SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN’S MAGAZINES
& HEALTH COMMUNICATION

A Reception Analysis of HIV and AIDS Messages in
Five Most Circulated Magazines in South Africa

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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DECLARATION

I, Claudia van den Berg (née Frindte), declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons’ data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
   a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced.
   b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

_______________________
Claudia van den Berg

March 2013
ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to discover the relationship between health, media and gender, more specifically HIV and AIDS prevention, women’s magazines and women as readers. This research has been conducted within a Master’s dissertation at the Centre for Communication, Culture, Media & Society (CCMS) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2012 and the primary emphasis is on media reception and the way in which women make sense of women’s magazines messages, particularly of HIV and AIDS messages. Therefore, the study’s focus is on media consumption, influences of women’s magazines and personal interpretation of embedded messages. The aim is to identify the role of women’s magazines as part of mass media within a particular field of communication rather than to identify the magazines’ impact on gender roles. My study will discover the reception of health messages on HIV and AIDS surrounded by controversial messages on femininity and gender stereotypes. The main research questions are: i) How, why and when are recipients using women’s magazines? ii) How are recipients perceiving and interpreting HIV and AIDS messages in women’s magazines, and specifically within the context of contradictory messages on sex, femininity and gender roles? iii) And, if and how are health messages in women’s magazines influencing recipients and their interaction with others?

The interpretive qualitative research paradigm is applied and the method of qualitative interviews is used for collecting the data. The uses and gratification theory, social learning/social cognitive theory, the concept of entertainment education (EE), and the women-centred sense-making approach are consulted.

As an overall result, the analysis reflects a positive picture and interpretation of women’s magazines by the participants, but it also shows the dual character of women’s magazines. Contradictions and critique on content were expressed, positive and negative features were identified, female stereotypes and at the same time the enjoyment of reading was noted, and with regards to health messages, the overall reception was predominantly positive and various content elements seemed to be relevant for the participants. In conclusion, the decisive factors for health messages on HIV and AIDS in women’s magazines, identified in my study are: motivation as an important stage, according to social learning/social cognitive theory in order
to enable behaviour modelling; relatedness, originally identified as a third human need within the self-determination theory, which helps to strengthen intrinsic motivation; the dual character of women’s magazines as an on-going conflict between the pleasure of reading a magazine and the consciousness of reprehensible stereotypes and female roles; the sense of female community and finally the role of readers as female opinion leaders. These results present women’s magazines as a multifaceted medium and might influence future research and programmes for health communication on HIV and AIDS prevention.

**Key words:** Women, health, HIV and AIDS, women’s magazines, print media, reception analysis, HIV and AIDS communication, development communication, media usage, media consumption, health messages, relatedness, duality.
INTRODUCTION

The central concern of my study is the relationship between health, media and gender, more specifically HIV and AIDS prevention, women’s magazines and women as readers. The primary focus is on media reception and the way in which women make sense of women’s magazines messages, particularly on health messages regarding HIV and AIDS. Within the field of public health communication, much attention has been paid to the use of mass media to influence attitudes, shape behaviour and persuade recipients to protect their health and prevent health risks (see Hornik, 1989; Wallack, 1989). Recently, more questions have been raised regarding the media’s role within health communication (Barnett, 2006; Covello and Peters, 2002; McKay and Bonner, 2000; McKay and Bonner, 2002). This study follows this recent approach to identify the role of women’s magazines as part of mass media within a particular field of communication, rather than to identify the magazines’ impact on gender roles. The study’s focus is on media consumption, influences of women’s magazines and personal interpretation of embedded messages. In the context of this study ‘embedded’ messages are indirect messages about health and are portrayed in lifestyles, stories and articles in women’s magazines.

Mass communication is designed for large-scale distribution via mass media, to reach many recipients, including a one-directional flow without dialogue opportunities, an impersonal and anonymous relationship with audience and the content is usually standardized (McQuail, 2009: 58). Compared to newspapers, magazines are designed for a smaller readership, are more specialised, are able to devote more space to health concerns than newspapers, and are more appealing to women (Frisby and Fleming, 2005). Women’s magazines have a long history of providing health information, linking personal and family stories with community and national health concerns (Lewis, 2008). The coverage of health issues has increased over recent years, often in the form of health columns, role model messages or articles on health news (Bonner, 2000). Various researchers have documented the importance of magazines as health information sources, especially for women (Barnett, 2006; Covello and Peters, 2002; McKay and Bonner, 2000; McKay and Bonner, 2002).
Most of these studies focus on health issues such as breast cancer or heart diseases, often in the U.S. In the context of South Africa, Sonja Laden’s research considers women’s magazines as ‘material goods’ that are a product of the print industry and have to advertise the consumption of products, but at the same time they are part of “cultural production of collective meanings in which they also construct a range of identity options for communities of individual readers” (2001:15).

Although this thesis is based on national South African magazines, the interviews took place in Durban in May 2012. This choice was influenced by the fact that Durban is a highly populated city, consisting of people from all cultural and economic dimensions. The magazines are distributed within the area of Durban; therefore the selection of Durban based readers is valid and possible. The selection is furthermore linked to the target groups by the selected magazines and can be described as female, between 20 – 35 years old, black, white or Indian.

As a result of a first screening of South African women’s magazines, it became evident that health issues, and particularly messages on HIV and AIDS prevention, were widely covered. The South African magazine market includes a number of nationally circulated titles such as *Bona*, *Move!*, *True Love*, *Fairlady* and *Cosmopolitan*. Although the market is huge and health messages are included, the relevance of magazines for health communication campaigns is controversial. According to Richard Delate, managing director of Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa (JHHESA), the impact of TV for health campaigns might be stronger as print in general and magazines in particular (2011). Otherwise, women are an important target group for health communication campaigns and are addressed exclusively within women’s magazines. Based on these facts, one could ask, how relevant are women’s magazines for addressing health issues such as HIV and AIDS in South Africa? Or, in other words, are magazines an effective channel for health communication and if so, why?

The main research questions of my study are:
1. How, why and when are recipients consuming women’s magazines?
2. How are recipients perceiving and interpreting HIV and AIDS messages in women’s magazines, and specifically within the context of contradictory messages on sex, femininity and gender roles?
3. If and how are health messages in women’s magazines influencing recipients and their interaction with others?

This research on South African magazines and the coverage of HIV and AIDS contributes to the public discussion on HIV and AIDS, which is of important social concern. The findings of the research may also be viewed in light of other research in the HIV and AIDS prevention communication field and contemporary theory in the health communication field. The limitations of this study are firstly the relatively short research period as required for a short Master’s dissertation, secondly the application of a reception analysis and the coding of comments. According to Melissa Hardy and Alan Bryman “paradoxically, the limitations of the technique lies in [...] the variety of coding scheme designs. There is no single way of capturing the meanings of a text” (2004:550). A third limitation of the study is the selection of participants, who influence the results on a personal level. Their individual usage, experiences, interpretations and interactions with women’s magazines influence the results significantly. In order to analyse the interviews, especially the uses and gratification theory, social learning/social cognitive theory, the concept of entertainment education (EE), and the women-centred sense-making approach have been consulted.

This study is structured into the following chapters:

CHAPTER ONE – BACKGROUND: This chapter provides the rationale and scope of this study, outlines the background and the context of HIV and AIDS in South Africa and offers an overview of the industry of South African magazines.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW: This chapter functions as the literature review of my study. It provides insights into communication, media and culture and explains concepts within development communication for behaviour and social change and entertainment education.

CHAPTER THREE – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: This chapter explains the theoretical framework with particular focus on the uses and gratification theory and the social learning/social cognitive theory.
CHAPTER FOUR – METHODOLOGY: Within this chapter the applied methodology is discussed in detail. It covers the interpretive qualitative approach, the women-centred sense-making approach and reception analysis by using interviews for sampling of qualitative data.

CHAPTER FIVE – ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the study. The profile of the participants and the South African context are considered. Six forms of consumption are discussed in order to find out how, why and when the participants use women’s magazines. This consumption behaviour is linked to and discussed in relation to the reception of HIV and AIDS messages. Influences and contradictions of women’s magazines and the interpretation of HIV and AIDS messages are discussed, especially within the context of contradictory messages on sex and femininity. Finally, the relevance of integrated messages is discussed in the light of interaction with others.

CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION: This chapter provides the conclusion of the study and summarizes the insights on motivation, relatedness, the dual character of women’s magazines, the sense of female community and finally the role of readers as female opinion leaders.
CHAPTER ONE - BACKGROUND

Rationale and scope of study

According to the United Nations Agency for AIDS (UNAIDS) over 33 million people were living with HIV and AIDS at the end of 2009, circa 25 million people have died because of AIDS since the disease was first discovered in the early 1980s, and more than 15.6 million children under the age of 15 have lost their mother, father or both parents because of AIDS (2010). Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the worldwide highest rate of HIV and AIDS infected people with 22.5 % and reached thereby 68% of the global total. Although the rate of new HIV infections in Sub-Saharan Africa has decreased, the total number of people living with HIV and AIDS is still increasing. With an estimated 5.6 million people living with HIV and AIDS in 2009, South Africa is the most affected country in the world (UNAIDS, 2010). Within South Africa, the Western Cape reported the lowest HIV prevalence at 16.1%, while KwaZulu-Natal has the highest prevalence in the country at 38.7% (Department of Health (DoH), 2010). A population-based household survey reported a disproportionately higher prevalence for females and the highest prevalence for women in the age group of 25 – 29 years and for men in 30 – 34 years (DoH, 2008). Although several sources show slightly different statistics, the overall message on the importance of HIV and AIDS becomes clear.

A focus on women within communication programmes for HIV and AIDS prevention can be recognized. It is especially strong because of their vulnerability and higher risk of infection based on cultural and social-economical conditions; for example a woman is infected with HIV by her husband, because the societal norms tolerate promiscuity among men. A woman does not ask her partner to use a condom, because she worries about her image within her tradition and culture. A woman is not able to access health care facilities outside her community, if her family or the community stop her from travelling alone to a clinic. Elaine Blechman and Kelly Brownell (1998: 206) recommend that “women-centred preventive interventions should be directed towards preventing violence and abuse by partners, addressing the power imbalances in sexual relationships and reproductive behaviour”. They further recommend including printed stories, role model stories, storylines such as refusing unprotected sex and introducing female-initiated methods to address gender related imbalances (Blechman and Brownell, 1998).
Because South Africa is the epicentre of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, it has become a centre for research and programming, especially for behaviour change communication (see Tomaselli and Chasi, 2011; Durden and Govender, 2012). The thesis offers an overview of the current debate on women’s magazines, with a particular focus on health messages in contradiction to messages on female roles, stereotypes and ‘typical behaviour’ (e.g. domestic duties, strong interest in fashion and make-up, interest to please men, shopping, diet, weight problems).

**HIV and AIDS in South Africa**

There is a broad awareness in South Africa of the HIV and AIDS disease challenges and a response is noticed with new policies and programmes. On World Aids Day 2009 under the theme “I am responsible, we are responsible, South Africa is taking responsibility”, the president announced a new national HIV counselling and testing campaign and policies related to availability of treatments, mobilizing of testing, stigma mitigation, medical male circumcision - all developed by the Department of Health (2010). Part of the government response is the prevention programme, which aims to achieve “information, education and mass mobilization, detection and management of sexually transmitted infections, HIV counselling and testing, widespread provision of condoms, both male and female, medical male circumcision, prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT), safe blood transfusion, post-exposure prophylaxis, and life skills education” (Department of Health, 2010). Central to these prevention activities are media campaigns, media coverage and related health communication programmes, often focused on behaviour change.

Considering a report by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2003) on gender and HIV and AIDS there are important differences between women and men in the HIV and AIDS infection mechanism, and the social and economic consequences of an infection. These differences include aspects such as biology, sexual behaviour and socially constructed gender differences. In the early stage of the pandemic, HIV infection was mostly among men, but latest estimations show now a higher prevalence rate for women, e.g., 58% of HIV-positive adults in Sub-Saharan Africa are women (UNAIDS, 2002). Gender inequalities are therefore key drivers of the HIV and AIDS epidemic: “gender norms related to masculinity can encourage men to have more sexual partners and older men to have sexual relations with much
younger women” (WHO, 2012). Different kinds of norms related to femininity can lead to less knowledge on HIV and AIDS because of restricted access to education. Therefore HIV and AIDS programmes are addressing these gender norms and stereotypes in order to change behaviour to achieve more sexual responsibility, decision-making and empowerment of women. In addition the aspect of violence against women, which is experienced by up to 60% of women worldwide, increases their vulnerability to HIV and is part of several communication programmes (WHO, 2012).

**Health Communication, HIV and AIDS and the Media**

Addressing sexual behaviour to prevent the transmission of HIV is an important communicative challenge. UNAIDS reveals that the majority of people newly infected with HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa are infected during unprotected heterosexual intercourse and this remains as the greatest risk factor for HIV in this region, followed by mother-to-child transmission (2010). Specifically for South Africa drivers of the epidemic are intergenerational sex, multiple concurrent partners, low condom use, excessive use of alcohol and low rates of male circumcision (UNAIDS, 2010).

UNAIDS (2001:13) summarizes the communicative challenges for HIV and AIDS as follows: “(1) Communication is a necessary but not sufficient condition for either preventing HIV/AIDS or for augmenting care and support programmes. (2) An individual’s response to HIV/AIDS is strongly influenced and shaped by societal norms; by their gender and socio-economic status; by their faith, beliefs, and spiritual values; and by the prevailing governmental and policy environment for HIV/AIDS”. They point out, responses on HIV and AIDS communicative messages are not just depending on personal and individual situations, but are also strongly influenced by the social and cultural context of the recipients (UNAIDS, 2001).

Southern African societies are marked by linguistic, socio-economic, and cultural diversity and according to Luuk Lagerwerf et al. (2009) health messages have to take into account the different ways of interpreting and understanding of media messages. Therefore effective health communication programmes in South Africa are based on understanding, knowledge, attitudes, and practices of people from different cultural backgrounds. Keyan Tomaselli and John-Eudes
Lengwe Kunda highlight the relationship between language, culture and human experience in order to construct meanings, especially in the creation of stigma and point out the power of language for health communication, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS communication (2009).

In order to address sexual behaviour and HIV and AIDS and communicate via media, the structures and networks, ownership and shares, availability of channels to recipients and current media discussions in South Africa are of special interest and are highlighted hereafter.

**The Industry of South African Magazines**

The overall media landscape in South Africa is diverse, complex, still growing and one of the largest in Africa (MDDA, 2009). Since the demise of Apartheid the South African media landscape is transforming and marked by significant changes. Some characteristics are the freedom of speech, which is currently endangered by the controversial ‘Secrecy Bill’, which would give the state the power to classify documents as secret in the ‘national interest’ (SA Journalism Schools, 2012). At the same time the commercialisation and privatisation of broadcasting and overall media channels and a huge competition and pressure of action can be noticed (MDDA, 2009). The media industry in South Africa is defined by three main categories: electronic and broadcasting media (television and radio), print media (newspapers, magazines) and new media (online, Internet, mobile) and the consumption by the audience. The following graph considers South African media consumption based on ‘past seven days’ (P7D) for TV, radio, newspaper, magazine, outdoor and Internet and ‘past six weeks’ (P6W) for cinema and is divided as followed:
The print media industry consists of two broad categories, the major media players and the independent publishers. There are five key players in the ownership and control of print media in South Africa: Naspers through its subsidiary Media24, Caxton, Avusa, the foreign owned Independent Newspapers and Primedia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>No. of wholly owned newspaper titles</th>
<th>No. of magazine titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media24</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caxton</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avusa</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Newspaper</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primedia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Major Print Media Owners and Number of Newspapers and Magazines (MDDA, 2009)

Circa 500 different magazines could be identified in 2009 in South Africa, of which the top five owners control approximately circa 30%. Media24 controls 18% of all magazines and is therefore the biggest player (MDDA, 2009). According to MDDA one of the challenges facing
the South African media industry is ownership and control (2009). The majority of print media is owned by a few companies which assume that variety of opinions, diversity of topics and news are potentially limited. Beyond that, print media is an expensive medium to spread information and is limited to literate people (MDDA, 2009). A long-term declining trend in circulation of magazines is noticeable (OMD, 2010).

According to a ranking by South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF, 2011) and their All Media and Products Survey (AMPS), Media24 is the largest publisher of women’s magazines with a total readership of over 6 million per month in South Africa. They are publishing a number of the most circulated women’s magazines such as True Love, Move!, and Real (SAARF, 2011).

Consumer magazines are generating circa 60% of print advertising revenue and are by that measure the most important part of magazine publishing in relation to professional magazines (MDDA, 2009). In terms of overall readership, SAARF concludes that print remains stable, but the average number of publications read is declining. In December 2009, consumers read an average of 4.91 print publications (newspapers and magazines) while in December 2010 just 4.21 publications have been read (SAARF, 2011). Based on the average readership of magazines per month during the period July 2010 until June 2011, the five largest women’s magazines are listed below and shown in Figure 3. They will build one of the foundations of this study and are part of the discussed magazines (SAARF, 2011).

*Bona* is published by Caxton Magazine. Its readership grew up to 11.1% of total adults in South Africa, due to growth in rural areas which pushed its total readership up to 3.79 million per month. It is the largest magazine in South Africa and the only magazine published in four of South Africa’s official languages – English, Sotho, Xhosa and Zulu. *Bona’s* target group is described as 99% black South Africans, 57% women and 67% within LSM 4 – 6 (*Bona Online*, 2011). LSM (Living Standard Measures) has become the most widely used marketing and segmentation tool in South Africa and divides the population into groups according to their living standards, where 10 is highest and 1 lowest (SAARF LSM, 2011).

*True Love* is published by Media24. With 2.838.000 readers monthly and 8.3% of total readership in South Africa it is the second largest magazine. The defined target group is 95.7%
black South Africans, 64.1% women and 62.6% LSM 5 – 7. As an example of costs per full page for advertising but also as an equivalent for costs of space, True Love has calculated R52.418 (True Love Online, 2011).

Move! is also published by Media24 and has a readership of 2,388,000 per month. Its demographic profile concentrates on 94.7% black South African, 70.1% women and 63.2% LSM 5 – 7. According to the magazine’s description the content is “tip-driven advice, information and knowledge for a better, well-informed life” (Move! Online, 2011).

Cosmopolitan is published by Associated Magazines. The magazine is an international adaptation and reaches 855,000 readers in South Africa. 32% are between 18 and 34 years old, 50% black South African, 29% white South Africans and circa 76% women. The cost per full page at R60,000 is the highest (Cosmopolitan Online, 2011).

Fair Lady is also published by Media24. Its readership declined to 737,000, just 2.2% of total adults in South Africa. They readership consists of 56.9% black South African and 50% LSM 5 – 7 and 42.8% LSM 8 – 10 (Fair Lady Online, 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>Readership</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Rates Full Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bona</td>
<td>3,789,000</td>
<td>15-24: 39%</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25-34: 26%</td>
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<td>35-49: 25%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>50+: 11%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Black: 99%</td>
<td>Women: 57%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White, Coloured,</td>
<td>Men: 43%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indian: 1%</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1-3: 13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True Love</td>
<td>2,838,000</td>
<td>16 - 24: 32.6%</td>
<td>Women: 64.1%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>25 - 34: 32.6%</td>
<td>Men: 35.9%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>35 - 49: 26.9%</td>
<td>R 52.418</td>
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<td>50+: 7.8%</td>
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<td>Black: 95.7%</td>
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<td>Coloured: 2.7%</td>
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<td>White: 1.0%</td>
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<td>Indian: 0.6%</td>
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<td>1 - 4: 13.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Move</td>
<td>2,388,000</td>
<td>16 - 24: 44.5%</td>
<td>Women: 70.1%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25 - 34: 29.6%</td>
<td>Men: 29.9%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>35 - 49: 20.2%</td>
<td>R 24,968</td>
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<td>50+: 5.7%</td>
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<td>Black: 94.7%</td>
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<td>Coloured: 3.2%</td>
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<td>Cosmopolitan</td>
<td>855,000</td>
<td>18 - 34: 52%</td>
<td>Women: 76%</td>
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<td>Black: 50%</td>
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<td>Fair Lady</td>
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<td>15 - 24: 18.8%</td>
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<td>8 - 10: 42.8%</td>
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Figure 3: Characteristics of 5 most circulated Women’s Magazines in South Africa (SAARF, 2011)
In summary, these top five magazines have a large readership and are playing an important role, from a financial perspective but also in terms of social interaction with South African women that will be discussed later on in chapter two.
CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to identify the key aspects in which this study is located: the field of mass communication, development communication for behaviour and social change and women’s health. An overview of the current debate on women’s magazines will be offered, with particular focus on health messages in contradiction to messages on female roles, stereotypes and ‘typical behaviour’. The fundament for this discussion will build on research on women’s magazines and an increased attention to audiences and their usage, understanding and experiences of magazines. Media and communication theories such as social learning/social cognitive theory will be discussed, and in order to identify the influence on health related behaviour, a link to development communication and theories of behaviour and social change are included. Finally the field of women’s health and the high vulnerability of women are discussed to show the strong need for HIV and AIDS campaigns, focussing on this specific topic and the defined target group of women (Lee, 1998; Maizes and Low Dog, 2010; Mayer, Williams and Wilkins, 2004).

Mass Communication, the Media and Culture

“Mass Communication can be considered as both, a ‘societal’ and ‘cultural’ phenomenon” (McQuail, 2010). It is characterized by the sending of messages to a large and diverse audience via a formalised process (Asante and Cassata, 1979). The source is usually a person or group, operating within an organizational setting and mass media messages are more complex than interpersonal communication. Mass media can be described “as an aspect of society” and refers to the institutions which provide these messages such as newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, film and the Internet (McQuail, 2010:80). A variety of scholars have identified four basic roles of mass media (Wright, 1986; Straubhaar and LaRose, 2008):

Surveillance – refers to the information role of media. Warning surveillance links to the news media and includes information about threats such as financial crisis or natural disaster. Instrumental surveillance comprises news and popular media and useful information on health news, products and entertainment.
Interpretation – refers to the function of mass media, which guarantee a context for new information and comments about significance and meaning. The goal of the interpretation role of media is the persuasion of the audience.

Socialisation – refers to the transmission of values within a society, especially the modelling of behaviour and attitudes. Health communication campaigns often try to establish this role.

Entertainment – refers to programmes, which are designed for amusement of the audience. These programmes operate as sort of stimulation, relaxation or release.

Women’s magazines might be playing each of these roles, depending on the topic and tonality. This aspect will be included within the analysis of reader’s reception.

In recent decades mass communication theories have increased and media theories have emerged in the social science and humanistic literature. After the first appearance of the concept of mass communication during the 1930s, Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan were the first modern scholars who studied “the connection between the means of communication available to a people, and the ways in which their means of communication contribute to shaping the character and scope of their society, its economic life, politics and culture” (Lorimer and Scannel, 1994). Innis focussed on the relationship between media and communication and societies and noted different orientations of media in terms of time or space (1950). McLuhan emphasized the organisation of a society around its medium of communication by claiming “the medium is the message”, which implies the form of a medium contains itself in the message and creates therefore a symbiotic relationship which influences how the message is perceived (McLuhan, 1964).

Starting from this perspective, Innis (1950), McLuhan (1964), Goody (1975) and others differentiate between three types of society based types of media: oral (thought and verbal expression), literate (ability of reading and writing) and electronic (at this time entertainment media, later on digital media such as computers). According to Denis McQuail the theoretical field of media is characterized by divergent perspectives and includes media-centric and society-centric approaches (2002). Media reflects but also influences society and while the
media-centric approach concentrates on the media’s own sphere and activities, the society-centric or social-centric approach views the influence of the media on society (Le, 2010).

Another perspective of media distinguishes between the interest in culture and ideas (culturalist) and interests in material forces and factors (materialist) (McQuail, 2002). This distinction also includes other important dimensions, described as humanistic versus scientific, qualitative versus quantitative, subjective versus objective. McQuail (1994) identifies a turn towards a more social-cultural approach to the study of media audiences, an approach which departs from structural audience measurement techniques and the behaviourist media effects tradition. The methodology of reception analysis is a result of this turn and will be applied and discussed later on. In summary, based on different scholars and experts, McQuail differentiate media theories into five different types (1994):

- **Social-scientific**: provides explanations based on systematic, objective, tested and validated observations of mass media and its effects.

- **Cultural** (scholars such as Hoggart, 2004; Hall, 1980): evaluative, seeking to differentiate cultural artefacts, core component is the culture itself, includes critical concerns on the rise of mass media, focuses on cultural products in form of images, ideas and symbols.

- **Normative** (scholars such as Baran and Davis, 2010): analyses how media should operate within the working conditions of certain social values.

- **Operational**: includes practical applications used by media practitioners.

- **Common-sense**: explains how we all experience media use.

In order to study the effects of mass media one could start from different perspectives. Some scholars focus just on the entertainment role of mass media, while others argue, especially the presentation in form of entertainment means that we are more willing to pay attention to this content and therefore it influences the culture of a group or the audience (Gerbner et al., 1994). This idea links to the entertainment education strategy, which will be explained hereafter.
Entertainment Education

Arvind Singhal et al. define entertainment education (EE) as “the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message both to entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members’ knowledge about an educational issue, create favourable attitudes, and change overt behaviour” (2004: 9). They claim further the purpose of EE is the contribution to social change in two ways: at first it can influence audience awareness, attitudes and behaviour on an individual base and second it can influence the audience’s external environment and create conditions for social change on a community or group level. The crucial idea of this communication strategy is the combination of two trends within mass media: entertainment as a ‘fun-factor’ and education as ‘serious information’. This leads also to some critical voices of scholars who argue that entertainment via mass media provides relaxation and escape from work (Stephenson, 1988).

Singhal et al. (2004) reveal further that EE strategy has been used in over 200 health programmes in over 50 countries addressing educational issues as HIV and AIDS prevention, family planning, environmental health, teenage pregnancy prevention and gender equality. In conclusion EE is the process of developing and implementing an entertainment programme to reach a broad audience and educate them about a social or health issue such as HIV and AIDS and change their behaviour in regard to this issue. EE strategy is mostly linked to electronic media, but according to Singhal et al. it is also relevant for other media forms: “The entertainment-education strategy has been widely invented and recreated in television, film, print, and theatre (2004:144)”. The messages for entertainment-education are often based on theories of behaviour change, especially the social learning/social cognitive theory: “At the heart of understanding the process of entertainment-education is Bandura’s social learning theory, which states that learning can occur through observing media role-models, and that vicarious learning usually is more effective and efficient than direct experimental learning” (Singhal et al., 2004:145).
Development Communication, Behaviour Change and Social Change

Development communication can be understood as “a researched and planned process crucial for social transformation” (Galway, 2012:9). It is based on three different strategies: advocacy (to raise resources and political and social leadership commitment for development goals), social mobilisation (build partnerships and alliances with civil society organisations and the private sector), and programme communication (aims to change and enhance knowledge and attitudes) (Galway, 2012).

Development communication is further refined as a strategic process or intervention including media (print, radio, TV, and the Internet) or education (training, literacy, and schooling) “for the purpose of positive social change” (McPhail, 2009: 3). This change could be economical, personal, spiritual, social, cultural or political and is focussed on developing nations or regions (McPhail, 2009). In the context of development communication “mass media are agents of social change” claims Wilbur Schramm (1964:114). The expected change can be “the transition to new customs and practices and to different social relationships” (Schramm, 1964: 114). It refers to change in behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, skills and social norms.

Development communication used a simple, one-way flow of information from sender to receiver, usually via mass communication. Later on, a two-step flow model emerged, recognizing the significance of social relations and networks. A reaction to the broader application of the modernisation paradigm was the dependency/dissociation paradigm, the development support communication paradigm and as part of early development communication theories behaviour change communication. It includes models or theories as exemplified by the health belief model (Rhodes and Fishbein, 1997), theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, 1980) stages of change model (Prochaska, 1994), or social learning theory (Bandura, 1995). The health belief model includes key aspects such as perceived susceptibility (individual perception of risk of a disease), perceived seriousness (individual perception of the effects of a disease), perceived benefit of taking action (individual perception towards prevention), barriers to taking action (costs, pain, upset), and cues to action (internal or external indications that desired behaviour is successful) (Edlin and Golanty, 2010).
The theory of reasoned action is based on the assumption that changing health behaviour needs the intention to adopt new behaviour. It includes positive thinking about the new behaviour and the persuasion that others respond positively to the new behaviour (Edlin and Golanty, 2010). The social learning theory/social cognitive theory is closely related to theories such as the health belief model and is based on expectations (e.g., about consequences, outcomes, one’s own competence) and incentives (e.g., improved health status, physical appearance). In contrast, it emphasises necessary sources of information for building expectations and it includes the idea of self-efficacy; the belief in one’s own capability (Bandura, 1995:2). According to Kar, Alcalay and Alex (2001) social learning theory/social cognitive theory has great value for planning and explaining how media interventions work.

According to Neill McKee et al. (2000: 72) behaviour change communication (BCC) is a “consultative process of addressing knowledge, attitudes, and practices through identifying, analysing, and segmenting audiences and participants in programmes and by providing them with relevant information and motivation through well-defined strategies, using an appropriate mix of interpersonal, group and mass media channels, including participatory methods”. It focuses on individuals, is a linear process and assumes that information leads to change. According to Paul Leagans (1961), behaviour refers to what an individual knows (knowledge), what he can do (skills-mental and physical), what he thinks (attitudes) and what he finally does (action). The Centre for Communication Programs, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, defines behaviour change communication as a process that motivates people to adopt and sustain healthy behaviours and lifestyles (2008).

BCC, as part of development communication, is founded on behaviour change theories. These theories have built, among others, the base for health communication strategies and programmes. Results of these strategies are models to design effective campaigns and examples of these models are the diffusion of innovations model (Rogers, 1995), the stages of change model (Prochaska et al., 1994), the self-efficacy model (Bandura, 1995:2) and the behaviour change continuum (World Bank, 1996). Within these models, different stages of behaviour change are possible and every programme which aims to change behaviour, needs to identify the stage of their target group. Every stage is characterized by different needs, specific messages and ways of communication.
The acknowledgement of participatory methods links to the next phase of change communication and the integration of participatory approaches. Participatory communication focuses on the empowerment of individuals and communities, and flows both ways between sender and receiver. An approach that brings together the work of a variety of scholars, theories and models is the communication for social change model by Maria Elena Figueroa and Lawrence Kincaid (2002). The philosophy of communication for social change is based on the work of Paulo Freire (1970). He described and understood communication as a dialogue and participation to create and enhance cultural identity, trust, commitment, ownership and empowerment. In order to identify the influence of women’s magazines in stimulating discussion within communities as a catalyst for health messages the field of communication for social change will be considered. Communication for social change is defined as “a process of public and private dialogue through which people define who they are, what they want and how to get it” (Gray-Felder and Deane, 1999:15). This communication model is based on the assumption that sustainability is more likely if the individuals and communities most affected are empowered to own the process and content of communication (Figueroa and Kincaid, 2002).

There are many more terms emerging to describe the evolution in methods and approaches in development communication, which have an influence on strategies for development communication and might show the on-going shift of paradigms.

**Women’s Magazines**

Women’s magazines are modern and popular cultural forms and part of the average woman’s media consumption (Laden, 2001). They explicitly position readers as women and it can be understood as a genre, which addresses ‘the feminine’, but at the same time ‘femininity’ has also been influenced by print media, particularly the magazine (Beetham, 1996:3). She described the evolution of this genre as a “feminised space” defined by the women at its centre and by its differences from the masculine world of politics and economics (Beetham, 1996: 3).
Naomi Wolf focuses on the influence women’s magazines have in defining self-improvement, particularly with reference to physical appearance, “that contradicts and undermines the overall pro-women fare” (1991: 69). She claims further the extreme dissent between positive and negative elements of magazine content (Wolf, 1991). Laden investigates consumer magazines for black South Africans and considers them as “cultural tools” and incorporated into the routines of people’s lives on different levels and visible in different ways (Laden, 2001: 5). She summarises the main concerns regarding consumer magazines as follows: “Why, after all, should consumer magazines be culturally relevant or meaningful [...] given the high rates of illiteracy in South Africa, the high cost of the magazines themselves relative to the earnings of many black South Africans and the fact that they typically promote a range of lifestyle options and commodities that, for all intents and purposes, seems to lie well beyond the reach of most of their target readership?” (Laden, 2001).

In consideration of scholars such as Silverstone, Hirsch and Morely (1992) Laden acknowledges the incorporation of magazines into the routines of people’s lives. She comes to the conclusion that magazines might have many functions: “The actual purchase of a magazine does not mean that it will necessarily be ‘used’ or even ‘read’ in the ways we assume” (Laden, 2001). It might be purchased and studied in different ways - silently, by one individual or read aloud by a group. It might be paged through for visual rather than verbal gratification. It might be read later or at a certain time and it might act as a status symbol in various social environments (Laden, 2001). She therefore argues that the socio-semiotic contribution of magazines extends way beyond their direct and most apparent use-value and should not be reduced to a “mechanism of cultural imperialism” (Laden, 2001). Anna Gough-Yates relates to the cultural aspect of women’s magazines as an industry “that depends heavily on social and cultural processes for its effective operation” (2003).

These perspectives show some views on women’s magazines and their interpretation of content, texts and effects. A variety of other studies evaluate women’s magazines and content as ‘a problem’ for women (Hermes, 1995). In their opinion, magazines do not just support gender differences and inequalities but also construct oppressive feminine identities. Constructed images of women within these magazines are “unreal, untruthful and distorted” (Gough-Yates, 2003:7). After a shift of the interpretation of magazines according to their
'positive’ and ‘negative’ images of women, Louis Althusser, a neo-Marxist philosopher, influenced the perception of magazines as texts which can fix and contain feminine identities and can work ideologically manipulative (1969). Later on, a number of feminist authors such as Gloria Steinem (1983), Sheila Rowbotham (1973) or Juliet Mitchell(1984) and with great influence of Antonio Gramsci, stated women’s magazines were not just defined as ideologically manipulative but “as an arena of political contest” and complex space (1971). In search of new ways interpreting the meaning of women’s experiences and consumed cultural artefacts such as magazines, interpretative and ethnographic approaches evolved. The shift is also known as an ‘ethnographic turn’ according to Joke Hermes (1995). Interpretative ethnography offers possible explanations “how particular readers make women’s magazines meaningful in specific social and historical context” (Gough-Yates, 2003: 12). This approach also acknowledges the role of the researcher as enlightened and more informed as the audience. Hermes observed women’s magazines “become meaningful exclusively through the perception of their readers” (1995: 6). The consideration of the context of consumption of women’s magazines is therefore essential and will be included in this study.

Within feminist cultural analysis the discussion on postfeminism can be noticed, without complete agreement on the meaning of it. It is used to signal an epistemological break with second wave feminism (also called The Feminist Movement or the Women's Liberation Movement from the 1960s until the late 1990s), as an historical shift to a third wave or a “regressive backlash” (Gill, 2007). Rosalind Gill understands postfeminism in consideration of all these difficulties as a ‘distinctive sensibility’, including a number of interrelated themes:

- “the notion that femininity is a bodily property and the obsession with the body
- The shift from objectification to subjectification
- An emphasis upon self-surveillance
- Monitoring and self-discipline
- A focus on individualism, choice and empowerment
- The dominance of a makeover paradigm
- And a resurgence of ideas about natural sexual difference” (Gill, 2007).
Angella McRobbie describes these contradictions as ‘double entanglement’ of feminist and anti-feminist ideas and neoliberal values in relation to gender, sexuality and family (2004: 255). Postfeminism media include a feminist perspective without becoming a feminist; feminist ideas are “incorporated, revised and depoliticized” (Stacey, 1987). Magazines include these contradictory messages and might be described as part of postfeminism: “On the one hand, young women are hailed through a discourse of ‘can-do' girl power, yet on the other their bodies are powerfully re-inscribed as sexual objects; on one hand women are presented as active, desiring social subjects, yet on the other they are subject to a level of scrutiny and hostile surveillance that has no historical precedent” (Gill, 2007).

In the context of appearance to readers and reading of magazines as a social practice situated the debate about the status of audience research versus textual analysis is important to acknowledge. According to Brita Ytre-Arne “research on popular genres such as women’s magazines has demonstrated that there can be substantial differences between the interpretations made by audiences and the interpretations made by researchers conducting textual analysis” (2011:213). These differences can influence understanding of how audiences use, interpret and experience media texts. In order to combine text- and audience perspectives, Ytre-Arne suggests a form of textual analysis which is reader guided (2011). It means to focus on dimensions that readers define as important and can lead to ambivalences and contradictions, shown in Ytre-Arnes’ research on Norwegian Magazines (2011). Hermes claims to “reconstruct the diffuse genre or set of genres that is called women's magazines and how they become meaningful exclusively through the perception of their readers” (1995: 6). Later on, she also suggests combining reception of readers with textual analysis (1995). Based on these recommendations the focus of my study is the reception by readers.

Beyond the above mentioned studies, other research aspects can be found, e.g., Marjorie Ferguson’s study on production and consumption (1983), McRobbie’s ‘interdiscursive space’ of production (1994) or Rob Nixon’s study on retailers, advertisers and magazine producers (1996).
Women’s Health

Mass media can play an important role in shaping knowledge on health issues. Even feminist scholars such as Cynthia Harrison (1989) have argued that women’s magazines are relevant in shaping women’s health discussion, and for many readers those magazines are the primary source of health information (Zuckerman, 1998). According to Mia Consalvo “women’s magazines can be criticised for many things, but they are important sources of information about women’s health” (1997: 52). The discussion shows although the magazines include messages on women’s health, they also cover gender prejudices and especially feminine stereotypes. This study aims to discover the reception of health messages on HIV and AIDS surrounded by controversial messages on femininity and gender stereotypes.

Sub-Saharan Africa, especially Southern Africa has been the region most affected by HIV and AIDS. “In 2007, two-thirds of those living with HIV in the world, or 22 million people, were found in sub-Saharan Africa [...] and women accounted for almost 60 per cent of all HIV-positive adults” (United Nations, 2010). In general, women and girls have specific health needs, physiological and social processes carry health risks (such as pregnancies). It can be more difficult for women to get health care and there are gender based inequalities (e.g., in income and education), which are limiting women in protecting their health (World Health Organization, 2009). The focus within women’s health analyses is often on specific life stages of women (e.g., adolescent girls, women of reproductive age) or particular health issues, such as HIV, maternal health, violence based issues or mental illness. My study focuses on adult women, specifically on women of reproductive age (15 – 44 years), based on the definition by the WHO and as the main target group of women’s magazines (2009). According to the WHO different criteria’s characterize this age group:

- “The risk of premature death varies enormously, from only 6% in high-income countries, to 42% in the African region.
- Infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis take a great toll, especially in Africa.
- Half of all deaths among adult women globally are caused by no communicable diseases.
- Mental health problems (depression, suicide) loom large.
- Violence against women is a major risk factor for ill-health” (Zoysa, 2009: 14).
According to WHO, HIV and AIDS are the leading cause of death and disease in women of reproductive age worldwide, and is mostly noticeable in Sub-Saharan Africa. The probability of infection during unprotected sex is higher for women than for men, less young women than young men have enough information on condom use, women are often exposed to stigmatisation or violence by their partners and younger women are often engaged in sexual activities with older men, who are generally more experienced and more likely to be already infected (WHO, 2009). The following Figure shows the HIV prevalence for women of reproductive age worldwide, including Africa:

![HIV Prevalence in Women, 1990 – 2007](image)

Based on these facts, it is understandable why research on women’s health, dangers and prevention are so important. According to Alan Radley “health and illness are not abstracted entities, but always occur within the broader context of living and are made tangible when reflected through other realms or spheres of everyday life” (1999: 27). The context in which women’s health research is conducted often includes the relationship to themselves, to others, and to cultural and structural influences. In this context media as part of their personal lives can be a tool for positive learning (as shown within the entertainment education discussion), but at the same time a threat to identities and views on gender roles and body images (as
shown within the feminist media discussion). The reader’s context, cultural and social background and personal usage of media, such as women’s magazines, are essential to formulate health communication messages. Lagerwerf et al. claim “health communication messages (in multi-layered African societies) have to take account of the possible different ways in which messages will be interpreted and understood within given contexts” (2009: 3).
CHAPTER THREE – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The key aspects in which this study is located are the fields of mass communication, development communication for behaviour and social change. Added to these is women’s health as outlined below:

![Diagram](image)

Figure 5: Theoretical Framework by Claudia van den Berg (Modification of model by Cardey, 2011)

This chapter provides an overview on mass communication theories and explanations on why people consume media. A particular focus lies on the uses and gratification theory and its focus on how audiences use the media to gratify their needs (Watson, 1998). The social learning theory/social cognitive theory by Albert Bandura is consulted as an explanation of behaviour and strategies to promote behavioural change (1995).

Mass Communication Theories

A variety of impacts of media on culture are described in different theories and they explain why people use the media and the consequences of the media usage itself. Several important theories are:
• **Hypodermic needle theory**: means the audience does exactly what media intend. Important representatives of this theory were Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1972), members of the Frankfurt School of Social Research in the 1970s. Their theory implied that the media is all-powerful and able to inculcate a repressive ideology directly into the powerless audiences.

• **Multistep theory** (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, Gaudet, 1944): means the audience follows opinion leaders who interpret media. Lazarsfeld and his colleagues suggested that interpersonal communication is much more persuasive than mass communication. Their idea can be also described as ‘word-of-mouth’ and includes the direct exchange in interpersonal situations.

• **Consistency theory** (Festinger, 1957): in order to reduce dissonance in their lives, audiences expose themselves to content and information that is consistent with their own ideas, beliefs and cultures.

• **Selective process theory** (selective exposure) (Festinger, 1957): audiences interpret the content in their own way. This theory is based on the limited effects model of communication and suggested, while media have effects on behaviour, these effects are limited and influenced by interpersonal discussions and opinion leaders. Therefore it includes ideas of the multistep theory.

• **Agenda setting theory** (McCombs and Shaw, 1972): describes the ability of the media to influence the significance of events. This term is particularly used by Marxist critics of the media, who emphasize the power and omnipotence of the media.

• **Conspiracy theory** (Berlet and Lyons, 1967): this theory is based on the idea of a small and powerful elite that uses the mass media to persuade audiences according to their agenda. This is often used for political criticism or large media conglomerates.

• **Social learning/social cognitive theory** (Bandura, 1989): the audience imitate behaviour that is shown in media. This theory is often used to explain the effect of health communication activities and will be therefore applied in this study.
- **Script theory** (Tomkins, 1962-63): is based on cognitive scenarios of the audience as a result of observational learning and direct experience.

- **Cultivation theory** (Gerbner et al., 1973): the audience thinks the real world works like the world shown in TV.

- **Priming theory** (Straubhaar and LaRose, 2008): media triggers related thoughts. This theory is grounded in cognitive psychology and refers to an activated process of filtering information and stimulating of related thoughts. It is therefore linked to Bandura’s social cognitive theory (1989).

Although the described impacts and effects vary, all the above theories acknowledge effects to a certain extent: the all-powerful perspective within the hypodermic theory, the criticising theory of agenda setting, the reality replacing ideas of the cultivation theory and the social learning/social cognitive theory with behaviour influencing effects. The above mentioned theories focus on the question what media does to audiences.

**Uses and Gratification Theory**

There are other models that rather focus on what audiences do with media. This aspect is also part of my study, therefore the uses and gratification theory is of special interest. The theory is understood as a “psychological communication perspective that examines how individuals use mass media” (Stacks and Salwen, 1996). It is an audience oriented theoretical framework based on the assumption that individuals select media in order to fulfil needs (Stacks and Salwen, 1996). Don Stacks and Michael Brian Salwen summarize five assumptions, which form the basis of this theory and are relevant in the context of consumption of women’s magazines:

(1) communication behaviour, including media selection and use, is goal-directed, purposive, and motivated”, “(2) people take the initiative in selecting and using communication vehicles to satisfy felt needs or desires”, “(3) a host of social and psychological factors mediate people’s communication behaviour”, “(4) media compete
with other forms of communication” and (5) “people are typically more influential than the media in the relationship, but not always (Rubin, 1994).

This theory shifts attention “from the message-makers to the message receivers” and the main question is how audiences use the media to gratify their needs (Watson, 1998). These needs might belong to four major categories: diversion (escape from routines or ease worries and tension), personal relationships (built relationships to portrayed characters), personal identity (identification with characters, stories and situations) and surveillance (gain information) (Watson, 1998). According to James Watson the uses and gratification approach assumes “people are capable of making their own minds up, accepting some messages, rejecting others, using the media for a variety of reasons and using them differently at different times” (1998: 62).

Uses and gratification research includes six areas: gratifications and media consumptions, social and psychological origins of gratifications, gratifications and media effects, gratifications sought and obtained, expectancy-value approaches to uses and gratification and audience-activity (Palmgreen, 1984). Particularly the areas of consumption, media effects and audience-activities are considered. In order to identify the usage and the effect of women’s magazines, the social learning/social cognitive theory and the uses and gratification theory are applied and explained next. It combines the aspect of effects of women’s magazines and their articles on HIV and AIDS on readers but also helps to understand why and how audiences receive these messages.

**Social Learning/Social Cognitive Theory**

Social learning/social cognitive theory identifies the interaction of three factors: cognitive, behavioural, and environmental (Bandura, 1994). According to Robert Heath and Jennings Bryant social learning theory explains how we learn from personal experiences as well as by observing, watching and consuming events in the mass media (2000). This theory explains behaviour and explains strategies to promote behavioural change.

According to Bandura there are four states responsible for learning and performance (1977):
• **Attention**: noticing and being aware of the modelled behaviour.

• **Retention**: remembering, coding, transforming modelled information and encoding it into memory.

• **Production**: reproducing and translating of modelled behaviour and self-observation of reproduction.

• **Motivation**: imitating and performing valued activities with expected positive consequences.

Bandura examines the role of social learning and these four stages in programmes for HIV and AIDS prevention and focuses on the concept of self-efficacy (1995:2). Self-efficacy can be defined as the confidence a person feels about performing a specific behaviour and within the discussion of HIV and AIDS the self-efficacy aspect is often linked to the confidence to insist on condom-use. That in turn is often related to the empowerment of women to negotiate and discuss this issue with their sexual partners. According to Bandura, self-efficacy is defined as a successful outcome, and depends on having a belief in one's own ability (1982). It influences the engagement in a task, the effort and performance and finally the achievement. This study will consider the learning states of the readers (attention, retention, production and motivation) in order to explain the effect of health messages on HIV and AIDS in women’s magazines.

Theresa Carilli and Jane Campell relate social learning/social cognitive theory to women’s magazines in order to explain how people learn gender behaviour from mediated images of others (2005). Especially within the discussion of the media’s contribution to sex role behaviour and sex role stereotypes through identification, the theory is applied in this study. The question of how messages on gender stereotypes in comparison to messages on HIV and AIDS are received by readers is a concern of my study.
This chapter describes the methodology applied in this research and foremost the interpretive qualitative and sense-making approach of meaning are chosen. The research design includes a reception analysis using qualitative interviews to generate qualitative data. The selection process of participants is based on purposive sampling and acknowledges the target groups characteristics of women’s magazines. For analysing the qualitative data NVivo research software is used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical perspective &amp; approach</th>
<th>Interpretive paradigm, qualitative approach</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Research design</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Selection of participants</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Qualitative data analysis package</strong></td>
<td>NVivo research software</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Methodology of Study

**Interpretive Paradigm & Qualitative Approach**

“Interpretive approaches seek to enrich understanding”, as facts need to be interpreted in context (Carter and Presnell, 1994). The purpose of interpretive research is to understand people’s experiences, for this study it is the reading of magazine articles on health issues, such as HIV and AIDS. The overall conclusion of scholars within this paradigm is that reality is constructed based on social context, space, time and personal situations of groups or individuals (Chilisa, 2012). The focus lies on understanding people in everyday settings and how they interpret information and situations in order to create meaning. Interpretive approaches are often associated with hermeneutic tradition, which is focused on seeking deep understanding by interpreting interactions and the resulted meaning. Based on this, meanings of articles on HIV and AIDS for female readers depend on their personal situation, social interactions, place and time of reading and more. “Each interpretive paradigm makes particular
demands on the researcher, including the questions he or she asks and the interpretations the researcher brings to them” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003: 33). In this context, the interpretive paradigm is linked to qualitative research, as it involves a naturalistic approach to the world and the study of phenomena in their natural settings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). According to Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, qualitative researchers “deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand (2003: 5).

The qualitative approach emphasizes the depth of understanding (Rubin and Babbie, 2009). In order to describe this approach, different scholars have developed various definition: Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin and their description as “any kind of research that produces findings that are not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification (1990: 17)”; John Pauly proposes a definition that includes a five-step process “a) finding a topic, b) formulating research questions, c) gathering the evidence, d) interpreting the evidence, and e) telling the researcher’s story (1991)” or Nick Jankowski and Fred Wester, who said it “refers to an understanding of the meaning that people ascribe to their social situation and activities” (1991: 44).

The overall goal of qualitative research is to access the ‘insider’ perspective of members of a culture (or subculture), to understand the way people think and make meaning within their social context, and how they express these understandings through communication (Priest, 1996: 103). According to Aisha Gilliam’s understanding, qualitative methods are most relevant in order to provide detailed, in-depth information, to describe diversity, to determine the quality of content and interventions, to identify unexpected outcomes, to document interactions, and to create response (2005: 2). The qualitative aspect becomes clear by asking and seeking an understanding of reader’s personal situation, their lifestyles, the context of reading and their individual interpretation of the magazine's content.

Women-centred Sense-Making Approach
In order to take into account reader’s experiences with magazine content, social backgrounds, personal health situations or involvement in HIV and AIDS through communities or relatives,
the sense making approach will be consulted. This approach has primarily been developed by Brenda Dervin since 1972 and is the outcome of her work in communication research. It is based on the assumption that people are making sense of their world and experiences all the time. There is a relation between sense-making and their behaviour and, in applying this approach, a focus lies on asking people about their individual experiences and their interpretation of it (Dervin, 1989). The core of sense-making is the assumption of discontinuity/ ‘gappiness’, which is an important aspect of reality – gaps between people, things, spaces and times (Dervin, 1992). In order to overcome these gaps, ‘bridges’ are needed and each of us must make sense of what we encounter. Information is subjective and sense-making does not deny objective reality or an existing message, instead it focuses on the subjective construction of reality, or the encoding and decoding by individuals (Neill, 1987).

In sense-making “the human is conceptualized as centred and decentred; ordered and chaotic; cognitive, physical, spiritual, and emotional; and potentially differing in all these dimensions across time and across space” (Dervin, 1999). The approach is applied as a methodology for studying the making and unmaking of sense in different communication situations, especially when professionals formulate messages in order to address them to audiences (e.g., readers, users, customers). When applying this approach to research some fundamental assumptions have to be acknowledged and considered (Rice and Atkin, 2001: 72 - 76): (1) “Sense-making is gap-bridging” and understands external information as not sufficient in order to make-sense of here and now for individuals. This must be done by “mind-body-heart-spirit step-takings or singular human entity, consciously or unconsciously, habitually or innovatively, and acting alone or in community”. (2) “There are many ways to make sense” and the process of sense-making involves ideas, cognitions, thoughts, conclusions, attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings, emotions, intuitions, memories, stories, and narratives. (3) “Sense-making is anchored in space and time” and it differs between internal situated communicative practices, such as thinking and remembering, and external practices, such as asking and objecting. (4) “Sense-making occurs at the intersection of three horizons – past, present, and future”. (5) “Sense-making can be either flexible or inflexible”. (6) “Sense-making involves energy […] – force, power, and constraint” and distinguishes different forms of energy as from within (motivation or resistance), from without (barriers and help from society) or from special circumstances and social influences. (7) “Every sense-maker is inherently a social theorist” because he discusses
connections between past and present, between present and future, between self and others, and self and society.

The sense-making approach has often been applied within health communication to find out, how consumers of health messages make sense of their lives, how they connect health messages to their personal behaviours and social backgrounds (Dervin, 1989). This approach is linked to Bandura’s concept of self-efficacy and calls for more promotion of self-efficacy in the media and communication regarding women’s health (Dervin, 1989). In this context self-efficacy is the belief that women can achieve control over their motivation, behaviour, and ability to act. If women know they are able to control and influence their health situation and that finding help is possible, there is a greater likelihood that they will benefit from media coverage concerning their health (Parrott, 1996). One can speak of a women-centred sense-making approach, which means that media messages about HIV and AIDS would focus on women’s needs, for example tips on communication with their partners on condom use, stories about and by affected women and how they face the challenges of the disease, the importance of testing and possible places for testing – in summary alternative perspectives of women’s experiences by individuals or support groups. Based on this, this study’s interview guideline will consider the women-centred sense-making approach.

**Reception Analysis & qualitative Data**

This study will include a reception analysis of reader’s experiences and feedback on magazines and articles on HIV and AIDS. It investigates the perceptions of readers as the receiver of the messages, with the role of the audience being understood as ‘active’. The notion of the ‘active audience’ was introduced by scholars such as Stuart Hall, Denis McQuail, John Fiske and David Morley and their interpretation of media use as part of everyday and social life and audience readings as diverse, sometimes resistant, sometimes responsive to media messages (Hall, 1980, McQuail, 1994, Fiske, 1989, Morley, 1980). Hall’s theory of encoding/decoding as an example of reception analysis understands the message and the included meaning as encoded by a sender and meaningfully decoded by the audiences with influencing, persuading, emotional, ideological and behavioural effects (Hall, 1980). Another example for a different direction within reception analysis is the inclusion of feminist approaches to popular culture.
This resulted “in a consideration of the mapping of good and bad, ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ genres, cognitive and emotional responses onto high and low culture, and offers instead an alternative set of valuations which mapped primarily onto active and passive audiences, critical and normative readings and open and closed texts” (Livingstone, 1998). Other approaches within reception analysis are interpretation “as a bridge between gratifications studies and cultural studies” (Katz, 1979), the focus on the ‘resistant audience’ as part of the questioning of hegemonic theories (Fejes, 1984) and the combination of cultural theories and popular culture in order to examine the relationship between model and actual audiences (Livingstone, 1995).

Audience reception is the empirical study of the social production of meaning and focuses on investigating what people see in the media and on the meanings which people produce when they interpret media texts (Schroder et al., 2003, Hobson, 1982). In contrast to this, Janet Staiger offers a more general definition and defines reception analysis by not being “a hermeneutics or truth-finding of the meaning of the text” (2005). The following questions have to be considered within a reception analysis: “How does a text mean? For whom? In what circumstances? With what changing values over time?” (Staiger, 2005). In this context, reception analysis can be linked to the sense-making approach. According to Stanley Baran and Dennis Davis “one of its central features is its focus on how various types of audience members make sense of specific forms of content” (2010: 257).

The reception approach includes an emphasis on discourse and reflexivity and, according to Pertri Alasuutari, there has been a shift from an emphasis on audience psychology to audience sociology (1999). In consideration of these diverse views on reception analysis, this minor dissertation follows Sandra Livingstone’s (1998) understanding and her focus “on the interpretive relation between audience and medium, where this relation is understood within a broadly ethnographic context”. It explores media experiences of the readers through the medium of extended talk (Schroder et al. 2003), more specifically by applying the method of sense-making time-line interviews. The data set, which is used for the reception analysis, will be the result of these interviews with readers. Among others the findings of the reception analysis are summarized in a SWOT analysis, which is ”a form of analysis, resulting in a listing of […] strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats” and is usually applied in order to enable strategic management decision (Bamford, 2010).
Sense-Making Time-Line Interview

In line with the sense-making approach that was chosen for this dissertation, the method of time-line interviews is applied. This interviewing approach is the core technique within sense-making methodology and it can be described as a form of qualitative interviews. Qualitative interviewing is based on conservations, composed of questions asked by researchers and listening and answering by respondents (Kvale, 1996, Rubin and Rubin, 1995). The purpose of most qualitative interviews is rather to discover interpretations and personal experiences, than facts or laws. Within the time-line interview the participants are asked to recall a situation (e.g., reading a women’s magazine) and to explain what happened (Dervin, 1999). This technique requires the researcher to ask what happened in a situation step by step in order to find out influences “for each time-line event, in terms of the situation (e.g., barriers, constraints, history, memory, experience), gaps (e.g., confusion, worries, questions, muddles), bridges (e.g., ideas, conclusions, feelings, opinions, hypotheses, hunches, stories, values, strategies, sources) and outcomes (e.g., helps, facilitations, hurts, hindrances, outcomes, effects, impacts)” (Dervin, 1999: 47).

Steinar Kvale lists different steps of interviewing, which are also relevant for my study: thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting (1996: 88). As part of the time-line interview the interviewer asks the participant to describe a situation step by step in order to reflect the emotional dimensions, gaps and uses/helps within situation (Dervin, 1999). For this study the time-line interview will be adapted and simplified in order to answer the underlying research questions. According to Michael Quinn Patton (1990) there are six types of question that can be asked in a qualitative research. This paper includes five of them, described as follows and presented in detail in Appendix 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of question</th>
<th>Example within this study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background/ demographic question</td>
<td>Descriptive questions on name, age, gender, education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience/ behaviour question (strongly influenced by the time-line interviewing approach)</td>
<td>When was the first time you read a women’s magazine? What is happening while reading magazines?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion/ value question</td>
<td>Who do you think the message is directed at? What sense do you draw from these articles personally?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling question</td>
<td>What feelings did these articles provoke in you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge question</td>
<td>If you wanted to get information about sexual health, what are your resources? Was there any kind of knowledge, attitudes and practices about HIV and AIDS you getting from the articles?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7: Overview Types of Interview Questions according to Patton (1990)

These types of interview questions are part of the overall categories within my interview guide:

- **General questions** – Background, demographic questions
- **Health-related questions** – In order to link the interviews to health communication and HIV and AIDS, questions on health knowledge, sources for health information and contraceptive methods are included.
- **Media-, magazines & HIV and AIDS- and article-related questions** – One issue of each magazine *Bona, True Love, More!, Cosmopolitan* and *Fairlady* are presented to the participants with questioning on recognition and usage, followed by their description of content and target groups. Afterwards five articles (one of each magazine) are shown to the participants and questions on impressions, content, relevance, likes or dislikes and special features are asked.

**Purposive Sampling**

In order to select participants for the interviews, purposive sampling was applied. “In purposive sampling the researcher selects elements based on his or her judgement of what elements will facilitate an investigation” (Adler and Clark, 2011). Irene Rubin and Herbert Rubin recommend three guidelines for selecting participants by using purposive sampling,
which was applied in this thesis: “[1] Knowledgeable about the cultural arena or situation or experience being studied, [2] willingness to talk, [3] representative of the range of points of view” (2005:66). For my study it is crucial that the participants are living in South Africa, are female, are readers of women’s magazines and are generally interested in magazine’s content. The selection is furthermore linked to the target groups by the selected magazines and can be described as female, largely between 20 – 35 years old, mostly black, but also white and Indian, and relatively educated, as stated by the magazines. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed (see Appendix 3) and a total of ten interviews will be conducted. In qualitative research, the sample size does not have any significant role as the purpose is to study one or a few cases in order to identify the spread of the range. Also, there is no effort to avoid bias; the sample is purposely selected from ‘information-rich’ respondents to provide the necessary information (Kumar, 2011). In this dissertation and with the agreement of the participants, only first names are used in the quotes below.

**NVivo Research Software**

NVivo is qualitative data analysis computer software produced by QSR International. It helps to organise unstructured information like documents, surveys, and has been designed for rich text-based and multimedia information. It allows the handling, classification and arrangement of the interview data sets and is used for open coding in order to examine the presence of dominant categories and to develop new categories. QSR International, the developer of NVivo recommended five principles in applying NVivo: manage data (to organize and keep track of data such as files from interviews), manage ideas (to organize and provide access to conceptual and theoretical ideas and the data which supports it), query data (to ask simple and complex questions of the data in order to find answers and results), graphically model (to show ideas and concepts based on the data), report from the data (using contents and build a basis for the analysis) (Bazeley, 2007). These principles are applied in the analysis.

**Validity, Reliability and Limitations**

This research on South African magazines and the coverage of HIV and AIDS contributes to the public discussion on HIV and AIDS, which is of important social concern. The findings of the research may be viewed in light of other research in the HIV and AIDS prevention
communication field and contemporary theory in the health communication field. Therefore, the information gained could serve as input for communication campaigns and programmes, which include print media and are targeted at women. They are qualified for further research on media usage by women and the relevance of women’s magazines for health communication on HIV and AIDS.

Reliability will be achieved by involving the supervisors, discussing the topic in research seminars by CCMS and including literature on research and studies related to the main research questions of this paper. The results of the time-line interviews will be carefully reviewed for relevant themes that contribute towards answering the research questions. The data will be analysed by using NVivo software, and the research design, methodology and theory applied are all outlined clearly to ensure rigour and testability of this study.

The limitations of my study lie in the applied methodology itself. Qualitative research requires the process of interpreting and creating meaning and depends immensely on the researcher and his skills of observation, interpretation and analysing. Edwin Black observes that “unlike the quantitative researcher who purges style and supplants passive voice in order to distance the reader, the qualitative researcher tries to engage, even “enchant” the reader” (1965). The sense-making theory suggests not only focussing on the individual’s understanding of media messages, but also on how this understanding is constructed within a particular context (Johnsson-Smaragdi, 1999). This requires a detailed overview and understanding of the personal and individual situation of the participants. An overview of personal health, participants’ affection by HIV and AIDS and their individual situation of reading and using women’s magazines will be considered. This might be a limitation of this study, as there are more factors that influence the interpretation of women’s magazines. Further limitations of qualitative reception analyses are related to the relatively small sample size. “Qualitative audience researchers [...] often work with very small samples from which it is not really possible to generalize, although [they] none the less often do” describes Hermes the risk for the researcher (1995: 352). The limitations are taken into account and generalized, universal and irrevocable findings are avoided.
CHAPTER FIVE – ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The main aim of this study is to identify the role and influence of women’s magazines within health communication, particularly for HIV and AIDS prevention. Readers of magazines were interviewed, their answers analysed, and forms of consumption discussed, in order to find out how, why and when the participants use women’s magazines. This consumption behaviour is linked to and discussed in relation to the reception of HIV and AIDS messages. In particular, the effects, contradictions, and the interpretation of HIV and AIDS messages are studied. Finally, the dual character of women’s magazines and the relevance of integrated messages, in the light of interaction with others, are analysed.

Profile of Participants & Descriptive Criteria

The ten interviewed women were in the age group of 23 – 33 years and therefore part of the magazines’ target age group. They were women’s magazine readers, 50% employed in different areas at a Durban based consumer goods company (for example marketing, sales, and administration) and 50% students. The senior students were conveniently chosen at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and professionals were chosen in order to make sure, they can afford the magazine and buy magazines on a regular basis. Fifty-percent of the participants had been in a relationship or were married and 50% were single. Regarding their ethnic background 60% were black (South) African, 20% white South African and 20% Indian South African. Their highest education level ranged from Bachelor to Masters and it can be assumed that their income was above the South African average, especially of those who were employed. In summary, the participants were generally urban, highly educated and had a significant interest in women’s magazines and other forms of media. Their knowledge about HIV and AIDS information in a South African context became especially clear during the interviews and influenced their reception of health messages strongly. Overall it can be concluded that there was no significant difference between the answers of singles versus married participants, or students versus professionals. However, there was a difference identifiable between preferred magazines by black or white participants and will be discussed later.
**Health Content of South African Magazines**

In order to estimate the relevance of HIV and AIDS for magazines as an embedded topic, the content and coverage of health issues, especially of HIV and AIDS, was documented. Issues of the five most circulated magazines over 12 successive months, from July 2011 until June 2012, were viewed and articles on health, respectively on HIV and AIDS documented (Figure 8).

As a result of this content documentation, every magazine issue covered at least one health related topic such as HIV and AIDS, breast cancer, sexual abuse, alcohol and drugs, and smoking and 60% of the magazine issues covered HIV and AIDS. The topic was embedded in personal stories by other women and couples, latest research results, celebrity stories, and more. The genres of storytelling included columns, short stories, human-interest stories, interviews, question and answers. The HIV and AIDS articles were often presented in a current South African context and included, for example, statements by the anti-apartheid activist Albie Sachs; information about a South African AIDS non-profit organisation Thanda; financial aspects and grants for HIV infected people; and general AIDS statistics of South Africa.

Not only were facts and news on the disease presented, but also aspects of everyday life, such as nutrition, supplements and vitamins, kids, family and relationship issues. Different aspects of the disease were discussed, such as condom use, infected partners, stigmatisation, ARVs (antiretrovirals), pregnancy and more. The following Figure provides an overview on embedded health topics:
Based on this documentation of content, it can be assumed that messages on HIV and AIDS are highly relevant for South African women’s magazines and have been included in more than half of the magazine issues. The magazine try to educate, inform but also entertain readers by integrating these stories and, because the disease plays such an important role within the health situation of South Africa, it is almost impossible to publish a magazine without integrating this issue. Within the following reception analysis, out of these 60 magazines one article from each magazine (blue marked in the table above) was used in order to identify the perception, interpretation and comments by the participants. The articles were chosen in order to represent all five magazines, offer an article on HIV and AIDS, present different narratives and portray diverse characters. During the interviews participants were asked to choose two articles, read them and summarize the content. Their answers, interpretation and discussion of content became the basis of the reception analysis. Each article covered HIV and AIDS from different perspectives, with different focus areas and by using different ways of storytelling. The content of these five articles is described in Appendix 2.
Based on participants’ assessment, True Love was described most positive as “trusting their content” by Gabisile or “because it looks mostly at South African black women and I want a perspective on black South African women” by Lungelo, followed by Fairlady and Bona (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012; Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012). Move! was read by the least number of participants and Cosmopolitan was especially known for its “superficial” content, described by Ausie or “very little serious content” explained by Gabisile (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012; Ausie interview 30.5.2012). The following analysis considers the participants interpretation further.

Consumption of Women’s Magazines & Perception of HIV and AIDS Messages

In order to identify the participants’ media and magazine usage several questions were asked. Out of five different forms of media, Internet and women’s magazines ranked in top position and were utilised by nine participants. Also, radio was used by nine participants, but with a lower relevance. TV was used by seven participants and newspapers by six (see Figure 9). All participants were readers of True Love and Cosmopolitan. Fairlady was read by nine participants, Bona by six participants and Move! by five participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of media</th>
<th>Used by participants</th>
<th>Average ranking (1 - 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s magazines</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9: Media Usage by Participants, 2012

The most interesting topics for the participants in women’s magazines were fashion, which was named by seven participants, followed by health and personal stories, named by six participants. Finally, articles on celebrities, and success and motivational stories were named by four participants. Asked in form of an open question what kinds of topics were also relevant, a broad spectrum was further mentioned and is shown in Figure 10. These interests can be
linked to the uses and gratification theory and apply to different forms of gratification motives (Watson, 1998). Especially within the field of ‘personal relationship’ and ‘personal identity’ topics on work-life-balance, advices, ‘how to’ and ‘things that help me through my life’ were mentioned by readers, see Figure 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics of Special Interest</th>
<th>Gratification Motives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Celebrities, gossip, recipes, food sections</td>
<td>Diversion: the need to escape personal problems, and the need for emotional release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships, love, &quot;feature articles about work-life-balance&quot; and &quot;bringing up your children in today’s day and age&quot; by Justine, advice, self-help by Nomvelo, &quot;how to&quot; by Marlini (Justine, interview 24.5.2012; Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012; Marlini, interview 29.5.2012)</td>
<td>Personal relationship: the need for companionship and help in social interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Things that help me through my life, women topics&quot; by Lungelo (Lungelo, interview18.5.2012)</td>
<td>Personal identity: the need for self-understanding and reassurance of one’s role in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology, politics, economy, development, outlooks, local, African economy, opportunities, SA politics, &quot;political landscape of SA&quot; and “issues in the SA media of social-political nature&quot; by Gabisile, HIV, business (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012)</td>
<td>Surveillance: the need for information about factors that might affect or help one</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10: Relevant Topics for Readers related to Gratification Motives according to Watson (1998)

When asked, where and why participants read women’s magazines, different scenarios were identified. These scenarios have had a strong influence on all the other items discussed, such as negative features of women’s magazines and interactions with others, and are therefore explained in detail. Within all answers six groups of magazine consumption dominated and correlated with the reception of messages on HIV and AIDS. These forms of consumption do not happen exclusively for one participant but can appear parallel, depending on the reader’s situation, time available to spend with the magazine and general interest in magazines content. The six in this study identified forms of consumption, based on participant answers, are:

1. ‘Consumption for relaxation’: In this predominant consumption mode, magazines served as a means to relax and unwind. Magazines were used by the participants to escape from
everyday life, to distract and to immerse into lighter topics. The participants were usually in a relaxed mood and spent a relatively long time reading the magazine. Laden has also identified this function of magazines and described it as “designed to evoke pleasure and enjoyment and relaxation rather than to provide ‘serious’ reading matter” (2001:8).

Statements by Justine, who said “I really like looking at them, so normally I read them evenings or weekends at home, if I go on holidays I read a lot of them, because it is relaxing”, Nzokuhle “I also buy them and I read them after hours when I am relaxing just before going to bed” and Gabisile “it is an effective relaxation method for me” confirmed this function of women’s magazines (Justine, interview 24.5.2012; Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012; Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012).

These readers preferred topics such as fashion, personal stories and advice, and if a health message was embedded in an entertaining story, they would have read it as well. If the reader was generally interested in health related topics, the article needs a positive and more personal perspective in order to get the reader’s attention. Real cases and experiences by women and couples were especially interesting for participants and could carry the HIV and AIDS prevention aspect. This conclusion can be linked to Singhal’s discussion of EE: “If the attention of the target audience were to be caught and held, especially if the audience is not spontaneously interested in health messages, it is no longer sufficient to rely solely on the rationality of the message. More emotionally appealing and popular communication aspects must be brought into play” (Singhal et al., 2004: 228). Nzokuhle described this aspect as: “if there is a nice balance between information and like I say the human aspect or entertainment or just an emotional appeal… if it’s not too biological” (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012). Nomvelo confirmed: “I think it depends how it’s like, I think what’s more interesting are real-life stories about HIV and AIDS because I think people are aware of the medical side of it, you know how you get it and what’s it about but it’s more how it’s affect people, I think that is more important and that is what gets to me” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012).

2. ‘Consumption to bridge’: In this mode, which was also often recognizable, magazines were used to fill time or in between different activities. Ytre-Arne comes to a similar conclusion and described this reading mode as “reading ‘between other tasks’ or ‘skimming’ in a free moment”, which means fragmented reading, especially at busy places (2011: 219). This was confirmed by the participants, who mentioned places like the doctor’s office, during travel
periods on the train or airplane and at grocery stores. The time that was spent on reading the magazine depended on the situation; it was more during travel periods than, for example, at the doctor’s office. The reader’s mode could be relaxed but she was usually more focused on the end of the waiting period and bridge over rather the content of the magazine. Varona described the magazine as an “intermediate thing” and Caitlin choose a magazine “usually if I am waiting somewhere” (Varona, interview 23.5.2012; Caitlin, interview 23.5.2012).

Readers in this consumption mode seemed generally less aware than others of HIV and AIDS as magazine’s content. They preferred more entertaining and visually appealing content, and in order to attract their attention, it helped to work with pictures, graphics or other eye-catching elements. During the interviews there was almost a moment of surprise, when participants realized the extent to which these messages are included. Cosmopolitan especially astonished Caitlin, who indicated “that’s what I didn’t expected, (these kind of article) to be in the Cosmo” and Marlini confirmed to get inspired “mostly on content through that is sparkling your eyes” (Caitlin, interview 23.5.2012; Marlini, interview).

3. ‘Superficial consumption’: In this mode, identified equally as often as the previous mode, participants did not spend much time with the magazine. They just paged through or focussed on looking, rather than reading, pictures were more important than the actual story and eye-catching elements were necessary to draw their attention. They spent the least amount of time reading the magazine. These participants consumed magazines almost in a passive way; they didn’t reflect much on the content. Nomvelo consumed magazines “in the evening or the weekend, just to page through and look.” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012). Gabisile utilized them “generally if I just want to switch off my brain and go through fashion, pictures and the occasional gossip” and described the magazine “like a no-brainer kind of indulgence” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012). In this context, Ytre-Arne comes to an interesting reflection: because the magazine can be read superficially and do not require too much concentration it is suitable for readers who just need a short moment of distraction or entertainment; “it is easy to slip in and out of the world of the magazine” (2011: 220). Also Camilla Nielsen comes to a similar conclusion and describes readers’ behaviour with a “pick-and-mix attitude and very selective in their choice of articles” (2008: 34).
Readers in this mode of consumption were generally interested in HIV and AIDS, but their interaction with the magazine content was so limited and their expectation to the magazine so basic, that the article or story itself will not get their attention, except when combined with an eye-catching element, confirmed by *Gabisile*: “there has to be something on the cover or topic on the cover that is really attention grabbing for me in particular” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012). *Nomvelo* emphasised the importance of visually attractive content as “I’ll read through articles that catch my eyes” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012).

4. ‘Belated consumption’: This mode of consumption, identified occasionally, means participants did not read the magazine immediately and it was usually combined with one of the other modes. Sometimes the participants kept the magazine for later and would read it after a few days or even weeks. Their interest in the magazine was high, but they did not have enough time to read it immediately. These women were often mothers or had a demanding job. *Gabisile*, a working mother, explained “if I buy magazines it would be probably with the groceries and it would sit around for probably two to three weeks before an opportunity arrives for me to actually page through it” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012). Participants in this mode of consumption also tend to read earlier editions again and therein laid the difference to newspapers for *Lungelo*: “you can read an issue from 2009 and it is still be relevant. That’s what it makes a difference from newspapers for me.” (Lungero, interview 18.5.2012).

In relation to the reception of HIV and AIDS messages readers did not expect stories with a high novelty value. They were generally interested in the content and waited for an appropriate moment where they could spend enough time to read the magazine, as mentioned by *Ausie*: “it takes me about 2 days to read it, it is usually over the weekend” (Ausie interview 30.5.2012). *Marlini* added: “it is an article that I am interested in, then I am marking it and keep it at my bedside and read it more in depth without any distraction” (Marlini, interview 29.5.2012). They usually spent more time with the magazine and, because of this; it was likely they also read an article on HIV and AIDS.

5. ‘Consumption to enhance femininity’: The participants, who consumed magazines in this frequently mentioned mode, appreciated the focus on women and, because of this focus, they spent time reading magazines. From their perspective, it was a special moment to
relax and interact with topics that are relevant for women. In this context, Deidre Donnelly considers women’s magazines as a genre created by and for women, because these magazines are often produced by a team of women and it “add a sense of an ‘imagined community’ to it” (2001:15). Lungelo described this sense as “women’s magazines are on women and how women should stand for themselves” and Caitlin assessed magazines “are about what women in South Africa are interested in” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012; Caitlin, interview 23.5.2012). The participants could identify themselves with the magazines content and this can be linked to the ‘retention’ stage, explained within the social learning/ social cognitive theory as remembering, coding, transforming modelled information and encoding it into memory (Bandura, 1977). They described it further as a form of treat when reading a magazine. For Emily Norval “describing something as a ‘treat’ implies a desire for it to be in some way special” (2011: 37). This is what Justine’s discovered as „it is me-time [...] I feel like I’ve got some quality own time” and also Marlini felt “it is like your time, that you can engage with the magazine” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012; Marlini, interview 29.5.2012).

Personal stories by other women, who explained and shared their experiences in life, got the attention of these readers in order to support the idea of a female community. In the context of HIV and AIDS topics, readers in this consumption mode were generally not that interested in the newest medical developments or statistics but would pay attention to stories that included relationship aspects, personal experiences and individual journeys. Nomvelo observed “I think it depends how it’s like, I think what’s more interesting is real-life stories about HIV and AIDS” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012). Nzokuhle preferred stories “if there is a nice balance between information and like I say the human aspect or entertainment or just an emotional appeal… if it’s not too biological” (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012).

6. ‘Exaggerated consumption’: This occasionally identified consumption mode seemed to be the enhanced level of the previous mode. In this mode, participants interpreted the magazine as something very special and, in their eyes, the content was highly relevant and worthy of incorporating into their daily lives. Ausie compared the magazine with a friend: “You feel like talking to a friend in a way”. For Nzokuhle it is not just a magazine but “it feels like a book to me as well” (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012). Finally, Lungelo compared “as a women’s magazine it is probably mostly like a bible” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012).
Because the magazine’s content was so believable and interesting for them, readers were also highly receptive to embedded messages on HIV and AIDS. They used magazine content for getting advice, inspiration and examples how certain situations can be handled. For them, the stories were always credible and used as a guideline in their own lives, described by Prestage: “the magazine becomes a message, it becomes more than the True Love message – it becomes a lifeline because someone somewhere will get saved by reading ‘condom wars’, by reading ‘dating an HIV positive man’ (the discussed articles), so it transforms into a life message” (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012). Gabisile, who showed earlier signs of a superficial and belated consumption, found a strong sense within the articles on HIV and AIDS “in a sense that I could probably counsel somebody else facing a similar situation as a result of these articles” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012).

The identified consumption modes show a diverse interaction with the magazine and were influenced by participants’ interest in the magazine itself, their social lives, time available, personal interests, and relevance or influence by others. Therefore, the form of consumption could constantly change. The following overview shows, which consumption mode per participant was noticeable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Consumption for relaxation</th>
<th>Consumption to bridge</th>
<th>Superficial consumption</th>
<th>Belated consumption</th>
<th>Consumption to enhance femininity</th>
<th>Exaggerated consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ausie</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Caitlin</td>
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<td>Gabisile</td>
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<td>Justine</td>
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<td>Lungelo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nomvelo</td>
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<td>Varona</td>
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Figure 11: Summary of Participants’ Consumption Modes
Effects and Contradictions of Women’s Magazines

In order to explain how health messages in women’s magazines are perceived and interpreted, effects by women’s magazines are of special interest. For that, the participants were asked to read and retell two articles on HIV and AIDS. The social learning/social cognitive theory offers the concept of observational learning in order to explain effects by media and to describe how media can teach, reinforce and portray behaviour (Bandura, 1989). This theory includes the idea of observing others and their behaviour and subsequently imitating them, also described as ‘modelling’ (Bandura, 1977). The concept was initially applied to communication research on effects of TV, but can be used in the context of health communication and the effects by print media as well, as role-models are involved and their behaviour is shown (Gochman, 1997: 153). Social cognitive theory outlines the key conditions that are necessary to enable behaviour modelling. The aim was to see whether or not the participants are generally able to do so. Therefore, these stages are applied to the participants in order to identify their learning behaviour and, based on that, their interpretation of the magazine content on HIV and AIDS. In accordance with Bandura, and as a result of the interviews, these learning stages were (1995):

- **Attention:** In order to replicate behaviour that is modelled in a magazine article, the reader must notice the magazine and pay attention to the content. Within my study, this stage was a precondition in order to identify the effects. All of the interviewed participants were readers of women’s magazines and paid attention to the content to a different extent, explained in the paragraph above on consumption.

- **Retention:** This stage outlines the way in which the reader needs to be able to remember and encode the modelled behaviour. During the interviews the participants were asked to retell the stories of the magazine articles they had chosen. All of them were able to tell the story in their own words and summarize them. *Lungelo* felt sympathy with the women described in *True Love* and stated “it’s kind of about women standing their ground and not being tricked by men in not using a condom” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012). *Nzokuhle* discovered the challenges living with HIV and AIDS and described the story: “they’ve gone through together in terms of informing the family and the support that she’s had from her friends and what they have to deal in the relationship physically and sexually etc. and how their relationship is good even though the man is HIV
positive, they make it work” (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012). All the participants were able to identify the embedded information on HIV and AIDS but some of them indicated they would not have read the article in the first place, because they felt already informed enough about HIV and AIDS. Some participants stated further that the presentation of the article did not draw their attention. This was especially the case for readers who tend to consume the magazine in a superficial way or to bridge time.

- **(Re)Production:** In this stage the reader needs to be capable of performing the behaviour. In the context of HIV and AIDS prevention, this requires personal strength and the belief in one’s own capability, also known as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995:2). Readers have to translate the message into actual behaviour (e.g., they should protect themselves during sexual intercourse) but they must also have the ability to reproduce the behaviour (e.g., the strength to negotiate prevention methods and to insist using condoms). During the interviews, it became clear that the participants were aware of the disease and could reproduce information on transmission, process and impact of HIV and AIDS. If a magazine article just repeated this information, there would be no added value for the participants. They did not show a deeper interest as indicated by Caitlin: “but when it comes to actually read about it, no, I would browse over because I feel I heard so much and so many times” (Caitlin, interview 23.5.2012). Gabisile added “If it’s just about using a condom, stick to your partner, be faithful … I probably skip through that message because I feel that is a message that is well-received and well communicated by now” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012).

In order to reproduce the described behaviour, it needed a story with a different view on the disease, described by Nomvelo: “more how it’s affect people, I think that is more important and that is what gets to me, because then it’s people you can relate to and situation you have been in and would be more interesting about HIV and AIDS than the actual disease itself” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012). An interesting aspect could have been a personal story that implicated family, partnership or everyday life. Also, embedding these issues into more positive topics such as celebrities, diet or success stories about women, helped to reproduce the described behaviour. In this context Lungelo thought “I become more interested if it’s a celebrity” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012).
In order to get an idea of participants’ self-efficacy, and therefore the ability to reproduce the shown behaviour in the article, their answers to health related questions helped. Most of them showed a strong awareness of health. They were confident about having a positive effect on their health through sport activities, healthy eating or medical check-ups, confirmed by Nomvelo: “I think I am healthy, I am aware of it, I look after myself, I try and eat healthy, I try to make good and healthy eating choices, and I try to go to gym once a week” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012). Nzokuhle stated: “I think my health is good, because I try and eat healthily and I exercise quite often, so I’d say that my health is good” (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012).

In terms of prevention during sexual activities, especially among the participants who were single, they stated to use condoms and other prevention methods. Also the participants, who were married or in a long-term relationship, answered to use condoms, but some of these participants showed a contradiction in their answers later on. They admitted not using condoms in their marriage or relationship anymore, although it might be reasonable and their last HIV test was long time ago. These aspects provoked a guilty conscience in Gabisile, an otherwise trusting married women, who admitted: “Me included, I don’t want to disclose too much personal information but I have been married for 10 years now and I can safely say I am more inclined to trust my husband and not insist to use a condom during sexual intercourse than I would have in the past” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012). This identified feeling of guilt offers an interesting parallel to the social cognitive theory. According to Ross Thompson, “guilt is viewed as a conscious process, in which a well-developed self structure is required for the reflective self-awareness and self-critical function” and can therefore be classified as another sign of self-efficacy (1988: 200). Overall, the participants were confident about caring for themselves and indicators for self-efficacy were visible. For some participants the articles even helped to strengthen their self-efficacy in form of empowerment, stated by Nomvelo: “I think the examples that are given, give me skills that you empowered yourself to say no, you are more convinced to say no and not take the risk” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012).

- Motivation: Finally, in this stage the reader needs to be motivated in order to imitate the modelled behaviour. This requires internal or external reinforcement in form of desired results and rewards. For all the participants, the need for prevention was clear, the outcome worthwhile and they had shown motivation to care for themselves, ensure
protection and stay healthy. If the participant was not affected by HIV and AIDS in their families or communities, the interest in this topic was much lower. Also the fact that all participants were widely informed about HIV and AIDS reduced motivation. In that case, the article or story needed a special or new aspect, in order to get the attention and provoke motivation to reproduce the behaviour as described by Lungelo: “I also think it is interesting to not just look on one person, who is HIV positive, but if a story is about a couple that is infected or affected by HIV and AIDS or a family that is fighting or living with HIV and AIDS that would be interesting rather than looking at only one person.” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012)

Numerous times the need for stories on and by other women was mentioned, in order to construct sympathy and relate to them. If an article was able to enhance this ‘relatedness’, the motivation to read the article on HIV and AIDS was much higher than without. Jennings Bryant and Peter Vorderer describe ‘relatedness’ as a human need that helps to strengthen intrinsic motivation and evolves for example, between friends, peers or teachers (2006).

The women-centred sense-making approach applied within the interviews, also helped when analysing how the female participants connected embedded health messages to their personal behaviours and social backgrounds, and how they made sense of them. According to Ronald Rice and Charles Atkin, there are many different ways to make sense, and this became noticeable through the participants’ answers (2001). There was a variety of personal interpretations and experiences as women, influenced by relationships, friends, family and community. Within that, there was again the demand for articles and content, focussed on women. Prestage asked for more women-centred information, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS: “so I think they need to be more on us, because it is our lives, our decisions, our choices, rather than making it a man thing and the guys give us excuses and we always give in” (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012). She criticized the tonality of many articles that mainly focussed on male behaviour and how to protect as a woman rather than speak to women as independent and able to make their own decisions.

Ausie came from a different perspective, and influenced by her relationship status as single, she emphasised the possibility of meeting somebody, as was discussed in the article in True Love. “You don’t have to be infected, but you could meet somebody and they disclose their status, how do you
deal with it, you know” (Ausie interview 30.5.2012). Justin’s conclusion was influenced by her marriage and by lives and experiences of her female friends: “I think from the Fairlady one, because I am in a long-term relationship, I might think oh my gosh, what does it mean? But at the same time I know my husband so well… But I think the one thing for me is that we’ve got a lot of friends, who have got divorced or getting divorced and there are a lot of affairs going on. So it is probably closer to home, than you actually realize” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012). The influence of community and family became clear within Nzokuhle’s evaluation of the Cosmopolitan article (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012). She was affected by HIV and AIDS within her family: “There is a lot of sense, because I do have a male relative who is involved with an HIV positive woman and they have a child that is HIV negative and I can relate because he hasn’t told, I am the only one that knows, he hasn’t told his family. I do not know how their family it will take it. So it is a very relevant issue that I see in my everyday life” (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012). Prestage, being affected by HIV and AIDS within her community, observed: “There is sense; these issues are real, like for instance the lady who speaks about her HIV positive partner, and she is HIV negative, only that she already know when going into this relationship that he is HIV positive and I know many relationships where women don’t know if they are positive or not, and it is always a struggle to get people to go for testing and by the time they are ready to go for testing, they are through the condom wars that are being talked about in True Love. So they are really real, I can identify with this” (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012).

Finally Lungelo, as a black South African woman, explained her choice of the magazine True Love during the interview: “because it looks mostly at South African black women and I want a perspective on black South African women because I am a South African black woman” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012). Within the interviews, especially the True Love got very positive feedback by the black participants. This corresponds with Laden’s description of the True Love magazine that “provides a benchmark for assessing some of the ways consumer magazines for black South Africans have effected changes in the socio-cultural dynamics of contemporary South Africa” (2003:14). She argues that the producer of True Love has been committed to a “broader agenda of socio-semiotic change in South Africa”. By integrating routines, representative black South African women and their beliefs, practices and identities the magazine becomes relevant as a “cultural tool” (Laden, 2001:14, Even-Zohar, 1994).
Sense-making not only considers experiences as a determined factor, but also reflects the importance of past, present and future. Some of the participants connected the messages to situations that happened in the past, were currently relevant or will occur in the future. Their personal situation influenced the sense making of one and the same story. *Justine*, who grew up with lots of information on HIV and AIDS at school and university, used the news aspect of the article to determine her sense-making: "*But a lot of time it is the same, like you need to check your partner’s status, and use of contraceptives. I had so much of that when I was at school and even at university and also in a full-time committed relationship; maybe I don’t think it is as relevant*” (*Justine*, interview 24.5.2012).

*Ausie* was influenced by recent experiences of her friends: “*But drawing from my own experience I’ve had a friend, whose partner is positive, but she is negative. So, I would say I am sure these articles somehow render truthfulness in it which means research was done. It may seem like a story, but I am sure something like that happens*” (*Ausie* interview 30.5.2012). *Lungelo*, who will finish university soon, thinks about her future: “*When I read a magazine, I feel like ok, when I finished my master what car I am going to get, what are older women thinking, how do they connect their life, what gym do their go to, all that stuff, yeah I just think of live as a women and what your life would be and I see other women in the magazine and I think ok this is one that I would like to be or I wouldn’t want to be*” (*Lungelo*, interview 18.5.2012).

The sense-making approach also emphasis the involvement of energy, which means motivation or resistance from within, barriers and help from external or other special circumstances. The acknowledgement, that motivation is needed for sense-making, corresponds with the idea of observational learning and the learning stages. Motivating the participants in order to make sense of a story often seems to fail because of the amount of repetitive information in magazine articles on HIV and AIDS. Without any new, personal or surprising aspects the article does not really get their attention, as stated by *Caitlin*: “*It depends if they put it in a way that is new and exciting*” (*Caitlin*, interview 23.5.2012). *Nomvelo* offers some examples for a more interesting aspect and confirms again the importance of personal experiences that help to relate to the story: “*I think what’s more interesting is real-life stories about HIV and AIDS, because I think people are aware of the medical side of it, you know how you get it*” (*Nomvelo*, interview 24.5.2012).
The above discussed results include a lot of positive implications for female readers generated by women’s magazines, but these effects are not without contradictions. On one hand magazine offer themselves as a “self-contained women’s space”, focused on women and their issues, questions and lives. On the other hand, it is defined by men to a large extent (Burton, 2005). Men are often the centre of the story and “provide the motive for many of the activities drawn out” (Burton, 2005: 142). These contradictions could also have been found in participants answers. Prestage questioned the responsibility shift towards men: “I don’t understand how they can shift the blame to men and say because they persuade us, because they told us” (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012). A need for the presentation of women as independent and self-reliant was evident.

The idea behind magazine messages on health are based on a combination of entertaining and educational content therefore the concept of EE helps to explain the effect of these messages further. EE aims to foster behaviour and social change and the social learning/social cognitive theory is often applied to explain the process of EE. According to this concept, learning can occur through observing media role-models and protagonists and their experiences (Singhal et al., 2004). The aim was to find out if there was an educational effect on the participants within the entertaining character of the magazines. Most participants found both aspects within the articles discussed and their feedback might be explained in the light of William Elwood’s summary of six elements of popular culture, which EE focuses on (2009: 244). The first one is “pervasiveness - because entertainment and media are everywhere”. This was confirmed by participants’ answers on their media usage. All of them used at least three different types of media daily out of TV, print (magazines and newspapers), radio or Internet.

The next focus was “popularity – because most people enjoy being entertained”, as confirmed by Prestage: “I am just interacting with them because they are fun, they are written in such a way I can identify myself with some of the stories” (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012). Justine added: “I really like looking at them, so normally I read them evenings or weekends at home, if I go on holidays I read a lot of them, because it is relaxing” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012).

Another focus that could be identified through the participants’ answers was a “personal focus – because readers of these texts are moved to share the experiences of the characters”. In this
context Lungelo admitted: “I would talk to my sisters about the Fairlady one […] we talk about things and I would tell them because it is interesting and because of the family, what happens in the family also… yeah I think I would talk to my sisters about that“ (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012). Caitlin stated that “I would discuss the Cosmo one with my friends if it comes up in a conversation, because often people get reaction when they hear about something like ob he has HIV and then I would bring that up like I have read an article” (Caitlin, interview 23.5.2012).

The fourth focus was on “persuasiveness – because media messages and characters can sway audience members in a variety of ways” and this was manifested in the feedback on the Cosmopolitan article by Caitlin who understood the article as encouragement to deal with HIV and AIDS: “and the Cosmopolitan one was like it is ok, bey its fine. Like don’t have such a stigma about it, this is something you can deal with, like normal life and it is fine” (Caitlin, interview 23.5.2012). In contrast Nomvelo thought about being personally affected: “I think the first one (Cosmopolitan), that I was reading was like: wow, she is brave. It makes me think about, what I would do in this situation” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012).

The next focus was “profitability - because EE programmes can attract the necessary commercial support to fund educational messages”, which could not be confirmed by the participants’ answers. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that the messages in women’s magazines are part of EE strategies which might have been supported by the publishing house or the magazine itself through free integration of the messages on HIV and AIDS. Laden’s belief, the magazine producer of True Love which has been committed to a “broader agenda of socio-semiotic change in South Africa” might confirm this finding (2001).

Finally, the focus “passion – because these messages can stir strong audience emotions about prosocial issues” became visible in the participants’ statements. Nzokuhle felt support and companionship: “reading a magazine helps me to feel like I am not alone with having certain problems and issues and also for entertainment things; sometimes it is just entertaining to read” (Nzokuhle, interview 23.5.2012). In contrast, Gabisile felt more informed and educated: “sometimes magazines and other media can be informative in a sense that they can educate us/ me on what to look for, science that can tell you that there is an issue here, which is HIV and AIDS related. How can you then support that person or approach this person in order to be able to help them” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012). Justine
expressed anger and irritation towards the story: “I think in the True Love one maybe a little more kind of anger and that it was very much like that these women having to defend themselves against these men or like HIV and diseases and it shouldn’t be like that” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012). In consideration of these results the participants were not just the passive audience, they could be motivated to discuss the embedded issues and became part of the debate.

Laden’s discussion of the functions of South African consumer magazines on three different levels underpin the contradictions and help to give an explanation. She defines them as ‘material goods’ that are a product of the print industry. Magazines advertise the consumption of products, but at the same time they are part of “cultural production of collective meanings in which they also construct a range of identity options for communities of individual readers” (2001:15).

**Interaction with others**

The relevance of interaction in order to change behaviour is part of the social learning/social cognitive theory. Bandura explains the effectiveness of social models in influencing another to change behaviour, beliefs or attitudes through processes such as observation, experience and social interactions (1977). Peter Jarvis points out the subjective reception by individuals and the transmission in form of interaction with others: “Individuals actually modify what is received and it is the changed version that is subsequently transmitted to other people in social interactions” (1987: 14). Because of this, it was my special interest to identify whether or not magazines were able to influence social interactions by the participants. In this context, *Prestage* shared not just the content with others but the magazine itself: “in most cases we share ideas, we share information so when I read about condom wars I want my friend to read about it, so I’ll give them my magazine” (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012). *Ausie* confirmed: “Oh yes, (I discuss) things like this with my neighbours, we talked about like I read about this… especially with my friends, we talk about anything although it is not easy for people to come out in an open setting” (Ausie interview 30.5.2012). It seems the magazine and its content was able to influence conversations, but just if the content was memorable and relevant for the participants.
There was no difference between participants, who had more critical points or read the magazine in a more superficial way when it came to sharing the content. If they had found the article on HIV and AIDS, it was highly possible that they would share the content if relevant and the situation appropriate, as suggested by Caitlin: “yes, I would discuss the Cosmo one with my friends if it comes up in a conversation” (Caitlin, interview 23.5.2012). Gabisile, who already shared an article that was discussed during the interview, stated: “in fact, incidentally my husband and I talked about the article in the True Love magazine. We talked about it because we were exactly discussing the same thing I just said that your logical brain receives the messages about protect yourself, yes be truthful to your partner but also use the protection while having sex” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012).

It seems that even if the magazine did not completely fit the participants’ idea of valuable and gender-appropriate content, the health message reached the participants anyhow. In their eyes, HIV and AIDS was so relevant for South Africa that messages were accepted in women’s magazines and would have been read if written in an interesting and stimulating way. Laden has mentioned the “large ‘pass-on’ readership” that was noticeable in her research on consumer magazines for black South African and which can be also interpreted as an interaction with others (2001:7). Almost all participants, when asked what happened to the magazine itself, stated to pass on the magazine to mothers, sisters, friends, domestic workers or colleagues:

Ausie: “I don’t throw it. I’ve got a cupboard, if somebody wants it, can take it and read it” (Ausie interview 30.5.2012).

Justine: “All my magazines get read by a lot of people and Bona, Move and True Love get passed onto my domestic worker and I know she passes them on to her friend” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012).

Nomvelo: “I'll have a friend over and they read it, my little sister, she often wants to read it” (Nomvelo, interview 24.5.2012).

In this context it can be assumed that women, who would not buy a magazine by themselves, get in touch with the messages anyway. And the women who pass the magazine on, become a reference for the magazine: when they read the magazine and pass it on, it must be a relevant medium and interesting to read.
With regards to interactions, presented in women’s magazines, Graeme Burton claims “the interactions represented in women’s magazines are circumscribed, obviously with relation to roles. Interactions are referred to within the home, in leisure situation, in relation to children and beloved males, in relation to friends, in relation to professionals who are helping them with health issues chiefly [...]” (2005). This was also identified by the participants and described as stereotypes, typical roles or middle-class characteristic. Lungelo described the character in one magazine: ‘from the Fairlady the character I would say is a typical married woman with children who thinks of her family even when the husband has done something wrong, so like what would the kids say and she is very forgiveness driven and compassionate in a sense also, so she’s more motherly” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012). She thought about the characters and her personal behaviour: “That’s what the Fairlady one actually has taught you. Yea, if I would be in a relationship, I would go for a test every year, just to know your status” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012).

In this context, Laden identifies the construction of South African consumer magazines as “a shared repertoire of everyday experiences, lifestyle options and social practices, which is best described, from a Western or European standpoint, as typically middle-class or bourgeois” (2001:7). It can be assumed that the strong identification of the participants with the magazine content might be based on these portrayed everyday experiences and social practices. But within the presentation of everyday experiences and common social practices lies another contradiction. If women always have been portrayed in this way, they might accept common gender-roles and stereotypical behaviour and do not question their own responsibility and possibilities, which became clear in some participants’ statements. The representation of women in media is also subject of Abebe Zegeye and Richard Harris’ discussion on South African media (2003). They pointed out the need for a more nuanced picture, which is of special interest for women’s magazines: “if the media is simply there to reflect reality, then there seems little we can do about this situation, and little means of changing the ‘conventional’ gender roles. But if the media is seen rather as a catalyst for change, and a creator of realities [...] then it is important that it does not report in ways that may reinforce old stereotypes” (Zegeye and Harris, 2003: 125). By extension, various participants expressed the wish for reworking the presented female roles in women’s magazines.
Conflict of Interest with Women’s Magazines

A variety of positive effects such as creating awareness and providing important information for women and enabling motivation, relaxation or inspiration were mentioned earlier. However, there were also noticeable negative effects. Gender stereotyped pictures exert an especially negative effect on body image and body satisfaction, resulting in lower self-worth (Cusumano and Thompson, 1997; Garner et al., 1980; Posovac et al., 1998). My study does not analyse these effects, but considers them. In the context of HIV and AIDS related questions during the interviews, the participants criticized different aspects of women’s magazines. Their critique was not so much on body images or appearances of integrated models, but more on female roles and behaviour of female protagonist, presented in the articles.

For some participants, it seemed too easy to shift the responsibility just to men and leave the women as either victims or seductress. The focus of most magazines on fashion or sexual tips was too superficial and put women in a passive role in order to attract men. The participants asked for an even stronger focus on women, and their possibilities to act and take responsibility. “Media tend to present women not just in South Africa in this manner, but also worldwide”, as pointed out by Zegeye and Harris (2003). This is especially in situations of social conflict, which is applicable to HIV and AIDS in South Africa “the situation is often even worse, with women being portrayed almost exclusively as victims or demons” (Zegeye and Harris, 2003: 124). With regards to this conflict, Justine recognized the presentation of women as always the “weaker sex” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012). Prestage considered: “They shifting the blame from us to the guys, yet we have to negotiate for safe sex because after all it is our lives. So I think they need to be more on us, because it is our lives, our decisions, our choices, rather than making it a man thing and the guys give us excuses and we always give in” (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012).

The focus on sexual aspects leads to further critique and questions the credibility and realistic approach of the integrated story. Despite most of the participants’ believing that the stories were generally true, they criticized exaggerated elements. The core idea of the story seemed to be appealing, but then it drifted off and the participants could no longer connect. Justine questioned the extent of presented sexual activities: “with the Fairlady one the only thing I find there is a lot of these articles, those like my partner lives a dangerous secret sex life, and that lets it sometimes sound too far away. I know my husband it not going to have a dangerous sex life, I really do believe that but
sometimes they can have an article like your partner had a one night stand and this is the result, because that is more realistic” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012). Marlini missed certain aspects of the disease: “But it doesn’t tell you what it is that you are getting and how bad it really is, it just said use a condom to not get HIV but do people really know what it is? Do they really know the extent of what the disease is and what impact it will have on your life?” (Marlini, interview 29.5.2012).

For Lungelo Cosmopolitan did not connect to the lives of black South African women and, in particular, the focus on sexual stimulating topics revoked its relevance as a serious social situation: “The question that I have with Cosmo is I think, they’re not really focusing on black people with HIV and AIDS, they focus on how or the best position while having sex, they wouldn’t say anything about HIV prevention and with Cosmo I think is it really relevant to South Africa?” (Lungelo, interview 18.5.2012). Not just the relevance was sometimes questioned, but some participants missed new information or information presented in a new way, as mentioned before. They criticised the predictability of stories and the unappealing presentation of already known content. Varona commented: “it is just generally that most magazine formats are very foreseeable, so even while you are reading, you know more or less, what’s to be expected, because it follows the set regime of categories” (Varona, interview 23.5.2012). Justine mentioned: “But a lot of time it is the same like you need to check your partners status, and use of contraceptives. I had so much of that when I was at school and even at university and also in a fulltime committed relationship; maybe I don’t think it is as relevant” (Justine, interview 24.5.2012).

In particular the discrepancy between sexual advice and the need for prevention are part of this conflict in which most of the participants found themselves: they enjoyed reading magazines, but questioned and critiqued them at the same time. This can be linked to the discourses on the “double-edged” nature of women’s magazines (Winship, 1987) or the “contradictory consciousness” discussion (Damon-Moore, 1994) that reveals the dual character and the conflict of interest encoded within the magazines. Based on the interviews with the participants it can be gleaned that the stronger the conflict, the less the influence of the magazine on readers’ lives and personal experiences. Norval (2011:10) identifies this conflict and describes it as “simultaneous attraction and rejection towards women’s magazines; on the one hand finding pleasure their escapist quality and recognising their mass popularity, but on the other, feeling a strong sense that to be a feminist, one must reject the construction of
womanhood put forward by most popular women’s magazines”. This links again to integrated stereotypes and Laden’s definition as ‘material goods’ and ‘cultural tools’ at the same time (2001).

According to the participants’ answers, it can be summarized that magazines suffer from stereotypical messages and sex-focused content but surprisingly the relevance of health messages did not suffer the same criticism. Most of the participants accepted messages on HIV and AIDS in the context of stories about sexual activities, relationship challenges or advice about fashion, make-up and lifestyle. Gabisile, who criticized aspects of the magazines earlier, still found credibility in the embedded health messages, even in the context of controversial messages on sex: “Yes, I do because I think you can still enjoy a healthy adventurous sex life but still protect yourself. The key is knowing how to protect you, knowing how to deal with HIV as a topic but as a topic that is subservient to trying to live a healthy sexual lifestyle” (Gabisile, interview 29.5.2012). Prestage pointed out the balancing function of these messages "I think is good that these articles [on HIV and AIDS] are put in, at least somewhere you’re balancing it out" (Prestage, interview 23.5.2012). The dual character of women’s magazines seems to substantially influence the interaction with them: enjoyment versus rejection, entertainment versus education, female focus versus male influence, and sexual inspiration versus need for protection. This characterizes the conflict that the reader might experience and which are unique for this medium.
CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION

The study discovered the relevance and reception of HIV and AIDS messages in women’s magazines in the context of health communication. The primary emphasis was on media reception and the way in which women made sense of women’s magazines. Therefore, the study focussed on media consumption, influences of women’s magazines and personal interpretation of embedded messages. As an overall result the analysis reflects a positive picture and interpretation of women’s magazines by the participants, but it also shows their dual character. Contradictions and critique on content were expressed, positive and negative features were identified, female stereotypes and at the same time the enjoyment of reading was noted.

With regards to health messages the participants’ reception was predominantly positive and various content elements seemed to be relevant for them. Because HIV and AIDS in a South African context is of such importance, the integration of messages influenced the overall acceptance of magazines in a positive way. Not only do HIV and AIDS influence the South African perspective on women’s magazines, but also participants’ social lives, interactions with others, reasons for interest in the magazine, cultural diversity, financial and educational differences and gender roles and stereotypes. As a result, South African women’s magazines cover these aspects in different ways and thus provide the basis for both critique and praise by the participants. The participants in turn consumed the magazines differently in terms of length and intensity of reading, which influenced the reception of HIV and AIDS messages significantly. A highly influential factor in stimulating motivation to read women’s magazines and interact with the content on HIV and AIDS was identified. This can be described as ‘relatedness’ in accordance to self-determination theory (Bryant, Vorderer, 2006). It describes the participants’ connection to the magazine itself, their protagonists, incorporated role models and narrative themes of magazine articles.

Women’s Magazines in a South African Context
The participants’ consumption occurred in different ways and correlated directly with the reception of HIV and AIDS messages. The different forms of consumption are confirmed by the uses and gratification approach, which states that readers use the media for a variety of
reasons and in completely different ways (Watson, 1998). The participants used the women’s magazine differently in order to gratify their needs. Based on these needs, they accepted some messages (e.g., the educational health message) but simultaneously rejected other messages (e.g., the gender-stereotyped message on lifestyle or relationships). This is, according to Watson, the core concept of the uses and gratification theory (1998). The participants not only consumed the magazine differently, they also have shown different needs underpinning why they consumed the magazine. These needs might be relaxation from everyday lives, distraction from work or housework, self-affirmation as a woman or creating a sense of community with others.

The following illustration shows the correlation between consumption and reception of HIV and AIDS messages, and classifies the identified forms of consumption. The ‘superficial consumption’ can be described by a low intensity of magazine reading and therefore a restricted reception of HIV and AIDS messages. ‘Consumption to bridge’ depends on the length of the waiting situation but can also be described by a lower intensity and restricted reception. ‘Consumption for relaxation’ and ‘belated consumption’ are characterized by a higher intensity in terms of reading and reception. ‘Consumption to enhance femininity’ and ‘exaggerated consumption” included most intense reading and resulted in higher reception of HIV and AIDS messages than the other forms of consumption (see Figure 11). These modes are influenced by the social lives of readers and can change of the basis of available time, personal interest, relevance of content or influence by others.

Figure 12: Consumption of Women’s Magazines and Reception of HIV and AIDS Messages
Not only did consumption occur in different ways, there were also many ways to make sense of embedded messages. Sense-making by the participants was strongly influenced by their personal lives, social interactions and backgrounds. The relevance of the magazine for participants, and therefore the consumption, was also influenced by the representation of women in the magazine. Certain participants critiqued the presented female roles, others accepted or ignored them. Overall the presentation of women influenced the acceptance and the appreciation of women’s magazines as a “feminized space” and Zegeye and Harris’s conclusion on media’s role matches the participants’ opinions and point out the importance “that South Africa recognizes the role of women in its peace process and in the continuing struggle against social problems such as poverty, HIV-AIDS and sexual violence” (2003: 127).

If magazines want to be part of it, it is necessary to shift the presentation from (stereo)typical pictures of women towards more contemporary roles and embrace female self-consciousness and responsibility. In this context the magazine *True Love* seems to be the best example for well-balanced content. Although it covered a similar range of topics, the tonality of stories, the balance of entertaining and educational aspects, interesting twists within the articles, and embedded characters and protagonists were very positively assessed by the participants.

The participants’ assessment of the five most circulated and, therefore most read magazines in South Africa, was different. *True Love* and *Fairlady* were preferred by all readers, in which *True Love* was preferred by black readers and *Fairlady* by white readers. *Bona* and *Move!* were assessed as being the most strongly focussed on South African people, but *Move!* seemed to be more for lower income target groups, as discussed by the participants and confirmed by the magazines’ target group description. *Cosmopolitan* was the magazine with a high appeal because of its inclusion of celebrities and ‘glossy’ character, but at the same time the content was ranked as superficial and only capable of entertaining. In the context of health messages on HIV and AIDS *True Love* and *Fairlady* seem to be best suited to embed stories and messages and the results show different ways how people make sense of the magazine’s content.
In the Context of Entertainment, Motivation and Relatedness

Women’s magazines aim to entertain and inform, as discussed and confirmed by the participants. According to Bryant and Vorderer “someone who is seeking entertainment usually does so for its own sake, that is in order to experience something positive, such as enjoyment, suspense, amusement, serenity and so on” (2006:6). These reasons matched the participants’ statements, who seemed to consume the magazine exactly on this account. The reader is not reading the magazine because of the entertainment she is already experiencing, but because of the entertainment she is expecting. Therefore, Bryant and Vorderer describe entertainment as “intrinsically motivated response to certain media products” and the state of motivation is crucial in order to consume the magazine (2006).

Motivation was discussed earlier and is identified as an important stage, according to social cognitive theory, in order to enable behaviour modelling (Bandura, 1995). The participants have shown motivation to a different extent and this extent can also be linked to the form of consumption. The more the participant was motivated to read the magazine, the more time she spent with the magazine and read its content. In this process, motivation was influenced by certain reasons such as expecting novelty value of the article, being entertained and relaxed, experiencing a moment of escape, getting visually stimulated and interested, being able to link personally to the story and the protagonists, or experience understanding of personal needs as a woman. Bryant and Vorderer describe them as an “appeal of novelty, […] challenge, […] or aesthetic value” and later on they consult the so-called self-determination theory, which can be described as the next stage of the social cognitive theory (2006: 6). The highly interesting aspect of ‘relatedness’ is mentioned within this theory. This seems to be a crucial factor for the motivation to read women’s magazines. Originally it is identified as a third human need that helps to strengthen intrinsic motivation and evolves for example between friends, peers or teachers (Bryant, Vorderer, 2006).

Based on participants’ statements and their synonyms for magazines such as ‘friend’ or ‘bible’, or the confirmed entertaining-educational character of the magazine, ‘relatedness’ seems to be important in inducing motivation. It can be applied to the context of health messages. With regards to HIV and AIDS messages, it might appear in form of relatedness to the protagonist (e.g., a woman, of the same age and ethnic background), relatedness to the social situation (e.g.,
married, working mother, large family), relatedness to the social problem (e.g., confrontation within family, argument with partner, discussion with friends), relatedness to cultural values (e.g., self-realization, representation of women, seek marriage, satisfy partner) and relatedness to visual representation (e.g., ethnic identity, age, status symbols).

The extent of motivation therefore varied from participant to participant, but two general conclusions can be made: Firstly, the participants stated to have been very informed about HIV and AIDS and this reduced the interest in stories on aspects they already knew about. In this case a novelty factor was missing. In order for women’s magazines to get participants’ attention, a more detailed, new, special, surprising or different perspective is necessary. If that happened, their attitude towards women’s magazines would be so positive that the message would come across better. Secondly, the affectedness of the participants influenced motivation. If the participant was not affected by HIV and AIDS in their families or communities, their interest in this topic was much lower. This confirms the idea of ‘relatedness’; the participants could not relate much to the story as they did not feel ‘situationally related’. The concept of relatedness in the context of health communication messages seems to be an interesting aspect for future research, especially in the context of entertainment education, motivation for behaviour change and the self-determination theory.

Duality of Women’s Magazines and Female Community

The dual character of women’s magazines, also discussed as “double-edged” nature of women’s magazines (Winship, 1987), the “contradictory consciousness” discussion (Damon-Moore, 1994) and the “simultaneous attraction and rejection” towards women’s magazines” (Norval, 2011) was identified and confirmed. It describes an on-going conflict, which the participants experienced, between the pleasure and entertainment of reading a magazine and the consciousness of reprehensible stereotypes and female roles, embedded in health messages. Laden explains both these sides of interacting with women’s magazines based on the character of being ‘material goods’ and ‘cultural tools’ at the same time (2001). Although the general assessment of the magazine suffered from stereotypical messages, the participants could still find sense in most of the embedded health messages. Because they were aware of the duality of women’s magazines, they accepted dual messages on sexuality as well: pleasure and experiences
on one hand and protection and risk of HIV and AIDS on the other hand. In the light of entertainment education, the effectiveness of health messages is based on various factors, which might be relevant for women’s magazines as well. Kimani Njogu, who discussed EE with regards to Africa, identified these factors and, in particular, the demand for “cultural sensitivity and appropriateness”, “constructing effective stories […]”, powerful stories that have twists and turns at times quite unpredictable” and “creating powerful female characters” are crucial for women’s magazines (2005:54).

Donnelly considers women’s magazines as a genre produced by and for women and it “adds a sense of an ‘imagined community’ to it” (2001:15). This sense was confirmed by the participants and not just the production by women, but also women’s concerns, interests and experiences as the centre of the integrated stories, were highlighted by the participants. Ferguson compares this focus with a cult or religion and from her perspective the editors of the magazines are extremely important as ‘custodians’ of the ‘feminine cult’ and by setting the ‘feminine agenda’ within the ‘scripture’ of women’s magazines (1983). Therefore, the magazine should be aware what kinds of stories are embedded and messages transferred in order to serve their ‘female community’. Laden suggests in this context that “to consider printed artefacts not simply as sources for ideas and images, but as both indicators of and contributors to social relations” (2001: 7). Because women’s magazine include ‘local knowledge’, which means shared ideals, values and knowledge by everyone in a given culture, a sense of community for the participants can arise (Laden, 2001: 7).

**Educating Educators**

As a result of the interviews, based on women’s magazines target groups, the average price of magazines and in the light of the 17,5% illiteracy rate in South Africa, women’s magazines seem to be an exclusive media channel in comparison to, for example, TV or radio (UN, 2005). In accordance with this, magazine readers tend to be above average in education, usually with a higher income, and based on the participants’ profiles, socially active and interested in interactions with family, friends and colleagues. Their role can be described as a form of ‘opinion leader’. According to Sven Windahl et al. “these are people who tend to consume more media output, discuss certain themes with others, and participate more in organizations
than others do in their immediate environment” (2009: 70). They play a role as “experts for others, mediating information gathered in the media” (2009: 70). Opinion leaders translate their own interpretations and perceptions and pass them on to ‘followers’ (Windahl et al., 2009).

The findings indicate that the participants were already aware of risks, transmission and effects by HIV and AIDS and more interested in background information, impact of the disease, case studies on other women, support for affected people and so on when considering this information as they interact with others. It seems that they might adopt the role of an ‘educator’ and source of support for others and act according to the role as an opinion leader. The role of opinion leaders is further described in the two-step flow approach that connects mass and interpersonal communication. The approach suggests that “the audience is composed of social beings who communicate among themselves” (Windahl et al., 2009: 72). This was confirmed by the participants and the integration of consumed health messages on HIV and AIDS in their interaction with others. As a consequence of ‘talking to opinion leaders’, women’s magazines need to consider their integrated health messages in order to gratify the specific needs of the readers for on-going new information. The discussion and verification of opinion leader communication by the magazines might be an additional aspect for future research, considering the two-step flow theory.

**SWOT Analysis of HIV and AIDS Messages in Women’s Magazines**

Overall the discussion about women’s magazines was characterized by contrasts of positive and negative features, feedback and opinions. The following table summarizes them and underpins the need for a strategic decision if, how and when women’s magazines become part of health communication campaigns for HIV and AIDS. According to Charles Bamford a SWOT analysis is” a form of analysis, resulting in a listing of […] strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats” and is usually applied in order to enable strategic management decisions but also helps to summarize substantial findings of my study (2010):
Strength of women’s magazines in the context of HIV and AIDS messages

- Enable pleasure and relaxation
- Can create a feeling of ‘relatedness’
- Custom-made messages for women
- Create a sense of ‘female community’
- Talk to an important target group in order to spread the message, readers are ‘opinion leaders’
- Medium fits into EE strategies and enables entertainment and education at the same time
- ‘Cultural tools’ and integration of ‘local knowledge’ (Laden, 2001)

Weaknesses of women’s magazines in the context of HIV and AIDS messages

- Dual character of women’s magazines (pleasure of reading versus consciousness and rejection of female stereotypes)
- Presentation of women often as passive and influenced by male perceptions
- Responsibility shift to men
- Portrayal of women often as “victims”
- ‘material goods’ and therefore a strong focus on advertising and profit (Laden, 2001)
- Often unrealistic elements of messages and exaggerated presentation of sexual activities

Opportunities of women’s magazines in the context of HIV and AIDS messages

- Reach women in a relaxed mode and the reception of embedded message is more likely
- “Female community” character helps to focus on women within health messages
- Women’s magazines target groups are suitable to pass on the message to friends, family, colleagues
- Background stories, case studies of other women, advise, and stories with a high novelty factor are likely to be read by women

Threats of women’s magazines in the context of HIV and AIDS messages

- Readers do not take the magazines seriously because of controversial messages on female and gender roles
- The embedded message get lost within the entertaining content
- Readers are more interested in entertaining content on fashion or beauty, and do not read the health message
- The magazine is too expensive in order to reach a broad audience

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<th>Figure 13: SWOT Analysis of HIV and AIDS Messages in Women’s Magazines</th>
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The interviews have shown a strong desire by the participants for more detailed stories and information and, in order for health messages on HIV and AIDS to get their attention, it
might be important for magazines to expand their thematic fields of stories. Beth Schneider discusses, with regards to women, various major psychological communication issues of HIV and AIDS. They could be interesting to consider and to enhance the relevance of included stories (1995). In the light of readers as opinion leaders and their participation in social interactions, the following extract includes interesting aspects for further stories (Schneider, 1995:129):

- Dealing with denial of the seriousness of HIV and AIDS by friends, colleges or family
- Decision making about life changes of HIV positive people (nutrition, sport activities, job)
- Coping with denial, anger, depression or preoccupation of HIV positive people
- Possibilities of an active public role regarding HIV and AIDS (counselling, volunteering, spokesperson)
- Helping, counselling, supporting partner/ friends/ family to cope with HIV and AIDS
- Finding information or giving information about HIV and AIDS (study results, organisation, research activities, websites)
- Dealing with the anticipated death of a partner/ friend/ family member
- Talking to a child about the disease and risks.

In conclusion, the decisive factors for health messages on HIV and AIDS in women’s magazines, identified in my study, are: motivation as an important stage according to social learning/social cognitive theory in order to enable behaviour modelling; relatedness, originally identified as a third human need within the self-determination theory, which helps to strengthen intrinsic motivation; the dual character of women’s magazines as an on-going conflict between the pleasure of reading a magazine and the consciousness of reprehensible stereotypes and female roles; the sense of female community and finally, the role of readers as female opinion leaders. These results present women’s magazine as a multifaceted medium and might influence future research and programmes for health communication on HIV and AIDS prevention.

Because the content on women and the different perspectives on it is so important, a deeper insight might be relevant for future research and could highlight who and how the content of South African magazines is decided, what kind of information is used and from what source.
Especially in the context of HIV and AIDS, it is of special interest what kind of feedback reaches the magazine and how participants respond.

Generally, women’s magazines are able to participate in health communication for HIV and AIDS, especially in dialogue with women. There is a strong need coming from participants for focused, relevant and sense-full content in order to induce motivation and stimulate reception, interpretation and exchange of embedded messages.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE: Interview Questions

**General Questions**

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**Health Related Questions**

1. In general, how is your health?
2. In the past month, how often has a health or emotional problem occurred?
3. If you wanted to get information about sexual health, what are your resources?

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<td>Public health campaigns</td>
<td>Health provider/ clinic</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Are you affected by HIV and AIDS within your community or family?
5. Do you use contraceptive methods? Which one(s)?

**Media related Questions**

6. What kind of media do you usually use?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women´s magazines</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Others:</td>
<td>Others:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Please have a look at these magazines (showing of five magazines: Bona, Move!, True Love, Fairlady, Cosmopolitan). Which of these women´s magazines have you ever read?
8. When, where and why do you read women’s magazines?
9. When was the first time you read a women’s magazine?
10. Describe a typical situation of when you are reading a women’s magazine.
11. What is happening (to you) while reading magazines? Do you have any questions while reading?

12. In your opinion, which magazine is the most interesting?
13. What kind of topics are you interested in and what information are you looking for?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fashion</th>
<th>Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrities</td>
<td>Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-up</td>
<td>Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal stories by women &amp; girls</td>
<td>Success and motivational stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. After reading the magazine, what happens to the magazine itself?

**Magazines & HIV and AIDS Related Questions**

15. Which of these health related topics have you ever discovered in a women’s magazine?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fitness or exercise</th>
<th>Sexually transmitted diseases, e.g., HIV and AIDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>Heart diseases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet/nutrition</td>
<td>Mental health issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol use</td>
<td>Drug use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual activities</td>
<td>Contraception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>Medicines/Pharmaceuticals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking cigarettes</td>
<td>Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Why do you think these topics are included?
17. How interested are you in articles on health, particularly on HIV and AIDS?
18. Do you pay attention to HIV and AIDS messages?
**Article Related Questions**

Please have a look at these five articles on HIV and AIDS and choose two. Please read those two articles.

19. Why did you choose those two articles?
20. What the specific issues are being talked about in these articles? Do you think these articles are true?
21. Who do you think the message is directed at, and why do you say so?
22. What sense do you draw from these articles personally (if there is any sense for you)? Do you find these articles believable? Does the credibility of these articles “suffer” from articles on sex/sex life tips etc.?
23. Is it worthwhile it having such messages?
24. What feelings did these articles provoke in you?
25. Was there any kind of knowledge, attitudes and practices about HIV and AIDS you got from the articles? Was there something new for you?
26. Has reading these articles helped you in understanding HIV and AIDS?
27. Would you discuss these articles with your friends or family?
28. Have the articles given you a reason or an understanding of why you should prevent HIV and AIDS?
29. Is there anything in these articles that you find educational or entertaining?
30. What have you learnt from the characters in the article (if a character is introduced)?
31. Do these articles give you skills to deal with similar issues in your real life?
32. Does the included information help you? How, why or why not?

THANK YOU.
APPENDIX TWO: Magazine article used during interviews

Fairlady, no. 05/2012

Title of article: “My partner led a dangerous secret sex life”

Content of article: This article is written in form of a “human-interest article”, which starts with an anecdote and is chronically organised (Pawlik-Kienlen, 2008). It deals with relationship issues, infidelity, betrayal, and HIV and AIDS as a consequence, described from the perspective of a married women. She believed having a long-term and reputed stable relationship, but is confronted with her partner’s HIV positive status and his secret extramarital sexual activities in the form of orgies, sex with different partners, sexual fetishes and pornographic activities. She described her journey from getting to know each other, his wealthy and privileged background, the moment of finding out about his status, her test and negative result, talking to their children, and more. She has to deal with different emotions, is scared by the disease and how he put her at risk but finally decides to forgive and support her husband and start a new chapter in life. After month of therapy and discussions she must face that her husband is not able to change and still involved in hazardous sexual activities. Eventually she ends the relationship and starts to move on.
**Bona, no. 01/2012**

**Title of article:** “HIV Q&A: Dear Criselda”

**Content of article:** The article is presented as a Q&A and covers a column by Criselda Kananda, a South African celebrity (radio DJ, motivational speaker, counsellor and ex-nurse). She has been diagnosed as HIV-positive and since then she has been actively involved in HIV and AIDS prevention campaigns, programmes and activities such as this monthly column in Bona. The January issue includes questions on the impact of the virus, support groups, transmission incorporated in personal stories.

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**Dear Criselda**

HIV or AIDS-related question? Lonely and confused? Don’t despair! Radio and TV personality Criselda Kananda is here to answer your questions.

**Dear Criselda,**

I was diagnosed with HIV 10 years ago. I started asking questions then and it seems I can’t live with the result. I’ve been in and out of hospital. My family and everyone don’t believe me. I have to show them my results to prove I am HIV-positive. My CD4 count remains high and I feel well, but I exercise and eat healthy. Even though my health is good, I would like to know if I will see my children grow up.

**Dear Sydny,**

It’s understandable that you are concerned about your health and future. Please consult a healthcare professional to discuss your options and manage your condition. HIV treatment can help maintain your health and improve your quality of life.

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**Letter from Reader:**

My husband gave me HIV. I’m 40-years-old and a woman in HIV. My husband was positive and immediately informed my husband was sick. My response was: “Support me.” However, when she got home, I was shocked to discover he has already been on HIV treatment for two years. What makes me angry is the fact that he knew he was HIV positive while having unprotected sex with me for all those years. I need counselling because I don’t feel alone about it.

**Counselling**

Dear Criselda: I am writing to you in a very hard time. My husband is HIV-positive and we have been married for two years. I am seeing some changes in his behaviour and I am worried.

**Dear Reader,**

It’s important to communicate openly with your partner to discuss his behaviour and any concerns you may have. Consider discussing your feelings with a trusted friend or a professional counselor who can provide support and guidance.

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**Positive Talk:**

Criselda Kananda is an HIV-positive South African celebrity. Her dedication to raising awareness and providing support to those affected by HIV is commendable. Her column in Bona magazine offers a platform for discussing HIV/AIDS-related issues, sharing personal stories, and providing valuable information. Through her work, she aims to inspire and empower individuals to take control of their health and well-being.
Title of article: “Condom Wars”

Content of article: The article includes anecdotes and quotes by different women, some with a humorous touch. It covers the aspects of negotiation and protection during sexual activities, condom use, includes gender perspectives and situation where different opinions of women and men are common. Especially the tricks used by men to not wear a condom and convince their partners, as described and discussed by nine different women. It explains the risk for women in giving in and shows different responses to their partner’s refusal to use a condom. Tricks and common statements on skin on skin experiences, more pleasure and trust are included and ways for women to say no are shown.
Cosmopolitan, no. 12/2011

Title of article: “What it feels like to date an HIV-positive man”

Content of article: This article can be described as an “inspirational article” and offers a moral message (Pawlik-Kienlen, 2008). It talks about a relationship between an HIV positive man and a HIV negative woman. It described her perspective, her journey and the situations she is dealing with in her community, family and partnership as a result of their status. It specifically deals with moments such as deciding about dating this man, creating a trustful and loving relationship despite the disease, informing the family, support by friends, discussion with doctors and concrete sexual practices. The story shows the possibility of living with HIV and AIDS.
Title of article: "Positive heroes: Finding love and healing"

Content of article: This “human-interest” article describes the journey of a sero-discordant couple (where one partner is HIV positive and one negative) (Pawlik-Kienlen, 2008) including medical aspects and procedures. Specifically, the question of whether or not it is possible to have a child together in this situation is explained. Aspects such as new procedures, medication, and doctor’s guidance are combined with the story of a “real couple”. The couple discovered that the man is HIV positive after their first child. The woman who is HIV negative left at first but decided later on to continue the relationship despite the disease. The reunited couple decided to have another child and discover different possibilities such as artificial insemination.
Finding love and healing

By acknowledging his status and learning all about HIV, Andile was able to add value – and another child – to his family, writes Katleho Khoase

It is possible for a sero-discordant couple (where one partner is HIV positive and the other is HIV negative) to safely have a child together? 

Yes, it is. With the help of new preconception medication and a doctor’s guidance, many couples are able to conceive without transmitting the virus to each other, or to their unborn child.

Andile’s story

Andile Makushane (31) was born in Bulawayo in the Eastern Cape, but he’s currently living in Kuilsriver in Cape Town.

He met his partner, Janine, in 2009 and they were blessed with a baby girl in 2001.

He later started getting sick, losing weight and developing from fatigue, not knowing that he was HIV positive.

A good friend suggested he go for a test, and that’s when his life took another turn. He was diagnosed with HIV in 2008. It was a shock to both Andile and Janine.

“Treatment and care didn’t make much sense back then,” he recalls. “I was afraid for my life. I didn’t attend counselling because I didn’t believe that I was going to be cured. I was fatigued, but I didn’t know why.

“At the time, I was working as a hair stylist and so I used to see this man from my hotel. We became friends and I started going to the clinic.”

He was told before he was told him he could not have someone who was HIV positive working for him.

According to the Employment Equity Act, it’s illegal for an employer to fire an employee for being HIV positive. Andile says, “I tried to commit suicide, but I was saved by my daughter.”

Seeking a cure

Although he told his partner and his doctor, Andile said he was in the era of criminalisation. But after a few months, he decided to follow his doctor’s guidance.

She suggested Andile go to Welkom to seek help from a nurse who would cure HIV.

“I went there to meet the nurse who was supposed to help me. While waiting for her to attend to me, I watched a documentary about Zwi Liebenberg, the HIV activist, and I saw the image of the first AIDS activist. I remembered it and then I decided to go back to Cape Town.”

He wanted to do the ART in 2010 and joined a support group. I was told that I wouldn’t be the long

because the CD4 count was too low.

“Then joining the support group was the best thing I could have done for myself because I learned so much about the virus. I became a C+ unit member and a peer educator at clinic.”

Things start looking up

He was feeling better and had gained weight. His reputation followed him after seeing him along the streets.

In 2007, they decided to have another child. Andile’s CD4 count was 455 and the doctor told him he could have a child.

“I was given an option of doing an intrauterine insemination so they separated it from the seminal fluid and joined it with the egg, but I wanted to have a child of my own.”

There’s always hope

The couple had to go through various tests and underwent the insemination process, but Andile’s CD4 count was too low.

“Then I went on a medication that would raise my CD4 count and a month later, I was able to have a child and she was born with the help of a donor sperm.”

Andile is now a father of two.

“Life is now much better and I’m able to earn a living.”

There are always those who look at Andile and say, “How can someone look like that and be HIV positive? Where is the cure?”

Andile says, “The cure is in the hands of God. And the doctors in the laboratory are working on it every day.”

Andile says, “I want people to know that there is hope for those who are sero-discordant.”

There’s always hope is the theme of this interview with Andile and Janine, who are currently raising their two children in Cape Town.

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