vis-à-vis the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages***

Data on the conditions that give rise to student's sexual risk practices in relation to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages was collected through observation and interviews. The aim was to ascertain through students' responses how the campaign's messages address the conditions that instigate students' sexual risk behaviour.

The study found that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages address some of the biological, environmental/social, behavioural and personality underlying influences to students' sexual risk behaviour. The Biological risk factors addressed include students' pursuit of sexual pleasure and belief that sex with many partners is more pleasurable than sex with one partner. The factors not addressed include the risk of joining university as adolescents, pursuit of physical beauty, belief that condoms reduce sexual pleasure, basing sexual decisions on physical health, belief in sexual fit, and lack of good sex. This then confirms data presented in Chapter Four that the Scrutinise Campus Campaign is informed by the Social Ecological Model that does not take into account the biological influences to human behaviour.

Behavioural factors addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign include alcohol and drug abuse. Factors not addressed include having paid work, extensive sexual experience, disappointment in relationships, conscious decision to infect others with HIV, and sexual addiction. Personality factors addressed include lack of trust, drive for material wealth, and unfaithfulness. Factors not addressed include "denialism", lack of satisfaction, nagging, lack of attention, personal beliefs, perception that sex is a chance to try variety, listening to explicit sexual lyrics, and pursuit of long term goals. Thus, the majority of the multisystemic risk factors to students' sexual behaviour are not addressed despite being critical in encouraging students to engage in sexual risk behaviour. The danger of not including these sexual risk factors in the prevention campaigns may not be effective in influencing behaviour change needed.

### ***Determinants of students' sexual protective behaviour vis-à-vis the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages***

The intention of the study was to determine how the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages address the conditions that buffer against students' sexual risk behaviour. Data on this was collected through observation and interviews.

The study found that the campaign's messages do not address protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. This study found several biological, environmental/social, behavioural, and personality protective factors to students' sexual risk behaviour. Biological factors not addressed include the influence of virginity testing, non-penetrative thigh sex, entering university as teenagers, and girls not being approach by girls. Personality factors not addressed include the influence of religiosity, sexual beliefs and attitudes, and practice of abstinence. Environmental/Social factors not addressed include campus environments, academic work, living with parents, enjoying close relationships with parents, appropriate monitoring and supervision, parental disapproval, positive influence, home-grown sex education, high expectation from parents and lecturers, and involvement in sports. Behavioural factors not addressed include hurt, disappointments, fear of HIV/AIDS, and lack of money.

The Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages mainly address risk factors, neglecting protective factors. Thus, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages are focused on students' sexual risk factors paying very little attention to the protective factors or rather on students who are not sexually active or abstinent. In addition, the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages do not effectively address the specific risks faced by gay, and HIV positive students. The problem of gender imbalances on campuses that encourage sexual risk behaviour are also not dealt with by the campaign despite being strong risk factors.

### ***The influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on students' sexual risk behaviour change***

The aim was to ascertain the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages on students' sexual risk behaviour change. Data was collected through observation and interviews. The study found that some of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages empowered students with symbolising capability to process and transform past risky sexual experiences by means of language and images used that lead to the examination of their sexual behaviour and decision to act. Through vicarious capability it enabled students to learn from others at the campaign events as well as from their own sexual experiences. Through forethought capability the Scrutinise Campus Campaign provided students incentives and guides for action through the aid of self-regulatory mechanism. The Scrutinise Campus Campaign through self-regulatory capability gave messages/education to students on sexual risk behaviour and guidance to internalise sexual standards. Through self-reflective capability it influenced students to reflect on their sexual behaviour, and evaluate them, and make protective strategies for a healthy sexual life. The study also shows that messages expounded on HIV testing, and students found it easy to learn new protective behaviour from their celebrities.

### ***Conceptual and methodological contribution of the study***

In Southern Africa, scholarly and public attention has been directed to the various health risks in particular sexual risk behaviour. Young people, specifically, have been found to be at high risk for many negative health consequences related to sexual risk-taking behaviour, including infection with HIV, other sexually transmitted diseases, and occurrence of unplanned pregnancy (Dube and Ocholla, 2005; Parker et al., 2007; Lengwe, 2010; Mulwo, 2010; HEAIDS, 2010). As risks related with young people's sexual risk behaviour increase, increased research efforts have been devoted to the investigation of the individual context (Potts et al., 2008; Mah et al., 2008; Carter et al., 2007; Green et al., 2009) overlooking the biological, behavioural and social context in which sexual initiation and sexual risk-taking behaviour takes place.

Although significant development has been made in ascertaining the determinants and consequences of young people's sexual risk behaviour, two key limitations exist within this area of research that encumber efforts to convert the findings into effective prevention programmes.

First, the studies that are there cannot provide a consistent and comprehensive conceptual framework by which to frame a clear understanding of young people's sexual risk behaviour. Without such a synthesis, the extant studies do not provide the comprehensive understanding of young people's sexual risk practices, and the risk and protective factors that are essential for the creation of future sexual risk-reduction efforts and evaluation of current prevention programmes. Second, the designs of most research studies that attempt to identify factors associated with young people's sexual risk behaviour are plagued by theoretical and methodological "pitfalls" that complicate efforts to accurately understand the findings.

The distinctiveness of this study is thus premised on its focus to examining students' sexual risk behaviour, their associated risks to health and well-being and importantly the factors related to the promotion of sexual risk-taking and risk-reduction behaviour. Students' sexual risk behaviour was explored in relation to their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages for HIV prevention with an aim to ascertain how messages deal with students' sexual risk behaviour on campuses.

This study demonstrates within a "multisystemic perspective" the risky sexual practices KZN students engage in and their underlying factors. The study has demonstrated a multisystemic conceptual model that organises the findings into a useful framework for understanding and preventing students' sexual risk behaviour, and protecting students especially when using both entertainment education and peer education strategies. Implicitly, these findings suggest guidelines for future research and the development of sensitive and efficacious EE programmes for HIV prevention in universities. More attention must be given to comprehensive models that take into account factors from multiple systems of influence and their combined effects on students' sexual risk-taking behaviour.

This study illustrates, therefore, that besides understanding sexual risk practices and several conditions that influence students' sexual risk behaviour, there is need for practitioners working to reduce sexual risk behaviour to be aware of the multisystemic protective factors that influence sexual behaviour. On the other hand, there is need for EE programmes for HIV prevention to be broad in scope and target factors from multiple domains of influence. Most importantly, sources of protective influence should not be ignored when developing and implementing EE

programmes for HIV prevention. To the extent achievable, both risk and protective factors should be addressed in the EE prevention campaigns.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

RESEARCH TOPIC

INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR, RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND THEIR RESPONSES TO THE SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN AT UNIVERSITIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL

A.	CAMPUS	1	Howard
		2	Medical School
		3	Pietermaritzburg
		4	Westville
		5	Edgewood
		6	University of Zululand
		7	Durban University of Technology

Demographic data

1.1	Sex of respondent [code by observation]	Male 1	Female 2			
1.2	What is your race group?	Black 1	Coloured 1	Indian 3	White 4	Other (specify) 5
1.3	What is your age? [in completed years]					
1.4	What is your marital status? [ONLY ONE response possible]	1	Married [living with husband/wife]			
		2	Married [not living with husband/wife]			
		3	Not married [living with boyfriend/girlfriend]			
		4	Single			
		5	Widow / widower / divorced / separated			
		6	Other [specify]			
1.5	What category of student are you? [ONLY ONE response possible]	1	Full-time student at COLLEGE / TECHNIKON / UNIVERSITY			
		2	Part time student			
		3	Other [specify]			
1.6	Which year of study are you? [ONLY ONE response possible]	1	First year			
		2	Second Year			

		3	Third year
		4	Post-graduate

1.7	<b>Where do you reside while on session?</b> [ONLY ONE response possible]	1	On-campus residence
		2	Rental house/room off-campus
		3	Off-Campus with my parents
		4	Off-Campus with my relatives/friends

## 2. Relation to HIV/AIDS

2.1	In the course of this academic year which of the following apply to you? [READ OUT ALL]	Yes	No or not applicable
a.	I have attended a workshop on HIV/AIDS within campus	1	2
b.	I have attended a rally on HIV/AIDS within campus	1	2
c.	I have attended a meeting on HIV/AIDS within campus	1	2
d.	I have discussed HIV/AIDS with peer educators within campus	1	2
e.	I have attended classes about HIV/AIDS at campus	1	2
f.	I have attended workshop, training or lecture on Decision making Skills/Negotiation skills/Interpersonal skills relating to HIV prevention?	1	2
g.	I have heard HIV/AIDS spoken about at a place of worship (church, mosque, etc.)	1	2
h.	Someone I know has told me that he/she is HIV positive	1	2
i.	I have helped or volunteered at an HIV/AIDS organisation or groups in my community	1	2
j.	I personally know someone who has died of AIDS	1	2
k.	I have helped care for a person sick with AIDS	1	2
l.	I personally know children who have lost a parent to HIV/AIDS	1	2
m.	I have worn a red ribbon while on campus	1	2
n.	I have worn a t-shirt, cap or other item with an HIV/AIDS message while on campus	1	2
o.	I have received information about HIV/AIDS from a nurse or doctor	1	2
p.	I have received information about HIV/AIDS from a traditional healer	1	2
q.	I have received information about HIV/AIDS from an organisation within campus	1	2

2.2a.	<b>Have you attended any funerals in the course of this academic year?</b>	Yes 1	No 2 [SKIP to 3.1]
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2.2b.	<b>How many of these funerals</b>	None /	1	2	3	4	5	More
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	were for a person you know, or think has died of AIDS?	Don't know 1	2	3	4	5	6	than five 7
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### 3. Media Exposure

3.1	In the course of this academic year, from which of the following sources have you found personally useful in obtaining information about HIV/AIDS [READ OUT ALL]	Yes	No
a.	Campus HIV/AIDS support unit	1	2
b.	Student organizations	1	2
c.	Religious groups on campus	1	2
d.	Class lectures	1	2
e.	Peer Educators	1	2
f.	Guest speakers	1	2
g.	Friends	1	2
h.	Blood donor groups	1	2
i.	Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centres	1	2
j.	Music, theatre or puppetry groups	1	2
k.	Other (please specify)	1	2

3.2	While on Campus, which of the following media of information have you personally found useful for getting HIV/AIDS information? [READ OUT ALL]	Not seen or heard	USEFUL for HIV/AIDS information	NOT USEFUL for HIV/AIDS information
a.	Posters	1	2	3
b.	Billboards	1	2	3
c.	Banners			
d.	Leaflets and information booklets	1	2	3
e.	Internet	1	2	3
f.	Plays or drama	1	2	3
g.	Television news	1	2	3
h.	Television dramas, talk shows, and other programmes	1	2	3
i.	Television advertisements	1	2	3
j.	Radio news	1	2	3
k.	Radio dramas, talk shows, and other programmes	1	2	3
l.	Radio advertisements	1	2	3
m.	Articles in newspapers	1	2	3
n.	Articles in magazines	1	2	3
o.	Murals	1	2	3

3.3	How often do you hear/read the following information about HIV/AIDS	Very often	Often	Rarely	Very rarely	I have never

	being emphasised while on campus? [READ OUT ALL]				y	heard
a.	Abstain until marriage	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Be faithful to one partner	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Use condom during sexual intercourse	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Go for Voluntary Counselling and Testing	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Care for the HIV positive	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Stop sexual violence against females	1	2	3	4	5
g.	Human rights and HIV/AIDS	1	2	3	4	5
h.	HIV/AIDS prevalence	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Modes of HIV transmission	1	2	3	4	5

3.4	Of the following channels of communication: posters, billboards, leaflets and information booklets, what draws you to the message?	Absolutely	Sometimes	Never
a.	Visual images	1	2	3
b.	Words	1	2	3

3.5	HIV/AIDS messages can appear in words only or images only OR they can be mixed. However,	agree	disagree	don't know
a.	Use of both images and words result(s) in mixed messages	1	2	3
b.	Images make the message clearer	1	2	3
c.	Images make the message even more ambiguous	1	2	3
d.	Words alone, are sufficient	1	2	3

3.6	Do you agree with the following statements?	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
a.	The ABC (Abstain, Be faithful, Condomise) approach in messages leaves out other useful information.	1	2	3
b.	The ABC messages are clear and precise	1	2	3
c.	The C (Condomise and consistent use) is biased towards females only.	1	2	3
d.	HIV/AIDS campaigns are biased towards the black student population	1	2	3
e.	Some HIV/AIDS messages, especially those advocating condom use, are more promotional than informative	1	2	3
f.	Effective HIV/AIDS messages should be specific to the diverse student population	1	2	3

#### 4. Student's Involvement in HIV/AIDS Messaging

4.1	Do you think the HIV/AIDS campaigns in your campus are adequate?	Yes 1	No 2
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4.2	Do you think the HIV/AIDS campaigns:	Yes	No
a.	Relates messages that people understand	1	2
b.	Are well designed and researched	1	2
c.	Have messages that are applicable to the youth it targets	1	2
d.	Involve the audience it targets in the design and implementation of campaigns	1	2
e.	Are educational and entertaining	1	2

4.3	Do you think students should be involved in HIV/AIDS prevention messaging?	Yes 1	No 2 [skip to 4.5]
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4.4	Why do you think student involvement is necessary?	Yes	No
a.	Students need to be part of the research, design and implementation of programmes.	1	2
b.	Students understand their sexual practices and are best placed to construct their own messages	1	2
c.	Students are more responsive when it's a message created by them.	1	2

4.5	Do you think the ABC (Abstain, be faithful and condomise prevention strategy is effective?	Yes 1	No 2
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### 5. Knowledge, attitudes and perceptions

5.1	Have you ever had sex before? [Sex is defined as the penis entering the vagina or anus with a person of the opposite or same sex]	Yes 1	No 2 [SKIP to 8.1]
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5.2	How old were you when you first had sex? [If respondent is unsure, they can estimate approximate age]		
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5.3	Would you say that you are able to say no to sex if you don't want it?	Yes 1	No 2
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5.4	Have you had sex in the past 12 months?	Yes 1	No 2 [SKIP to 5.9]
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5.5	In the past 12 months have you been physically forced to have sex against your will?	Yes 1	No 2
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5.6	How many sexual partners have you	1	2	3	4	5	6	More
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had in the past 12 months?							than 6
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5.7	Do you have more than one sexual partner at the moment?	Yes 1	No 2 [Skip to 5.10]
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5.8	How many sexual partners do you have at the moment? [SKIP TO 5.10 after this question]]	1	2	3	More than 3
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5.9	What are your reasons for having multiple partners?[open-ended]	
a.		
b.		
c.		

5.10	What nicknames or labels are given to students with multiple partners? [open-ended]	
a.		
b.		
c.		

5.11	What is your understanding of marriage? [open-ended]	
a.		
b.		
c.		

5.12	What are the reasons that you have not had sex in the past 12 months? [PROMPT IF NECESSARY. MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE]	
a.	I have not found a partner	1
b.	I am not interested in sex	1
c.	I want to wait until I am married	1
d.	I am not interested in having a sexual relationship	1
e.	I have chosen to abstain from sex	1
f.	I am worried about the risks of HIV infection	1
g.	I am worried about the risks of an unwanted pregnancy	1
h.	I am worried about the risks of sexually transmitted diseases	1
i.	I am worried about partner violence	1
j.	Other [Specify]:	

5.13	What are your reasons for getting into a relationship with sexual partner(s)	
a.	Relationship leading to marriage	1

b.	Relationship for fun/companionship only	1
d.	For financial/material benefits	1
e.	Everyone else has a partner	1

<b>5.14</b>	<b>When it comes choosing a sexual partner, which of the following applies to you?</b> [READ OUT ALL. Multiple Responses possible]	
a.	My parents advise me on whether or not I should have (accept) a sexual partner	1
b.	My friends advise me on whether or not I should have (accept) a sexual partner	1
d.	My brothers/sisters advise me on whether or not I should have (accept) a sexual partner	1
e.	My relatives advise me or whether or not I should have (accept) a sexual partner	1
f.	I make personal (independent) decisions on whether or not to have (accept) a sexual partner	1

<b>5.15</b>	<b>How much older or younger than you was your MOST RECENT sexual partner?</b> [If respondent is unsure, they can estimate. ONLY ONE response possible]	
	Same age as me	1
	1-2 years younger than me	2
	3-5 years younger	3
	6-10 years younger	4
	More than 10 years younger	5
	1-2 years older	6
	3-5 years older	7
	6-10 years older	8
	More than 10 years older	9

<b>5.16</b>	<b>With your MOST RECENT partner, did you do anything to prevent HIV infection?</b>	Yes 1	No 2 [SKIP to 5.18]
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<b>5.17</b>	<b>What did you do to reduce the risk to yourself or your partner of HIV infection?</b> [DO NOT PROMPT. MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE]	
	Nothing	1
	My partner and I are faithful to each other	2
	I am faithful to my partner	3
	My partner and I know our HIV status	4
	We stop before ejaculation (withdrawal)	5
	We have thigh sex	6
	We have anal sex	7

	We have oral sex	8
	We use contraceptives (pill, IUD/loop, injection, etc.)	9
	We use male condoms	10
	We use the natural method / safe period	11
	Other [specify]:	

5.18	Have you ever used a condom before?	Yes 1	No 2 [SKIP to 5.23]
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5.19	Did you use a condom the last time you had sex?	Yes 1	No 2
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5.20	Did you use a condom the last time you had sex with a person you are married to or living with?	Not applicable	Yes 1	No 2
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5.21	Did you use a condom the last time you had sex with a person you are NOT married to or living with?	Not applicable	Yes 1	No 2
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5.22	Do you ALWAYS use condoms when you have sex with a person you are NOT married to or living with?	Yes 1	No 2
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5.23	When it comes to using condoms, which applies to you? [READ OUT ALL. ONLY ONE response possible]		
	I always use condoms		1
	I use condoms most of the time		2
	I use condoms sometimes		3
	I seldom or never use condoms		4

5.24	MALES ONLY. Are you confident that you are using condoms correctly?	Not Applicable	Yes 1	Unsure 2	No 3
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5.25	Have you ever had sex in exchange for money or things of value to you?	Yes 1	No 2
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5.26	Do you know of a place within campus where you can be tested for HIV?	Yes 1	No 2
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5.27	What are the benefits of getting an HIV test? [DO NOT READ OUT. Multiple responses possible]		
	To know your HIV status		1

	To access antiretroviral therapy	2
	To protect your partner from HIV	3
	To decide whether to have children	4
	Other [Specify]	

<b>5.28</b>	<b>Have you ever been tested for HIV?</b>	Yes 1	No 2 SKIP To 5.30
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<b>5.29</b>	<b>When was your last HIV test?</b> READ OUT. ONLY ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE	
	In the last 12 months	1
	More than 1 year ago, but less than 2 years ago	2
	More than 2 years ago	3

<b>5.30</b>	<b>Have you ever gone for an HIV test with your partner?</b> [Note, partner is girlfriend/boyfriend/husband/wife]	Yes 1	No 2
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<b>5.31</b>	<b>What were your reasons for having your most recent HIV test?</b> [DO NOT PROMPT. MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE]	
	I wanted to know my HIV status	1
	I engaged in risky sexual behaviour	2
	My partner asked me to go for testing	3
	I wanted to start a new sexual relationship	4
	I applied for an insurance policy or loan	5
	My employer requested it	6
	I was feeling sick	7
	I was pregnant	8
	Other [specify]:	9

<b>5.32</b>	<b>What are your reasons for not going for HIV test?</b> [DO NOT PROMPT. MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE]	
	I do not know where to get tested	1
	I do not think that I have HIV	2
	I am not at risk for HIV	3
	I trust my partner	4
	I was afraid to find out that I might be HIV positive	5
	I am not ready to have an HIV test	6
	I haven't gotten round to it	7
	I was concerned about CONFIDENTIALITY	8
	I was concerned about STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION or REJECTION	9
	I was concerned about LOSING MY JOB	10
	I am concerned about the STANDARD OF SERVICE	11
	I haven't got around to it	12
	Other [specify]:	13

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<b>5.33</b>	<b>Do you talk to fellow students about going for VCT?</b>	Yes 1	No 2 [Skip to 5.34]
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<b>5.34</b>	<b>What are your reasons for not talking about VCT?</b>	
<b>a.</b>		
<b>b.</b>		
<b>c.</b>		

<b>5.35</b>	<b>What names, phrases and or terms or nicknames are used to describe VCT?</b>	
<b>a.</b>		
<b>b.</b>		
<b>c.</b>		

**6. Social Norms**

<b>6.1</b>	<b>How much do you agree with the following statements about the community where you live? [READ OUT ALL]</b>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / not applicable
<b>a.</b>	Students in my campus do not take HIV/AIDS seriously	1	2	3	4	5
<b>b.</b>	Students in my campus are joining together to help people with HIV/AIDS	1	2	3	4	5
<b>c.</b>	The number of students in my campus openly saying that they are living with HIV/AIDS is increasing	1	2	3	4	5
<b>d.</b>	When students in my campus say they have HIV/AIDS, other students do NOT support them	1	2	3	4	5
<b>e.</b>	There are enough organisations in my campus helping with HIV/AIDS	1	2	3	4	5
<b>f.</b>	Male condoms are easily accessible	1	2	3	4	5
<b>g.</b>	Female condoms are easily accessible	1	2	3	4	5
<b>h.</b>	I trust most people in my campus	1	2	3	4	5
<b>i.</b>	Students in my campus frequently talk about HIV/AIDS in their ordinary conversations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>j.</b>	Students in my campus frequently discuss abstinence, being faithful and use of condoms in their ordinary	1	2	3	4	5

	conversations					
<b>6.2</b>	<b>When it comes to sexual relationships among students in your campus, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?</b> [READ OUT ALL]	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a.	Abstinence is a realistic HIV preventive option among students	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Being Faithful to one uninfected partner is a realistic HIV preventive option among students	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Using Condom is a realistic HIV preventive option among students	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Condom use is associated with infidelity	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Condom use is associated with having STI	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Insistence on condom use could break up relationship	1	2	3	4	5
g.	Males have powers to decide whether to abstain from sex or use condom during sexual intercourse	1	2	3	4	5
h.	Females have powers to decide whether to abstain from sex or use condom during sexual intercourse	1	2	3	4	5
i.	It is ok for a man to have more than one sexual partners	1	2	3	4	5
j.	It is ok for a woman to have more than one partners	1	2	3	4	5

### 7. Talking about Sex, HIV/AIDS/VCT

<b>7.1</b>	<b>In your ordinary conversations, Does the following apply to you</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
a.	I often talk about sex with my friends.	1	2
b.	I often talk about HIV/AIDS and VCT with Parents.	1	2
c.	I often talk about issues related to HIV/AIDS at home	1	2
d.	I often talk with friends about abstinence and being faithful to sexual partners.	1	2

<b>7.2</b>	<b>What names, phrases and or terms are used to describe students who abstain from having sex?</b>	
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a.		
b.		
c.		

7.3	<b>What names, phrases and or terms are used to describe students who practice fidelity to a sexual partner?</b>	
a.		
b.		
c.		

7.4	<b>What names, phrases and or terms are used to describe students who insist on using condoms?</b>	
a.		
b.		
c.		

7.5	<b>What names, phrases and or terms are used to describe students who abs?</b>	
a.		
b.		
c.		

Thank you for your participation

## APPENDIX II

### IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

- **WELCOMING REMARKS (MODERATOR)**

I first greeted the respondent and introduced myself. Then I invited the respondent to introduce herself or himself by telling me her or his name, what she or he is studying, year of study, and the campus she or he is from. Then I gave her or him a biscuit, pen, and pencil.

- **PURPOSE OF THE DISCUSSION (MODERATOR)**

I told the respondent that all issues to be discussed were of great importance for understanding students' sexual risk behaviour and their response of entertainment education (EE) prevention campaigns. I encouraged the respondent to feel free to express her or his experiences, comments and suggestions. I also reminded her or him that there were no right or wrong answers hence her or his views were very important. I made it clear that this research was mainly aimed at eliciting more information that would contribute to the improvement of the quality of health of students, and all information was going to be treated as confidential. I then told the respondent that she or he was entitled to his or her opinions. Each respondent was informed about expected duration of the interview (one hour) and a request was made to record the whole interview. I informed the respondent ten minutes before the end of the interview.

- **DISCUSSION**

I set the ball rolling by posing a general question on students' campus life. I then moved to a more specific consideration on her or his experiences of risky sexual behaviour on campuses.

#### A. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR

*Note: The discussion was guided by Jessors' theoretical framework that takes into account the influence of the behavioural, biological, personality and social/environmental factors to sexual risk behaviour.*

1. How serious do you think the HIV/AIDS epidemic is on campuses?

2. What risky sexual practices or behaviour do you or fellow students engage in?
3. What *social/environmental* reasons do you think influence you to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Investigated students' experiences of the influence of the members of the family, university community, peers, and other factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

4. What are the *behavioural* reasons do you think influence you to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Explored students' experiences of the influence of substance abuse: alcohol, drugs, smoking and other behavioural factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

5. What are the *personality* reasons do you think influence you to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Probed students' experiences of the influence of stress, self-esteem, self-efficacy, beliefs and other individual factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

6. What are the *biological* reasons do you think influence you to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Explored students' experiences of the influence of age, sex, race group, and early initiation of sex and other biological factors to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour.*

7. What are other reasons do that you think influence you to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Examined students' experiences of the influence of the media, Money/Gifts, accessibility of condoms, and other factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

## **B. STUDENT'S EXPERIENCES OF RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR IN RELATION AND THEIR RESPONSE OF SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN FOR HIV PREVENTION**

*Note: Having explored the sexual risk practices or rather behaviour students engage in and the risk and protective factors to these I asked the respondent to talk about the relationship between her or his experiences of risky sexual behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign aimed at addressing her sexual risk behaviour.*

8. It has been suggested that students' sexual risk behaviour can be curbed using the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's strategies. What are your views about the Scrutinise Campus Campaign programme?

9. What are the Scrutinise Campus Campaign strategies used to address your sexual risk behaviour?
10. Do you think there is a relationship between your experiences of risky sexual behaviour and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign messages being provided to you?
11. Does the Scrutinise Campus Campaign address the sexual risk practices you engage in?
12. What sexual risk practices do you engage in on campuses?
13. What are the reasons you engage in sexual risk behaviour?
14. Does the Scrutinise Campus Campaign address the reasons you engage in risky sexual behaviour?
15. What are the sexual risk factors addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?
16. What are the patterns of your response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign messages have you observed or experienced on campuses?
17. What are the messages communicated you?
18. To what extent do you think there is an engagement between you and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?  
*Note: The question explored student's participation in the planning, message and material development, pretesting, implementation and evaluation. It explored students' specific roles in different stages of the design and implementation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.*
19. What do you think of the efficacy of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on campuses in addressing students' sexual risk behaviour? What are the successes, failures, and reasons for these? What are your suggestions to improve the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?

**Thank you for your participation**

## APPENDIX III

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

- **WELCOMING REMARKS (MODERATOR)**

I first greeted the focus group discussion participants. Then, I introduced myself and invited participants to introduce themselves by telling the group their names, what they are studying, year of study, and the campus they are from. As introductions were taking place cool drinks and biscuits were served.

- **PURPOSE OF THE DISCUSSION (MODERATOR)**

I told participants that all issues to be discussed were of great importance for understanding students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. I encouraged students to participate in the focus group discussion as I was interested in their ideas, comments and suggestions from each one of them. I also reminded them that there were no right or wrong answers hence their views were very important. I made it clear that this research was aimed to collect information that would enable improvement in the quality of health of students and all information was going to be treated as confidential. I then laid down some ground rules: one speaker at a time, speakers' entitlement to his/her opinion, no side discussions, and all comments to be addressed to the moderator to avoid personal confrontations. Participants were then informed about expected duration of the discussion (one hour) and a request was made to record the whole discussion. I informed participants ten minutes before the end of the discussion.

- **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

I set the ball rolling by posing a general question on students' campus life. I then moved to a more specific consideration on students' experiences of risky sexual behaviour on campuses.

## A. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR

*Note: The discussion was guided by Jessors' theoretical framework that takes into account the influence of the behavioural, personality, biological and social/environmental factors to sexual risk behaviour.*

1. How serious do you think the HIV/AIDS epidemic is on campuses?
2. What are the risky sexual practices or behaviour do students engage in?
3. What are the **social/environmental** reasons do you think influence students to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Investigated students' experiences of the influence of the members of the family, university community, peers, and other factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

4. What are the **behavioural** reasons do you think influence students to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Explored students' experiences of the influence of substance abuse: alcohol, drugs, smoking and other behavioural factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

5. What are the **personality** reasons do you think influence students to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Probed students' experiences of the influence of stress, self-esteem, self-efficacy, beliefs and other individual factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

6. What are the **biological** reasons do you think influence students to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Explored students' experiences of the influence of age, sex, race group, and early initiation of sex and other biological factors to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour.*

7. What are other reasons do you think influence students to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: Examined students' experiences of the influence of the media, Money/Gifts, accessibility of condoms, and other factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

## B. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AND THEIR RESPONSE THE SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN

*Note: Having explored the sexual risk practices or rather behaviour students engage in and the risk and protective factors to these, I asked students to discuss the relationship between their experiences of risky sexual behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's efforts to address their risky sexual behaviour and the underlying factors.*

8. It has been suggested that students' sexual risk behaviour can be curbed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's strategies. What are your views about the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?
9. What are the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's strategies used to address students' sexual risk behaviour?
10. Do you think there is a relationship between your experiences of risky sexual behaviour and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign being provided to you?
11. Does the Scrutinise Campus Campaign address the sexual risk practices you engage in?
12. What sexual risk practices do you engage in on campuses?
13. What are the reasons you engage in sexual risk behaviour?
14. Does the Scrutinise Campus Campaign address the reasons you engage in risky sexual behaviour?
15. What are the sexual risk factors addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?
16. What are the patterns of your response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages have you observed or experienced on campuses?
17. What are the messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?
18. To what extent do you think there is an engagement between you and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?

*Note: The question explored student's participation in the design, material development, and implementation. It explored students' specific roles in different stages of the design and implementation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.*

19. What do you think of the efficacy of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on campuses in dealing with students' sexual risk behaviour? What are the successes, failures, and reasons for these? What are your suggestions to improve the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?

**Thank you for your participation**

## **APPENDIX IV**

### **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ENTERTAINMENT EDUCATION PREVENTION PROGRAMME OFFICER**

- **WELCOMING REMARKS (MODERATOR)**

I introduced myself and then asked the EE prevention programme officer to introduce himself or herself by telling me her or his full names, and the nature of her or his job.

- **PURPOSE OF THE DISCUSSION (MODERATOR)**

I then told the of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officer that all issues that will be discussed were of great importance for understanding students' sexual risk behaviour and their response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign. I encouraged him or her to share in these issues and emphasised that I was interested in his or her ideas, comments and suggestions. I also reminded her or him that there were no right or wrong answers hence her or his views were very important. I made it clear that this research is meant to collect more information that would enable improvement in the quality of health of students and all information was going to be treated as confidential. The Scrutinise Campus Campaign officer was then informed about expected duration of the discussion (one hour) and a request was made to record the whole interview. I informed the Scrutinise Campus Campaign officer at least ten minutes before the end of the interview.

- **INTERVIEW**

I set the ball rolling by posing a general question on students' life on the campuses. I then moved to a more specific consideration on her or his experiences of students' risky sexual behaviour.

#### **A. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR ON CAMPUSES**

1. How serious do you think the HIV/AIDS epidemic is on campuses?
2. What are the risky sexual practices or behaviour do you think students engage in?
3. What are the reasons do you think influence students to engage or not to engage in risky sexual behaviour?

*Note: The question explored students' experiences of the influence of social/environmental, personality, behavioural, biological, and other factors to engage or not to engage in risk sexual behaviour.*

**B. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR AND THEIR RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN**

4. What are the Scrutinise Campus Campaign strategies are you using to address students sexual risk behaviour?
5. Do you think there is a relationship between students' experiences of risky sexual behaviour and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages you are offering students?
6. Does the Scrutinise Campus Campaign address the sexual risk practices students engage in?
7. What sexual risk practices do students engage in on campuses?
8. What are the reasons students engage in sexual risk behaviour?
9. Does the Scrutinise Campus Campaign address the reasons students engage in risky sexual behaviour?
10. What are the sexual risk factors addressed by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?
11. What are the patterns of students' response to the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages?
12. What are the messages communicated by the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?
13. To what extent do you think there is an engagement between students and the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?

*Note: The question explored students' specific roles in different stages of the design and implementation of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign.*

14. What do you think of the efficacy of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign on campuses in dealing with students' sexual risk behaviour? What are the successes, failures, and reasons for these? What are your suggestions to improve the influence of the Scrutinise Campus Campaign?

**Thank you for your participation**

**APPENDIX V**

**DATA COLLECTED AND TIMEFRAME**

<b>INSTRUMENT</b>	<b>DURATION</b>
In-depth Interviews	July 2009 - September 2009
Focus Group Discussion	September 2009 - November 2009
Observations	July 2008 - May 2011
Workshops	July 2008 - May 2011
Campaign Events	July 2008 - May 2011
Document Analysis	July 2008 - May 2011
Data sets	July 2008 – May 2011

**APPENDIX VI**  
**INFORMED CONSENT**

**PROJECT TITLE**

INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOUR, RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND THEIR RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINISE CAMPUS CAMPAIGN AT UNIVERSITIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL.

**FULL NAMES**

Student: GIVEN MUTINTA  
School: LITERARY STUDIES MEDIA AND CREATIVE ARTS  
Faculty: HUMAN SCIENCE  
Campus: HOWARD COLLEGE  
Existing Qualifications: Dp.Ph, BD, MCD  
Proposed Qualification for Project: PhD

**CONTACT DETAILS**

Cell. No.: 0712930109  
E-mail: 208502317@ukzn.ac.za

**SUPERVISOR/ PROJECT LEADER DETAILS**

Cell. No.: 0312602635  
E-mail: tomasell@ukzn.ac.za

We are doing research on a project entitled **Understanding responses to the Abstinence, Be faithful and use of Condom (ABC) strategy in the Higher Education Sector in South Africa; towards an advocacy framework to influence policy and practice for the prevention of infection with HIV among university students.** The aim of this project is to understand how HIV/AIDS information is communicated to students in South African universities and students' reception of the HIV/AIDS messages. The first phase of the project was conducted by: Abraham Mulwo, John-Eudes Lengwe Kunda, Irene Pule and Eliza Moodley. They managed this research as a team. The second phase of the project will be conducted by Given Mutinta and my study intersects with a composite ABC project. My study will draw on this omnibus study in so far as it indicates students' experiences of sexual risk behaviour and their response the Scrutinise Campus Campaign's messages for HIV prevention. My study will explore students' sexual risky practices and the underlying influences to their sexual risk behaviour with special reference to the protective factors an area that is not addressed by any study in the project. Thus, it will contribute to the findings of this joint research project and bringing a new perspective to bear with regard the challenges of designing and implementing EE prevention programmes in relation to students' risky sexual behaviour.

This project is supervised by Professor Keyan Tomaselli, Professor Lynn Dalrymple and Dr. Emma Durden at the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS), University of KwaZulu-Natal. Thank you for agreeing to take part in the project. Before I start I would like to emphasize three issues:

1. Your participation is entirely voluntary;
2. You are free to refuse to answer any question;
3. You are free to withdraw at any time.

The information you provide in the questionnaire/Interview/Focus Group Discussion (researcher to tick where necessary) will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to members of the research team. Excerpts from the Interview/Focus group discussions may be made part of the final research report but your identity will not be reflected in the report.

If you give consent to participate in the study, please sign this form to show that you have read the contents

I..... (Full names) 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.

Signature of the Participant.....Date.....

**Thank you for your participation**