Investigating Communication, Health and Development

10 Years of Research in The Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS)
Dedication

This book is dedicated to the late Professor Lynn Dalrymple, who was instrumental in creating the Public Health Promotion via Entertainment Education course at the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS) in 2002. Lynn’s dedication to innovative communication methodologies has inspired a generation of leaders in HIV and AIDS and public health communication internationally, including many of those whose work is featured in this book.

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Patrick L. Coleman

It all began in 2000 when I was requested to make a short visit to South Africa by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to provide them and the Government of South Africa guidance in expanding their AIDS communication programme. My employer, The Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Bloomberg School of Public Health through its Center for Communication Programmes (CCP), had wide experience in many countries throughout the world in this area but it was our first endeavour in the complex country that is South Africa.

My assignment was vague with minimum guidance which left me to find my way, which is what I relish! During that visit I met Warren Parker and Lynn Dalrymple (among others) and was struck by their competence, professionalism and commitment to fighting this pandemic that was ravishing their country. Both governments saw value in my skills and I became enamoured with the people, the country and the challenges of fighting AIDS. A plan for me to move to South Africa in 2000 fell through due to other funding priorities so I continued to make regular visits.

One of the things that stood out during my visits was the need for developing the next generation of social development communicators, especially through academic training in the areas of strategic communication and research. I mentioned this to Warren and Lynn and we worked to set up and fund the Centre for Development, Research and Evaluation (CADRE) with Warren and added ad hoc training in these areas to Lynn’s group, Drama in AIDS Education (DramAidE). But it wasn’t enough.
Then in 2001 they introduced me to Professor Keyan Tomaselli at the (then) University of Natal (UND). One of my specialties is using the entertainment industry (the second largest business in the world) for educational purposes. Warren, Lynn and I pitched him the idea of collaborating on an academic, graduate-level course that would use Entertainment Education (EE) as the lynchpin for developing the skills of students in strategic communication with a research component. This brilliant man took our idea (and the initial small grant of $25 000 from us) to heart and worked miracles in record time, managing to develop the course and have it approved as an accredited offering in his department, Culture, Communication and Media Studies (CCMS). Coming from an academic institution, I was truly amazed at the speed this was accomplished.

Thus was born, in 2002, the world’s first graduate-level course on Entertainment Education. With our funding we were able to support small-scale research projects conducted by students, so their academic training could be applied in practice. The one stipulation of the funding was that it should be used for support of South African students first and then other African students if the need arises. To their credit, USAID was supportive of this project as they saw the practical value of both building future social communicators and gaining insight through field research into myriad AIDS communication interventions, especially since many of these interventions didn’t know the impact of their work.

The first year we put together hurriedly a list of course instructors of both South Africans and JHU faculty. The students’ research was guided by various instructors under the guidance of Prof. Keyan Tomaselli and Prof. Ruth Teer-Tomaselli from CCMS. The students received editorial assistance from Arnold Shepperson.

The course grew in popularity with students from different disciplines of the university and attracted students not only from other African countries but also from Europe and the United States. Over time we fine-tuned the course and refined the curriculum with a constant set of instructors which now included previous students of CCMS. I moved to South Africa in 2003 and was more actively engaged with the course and the students. Shortly thereafter the United States President’s Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) assistance came into existence and our funding grew exponentially with a corresponding rise in our funding commitment to the University of KwaZulu-Natal and this led to the expansion of the course and permanent staff and faculty at CCMS to support it.

In 2006 we started the process of expanding beyond a course to a full-fledged programme in what has become a research track in Communication for Participatory Development. It was not an easy process as we attempted to meld different philosophies, theories and personalities together.

It is hard to believe that it is now ten years later and this book is published. What started as a dream has flourished into a standard that other institutions are attempting to replicate. After all, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and success.

We have been successful in achieving our goal of building a strong new core of social development communicators not only in South Africa but in other African countries. We have influenced academics in Europe and the United States to incorporate our experiences into their own institutions.

In addition, through the years of research the programme has been able to critically examine a vast number of AIDS communication interventions that otherwise would not have been scrutinised. The data has often been used to improve these programmes and has enabled many organisations to re-examine their strategic approach to their programmes.

In reading over the following pages, I was amazed at the variety and depth of research coming out of the programme. I am proud of what is written here and there is much more quality research available on the CCMS website. It is also fulfilling to note that the two editors of this book are graduates of the programme as they are taking the original idea to the next level.
Finally let me say thank you not only to the people mentioned in this foreword but to all the students who have participated in the course (now programme) over the last decade. Without your hard work, commitment and imagination all of this would not have happened.

I can’t wait to see what the next ten years bring.

A Note from the Director of The Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS)

Prof. Keyan Tomaselli

Interventions, Education and Entertainment

This compilation of a 10-year research project is unique. The uniqueness stems from the systematic work done by academics and hundreds of graduate students working on a single project. The naming of the project shifted over the decade. This shift reflected the changing nature of our research practices relating to public health communication. The early graduate module was named Public Health Promotion via Entertainment Education (EE). This was adjusted to Communication for Social Change (CFSC) and finally, in response to specific issues facing South Africa, Communication for Participatory Development (CFPD).

How the project came about is instructive. A number of MA students who joined CCMS in the mid-1990s indicated interest in the use of media in health education. Joram Rukambe (2000) and Maxwell Mthembu (1995) led the way in opening up analysis of media interventions on HIV and AIDS in Namibia and Swaziland respectively. A later study was done by Mpolokeng Mpeli (2005) on Lesotho. Warren Parker’s (1994) MA thesis was to become a defining study in educational media interventions in the mid-1990s (see Parker, 1997), when I worked with Warren and Arnold Shepperson on developing the national Beyond Awareness campaigns facilitated by the Department of Health between 1996 and 2000 (see Tomaselli et al, 2002).
A comprehensive analysis conducted at Hlabisa in KwaZulu-Natal by Elaine Epstein (1997) attracted considerable attention as this was one of the first highly funded communication studies to be located in a deep rural area. Other work being done at the start of the partnership with DramAidE and Johns Hopkins University (JHU) was done by Alexandra von Stauss (2002, 2004) who examined how a Dutch photographer imaged AIDS patients as victims. Veena Rawjee (2002), Callen Morrison (2005) and Tesfagabir Berhe Tesfu’s (2003) theses on campus health promotion established a pattern that was to be pursued in much more depth by later MA and PhD students on seven campuses across the province, all reported on in this volume. One of the few comparative analyses was done by Kulubrehan Teweldemedhin (2004) on Radio Ukhozi and an Ethiopian station. Comparative analysis is all too rare and will constitute the new post-2010 phase of our project (Cardey et al, forthcoming).

While the research contributed through these MA theses was determining of a key component in one of the Centre’s developing research orientations, perhaps the most significant “originary” contribution came from Lynn Dalrymple’s PhD thesis (1987; 1997). Dalrymple’s work generated the praxis to be developed by Drama in AIDS Education (DramAidE), which she founded at the University of Zululand, and then linked to CCMS (Durden and Tomaselli, 2012). This partnership underpinned CCMS’s early field work and was then developed by Johns Hopkins University’s Bloomberg School of Public Health that was looking for a South African research partner, one that would also educate and train public health communication professionals. This three-way partnership was born in 2001. It matured, developed and generated not only graduate modules and research, but students involved in it have shaped the way that HIV and AIDS is understood, and can be combated, especially in KwaZulu-Natal.

Too often, honours, MA and PhD research is dismissed by the academic community as being “pre-publication”, that is, not useful other than in securing their students higher degrees. This project contests this intellectual marginalisation, as it was conceived from the outset as being interventionist, applied and paradigm-shaping. Apart from the long list of peer-reviewed publications arising out of the project (see Appendix 2), there has been constant interaction between students and the Johns Hopkins programme and its media partners like SABC Education, Curious Pictures, Brothers For Life, DramAidE, The Valley Trust, The Turntable Trust and the Centre for Development, Research and Evaluation, amongst others across the country. Media projects which our students have studied and which impacted campaign strategy include Intersexions, Takalani Sesame Street, Scrutinize, Brothers for Life and so on. Students work between the academy and actual campaigns, influencing outcomes.

Some of these projects were published in the book that I co-edited with Colin Chasi (2011), which provides much more detail on how the work done by students influenced actual campaigns. The intention of the current volume is to document the nature of the broader research programme and to make it public. AIDS remains a grievous pandemic and the growing biomedical emphasis that is edging out social sciences research is a worrying factor. This book aims at protecting the latter while working with the medical establishment directly.

Bibliography


A version of this in the form of a strategy document prepared for the SA Dept of Health is available at: http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=572&Itemid=70


*Emma Durden and Eliza Govender*

This book was conceived as a showcase of post-graduate research projects and theses conducted under the auspices of the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. CCMS aims to be a site of excellence for graduate teaching and research in the interaction of society and media, with a strong focus on communication for participatory development.

This book traces some of the key research conducted over a ten-year period by honours, MA and PhD students who have attended the CCMS Entertainment Education / communication for participatory development course from its inception in 2002, until 2011. There has been a marked shift in the paradigm guiding this post-graduate course, which is explored in the introductory chapter. Innovative methodologies and indigenised theories are brought to bear through each research project, which include conceptually integrated, paradigm-specific graduate work. It keeps abreast of current debates, contributes to international conferences and peer-reviewed publications and assists CCMS in retaining a comparative world benchmark.

Much of the work included in this collection reflects the Freireian-derived experientialist pedagogy of CCMS, where students take responsibility for developing their own research directions within specific research programmes. There is a strong emphasis in this
collected work on media, social justice, and human rights issues, especially relating to historically disadvantaged communities.

The book includes two primary research foci: development communication and public health communication. Development communication invokes new ways of harnessing media and localised cultural frames in promoting development strategies, health promotion, private-public partnerships and community development. Public health communication in the context of this work involves applying the emergent field of Education Entertainment via a framework of communication for social and behavioural change.

In order to provide a wide range of examples of research approaches and topics, we have included edited, shortened versions of 35 research papers. It was extremely challenging to reduce 40-page honours research projects to five pages, and 300-page PhD theses to less than ten pages; but we hope we have done so in a way that provides a concise overview of the work, and inspires scholars to go directly to the source to read further. All of the full-length works are available on the CCMS website.

The research projects included are from a range of students, some who are currently registered for further study with CCMS, and others who have gone on to play lead roles in the health and communication sphere in South Africa as well as other African countries, including Kenya, Zambia, Rwanda and Malawi. All have given their permission to have their work included in this book, which we hope will be a useful reference for other scholars as well as practitioners in the area of communication, health and development.

Introduction

The HIV and AIDS communication landscape

Almost three decades after the first AIDS diagnosis, millions of children, youth and adults are still grappling with the disease, which has now reached extraordinary levels. Although the immediate determinants of the spread of HIV relate to behaviour, the ongoing spread also recognises that the pandemic is intertwined with developmental issues such as poverty, culture, unequal power structures, migrant labour, government policies and socio-economic injustices (Hemer & Tufte, 2005; Parker, 2004a; Scalway, 2003; Figueroa et al, 2002). This has forced communication scholars and health practitioners to rethink health communication approaches. An effective response to HIV and AIDS thus requires a review of the individual, social, community and societal influences and not only the health aspects of the disease.

Transitions within the communication for development paradigms have been a catalyst for the transitions in health communication from the early 1960s. In an attempt to combat risky sexual behaviours, Western countries adopted strict stages of change or linear models for changing behaviour. These models were based on the understanding that people are given knowledge that changes their attitude, and it was further assumed that a change in attitude would change their practice/behaviour. Commonly known as knowledge, attitude and practice, or KAP studies, these health theories came under extensive criticism. A number of critics of these predominantly Western theories of behaviour change have noted that behaviour change does not occur in isolation, but within a framework of various factors such as the individual, the community and society.
Studies around HIV and AIDS over the years have shown that the pandemic is a social condition more than an individual problem, hence a more social approach is needed to combat it (Ford et al., 2003; Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000; UNAIDS, 1999; Singhal, 2001). Communication is an essential element of HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care, but early efforts were limited to transferring information and knowledge about HIV rather than focusing on the cultural and social contexts in which the communication occurs (Chandwani & Gopal, 2010).

**Paradigm shifts in development communication**

From the outset, communication for development (sometimes referred to as development communication) has been a strategic process to persuade people to change and to improve development processes (Tufte & Mefalopulos, 2009). Development should aim to enrich the lives of individuals by widening their horizons and reducing their sense of isolation. It can reduce the afflictions brought on by disease and poverty by not only increasing life spans, but also improving the quality of life (Stiglitz, 1998: 3). Hence, development is seen as a form of transition and growth, and a medium for change to achieve better social, economic and cultural conditions.

The early 1960s associated development with “modernising” and transferring Western ideas and technological advances to Third World countries. In stark contrast, development defined in the health context today is a move away from a focus on individual behaviour change to social change, where emphasis is placed on the role of the community, society and social networks. This emphasis on social structures and cultural influences in addressing development results in effective responses to HIV and AIDS prevention; however, the application of real forms of participation by communities still remains a challenge. Over the decades, development communication has progressed from the dominant paradigm of modernisation to community partnerships advocating for participatory approaches such as communicating for social change and communicating for participatory development. This approach was a direct response to some of the challenges of the pandemic, which required a new communication and development model.

**Paradigm shifts in health communication**

Two dominant schools of thought arose during the transitions within development; the first was classified as behaviour change communication (BCC) and the second was social change communication. BCC was the initial strategic response to promote positive health outcomes, based on proven theories and models of behaviour change. It employs a systematic process beginning with formative research and behaviour analysis, followed by communication planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The problem, however, is that BCC often poses certain linear, rational, logical flow models to encourage sexual behaviour change for HIV prevention, which is often a non-rational, multifactor process. Behaviour change theories are limited by a range of conceptual and contextual factors. These factors do not negate the value of “choice-based” behaviour change approaches, but there has been an over-reliance on and over-investment in BCC (Parker, 2004a).

Critics of BCC programmes have called for a move towards a social change communication approach, arguing that communication responses to HIV and AIDS must take into account the context in which the pandemic is embedded (Cardey, 2006). Understanding the dynamics of HIV transmission cannot be alienated from a broader context of poverty, inequality and social exclusion. Social change communication is therefore an integrated approach that encapsulates media, interpersonal communication and advocacy. It shifts from the didactic approach to communicating about HIV to a more inclusive approach. Central to an integrated approach is the emphasis on “mainstreaming”, where stakeholders such as government, the corporate sector and civil society respond to the challenges of HIV and AIDS. However, Melkote and Steeves (2001) state that social change is a complex, disordered, unstructured and often uncontrollable process.
Community empowerment in the early 1990s was at the forefront of communication approaches in addressing HIV and AIDS. Central to the understanding of the community empowerment process is the recognition that communities are composed of organisations and people who interact on various social levels. The move away from the dominant development paradigm of modernisation to a focus on participatory and empowerment initiatives has led to the development of various communication and development models. One of the prominent models developed in the late 1990s was the communication for social change approach, later known as communication for participatory development (CFPD) and this formed the basis of the Public Health Promotion via Entertainment Education course offered at CCMS.

The need to offer a public health promotion course

The rapid rates of HIV transmission in South Africa in the late 1990s saw an increased interest among CCMS staff and students on the social dimensions of the AIDS epidemic. The questions that graduate students had included why South Africans were failing to effectively respond to the high rates of HIV transmission, and why prevention efforts were failing. Epidemiological research provided graduates with the “what” factor, explaining what caused the spread, but why people still engaged in risky behaviour despite awareness of HIV and AIDS was still questionable. The Beyond Awareness Campaign was one of the first initiatives that CCMS staff and students undertook to assist in the national AIDS campaign for HIV prevention, from a communications and cultural studies perspective. The idea behind this campaign was to move from “beyond just awareness” to providing valuable insight into some of the cultural, social and economic factors which influence an effective response. The field of cultural and media studies offered theoretical opportunities to explore and critique contemporary social issues, and to understand how people make sense of health issues within their specific cultural contexts.

It was against this backdrop that CCMS continued to work in the field of HIV and AIDS with other initiatives such as DramAidE (Drama in AIDS Education, administrated by The University of Zululand) and CADRE (the Centre for AIDS, Development, Research and Evaluation) as research partners. In 2001, graduates of the CCMS programme, Professor Lynn Dalrymple (PhD), Director of DramAidE, and Dr Warren Parker (PhD), Director of CADRE at the time, were instrumental in facilitating a partnership with Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa (JHHESA) to support CCMS through USAID/PEPFAR funding, to develop a post-graduate course on Public Health Promotion via Entertainment Education (EE).

The course was the first to be introduced in Africa, exploring EE as a strategy for social and behavioural change. More importantly, the course contextualised EE within a South African perspective, using as case studies some of the national interventions such as Soul City, Yizo, Yizo and Tsha-Tsha as early EE initiatives in the country. The EE strategy is based upon the recognition that the most effective programmes and messages have form, content, character and unique features that can be analysed, understood and replicated.

From 2002, the course was taught by international experts in reproductive health, Entertainment Education, communication and cultural studies, HIV and AIDS prevention and epidemiology. Lecturers such as professors Larry Kincaid, Lynn Dalrymple, Patrick Coleman, and Keyan Tomaselli and doctors Warren Parker and Sue Goldstein were all pivotal contributors to the EE post-graduate programme.

The course was designed to provide students with a clear understanding of key theories of health communication; of communication campaigns and of Entertainment Education interventions. It also investigated how to apply a theoretical understanding in the development of a framework for EE activities; and to create criteria for evaluation. The module included an introduction to theories of behavioural and social change and conceptual frameworks for developing strategic communication campaigns. It also offered an overview of EE theories, models and methods of evaluation of communication interventions.
The key objectives of the course were to:

• Develop a clear understanding of key theories of health promotion communication in relation to cultural and media studies;
• Develop an understanding of a range of Entertainment Education interventions;
• Apply theoretical understanding to the development of Entertainment Education activities; and
• Develop criteria for understanding outcomes of Entertainment Education activities.

The continuous changes in the field of development and communication for HIV prevention led to a revision of the EE course in 2007 to incorporate new development trends in HIV and AIDS communication. Social and cultural contexts were emphasised as crucial factors in developing HIV-prevention interventions and campaigns, and therefore led to a revision of the course which extended beyond exploring EE as a communication strategy, to other communication for social and behavioural change models.

In order to widen the scope of the course to address these cultural and social contexts within the broader field of development, the course was renamed communication for social change (CFSC) in 2008. This reflected a model that served as a broad framework for facilitating community dialogue for social change. However, given that the Rockefeller Foundation had put a trademark on the name CFSC, the course was renamed communication for participatory development (CFPD) in 2009.

The changes to the course name and broadening the scope of the communication strategies taught in the course within a development framework were also met with other transitions within the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS).

CFPD approach

CFPD emerged from decades of theory and practice across a variety of domains involved in communication, such as social marketing, communication for development and community organising. It gained additional visibility in 1997, when the Rockefeller Foundation launched a series of international meetings and publications to explore ways in which communication could play a more integral role in development (Reardon, 2003:2). As with the paradigms of participation and another development, the guiding philosophy of CFPD can be traced to the work of Paulo Freire.

CFPD is defined as a process of public and private dialogue through which people define who they are, what they want, what they need and how they can act collectively to meet those needs and improve their lives (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte, 2004; Kincaid & Figueora, 2009). CFPD supports processes of community-based decision-making and collective action to make communities more effective and build more empowering communication environments.

Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron and Thomas Tufte (2004) outline three key principles of this model:

• Technology should be used as a tool to support the communication process;
• Communication for social change deals with culture and cultural identity; and
• The process is more important than the product.

This model suggests that social change can only be effectively facilitated when the community and partners determine the levels of participation and ownership between the development support communication professionals and the community. Only when these communication professionals hand over all levels of participation to the community is effective ownership achieved, and active dialogue for collective action can then take place. Social change becomes a process when the relationship between professionals and community is mutually adhered to.
The CFPD model that now informs the course takes students through an academic journey of discovery and discourse by tracing some of the key development theories and public health theories which inform HIV and AIDS communication design today. The course traces the critique, debate and application of various health communication models and frameworks which have been adapted or developed for a South African perspective. It further covers a range of case studies which demonstrate the critique or use of the CFPD process and EE as a communication strategy. Some of the case studies include the campaigns of Soul City and Khomanani, Tsha-Tsha, and Intersexions, which mainly use television drama to communicate HIV and AIDS information.

Other case studies which the course explores include participatory theatre projects using the Freirean-inspired method of forum theatre which has been developed in South Africa as part of the HIV and AIDS struggle. These projects involve community participation through a problem-posing and problem-solving methodology. DramAidE (Drama in AIDS Education) and the smaller Problem Solving Theatre Project are two examples of this, using forum theatre as a strategy to encourage participation by creating dialogue and stimulating critical consciousness. Through these theatre interventions, community members are drawn into discussion regarding issues around HIV and AIDS.

Although participatory principles should inform all approaches, a new appreciation has emerged of the synergy between participatory methods and large-scale or expert-driven interventions (UNAIDS 2007: 13). This confirms the CFPD approach and the use of EE, which emphasises not only the participatory approaches of communicating in communities and between people, but also the important role that technology and large-scale media can play. This is discussed through case studies of Scrutinize, the national HIV and AIDS campaign targeting young people between the ages of 18 and 35, and the award-winning television series 4play: Sex Tips for Girls and Intersexions.

Many of the research projects included in this book explore different aspects of the case studies mentioned above, while others explore a variety of smaller interventions, some of which are created and facilitated by the students themselves. In summary, this collection provides a reflection of the different approaches and understandings of communication interventions in the field of public health and development.

Bibliography


All approaches towards health communication and development are influenced by different ideologies. Ways of thinking about development are influenced by the systems of ideas and the policies of those in power. This predominant ideology is responsible for setting the development agenda in any particular context, and also influences public health campaigns. This influence extends to the content and the medium of such campaigns, and also influences how people respond to them.

This chapter explores the notion of ideology and how it influences both thinking and communicating about health issues in general, and HIV and AIDS in particular. It includes summaries of five postgraduate student papers. Contributors include: Oyvind Mikalsen and Nangamso Zajii (2004); Samantha Waugh, Daniel de Freitas and Rune Miljeigtig (2004); Kerry Cullinan (2003); Warren Parker (2004); and Mkhonzeni Gumede (2010).

Mikalsen and Zajii (2004) investigate notions of health and development in north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal. Their research questions what kind of service delivery has occurred in the area, what different people see as development, and how they define their health priorities. It is apparent that different communities that have been historically segregated by apartheid laws have vastly different needs and that a single notion of development cannot be applied to one geographical area.

While Mikalsen and Zajii’s research explores what people’s development needs are, Waugh, de Freitas and Miljeigtig (2004)
investigate the reception of a development project. They look into a toilet innovation introduced by the local municipality into a peri-rural area outside Durban. Their research uncovers the fact that although service delivery has taken place, the services are not deemed by all recipients to be appropriate. The investigation questions the barriers to accepting new innovations and development, and how to overcome these barriers.

Cullinan (2003) explores the texts of the then President Thabo Mbeki’s speeches and the ideology and discourse surrounding these. Her thesis examines how Mbeki shifted his ideas about HIV and AIDS over the course of his presidency, and how his discourse reflects this. She makes important points about the links between language and power, and how the way that HIV and AIDS are spoken about may impact on the population at large.

Ideology is also investigated in Parker’s (2004) research, in which he explores how ideology informs and serves the purposes of a particular project. Using the case study of the organisation loveLife, Parker interrogates the ideology behind the organisation, and explores how this ideology influences the project outputs. He questions the notion of hegemony and the ideological dominance of any one particular way of thinking in a multi-cultural and complex environment, and criticises loveLife for not taking cognisance of this in the South African context.

This complexity is explored in Gumede’s (2010) auto-ethnographic research, which discusses the complex interaction between belief, identity and context in mediating responses to public health communication. Gumede juxtaposes his own life story and cultural context with that of the organisation that he works within, DramAidE, and seeks to understand how people receive information about HIV and AIDS and how this information is interpreted and applied.

The people of St Lucia area: Point of view on health and development sustainability

Oyvind E. Mikalsen & Nangamso Zajiji (Honours, 2004)

Problem statement

The St Lucia regional community in north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal was embroiled in controversy throughout the 1980s, as conservation activists battled corporate entities who proposed to undertake mining of the coastal dunes in the area. The conservation movement won, and mining operations were not given the go-ahead. Instead, the area around St Lucia and the Eastern Shores was earmarked as a prime eco-tourism destination.

The area is a World Heritage Site of outstanding beauty. There are, however, various contextual differences that exist between the people of St Lucia town and those of Khula Village and Dukuduku Forest (a township and rural area, respectively some 10 and 20 kilometres outside of the town). Economically, the people living in the town of St Lucia are much better off than those living in the outskirts. While the former own restaurants, lodges and shops, etc., the latter are either owners of small-time craftwork operations (hawking) or are employed by the well-off sector of this region. These differences manifest themselves in the problems that these people encounter as well as in their perceptions regarding the possible solutions to these problems.

While tourism has done a lot for development in St Lucia town, this is seen to a lesser extent in Khula Village, and even less in the rural area of Dukuduku. There is some concern about the extent to which the makers of the conservation policy have followed up on other aspects of development in the St Lucia area. The expansion of tourism has seemingly not been accompanied by
the provision of health facilities that benefit the local people who work predominantly in the St Lucia tourism sector.

**Objectives**

This research set out to survey members of the St Lucia regional community, comprising of Dukuduku and Khula Village settlements, and including the St Lucia town community; and to investigate their point of view on health and economic development since the area was established as a tourism development over a decade previously.

The research illustrates the problems that the “have-nots” from the Khula and Dukuduku areas (those people without access to health care, infrastructure, proper sanitation and water and transport services) experience because of their position within South Africa’s democratic society, and how their health care and development ideas differ from those of the “haves” (the people living in St Lucia town).

Based on this formative research, the researchers develop a video storyboard for an Entertainment Education (EE) intervention, based on an attempt to mobilise civil society to organise and agitate for the delivery of the promised benefits from the declaration of St Lucia as a World Heritage Site. One of the central objectives of this intervention is to test the validity of using EE principles to promote the main objectives of a participatory development intervention.

**Links to other literature in the field**

The literature review explores media use for development purposes, and the notion of participatory media-making for more effective communication.

Media use, traditional folk and modern mass media have been standard strategic inputs in planned national efforts to promote agriculture, health and education in developing countries since the 1960s (Yun, Govender & Mody 2001:3). However, the content of small media often encodes the assumptions of media practitioners without expertise in the local needs and conditions of the proposed beneficiaries. The conventional documentary forms, hit-and-run production practices, and voice-of-authority narration used in many of these products do not mesh with the forms of learning experience in local contexts. They often fail to involve local communities in making their own messages in communicating their perspectives back to the development planners (Tomaselli, 2002). This project attempted to use a more inclusive media-making approach.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

The study is based on the theories of communication for development, in particular participatory theories.

Critics of modernisation theory assert that development communication is a process of consensus building and resistance. It is not a linear process, but must be historically grounded, culturally sensitive, and multi-faceted (Melkote & Steeves 2001:38). The concept known as “another development” has been elaborated to account for this, offering an alternative model for people-centred development. This approach is geared to the satisfaction of basic human needs, both material and, in its broadest sense, political; it encourages self-reliance, and endogenous and ecologically sound programmes, based on democratic, political, social and economic transformations which alone will make possible the attainment of the other goals.

Proponents of the “another development” model hold that it is also applicable in societies seeking to overcome discrimination of any kind – social, ethnic or economic. It is a participatory and pluralistic process (Hammarskjöld Foundation, 1975). Both the objectives and the means of this kind of development are supposedly defined and driven by the beneficiary communities themselves (Tomaselli & Shepperson 2003:7), and communicated by them to policy makers via media.

This research into the local communities’ understanding of health and development issues draws on the health belief model (Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000; see also Kelly, Parker &
Lewis, 2001). This explores peoples’ responses to and utilisation of disease prevention programmes, which tend to be predicated on an individual’s perceived seriousness of disease, severity of the disease, perceived benefit of services, and barriers to treatment.

The project also draws on Fishbein & Ajzen’s (1980) theory of Reasoned Action. This theory asserts that people’s attitudes result from individuals’ beliefs (expectations) that a particular behaviour will lead to a particular outcome, with individuals evaluating that outcome in terms of its reasonableness in their context (Fishbein & Ajzen 1980:7). They base these judgements on their subjective norms, a combination of the person’s beliefs of how significant others feel about the appropriateness of the behaviour and the value the individual gives to such norms (Fishbein & Ajzen 80:6).

In order to influence behaviour, it is therefore necessary to expose the target audience to information that will produce changes in their beliefs (Fishbein & Ajzen, 80:81). Using this premise, the researchers created the storyboard for their documentary video in an attempt to encourage audiences to return to the activist behaviour they successfully employed in their earlier advocacy of tourism as St Lucia’s preferred development path.

Research methods and methodology
Qualitative observational research was conducted, including a collection of video footage in the relevant communities using the local knowledge approach, which states that necessary information for development arises from knowledge produced by conversation between community and development agents. This information is in the form of filmed in-depth interviews and conversations with the subject community: the people living in Dukuduku and Khula Village. Together with questionnaires handed out to workers (black employees) and some of their employers in St Lucia town, the information is derived to form the narrative for the video material.

Further desktop research was obtained from the offices of the Empangeni-based newspaper, the Zululand Observer, and from the Sunday Times. Additional media-derived data was obtained from the Wetlands Wire, the official newsletter of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park Authority. Much of relevance to the background of St Lucia’s development history was obtained from the Environmental Impact Assessment Reports prepared in advance of the dune-mining proposal.

Key findings
The research indicates that a significant portion of the St Lucia region’s population (including the Khula and Dukuduku areas) is well aware of the dangers and illnesses to which they are exposed. Members of St Lucia town, Dukuduku and Khula village perceive and articulate the severity of a number of illnesses (HIV and AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and criminal injuries) and view themselves as susceptible to these.

The respondent’s level of health belief is high, perceiving health care and immediate medical and paramedical assistance as beneficial to their well-being. However, the non-existence of health care facilities, paved roads, transport, clean water and proper sanitation act as a real barrier to well-being that needs to be overcome for the people living in Dukuduku and Khula Village. The existence of a whole section of the population so dependent on aid and intervention, and without proper sanitation and health facilities, raises questions about the claims that tourism has benefited the communities of St Lucia.

It is clear that the residents of the well-off area of St Lucia town and the less fortunate Dukuduku and Khula Village are all concerned about the level of development that is taking place in the region, regardless of their contextual differences. Particular concerns, however, differ according to the different groups. The predominantly white inhabitants of St Lucia village are concerned about a new law banning 4x4 vehicles from the beaches, which may affect tourism to the area. Khula Village residents are more concerned about access to hospitals and clinics. At the same time, they are aware of a wider range of health issues affecting them than the St Lucia inhabitants are.
The research data shows that Dukuduku and Khula Village residents prioritise different facets of the same general situation. Their form of reasoning, their health belief, is identical to that of the St Lucia town residents. However, while the St Lucia town residents stipulate HIV and AIDS, TB and malaria as health issues that need to be prioritised, the Khula Villagers stipulate access to clinics, education and medicine as priorities. These differences reflect the unequal distribution of income, in that St Lucia residents have the wealth to gain access to health facilities, something that the villagers lack and clearly desire.

St Lucia town residents’ economic reserves and historical access to services clearly influences their emphasis on their economic plight, as opposed to those whose historical condition has placed them in a socially and politically subordinate position. There consequently needs to be recognition of the juncture where development and health intersect. In order to accomplish sustainable development, it must be taken into cognition that hospitals and clinics independent of an effective infrastructure will be useless.

Conclusions and recommendations
What these underdeveloped areas need, in effect, is an integrated systems approach to sustainable forms of development. This entails, for example, both the provision of roads that are suitable for travel and a reliable transport system, in order to overcome the problem of inaccessibility to service points. By the same token, it is no use having a clinic in an area where cholera keeps reoccurring due to improper sanitation and primitive water supplies which are predominantly contaminated. Health issues like HIV and AIDS and tuberculosis are, on their own, not equal opportunity diseases. Both disproportionately favour poor and marginalised groups in many countries, and this is evident in the St Lucia region.

When the South African government turned down mining in favour of eco-tourism in the area, they made it very clear this would bring greater benefits to the local community. However, all that the locals claim to have seen is a number of researchers but no visible interventions where health care is concerned.

This research provided the impetus for the creation of a documentary video that illustrates the amount of development that the business of tourism could achieve, but has not. The storyboard arises therefore from “the input of people in activities that are ostensibly set up for their benefit” (Melkote and Steeves, 2001:199), so that the people who were so instrumental in attaining the conservation policy in the mid-1990s can see what limited development their previous efforts have resulted in, and can once again bring their activism to bear.

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A Royal Flush: A case study of the discourses surrounding the Urine Diversion toilet and barriers to its sustainability

Samantha Waugh, Daniel de Freitas and Rune Miljeigrig (2004)

Problem statement

Given the growing population in Ethekwini Municipality’s rural and peri-urban communities, there are constant health and hygiene problems in under-resourced areas, resulting in health crises such as cholera outbreaks, amongst others.

The Ethekwini Water and Sanitation Department (EWS) aims to provide an acceptable basic level of water and sanitation to all households in Ethekwini Municipality’s rural and peri-urban communities by 2010, through the supply of urine diversion toilets. This urine diversion toilet is a dry system designed to deal with human waste in an environmentally and economically sustainable way. Through separating urine and faeces by the use of a double vault system, this allows for the toilet user to safely handle matter that has been left to dry in the sealed vault after about one year. The project aims to reduce cholera outbreaks. However, there appear to be some barriers to the communities’ acceptance of the toilet system. This research seeks to establish what those are.

Objectives

This project aimed to investigate the discourses and barriers surrounding the use of the Urine Diversion (UD) toilet in Zwelibomvu, a rural area in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The research question was specifically formulated to assess Ethekwini Water and Sanitation’s UD project. By analysing the knowledge, attitude and behaviour of 21 users of the Urine Diversion toilet,
the project aimed to monitor the discourses surrounding the Urine Diversion toilet and barriers to its sustainability so that recommendations can be made to improve the project.

Links to other literature in the field
A new wave of initiatives is being seen in the field of Education Entertainment where the focus is on problem identification, challenging power relations and advocating social change (Tufte; 2005:164). Solutions to problems are sought by strengthening people’s ability to identify the problems in everyday life and their ability to act collectively upon them (Tufte; 2005:164). In this project, issues of social inequality apply to the users of the UD toilet because they are poor and have no option of using the flush toilet because of the cost involved.

There has been a strong focus on the use of community participation as an approach in the EWS programme. Education has aimed to teach people about breaking the cycle of waterborne disease and to introduce the operation and maintenance of the Urine Diversion toilet (Water Information Network, n.d.).

Innovations in public health have defining characteristics that affect and help to explain their differential rate of adoption. Optimisation of relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability will allow an innovation to be adopted more rapidly than other innovations that lack these characteristics (Haider & Kreps, 2004:4).

The communication of messages concerning this new innovation would involve the active creation and sharing of information among people to reach a mutual understanding (Haider & Kreps, 2004:4). The communication strategy that EWS has chosen includes the use of facilitators, posters and street theatre to pass on information concerning the UD toilet. The response that the target audience has to these messages influences whether there is a mutual understanding between the message source and audience.

The framework of social ecology was used as a guide for this investigation. Social ecology involves a set of theoretical principles for understanding the relations between diverse personal and environmental factors in human health. It explains the influences of behaviour change and reflects not only behaviour and environmental change but also the interplay between persons, groups and their social, physical and cultural environments (Kar & Alcalay; 2001:112).

Social ecology is a framework that accommodates the diffusion of innovations theory and conversion model because it indicates the factors that exist in communities that determine health behaviour.

Concepts and theory informing the research
The diffusion of innovations theory helps to explain the adaptation of an innovation that is perceived as new. Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system (McCormack; 1999). The diffusion of innovations model uses the innovation-decision model to explain the process by which users unfamiliar to a new product understand how it functions, why they need it in their lives, how they choose it and whether they will stay committed to it (Rogers; 1995).

The five elements of the theory: innovation, communication, channels, time and the social system are the factors that influence discourses around a health or development issue. These elements are examined in this research in an attempt to understand the discourse surrounding the Urine Diversion toilet.

“Decision” takes place when an individual engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation (Haider & Kreps; 2004:4). This decision would depend on how easy the users find it to use and maintain the new UD toilet and the positive and negative attitudes they feel towards how it suits their current situation regarding sanitation.

Further to this, discourse theory is used as a theoretical framework in this study, to understand the discourses concerning the UD toilet and barriers to its sustainability. It involves exploring and describing the nature of a social phenomenon, including culture
and the interrelationships between its components (De Villiers & Van der Wal; 2004:238). Discourse theory uses the concept of “social constructionism” in explaining how a social phenomenon is developed within society (Burr: 1995:1). Social constructionism focuses on how social practices and interactions between people shape social phenomena (Burr: 1995:7).

Research methods and methodology

A questionnaire was developed for this research, which contained both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire gave the ability to be both culturally and gender sensitive and proved to be the most practical way of collecting data in light of the fact that none of the researchers spoke Zulu, the first language of the respondents. The questionnaire was developed with indicator questions, which allowed the researchers to link the community’s responses with the theories employed and thus made data analysis easier.

Some questionnaires were distributed after a street theatre performance of an educational play, and others were administered from door to door with a trained interpreter. In total, the research sample consisted of 21 random individuals, all of whom had a UD toilet at home. The majority of 61% of the respondents were female and 39% were male. The age group ranged from under twenty years old up to sixty.

Key findings

The research findings showed that only 33% of respondents agreed that the UD toilet was an improvement in their lives. This shows that there was no perceived advantage of the UD toilet in two-thirds of the respondents and this is clearly a barrier to the rate of adoption of the UD toilet.

Only 19% of the respondents were happy with the toilet and stated that it suited their needs and was good for their family, while 29% were happy because the UD was better than having nothing but were willing to use flush toilets if they had the option. However, the toilet was not compatible for 29% of the respondents, while 23% of respondents were not using the toilet at all because it was not easy to clean and children could not use it as they were not allowed to be around ash. The compatibility of the UD toilet is low and this is a barrier to the sustainability of the innovation.

When asked what the respondents thought of cleaning out the chamber in the UD, 52% of respondents had a positive view, but 48% responded that it was not easy to maintain and clean the toilet. This is another potential barrier to the sustainability of the UD toilet.

The respondents were asked how they found out about the UD toilet. The house-to-house visits by EWS were the most common channel, with 67% of the respondents citing this as their information source. The radio was the source of information for 14% of the population, while one household said that they found out about it through the local chief. The strategy of using interpersonal channels appears to be more effective in passing along important information about this new innovation, when compared to mass media channels like the radio.

In total, 24% of respondents had a favourable attitude and 76% had a negative attitude towards the new innovation. The general response of those with a favourable attitude to the UD was that it was better than not having a toilet, but was not the best system. The negative responses were primarily around the difficulties in cleaning and maintaining the UD toilets. The diffusion of the toilet innovation is likely to be undermined because 76% of the respondents have an unfavourable attitude to it.

While all of the respondents had UD toilets installed by EWS, 24% of respondents used the UD for other purposes, such as using it as a place to wash and as a place to keep tools. This shows that although the innovation is in place, its usefulness is limited.

An additional problem with the toilets relates to cultural practices in the area. Respondents noted that tradition dictates that the makhoti (daughter-in-law) is not allowed to use the same toilet as others in the house. Although this was only strictly applied to
one household of the 21 surveyed, it does point to other potential problems that may result from cultural understandings.

Further to this, the opinions of the local traditional leader (chief) may also have influenced attitudes towards the toilet, with a number of respondents saying that they knew that their traditional leader did not like the innovation. The views of other community leaders were also noted, with 50% of them being positive about the UD toilet in the community and 50% negative.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The research raised a number of issues and concerns that users have with regard to the UD toilet. The EWS programme involves community participation before construction work begins on the toilet, as this involves consultation with community structures and tribal authorities. However, greater involvement with the target group of UD users is recommended. This will allow for issues that the respondents identified as problems to be addressed so that barriers to the sustainability of the UD toilet are understood.

The community workshops facilitated by EWS do not seem to involve getting the actual users to talk about issues that affect them so that recommendations can be made. This is evidence of a lack of critical dialogue as a pathway towards social change.

The research into the barriers to the sustainability of the UD toilet concluded that structural issues of the UD toilet influenced how it is diffused in the innovation decision process. Addressing the complexity of having to clean the chamber would make the UD toilet easier to use and persuade more users to use it.

More focus should be placed on educating the public on the negative environmental and social impact of using a pit latrine or other toilet, and how the UD toilet serves to reduce negative outcomes such as cholera outbreaks. Government could further provide users with rewards such as food stamps, because this could further encourage people to use the UD toilet.

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Kerry Cullinan (MA, 2003)

Problem statement

In 1999, when President Thabo Mbeki started to entertain the views of so-called AIDS “dissidents”, those who disputed the causal link between HIV and AIDS, after holding the orthodox scientists’ view that HIV infection lead to AIDS, this caused widespread disbelief, confusion and outrage. It was hard for those working in the HIV and AIDS field to comprehend how the most powerful person in the country could entertain ideas that had little international or scientific credibility. This led to conflict between government and elements in civil society, particularly the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), HIV and AIDS scientists, and non-governmental organisations.

The struggle within the ruling party and between government departments was incomprehensible and led to a widespread lack of morale in the AIDS sector, particularly among people living with HIV and AIDS. More and more people were getting sick and dying, yet many politicians seemed oblivious to the health crisis, and at times it did not seem as though it would be possible for antiretroviral drugs to be introduced in the public health sector in South Africa.

While nervous government officials, mindful of South Africa’s international image, tried to insist that the government’s AIDS policy was being implemented in an orthodox manner, critics of the government from both left and right started to make crude generalisations about what Mbeki had said. Many of these generalisations were not based on fact, but came to be regarded as fact. This research is an exploration of Mbeki’s texts to try to establish what he said, how he constructed his arguments, and how he dealt with his opposition.

Objectives

This research is an examination of presidential communication, focusing primarily on how Mbeki used language forcefully to promote a group of fringe researchers and a discredited scientific position. It examines Mbeki’s speeches, articles, interviews and letters dealing with HIV and AIDS from 1998 to 2003, in order to identify how he changed his views from the orthodox position that HIV causes AIDS, to the dissident view.

The research questions include the following:

1) What are the key components of Mbeki’s views on HIV and AIDS, particularly as articulated since he became president in 1998?

2) How have civil society, particularly the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and opposition politicians, responded to Mbeki’s unconventional approach to HIV and AIDS?

3) How has Mbeki responded to those who disputed his views on HIV and AIDS?

Links to other literature in the field

In 1983, South African health officials assured the public that it should not be alarmed about AIDS as it only affected white homosexuals and drug addicts. By 1986, the South African authorities had identified another “high-risk group”, that of foreign mineworkers, particularly Malawians and Mozambicans, but argued that infection in this group was linked to homosexual activity in the single sex hostels. It was only around 1988, when more heterosexuals were diagnosed as being HIV positive, that the government accepted that high-risk behaviour was driving the epidemic and that there was a need to target this in an awareness campaign. However, the awareness campaign had different messages for different race groups and reinforced the
idea that AIDS was primarily a disease affecting poor black people (Grundlingh, 2001).

The post-1999 struggle over HIV and AIDS needs to be seen in context, both in terms of South Africa’s new democracy and in terms of the promotion of Africanism as a key theme of Mbeki’s government. This context is particularly important when examining how Mbeki responds to those who criticise his dissident views on HIV and AIDS. In this regard, the perspectives offered by the Director of Wits University’s Centre for Health Policy, Helen Schneider, and political analysts Krista Johnson and Steven Robins are important.

Schneider argues that “the conflict around AIDS, in the context of an emerging post-apartheid state, represents a battle between certain state and non-state actors to define who has the right to speak about AIDS, to determine the response to AIDS, and even to define the problem itself”. Johnson asserts that Mbeki seeks to establish a democratic state which is “seen as the only legitimate expression of the interests of the whole nation, becoming coterminous with the ‘national interest’ or ‘public will’.” Robins believes that Mbeki’s view that an African solution to AIDS is needed is influenced by the fact that, in Africa, there is “a profound distrust of Western science” arising from “the historical legacies of scientific racism and colonial discourses on race and biology” (Schneider, 2002:145; Johnson, 2002:227; Robins, 2002).

Robins’ theme is also expounded on by Mbali (2002), who argues that “Mbeki’s denialism is a response to the largely extinct earlier colonial and late apartheid racist discourse around African sexuality as inherently diseased”. She argues that the race-based discourse in the “AIDS world” has “been massively surpassed by rights-based, anti-discrimination discourse” (Mbali, 2002:20). Mbali describes Mbeki as arguing against the “racist spectres of colonial and late apartheid medical discourse” and says that he seems to believe that he is “defending Africans against racism and neo-imperialism through his denialism” but “appears to be attempting to throw out altogether the Western biomedical/scientific paradigm relating to AIDS as racist and neo-colonial” (Mbali, 2002:74–5).

However, this is a somewhat simplistic view of Mbeki’s position and of the AIDS field generally. While race is an important element that informs Mbeki’s views on HIV and AIDS, and particularly when he responds to those who rejected his unorthodox arguments, another very important element is his scientific engagement with the epidemic. The terms that he uses such as “co-factors”, “causal factors” and the relationship between “viruses and syndromes” are based on Western science and indicate that he is not rejecting the Western biomedical and scientific paradigm, but engaging with it from a dissident scientific point of view. He largely resorts to race-based arguments when addressing his critics and those who oppose the dissidents’ arguments. It is also somewhat optimistic to argue that racism is “extinct” in modern HIV and AIDS discourses. A number of remarks emanating from various influential players, including US policy-makers, on the question of whether Africa is ready for ARV therapy indicates that racism is still a factor in HIV and AIDS.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

Language and power are the key theoretical components of the analysis of this research. In democracies, the language used by political leaders is influential in articulating and developing policy and influencing public opinion. The language used by government leaders plays an important role in legitimising and regulating power relations in modern political systems.

While physical force and coercion are still options to modern democratic governments and political leaders, they generally tend to wield power within their own borders by manufacturing consent for their views, using verbal persuasion to get their electorates to support their policies. When there is sufficient consent around an idea, this is often considered to be common sense. When shaped ideologically by power relations, these common sense assumptions act as social glue that keeps subordinate groups from recognising that their interests may be at odds with those of the ruling elite which is promoting a particular idea. This is what Italian communist Antonio Gramsci (1971) defined as hegemony. Thus, in modern democracies, power is often exercised and achieved...
through the ideological workings of language. In other words, when language acts to reproduce the power relations between different groups, that is to maintain the status quo, it is operating ideologically (Fairclough, 1989).

When language is used ideologically, it acts to reproduce power relations. However, what happens when people see through politicians’ attempts to coerce them into supporting their positions? In other words, what happens when texts are developed in opposition to those in power? In searching for ways in which to address the power relations at play in the HIV and AIDS discourse between Mbeki and his critics, the research draws on the views of Michel Foucault (2000).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) as developed and propagated by Norman Fairclough (1989; 1995; 1997; 1999) is used as the basis of the research. CDA regards all discourse as being concerned with power relations, although these are not necessarily political in nature. Critical discourse analysts take the view that language is a social practice determined by social structures and the conventions associated with such structures. Language not only reflects social practices but also plays a role in creating such practices. In other words, language has an ideological role to play in maintaining power relations.

Those in power use propaganda to promote their ideas and values. Constant repetition of this propaganda ensures that it becomes the norm, naturalising the dominant ideology. At the same time, those in power denigrate opposing views and try to exclude counter-debate. CDA positions itself as a form of social action that aims to address social problems by examining the linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures and by uncovering power relations and opaque practices. It asserts that power relations are exercised and negotiated through discourse, which means that power operates through language.

Research methods and methodology

Based on an understanding of CDA, this research examines a selection of Mbeki’s speeches and a speech by Judge Edwin Cameron in reaction to Mbeki. The analysis is undertaken in two stages. The first stage involves both interpretation and explanation. The relevant text is considered from an overall perspective in which the genre is defined and whether the text is typical or atypical of this genre. The content (discourses) of the selected speeches is considered in terms of “framing”, or how the content is presented, as well as the angle or perspective that is taken by the writer or speaker. Both “foregrounding” (what concepts are emphasised), and “backgrounding” (what concepts and issues are played down), are important. In addition, what has been omitted and what background knowledge is presumed (presupposition) is relevant.

The second stage involves homing in on sentences, phrases and words, essentially to look at what is being emphasised and normalised as well as the relationship that Mbeki (and later Cameron) assumes with his audience. This can provide pointers to style. In the terminology of discourse analysts, what has been topicalised (put at the front of each clause), agency relations (who is doing what to whom, use of passive/active voice, and what is being normalised), the connotations of words and phrases, and the degree of formality and technicality of the language are important (Huckin, 1997). Longer extracts are analysed using the specific relations of antithesis, equivalence and entailment to see how Mbeki builds his argument.

This pragmatic version of CDA is a useful method that is relevant and applicable to the content and style of Mbeki’s speeches. While all of Mbeki’s speeches have been considered, a far richer source of his views lies in his letters and interviews, which are also more likely to reflect his views than those of his communication officers and speech writers. These are also considered in this analysis.
Key findings

Mbeki and the orthodox view of HIV and AIDS

Prior to late-1999, Mbeki followed the orthodox view that HIV causes AIDS and the articles and speeches he wrote are all based on this presupposition. There is nothing particularly unusual about Mbeki’s period of HIV and AIDS orthodoxy, although his interest in science is clear and should be noted as this predisposition to science and scientific argument plays an important part in attracting him to the ideas of the AIDS dissidents. There are three general discourses in Mbeki’s speeches, articles and letters that characterise this period:

• HIV and AIDS is a significant threat to progress in Africa;
• HIV and AIDS is a challenge that needs to be taken up by the youth; and
• Science offers the possibility of addressing HIV and AIDS.

An analysis of a particular 1998 speech by Mbeki shows that his discourse is based on the presupposition that HIV causes AIDS. Although Mbeki’s style is generally formal, this article assumes a sympathetic audience as Mbeki makes references to emotions which is generally unusual in his formal speeches. However, it also provides a prelude to the government’s interference with the Medicines Control Council (MCC), a supposedly independent statutory body responsible for licensing of medicines. Perhaps this was a sign of what was to come.

Mbeki and AIDS dissidence

Mbeki’s overt and public involvement with AIDS dissidence ranged from late-1999 to mid-2001. Despite the fact that Mbeki was the first and indeed only, South African government leader to raise questions about whether HIV causes AIDS, a sustained thread throughout his overt period of dissidence is his assertion that his views and actions are at one with his government. He almost always uses the first person plural “we” in his texts when arguing his points.

The first public indication that Mbeki was breaking with AIDS orthodoxy came in an address to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) on October 29, 1999, in which he questioned the wisdom of using a “toxic” drug such as AZT to treat those with AIDS. An extract from his speech shows Mbeki became drawn to the dissident views by first becoming concerned about the effects of AZT, and that he was researching the issue on the internet. It is clear from the NCOP address, however, that Mbeki is at this point still of the view that HIV causes AIDS; and that he is grappling with how to deal with the epidemic, particularly whether drugs can offer a solution.

The most revealing documents dealing with Mbeki’s interest in, and at times espousal of, dissident views are to be found in 2000 and 2001. These are supported by interviews he gave, mainly to the broadcast media, at the time in which he made more explicit a number of his personal views. Analysis of these interviews and his speeches and letters at the time show the following themes that characterise Mbeki’s overtly “dissident” phase:

• Poverty is the major cause of acquired immune deficiency in Africa.
• HIV cannot be the only cause of immune deficiency.
• Poor Africans have always had a number of infections that have weakened their immune systems.
• Tuberculosis is more of a threat than HIV and AIDS.
• AIDS infection, incidence and mortality statistics are unreliable.
• Taking an HIV test would serve no purpose.
• HIV and AIDS in Africa is so different to that of the West that it is questionable whether it could have the same cause and should be addressed in the same manner as in the West.
• Western assumptions about HIV and AIDS and its manifestation in Africa are based on racist notions about Africans being unable to control their sexual urges.
• Racist South Africans are linking AIDS to rape and promiscuity, particularly by Africans.
Antiretroviral drugs often cause more harm than good.
The profit-driven pharmaceutical companies are promoting their drugs as the only solution to HIV and AIDS, and Western nations are assisting them.
Providing ARVs as post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) cannot be scientifically sustained.
The AIDS dissidents must be heard, yet they have been censored.

While in isolation, some of these statements, when qualified, are justified; however when compounded they give a very strong ideological view that negates the scientific findings from the international community in the AIDS field. The overwhelming political discourse Mbeki attempts to convey is that the South African government is seriously engaging with HIV and AIDS. However, at the same time, the letters attempt to legitimise Mbeki’s investigation of AIDS dissidence as part of his quest for an African solution to the epidemic.

Mbeki and his critics
Mbeki’s interest and involvement in AIDS dissidence provoked a storm from civil society, the international community, the press, opposition parties and HIV and AIDS scientists. The reaction was often hostile, derisive and mocking – not the manner that a democratically elected president would expect. Mbeki reacted to this criticism with fury. The overriding theme in Mbeki’s reaction was that those who were against him were racist, reactionary and dancing to the tune of the pharmaceutical companies. It is not always possible to separate out his dissident sympathies, with his reaction to criticism.

These are the key themes in Mbeki’s texts in reaction to criticism:
• There is a sustained campaign to force government and the president to accept the orthodox view on HIV and AIDS.
• Those who oppose the AIDS dissidents are fanatics who use tyranny rather than science to silence their opponents.
• Blacks who oppose Mbeki are “Uncle Toms” who are trying to impress their white masters.
• The pharmaceutical industry is involved in the campaign against dissidents because it wants to secure its profits from antiretroviral drugs.

All of these contribute towards a political discourse that recognises those who believe Mbeki’s views as true thinkers and loyal Africans for the people, and those who are against Mbeki as part of the colonial, capitalist oppressive system that the anti-apartheid movement fought against.

Civil society responses to Mbeki’s views
An analysis of Mbeki’s changing views on HIV and AIDS would be incomplete without acknowledging and reflecting the reaction from those opposed to his dissident views. Reaction to Mbeki’s views hardened into resistance, involving lobbying, protest marches and pickets, using the courts, public protests and, finally, a civil disobedience campaign. This struggle was led by the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), supported by a wide range of civil society organisations and individuals, most notably the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), religious organisations, health professionals and HIV and AIDS scientists, and backed by international organisations such as Medicins sans Frontieres, Oxfam, ACT-UP and others.

In addressing HIV and AIDS, there are a number of common themes in the TAC’s discourse that are relevant to Mbeki and the government’s position, namely:
• Treatment for people living with HIV and AIDS is a moral and human right in line with the Constitution.
• Denying access to treatment is a crime against the poor.
• The TAC opposes government’s HIV and AIDS policy, not government.
• The AIDS denialists distort facts to deny access to life-saving drugs.
• There is a lack of political will to address HIV and AIDS adequately.
• Government is trying to underplay the impact of HIV and AIDS.
• The government’s lack of urgency is linked to denial.
• Government’s HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan does not adequately address treatment and must include antiretroviral drugs.
• HIV and AIDS should not be used for political gain.
• The TAC does not fear government accusations of being “unpatriotic” or “racist”.
• Antiretroviral drugs work.
• The pharmaceutical companies are immoral in their pursuit of profits.

An analysis of a particular speech by Judge Edwin Cameron shows that the primary discourse of the civil society response is one of activism, with the assertion that the truth about AIDS is impossible to deny, and that while the “denialists” are doing a great deal of damage, they are also inadvertently making people determined to take action against AIDS.

Conclusions and recommendations

It has been argued that Mbeki declared that HIV did not cause AIDS; that he had rejected Western science about HIV and AIDS because he believed it was based on racism; and that he had cynically delayed antiretroviral treatment because it was too costly for his government. However, this research shows that Mbeki’s views were not that crude or simplistic. He genuinely engaged with the science of HIV and AIDS in an attempt to understand the epidemic and the forces driving it. In this sense, then, his interest in AIDS dissidents was not that of a sophist looking for excuses to disguise a neo-liberal economic policy aimed at cutting public-health spending, but one of a genuine believer, convinced by the scientific arguments advanced by dissidents such as David Rasnick and Anthony Brink.

In addition, the controversy caused when Mbeki decided to defend and promote the antiretroviral drug, Virodene, and the subsequent discovery that the substance was little more than an industrial solvent, could have played a role in Mbeki’s increasing scepticism of a drug-based response to HIV and AIDS. This scepticism could have ultimately led Mbeki to question the role of the pharmaceutical companies in addressing HIV and AIDS, and this could have led him to consider the theories propagated by the AIDS dissidents.

There is no doubt that Mbeki’s stance on HIV and AIDS cost him dearly in terms of local and international credibility. He lost the trust of people living with HIV and AIDS and alienated orthodox scientists and international leaders. Mbeki caused confusion within government and even prompted his predecessor, Nelson Mandela, to speak out against his views on HIV and AIDS.

In dealing with his critics, Mbeki frequently denigrated as racist those who opposed his views on HIV and AIDS without dealing with the substance of their criticisms. This is a common tactic of Mbeki’s that serves to deflect public attention from the content of the criticism to an emotive issue such as racism. Thus, although he claims that his positions on HIV and AIDS are based on scientific reasoning, he resorts to irrational, unscientific labelling to defeat his critics rather than defending his position using science. This form of defence has become a trademark of the Mbeki government, and does not bode well for future debate on important policy issues.

By late 2001, Mbeki had largely withdrawn from any public involvement with HIV and AIDS and delegated all presidential responsibilities on the epidemic to Deputy President Jacob Zuma. This was after he had admitted both in Parliament and to the ANC’s National Executive Committee that his views on HIV and AIDS had caused confusion. Although his government was poised to implement the world’s biggest antiretroviral treatment programme, it is still unclear whether Mbeki had given up on his
dissident sympathies. Mbeki has never publicly refuted his earlier position that a virus cannot cause a syndrome, or stated his public support for the antiretroviral roll-out.

Despite Mbeki’s dissident position and the fact that it caused confusion and paralysis in government’s campaign against HIV and AIDS, ultimately the orthodox position has won the day for a number of reasons. Not least of these are the intense lobbying within government and the ANC for the orthodox position, the mass mobilisation of citizens by organisations such as the TAC, Cosatu and faith-based organisations and the sheer weight of the HIV and AIDS epidemic that has fundamentally altered the patterns of disease and death in this country. But although South Africa is about to launch a massive ARV programme in public health, the country still lacks the leadership to address HIV and AIDS adequately.

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Problem statement
HIV and AIDS is an ecological phenomenon that has impacted directly on material conditions and lived experience globally. In South Africa the epidemic has reached prevalence levels in excess of 10% in the general population, and in some populations, regions, and contexts, infection levels are far higher (Shisana et al 2002; UNAIDS, 2004b). AIDS interventions thus occupy an important place within the sphere of public policy and funding investment.

Interventions in response to AIDS occur at all levels of society, including both organic and relatively informal responses (such as small groups of individuals working collaboratively to provide care to individuals who are ill, or to children orphaned by AIDS at grassroots level) as well as formal responses located within the state or other formal institutions and groups. All AIDS interventions require resources to be sustained, and larger national and international level programmes are often resource intensive.

At most levels of intervention, competition exists between programmes, organisations and groups to secure acceptance, and in some cases expansion and dominance, within the broad response to the epidemic. This direction towards dominance, whether formal or informal, overt or covert, involves ideological dimensions – specifically the framing in the public sphere of the ideas that constitute a given programme or intervention, and further, related processes of legitimation. Ideology thus intersects with discourse processes that foster dominance.

Ideological discourses about HIV and AIDS have drawn on specific epistemological foundations and world-views, incorporating intersections with parallel ideologies, and in many instances being directed towards achieving expansion and dominance of particular ideas. This ideological strategy incorporates the construction of common sense. Ideological claims are reiterative, but are also related to processes of legitimation that combine structural relations with communicative power.

Objectives
This thesis explores the concept of ideology and related concepts of dominance, power and hegemony, through relocating macro-level understandings and analysis of ideology within analysis of superstructural entities, notably organisations, groups and elites. The South African HIV and AIDS programme, loveLife, is utilised as a case study in this research, to demonstrate ideological trajectories over time.

Ideologies serve the interests of particular social formations or classes over others, and at the macro-level this has to do with organised thought as it relates to power. The interrelation between claims about the HIV and AIDS epidemic, claims about the impact of the loveLife programme, and the utility of alliances and structural partnerships in legitimating such claims is explored.

The loveLife programme has utilised discourses to address a range of groups including AIDS researchers, strategists, policy makers, and the general public on the one hand, and the programme’s stated “target group” of 12–17-year-old youth on the other. This has included both discourses about the loveLife programme – its assumptions, vision, relationships to other organisations and impacts – as well as discourses that have to do with creating a “positive lifestyle” amongst South African youth for the suggested purpose of transforming sexual and reproductive health practices with a view to mitigating individual and social risk to HIV and AIDS.

This thesis examines the ideological discourses and practices that relate to what might be termed the meta-discourses of the loveLife programme – discourses that involve representation of the programme as an appropriate and viable intervention in relation
to AIDS. These discourses occur both within South Africa and globally.

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review explores the history of responses to HIV and AIDS, and how the loveLife programme fits into this context.

The emerging phenomenon of HIV and AIDS in the 1980s was very much located in public discourse. During this phase, emphasis was placed on biomedical orientations that focused on the viral nature of HIV and modes of infection. These discourses were not without ideological dimensions: HIV infection was attributed to risky sexual practices amongst gay men, Haitians and Africans, and politicking was rife amongst scientists laying claim to the “discovery” of the virus. This period laid the foundations for a wide range of social explanations of behavioural and social factors that contributed to vulnerability to HIV infection, as well as extending to the social spheres that lay beyond individual HIV infection. Explanations with regard to the latter were largely grounded in social and biomedical research involving analyses of epidemiological trends in relation to intersections with sexual behaviours, practices and contexts.

Whilst such research, functioning in concert with the range of responses and interventions, was integral to the development of HIV and AIDS policy, these processes have also formed the foundation for a wide range of ideological developments in relation to the disease and include constructing, legitimating and replicating particular interpretations of the epidemic. The concept of ideology offers an understanding of the relationship between social and material conditions and the ideas that frame social life in any given era. Ideologies are all-pervasive systems for structuring thought and action with a primary orientation towards ensuring dominance of particular ideas at one level or another.

The loveLife programme is represented through a complex set of discourses. These discourses articulate perspectives on the past, present and future in relation to the AIDS epidemic. This can be understood as representing specific ideological positions including, for example, the notion that HIV and AIDS can be understood through quantitative behavioural research, which is amplified into assertions that youth are the “driving force” underpinning the epidemic; that other interventions addressing HIV amongst youth in South Africa have failed; that loveLife is a new vision of prevention that will bring about significant impact in HIV reduction in a short amount of time; and that loveLife is succeeding in changing the sexual behaviours of youth (loveLife, 1999a; 2000d; 2002b; 2002c; 2003a; Harrison & Steinberg, 2002).

The loveLife programme is grounded within an implicit epistemology of quantification and assumptions about behavioural causality that contribute to the construction of common-sense representations about HIV and AIDS and youth in South Africa. Quantitative studies such as questionnaires oriented towards understanding knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and practices (KAPB) and surveillance, such as The South African Department of Health KAPB study (2002) and the Shisana et al (2002) combined study, are constrained in that they allow for aggregate rather than individual understandings. They cannot understand the diverse reasoning and individual contextual factors that prompt individual responses to the questionnaires. Within such research there is an ideological effect that contributes to masking contexts of material conditions and lived experience which renders contradictions invisible. Programmes based on quantitative research only may miss the mark.

The loveLife programme represents youth identity as incorporating reification of consumption within the framework of globalisation, and loveLife publications integrate discourses on sexual health, personal reflections, music, fashion and films. This construction of youth identity in this way services the ideological function of homogenisation that masks the complexity and diversity of South African youth.

Concepts and theory informing the research
Discourse theory, hegemony and notions of legitimation and episteme inform the research approach.
HIV and AIDS, as material/ecological phenomena, have required explanation at a social level and emerging knowledge has been consolidated through a range of discourses. These discourses have coalesced into various trajectories related to the ideological dominance of particular ideas, or the establishment of commonsense perspectives, with the consequence that they influence HIV and AIDS intervention policies and practices. These function ideologically through reiteration and legitimation, and in the trajectory towards dominance, are likely to incorporate hegemonic strategies to consolidate power and to address critique. Hegemonic power includes both structural and ideological forms of dominance.

In this research process, a range of analytic issues are considered towards framing a methodology for analysis. This includes reflections on processes of representation; epistemological foundations (including quantification, causality and consumption); processes of legitimation (including moral panic and research discourses); and dominance practices (including structural linkages and mechanisms for addressing critique).

Legitimation is a rationalising process sustained through reiteration of reasonings and ways of understanding a particular problem incorporating the framing of particular solutions in response. It involves arguments for, and justifications of, particular courses of action drawing on a range of strategies that have to do with elevating particular ideas as valid. Foucault’s concept of epistemic communities is also related to legitimation. For example, elites who have an “authoritative claim to policy relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area” (Haas, 1992:23) are an important part of legitimating discourses.

Whilst legitimation is a product of the orthodoxies underpinning particular discourses in combination with claims-making, the ideological processes of legitimation may also incorporate structural linkages and associations between groups and/or elites. In the case of loveLife, these forms of legitimation occur both globally and locally. Structural linkages and elite endorsements are functional to processes of hegemonic consent, given that ideological power is both concentrated and expanded through such linkages. The establishment of an ideological bloc by a group through leadership is related to hegemonic direction. To understand hegemony therefore: “It is not enough to say that [a group] exerts its dominance over other groups. We should look at how the group must also have behind it the economic, political and cultural conditions that allow it to put itself forward as leading” (Joseph, 2000:183).

Epistemic communities are conceptualised and defined as thought communities, made up of socially recognised knowledge-based networks, the members of which share a common understanding of a particular problem/issue or a common world-view and seek to translate their beliefs into dominant social discourse and social practice. These thought communities might be local, national or transnational (Antoniades, 2003).

Foucault’s concept of episteme refers to historical relations that underpin knowledge and consequently discourse. Episteme has a generative function – it is the foundation from which knowledge and discourses are built. Episteme represents the aspects of knowledge construction that give rise to orthodoxies – standardised and/or dominant ways of viewing the world and of explaining lived experience and material conditions. Orthodoxy service processes of ideological masking by virtue of narrowing the understanding of social conditions, and at the same time shifting these narrow frameworks of understanding into ideological domination through common sense. In the case of loveLife, three epistemological orientations have been central to discourses about the programme: quantification, behavioural causality and youth modernity in relation to consumption.

Quantification, causality and constructions of youth intersect in a range of legitimating ideological practices. Moral panic is an ideological approach that has the ideological function of framing causal pathways. It includes constructions of the amoral “other” and incorporates both quantitative and causal orthodoxies within such constructions. Evaluative research is another ideological strategy that is equally underpinned by logics.
that are interdependent with quantification and reifying particular assumptions about causal pathways; whilst elite endorsements and structural linkages integrate common-sense constructions with a view to influencing public policy.

Hegemony involves two interconnected processes: the development of an ideological bloc that consolidates power through structural linkages between elite individuals and the groups they represent, and practices that are functional to dominance. Hegemony through discourse, however, is primarily related to consent, whilst other ideological practices incorporate masking of contradictions through reiteration or attempting to undermine counter-ideological discourses.

Consent is identified by Gramsci (1971) in relation to the macro-level concepts of ideology and hegemony as state and civil society interact. Gramsci’s concept of consent is related to the notion of spontaneous affirmation of the dominant political group. This ruling group then offers direction through leadership, moderating dissent through making non-fundamental concessions without resorting to coercion. At some level, consent is embedded within the structures of society, and within ideological apparatuses that frame what may be known. It is, however, also related to power in the sense that dominant groups are far more readily able to define the boundaries of discourse, although in general, there is an openness to the system that allows for domination to occur through a continuous process of addressing oppositional discourses by avoiding overt confrontation.

In this research, these concepts are applied to groups that assume leadership and become dominant in the public sphere of policy and social action – in this instance, in the sphere of HIV and AIDS and public health. For both the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) and loveLife, assuming leadership has involved an embedding of ideas within particular dominant spheres whilst at the same time employing ideological strategies of legitimation and structural linkages between groups to consolidate dominance.

These strategies have been effective in so much as they have been financially resourced and focused at levels that are beyond the scope and framework of activities of other groups in the field. KFF, for example, is specifically structured to expend resources on influencing policy, whilst loveLife has emphasised relations with media partners and other elites in South Africa. It is these activities that are directed towards framing a dominant common sense about HIV and AIDS, youth and programmatic intervention through discourses that emphasise knowledge that is “true” and activities that are strategically appropriate.

**Research methods and methodology**

The research is approached through latent critiques of the loveLife programme as it functioned from 1999–2004. This is conducted through an examination of the profile and orientation of the loveLife programme, and an examination of the contextual contradictions and the paradigm of consumption apparent in the programme’s public media. In addition, a survey of other NGO’s impressions of the loveLife campaign was conducted.

The research investigates constructions of youth sexuality, as well as ideology and critical awareness. The notions of critique, consent and coercion are combined with a structural level critique and examination of the notions of hegemony, counter-hegemony and ideological resistance.

**Key findings**

Ideologies are generalised throughout society and include dominant, dominated and ascendant bodies of thought. Ideologies are, in essence, summative frameworks for understanding the world that incorporate reference to the past, present and future and are directed politically towards dominance. These include the notion of an interpellulative aspect that is related to identity and subjection. It is recognised, however, that interpellation is relative to consciousness of contradictions related to material conditions and lived experience. In this sense, ideologies are never totalising. Rather, ideology may be understood as a process of producing and framing meaning.
The patterning of loveLife’s ideological development and trajectory is depicted in Figure 1. The figure illustrates the interrelation between epistemological foundations and subsequent process of ideological discourse. These include foundational claims, interlinked with legitimating processes and counter-critique strategies that allow discourses to be reiterated and legitimated in service of common sense.

**Figure 1: Ideological trajectories towards the construction of common sense**

Particular claims can be considered fundamental to the ideological process – specifically claims that rationalise and justify the relevance of a particular ideology to social goals. In the case of loveLife, these goals are framed as influencing the reduction of HIV amongst young people through reducing HIV infection, and claiming legitimacy based on supposed causal impacts.

Structural relations with existing dominant ideological entities have underpinned the capacity of KFF and loveLife to become ascendant, to assume leadership, and in effect, to appropriate elements of indigenous and global public spheres in relation to youth and HIV and AIDS. This has been inter-related with the legitimating authority derived from the notion of philanthropic and social goals, but has been interdependent with the strategic resourcing of a range of structural linkages. Alliances and related access to elites has involved diverse sectors ranging from UN organisations, through to former US presidents, rock stars, Hollywood actors, politicians, corporate heads and the like. Elite formations may include relatively strong integration (in this case centred around the loveLife programme), but wide differentiation and autonomy in relation to their own diverse and specific interests.

In relation to ideological expansion and ascendancy, discourse provides the fundamental link between these wide-ranging structures, and access to, and resourcing of, discourse genres and fora (i.e. securing communicative power), has been integral to this process. Emerging discourses have often included a circular aspect in relation to the ideological bloc – i.e. it is not only the loveLife programme that is reified and valorised, but additionally one or more of the entities constituting the bloc. This circular ideological process is functional to the hegemony.

Dominated and direction towards common sense is inter-related with reiterative discourse practices as they intersect with communicative power. Whilst theories of persuasion and propaganda have generally been dismissed by virtue of their implicit relation to linear models of communication, it cannot be ignored that propagandist strategies are relevant to ideological discourse. There are many similarities between the coercive ideological strategies identified by Therborn (1991) – notably excommunication, restriction, shielding, repetition and delimited appropriation of discourse – and those identified by Black (2001) – notably reliance on authority figures, abstractions, physical representations, simplifications, temporal disjunctures, finalistic points of view and competition.
Other strategies, including hyperbole and othering, in combination with approaches to structuring arguments and justifications, and insertions of false logics such as encompassed within ad hominem constructs, are all functional to the same end – ideological direction towards dominance.

The central purpose of this thesis was to develop analytic approaches for understanding how ideology emerges in the context of an epidemic such as HIV and AIDS, and how particular ideological processes are directed towards dominance.

Approaches to analysis have involved an expanded repertoire of strategies. These include analysis of epistemological foundations; analysis of discourses incorporating particular epistemologies/orthodoxies; analysis of claims-making discourses; analysis of structural linkages, partnerships and alliances; analysis of processes of legitimation; and analysis of communicative power and access to the public sphere. These intersect with analyses of latent critiques and critical discourses as they relate to hegemonic and counter-hegemonic processes. The overall process is modelled in Figure 2.

Critique of ideology is oriented towards identifying and unmasking contradictions and related differentials of power. The approach is essentially an evaluative one that is directed towards achieving transparency as opposed to being informed or directed by a particular moral purpose. This process is, however, itself ideological, in that exposing contradictions has the effect of weakening particular ideological constructions, and such critique may be introduced into counter-hegemonic processes.

**Figure 2: Ideology critique model**

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Analysis of epistemological foundations (e.g. quantification, causality, consumption)
Analysis of discourses incorporating epistemological/orthodox constructions
Analysis of claims-making discourses (e.g. moral panic, research)
Analysis of structural linkages, partnerships and alliances
Analysis of legitimating strategies and discourses
Analysis of access to communicative power and the public sphere
Analysis of latent critiques and critical discourses in the public sphere
Analysis of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic processes
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**Conclusions and recommendations**

In the case of loveLife, the analysis undertaken has allowed for a theoretical and practical exploration of contradictions that were framed by discourse constructions and structural interrelations. Analysis of public-level and latent critiques suggests that contradictions are readily understood by various sectors, and thus, whilst ideologies may be structured to achieve interpellation, it does not necessarily follow that interpellation is achieved to a large degree.
Countering critique within a framework that includes dominant access to communicative power, in combination with structural power, has not required that the loveLife programme devolve, to any great extent, to the concept of accommodation by consent. Instead, it has been possible to defer to ideological reiteration (via dominant access to communicative power), alongside coercive power (threats of legal action, ad hominem attacks on critics). In this sense, the programme has been engaged in a “war of position”.

Dominance may be countered both passively and actively. Active dominance is inter-related with mobilisation, but there is little likelihood that the loveLife programme poses sufficient threat to engender mobilisation amongst those organisations that perceive its contradictions. Whilst critical discourses may become more vocal, coherent and sustained, the pragmatic interests of programmes working in the HIV and AIDS field are unlikely to be mobilised unless the threat posed by loveLife directly affects their pragmatic activities. Rather, some degree of acquiescence is likely.

Within the bloc that constitutes loveLife, it is apparent that contradictions may also be articulated. These contradictions are, over time, likely to become more transparent – both by virtue of ad hoc critiques, as well as being a product of the complexity of sustaining contradiction within global and local HIV and AIDS policy and strategy. There is little to suggest that the loveLife programme will be in a position to make good on its promises and claims, and there is some risk to the organisation as a result of this. Such dissention may contribute to broader critique of ideologically dominant groups.

The massive resources required to sustain the loveLife programme, even within the global framework of increasing financial commitments, is unlikely to be sustained, as the need for funding to be directed to other growth points of the epidemic becomes apparent – for example the emerging epidemic in Asia. Some strategic direction has been given by KFF to the notion of replicating loveLife as a model for application elsewhere. It is this direction that is central to the global positioning of the loveLife model in wide-ranging discourse fora as a successful and replicable approach to HIV prevention.

However, although it may have been possible to secure positional influence over the first round of Global Fund grant-making (amongst other spheres), it is unlikely that reiterative claims-making alone can sustain the programme at the level of global policy and strategy development in relation to HIV and AIDS. Similarly, it is unclear whether the South African government would continue beyond its own three-year commitment to the loveLife programme.

Clearly, within the present climate, counter-hegemonic discourses will continue to be aggressively countered, and it remains to be seen whether contradictions can be sustained over extended periods of time.

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**“Act Alive”: Youth clubs communicating healthy life choices**

*Mkhonzeni Gumede (2010)*

**Problem statement**

“Kwasukasukela” is the call of the storyteller. Come and listen, or in this case, read my story. It begins when I joined DramAidE (Drama in AIDS Education) in 1993 after graduating from the University of Zululand. In 1997 I became the Project Manager of DramAidE and have been working in this organisation for 15 years. It was a new programme when I joined and I was instrumental in developing and establishing Act Alive, which is one of the DramAidE projects. This story is about the influence of my background and education on the way Act Alive was developed and sustained. It explores the ways in which young people receive and interpret information about health, risk and the dangers of contracting a sexually transmitted infection.

DramAidE is a community action communication model initiated at a rural university, sustained and developed over fifteen years. There are a number of different projects that make up the overall DramAidE programme. I have chosen Act Alive as a case study because it is a school-based project that has allowed us to implement most, but not all, of the principles of participatory action research (PAR). In this study I do not focus on an evaluation of how effectively this mission was carried out, or what impact it has had, but instead provide a critical reflection based on my own participation in one of its projects. Adopting an auto-ethnographic approach, this study is a collection of impressions about the genesis of Act Alive as a DramAidE project, and the way it developed and changed to meet the needs of young people in KwaZulu-Natal.
Objectives

Through my narrative, and my experience of working in DramAidE, which interrogates the broader cultural, political and communicative engagement with HIV and AIDS prevention efforts, I analyse key aspects of DramAidE's work. This is in order to investigate the appropriateness and effectiveness of promoting healthy lifestyles amongst the project beneficiaries. DramAidE constitutes an important aspect of my working life. I have been a facilitator and manager in DramAidE, which has provided me with an opportunity to teach and to learn from DramAidE. As a participatory action research (PAR) programme, DramAidE is self-critical of its work and encourages its staff to reflect on its work in order to improve its practice.

In order to explore the experience of being part of Act Alive, my research records my own life story highlighting my cultural background, my role as researcher/facilitator, and the people involved. I critically reflect on my work in DramAidE over the past 15 years and my changing understandings and attitudes towards health and education, so I use myself as a case study. The discussion includes the concepts and theories that inform DramAidE and responses to the Act Alive project.

Links to other literature in the field

Reflecting on my own history, we can see that different communities and societies have varied notions of reality and different views of the external world. As a boy, I grew up believing in a version of reality that was challenged and has changed as I became an adult and came face-to-face with different constructions of the view of the external world including a scientific view. Elements of both the transcendental and scientific views of the world coalesce into forming a “mixed reality of existence”. This complex interaction between these worlds plays itself out in everyday living.

In my story, I adopt the view that culture is constantly changing and is a way of making sense and negotiating a variety of different meanings (Tomaselli, 2003). There is a tendency in literate societies to value the written word over the spoken word because it is argued that the written word carries a legacy of established knowledge (Canclini, 1995). It is easy and convenient to reject indigenous knowledge as “unverified” because of the difficulty of proving its basis as most of it is undocumented. Tomaselli, (2003:432) points out that a transition into literate society always involves a struggle of that which is “true” by virtue of authority and that which can be verified because of the massive volume of documented material. Nevertheless, in South Africa, particularly in rural communities, the oral tradition continues to thrive and plays an important role in transmitting information and preserving cultural norms and values, such as respect for the elders and the need to care and support one another. It thrives not only because many people are non-literate but because of the sense of authenticity of the spoken word and of well-known stories, chants, rhymes and songs in transmitting cultural norms and values from one generation to the other.

HIV and AIDS communicators are faced with the challenge of finding an appropriate medium to reach audiences with HIV and AIDS messages. Choosing between the spoken word and the written word depends on the target audience for which the communication is intended. Non-literate societies depend on relationships of personal authority and people give credence to those in authority through lineage and patronage (Tomaselli, 2003:431). For such societies, the spoken word may be more appropriate where role models and known community leaders may be used to champion HIV and AIDS communication.

This study further introduces storytelling as an important element of the oral tradition that helps to transmit and promote appropriate values to the young. Using personal narratives as a useful research tool, I write about my early childhood, identifying key moments of significance that contributed to my present sense of self. Narrative is presented as a framework for understanding the subject under investigation (Sandelowski, 1991). The key consideration here is that information is created through a social process of inquiry and communication.
The notion of “community” is contested and is a subject of ongoing debate by social theorists. Arvanitakis (2008:299) suggests that community is established through “natural” formations relying on shared identity, recognition and social formations arising out of mutual beliefs, understandings and practices. In this study, community refers to a group of people bound together by social identity, shared experience, mutual beliefs and interests as the basis of identification and collective fellowship. As is the case with culture, a community is constantly adjusting to changing social, political and economic realities (Williams, 2005).

Some national HIV and AIDS communication strategies that have been implemented tend to assume a homogenous South African population. The difficulty is in developing a strategy that reflects the ideational or cultural system that guides decisions that are made by the target group. The strategy also needs to show a realistic appreciation of the power relations which control, and probably dictate, individual action (Preston-Whyte, 1992). My research examines the efficacy of a communication strategy targeted at local level that respects local cultures and examines power relations that impact on issues of making healthy life choices.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The study investigates the theoretical underpinnings of the DramAidE project, including liberatory theatre theory, PAR and notions of participation. Initially, DramAidE based its work on theories of educational drama and theatre for development (TFD). These theories claim that drama and theatre can be used for education or propaganda, as therapy or as participatory tools in development projects.

Over time, however, this shifted and DramAidE drew more on the theories of Berthold Brecht (1944) and Augusto Boal (1995), who argued that theatre can achieve conscientisation – moments of insight (especially political) – or alternatively that theatre reinforces the status quo (through catharsis). They used theatre as a tool to conscientise their audiences against social injustice. They rejected the notion that the audience should be passive participants in the play. They argued that empathy and catharsis perpetuate the status quo by overwhelming the audience with emotions and limiting their ability to think (Boal, 1995; Brecht, 1964). In this revised view of theatre, the audience is seen as subjects with whom information can be collectively exchanged through a social process of dialogue using drama, songs, storytelling, folklore and other forms of local media. The aim of DramAidE is to start a social interaction through using theatre and drama where meaning about HIV and AIDS is produced and exchanged. DramAidE has applied the theories of Paulo Freire (1970) who had considerable influence on the development of participatory teaching methods.

Act Alive became a PAR intervention, meaning that a researcher or facilitator identifies a problem, works in a team and in partnership with the research community to find a solution (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Silverman, 1993; Bryman, 1988). PAR is a method of research where creating positive social change is the predominant driving force. PAR grew out of social and educational research and exists today as an example of a research method that embraces principles of participation and reflection, and empowerment and emancipation of groups seeking to improve their social situation. These theories inform the work of DramAidE, and are examined against my own experience, as I explore the ways in which the organisation I work for has attempted to communicate information about HIV and AIDS to the kind of communities where I grew up.

Research methods and methodology

I have adopted an auto-ethnographic approach because it enables me to explore and understand the role I have played in establishing and developing DramAidE. I reflect on my involvement in the DramAidE project as a subject of investigation. I reflect on my personal experiences, my thoughts, beliefs and identity in relation to DramAidE as a central focus of this research. This includes interrogating social and cultural aspects of my personal experiences in relation to my beliefs and identity. Whilst these distinctions may fade into each other and lines may become blurred, auto-ethnographic writing helps to permeate various layers of meaning.
in order to show the multiple layers of consciousness that exist within us (Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

I use stories, articles and reports that I have written as part of my work, examples of workshops that I have conducted and accounts of plays that I have performed for this research. This requires the assumption of different roles during the writing. These roles constantly merge with each other. I write as a participant researcher by questioning and analysing different assumptions that may have informed various activities that I undertook in implementing DramAidE projects. These are evaluated as evidence with the understanding that the very act of gathering that evidence has aided in its creation (Heitz, 2007).

I use myself as a subject of investigation to understand the influence that DramAidE has on my outlook on life with special reference to healthy life choices. I use my personal experience in DramAidE to conceptualise the potential influence that DramAidE may have on others who have participated in DramAidE programmes.

Key findings
A glimpse into my early life and cultural heritage provides the context in which DramAidE developed its theory-based projects. The key points raised are that the Zulu social system was traditionally hierarchical and stratified according to seniority and status, meaning that it was highly regulated with normative patterns of behaviour observed and promoted with respect for this social system. It was through this system of respect that behaviour was regulated and the young were guided through different stages of physical development.

It was the family that established rules of behaviour and nurtured the young in appropriate values, such as those of respect for self and others; and developed ubuntu. Knowing and understanding your place in the family provided a sense of belonging that developed a sense of identity as an individual. This sense of belonging is as important to a sense of identity as the sense of being an individual.

Traditional ways of knowing and understanding the meaning of life are breaking down under the pressure of rapid urbanisation and as a legacy of colonisation and apartheid. This is particularly evident when young people leave home and stay in residences at university. The temptation to push the boundaries of appropriate healthy behaviour is real and difficult to resist. Clearly peer pressure plays an important part in students experimenting with alcohol and exploiting opportunities to have unsafe sex. The response to information about HIV has been fraught with suspicion and denial in this sector of South Africa.

As the Act Alive project evolved and changed, this context profoundly affected the theory and methodology that became part of the DramAidE approach. In fact it is true to say that Act Alive is informed by, and is a product of, this cultural heritage.

Communication programmes need to take into account the importance of culture in mediating meaning and the reception of messages that they promote. Communication programmes should consider the prevailing systems of making sense in choosing communication tools to be used in campaigns. DramAidE has claimed from the outset that our methodology is sensitive to its cultural environment. DramAidE works with the local community to adapt health messages in performance art forms and include messages about health. They are encouraged to re-interpret messages and express them in local languages and media. The essential elements of these art forms are left unchanged. This enhances the delivery of messages because audiences identify with the cultural products used. Local performers find it easy to express their thoughts and feelings through popular arts, which are part of their heritage.

A key point emerging from the narrative of my life in review is the importance of reconciling local knowledge with established scientific knowledge. Similarly, certain cultural practices are no longer compatible with the human rights culture that South Africa has defined in its constitution. This means that social change is taking place and in the Act Alive project the intention is to promote change that will lead to a healthy society that recognises human rights.
In Act Alive, a cultural approach to communication means understanding:

- Beliefs, such as notions of illness and reasons for getting sick;
- The appropriate use of language;
- Social systems in relation to peer influence;
- Social systems in relation to gender and human rights; and
- Creative expression through art forms such as song, dance and poetry.

This simplified discussion of a highly complex topic allows me to explore what is meant by a cultural approach from the perspective of a Zulu male, socialised in a Zulu family, educated at a university, and then working for DramAidE.

There is great value in adopting a cultural approach to HIV and AIDS communication that recognises the centrality of the cultural context in understanding disease and illness and what people do when they are sick, which can benefit HIV and AIDS prevention efforts. The core message here is that science and culture are not mutually exclusive and that culture can be a useful resource for HIV and AIDS communication.

The interplay between human rights, gender and culture should not disadvantage women and increase their vulnerability to HIV infection. Culture should not be used as an excuse to perpetuate patriarchal practices and similarly human rights should not be used to contest useful cultural values such as respect and affinity to a community that helps to build a caring and peaceful society.

Language should not be used as rhetoric to promote Western thought about disease causation and prevention because this may lead to the rejection of such projects. Language should be used to tap into local indigenous knowledge whilst introducing major ideas about how to prevent HIV and AIDS. Language should be used as a tool to facilitate authentic dialogue and not merely the transmission of messages.

Peer education is a useful approach that has been used worldwide to facilitate public health communication and prevent infection with HIV. It was an integral part of the traditional Zulu social system. Young people talk to each other anyway. It is important to ensure that peer educators transmit correct information to one another about sexual reproductive health. Peer education should be adapted to existing social structures and draw useful values such as respect and the sense of belonging to a community from the cultural heritage.

DramAidE builds on these notions, and uses a problem-posing approach in its work, which encourages participants to seek to amplify circumstances that bring about injustice and oppression. This helps in situating their position of disadvantage within their ability to transform it. DramAidE facilitators may have an idea of an appropriate thing to do, but individual participants may choose different pathways to action that are usually defined by their perceived ability or inability to change intervening factors that are uniquely different for each case.

Through questioning their circumstance, participants are enabled to understand the issue more clearly. It allows for a better perspective about the problem and an understanding of how it manifests itself. Participants are encouraged to label it and to identify that which they can do rather than becoming overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem. They are able to deduce facts from their personal feelings and are encouraged to assess their capacity to effect change. In instances where there is capacity but lack of agency to effect change, participants are challenged even further about their determination and commitment to change.

The Act Alive workshops provide space for the participants to explore different solutions to the issue. The DramAidE techniques call on the participants to use their analytical skills by relating images to real-life situations in order to discover what the symbolism of oppression represents for them. Education is not the transfer of information from the teacher to the learner only. In this case, participants are given space to contribute to the learning experience. Their thoughts and feelings are invited and used in the resolution of the issue under discussion. Views by participants are...
encouraged and used to deepen discussion and explore different alternatives. This allows for an appropriate cultural approach.

Conclusions and recommendations

South Africa is a society that is in transition, and constantly adjusting to the expectations of the rapidly changing world within the context of globalisation. Indigenous South Africans have adopted a plural approach to medical health and well-being, and this impacts on the way that the epidemic is managed in the South African context. The core consideration here is that traditional notions of health and well-being should not be viewed as oppositional to biomedical approaches to health. Both are mutually beneficial to the patient and should be accorded equal consideration in dealing with sickness, especially for traditional societies. This has implications on how new information, such as that HIV causes AIDS, will be received and acted on, and therefore on the development of appropriate communication strategies.

Using myself as a case study, I have highlighted the contradictions of living in the changing world where I was raised in a Zulu family and way of life that respects amadlozi (ancestors) yet am Christian and have been educated in Western science and ways of understanding the world. These worlds co-exist within me and I unconsciously draw upon them in making sense of the world and making decisions about my life. The contradictions may be subtle and superfluous yet their application in reality may be the difference between life and death. Likewise, HIV and AIDS communication projects need to consider the importance of the interaction of these belief systems and their influence in mediating meaning and responses to new information.

It is essential for the Act Alive project to allow space for the participants to determine their future. Facilitators should not be afraid of giving power to the participants and feel comfortable with the end result that may be different from what they set out to achieve. There are no short cuts in this approach. It is important for the project participants to appreciate the structural causes that bring about the situation of disadvantage. Critical consciousness should lead to take practical steps that address oppression.

It is important for DramAidE and other development projects to be fully integrated into communal life; otherwise these projects run the risk of being rejected by the communities for whom they are intended. Doing projects with the community and not for the community enables project participants to derive benefit from such projects on their own terms in accordance with what works in their locality. In this approach participants own the project and determine the direction, pace and outcomes. Such an approach allows for authentic dialogue to occur and projects benefit from the social capital obtained in the project area. Such projects are able to harness indigenous knowledge and enhance their depth and impact. In this way, the probability for success and sustainability is maximised.

It is possible that young people participating in the Act Alive project are given an opportunity to interrogate customs and traditions, or the “rules” of their local culture, and bring about social change. These established youth clubs are able to negotiate the contextual mediators such as local culture, gender and socio-economic status in order to bring about behaviour change. An examination of the DramAidE techniques employed in the Act Alive project, including workshops, forum theatre and other participatory techniques, shows that participatory techniques open a space for people to engage with these contradictions, to reflect, and to act on what they see.

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CHAPTER 2

AIDS Communication and its Reception amongst Students

This chapter covers the notion of communicating about HIV and AIDS, and how communication is conceived, delivered and received by South African students.

The chapter explores the theory behind health communication and reception and the implications of reception studies for theory and for communication practitioners. It includes summaries of five post-graduate student papers. Contributors include: Tesfagabir Tesfu (2003), Eliza Moodley (2007), Abraham Kiprop Mulwo (2009), Given Mutinta (2012) and John-Eudes Lengwe Kunda (2009).

Tesfu’s (2003) research explores how a communication campaign may influence behaviour change in that it encourages people to take action. However, he notes that this is simply one step in a process where audience members require greater information and one-on-one discussions before they are likely to make further changes in their behaviour.

The remaining four papers are drawn from research that is part of a composite study, involving three PhD theses and one MA dissertation that was conducted by students based at CCMS in conjunction with Johns Hopkins Health and Education South Africa (JHHESA), with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The study explores the responses of students at universities in KwaZulu-Natal to communication and media strategies relating to the prevention of infection with HIV through abstinence, being faithful to one partner and the correct and consistent use of condoms (ABC).

The study, referred to as “the ABC omnibus survey” was conducted at seven campuses in three universities: the five campuses of University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and one campus each at University of Zululand (UNIZUL) and Durban University of Technology (DUT).

A survey instrument was adapted with permission from a questionnaire originally designed by the Centre for AIDS Development, Research and Evaluation (CADRE). Structured, closed questions elicited data relating to the sources and nature of HIV and AIDS information accessible to students at each of the seven campuses, perception of students towards the relevance of this information, students’ sexual practices, and the factors that influence students’ sexual practices. Twenty-eight research assistants were recruited and trained in identifying respondents and in administering the questionnaire.

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to identify a total of 1400 respondents (200 from each campus) who participated in the questionnaire survey. Data capturing involved creating SPSS (version 15) spread sheets. Data analysis included generating frequencies and percentages showing how respondents answered each question. Responses were summarised in tabular form and chi-square analysis was conducted to analyse the correlation between various responses.

The four papers presented here reflect different angles with data drawn from the omnibus study as well as additional research questions that were explored through other research methods.
An evaluation of communication strategies used in the voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) campaign at the University of Durban-Westville

Tesfagabilir Berhe Tesfu (MA, 2003)

Problem statement
Activists stress the importance of Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) programmes in dealing with the HIV and AIDS epidemic. VCT programmes enable clients to know their HIV status and to lead their lives accordingly. They encourage those who are found to be HIV negative, among other things, to practise safer sex. They also assure those who are infected with the virus that it is possible to be HIV positive and to “live positively”.

If young people can be sensitised about the benefits of VCT, many lives will be saved. The youth thus render themselves an important target group for health interventions, particularly those interventions that bring about changes in attitudes and behaviour relating to sexuality (Sendrowitz, 1999.) As students are a group at risk of HIV infection, a number of universities have attempted to provide comprehensive strategies to mitigate against this.

While awareness about HIV and AIDS amongst young people is high (Stadler & Hlongwe, 2000), research shows that the demand for VCT is low in South Africa (Stein, 2000:1). The University of Durban-Westville (UDW) has integrated VCT services into pre-existing student counselling programmes. In 2003 the University publicised the introduction of this HIV and AIDS VCT facility on campus, through the use of entertaining media and other communication strategies.

Objectives
The research examines and evaluates a communication campaign carried out at the UDW to publicise the new VCT services. Drawing on theories of Entertainment Education (EE) and behaviour change, the campaign's effectiveness is analysed in relation to (1) audience reception; (2) take-up of the service promoted; and (3) visibility and penetration of the media employed.

The research questions include the following:
• What communication strategies does UDW use in their campaign?
• Does this campaign effectively inform students about the benefits of VCT?
• Were students involved in the design of messages at all levels and stages of the campaign?
• What are the students’ views of the campaign?
• What are the outcomes of the campaign?
• What are the advantages and disadvantages of the campaign’s use of EE techniques?

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review explores notions of communication for behaviour change, and how the action of presenting for VCT services can in itself be a sign of behaviour change.

In a study about the theory and principles of media health campaigns, Atkins (2001) observes that “most campaigns present messages that attempt to increase awareness, informing people what to do, specifying who should do it, and cueing them when and where it should be done” (2001:10). Communication campaign strategies involve, among other things, thorough formative research, effective participation of the target group, establishing strong partnerships among the stakeholders, and using the most appropriate media to convey the message. Communication has been redefined as a process where “participants create and share information with
one another in order to reach a mutual understanding” (Rogers & Kinkaid, 1981:63). Conceived in this way, communication is no longer seen as a one-way process. Rather, interaction helps communication participants to gain the utmost benefit by engaging in an effective process with practical goals.

In the case of VCT campaigns, if programme officials who are in charge of designing the messages for the campaign create and share information with the target groups, they can narrow the gap between themselves and the audience. If a sample of the recipient group shares their ideas during the process of message design, there is a greater probability that the campaign will appeal to a larger section of the target group as a whole.

Behavioural investigations reveal that audiences “have different ways of thinking, even different ways of interpreting drawings and photographs from those of the experts and officials who initiate communication programs” (Piotrow et al, 1997:18). Internationally, VCT programme officials use posters, drawings and so on, designed to have an impact on their target audience. It is important that the designers of health communication campaigns should at least pre-test the posters and drawings before they are released. Generally, practitioners should collect as much information as they can from the audience in order to neutralise their own bias and/or prejudices.

A client’s attendance at a VCT service is in itself a form of behaviour that departs from an individual’s everyday forms of conduct. Thus, given the foregoing discussion about health communication, one reason for someone presenting for VCT could be that she or he has responded to the representations of such a campaign. However, the first occasion on which one presents for counselling is an act and not in itself a form of everyday conduct.

VCT itself can also be viewed as a communication process, which is designed explicitly to lead to a change in behaviour that depends largely on the individual first act of presentation as the desired outcome of a separate and prior health communication campaign. A counsellor’s principle communication role in VCT is to help the client manage problems, and to effect life-enhancing changes that will serve the client in the future (Van Dyk, 2001:201). This process of behaviour change is dependent on a series of five steps, namely, pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance (Vinci, 2003).

The VCT process is a special case of communication practice, in that it is carried out with the intention of producing a particular effect. The five steps of behaviour change are essentially psychological, and thus much that is covered there falls outside the scope of this project. However, if we view VCT and behaviour change jointly, then it is clear that communication promoting the former should ideally aim to target the behaviour-change progression at the preparation stage, where an individual intends to make the change. Where the psychological aspects of the pre-contemplation and contemplation stages may have some or no effect on the form of action taken, we may be justified in assuming that in the case of an individual who is part of a university community, exposed to ongoing health communication campaigns, he or she will have been exposed to (and probably aware of) the messages these campaigns propagate.

If such individuals do present for VCT, it is likely that they have already contemplated, or are in the process of contemplating, some action. VCT publicity campaigns would therefore seem, on the basis of the behaviour-change model, to be best designed around messages that produce the effect of setting a process of contemplation in motion. The VCT process itself, on the other hand, begins at the stage of action, and as a communication practice operates during the remaining stages of behaviour change. In evaluating the UDW publicity campaign for the campus VCT facility, then, it is useful to deploy this account to establish a more effective touchstone for assessing the campaign’s effectiveness.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The theories of the diffusion of innovations and social modelling inform the research.

The diffusion of innovation theory is built on the process of
awareness-raising by “using opinion leaders to influence attitudes and behaviours” (Airhihenbuwa et al, 2000:7–8). Diffusion of innovation supports the idea that interpersonal communication plays a prominent role in the adoption of new ideas (Rogers, 1995). Not only opinion leaders but also peer groups are the best ways of encouraging the adoption of a new idea.

The notion of the dual influence of opinion leaders and peers is supported by Albert Bandura's (1969) notion of role modelling, in that the consequence of communication is the intended adoption of a changed form of behaviour at the community level. In other words, through communication, a form of communal efficacy may be achieved.

In the case of this research, as the opinion leaders are recruited from within the community of potential VCT beneficiaries, students participating in the process of the formation of messages provides an added element of participatory communication (Freire, 1972; Freire & Shor, 1987) to the overall strategy.

Research methods and methodology
Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect and analyse data for this research; including questionnaires and interviews. Further data was gathered from observation of the media used in the UDW VCT campaign.

Stratified sampling was used in administering questionnaires to ten students from each of the University’s six faculties. To ensure equal gender representation, five male and five female students were recruited from each faculty. In total, 60 students completed the questionnaire.

In-depth interviews were conducted with six purposively selected interviewees, including three programme officials who organised events for the VCT campaign, and three of the campus VCT counsellors. The programme officials were interviewed regarding what kinds of communication strategies were used in the campaign; and the extent to which students were involved in the campaign. Counsellors were interviewed about issues relating to the number of students visiting the VCT services after the awareness campaign, their views on the effectiveness of the communication strategies used, and related issues of implementation.

Key findings
The UDW VCT campaign carried the slogan “Face your Fear” which formed the basis of several strategies used to attract students to VCT services. The campaign used entertainment based on drama and music to appeal to the target group. Small merchandising gifts such as caps, booklets, T-shirts, stickers and rulers were handed out during the functions to brand the campaign. The campaign also utilised posters. Campus radio and student-generated print media were not used in the campaign. The campaign also involved a twice-weekly information table on campus, run by student volunteers who provided feedback to the campaign organisers based on their contact with students.

The campaign posters were by far the most effective communication medium, reaching some 77% of questionnaire respondents. Both students and programme officials remarked on the strong reception of this medium, noting that students liked the posters so much that they stole them and put them in their rooms. Branded T-shirts were the second most visible medium. However, very few of the surveyed students had noticed any of the other media employed, and they particularly commented on the lack of radio coverage (the most popular medium on campus) for the campaign.

Students were asked to express their knowledge of VCT-related issues. In general their responses indicated a high level of VCT awareness, and of the campus VCT initiative. Some students confirmed they had previous knowledge of VCT, but most respondents said they had heard about VCT through the campus campaign. This proves its efficacy in creating awareness about VCT.

Students participated in the campaign in various ways. Students and staff from the UDW Department of Psychology carried out the preliminary research for the campaign, and some of the
campaign media was based on this research. Students also staffed the information tables on campus, giving peer advice.

The media used in the campaigns does offer an opportunity for greater participation with the target audience, but this was not encouraged at all levels during the campaign. A professional drama group performed during the launch of the campaign. Although the play may well have conveyed the message about VCT, programme officials were of the opinion that it would have been preferable if the students were more involved in doing the drama. Students also noted that they could have been notified in advance of campaign activities and this might have increased their attendance at campaign events.

Interviews among students revealed that what student involvement there was had had an effect and students were talking about VCT. The majority of 59% of the surveyed students indicated that they would consider going for VCT; 50% of the males and 67% of the females responded in this way. Many of the counsellors and programme officials interviewed suggested that the VCT campaign had encouraged students to shift their approach to VCT from the pre-contemplation and contemplation stages, to action. However, just three of the respondents (5%) have actually gone for a test as a result of the campaign.

Conclusions and recommendations

While the campaign was recognised as being effective, there are ways to build on this success. One key factor is that the organisers of the UDW campaign seem to be very conscious of the need for greater participatory communication methods as a matter of principle.

The data indicates that elements of the present campaign can be carried forward into future programmes. However, these would benefit from greater integration of the various media components. The present data does not provide sufficient evidence that the UDW campaign has succeeded in accomplishing all its objectives. It does show that students respond to campaign media in large measure, but it is not possible to conclude that other influences did not have an equal or greater influence on the decision to report for VCT.

Some factors to keep in consideration for futures campaigns are:

• The increased resources that will result from the proposed merger with the University of Natal;
• The potential for a licensed University campus radio that can be used as an additional medium on a multifaceted communication campaign;
• Employing social marketing principles for EE strategies involving intensive research;
• The twice-weekly VCT information table should continue across the merged institutions; and
• Leaflets should be updated and merchandising media distributed occasionally.

Although the data suggests that the present campaign has shortcomings, it has the potential to integrate health communication theory with models of behaviour change in ways that focus on getting potential beneficiaries to act by presenting for VCT. By avoiding the overly ambitious goal of aiming to change its audience’s behaviour, and exploiting media to encourage people to present for VCT, the somewhat exaggerated claims for media are avoided (Epstein, 2003), and the long-term business of behaviour change is left to the professionals who offer the service and other life-skills counselling.

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Eliza Moodley (MA, 2007)

Problem statement
South African youth are among the highest risk groups for HIV infection in the world (Leclerc-Madlala, 2002:21). The South African National Behaviour and Communication Survey in 2005 shows that HIV-prevalence rates for youth in the age group 20–24 were 23.9% for females and 6% for males. The findings of this survey indicate that HIV prevalence is still increasing despite current preventative and educational programmes and interventions. Extensive resources and information are available on basic HIV and AIDS information, but there still remains a gap in research conducted with young people, particularly students at tertiary institutions. A dire need for effective programmes and campaigns exists for young people; however, these interventions must ensure that the message is applicable to its target group.

This study explores students’ perceptions of the Abstain, Be Faithful and Condomise (ABC) strategy with the view to understanding students’ responses to the pandemic. The study will also explore the Communication for Social Change model and the role of dialogue for collective action when students are discussing their sexual practices.

Objectives
The key questions this study poses concern students’ perceptions towards the ABC prevention strategy. The study in particular assesses whether the ABC strategy reflects and/or influences their choices of sexual practices. It also explores the role of student participation in HIV and AIDS messages and programmes. This question focuses on students’ perspectives concerning effective...
HIV-prevention strategies, and whether the students feel it necessary to be involved in HIV and AIDS prevention.

The study explores ways in which students at UKZN could be involved in the development of prevention strategies for HIV and AIDS transmission, by assessing the effectiveness of active dialogue and collective action. Whilst this study is focused on the assessment of the ABC strategy with students, it also draws on the findings of the ABC omnibus project survey conducted by CCMS.

**Links to other literature in the field**

This literature review commences with a discussion of the origin of the ABC message and some of the controversy around this prevention strategy. A review of some of the literature and case studies shows how these perceptions influence students’ choices and adherence to the ABC message. Uganda was one of the first countries in Africa to identify the virus after it was recognised in the United States of America. Uganda’s success in reducing HIV and AIDS infections is attributed to its approach of promoting “abstinence”; monogamy or “be faithful” (used to reduce the number of sexual partners); and “condom use” especially for those who were unmarried and could not abstain (Singh et al, 2003:6). These three behaviour-change elements promoted in Uganda are what form the ABC message today. While Uganda was commended for its success in reducing HIV prevalence, two conflicting debates emerged about that country’s experience (Singh, 2003). The first has to do with the relative contributions of the three behaviour-change approaches towards the success of reducing and sustaining HIV rates in Uganda. The second debate stems from the question of what caused these behaviour changes.

The ABC approach has been defined differently in various countries and communities and often tailored to the local epidemic context. The PEPFAR definition, promoted widely in South Africa, initially included abstinence and delayed sexual debut as a first option, with condom usage only promoted with young people if they are informed of the failure rates of condoms and only if it does not appear as an alternative to the message of abstinence.

PEPFAR in its initial years would primarily fund initiatives in support of “abstinence” and “be faithful”, with “condom usage” only introduced in cases where “abstinence” cannot be achieved. PEPFAR used to adopt an approach that is target-specific and like Gilchrist (1990) outlines a message that must approach different stages of people’s lives as they engage in different levels of sexual interaction. The controversy and debate around the ABC strategy demonstrates the need for the revision of the HIV and AIDS message to promote safer sexual practices among young people.

Although the first message, “be abstinent”, is the safest lifestyle for youth, it is also not the most attractive (Hein et al, 1993:219–220). “Be monogamous” is confusing, because young people can have intercourse with one partner at a time for a period of time before they find someone else, which is recognised as monogamy. “Limit the number of partners” is misleading, as a person has a much higher risk of getting HIV if his or her one partner is infected, than if the person has many partners who are not infected.

Young learners from high schools across KwaZulu-Natal commented that the “ABC” message did not specify if anal, oral or vaginal sex was dangerous and which should be abstained from (HIVAN, 2006). The ABC message encouraged abstinence, yet it did not make clear which sexual practices were to be abstained from or which bore the highest risk. While the ABC strategy does not adequately address young people’s sexual practices, it also provides mixed and confusing messages. The message seemed simple yet it relayed multiple and contradictory meanings. The message seemed that within this context, the ABC message was not working.

The findings showed that young people in South Africa are not delaying sexual debut or practising abstinence, limiting the number of sexual partners, or ensuring the correct and consistent use of condoms. This indicates that the ABC prevention strategy does not reflect young peoples’ behavioural patterns, and therefore was not able to always offer solutions to the complexities of their sexual interactions.

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) survey confirmed young people as being sexually active and at risk despite all the
ABC messages targeted at them (Shisana et al, 2005). Through the Campbell study it was found that young people were capable of reflecting critically on their own actions and engaging in debate and discussion for the testing of dominant norms and alternative ways of behaving (Campbell, 2003). Debate and dialogue should be encouraged as this ensures that young people’s behaviour and norms can be tested and understood better to further support interventions.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The research rests on the concepts of development and conscientisation. Everett Rogers’ (1969, 1976) diffusion of innovation theory posits that people are active participants with the media as a catalyst, which is a fundamental attribute to the development of communication for social change (CFSC). Paulo Freire was instrumental in identifying the transition from a traditional passive learning concept to a participatory approach, where dialogue should not involve one person acting on another, but rather people working with each other (Freire, 1983). Critical and continuous dialogue was therefore a means of conscientisation. Freire adds that without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there is no true education. A focus on audience as social groups, two-way flow of communication, mutual understanding and establishing communication networks all contribute to the variables of CFSC.

CFSC in the first instance addresses the significance of dialogue, where the “dialogue” can act as the channel for communication. Students at campuses should actively engage in a two-way flow of communication through dialogue and away from a sender–receiver form of communication. CFSC then addresses the need for collective action, where students can work together on prevention messages and programmes. These prevention messages and programmes must be designed and implemented in a participatory way to ensure active engagement of all role-players in the process.

CFSC is selected as a theory to use with students as there is a focus on dialogue before collective action. So whilst the dialogue achieves active participation through the horizontal flow of communication and promotes mutual understanding, young people at tertiary institutions are not given this opportunity to discuss and engage in dialogue about the messages and HIV- and AIDS-related information. My study will focus only on phase one of the model, identifying some of the catalysts that can be used to start dialogue with students about their perceptions of the ABC strategy and the how students can be involved in HIV and AIDS messaging.

Given that young people bear different opinions and interpretations of HIV and AIDS and sexual practices, CFSC enhances the need for dialogue which overcomes divisions and mindsets that can be changed. This study tests the ten steps towards actively engaging students in collective dialogue, as well as identifying some of the barriers or challenges to achieving effective communication, and how this can be addressed.

When looking at the first step, recognition of a problem, the question to be addressed through dialogue in this instance is whether students find the ABC prevention strategy a call for concern in its implementation and how they see the relevance of its message and approach. Identification and involvement of leaders and stakeholders would assess if students find the need to draw on external expertise and the role some of them should play. In clarification of perceptions, through the process of dialogue, students will clarify the misconceptions of the ABC strategy and its effectiveness for students.

Expression of individual and shared needs will address if all students express their views and needs, and whether there is a process of mutual reflection and understanding. The fifth step of community dialogue is the vision of the future, where students can identify where they see themselves in the future and how they strategically plan to get there. The assessment of current status allows students to identify how goals can be achieved given the size of the current problem. Based on this assessment, the group is now able to work towards the next step of setting objectives. The step of options for action assesses the different approaches
to ensure that the objectives set can be achieved. The ninth step is consensus on action; without getting the group to feel and identify that the proposed action is their own initiative and allowing them to feel a sense of empowerment, the process of dialogue is defeated. The final step is the action plan which allows for each person to know the deadlines for moving towards an effective solution of their problem.

This study was not limited to students’ active participation in “intervention” but also places emphasis on the construction of the message or HIV and AIDS prevention strategy. In other words, what students’ views on the ABC prevention strategy are, and how they would reconstruct this HIV and AIDS message if given the opportunity.

Research methods and methodology

This research was part of a composite study which took the form of a survey and produced quantitative and qualitative data using researcher-administered questionnaires and focus groups respectively. Qualitative research was conducted using focus groups to generate rich data to address the research questions; qualitative research also provides a descriptive record of how students engage using dialogue in focus groups.

This research drew on the information from 400 questionnaires of the ABC omnibus study. Two hundred students from each of the Howard College and Westville campuses were selected, using a multi-stage sampling technique. The sample was adequate to obtain the general responses of students to contribute to the findings of the qualitative research.

Convenience sampling was used for the focus groups, as all students are affected directly or indirectly by HIV and AIDS, and will at some point be required to make a decision or act in terms of the ABC-prevention approach. It was for this reason that students who were willing and keen to be part of the focus group were used, instead of soliciting students who were not keen participants.

Informed consent prior to the administration of questionnaires and focus groups was crucial. Students were informed about the level of confidentiality, that all data would be used for research only, and that at no stage would their identity be disclosed. The questionnaires were analysed using frequencies and percentages. The data obtained through focus groups was transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

Key findings

Students were selected from four different levels of study to ensure that respondents between the ages of 18–24 were part of the survey. A total of 55% of the sample group was black, 1.3% coloured, 33% Indian and 11% white. Some questions asked about students’ knowledge about HIV and AIDS. 59% of students responded that the ABC strategy was effective. Abstinence was a message that most students heard frequently. A total of 31% agreed that “abstinence” is a realistic option, and 28% strongly agreed in favour of abstinence. A total of 37% disagreed (and strongly disagreed) that this was a viable option. The survey found that 44% agreed that “being faithful” to one partner was a realistic prevention option, and 54% agreed that using a condom was also a realistic prevention option. This suggested that of all students who participated in the research, irrespective of how they interpreted the overall ABC message, more students noted the use of condoms as a more realistic option than abstinence.

More students from the sample favoured condoms and suggested condom usage as a more realistic approach. “Be faithful” ranked as the lowest realistic option, students preferred to either abstain or use a condom. It was later found in the focus-group discussion that students were in favour of casual sex or having multiple partners, and there was no need to “be faithful” as long as condoms were used. The ABC message was therefore identified as problematic since the “be faithful” component was not widely encouraged by students.

Students did feel that there was a representation of young people in the design and implementation of campaigns. However, 90% saw the need to have more active student participation. When students
were asked about their involvement in HIV- and AIDS-prevention messages, 92% at Howard College agreed that it was necessary, and 87% at Westville campus agreed. This shows that students encourage their participation and involvement. Students may only find the need to be involved in the implementation of a campaign or prevention message, but when asked, 98% of students found it necessary to be part of all stages of developing the HIV- and AIDS-prevention message, including the three aspects of research, design and implementation.

Even though students recognised the ABC message as an appropriate one and in most cases evidenced a positive understanding of the message, there was still a need for their reflection and engagement in the process of design and implementation of prevention messages. Students understood the nature of their sexual practices and were best placed to construct their own messages. A high frequency of 91% of students felt that they understood their sexual practices and were best placed to design messages that will reflect these practices. This implied that students who engaged in, for example, casual sex, multiple partners, encouraged abstinence or condom usage, were well positioned to construct a message to reflect their safer sexual practices.

There were eight major themes identified from the focus group discussion. The first theme surrounded the role of the government in HIV and AIDS. Students criticised the government for encouraging pregnancy through child grants. Women who were desperate for financial support would in some cases have a child in order to collect the child grant. This placed them in a vulnerable position as unprotected sex is a high-risk sexual practice that could expose them to HIV infection.

Another theme that emerged during the focus-group discussions were students equating the number of pregnancies on campus as an indicator of the failure to use condoms. Unplanned pregnancies showed the lack of adherence to abstaining or using a condom. Students assessed the effectiveness of the ABC approach in light of the number of visible pregnancies they saw on campus, and came to the conclusion that they could not really say if the ABC approach is effective in the context of HIV, because HIV cannot be seen, but the visibility of pregnancy shows that it is not effective.

Another theme that developed throughout the discussion was the effects of long-term relationships with regard to the ABC approach and issues of trust. Condoms in some cases were used in the initial stages of a relationship, but as it developed into a long-term relationship, students did not find the need to use condoms. Students were concerned about the level of trust a long-term relationship imposed as it meant that being in a long-term relationship automatically equated to faithfulness by the other partner which could not be proven.

Students also addressed the difficulty in applying the ABC approach in terms of the “be faithful” component, as you are not always sure of your partner’s faithfulness when you have been dating for a long time. Early marriage was identified as a possible solution to HIV and AIDS. Students argued that if young people made the decision to get married earlier once they were settled in an established relationship, the risk of unprotected sex, multiple sex partners, and sex before marriage would be prevented. However, others commented that young men couldn’t take care of wives if they were not in an economically stable position. They emphasised that marriage should not be a solution that might later cause further setbacks within the marriage.

Students also addressed ways in which sexual behaviour can be changed. This was categorised into another theme that arose through discussion. Students argued that the two major ways of promoting behaviour change were through making HIV and AIDS a reality to students through visits to communities where people are living with HIV and AIDS each day, and also encouraging students to get themselves tested.

The idea that religion can play a role in HIV and AIDS prevention was the final theme identified from the focus-group discussion. One student made reference to the case in Zimbabwe where attending church at Solusi University was compulsory. This allowed students to seek guidance from the church on important decisions, and to be shaped into responsible people. Students noted that the
churches teach responsibility and moral uprightness, and can be used as vehicle in the promotion of positive-prevention messages and sexual practices.

Central to all the discussions that took place in the two focus groups was the need for an open heart to face-to-face communication. Students identified the need for constructive dialogue and suggested that a good way to start this process was to establish small group discussions in residence. The discussions can at any time include students, lecturers and health workers, through sharing ideas and clarifying perceptions and misconceptions as was done in the research focus groups. Students had the opportunity to experience the success of actively engaging in dialogue on issues that were relevant to them in the focus group discussion, and wished to replicate this.

Conclusions and recommendations

The data from the survey and the focus groups illustrate the importance of clarifying perceptions. While 59% of students who were part of the survey found the ABC message effective, this was not the case with respondents in the focus group. When students were given the opportunity to discuss their views about the ABC strategy, they broke down the strategy into various components (A-B-C) and concluded that this prevention message was not effective. The process of dialogue allowed students to explore some of their concerns about this prevention message and some contributing factors to HIV and AIDS.

Three crucial recommendations emerged from these focus groups. The first suggested that all future HIV and AIDS campaigns reflect the need for responsibility and accountability of students' sexual practices. Despite some of the socio-economic influences on HIV and AIDS, responsibility and accountability by individuals was a good starting point towards HIV prevention. The second recommendation was based on the need to address the challenge that face young people today: do students need so many options? The focus group discussion demonstrated that some students were in favour of a similar approach as that taken by Uganda and Zimbabwe to control the spread of HIV infections. This draws attention to the need for target-specific messages, where messages must be “community” specific.

The final recommendation that emerged from the findings acknowledged that social change can only be effectively facilitated when the community and partners determine the levels of participation and ownership between the development support communication professionals and the community. Only when these communication professionals hand over all levels of participation to the community (in this case, students), is effective ownership awarded. It is only in the community’s understanding of the level of ownership that active dialogue for collective action can take place. In other words, social change becomes a process, and it is only when the relationship between the professionals and the community is mutually adhered to, that active participation can take place. It is then through this empowerment that the community feels free to engage in dialogue. Only through this face-to-face interaction does collective action take place and this is communicating for social change.

Bibliography


An analysis of students’ responses to ABC and VCT messages at three universities in KwaZulu-Natal

Abraham Mulwo (PhD, 2009)

Problem statement

Although several initiatives have been developed to combat HIV and AIDS in South Africa, national surveys on HIV and AIDS awareness and sexual behavioural practices show that young people continue to engage in risky sexual practices, despite the high awareness of HIV and AIDS risks. This begs for a clearer understanding of how young people make sense of behaviour-change communication programmes, so as to establish why these programmes seem not to have any impact on their sexual behaviours.

A crucial component often missed in previous studies is the investigation of mediation processes that are involved in HIV-prevention communication within specific cultural contexts. In order to comprehend the evident failure of campaigns to generate the desired outcomes, in terms of behavioural modifications, it is important to understand how audiences make sense of the texts presented to them by these campaigns, especially within contexts such as universities that are characterised by the existence of multiple cultures. The uniqueness of the present study is thus premised on its focus on the structures and processes that underpin meaning-production, with regard to sex and HIV and AIDS among university students, and how the produced meanings ultimately affect the interpretation and impact of HIV-prevention texts.
Objectives

Using hermeneutics, reception theory and the social constructionism theory, this study examined how students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), the University of Zululand (UNIZUL) and the Durban University of Technology (DUT) make sense of the cultural meanings offered by HIV-prevention messages, such as “Abstinence”, “Be faithful”, “Condomise” (ABC) and Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT). Specifically, the study investigated the processes and structures that influence students’ constructions of sex and how these constructions ultimately shape the meaning-formations, with regard to “Abstinence”, “Be faithful”, “Condomise” and VCT, and the adoption/non-adoption of these HIV-prevention options.

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

• How do students at UKZN, UNIZUL and DUT access HIV- and AIDS-communication campaigns?

• What campaign strategies have UKZN, UNIZUL and DUT put in place to promote HIV prevention among students?

• What impact do prevailing discourses on HIV and AIDS have on meaning formations, with regard to sex and HIV prevention among students at UKZN, UNIZUL and DUT?

• How do students at UKZN, UNIZUL and DUT interpret the cultural meanings offered by HIV- prevention texts such as ABC and know your status (VCT)?

• How do the students’ constructions of sex influence their interpretation of ABC and VCT messages?

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review examines the nature of the HIV and AIDS epidemic and its impact on young people in South Africa, and the problem of HIV and AIDS in South African universities. It further examines studies relating to communication strategies that have been in place to curb the epidemic among university students and among the general youth populations.

Recent communication surveys in South Africa show high levels of exposure to communication programmes in relation to their target audiences (Kelly et al, 2005; Pettifor, 2004). A national communication survey (Parker, 2006) revealed an overall high level of awareness of HIV and AIDS and HIV-prevention strategies such as condom use and abstinence. Condom use was found to be high particularly among young people under 25 years old. High levels of awareness of nearby HIV-testing centres and high numbers of young people who had undergone HIV testing was also noted. However, the communication programmes did not seem to have had sufficient impact on the levels of HIV prevalence and sexual-behavioural practices among young people.

The study noted that the awareness of the importance of reducing the number of partners in preventing HIV infection and delaying sexual debut was still low. 10% of the study respondents aged 15, 50% of those aged 16, and 40% of those aged 17 reported having had sex. The study also established high levels of more than two partners in the past one month among young people aged 15–24 years. These findings show the need for clearer understanding of factors that motivate young people to engage in sexual practices that have been identified as risky and to develop programmes that are tailored towards addressing these factors.

The education sector is regarded as the “best hope for survival” against HIV and AIDS, because of its leadership position in research and knowledge development (MacGregor, 2001). A recent audit conducted by HEAIDS (Chetty & Michel, 2005) shows that the majority of South African universities have put in place some steps to mitigate against the epidemic, but many of these were slow to be implemented. Only 20% of the universities had additional finances allocated to HIV and AIDS activities, while fewer than half the universities (43%) had an HIV and AIDS centre at their institution. In terms of academic programmes, only 37% of the universities had a policy for inculcating HIV and AIDS into their curriculum. Notably, fewer than 50% of the institutions had incorporated HIV and AIDS into the core of their planning and management framework. The low level of internal communication about the HIV and AIDS epidemic and high levels of complacency
among students and staff in the universities was also noted in the study.

The HIV situation at universities is generally estimated to be comparable to that of similar groups in the general population (Kelly, 2001). However, this comparison may be misleading since residential universities are considered focal points for sexual activities (Chetty, 2000). The majority of university students are younger than 30 years (Raijmakers & Pretorius, 2006), which is the age category said to be at the highest risk of HIV infection.

It is beyond any doubt that the HIV and AIDS epidemic among young South Africans, as in other African countries, is mainly driven by unsafe heterosexual sex. The link between the South African HIV epidemic and sexual behaviour has been discussed in the works of Abdool-Karim and Abdooll-Karim (2007), Abt. Associates (2000), Eaton, Flisher and Aaro (2003), and Harrison (2005), among others. Their arguments are supported by findings of nationwide studies that reveal how young South Africans engage in sexual behaviours that expose them to greater risk of HIV infection, such as having multiple and concurrent sexual partners, early age at sexual debut, and not using condoms during sexual intercourse (see for example, Pettifor, 2004; Parker et al, 2007). The unprecedented spread of HIV among the young people in South Africa has been associated with risky sexual behaviours (Harrison, 2005; Soul City, 2007).

National and small-scale studies show that young South Africans continue to engage in risky sexual practices that place them at risk of HIV infection. It is yet to be fully understood why intensive efforts to encourage safer sexual behaviour in South Africa don’t seem to bear any fruit. However, a comparative analysis of the national response strategies in South Africa and in those countries that have registered significant declines may provide crucial insights into the failure of the South African HIV-response strategy.

Firstly, it is evident that the achievements made in countries where significant HIV-prevalence declines have been recorded resulted from a strong commitment by the political leaders to the fight against HIV and AIDS (Cheluget et al, 2006). Political leadership is not only important in mobilising resources but also in setting the public agenda on the need, and how to address HIV and AIDS.

Secondly, the campaign strategies employed by these countries emphasised horizontal communication through religious and community-based organisations and other NGOs to generate discussions about HIV and AIDS at local community levels. Social-behaviour changes that have been documented from research in these countries resulted mainly from the social communication strategies that have been put in place in these countries.

On the contrary, the South African response strategy was, until late-2008, characterised by denial, controversy and confused policy development. This study seeks to document the nature of influence that the controversies surrounding the national HIV-response strategy have had on the reception of HIV-prevention messages by students at universities in KwaZulu-Natal. There is a clear need to move beyond measuring attitudes, practices and beliefs regarding HIV and AIDS and sexual behaviour, to examine the meanings that students attach to behaviour-change messages and to their sexual behaviours, and how these influence their responses to behaviour-change messages.

Concepts and theory informing the research

Hermeneutical theory, reception theory and social constructionism theory provided a complementary framework within which this study was conceptually developed.

Hermeneutical theory mainly concerns itself with the methodology and philosophy of textual interpretation. It highlights the significance of examining parts of the text in relation to the whole, and the need to understand the historical context of the author, the text and the interpreter as key to understanding interpretations (Heidegger, 1962; Bleicher, 1980).

Through his synthesis of understanding, interpretation, assertion, and the fore-structures of understanding, Heidegger was able to introduce a new dimension to the concept of the hermeneutic circle, which is a movement between self-understanding and the
detailed understanding of our daily experiences in the world in which we live. Heidegger thus foregrounds lived experience and self-understanding as pre-conditions for effective interpretation.

Hermeneutical theory further provides the basis for explaining the multiplicity of meanings generated out of one text by various interpreters. Nevertheless, the theory is mainly oriented towards the process of (re)production of meanings and, as such, fails to provide an adequate framework for analysing what the audiences do with the texts, that is, the nature of impact that texts have on the audiences. This component falls within the domain of reception theory.

Reception theory is founded on the premise that the meaning decoded by the receiver of the message is not necessarily the same as that intended by the sender. Consumers not only resist the construction of reality by the media texts but, instead, constructed their own, often oppositional, realities. Thus, audiences are no longer seen as consumers of textual meanings but, instead, as active producers of meaning (Hall, 1996; Fiske, 1989; De Carteau, 1990).

According to Schröder et al (2003), the study of media audiences is necessitated by the desire to understand how the media contribute to the important social processes, including the building of relationships, the negotiation of identities, roles and norms of interaction and so on. Reception theory, thus, highlights the dialectical nature of the relationship between the media and its audience. Although the media contributes to key social processes such as the formation of social identities and social norms, such identities and norms will, in turn, influence how individuals interact with the media products.

The way individuals use and make sense of media materials is determined by the identities and communicative repertoires they are socialised into as a result of their membership of global, regional, national and local level groups in the course of their life history (Schröder et al, 2003:5). Jensen (1991) argues that this making of meaning happens on a communal level. This articulation of interpretive communities provides an elaborate framework of analysing the processes through which audiences interact with texts to produce meanings that work for them.

Both the hermeneutical theory and reception theory underscore the fact that the meaning-formation process is a social action. Social norms, for example, influence young people’s world-view and especially what they perceive as being socially acceptable or unacceptable. Consequently, an analysis of the responses to campaign texts must also involve an analysis of the social norms, values and practices that shape the manner in which individuals within a social system collectively develop the interpretive lenses through which they make sense of phenomena. Specifically, there is need for a comprehensive understanding of the influence of the socially-constructed meanings, norms and values about sex, and the way these influence the interpretation of the ABC and VCT texts.

The social constructionism theory focuses on understanding how socio-cultural forces influence the construction of knowledge (Burr, 2003). Berger and Luckmann argue that whatever members of the public perceived as a social reality was, instead, a construction to which each member contributes through knowledge accumulated from the reality of everyday life (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This provides a more comprehensive approach to understanding social processes of meaning production. In the social-constructionist framework, sexuality is seen as a “socially scripted behaviour”, hence the attitudes and perceptions of young people at South African institutions of higher learning towards sex, and their sexual behaviours, are greatly shaped by norms, ideologies, discourses and beliefs that exist within their social environment.

Sexual activity is also perceived by social-constructionist scholars as a “signifying system”: “through sex, we are able to communicate about non-sexual matters, such as power, hatred, envy, domination and so on” (Horrocks, 1997:108). Sex can mean different things for different individuals. It can be a means of obtaining material “goods”, a source of pleasure, a means of recreation and desire, a way of controlling other people’s bodies, a commodity for sale, and so on (Horrocks, 1997). Social constructionism thus provided
the basis for understanding the meaning of behavioural practices, especially relating to sex amongst students, and how these practices influenced the interpretations and impact of the ABC and VCT texts.

Research methods and methodology
A multi-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques, was utilised to collect and analyse data for this study. Specifically, the study aimed at exploring the kinds of meanings that university students generate out of the behaviour-change campaign messages and the systems and processes that shape production of these meanings within student communities. This required a complex approach, combining a survey and in-depth interviews, in order to develop a clear understanding of the context within which students interact with and make sense of the campaign messages.

The main thrust of the study was to develop a hermeneutic analysis based on the interview responses, which were then used to complement the hard data generated from the omnibus survey. The in-depth interviews were designed to generate textual experiential narratives to give nuance to the survey data.

The omnibus survey was used to provide an overall understanding of where students were getting information on HIV and AIDS, their general attitudes towards HIV and AIDS and HIV-prevention messages and their sexual-behavioural practices. Major themes emerging from the survey schedule were then pursued further, using both in-depth interviews and observation schedules.

The first phase consisted of the omnibus survey, involving 1400 respondents selected from across the seven campuses and interviews with programme administrators in charge of the HIV and AIDS programmes at the three universities. Interviews were conducted with HIV- and AIDS-programme administrators to find out how each of the seven campuses planned and executed HIV and AIDS programmes targeting students. The main objectives of these interviews were to generate an understanding of the way in which HIV-prevention campaigns on each campus were organised, the main messages that were passed to students during the campaigns, and the level of student participation in the design and implementation of the campaign activities at various campuses. Major themes emerging from the findings of the survey were also pursued during this interview. A total of three programme administrators were interviewed, with one administrator from each of the three universities.

The second phase of this study was aimed at providing the experiential textual explanation of the hard data that had been generated through the survey. This phase involved in-depth interviews with 24 students drawn from across the seven campuses. The study selected four interview respondents from each of the three campuses with comparatively large population sizes: the University of Zululand, and at UKZN, the Howard College and Pietermaritzburg campuses. Each of the four levels of study, that is, first year, second year, third year and post-graduate, was represented by one respondent. For the rest of the campuses, one respondent was chosen from each of the three undergraduate academic levels. The sample also had to be distributed to reflect the racial diversities among the study population. Based on the racial statistics generated from the omnibus data, the study selected sixteen black, three Indian, three white and two coloured respondents. The sample was further divided into equal proportions of male and female respondents.

The interviews were aimed at generating an understanding of how students make sense of the ABC and VCT texts and how their interpretations not only shape, but are also shaped by, their understanding of their everyday experiences, especially with regard to sexual practices and lifestyles within the campus environment. Semi-structured interviews involved the use of a set of questions that acted as a guide on issues to pursue, rather than a strict format that had to be followed. All the interviews were recorded, using a digital voice recorder, with consent from the respondents. In addition, notes were taken throughout the interviews as reminders to important questions emerging out of the discussion that needed to be pursued further.
Once the data was collected, the interviews were transcribed and transcripts were read and re-read several times to identify key themes. The themes, together with supporting verbal quotes from all the interviews, were entered into the N-Vivo computer software to facilitate easier analysis. Hermeneutics was utilised as a methodological framework for analysing interviews.

The third phase of this study involved participant observation of how HIV and AIDS activities targeting students were being conducted within the seven campuses. During this period, the researcher attended a number of HIV and AIDS activities on each campus and observed how these campaigns were being conducted, including the themes being presented and/or discussed and the attendance level of the students. The researcher also observed how poster campaigns were being conducted and noted the location and the size of posters and the messages being presented in these posters. The main objective of the participant observation was to cross-check the findings of the questionnaire survey. Specific sources and the nature of HIV and AIDS information were noted and the level of attendance at the open-air campaigns and workshops was estimated.

**Key findings**

The results of the questionnaire illustrated that students find the mass media, especially television-drama programmes, more useful in obtaining information about HIV and AIDS. In contrast, relatively few students identified interpersonal-communication campaigns, such as peer-education programmes, public lectures and open-air campaigns, as useful sources of HIV and AIDS information.

Fewer than half of the participants cited peer education as a useful source of HIV and AIDS information, even though this is considered by the universities as the main avenue through which HIV and AIDS campaigns among students are mobilised. Further interviews with HIV- and AIDS-programme administrators from the three universities established that universities had not invested major efforts to ensure a sustained and coordinated interpersonal communication campaign within campuses, in spite of their recognition of peer education as a critical tool in the campaigns against HIV and AIDS.

Empirical evidence emerging from the study further illustrates that students seldom participated in HIV and AIDS activities. Few participants reported having been involved in campus HIV and AIDS activities, such as attending HIV and AIDS workshops and seminars, wearing red ribbons and T-shirts with HIV and AIDS messages, and attending peer-education programmes. This indicates a lack of interest among students in issues related to HIV and AIDS.

A further inquiry through in-depth interviews revealed that some students did not consider HIV and AIDS as a threat to them. Some argued that HIV and AIDS was a disease of the poor, hence their belonging in the upper-class category cushioned them against HIV and AIDS. This belief was further illustrated by the sexual behaviours among some females, who considered pregnancy a more serious threat than HIV. Others, however, still held to the myth that HIV might not be a reality. This perspective resonated with the discourses of denialism propagated earlier by the former president, Thabo Mbeki. For others, however, a feeling of fatalism informed their don’t-care attitudes. This group of students argued that they would still die, whether or not through HIV, hence there was no need to worry about the epidemic.

An analysis of the campaign themes showed a dissonance in the perceived importance accorded to various prevention options from the perspectives of the students in relation to those of the universities’ HIV- and AIDS-programme administrators. Responses from students showed that campaign programmes that they had access to more often emphasised the condomise approach, followed by abstinence, being faithful and VCT. However, interviews with HIV- and AIDS-programme administrators from the three universities revealed that each of the universities favoured a distinct approach. The University of Zululand favoured the ACT (Abstinence, Condomise, Test) approach in which abstinence is highly emphasised in accordance with the values of the local community.
The UZKN approach, on the other hand, emphasised “knowing your status” as a starting point in behaviour change, whereas the DUT preferred a more balanced approach, with a slight emphasis on abstinence, especially with those programmes operating under funds from PEPFAR. The difference between the students’ perspectives and those of the administrators could be attributed to the fact that students access communication campaigns mainly through the mass media, rather than the locally generated programmes. This supports the conclusion that students preferred the mass media programmes with entertainment content rather than the programmes organised by the universities.

The survey also showed that close to half of the students thought that HIV- and AIDS-communication campaigns were inadequate. In addition, the majority of the students indicated that they supported an approach that involved students in the design and implementation of prevention communication, with an overwhelming support of the argument that students mainly understood their own problems and were in a better position to design prevention communication that was of relevance to them.

On the perceptions of ABC- and VCT-prevention options, the study established that the majority of students perceived the condomise approach as the most realistic way of preventing HIV infection. Huge proportions of the students also perceived abstinence, being faithful and VCT as realistic ways of preventing infection. However, the analysis of students’ sexual behaviours revealed a gap between their perceptions of HIV-prevention options and the adoption of these options in their day-to-day sexual behaviours.

An investigation of students’ sexual behaviours revealed that the majority (68.5%) of university students had engaged in sex, with most of them (77.1%) reporting having had sex in the past 12 months. Black students were more likely to report having had sex before, followed by coloured and white. Significantly, fewer than half of the Indian students reported having had a sexual experience.

A further investigation through in-depth interviews established that students’ sexual behaviours were often shaped by the socially constructed meanings of sex. It was established that students were under enormous pressure from their peers to engage in sex. Sex was construed as “cool”; hence virginity was a socially stigmatised identity. Sex was therefore a ritual through which individuals could be incorporated into the “cool” social groups in which they could be able to talk about sex. For some females, the desire to prove their attractiveness for men motivated them to engage in sexual activities, whereas for others, engagement in sexual activities was a symbolic sign of freedom from control from parents or guardians. Among black males, sex was often a sign of social achievement.

Concurrent multiple sexual partnerships were also found to be common among students. 39% of participants who had engaged in sex in the past year indicated having had more than one sexual partner in the same period, whilst 48.5% of the currently sexually active students reported having more than one sexual partner. Third-year students were more likely to report concurrent sexual partners than students in other levels. In terms of gender, males were more likely to report engagement in concurrent sexual relationships than females.

The reasons for engagement in concurrent multiple partnerships were varied, with the majority of males perceiving the number of sexual partners as a symbolic signifier of social status. Concurrent multiple sexual partners were also maintained at different locations for convenience when one is at home or at university. Others saw concurrent relationships as a means of cushioning oneself from disappointment by untrusted sexual partners.

Amongst females, engagement in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships was often seen as a means to revenge on cheating sexual partners. Others used their sexuality to assert themselves within their social groups. Beauty was conceived of in terms of the number of male partners that one was able to attract. Sex among some female students was also a commodity for exchange for symbolic signifiers of status, such as visits to expensive restaurants, rides in high-class cars and possession of items of higher social status. Some engaged in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships for fun and new experiences. It was further established that multiple concurrent partnerships among students were legitimised
through the social acceptance of open relationships where partners mutually agreed to pursue other concurrent sexual relationships. The study further established that close to one-third (27.4%) of sexually active students didn’t use condoms with their most recent sexual partners. Only 13.2% indicated that they used condoms every time they had sex with someone they were not married to or living with. During in-depth interviews, participants reported that they mainly used condoms in casual sex and in short-term sexual relationships. In long-term relationships, however, condom use was gradually abandoned as “trust” developed amongst sexual partners. During interviews, some participants reported that they did not use condoms during sex because they were “not used to having plastics around”. For some, the decision to use or not use condoms largely depended on the perceived health status of the sexual partner.

The inconsistent supply of condoms by the university was also cited as one of the key factors for inconsistent condom use among students. In the absence of condoms, some students were ready to engage in condomless sex, for fear of losing their chance in case their partners changed their minds. It was further established that the socially constructed notions of trust and the symbolic significance of condom use were also perceived to have a great influence on the decision to use or not to use condoms.

The study results established that even though the majority (85%) of students knew where to go for VCT services, 42.2% of them had ever been tested for HIV. 27.5% of respondents who had been tested had undergone VCT with their sexual partners. About half (49.5%) of those who had not undergone VCT thought they did not have HIV, whereas another 44.4% did not think they were at risk of infection. Another 26.3% indicated that they trusted their sexual partners. A further investigation through in-depth interviews revealed that some students were scared of knowing their status because they thought their partners would hold them accountable in case they were found to be HIV positive. Some students were also scared of being socially ostracised by their colleagues in case they were found to be HIV positive. For some, the choice to undergo VCT mainly depended on their perception of their health status, with some arguing that they were “not skinny”, hence they didn't see any need to undergo VCT.

In sum, it can be argued that even though students perceived HIV-prevention options positively, the social constructions of sex and HIV and AIDS, rather than HIV-prevention communication, often informed their sexual practices. The research findings illustrate that the students’ interpretations of the ABC and VCT messages were often contrary to the connotative meanings that are intended in the campaigns. Though dominant readings were observed, students often interpreted these meanings from alternative frameworks that resulted in negotiated meanings and, in some cases, oppositional ones.

It is evident from this analysis that the interpreted meanings related to the socially constructed meanings of sex appeared to draw from the various categories of students with regard to their involvement in sexual practice. Students who subscribed to the religious and/or cultural ideals of pre-marital chastity often understood the concept of abstinence from the religious and traditional cultural perspective, as a religious, moral practice and virginity preservation. This group of students perceived abstinence as an effective way to avoid HIV infection even though abstaining, for them, was primarily motivated by the desire to uphold cultural or religious ideals, rather than avoiding HIV infection.

On the other hand, students who did not subscribe to the religious/cultural ideals of pre-marital chastity often interpreted abstinence appositionally, as sexual abnormality or denial of sexual pleasure. Some argued that “normal people” engage in sex, hence those who “claimed” to be abstaining were considered abnormal. Among other students in this category, the call for abstinence was often understood as an attempt to deny individuals the opportunity to engage in sexual pleasure. Some argued that abstinence can be implemented successfully if the decision comes from individuals themselves rather than “being told what to do”. This illustrates that the resistance that the notion of abstinence encountered was often a result of the way the message was communicated in the
moralistic discourses of culture and religion, rather than to the concept itself.

The dominant interpretation of “be faithful” was also observed in the study. Nevertheless, the majority of participants understood to “be faithful” as a commitment to a serious relationship or marriage. According to this account, individuals who were not in a relationship for marriage purposes did not have to be faithful since they “were not in a relationship for the right reasons”. This understanding therefore seemed to legitimise concurrent sexual relationships among those who were in relationships for fun, companionships, and so on. For others, the notion of “be faithful” was understood as protecting one’s sexual partner. According to this account, one could still be faithful to the “main” partner, whilst engaging in concurrent relationships, as long as they engaged in protective sex with other sexual partners. There was no oppositional interpretation observed with regard to the “be faithful” message.

With regard to the condomise message, some participants interpret it connotatively as meaning the use of condoms to prevent HIV and STIs. This illustrates an interpretation that is in perfect symmetry with the connotative meaning intended in the ABC campaign. For some participants, however, the interpretations of the condomise message were seen to have been mainly influenced by the socially constructed meanings relating to the use of condoms and, for others, the competing discourses with regard to the prominence given to the different prevention options in some of the ABC campaigns.

Some understood the notion of condomise as “the last option”, which should only be used in prevention of HIV when all other options have failed. This also seemed to construe condomise as a less-secure method of HIV prevention, compared to other methods, a perspective that is emphasised in some ABC campaigns, such as those funded by PEPFAR. For others, the use of condoms symbolised lack of trust, whereas other respondents understood condom use as a “gamble” with life.

The students’ interpretations of the VCT message also reflected the dominant and negotiated readings. Some understood VCT from the same connotative code as intended in the VCT campaign, as undergoing voluntary counselling and testing, to “know your status”. However, others understood VCT from a variety of perspectives, such as “facing reality” of possible HIV infection, “taking responsibility” for one’s partner’s HIV status and uncertainty about health status. Some argued that they were not ready to undergo VCT because they did not want to face the reality of possible infection which, for others, meant “knowing when you are going to die”. A positive diagnosis for some participants meant that one owes an explanation to one’s sexual partner about their HIV status.

In sum, it can be argued that the categories of interpretations of the ABC and VCT messages amongst students vary, depending on the various sub-cultures that students identify with regard to the meanings attached to sex and sexual behaviour. These subcultures supply the interpretive repertoires through which students engage with, and make meaning of, the ABC and VCT texts.

This analysis has shown that university students make sense of the ABC and VCT campaign texts through interpretive codes that they obtain through membership in various interpretive communities. Two major interpretive communities were identified and were constituted along the socially constructed meanings of sex. Within each of the two interpretive communities, there were multiple and overlapping sub-cultures that constructed the meanings of sex and HIV prevention differently. However, these sub-cultures were not discreet categories and individuals could draw from multiple-interpretive communities simultaneously in making meaning of the various components of the ABC and VCT texts.

This process reflected the inter-subjective dimension of meaning-formation, which consequently undermined the individual-centred ideological orientation that underpins the ABC and VCT campaigns. This, therefore, supports the conclusion that despite the increase in HIV and AIDS awareness, and changes in attitudes towards HIV and AIDS and HIV prevention, ABC and VCT
Campaigns may not necessarily lead to behavior change, since individuals' knowledge and sexual practices are socially sanctioned through a social process that exercises power over the individual through social exclusion and inclusion.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The findings of the study illustrated that university students find the mass media, especially television programmes with an entertainment component, more useful in accessing HIV-prevention communication campaigns. The communication strategies developed by the universities were found to be both inadequate and less appealing to these students.

The study also found that the majority of students were sexually active, and a significant proportion of these students engaged in multiple and concurrent partnerships. Inconsistency in condom use was high, and less than half of the students surveyed had tested for HIV, despite knowledge of testing venues. In terms of the impact of competing discourses on students' perceptions, the findings show that the discourses of denial propagated by the political elite in the late 1990s have had significant influence on the students' perceptions of HIV and AIDS.

Students' interpretations of ABC and VCT were important in this study. Abstinence was often seen from a moralistic perspective such as virginity preservation, while others saw it as sexual naivety or denial of sexual pleasure. “Be faithful” was often understood as a commitment to a “serious” relationship or to a marital relationship. In this study, as in others, condom use indicated lack of trust in the sexual partner.

Findings of the study support the conclusion that the categories of students' responses to HIV-prevention messages were often predicated upon their relationships and participation in the various social groups. Their decisions to adopt/not adopt these prevention options were often based, therefore, on how meanings attached to these options articulated with the social significance of sex and sexual practices. In the context of inter-subjective meaning-formation, therefore, the relational categories of abstinence, being faithful, condomise and VCT should not be conceptualised as discreet, frozen categories, but should rather be understood as open-ended possibilities existing concurrently, coextensively and dialectically.

**Bibliography**

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“They have ears but they cannot hear”: Listening and talking as HIV prevention: a new approach to HIV

John-Eudes Lengwe Kunda (PhD, 2009)

Problem statement

Despite massive HIV campaigns and educational efforts, South African youths continue to indulge in unsafe sex (Kahn, 2005; Shisana et al, 2009). Literature investigating the failure of HIV- and AIDS-educational campaigns and programmes has anchored the blame on individualistic, biomedical and behavioural perspectives that are predominantly pillared on social cognitive models within programmes and campaigns (Campbell, 2003; Airhihenbuwa, 2000). The underlying problem with these models is that they have embraced a narrow linear and functional conceptualisation of sexual behaviour more generally (Kelly & Ntlabati, 2002; Parker, 1995).

Researchers have argued that the basic and most problematic assumption common to research and interventions early in the epidemic was the understanding that sexual behaviour is “shaped by the conscious decisions of rational individuals” (Campbell, 2003). Such theoretical arguments have held that linear logic models have discounted the extent to which young people are embedded in their social structures and contexts, and this has resulted in a proliferation of explanations of youth sexual behaviour unconnected to social meaning and separated from the social context of the everyday lives of young people in which sexual behaviour is carried out (Frohlich et al, 2001).

Sexual behaviour amongst young people is rooted not in decisions that do not conform to rational, logical, value-free ways of thinking, but rather which have an alternative logic and validity that is related in a complex fashion to the cultural and moral environments in which they live (Crossley, 2000).

Sexuality is made relevant in the way that language is used as a matter of the identity of a group or individuals. Sex, for human beings, is not merely instinctive behaviour. It is meaningful, cultural behaviour and as such is semiotically loaded with meaning. Listening and talking about sex highlights conventions and taken-for-granted assumptions about the way things have to be done. Language as the most powerful representational system shapes our understanding of what we do and how we do it in relation to sex. Our understanding of sexual scripts about the sexuality of a particular group of people is through language as a signifying practice. The study of listening and talking is not merely an investigation of how sex is talked about, but how respondents enact sexuality and sexual identity vis-à-vis its linguistically loaded forms of representations in a variety of discourse genres.

The appropriation of cultural myths is encoded in language and, as such, language is a legitimate area of inquiry especially in understanding sexual scripts in the context of HIV and AIDS. Ideologies influencing developing communication campaigns in light of these discourses become a serious challenge as the conventional basis for such campaigns is in socio-cognitive theories, few of which can be assumed to apply with regard to the discursive representations of sexual practices and the inherent risks.

Objectives

Drawing on the cross-sectional ABC omnibus survey, conceptually triangulated via focused-ethnography, listening analysis and discourse analysis, this research examines perceptions, interpretations, attitudes and practices of sexuality and HIV and AIDS. The research is a multi-method and inter-disciplinary approach located within cultural studies to interrogate the gap between knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour modification in the light of the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

This research offers a critical appraisal of sexual behaviour in the context of ABC (Abstain, Be faithful, Condomise) as ideologically encoded in cultural and relational myths.
The key research questions are:

1) How are students talking about the key constructs of the ABC approach?

2) What and how are discourses of ABC constructed in students’ daily interactions?

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review contextualises the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Africa, southern Africa, South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal and finally within the three universities used for this study. Southern Africa is disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS, and South Africa is the epicentre of the epidemic. Certain factors have been identified as drivers of the epidemic, such as early sexual debut, having multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, and lack of correct and consistent condom use. The literature review takes a critical look at previous campaigns to mitigate against HIV and AIDS, and also focuses on the notions of language and discourse in relation to HIV and AIDS.

How language is used is reflective of an attitude towards an issue, idea, or people, in this case individuals living with HIV and AIDS. It is important to be aware of what people say if we are to share in their cultural frames for understanding reality (Moto, 2004). After the independence of South Africa, sex is depicted in terms of individual rights. Sex is talked about in grand fashion as depicted in magazines (Posel, 2004a). The extent to which sex talk is prevalent is depicted in the number of magazines depicting sex and sexuality. Posel notes the increase in the prevalence of HIV and AIDS as coming with the transition into democracy (Posel, 2004a). South African media has emphasised sex and risk much more than other facets of the AIDS epidemic and this has in part worked to put a lid on questions of prevailing sexual norms.

Edutainment programmes have fostered a desire to talk about sex. This openness of sex talk in the media has not been without resistance as a feeling of loss of traditional modesty on sexual matters has been voiced. This resistance has largely come from parents who are being encouraged “to love their children enough to talk about sex” (Posel, 2004a). HIV and AIDS, as a predominantly sexually transmitted disease, is associated with images of robust and rampant sexuality hence the dominant denials of the sickness and the stigma that come with the disease (Posel, 2004a).

Metaphors have been used as representations of people’s attitudes, perceptions and knowledge about certain factors of life. In the area of HIV and AIDS, analysis of talk has employed images that reflect a people’s collective understanding of a given phenomena (see for example, Mawadza, 2004; and Nyblade et al, 2003). Discourse analysis has been used to unveil linguistic constructions of stigma. Interventions depend on understanding the knowledge, attitudes and practices of people from given cultural vistas, hence the necessity of studying the use of metaphors in communities where interventions may be desired as a lead into local frames of reference.

People’s experiences and knowledge of stigma are constructed based on deductions of connotations between AIDS and perceived promiscuity and/or sex. These connotations are then represented in metaphors which are hidden from the “unintended audience” (Campbell et al, 2005). Some of these metaphors may be based on incomplete knowledge about HIV and AIDS transmission and prevention. Analysis of the language used to describe an individual’s status may be a maladaptive form of behaving arising out of fear of causal transmission through communal sharing of common utensils or mere social interaction, and the perceived non-productive nature of HIV-positive individuals who are seen as destined for the grave (Mbwanbo, 2003). Through the analysis of language used in stigma, some researchers have concluded that there is a widespread pessimism in HIV and AIDS discourse in which the gloomy image of death and dying is invoked (Jones, 1997). The conclusion is that the study of metaphor and the language people use gives insight into the internal states of the individuals within a culture and their shared worldviews.
The naming or labelling of a problem allows not only the identification of the problem, but also an inherent desire for a solution. The naming of sex and HIV and AIDS reveals people's hopes, fears, meanings, understanding, and attitudes towards this experiential fact. Due to lack of scientific names for HIV and AIDS in African languages, the disease is given names that reflect a people's feelings and fears (Mawadza, 2004). More often than not, people with the disease are named after their appearance. Visual diagnosis is used to isolate individuals who may be seen as infected. The people living with HIV and AIDS are thus described in terms of those harbouring the foreign disease. Other metaphors which further stigmatise people living with HIV and AIDS relate to death, the lethal nature of the disease, the advent of death, a self-inflicted disease, and a modern disease (Mawadza, 2004). Language is therefore an important vehicle used to constitute and construct meaning and attitudes in public discourse.

Further research has indicated the role of language in constructing reality. Horne carried out research on aspects of AIDS-related discourse, in which she concluded that language does not just describe a condition but constructs it (Horne, 2004). It can never be separated from thoughts and feelings or from the context of its use. This is shown in how language has been used in South Africa to talk about and concomitantly shape attitudes towards HIV and AIDS. According to the findings, different metaphorical representations have revealed varying conceptions and attitudes towards the disease (Horne, 2004).

The indirectness employed in describing the cause of death in HIV and AIDS cases is indicative of fear associated with the disease (Horne, 2004), and the mystery surrounding the disease is partly due to lack of medical explanation for its existence and cure (Posel, 2004b). Some of the words used, for example in Zulu are “ilotto”, “iace” referring to the risky nature of the sexual activity with regard to the disease, but also it reveals that people are not always in control of whether they contract the virus or not (Horne, 2004). This metaphorical representation shows the deeply imbedded use of metaphor, in the appropriation of meaning, is within the fabric of human interaction. The use of metaphors to describe sexuality and AIDS (Sontag, 1989; Ross, 1988; Watney, 1989) has demonstrated how human beings can tag disease in a particular way in order to negotiate meaning.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The research rests on the theoretical assumption that in order to understand sexual behaviour, we must understand not only individual perceptions, but also their contexts. However, we also have to appreciate the fact that sexual behaviour involves interpersonal factors within a sphere of interaction.

Sexual interaction is a particular form of interaction involving private and public performances (Bajos & Marquet, 2000). In the context of a sexual relationship, individuals do not act in a vacuum, this interactional space is affected by three-level factors; personal (intrapsychic); inter-personal and contextual. This relational balance occasions sexual behaviour.

This study appropriates a conceptual framework by Igham and Zesen (1997) and Ferrand and Snijder (1997). In this framework, three levels form a nexus of interlocking factors which impact on behaviour: the individual, the immediate social context and the macro, cultural context as appropriated by Marston and King (2006a).

The individual-level factors include attitudes, beliefs, and previous sexual experience; whereas friendship networks, families and social relationships constitute the interpersonal. The macro-level factors include cultural norms and understandings, gender norms, place of residence and social demographic determinants. Interactional level variables as well as individual level variables are fundamental to explaining sexual behaviour and an interaction-oriented approach can be used even when the original data were not collected with this approach in mind.

Reported behaviour may best be understood in the ambit of interpersonal factors, as they are located within a given cultural context. Relationships or interactions between individuals involve
all communication and actions, which take place in accordance with each other’s perceptions and expectations. These interactions create a framework for, and give meaning to, the relationship (Goffman, 1974).

Interaction is a reciprocal influence that partners within an interaction have on each other. Sexual behaviour is moulded within an ambit of social interaction in which particular forms of representing the sexual takes place. In the context of interpersonal relationships, talk and/or discussions form a central locus in the transmission of values. In the context of shared meanings, groups of people interpret objects of encounter within their phanerons or cultural scripts (Tomaselli, 1996; Simon & Gagnon, 2003). The nature of social interaction has the capacity to create collective efficacy which is important in directing behaviour within closely knit communities (Epstein, 2007).

Script theory also informs the research. Script theory is credited with moving the study of sex and sexology out of the domains of narrow, reductionist, biological, individualistic models (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). Scott (1990:5–6) “acknowledges the social nature of sexuality and the developmental process of labelling, through which we commonly construct what we understand sex to be”.

Script theory has, however, been criticised for presenting individualistic cognitive assumptions without due regard to the social context (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). It ignores the immediate milieu in which scripts are produced. Edwards (1994) challenges the cognitive model of scripts, and instead opts for “script formulations”. He sees these formulations as kinds of talk which describe events as following a routine and predictable pattern (1994:21). He doesn’t dwell on the cognitive content, but assesses patterns of regularity and the scripted nature of experience’s constitution through talk.

This provides a micro-structure analysis of how individuals may formulate and regulate forms of talk as part of a discursive repertoire. There are no ready-made cognitive schemas for discourse, but discourse is actively reproduced within interactions. According to this (discursive) approach, scripts do not exist as pre-written cognitive contents dumped from memory storage into talk. Scripts are actively constructed in interactions through which people “work up” events as scripted (or as breaches of scripts), and this “script talk” is analysable in its own right (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). Scripts can be studied as analytical categories for understanding behaviour but they can also be studied as tools used in interactions for subjects to meet their interactional objectives. Scripts which may be considered as culturally available, since they are located within specific contexts, are actively appropriated by individuals to particular interactional situations and are also modified, personalised and internalised as “intrapsychic” scripts.

In behaviour, people draw on scripts (phanerons). These are accepted assumptions that inform attitudes and their resulting actions. In order to appreciate student-talk about sex, a comprehensive theoretical framework is built around an understanding that reality is socially constructed. Specifically, semiotic analysis, as explicated by the phaneroscopic table which is provided as a frame for understanding “talking” as text. The notions of the phaneroscopy are analysed alongside scripts as embedded systems of appropriating behaviour in context.

Central to these analytical tools is the understanding that language is critical to representation and the process of signification. This understanding rests on cultural experience as a constructed reality. Individuals and communities negotiate meaning and appropriate modes of exchanging meaning. This is achieved through a process of conventionalising objects of experience as hegemonic resulting in the creation of myth/ideologies which are considered normative.

In the entire process of meaning-making, language plays a significant role. The linguistic representation of modes of experience is what results in discursive practices. Discursive practices “frame” meanings in pre-agreed ways that are understood by parties to a discourse (Tomaselli, 1996). But these discourses do not operate in a vacuum. They operate within the structure, interpersonal and intrapersonal spheres. These spheres coalesce to give meaning to practical behaviour. The resulting behaviour may be counter-
discourse or pro-discourse. This is how semiotic analysis as elaborated in the phaneroscopy comes in to offer tools for the analysis of ideologies that may be present in the enumerated three-levelled hierarchy of influence.

Sexuality, sex and HIV and AIDS are discursively constructed. This means that they have meaning only within other discourses which we use to make sense of them and the language which is used in the discourses that are (re)circulated (Cameron & Kulick, 2003). Therefore it is in the language of representation that the reality of sexuality is expressed and categories through which sexual desires, identities and practices are produced.

Representation plays a role in the process of cultural production (Du Gay & Hall, 1996; Hall & Open University, 1997). Hall and Du Gay outline a five-staged process in which cultural production takes place. This outline is known as a circuit of culture. The underlying idea of this circuit is that meaning is a shared convention. This sharing takes place through the means of language. Thus language is considered a central tenet of meaning and necessarily of culture.

When students talk about sexuality, they use images that are from a familiar environment. They pick images that are circulating within the public sphere as the space of social interaction. This is the space of inter-subjective exchange in which the subjectivities of individuals in interactions are turned inside out in order to make their subjective feelings overtly available. The “I-thou encounters” of Martin Buber (Peck, 1993) and the “problem-mystery” conceptions of Gabriel Marcel (Marcel, 1948, Marcel et al, 1984; Marcel, 1967) attest to a rich tradition of this approach.

When students talk, joke, and appropriate the language of sex and sexuality, they do so in an exchange of value systems that reflects their belief systems. It becomes a moment to trade ideological standpoints. These discourses of talk on sex, sexuality, and HIV and AIDS do not necessarily lead to action, but do inform and may motivate behaviour (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Chi-Chi et al, 2007).

It is enough that a socialised system of thought is available, and sometimes acted on, that we can deduce a structure that informs behaviour and the reproduction of “senses of belief”, common sense that is a source of knowledge. The senses that we read about, hear about, or joke about are revelatory of a belief system just as much as a belief system is fed by these discourses. If sex is considered a commodity within the social fabric, this indicates the possible direction which a particular community might have.

The critical assumption in this study is that talk reveals the nature of attitudes and practices within a discourse community and in this case that of students. The emerging discourses create a framework within which knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices collectively shape and inform behaviour. Social constructionism explores evolving meanings that are continually reproduced within social interactions. New concepts emerge which are a product of interaction. This is only possible within the womb of communication. Reality is thus constructed in the active process of interaction and the individual is an active participant in this process of producing, circulating and reproducing knowledge (Hall, 2002; Hall & Du Gay, 1996)

Research methods and methodology

The data collected through the omnibus survey was used for this research, as well as interviews and focus-group discussions with students. In total, 54 formal discussions (interviews), were held, one of which was with a peer educator’s coordinator from an HIV and AIDS campus support unit. These interviews were conducted with informed consent, and were recorded.

The analysis of the results was determined by emerging themes from the qualitative study as well as the patterns of the data in terms of sexual-behaviour patterns. In HIV prevention, the correct and consistent use of condoms is a critical factor. As such, the use of condoms was taken as a key factor in analysing sexual behaviour. Concurrent sexual partners create a propitious ambience for transmission of HIV, especially when condoms are not correctly
and consistently used. Sexual behaviour around concurrency is taken up as a dependent variable in examining factors that may predict its occurrence.

The quantitative results are presented in such a way as to give an overview of the sexual patterns of students’ behaviour in the seven campuses. The presentation of results has taken into account the gender and ethnic demographics in order to assess the differences in sexual behaviour. While generalisation may be made on the survey data, this is not true of the qualitative results which are not meant to be generalised beyond the respondents covered. Ethnographic results may shed light on the general patterns of sexual behaviour by presenting in-depth discussions of the meanings attached to sexual behaviour. In a cross-sectional survey, unlike an experimental study like a randomised controlled trial (RCT), the direction of causality is difficult to ascertain. This forms a methodological weakness.

Key findings

Representations of love, sex and ABC

Representation is a depiction of what we perceive to be real-life phenomena. It is captured in a web of meanings tied in to modes of relationships within the interactional space. Sexuality is classified into categories that aid meaningful interaction. In sexuality and HIV and AIDS research, various forms of classifications have been formulated and reformulated. These forms of classifications draw from and build on taken-for-granted assumptions about the body and sex (ideology) as viewed within a given cultural system. Representations depend on these taken-for-granted assumptions (scripts).

The data collected raised a number of interesting concepts regarding sex and love amongst students. Love seems to be an ideal that is admired but is existentially experienced as difficult to translate into canons of sexual relationships. It seems to be understood that sex is taken for granted in male/female relationships. The male/female classification seems to fall within a dominant power relationship in which ideological constructions of womanhood and manhood is hegemonic.

Students may also have a relaxed attitude towards cohabitation. For some, it is an opportunity to get to know a partner whilst for others it is a moment of the expression of love without legal or religious prescriptions. In a dominantly patriarchal society, it is not surprising to find that the classification of female students is dependent on socially constructed subject positions in which females are classified as good or not based on accidents of their appearance and perceived character. This gives two categories of the “marriageables” and the “unmarriageables”. The former are expected to be obedient, docile and mother-like, while the latter are seen as hot, not so good for marriage but good for casual sex.

The classification of male students seems to fall into the ideological men-can’t-control-themselves biological myth. The notion of “one-offs” or “fuck buddies” seems to be an existing anonymous relational category. Other studies have noted a similar pattern in South Africa (Parker, 2008).

The university offers unique space in which students explore their growth and self-actualisation. This freedom opens up relational challenges, especially those of a sexual nature. As liminal space, the university may still be identified as potentially a high-risk setting.

Sex as a biological drive

The data analysis explores the notion of sex as a biological factor alongside related themes. Sexuality seems to be experienced as an inert drive which is in search of expression. While female students are represented as more in control of their sexuality, male students are seen as expressive and almost incapable of self-restraint. The choice of language reveals a taken-for-granted assumption to which both male and female students may subscribe, that is the notion of yielding to the sexual drive which is a force in need of release. This notion has implications for the way safe sex, fidelity, abstinence, the nature of risk and choice-enablement are perceived.

Despite sexuality being a normal biological feeling that is experienced on the level of body-chemistry and mental influence, its constructed nature shapes attitudes, knowledge and expectations within social interaction. The understanding of the sexual self
is located within existing taken-for-granted assumptions. These assumptions may be religious, cultural and economical. Since sex is perceived as inevitable in a male/female relationship, the biological myth goes to reinforce justification for the male quest to seek release in the event of an arousal. A dominant male-oriented discourse is revealed which describes relationships from a male ethos. Abstinence in the discourse is not the question; the real question that arises is one of “harm reduction”.

Fidelity as a concept is aspired to but “realistic drives” seem to be the order of the day. Students believe that life is an experience that must be lived with minimum restrictions. This takes on a hedonistic pleasure principle. But in the time of HIV and AIDS, the creation of awareness is indispensable. This is with respect to the fact that knowledge on HIV and AIDS, its means of transmission, and the risk factors, do not necessarily lead to behaviour change. This has ramifications for sexual health.

Sexual health and talking about HIV and AIDS
The link between sex and HIV does not seem to be made nor implied immediately in relationships. Various reasons may explain this irony in which knowledge, which is near universal, does not necessarily translate into safe sex practice.

The link between sex and HIV and AIDS seems not to be very apparent in conversations. This may be due to the long lead between HIV and death; the semblance of fitness brought about by weight loss and the inevitability of death. Despite efforts to break the silence about HIV and AIDS, some find it difficult to talk about HIV, especially when it affects a close relative or sibling.

The use of humour, ridicule and mockery plays a social function of filling up the gap of silence. In themselves jokes become a silent vehicle for the noise that is associated with a given subject. For instance, when student discourse uses positive names and turns them into nicknames, they relativise their meaning in order to contextualise within their discursive community a language that appropriates meaningful social relations.

Silence on HIV and AIDS and homosexuality seems to reinforce behaviours that do not discuss possible risky situations and practices. The internet is identified as a source of information on sex and sexuality. The use of condoms is highlighted as a safe sex practice. The nature of abstinence within university space is explored with its inherent tensions.

Conclusions and recommendations
There is the understanding in this study that qualitative research is beginning to show that a nexus of strong, socio-cultural forces shape sexual behaviour, that is, numbers of sexual partners, condom use, abstinence and talk. But all this is manifested on the level of denotation, i.e. meanings arising out of an experience with objects of encounter. There is a higher level of connotative meanings which are and become discursive practices informed by an ideological ethos which may be particular, but not exclusive, to the interpreting community, in this instance, students.

While reported sexual behaviour may be unrepresentative, it does, however, depict preferred notions of meanings attached to them. These meanings are represented in discourses of talk, as patterns of preferred ways of self-representation.

Amongst the dominant scripts that came out in the ethnographic inquiry are sex as uncontrollable biological drive; females being responsible for safe sex practices; strong social scripts elevate male sexual prowess and show disdain for female affirmative sexualities; risk is discounted using a form of post-modern fatalism (resistance to regulation); and physical status, based on appearance of a possible partner, is used to select “sexually safe” partners.

The use of the phaneroscopy as a semiological tool addresses reality as embedded within higher structures of meaning with historical significance. Influences on condom use are not homogeneous, neither are attitudes. Individual interpretive communities, like the body of students, attach meanings to objects of experience. These meanings are engaged, reproduced, and re-circulated in a pre-negotiated fashion.
Existing systems of meanings within student social interactions are taken up, reinterpreted and appropriated to suit their dominant understandings. Some of these meanings are passed on within this cultural space and become dominant-hegemonic. These legitimate certain practices, not in conscious rebellion, but through the subtle influence of taken-for-granted assumptions. These taken-for-granted notions build the first and second order of signification by offering a linked system of concepts in which the world is made sense of.

The findings in this study affirm the necessary stepping stones for understanding the sexuality of university students using the semiotic tool of the phaneroscopy alongside scripts. The assessment of talk as text within a semiological lens gives hermeneutical meaning which is a critical ingredient of all prevention campaigns, especially those aimed at shaping attitudes with their resultant behaviour in a particular direction.

The key assumption is that by a critical examination of what young people, in this case students, say and do, researchers are more likely to attune themselves to a contemporary frame of reference (phaneron) that exists within a discourse community. This phaneron becomes the basis of interrogation in HIV-prevention messages. Let us take, for instance, the “sex as biological myth” concept. Like all other myths, there is some fundamental truth to the experience of sexuality as a biological fact necessary for the propagation of the human species (denotation), but this drive is experienced within a context of meanings attached to the sexual factor (connotative), and these meanings are located within a mythical understanding of what sexuality is and its role in the community with the concomitant regulations (mythical/ideological).

While dominant groups, especially of the adult world, may view sex as a property of marriage between two consenting adults, some students may have their version of marriage in which love is the supreme value with or without ceremonies. These two views, while not mutually exclusive, signify how nuanced phanerons are. Listening to talk enables entry into phaneroscopic frames of experience of a given discourse community, which is a critical entry point for prevention.

There is silence on the role of pleasure in harm reduction within student discourses. This may be a result of a culture that perceives formal discussion of sexual pleasure as more likely to encourage “promiscuity”. There is need also to engage on the meaning of romance, self-esteem and issues of marriage or the lack thereof. A culture of integral formative training as opposed to mere education may be an area of consideration for students by university administration.

Language is the locus of interaction. It is the site where meaning is negotiated. Students have a particular way of talking about their sexual experiences and fantasies. In this time of HIV and AIDS, listening to students’ stories becomes an important entry point into their sexual lives. Peer ethnographic studies may render a better understanding of the nature of sexual practices within campuses.

Social interaction is formed by a particular culture and feeds into daily interaction. Social pressures hamper honest and straightforward communication; including talk on subjects of abstinence, condom use and partner reduction. Breaking the silence will open up a process of owning up to sexual experiences. Talking and listening taps into the existing discourses among students. This engagement is critical if sexuality, as a reproductive imperative as well as a relational challenge, is to be understood and demythologised in an effort to stem the deadly epidemic of HIV.

A deeper understanding of the cultural and sexual scripts obtained from students is critical for appropriate design and implementation of interventions aimed at stemming the tide of the HIV epidemic. Interventions that only emphasise the rational dimensions of human behaviour are more likely to miss their target audience. Peer ethnographic studies should be taken up in order to understand sexual dynamics at play amongst university students. The wider project, of which this study only formed a part, is important and must continue so that it continues to provide data that will inform thinking around HIV prevention within universities.
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Problem statement

As a general experience of human behaviour, risk can be understood according to three perspectives: as an action, as a potentiality that is unclear in its outcome, and as a pathway towards achieving some desired goal, even if this pathway entails possible harm (Jessor, 1991:45). As part of students’ development, risk adopts a special significance. Students are likely to lack experience and a subsequent ability to either identify that an activity or behaviour does in fact contain risk, or to remain in control of the identified risk. Most of the students in universities in South Africa are people moving into adulthood, and at the same time they indicate a need to learn new strategies for coping effectively with university’s life encounters.

Against this background, students in South African universities are at times characterised as risk takers and pleasure seekers, with sex as one of the array of risky behaviours that they engage in. Leclerc-Madlala (2002) and Parker et al (2007) state that desire for sexual pleasure, pursuit of modernity and cultural scripts are among the underlying factors to students’ sexual-risk behaviour. The sexual practices students engage in are associated with a host of harmful consequences including sexually transmitted diseases and infections such as HIV that severely and permanently compromise students’ health, education and general wellbeing (HEAIDS, 2010; Mulwo, 2010).

Objectives

This research provides an attempt to grasp the apparent failure or success of the Scrutinize Campus Campaign prevention communication programme to influence behavioural change amongst university students. In order to understand the campaign’s potential efficacy, it is important to understand students’ risky sexual practices, what influences students to take risks, and their risk and protective factors. This research explores these issues, as well as the relationship between students’ risky practices and the content of the Scrutinize Campus Campaign’s messages, and how students respond to the campaign.

Research questions include the following:

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

Links to other literature in the field

The ABC omnibus research conducted by the CCMS provides data about the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices (KABP) of students’ sexual practices and their responses to the Scrutinize Campus Campaign at universities in KwaZulu-Natal.

Negative conditions on campuses influence some students to reach a point where they think that they have little to personally lose and engage in high-risk-taking sexual practices (HEAIDS, 2010). Thus, there is a need to understand the phenomenon of students’ sexual-risk behaviour as a multi-systemic construction within the campus context in which it is practised.
Mulwo (2010) highlights the risk of multiple partnerships, negative attitudes towards condoms, and students’ perceptions of abstinence, being faithful, fatalistic attitudes, dangerous myths about HIV and AIDS and condoms, which are linked to and maintained by universities’ socio-sexual culture, which impedes behaviour change. Lengwe (2010) found that many students engage in high-risk sexual behaviour. He found that many female students do not only engage in risky sexual activities such as age-disparate sexual relationships, and multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships to meet their basic needs such as money, food and clothing, but also to satisfy their wants, such as having expensive cellphones and jewellery and riding in luxury cars.

According to Pule (forthcoming), students in some campuses are under intense pressure to engage in unprotected sex, age-disparate sex and other sexual-risk behaviour in order to meet their financial goals and to be loved. In addition, this situation is exacerbated by the gender power inequalities on most campuses, where forced sex is common and often goes unreported (Pule, forthcoming). In addition, Moodley (2007) points out that on some campuses, male students’ involvement in pre-marital sexual activities is considered healthy, with the belief that men have a voracious desire for sex. She concluded that the involvement of students in campus HIV and AIDS interventions could render these more effective in addressing students’ sexual risk behaviour (Moodley, 2007).

The HEAIDS (2010) survey reports that students in South African universities account for 3.4% for cases of HIV infection nationally. Behaviour that puts students at risk of HIV infection is common and it occurs at all universities. HIV prevalence amongst students increases sharply with age as they progress from their late teens to early 20s and even more so after the 25-year mark. Only 60% of sexually active students had used a condom the last time they had sex. 19% of male students had slept with more than one partner in the last month. About 1 out of 20 sexually active students had a partner more than 10 years older than them (HEAIDS, 2010:14).

Both male and female students had a similar rate of being involved with sexual partners more than 10 years older than them. The rates are 6% and 7% respectively. HIV prevalence between the sexes varied sharply, however. Among females it was more than double that of males, 4.7% compared to 2% (HEAIDS, 2010:15). The survey found that students arrived at university with funding for their studies and residence. However, they had little funding for food. The lack of disposable income encourages risky behaviour. These practices include multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships and transactional sexual relationships.

However, there is increasing data in South Africa that where HIV and AIDS education and awareness are succeeding, it is the use of Entertainment Education (EE) that is helping young people to grasp the messages communicated and to spur them into action. Many prevention strategies using different approaches have been employed at universities, with different outcomes. Some employ drama, music, dance and other approaches.

One such EE prevention programme is the Scrutinize Campus Campaign that was created to support the Scrutinize Campaign created in partnership with United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Johns Hopkins Health Education in South Africa (JHHESA), and designer jeans label Levi. The aims of the Scrutinize Campaign are to encourage and equip young people to take responsibility to reduce their risk of HIV infection (Spina, 2009).

The main topics addressed by the campus campaign include perceptions of risk, multiple and concurrent partnerships, faithfulness, condom use and safety, transactional intergenerational sex, and alcohol and sex (JHHESA, 2009). Animated advertisements are broadcast on national television and are used to stimulate discussions in a series of organised youth conversations.

Scrutinize Campaign messages were found to be suitable for young people, and were adapted to inform the Scrutinize Campus Campaign which was implemented at a number of South Africa’s universities. It is a programme of performances and educational events, which are aimed at supporting the Scrutinize Campaign and reinforcing its objectives. The aim is also to encourage and
equip students to take responsibility to reduce their risk of HIV infection. Thus, the campaign was designed to raise awareness about high-risk sexual behaviour, provide opportunity for students to engage with their peers, to unpack issues of risk, and to create learning moments for students to examine or “scrutinise” their own behaviour in the context of risk (Spina, 2009).

Concepts and theory informing the research

Wilder and Watt (2002) define risky behaviours as those that jeopardise one’s physical well-being. Adams (1999:14) states that all people have “thermostats” which evaluate risk. This risk “thermostat” notion suggests that everyone has a predilection to take risks. However, this inclination differs from one individual to another. The inclination to take risk is influenced by the potential reward of taking the risk (Adams, 1999). The way people view risk is influenced by losses they have experienced in the past. According to Adams (1999) a person’s risk-taking decision represents a balancing of interests between a potential risk and a potential return.

Young people’s involvement in harmful risk-related activity results from the direct and indirect interaction of certain antecedent factors, and the extent to which young people have been exposed to these factors (Jessor et al., 1977; Jessor, 1998). According to Jessor (1991), a risk factor can be defined as an agent or condition that is linked to an increased probability of outcomes that compromise health, quality of life, or life itself. On the other hand, protective factors are conditions that reduce or completely obliterate the probability of outcomes that compromise health or rather buffer against risky behaviour (Meacham, 2004).

Exposure to risk factors increases young people’s vulnerability to being harmed by the outcome of engaging in harmful behaviour, or reduces the impact of its harmful outcome (Jessor, 1998). The role of protective factors is therefore to act as a cushion between young people’s exposure to and involvement in risk behaviour, rather than blanketing young people from any involvement in risk behaviour (Jessor, 1998).

Protective factors are found in the governing roles of parents and similar figures of authority, as well as other authoritative aspects of control such as community sanctions. Protective factors also result from involvement in activity that is incompatible with or opposed to problem behaviour, as well as commitment to conventional institutions such as school and church organisations (Cooper et al., 2001).

For young people who are exposed to situations of risky behaviour, being “at risk” means that they have entered a path away from these protective influences towards behaviour that is potentially deviant and that therefore compromises their quality of life and health. While risk-related exploration is a normal part of adaptive young people’s risk behaviour, problems begin when the exploratory nature of this behaviour leads to commitment to the behaviour (Wilder and Watt, 2002).

Sexual risk and protective factors are factors that encourage or discourage one or more behaviour that might lead to pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease, or encourage behaviour that might prevent sexual risk behaviour (Jessor, 1991). This is an essential concept for understanding why young people may or may not adopt safer-sex behaviours.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that to understand any human behaviour, such as sexual-risk behaviour, one needs to know that there are four domains that are at play. The first is the microsystem which holds that a person is influenced by roles society has ascribed to him or her. In other words, norms influence people’s behaviour. The second is the mesosystem where human behaviour is influenced by social systems in which people interact. The third exosystem explains that behaviour and development are influenced by settings an individual does not interact directly in but affects his or her behaviour or development. The fourth system, the macrosystem, explains that human development is influenced by cultural values or rather the larger system.

It is important to understand the interrelation between these systems to understand why and how students engage in risky sexual behaviour. Previous research (see Lengwe, 2010; Paruk et
al, 2005; Blum & Mmari, 2005; Makgati et al, 2005; Hallman, 2004; East, 1999) suggests that the family structure, socio-economic status, level of parents’ education, parental supervision, parental warmth and peer influence all impact on risk factors for young people with regard to their sexual decision-making. Other factors that influence their risk-taking include their own age, race, faith, physical development, intelligence, thrill-seeking nature and perceptions around HIV (Moorosi et al, 2009; Letseka et al, 2008; Harrison, 2005; Wibrehan, 2005; Zuckerman, 1994).

Many of the previous studies mentioned rely on cognitive theories to explore young people’s sexual-risk behaviour. Cognitive theories mainly explore the influence of individual factors. They have been criticised for addressing individual influence of behaviour at the expense of other factors such as the biological, environmental/social, and behavioural instigators of behaviour (Kotchick et al, 2001; Jessor, 1991).

The problem-behaviour theory takes into account the multi-systemic factors that influence young people’s sexual behaviour. These include the biological, personality, environmental/social and behavioural domains (Jessor, 1991). Problem behaviour is conceived as an underlying syndrome or constellation of interrelated unconventional behaviour instigated by multi-systemic factors with the young people taking central position within this constellation. Young people are the actors of the behaviour, and the recipients of the consequences resulting from the problematic co-variation of the impact of risky behaviour.

The focus of problem-behaviour theory is therefore primarily upon young people who act, with young people’s behaviour manifesting the motivation underlying that behaviour or action. The focus of the problem-behaviour theory is placed on the acts performed that lead to risk and protective behaviour and their underlying influence on young people’s behaviour without making any moral judgment about young people’s personal attributes.

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

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

Research methods and methodology

The main focus of this study is the Scrutinize Campus Campaign facilitated on the campuses of the Durban University of Technology (DUT) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). This study employed a cross-sectional research design. Three campuses in KZN universities were selected from which data was collected to help answer the main research questions.

A combination of qualitative techniques was employed in order to develop a clear understanding of the phenomena under study. The main thrust of the study was to develop an interpretive phenomenological analysis on research material text. Interviews were designed to generate textual experiential narratives to give nuance to the findings. This data was then complemented by data collected using observations, data sets from the CCMS ABC omnibus survey (2007), field notes and documents collected.

As this was a qualitative study aimed at gathering an in-depth understanding of students’ sexual-risk behaviour and their
response to the Scrutinize Campus Campaign’s messages, smaller but focused samples were used rather than large random samples. 96 students were sampled for data collection through stratified and purposive sampling methods. Measures were taken to ensure that the major diversities observed among students at the two universities were taken into account. These diversities included the location of the respondents, gender, race, and year of study.

The study was conducted in four phases: the first phase was interviews with Scrutinize Campus Campaign officers; the second phase involved in-depth interviews with 96 respondents, selected from across three campuses; the third was focus-group discussions; while the fourth and final phase was the researcher’s observation of Scrutinize Campus Campaign activities taking place at each of the three campuses, supported by field notes. The researcher witnessed three campus campaign events at Pietermaritzburg, Steve Biko and Howard College campuses. The researcher also attended two Scrutinize Campus Campaign training workshops and three planning meetings.

The resultant collected data was coded through a manual coding system and the qualitative data analysis programme NVivo. This data was then analysed according to themes and the research hypotheses.

Key findings

The research interviews investigated the notions of risky behaviour including transactional sex, one-night stands, age-disparate relationships, multiple concurrent sexual partners, and unprotected sex. A high frequency of 94% of the respondents said that they know students who are engaging in transactional sex. 62% of the respondents said that relationships that involve some sort of exchange are either “rampant” or “widespread” or “common” on campuses. 72% of the respondents in the sample practically viewed transactional sex as a viable and efficient way of meeting their needs and wants. The findings reflected that for most female students, familiarity and intimacy with the sexual partner, or love, is reason enough not to feel at risk. This seems to stem from the fact that older partners have more power to make sexual decisions.

Data collected from all three campuses under study shows that students are engaging in what they call “towing” or one-night stands. “Towing” is a sexual behaviour where students bring males or females to their rooms and engage in spontaneous sexual interaction despite not being in traditional romantic relationships with each other. It is derived from the process of pulling or drawing a car, or some other form of coupling as done by road vehicles. Respondents explained that there are no premeditated arrangements regarding what behaviour would occur, and there is no pledge of any subsequent intimate relationship. An evaluation of respondents’ responses shows that 55% of the female respondents said that “towing” makes them feel socially humiliated and sexually “used” and “abused”. However, the study found that 80% of the male respondents who had one-night stands had positive feelings about it, feeling greater sexual satisfaction and a sense of contentment.

A high frequency of 81% of the respondents explained that students engage in age-disparate sex. They explained that any student in a relationship with a partner older or younger by five years is considered to be engaging in an age-disparate sexual relationship. 67% of the students said that older partners have low risk of HIV infection because most of them are married therefore in stable relationships. However, 81% of the respondents recognised that there may be an element of risk in that the big age gap allows older partners to have more power and control over relationships, including condom usage.

This study found that multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships are perceived as ordinary behaviour. 60% of the respondents explained that multiple partnerships are highly approved of and seen as a competition for superiority. However, 83% of the respondents said that they are aware of the increased risk of HIV infection. Despite this recognition of the risks of sexual networks, 60% of the respondents reported that with regular partners, they tend not to use condoms, arguing that they trust each other.
Data shows that 76% of the students have engaged in sex at the university without using condoms. Other forms of birth control were used, and it was apparent that 70% of the surveyed students are more concerned about a pregnancy than HIV infection.

The research reflected that there were a number of factors that increased the likelihood of students engaging in these risky behaviours. 63% mentioned that coming from rural backgrounds and single-sex schools made students more likely to engage in sexual-risk behaviour because they tend to be naïve. In support of this, the research found that 72% of students who had not engaged in sex prior to joining university had their sexual initiation during their first year of study at the university. For many, this was a result of them not knowing what to expect of university life, and they felt that their values had been compromised by their loss of virginity. 77% of the respondents said that they perceive freedom from parental control as one strong factor to students’ sexual-risk behaviour on campuses.

Many of the respondents (67%) noted that pressure from their friends influenced these decisions regarding risky behaviour. 82% of the respondents said that it is easy to engage in sexual-risk behaviour if their best friends are sexually active and have more permissive attitudes towards sex. Notions of masculinity also influenced risk-taking behaviour, with 76% of the male respondents saying that having sex with many females or having unprotected sex is what being “a real male” means. Further to this, 67% of the respondents mentioned social status as a strong sexual-risk factor.

In a finding that university authorities should take note of, 71% of the respondents, with the majority as females, explained that they engage in sexual-risk behaviour because they are sexually harassed by lecturers. Respondents also reported that unwelcome requests for sexual favours in the form of verbal conduct and a hostile learning environment through sexual overtones are common. In addition to this, the permissive university environment was cited by 87% of respondents as a place where high rates of alcohol abuse, sexual violence, and hunger making it easy for them to engage in sexual-risk behaviour. In addition, 83% of respondents said that they engage in sexual-risk behaviour because of huge blocks of unstructured time.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

Findings indicate that students at KZN universities engage in several risky sexual practices including unprotected sex, transactional sex, age-disparate sex, multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships, towing, open sexual relationships and cohabitation. Students’ sexual-risk behaviour increases the risk of contracting or transmitting diseases or infections like HIV.

Furthermore it shows that there are several domains influencing students’ sexual-risk behaviour: environmental/social, behavioural, personality, and biological factors that are interrelational and difficult to separate. The interrelations of the sexual-risk factors influence students’ sexual-risk behaviour and lifestyles. In other words, interrelations of these variables represent instigations that results in proneness: the likelihood that sexual-risk behaviour will occur; and this compromises physical health.

Findings indicate that not all students engage in sexual-risk behaviour. Students’ protective sexual factors reduce the likelihood of them having sex and the risk of contracting or transmitting diseases or infections like HIV, thus increasing their sexual health and welfare. This shows that environmental/social, behavioural, personality, behavioural and biological factors influence students’ protective sexual behaviour.

The factors mentioned above that influenced students’ decision-making regarding sex and risky behaviours was contrasted with the students’ reception of the Scrutinize Campus Campaign. For the most part, the campaign was well-received by students. The campaign’s messages were found to promote the efficacy and effectiveness of condoms; however, they did not address the notion of condoms reducing sexual pleasure, which was a concern for students.

A high frequency of 91% of the respondents recalled that the Scrutinize Campus Campaign teaches them about the risk of
multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships. However, the way that students interpret faithfulness and multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships suggest that these messages are negotiated or misconstrued.

Just over half of the respondents (51%) were able to recall that the campaign teaches them to be cautious with the “love words” that people use. Notions of deceit and faithfulness were effectively brought to the surface through the campaign. However, notions of sexual pleasure, transactional sex and masculinity in the context of relationships were not appropriately dealt with by the campaign.

It was found that the campaign addresses the risk of alcohol abuse but fails to deal with some of the underlying risk factors to alcohol abuse. The campaign’s messages did successfully deal with the practice of age-disparate sexual relationships and more than half of their underlying factors.

In all, the data showed high recall of the Scrutinize Campus Campaign messages and that it was a popular campaign with a number of events and popular promotional items. Respondents felt that the campaign was informative, but that there were some essential elements that add to the risk factors for student sexual behaviour, which were not covered by the campaign. Future EE campaigns that are designed for students should take these risk factors and the contrasting protective factors into account to ensure that they are appropriate for their particular audience and likely to have greater long-term impact.

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CHAPTER 3

Participatory Communication Methodologies

This section covers some of the theory behind participatory communication approaches and strategies that draw people into participating in different types of programmes and methodologies to explore health-related issues. Case studies are provided for the different projects. The section includes summaries of five postgraduate student papers. Contributors include: Matalimo Selebalo (2010); Aaliyah Dangor, Sertanya Reddy and Bhavya Jeena (2009); Nkululeko Mthiyane (2010); Dominique Nduhura (2004) and Hannah Mangenda (2008).

Selebalo’s (2010) research involved university-based students in an intervention on hand hygiene; finding that involving students in both research processes and in the creation of public health promotion posters gave them a sense of ownership of the project.

Dangor, Reddy and Jeena (2009) use the participatory technique of body-mapping with school learners, to explore issues of identity and conflict resolution. They find that this methodology creates a sense of achievement for individuals and that the process allows them to understand the physical and emotional aspects of conflict.

Mthiyane (2010) worked with school-based learners to create plays, poetry and a song to explore issues around substance abuse and peer pressure. She measures this against the communication for social change model, and finds that it is difficult to achieve all levels of the model in one intervention.

Nduhura (2004) explores how the organisation DramAidE adapts and applies Freireian participatory methodologies in South African schools, to explore HIV and AIDS issues. The research explores some of the contextual and cultural barriers to learners practicing the life skills newly acquired through the programme in their own lives.

Mangenda (2008) builds on this research, and weighs up the benefits of the more participatory workshops of DramAidE versus their travelling once-off theatre performance. Her findings suggest that the participatory activities have a great impact on school-learners, but that the once-off interventions also have a role to play.
Problem statement

The World Health Organization (WHO) (2006) regards hand hygiene as an integral aspect of public health as it reduces the number of infectious diseases amongst people sharing a common place. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) argues that most food-borne illnesses start in restrooms and these diseases are transferred through bacteria carried mainly by hands. Hand washing is the simplest, most effective measure for preventing the spread of bacteria, pathogens and viruses (CDC, 2002). However, even with this knowledge, most people still do not wash their hands after using the restrooms or before and after eating.

John Bews Hall residence is a three-storied, female residence that houses 108 female students at UKZN. It has two bathrooms on each floor with three restrooms, all of which have no hand-wash dispensers or soap available for the residents. Residents reported that they did not wash their hands after using the restrooms and attributed this to the absence of hand wash (soap) in the restrooms.

Objectives

In order to address the hygiene issue, the “Hands Free” intervention was developed on the second-floor restrooms at John Bews Hall (residence) at Howard College. The objectives of this research were to evaluate the knowledge and practice of hand hygiene among the second-floor residents; to bring awareness and highlight the importance of hand hygiene to the residents; to implement an intervention that would guide proper hand-hygiene practices; and to evaluate and monitor the practice of hand hygiene among residents before and after the intervention.

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review explores literature on behaviour change communication (BCC) and Entertainment Education (EE) which is mainly used to implement the intervention, as it brings fun and entertainment to the participants while at the same time, they learn about proper hand-hygiene practices.

Behaviour change communication has been proven to be very effective in responding to challenges of minor problems while the social change communication approach is more effective with challenges of a pandemic (Cardey, 2006:1). Some of theories of BCC include the social learning theory (Bandura, 1997) which postulates that an individual behaviour is the result of the interaction among cognition, behaviour, environment and physiology. This theory focuses mainly on bringing about change for the individual instead of focusing on society at large. Central to this theory are the concepts of role-modelling and self-efficacy, where the perception of one’s ability to adopt a recommended behaviour is addressed.

The theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) predicts the individual behaviour by examining attitudes, beliefs and behavioural intentions and observed expressed acts. There is a linear progression from attitudes to action, and a given behaviour is determined by an individual’s intention. The health belief model (HBM) (Becker, 1974) predicts individual response to, and utilisation of, screening and other preventive health services by assuming a rational decision-maker. The diffusion of innovations theory (Rogers, 1983) focuses on the communication process through which a new idea or product becomes known and used by people in a given population. Diffusion of innovations has been criticised for being too linear, for having a pro-innovation bias and for widening the gaps between the “information haves” and “have-nots” in a social system.
For any intervention to be implemented, it must undergo three main stages: the pre-intervention stage, the intervention process and the post-intervention stage. The pre-intervention organises everything that is involved in the intervention including the survey and evaluation of the problem. The intervention process is the actual implementation of the programme that is designed based on the pre-intervention stage. The post-intervention is the evaluation of the actual intervention.

Any intervention requires a communication strategy. “Enter-Educate is a strategic process to design and implement a communication form with both entertainment and education elements to enhance and facilitate social change” (Coleman, 1999:76). Coleman states that the EE approach promotes healthy choices, practices and lifestyles because it is pervasive, popular, personal, participatory, passionate, persuasive, practical, profitable and proven effective (1999:78). Participatory communication plays a big role in interventions as it gives the participants a sense of ownership and in return trust and commitment toward the project.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

The development of the “Hands Free” intervention is based on the theories of Paulo Freire, with reference to participatory communication, behaviour change communication and the new “Processes and Principles for Health Communication Projects” (The new P-Process) revised by Piotrow et al (1997).

Paulo Freire emphasises the notion of dialogue which is “the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world” (Freire, 1970:45). He argues that “without dialogue there is no communication and without communication there cannot be true education” (1970:47). Freire’s theory emphasises that the essence of dialogue is the word. “But the word is more than just an instrument that makes dialogue possible; accordingly, we must seek its constitutive elements. Within the word, we find two dimensions, reflection and action” (Freire, 1970:44). Freire further argued that people need to understand and participate in learning in order for them to implement any change for development. When people understand the word, what is said and illustrated, the word will be converted into activism. In the case of the “Hands Free” intervention, the word was the reasoning behind the importance of hand hygiene and the practices that follow. Residents must first acknowledge what hand hygiene and its benefits are for them to attempt to change their behaviours.

The P-Process (Piotrow et al, 1997) works as a link between the theories of Paulo Freire and Behaviour Change Communication. The P-Process is part of a strategic communication process that combines a series of elements including research, stakeholder participation, creativity and high-quality programming to stimulate positive and measurable behavioural change amongst an identified target audience and to promote the uptake of services.

According to Piotrow et al (1997), the following steps can be followed in sequence to develop and implement effective national communication strategies:

- **Step 1 is analysis:** this is where situation analysis, programme analysis/needs assessment and audience/behavioural analysis occur.
- **Step 2 involves strategic design:** this constitutes the objectives, identifies audience segments, positions the concept for the audience, clarifies behaviour-change models, selects channels of communication, plans for interpersonal discussions, draws up an action plan and designs the evaluation.
- **Step 3 is the development, pretesting and revision and production:** this step works to develop message concepts, pre-test with audience members and gatekeepers, revise and produce messages and materials, and retest new and existing material.
- **Step 4 involves implementation and monitoring:** this includes mobilising key organisations, creating a positive organisational climate, implementing the action and monitoring the process of dissemination, transmission and reception of programme outputs.
Step 5 involves evaluating and re-planning: this is where the impact on audiences or participants is measured and the participants determine how to improve future projects.

The steps to behaviour change (SBC) model is an adaptation of diffusion of innovations theory and has five steps towards behaviour change: knowledge, approval, intention, practice and advocacy. The SBC framework and the new P-Process work as mediators that link behaviour change communication with the intervention process.

Research methods and methodology

This research study is of a qualitative nature where the main interest is to find out “why” and “how” hygiene can be practised and sustained in the target group. The research takes the form of a survey as part of the pre-intervention to determine if there is a problem with hand-hygiene practices amongst John Bews Hall residents. Two questionnaires were handed out to all of the 27 residents on the second floor. This was followed by a focus-group discussion to get detailed information on the behaviours and practices of hand hygiene, and to find out the core reasons why residents do not wash their hands after using the restrooms. The hand-wash dispensers were installed a week after this focus-group discussion and during this time there was continuous monitoring to establish if residents were using their own soap to wash their hands and if they would wash them correctly.

In the intervention process, residents had a brainstorming session, followed by the viewing of posters with images of what hand hygiene stipulates, with outlined steps to be followed when washing hands. The residents also created a slogan to be constantly said as residents exit the restrooms. During the intervention, a hand-hygiene quiz was conducted among residents to test their knowledge and behaviour change and the top scorers were awarded prizes. This was done as an indicator to determine whether the hand-hygiene habits that were discussed in the first focus group were learnt, and if they were practised. Another indicator of the change in behaviour involved checking the level of hand wash in the dispensers; where the amount of hand wash used could be monitored on a daily basis.

The second questionnaire, with both closed and open-ended questions, was aimed at gaining insight into two different groups of participants: members who had participated in the first focus groups and those who had not. This would work towards the evaluation of the effectiveness of the posters and the installation of the hand-wash dispenser. A second focus group was conducted to evaluate the behaviour changes (if any) of the residents towards hand hygiene. It focused on the changes that had occurred pre-intervention, during the intervention and post-intervention.

Content analysis was used to analyse data and this means that the context of the data was evaluated and analysed in a way that would answer the proposed questions.

Key findings

The data generated in this study was analysed in terms of the research themes relating to the residents’ hand-hygiene behaviour change.

Knowledge of hand hygiene by participants

Before assessing the participants’ practices of hand hygiene, it was important to find out their knowledge and habits towards hand hygiene hence a survey was conducted to determine if there is a problem and its severity. Approximately 50% of the survey population did not practice hand hygiene. About 75% of the population study admitted to washing their hands after using the restrooms, but they did not use soap due to its absence in the restrooms. Most participants were informed about hand hygiene and the diseases one can get from lack of hand hygiene. A large percentage of them admitted that, although they had all the knowledge about hygiene, they did not think of it as an integral part of their health.

When asked about the amount of time they take to wash their hands, most respondents admitted to about five seconds, and were
shocked at the required time of fifteen seconds. They also did not know of the proper six-step hand-wash procedure. The residents explained that the main reason for their ignorance with hand hygiene was the lack of hand wash in the restrooms.

After the intervention, students reported that they had been washing their hands in the proper manner at most times. This, they say, was influenced by seeing the posters in the restrooms and having hand wash available in the restrooms.

Paulo Freire’s notion of dialogue as a form of communication contributed to bringing about change in the behaviour of the residents. Behaviour-change communication was another vital aspect that induced a trustworthy environment that allowed the residents to participate in the intervention. The new P-Process linked the two theories together by infusing them into practicalities that made sense to both the implementers of the intervention and the residents involved. At the end of it all, the monitoring and evaluation that was conducted on the “Hands Free” intervention assessed that the intervention was effective mostly because participatory measures were taken into account in the process of influencing change in the residence. The willingness of the residents to maintain and sustain proper hand-hygiene practices also added to the success of the intervention.

Conclusions and recommendations

Since John Bews Hall was proven to lack cleanliness and proper hand-hygiene practices, this intervention was a response to this public health concern. Finding out the extent of the residents’ knowledge on the importance of hand hygiene was one of the main objectives of this intervention. This was achieved through a survey that showed the amount of knowledge the residents have and their habits towards hand hygiene. It was important to research, before the intervention, if the residents believed there was a problem of hand hygiene in the residence and then take into consideration their opinions about this matter. To achieve the objectives of the intervention, a form of participatory intervention had to be created for this public health message of hand hygiene and this was done by involving the participants in the creation and methods that were taken to put it into action. This proved to be vital as it brought ease and ownership of the intervention to the residents so that they could participate at all levels of the intervention.

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Painting the problem: Body mapping as a participatory Entertainment Education tool in helping youth learn about conflict resolution

Sertanya Reddy, Aaliyah Dangor, Bhavya Jeena (Honours, 2009)

Problem statement

South Africa has some of the worst statistics on school-related violence in the world. In 2008, the South African Institute of Race Relations published statistics which revealed that only 23% of South African students felt safe at school. In 2001, South African schools were facing a major problem and teachers are often reluctant and unprepared to deal with violence and conflict (Simpson, 2001).

This research looks at an initiative exploring issues of violence and conflict with young people. While it is generally agreed that young people should become more involved in society, youth are frequently ignored in development initiatives (Matthews & Limb, 1998). Participation in development contexts is increasingly being celebrated, yet there is still a dearth of research or practical examples focusing on the active engagement of young people (Diaz-Bordenave, 2004). This project investigates the possibility of employing interesting and enjoyable means to encourage youth to be involved in their own development.

Body mapping was used as a tool to help youth from ARROW SA learn more about conflict resolution. Art: A Resource for Reconciliation Over the World (ARROW) is an international organisation that employs a variety of art forms to promote values such as peace and cooperation amongst youth and that hopes to contribute to their intra- and interpersonal development (ARROW, 2006). The ARROW SA hub is based at Bechet High School in Sydenham, Durban and hosts weekly sessions with 30 students, from grade eight to grade twelve.

Objectives

The participants in the study are ten students from Bechet High School who attend weekly ARROW SA sessions. The main objective was to explore body mapping as a participatory Entertainment Education tool to facilitate the teaching of life skills with these students. Through a body mapping workshop and a group interview, the following three research questions were addressed:

1) How does the participatory aspect of body mapping help the ARROW SA students better understand conflict resolution?

2) How do the ARROW SA students perceive the entertainment aspect of body mapping?

3) How did the process and tool of body mapping help the students come to a better understanding of how to manage conflict in their lives?

Links to other literature in the field

Dawn Trussell (2008) advocates for the participation of young people in the research process because youth are capable of speaking for themselves and the most accurate data on youth can be gathered when young people shed light on their own lives. However, Trussell suggests that efforts should be made to engage young people by employing creative research techniques. The research with the ARROW students was therefore developed with the creative techniques of body mapping. Like Trussell (2008), Alice McIntyre (2000) argues that youth should be provided with opportunities for dialogue. In conducting her research with students, McIntyre employed various creative techniques such as collage-making and community photography. Although McIntyre strived to encourage the students to freely express themselves, she did create a preliminary framework that was used to structure her sessions with the students. Similarly, we created a body mapping
workshop to provide some structure and guidance for our research with the ARROW students. This framework was adapted during the actual workshop to suit the students’ needs.

Jane Solomon’s HIV body mapping workshop has been used in a number of countries since it was introduced in 2002 (Devine, 2008). Although it was developed as an art therapy method for empowering HIV-positive women, it has been adapted to suit other causes such as sex education, physical trauma, and as a counselling technique with children that have been abused (Ishola et al, 2008). The body mapping technique has proved successful in empowering HIV-positive women to perceive themselves as physically and emotionally strong individuals, as well as reducing their negative body images (Devine, 2008). The technique was exported to two collaborating Canadian organisations in 2006, which used the technique amongst a group of Tanzanian and Zambian women. The workshop succeeded in “enabl[ing] women living with HIV/AIDS to better understand HIV and its treatment, combat stigma, improve personal coping strategies and share wisdom through art” (Devine, 2008:60). These studies suggest that body mapping is a useful exercise in acting as an ice-breaker in order for sensitive issues to be discussed. We therefore believe that body mapping has great potential as a tool in facilitating discussions around the difficult topic of conflict.

Concepts and theory informing the research

This project is informed by the communication for participatory development (CFPD) model which was formally developed by Larry Kincaid and Maria Figueroa (2009). The origin of the model can be traced as far back as the history of development communication. While modernisation was the dominant development paradigm during the 1960s, by the 1970s a shift had occurred in the field of development communication with participation beginning to re-shape the various development contexts. However, participation is a constantly evolving concept that is “kaleidoscopic” in nature, making it difficult to discuss participatory development in a structured, definite way (White, 2004: 16).

One of the important features of the CFPD model is that it includes a catalyst phase, and there are “a variety of catalysts [that] can stimulate a community to discuss a problem…” (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009: 1316). In this particular project, the researchers were regarded as the catalyst and adopted the role of change agents who initiated a body-mapping workshop amongst a group of ARROW SA learners. Dialogue should, ideally, play a role in the whole process of participatory development, from recognising a problem, setting objectives, establishing a plan of action, and finally implementing and evaluating the plan (Gumucio Dagron, 2001). This idea of collaboration becomes particularly important in the CFPD model, which values collective action (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009).

The emphasis in the CFPD model is on the community working together as a unified group to bring about positive change. Since CFPD values participation and dialogue as empowering activities, the focus is more on the process of development, rather than simply the outcomes (Gerace & Lazaro, 2006). In this particular project, the focus was on the actual participatory process and its implications for empowerment and not on explicitly measuring how much the students learn about conflict resolution, but rather on how the participatory nature of the workshop influences their learning process.

The term Entertainment Education (EE) has been defined as “incorporating an educational message into popular entertainment content in order to raise awareness, increase knowledge, create favourable attitudes and ultimately motivate people to take socially responsible action in their own lives” (Singhal & Rogers, 1999:9). EE combines education with entertainment, based on the premise that people learn more effectively when they are enjoying themselves (Coleman, 1999). The EE approach initially used the mass media as its main channel to address social and health issues (see Henry Kaiser Foundation, 2004; Singhal & Rogers, 1999). The emphasis, however, has shifted over the years to incorporate a more participatory communication method with redefined objectives and also to encourage interpersonal communication (Kincaid in Storey, 1999:705).
Thomas Tufte (2005) suggests that the development of EE can be traced across three different generations. The first generation of EE is based in the social marketing practices which were popular during the 1970s, when television and radio were the main media used. The second generation of EE therefore began to introduce participatory approaches, and to focus on society as a unit of change. Tufte (2005) views the third generation of EE as initiatives which focus on problem identification, social critique and articulation of debate, challenging power relations and advocating social change. We will be drawing on ideas from the second- and third-generation concepts of EE in our research. While many different EE techniques exist, this project employed body mapping as an EE tool.

Research methods and methodology

We employed a qualitative approach and used the interpretive paradigm to investigate how individuals subjectively interpret content (Cohen et al, 2001). The participants in the workshop each constructed their own body map, thereby actively making meaning according to their own life experiences. The participants were chosen using non-probability, purposive sampling. The main data collection method was a face-to-face group interview with the ARROW SA students who participated in the body-mapping workshop. Informed consent forms were given to the ARROW students for permission from their parents.

In order to gather and analyse our data, we used the principles of grounded theory and thematic analysis. The grounded theory approach allows the researcher to choose from open coding, axial coding or selective coding when undertaking analysis. Thematic analysis “focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behaviour”, and is a process in which the researcher uses transcribed conversations to identify “patterns of experiences” (Aronson, 1994:49). These patterns are then combined and catalogued into sub-themes; themes are then identified by bringing together pieces of experiences and ideas to form a coherent and meaningful picture (Aronson, 1994). We examined all the answers gathered from our group interview and found patterns and categories which emerged.

Key findings

In order to provide structure and coherence to our findings, we have analysed the data gathered from the group interview according to three sections. The first deals with the participatory nature of the body-mapping workshop. The second section discusses the influence of the Entertainment Education approach of body mapping, while the final section examines the value of body mapping as a tool in teaching life skills to youth.

Participatory development – I participate therefore I learn?

Since the community is perceived as the starting point for development, their needs should provide the basis for development decisions. Our decision to conduct a workshop dealing specifically with conflict resolution was informed by the fact that conflict is a prevalent factor in many of the ARROW students’ lives. Our workshop was based on the need of the ARROW students to better understand conflict, so that they would be able to manage it in a mature, responsible manner.

Participants encouraged open dialogue during the workshop and believed that the dialogical processes that occurred in the body-mapping session contributed to learning about conflict resolution. The use of dialogue was particularly important considering that the issue under discussion was conflict. According to the students, it was helpful to further discuss the issue of conflict in the interview as it helped them better understand the body-mapping process and the manner in which it helped them think about conflict in new ways. Through the use of dialogue, the ARROW SA students were encouraged to actively participate in the body-mapping workshop. Although it was important for each student to individually identify how conflict operates in their lives, we did strive to create a sense of group effort because the CFPD model values both individual and collective action (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009). The fact that the students were provided with the opportunity to take control
is central to the success of a participatory initiative. “People are voiceless not because they have nothing to say, but because nobody cares to listen to them” (Servaes & Malikhao, 2005:91).

**Entertainment Education – the fun of learning**

The very first step of the body-mapping process required the students to draw the outline of their partner’s body on the page; it immediately broke down barriers between the group members. The students contrasted the workshop to classroom learning and they all pointed out that they found body mapping much more entertaining. The students were also able to come to their own opinions and understandings of conflict. One student shared about how they found themselves in a situation of conflict with their teacher, while other students became angry, she remembered the “3 Cs” and chose to hold herself back from the conflict (Group interview, October 2009).

With any EE project, the educational aspects are woven into the overall entertainment form, so educational messages are not always explicit or overt. We then asked the students if the situation would have been different if we sent them home with their body maps after the workshop and never met with them again. They all agreed that the group interview made a significant difference because it helped them reflect on what they had learnt, and to think more about how to apply the conflict-resolution skills in their lives consciously rather than just on a subconscious level.

The study guarded against leading the students into what we saw as the ideal solution to conflict, by allowing them to personalise conflict to their own lives and come up with what they thought of as the relevant steps to deal with the issue. For example, many of the students felt that they could best deal with conflict situations by staying quiet and not engaging with the other person. This contrasts with our belief that dialogue and communication are important to solve conflicts, but in the contexts of the students’ conflicts, their solution made sense for them. They explained that they often fight with teachers and parents who have power over them, so instead of us imposing our view that they must work through problems with their elders, we allowed them to decide as a group that disengaging from conflict can actually be a better solution for them, depending on the context.

**The value of body mapping in teaching life skills**

Body mapping is a valuable tool in teaching life skills because it enables participants to recognise the link between the emotional and physical aspects of an issue. In the workshop, the students established a mind-body relationship when mapping out conflict on their bodies. The uniqueness of drawing on one’s own body contributed greatly to the effectiveness of the exercise. The body map is meant to show where the participant is “holding trauma” and “where their resources are in their body” (Wallace, 2009:23). As such, the body map establishes a visible mind–body connection. The steps involved helped them to process how they can control their bodies in a conflict.

The body-mapping process allowed the students to establish their own identity on their body maps by writing their names and school. This allowed the students to gain ownership of their artwork. A sense of empowerment amongst the students was also created as they gained a feeling of ownership and pride of their body maps. The students’ desire to continually add to their body maps suggests that they have embraced and taken ownership of engaging in their own self-improvement and development.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The aim of this research project was to engage with the ARROW youth as partners in a dialogical and entertaining process to help them better understand conflict and how it can be resolved. By interacting with the students in a body-mapping workshop and then, later, in a group interview, it became clear that body mapping is indeed a valuable participatory EE tool in facilitating the teaching and learning of life skills amongst youth. The fact that the students were encouraged to actively participate in the workshop enabled them to discover their own experiences and perceptions of conflict, as opposed to simply being told what they should know.
The EE approach also proved successful because the creative, enjoyable nature of the workshop made the complex issue of conflict resolution accessible and understandable for the students. Furthermore, body mapping proved to be a valuable tool in the students acquiring a better understanding of conflict by allowing them to work through a steady, orderly process. In addition, the visual representations of their bodies helped them perceive both the physical and emotional aspects of conflict. While this project has dealt specifically with the issue of conflict resolution, we believe that body mapping can be employed as a tool in helping young people learn other life skills.

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A Song for Social Change: An ARROW SA Intervention at Bechet High School and the communication for participatory development (CFPD) model

Nkululeko Mthiyane (Honours, 2010)

Problem statement

There is an ever-increasing awareness in South Africa that substance use among adolescents is a significant health problem (Brook et al, 2006). Substance abuse is often attributed to various socio-ecological and environmental factors such as peer pressure. A Song for Social Change is an intervention which was intended to counter the challenges of substance abuse in a group of adolescents. The participants in this study were the Art: A Resource for Reconciliation Over the World (ARROW) SA students from Bechet High School (ARROW Bechet). ARROW is an international organisation that employs the creative arts to build relationships and promote peace amongst youth in the hope of contributing to their intra- and interpersonal development (ARROW, 2006).

A Song for Social Change intervention was a programme which utilised the creative arts such as theatre, poetry and song to provoke dialogue and awareness on substance abuse. In the intervention, participants engaged in these art forms whilst addressing issues of peer pressure related to substance abuse which culminated in the creation of a song.

Objectives

The objective of this study is to determine how the intervention was informed by communication for social change (CFSC) theory and participatory communication. This study mainly focuses on the processes that lead to this change through the exploration of


the steps of the CFPD model. Therefore it questions to what extent the A Song for Social Change intervention incorporated CFSC ideology and participatory approaches. Secondly, it asks what steps of the CFPD model can be identified in the intervention. This study forms part of a larger study where the focus is also on the evaluation of the intervention as an Entertainment Education (EE) initiative and an evaluation of the outcomes of the intervention.

**Links to other literature in the field**

In *The Beat Goes On*, Christopher Reardon (2003) focuses on how cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. This led to the development of a campaign which aimed to promote healthy eating and physical exercise among area residents (Reardon, 2003:7). Through dialogue a strategy team was formed which included consumers, physicians, community activists, religious leaders, public health personnel and social-service providers.

The objective of the team was to explore ways of disseminating information about healthy lifestyles. The mobilisation of this team is an example of community dialogue which is the second phase of the CFPD model. Collective action in this study is illustrated by how the strategy team arranged blood-pressure screenings, as well as a mobile health facility which provided the community with education on exercise and nutrition.

The UNICEF Network of Educational Theatre study focused on child immunisation in Nigeria, with the idea of using popular theatre due to the lack of mass media access for a vast majority of the Nigerian population. This project led to hundreds of women taking their children for immunisation shots, women who had previously been reluctant to do so for cultural reasons. It is this participatory communication that leads to social change which is the foundation of the communication for participatory development (CFPD) model (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009).

A study conducted by Reddy, Dangor and Jeena (2009) explores the use of body mapping as a participatory Entertainment Education tool to facilitate the teaching of life skills amongst youth. It is similar to A Song for Social Change intervention, in that it focuses on the ARROW SA students from Bechet High School and it also refers to the CFPD model. The Reddy et al study focuses on how participation in a body-mapping workshop influences the students’ understanding of conflict resolution. In A Song for Social Change intervention, however, the arts were utilised to address issues of peer pressure related to substance abuse with ARROW Bechet.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

The theoretical framework of this study uses the CFPD model, communication for social change theory (CFSC) and participatory communication approach.

**Participatory communication**

The work of Paulo Freire has been at the forefront of participatory communication theory for decades. One of Freire’s main arguments is that participatory development can be achieved through the awakening of the critical consciousness of the oppressed. This refers to a state where a community moves away from a passive reaction to their situation to a state where they are willing to take action (Freire, 1969).

Freire believes dialogue is an existential necessity as it implies communication and without communication there cannot be true development (Freire, 1970). It is this active involvement through dialogue that leads to empowerment which is one of the proponents of participatory communication.

The work of Paulo Freire also served as a guiding philosophy to communication for participatory development through his emphasis of communication as dialogue and participation for the purpose of creating cultural identity, trust, commitment, ownership, and empowerment (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009). Within A Song for Social Change intervention, participatory approaches such as theatre drove dialogue. The process of creating the song also ensured a greater extent of participation.
Communication for social change / participatory development

CFSC can be understood as “a way of thinking and practice that puts people in control of the means and content of communication processes” (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte, 2006:xix). These processes include social marketing, communication for development, and community organising (Cardey, 2006). CFSC focuses on individual and social change. It places emphasis on the people’s perception of their condition. This makes CFSC “a process through which people determine who they are, what they need and what they want in order to improve their lives” (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte, 2006:xix).

The CFPD model was conceived partly as a result of a review of past development initiatives which lacked valuable components. These include the idea that the concept of development needs to extend in its application to include human development in local communities. Participatory development requires dialogue; a symmetrical, two-way process of communication. Models of development need to make provision for social change at the community level as well as individual change. The CFPD model occupies three functions. It explains why community projects are successful or unsuccessful, making it a descriptive model. It is also prescriptive, in that it can be used by external change agents to involve local leaders to increase the likelihood that development projects succeed. The model can also be predictive in that it can be used to develop hypotheses about what happens during a community development project (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009).

In A Song for Social Change intervention the model occupied a more descriptive function in that the intervention was not designed according to the model but the model can be used to describe what happened in the intervention and to what extent it was successful or unsuccessful. The main purpose of the CFPD model is to identify social, as well as individual, outcomes (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009). The most defining characteristic of the CFPD model is its ability to initiate change. This is achieved through making provision for a catalyst. The catalyst can take many forms in a change intervention such as internal stimuli, policies and mass media (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2009). In the context of this intervention, the researchers occupied the role of catalyst in the form of change agents. Our purpose, as change agents, was to stimulate dialogue on issues of substance abuse with the ARROW students using the arts.

Research methods and methodology

Qualitative data gathering methods were used in this study. Participant observation was used and documented by field notes, and themes and categories were identified to make categorising of observations simpler. Unstructured interviews were conducted with intervention facilitators and guest-facilitators and served as an evaluation of the intervention. The interviews were documented with written notes as well as recorded with an audio recorder. The intervention programme was divided into three sessions, where each session utilised a different art form to address substance abuse and peer pressure.

The theatre session involved short improvised skits performed by the ARROW students. The skits presented different scenarios of peer pressure and substance abuse. Half the group would perform a scenario and the other half would then be required to alter the outcome of the scenario as they saw fit. This process was followed by an in-depth discussion on the issues that surfaced and other related issues.

Poetry proceeded with a word-association exercise which involved all the participants creating stories, rhymes or sentences using a given word. This was an impromptu exercise which revealed the first thing that came to mind when an individual was given a word related to substance abuse. The students then divided into groups where they wrote poetry pieces which they recited to each other. The session culminated in a discussion which also drew from the issues raised in the poetry pieces.

Song-writing formed the third session of the programme. In this session views and concerns regarding peer pressure and substance abuse were articulated in the form of a song. The group spontaneously went into discussion of the songs and their videos.
and the messages they carried. This session also highlighted the immense power of music which could be emulated in the song for social change, and continued with the creative process of writing the lyrics of A Song for Social Change.

Key findings
This study does not purport to evaluate the extent of individual or social change that resulted from the intervention. Its main focus is on the process, as “the process is equally important as the outcomes” (Figueroa et al, 2002:i). The theatre, poetry and song strategies were prescribed, but the ideas and content within these strategies emerged from the students. The students decided how to perform and interpret the scenarios within the theatre session and the poetry was their original work. This is evident in that after the poetry session one of the students decided to privately write a poem which they shared with the rest of the group in a separate ARROW session. This action symbolises empowerment when empowerment refers to gaining an increased awareness of one’s identity and talents, and achieving the ability to determine the course of their own lives (White, 2004). Empowerment is an underlying element that fuels the CFSC process.

CFSC also emphasises horizontal communication, as it places the people at the crux of the change process (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte, 2006). In A Song for Social Change, communication was largely horizontal even though the facilitators came as exogenous entities. The guest facilitators brought the skills of their particular disciplines, however the content and issues discussed in the actual intervention emerged from the ARROW students. This is illustrated by an account of one of the students who gave categories of some of the types of alcohol consumers, which is an example of local knowledge. The guest facilitators brought the skills of their particular disciplines, however the content and issues discussed in the actual intervention emerged from the ARROW students. This is illustrated by an account of one of the students who gave categories of some of the types of alcohol consumers, which is an example of local knowledge. This is pertinent, as CFSC builds upon local knowledge and traditions (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte, 2006). This reciprocal flow of information was motivated by the healthy dialogue that characterised the intervention.

It is through dialogue that collective problem-solving can be reached (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte 2006). The students felt confident enough to ask the facilitators questions regarding their experiences of peer pressure and substance abuse, this is characteristic of the process of CFSC which highlights this critical two-way nature of communication. Identification and involvement of leaders and stakeholders is step two of the CFPD process and it was clear that ARROW Bechet was at the core of this intervention with Mary Lange occupying the role of co-facilitator of this intervention. Bechet High School initiated this community dialogue by requesting that such an intervention be conducted. It is through the collaboration of these stakeholders and facilitators that this intervention could be initiated.

The clarification of perceptions occurred when students acknowledged that peer pressure related to substance abuse is a problem in general, even if it is not within this community. The students also acknowledged that one can drink alcohol, but responsibly. This demonstrates a balance in perceptions. Through dialogue, clarification of perceptions can lead to the expression of individual and shared interests of community members.

The expression of individual and shared interests step could not be identified as it was stifled by the domination of certain individuals in dialogue. This process could have occurred if all students were confident enough to voice their opinions. These steps within the community dialogue phase lead to the formulation of an action plan. This is then followed by the collective action phase of the CFPD model. The song served as a symbol of collective action as the students collaboratively created a song to create awareness on peer pressure as it related to substance abuse.

In the process of creating the song, assignment of responsibilities and implementation tasks were divided among the students, where some wrote the chorus of the song, others wrote the verses and the poetry piece. The assignment of responsibilities was done by the students themselves with no involvement from the facilitators. As there was no plan beyond the creation and recording of the song, the implementation step in the intervention was characterised by these processes. Some of the students did, however, express an interest in finding a platform where the song could be heard by
other teenagers. They made reference to the possibility of having the song broadcast on local radio stations or staging a performance at the school.

As a result of dialogue and collective action, change is expected to occur at both the individual and community levels. However, it is not within the scope of this study to evaluate whether change occurred. In this study individual change would be identified by any skills that the ARROW students acquired during this intervention. The student who decided to start writing poetry could be an indication of this. The use of poetry also occupied the role of a catalyst in this intervention. As the intervention was based on a community’s creation of a song leading to social change, this change in the intervention would take the form of aspects such as information equity and collective efficacy. In the intervention this would entail the ARROW students gaining more knowledge about the issue of peer pressure related to substance abuse. It would also involve the students educating other students about the issue therefore reducing information inequity. Collective efficacy refers to an increase in a community’s shared belief in its collective capability to attain its goals and accomplish desired tasks (Bandura, 1986). This would be demonstrated by the students’ belief in their ability to work as a collective, which they could apply in other ARROW initiatives.

Conclusions and recommendations
A Song for Social Change intervention made use of the creative arts as an instrument to drive dialogue while keeping it entertaining and engaging. An investigation of the processes shows that elements of CFSC and participatory communication were evident. This was a suitable combination, as the intervention as a whole aimed to influence both individual and social change. CFSC and participatory communication form the blueprint of how this can be achieved through an emphasis on community dialogue and community participation and ownership. These elements also form the foundation of the CFPD model which aims to promote individual and social change leading to human development. In A Song for Social Change, some of the steps of the CFPD model can be identified but it is evident that not all steps can be followed on all occasions.

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Freireian pedagogy as applied by DramAidE for HIV and AIDS education

Dominique Nduhura (MA, 2004)

Problem statement

South Africa is rated as one of the countries with the highest number of HIV infections in the world despite 90% of the population being aware of the disease (Bourgault, 2003). The highest prevalence rate is for young people between the ages of 25 and 29 (HSRC, 2002). Many approaches have been developed to address HIV and AIDS with young people but there needs to be a shift from just “putting out messages” to promoting an environment where the voices of those most affected by the pandemic can be heard (Scalway, 2003). Most theories underlying the models and frameworks used in HIV and AIDS prevention were grounded in social psychology and communications where the linear processes and rational volition were strongly weighted towards the promotion of behaviour information through communication (UNAIDS, 1999). In most cases, these theories and models were imported from Western contexts and showed certain limitations when applied to situations in the Third World (Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000).

This research uses DramAidE as a case study to focus specifically on their forum theatre, workshops and open day projects with high-school learners. DramAidE is an AIDS, life-skills and sexuality education programme that has been operating in KwaZulu-Natal since 1991, using an educational drama approach that attracts young people, builds on their talent and enthusiasm, and helps to develop essential life skills (Dalrymple, 1987; Dalrymple & Botha, 2001). The project has been built on the premise that the majority of problems faced by the youth can be located between parents’, pupils’ and teachers’ relationships. Therefore, the life skills taught to young people aim to provide ways of developing a supportive
and satisfactory network of relationships at home, at school and within the broader community (DramAidE, 1995).

Objectives

Drawing on a survey undertaken with DramAidE and its beneficiaries, this study critically discusses the problem of whether the agents or actors who design strategies take full account of the concepts their plans are designed to change. More specifically this study investigates whether the critical pedagogy used by Freire to reduce illiteracy and conscientise rural adult peasants can work in a classical education context. A key question is to analyse to what extent the methodology developed in such a context – and adapted for participatory education programmes in Africa in the Training for Transformation programme (Hope & Timmel, 1984) – can fit into the broader South African social, community and political structure within which DramAidE’s beneficiary communities are located.

Links to other literature in the field; and concepts and theory informing the research

The review of literature and theory that informs this study covers development communication which traces the transition in development and how this contributes to the work of DramAidE, particularly with the development of Entertainment Education as a communication strategy for social change. The work draws on behaviour-change theories, with a direct reference to the work of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal who were key theorists and educators in participatory education and forum theatre.

The various development paradigms from modernisation to dependency and later development-support communication still did not effectively advance development in Africa. Communication researchers have established that most of the time media systems such as radio, television stations, and newspapers failed to further development in Africa. Mda (1993) believed that media systems ought to operate in a triangular interaction of news, communication and community with the emphasis on the bottom-up type of communication that allows the people at the grassroots to talk (Gunaratne, 1996). This bottom-up communication is central for HIV prevention and awareness. One of the key communication strategies which was adapted to a participatory and bottom-up approach was Entertainment Education (EE) which is one of the key strategies of DramAidE.

EE refers to “the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience knowledge about an educational issue, create favourable attitudes, and change overt behaviours” (Singhal & Rogers, 1999:xii). Its focus is on how entertainment media such as songs, soap operas, cartoons, theatre, etc. can be used to transmit information that may result in pro-social behaviour. EE is viewed as an effective tool because it is pervasive, popular, participatory, passionate, personal, persuasive, and proven effective (Coleman, 1999). Some psychosocial theories and models were influential in the design of EE communication strategies and these can be categorised into three major groups: those predicting risk behaviour, those predicting behavioural change and those predicting maintenance of safe behaviour. When applied to HIV and AIDS campaigns, these theories have proven to be largely inappropriate to the contexts in which they were conceived in the West (UNAIDS, 2001).

The writings and experiences of the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, have become more and more influential in the field of development communication since the 1970s. Freire (1974) developed the concept of critical consciousness that refers to the ability to recognise social, political, and economic oppression and to take action against the oppressive elements of society. Freire was opposed to the “banking” system of education in which the teacher was a depositor of knowledge to a passive student.

By the same token, Dalrymple (1987) notes that, for knowledge to be beneficial it has to be meaningful and accessible to learners and it should meet their thinking and experience, thus the focus should be on their active rather than their “blank” minds. Freireian pedagogy is referred to as being participatory, situated within
beneficiaries’ contexts, critical, democratic, dialogic, and leading to de-socialisation, with multicultural, research-oriented, activist and affective education (Shor, 1993:33–34). There are several critical views of the Freireian critical pedagogy which shows that this pedagogy may not fit in all circumstances and therefore should be cautiously adapted to local contexts, a fact which is acknowledged by Freire himself (Thomas, 1996). The Freireian methodology was translated into a theatrical practice by Augusto Boal (1995) in his work termed the “dramaturgy of the oppressed”.

In his dramaturgy, Boal works on the assumption that empowerment of the oppressed communities is necessary, and that participation of the oppressed communities is a prerequisite for change. He challenges the use of theatre as a tool of social control and therefore develops a new approach aiming to democratise theatre and liberate “spect-actors”. This new kind of theatre is coined “forum theatre” where beneficiaries are fully involved. Boal’s approach, anchored in participatory methodologies, fits well in areas like schools and workplaces where participants constitute a community and share oppression to a certain level and where forum theatre serves as a problem-posing and conscientisation process rather than a problem-solving one (Boal, 1995).

DramAidE builds on this approach in its work, and the process is all about fixation of belief through drama. Peirce (1877) explains that there are four methods for fixing new beliefs which include the method of tenacity, the method of authority, the method a priori and the scientific method. The fourth method of fixation is the method of scientific investigation that occurs with learning from disciplined inquiry into experience, into the habits that fail to meet expectations (Peirce, 1877). Investigation is made up of two processes: “reasoning” and “observation”. It is through this method that DramAidE’s achievements will be assessed. Settling beliefs, as is DramAidE’s goal, requires full knowledge of beneficiaries in order to shape messages more adequately.

In The Human Condition, Hannah Arendt (1958) distinguishes between three realms of the human condition, namely labour, work and action. She links the first two activities to the private realm. The third activity, action, is classified in the public realm. Labour and work (the private realm) are ruled by the necessities and materiality of the life process. Arendt argues that modernity transformed privacy into intimacy, which is the opposite of the social realm. As such, the intimate realm refers to “the bodily part of human existence that need[ed] to be hidden in privacy, all things connected with the necessity of the life process itself, which prior to the modern age comprehended all activities serving the subsistence of the individual and the survival of the species” (Arendt, 1958:72).

Because HIV attacks through the intimate realm, i.e. sexual behaviours, while DramAidE operates in social realm, Arendt’s distinction can serve in developing criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of campaigns that operate in the social realm, but whose outcomes occur in the intimate realm. This effectiveness must be assessed with regards to DramAidE’s capability to reconcile the potential tension between memory and records embedded in beneficiaries’ intimate realm.

DramAidE is informed by the methodology of participatory action research (PAR). The methodology involves three steps. Firstly, DramAidE’s facilitators and community nurses visit schools and present AIDS information in the form of a play that they themselves have adapted through improvisation to local conditions, the second step is workshops with young people and teachers helping them to design their own plays and thirdly, schools organise open days when the AIDS messages are taken to the wider communities in a bid to enable participants to express their ideas creatively, i.e. through plays, songs, dances, poetry, posters and speeches, thus empowering them to break the silence (Dalrymple, 1995).

Research methods and methodology
For this research, a number of qualitative research methods were employed. Simple observation was done at the Lihlithemba High School in Ndwedwe Municipality and Amatshezulu High School in Hammarsdale. The researcher joined DramAidE’s facilitators on their school visits in order to have a clear understanding of the
project's activities. For simple observation, the researcher remains an outsider of the group under study. Simple observation was preferred for this study given that the aim was to be as objective as possible when assessing DramAidE's programmes.

After a period of observation of the theatre performances, focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted in six schools. The six schools were randomly chosen from four different areas: Lihlithemba High School (Ndwedwe), Sisebenzile Secondary School (Ndwedwe), Amatshezulu High School (Georgedale/Hammarsdale), Nogunjwa High School (Kwa-Mkhinzwana/Cato-Ridge), Mnyameni Zenex Secondary School (KwaNyuswa), and Siyajabula High School (KwaNyuswa).

Focus group discussions in each school brought together between six and twelve pupils randomly chosen from any class, ensuring that females and males are equally represented where possible. Learners were asked to provide their views on their participation in DramAidE's programmes, what they had gained from them in terms of life skills and to what extent they put them into practice, and the possible problems that they encountered. Focus group discussions were generally between thirty minutes and one hour long.

In-depth semi-structured interviews were also conducted with teachers in charge of DramAidE's Clubs in schools. One teacher in each school was interviewed to ascertain how they communicated with schoolchildren, how they viewed the education given by DramAidE to their learners and the challenges they faced. Some of the limitations of the study were the restricted time for the learners to discuss their experiences, and the fact that not all learners were articulate in English and some struggled to express themselves, while the researcher did not speak Zulu, the home language of the respondents.

Key findings

Learners' perspectives

In general, there were serious discrepancies between how well learners mastered the life skills taught by DramAidE, and how learners put them into practice. The life skills taught included aspects such as self-confidence, assertiveness, decision-making skills, informed sexuality, and improved communication. Some of the life skills adopted were the result of encounters with other persons, especially the ones who lived with HIV infection, which erased some misconceptions from the learners' minds. Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which looks at human behaviour as a continuous interaction between cognitive, behavioural and environmental determinants, can be used to explain this way of adopting new life skills.

Some said they were scared and “too shy” to talk about sex in their communities, and, most females found it impossible, because they feared a kind of “what-kind-of-girl-is-this-one” judgement, and also being discredited by their parents. Therefore, for most learners, it was easier to teach their classmates at school than their broader communities where peers were said to be “too rude” and tended to undermine whatever they were taught. Peer pressure was said to affect both males and females and it was so strong that it constituted the greatest danger that drove young people into risky relationships. Most of the time, these were with multiple partners, thus preventing them from practising the newly learnt life skills.

Despite peer pressure, a certain critical consciousness was also seen through the relationships between some males and females. A number of females felt more confident about communicating their sexual problems to males because they are seen as “good secret keepers”. Therefore, stereotypes, i.e. labelling people in a fixed way, with regard to gender characteristics subsisted between males and females, thus preventing effective communication between them. Stereotypes constitute a danger to self-esteem and might spawn self-devaluation for people who are ascribed the blame (Bandura, 1997).

While it seemed that females took “love” for granted, males, on the contrary, were inclined to speak quite consistently of “just having a girlfriend”. Therefore, this common sense from young people to confuse “love” with “sex” harboured doubt that prevented learners from negotiating safer sex. DramAidE needed
to address this doubt by imparting appropriate life skills – if not yet – for a convenient habit to be attained. In addition, most Zulu women are socialised into a submissive role, and have no power over their bodies. Females’ powerlessness emerges also as a result of a number of cultural expectations including the need for them to establish their fertility while they are still teenagers in order to find a husband. The need for a husband is also material as men are generally the “breadwinners and decision-makers” in their families (Seidel, 1995).

DramAidE considers relationships between children, teachers and parents as paramount for life skills to be established. Asked about their relationships with their teachers, learners had varied views. In general, they were comfortable to communicate with their teachers, both males and females, but the learners’ environment was still full of myths and misunderstandings that tended to deny the existence of HIV and AIDS and therefore legitimate risky sexual relationships. Therefore, people tend to trivialise the pandemic probably because it is still an invisible disease. Further concern shown by learners was about DramAidE’s limited presence in rural communities. Incapable of taking action on their own as a result of various challenges, including lack of credibility among their peers, learners saw DramAidE’s follow-ups as more than a necessity.

**Teachers’ perspectives**

Teachers in charge of DramAidE’s health clubs in schools explained that the clubs increased their communication with pupils about their sexual behaviours. They were now consulted more regularly by pupils who felt intimidated by their parents. However, some of DramAidE’s teachings contradicted pupils’ culture because some learners cherished “traditional” beliefs and attitudes. Despite difficulties encountered, teachers believed that DramAidE had done enough to empower them to carry on teaching life skills if the project ceased its interventions. However, they still need to be backed up by the support of DramAidE’s teams who served as a catalyst to sort out a number of problems when they sometimes lacked funds and logistics. Further challenges existing in some schools related to the sustainability of programmes as most only run for one year. This lack of sustainability to a certain extent challenges DramAidE’s objective, which is to form clubs in schools that will become self-sufficient and to encourage the school community to build a culture of learning and health promotion in schools (Dalrymple, 1997).

**Parents’ perspectives**

Parents understood the dire need for their children to be provided with life skills enabling them to live their lives positively within their community. Many parents recognised the difficulty that they experienced in communicating with their children, either because they did not have time to follow up with their children or because the latter were more open to their friends than to their families. But the most important reason for this lack of sexual education stemmed basically from their culture that considered the discussion of anything related to sexuality as taboo. Zulus are not the only ones to keep sexuality secret. Of all the cultures in South Africa, none of them has traditions that make it easy for men and women to talk openly and seriously about sexual behaviours (Deutsch & Swartz, 2002). However, some parents, torn between the necessity to preserve their culture and the need to provide their offspring with a serious sexual education, said they were very open to their children getting sexual education from elsewhere, such as at school, but not from themselves.

Some parents thought that the DramAidE life-skills programme was probably the cause of the academic failure of their children who spent much of their time preparing and performing plays. This view comes within a general understanding of many teachers and parents in South Africa, who think that schools are being asked too much, and instead of concentrating on their studies, they distract pupils with life-skills games. Some educators substantiate this point with the argument that the best predictor of health and longevity is educational achievements.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

DramAidE is based on a constructivist approach, and strives to apply a participatory-driven pedagogy. It takes the learners’ needs into consideration in order to empower them. DramAidE aims
to use plays, workshops, and open days to establish dialogue
between health workers and school communities. The project has
imparted a number of life skills to young learners, who participated
enthusiastically in the traditional expressive forms used by the
project. However, a number of obstacles to the project exist.
These included: the “banking education” system, uncooperative
caregivers and teachers, lack of information and support necessary
for peer educators to play a significant role in their community,
cultural beliefs and attitudes, and peer pressure. Sexuality was
considered an intimate subject, and young people were unlikely to
change their sexual practices, or to benefit from being taught by
their elders about sexuality.

This study found that information does not always yield the
intention to seek change, especially when the doubt agitated is
deep-rooted in the beneficiaries’ culture. Peer educators should
be able to serve as role models but this is not always the case.
Learners were more inclined to talk to their peers, and to gain self-
confidence that enabled them to fix their newly acquired life skills
through social networks. This research indicates that Freireian
pedagogy is used by DramAidE, and has been readapted to local
circumstances where the project’s action initially clashed with the
community’s cultural beliefs. One may conclude that Freireian
pedagogy is applicable to the South African educational context
provided that participatory techniques are readapted frequently to
fit beneficiaries’ needs.

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A comparative analysis of the efficacy of a once-off forum theatre intervention and weekly ongoing workshops used by DramAidE

Hannah Mangenda (Honours, 2008)

Problem statement
Paulo Freire, Brazilian educator and author of Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) argues that “if humankind produce social reality [...] then transforming that reality is an historical task, a task for humanity” (1970:33). DramAidE, an independent non-governmental organisation attached to the universities of Zululand and KwaZulu-Natal, is inspired by Paulo Freire’s liberating theory of education and “uses drama methodologies to critically engage young people to communicate effectively about issues relating to sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS” (Dalrymple, 2004:2). One of DramAidE’s projects, a travelling theatre show, visits many schools in one area; and another project holds weekly workshops with the same schools and students.

The drama methodologies mainly used in these interventions are forum theatre and role play respectively, both being largely inspired by Augusto Boal, a Brazilian theatre practitioner and social activist, and adapted for the South African context. This paper will investigate and compare the efficacy of each of these approaches according to DramAidE’s stated aims.

Objectives
This paper focuses on examining and comparing the weekly workshops of the “Act Alive” clubs, which use role-play methods, as well as the forum theatre technique in the travelling theatre performances. Both approaches use drama to engage the participants, to stimulate critical reflection on the presented situation (and in extension on their own life), to provide a space for meaningful debate and to present an opportunity to rehearse skills needed in real life. The most obvious difference between forum theatre and the workshops as used by DramAidE is the fact that the forum theatre show is a once-off intervention (recurring at most once a year) and the workshops are ongoing for at least a year. The forum theatre performance therefore needs to be self-contained and restricted to the school setting it is performed in, while the club not only builds on past experiences, but also actively tries to reach out into the wider community. On the other hand, due to its nature as a travelling theatre show, the forum theatre performance reaches many more learners than the workshops (close to 100 000 people as opposed to 900).

Links to other literature in the field
Dominique Nduhura’s (2004) study concluded that although DramAidE was very successful in imparting knowledge and changing the attitudes of the learners in the clubs, it was very hard for the youth to change their behaviour – and especially maintain the changed behaviour – because of “peer pressures and other culture-based hindrances abounding in their communities” which also “prevented them from spreading information they got from DramAidE” (2004:62). This points to social factors that may limit the efficacy of the DramAidE programme. These may include “poverty, limited access to health and social services, labour migration, urbanisation, unemployment, poor education, the inferior social position of women, diversities in language and culture amongst others” (Kelly, Parker & Lewis, 2001:2).

Miranda Young’s (1997) study of gender dynamics and DramAidE focuses on the aspect of the “inferior social position of women” and argues that if any “change in attitude is to be translated into a change in behaviour” it is necessary to recognise the “interconnected nature of the oppressions of race, class and gender” (1997:63). Validating the points made above, Nupen, when interviewing youth partaking in DramAidE clubs, found that “one of the major challenges that directly impacts on the success of the project is the difficulty of gaining acceptance from the community at large.
that there is equality between men and women” (2007:17). Nupen concluded therefore that the focus of the DramAidE programmes is to not only teach learners about sexuality but also to “work collaboratively with educators, learners, the Departments of Health and Social Welfare and Education respectively, as well as the community in the selected areas of KwaZulu-Natal, to creatively share information about the complicated nature and effects of HIV and AIDS” (2007:3).

These findings go hand in hand with DramAidE’s stated goal “to create a network of peer educators that practise safer sex and other positive behaviours, and initiate a social movement that promotes healthy lifestyles” (dramaide.co.za). This research assesses the efficacy of both the DramAidE weekly workshops and of the forum theatre show in promoting this goal.

**Theoretical framework**

With the shift in development communication came also a shift of how development should be brought about and who should be in charge of the process (Parker, 1997:49). These insights and others led to a “call for a model of development communication based on *dialogue* versus monologue, *horizontal* versus vertical information sharing, equitable *participation*, *local ownership*, *empowerment*, and *social* versus individual change” (Figueroa et al, 2002:3). An attempt at such a model can be found in communication for social change (CFSC) and later the communication for participatory development (CFPD) model, which 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” (Figueroa et al, 2002). These models are 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.

One example of development communication in which this shift towards participatory methodologies is apparent is Entertainment Education (EE), of which DramAidE considers itself to be a part, which can be defined as the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience knowledge about an educational issue, create favourable attitudes and change overt behaviour (Singhal & Rogers, 1999:9).

Arguably one of the theories that exerted the biggest influence on EE is Albert Bandura’s social learning theory which states that “individuals learn not only in classrooms but also by observing role models in everyday life, including characters in movies and television programmes” (Singhal & Rogers, 1999:65). EE practitioners found, though, that no two audience members take the same route in this process and are obviously influenced in their decisions and actions by their social environment. This realisation signalled a shift towards a growing desire to understand the meaning-making process more fully, and away from the focus on individual behaviour change towards a more holistic social change paradigm.

For people to transform themselves it therefore does not only require them to recognise the need for change and to have the will to change, but they also need to be empowered to take action. Emma Durden argues that “individual change is unlikely to be sustained unless the context in which it occurs is supportive of those changes” (Durden, 2003:78). This mirrors the findings of the DramAidE studies quoted above and supports the notion that DramAidE’s goal of an inclusive approach is not only timely, but indeed necessary.

Freire argues that to change the oppressive system and to transform their reality, the oppressed first have to become conscientised; which means they have to come to realise that the oppressive system is not just and can indeed be changed by them. This conscientisation then leads to emotional independence and praxis, which Freire defines as “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (1970:33). But he warns that conscientisation cannot “be packaged and sold” but can only come about through sincere dialogue and proposes “a humanising pedagogy” as one form of conscientisation. This new form of communication replaces the “banking” concept of education in which students are seen as passive, empty receptacles with “problem-posing education”
which views students as actively involved in their own learning process and as people already experienced and knowledgeable in many aspects.

It is this view of the world as a reality in process, and the belief in one’s own power to transform it, that DramAidE wants to offer to its participants. Since it mostly uses drama methodologies to arrive at this goal, it is strongly influenced by Augusto Boal, who heavily relied on Freire’s ideas to create his Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal agrees with Freire that it is necessary to break the culture of silence to transform society and claims that “to speak is to take power” (1979:xx). He therefore created a form of theatre that allowed the spectator to become a “spect-actor”, actively suggesting and even acting out solutions to the problems posed on stage. He places the emphasis of the outcome more on the intellectual conscientisation of the audience than the action itself.

While forum theatre in practice often struggles to completely destroy these barriers, interactive workshops using role play have frequently succeeded in creating a space of collective acting and reflecting. Role play can be defined as “an active, experience-based learning method, in which learners explore a situation as though they were the people involved in it” (Hunt, 1989:3) and is a method extensively used by DramAidE in their workshops. For role play to be successful though, it is necessary that “the role is taken on in a safe environment in which students are as inventive and playful as possible […] and by doing so, are experimenting with their knowledge of the real world and developing their ability to interact with people [my italics]” (Ladousse, 1987:5). One could therefore describe role play as taking the premises of forum theatre (participation and empowerment) to another level. In that sense then they do not differ much in their essential goals and methods, but more in their settings and levels of participation.

**Methodology**

This research falls within the interpretative paradigm, involving mixed methods to discover more about the DramAidE programme and its effects. Questionnaires were used with two sample groups of learners from the same school who had seen a forum theatre (FT) play the previous year and who took part in the DramAidE club which held weekly workshops. The first sample group comprised of 13 respondents who ranged from grade nine to twelve learners, and the second sample group of 40 respondents who were in grade eleven. Both sample groups were found in the same school, which is on the one hand an advantage since it means that the learners share a similar environment, but can also have influenced the outcome of the questionnaires in terms of the FT group’s answers.

In addition to the questionnaires, the researcher joined two DramAidE facilitators, and observed both a weekly workshop (in a primary school) and two FT performances in two high schools. Thereafter, a qualitative in-depth interview (approx. 45 min) was conducted with each one of the two facilitators and informal conversations held with other DramAidE staff focusing on why they chose the respective drama methodology in their projects, what they see as its strengths and weaknesses and how they see this tying in with the broader field of development communication or communication for social change.

**Key findings**

Speaking about her experience using drama methodologies (mainly role play) in the workshops and why she considers these useful, Mesuli Ntshalintshali, a DramAidE facilitator, said that “people are able to express themselves freely when using drama […] Then the realities that have gone unchallenged are being given a chance to be challenged […] with drama you get people to talk about those things without there being a quarrel”. Ntshalintshali attributes this success of drama in opening learners up to the shift in the power relations that goes hand in hand with the participatory method, “because you know most of the time they are used to lecture-type learning with the teacher in front in the position of power […] So with drama I am able to be myself and learn – in a fun way” (interview, May 2008).

The learners’ answers seem to mostly support these claims, especially the one that the drama methodologies are working...
very well in engaging the learners in the process. All respondents in the FT group, for example, said that the show was either “very enjoyable” (the vast majority) or “a bit enjoyable” and all respondents in the workshop group said that they found the process “very enjoyable”. The reasons for the enjoyment differed at certain points though. While the FT respondents said that the play itself and the transfer of information were enjoyable, the workshop group had a much wider range of answers. Some of them also said the reason for their enjoyment was the learning, while others were more cognisant of the effects of the process, like gaining in confidence and meeting different people, or simply enjoying acting in the role plays and getting goodies (like T-shirts).

These more differentiated answers from the workshop participants can also be found when comparing other answers in the two questionnaires. For example, when asked what they remembered as the main topic of the show/workshops students in both groups remembered the factual knowledge they gained (mainly about HIV and AIDS, drugs and alcohol) and the positive behaviour advocated around these topics, but some learners in the workshop group also remembered “self-awareness and goal setting” as the main topic.

Interestingly, when asked what they learned from the play/workshop that was new to them, some learners (mostly female) replied that they learned from the FT that “your actions affect your life” and that one should “respect oneself”, obviously having reflected on the action shown on stage and drawn some conclusions about the reasons for the events portrayed. Although the workshop participants mentioned almost the same issues as the FT audience, they phrased them differently. In most cases, they added a “how to” at the front, indicating that they not only learned what the appropriate action in a given situation should be, but also how to implement it. Interesting here is that while drugs seem equally important to boys and girls, it was two boys who mentioned “how to live with HIV” and two girls who wrote “how to stand up against abuse”, indicating different lived experiences and that both of them were catered for in the workshops.

When asked what they thought about in their “life outside” after the show/workshop many learners in the FT group, especially girls, said that they thought about how to apply their new understandings to their own life, while a substantial number also indicated that they were mostly thinking about the characters and the form of the play. A minority stated that they did not think about it afterwards. When looking at the answers of the workshop group it is striking that half of the girls indicated that rather than just thinking about it, they talked about it with their friends. It is important to note here that this does not mean that the FT participants did not speak about the show afterwards. A question aiming at determining this factor was not, but should have been, included in the questionnaire. Even more encouraging is that all of the boys and half of the girls in the workshop group said they remembered the club’s advice and acted more responsibly.

In comparison, when directly asked if the play caused them to act differently, about 5% of the FT group mentioned various situations in which they changed their behaviour but the overwhelming majority said they did not change their behaviour. Also interesting here is the comment of one girl who related that she started abstaining because her friend got pregnant and because of the play. This points to the accumulative effect an intervention such as this play can have when it reinforces other events and thoughts in people’s lives.

When examining the response to the FT performance, it is interesting that only 27.5% of the audience stated they remembered best the different issues covered in the play and 12.5% remembered how to apply the message to their own lives, while almost half of the respondents said they remembered best the different show elements, especially the dancing. Learners of the workshop group also remembered best the activities (rather than the topics, for example), but they laid the emphasis more on the outcome of these activities, their increased confidence.

When asked if they think it is beneficial to them to have an FT performance in school, all of the respondents in the FT group said they think a show like this is useful, with 65% claiming that it
teaches them about life and 20% stating it motivates them to do better.

These answers were echoed almost exactly by the workshop respondents who said they found the workshops very useful because they “learnt a lot about life” and it “motivates you to change your life”. Interesting here is that both of these answers were given equally frequently, with the girls leaning more towards the first and the boys toward the second answer. It is noteworthy that only one person replied the workshops were useful because they “can help others with the knowledge gained”.

Conclusions and recommendations

Measuring the efficacy of a once-off forum theatre intervention and weekly ongoing workshops provided by DramAidE, one can conclude that both projects examined did achieve the stated goal of equipping young people with increased knowledge about HIV and AIDS and the skills to inform and communicate with others about sexual health; but the weekly workshops were more successful in achieving the goal of creating a network of peer educators that practice safer sex and other positive behaviours, and initiate a social movement that promotes healthy lifestyles.

This result will not be surprising to many development communication practitioners, who argue for an ongoing, inclusive and dialogical process (Figueroa et al, 2002:ii), which “operates strategically within three interlinked units of change: the individual, the community and the broader society” (Tufte, 2002). It is the failure of the travelling theatre show to address these interlinked units and to move “from a ‘production-centred’ approach to a more ‘audience centered’ approach” (Singhal & Rogers, 1999:222), which also accounts for its failure to transcend teaching the learners a solution, and to help them analyse the deeper causes of the problem and come up with their own solutions, which, at least in part, was achieved by the workshops. It seems that Freire’s premise of the interaction between individuals and their community, before being communicated to the learners, has to first be truly internalised by DramAidE itself, and be accounted for in the planning of their interventions.

To explain these results even further, DramAidE’s goal of imparting knowledge as first-order change which “occurs within the given system which itself remains unchanged” while the second goal of initiating a social movement would constitute a second-order change in which “the system itself changes” (Watzlawick et al quoted in Singhal et al, 2006:271). Singhal et al argue that this “second-order change requires greater creativity and prolonged investment of time and contact by a change agent [my italics]” (2006:271). It follows then that a once-off theatre show, no matter how participatory and inspiring, is not able to bring about second-order change, simply because it is not sustained.

It can be argued that the forum theatre performance managed to bring most students to the first two stages in which they felt included and in control of the situation, while it did not manage to create an atmosphere of intimacy, in which most students felt free to voice their concerns. It did on the other hand empower a few learners to take action. The weekly workshops, though, seemingly moved almost all of the participants through the first three stages and empowered more than half to change their behaviour, with a few of them mentioning that they gained a new vision of their life, which inspired them to set goals and to share their knowledge with others. While the forum theatre performance was by no means without effect, it becomes clear then that the participants of the weekly workshops in general did advance further on the scale of positive youth development and therefore did fulfil DramAidE’s self-set goal of second-order change more, although not in all cases.

While the once-off forum theatre performance then did not cause the behaviour change it desired, it did prove a very effective means of sharing information, since most audience members remembered not only the overall issues, but also the desired behaviour and how this might apply to their own lives. It does therefore seem to have great value as a tool when a simple transfer of information is desired or as one of many inputs in a longer intervention. This became clear, for example, when one girl mentioned that she started to abstain because her friend fell pregnant and she watched the show. While neither of these events caused the behaviour change on its own, it was their accumulative effect that had the desired outcome.
After researching this project I agree with Nupen that the facilitators take on “a weighty responsibility” (2007:22; also see interviews; White, 2006) and feel that while the methods used by them are researched to quite a degree, the role of the facilitator’s personality, life style and training in the process is one yet to be examined in more detail.

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CHAPTER 4
Research into Radio as a Medium for Entertainment Education

Radio is a popular, largely portable, medium which requires some outlay for the initial technology but is then freely available to listeners. As such, radio is a widely popular medium throughout South Africa. Three different types of radio station are identified, namely: public radio, community radio and commercial radio.

Public radio in South Africa is operated by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). This is a state-owned but financially independent corporation, which derives income from advertising and licence fees. The mandate of the SABC is to provide both a commercial and public service, each administered separately, with commercial radio stations subsidising the public-service stations. The SABC includes 18 radio stations, reaching an average daily adult audience of 19 million (Statistics South Africa, 2007). As such, it has the widest reach of any local broadcaster.

Community radio stations in South Africa came into existence after 1994 when the country’s airwaves were deregulated, and over 100 community stations currently exist in South Africa, catering to a wide variety of geographic, language and interest groups. There are a further 12 commercial radio stations licensed in South Africa, and these rely predominantly on advertising revenue for their continued success.

This chapter covers some of the theory and uses of radio as a communication tool in the health and development sphere. Case studies are provided of radio stations and radio shows that make differently effective use of the medium for health communications.

The section includes summaries of two post-graduate student papers. Contributors include: Musi Khumalo (2002); and Nisha Ramlutchman and Kamini Moodley (2003).

Musi Khumalo’s (2002) research investigates the inclusion of HIV and AIDS messages in the daily radio drama series aired on the popular Zulu-language radio station, Ukhozi FM. Through individual interviews with programme managers at the radio station, khumalo ascertained that Ukhozi had not fully capitalised on the popularity of its weekday radio-drama serial to promote HIV and AIDS prevention messages. Citing a range of EE scholars and behaviour-change theorists, Khumalo argues that radio has the potential to set a pro-social HIV and AIDS agenda, and that Ukhozi FM fails its social responsibility to do so in a region beset with an uncomfortably high incidence of the disease.

Radio coverage of HIV and AIDS issues is also explored by Nisha Ramlutchman and Kamini Moodley (2003) who analyse the partnership between the youth radio station Yfm and the NGO loveLife, who joined forces to broadcast a health promotion talk show (Youth Crossfire) to target teenagers with messages about HIV and AIDS and sexuality.

Both research projects reflect that behind-the-scenes politics provide challenges that prevent radio from being well utilised as a medium for pro-social messaging with regard to HIV and AIDS. Both projects were concluded at the beginning of the decade, and much has changed since then, with a range of more successful radio shows currently being broadcasted.
Problem statement
In today's highly commercialised environment, the raison d’etre of a public broadcaster should be the prioritisation of good programming rather than numbers. This responsibility is rooted in the need to enlighten the public and of the broadcast medium being a public space in which social and political life unfolds democratically (Raboy, 1996:6). The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is South Africa’s public broadcaster with a network of nineteen radio stations under its ambit.

Ukhozi FM, as part of this network and with a strong social responsibility mandate, commands a listenership of around 4.6 million listeners making it the largest radio station in the southern hemisphere (Ukhozi FM website). The station's main broadcast area, KwaZulu-Natal, is the most densely populated province in the country with 8.4 million people who are predominantly Zulu speakers, and Zulu is the broadcast language of the station. Based on the above, a communication intervention targeting a mass audience would reach a large part of the country's populace, especially in KwaZulu-Natal.

The HIV-prevalence rates place KwaZulu-Natal at the top of the list in South Africa, with 36.2% (Department of Health, 2000). Further revelations indicate unexpected patterns of distribution of HIV by age which ultimately call for prevention efforts to be sustained beyond the youth category, which has constituted most of the target population of such actions so far (DoH, 2000). The question then arises as to what role the public broadcaster, and in this specific case, Ukhozi FM, should be playing in this regard.

Objectives
In its bid to “stay in touch on issues that directly affect its audience” (Ukhozi FM website), the radio station has created a time slot to accommodate a social drama series, which, due to increased popularity, is broadcast four times a day from Monday through to Thursday.

The focus of this research is to establish whether Ukhozi FM, as the major radio station in the province, has played its part in educating and conscientising KwaZulu-Natal's population about HIV and AIDS prevention and management through its weekday social drama serial.

This includes the following research questions:

- How are the scripts for the drama series created?
- What is the content of these scripts in relation to HIV and AIDS?
- How are these scripts received by their intended audience?

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review explores the role of the public broadcaster, and the potential of radio to be an effective medium for informing people about HIV and AIDS in an entertaining way.

In the absence at present of a vaccine or cure for AIDS, “the single most important component of national AIDS programmes is information and education... and media has the power to set the agenda in this regard” (Stein, 2001:1). Three specific issues are highlighted in this statement, namely (1) desperation at the lack of significant progress in finding a medical/clinical solution to the AIDS pandemic (2) recognition that the current usable defence weapon in combating the disease is access to education and information for the populace and (3) the recognition of the importance of the agenda-setting role of the media.

Public broadcasting
Public broadcasting can be seen as “broadcasting with a purpose
to enhance the quality of public life, empowering individuals and social groups to participate more fully and equitably... it aims to touch people, to move them, to change them” (Raboy, 1996:13). Public broadcasting principally conceives its audience not as a market but as a public, creating a social agenda for its audience rather than a market-driven one (Raboy, 1996:5).

The public service broadcasting radio station becomes a public sphere for its audience. The public sphere describes a process of participation “by which people bring themselves into verbal contact with each other” (Sholar, 1994:79). In this case, the public is not the centre of a government or state but a “human shared life, with communal well-being, with a community whose interests are at stake” (Sholar, 1994:78).

**Entertainment Education**

Entertainment Education (EE) is “the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate in order to increase audience knowledge about an education issue, create favourable attitudes and change overt behaviour” (Singhal & Rogers, 2001:12). EE ultimately talks about a strategic process meant to design and implement a common form with both entertainment and educative elements, which enhance and facilitate pro-social behaviour. The assumption is that there is no homogenous audience with similar negative sexual behaviours but that communication interventions should nonetheless be able to enhance positive behaviours.

EE is an appropriate communication tool for HIV and AIDS awareness on public radio. One should also note that EE has been consciously applied, with significant success, to HIV and AIDS prevention and control in the form of radio drama and television soap-operas (Fossard, 1996). In fact, radio is a powerful form of communication that “motivates while entertainment creates bonds among” the community members and subsequently sets a social agenda whilst telling a story that the audience would like to hear (Fossard, 1996:7). The non-pernicious nature of the EE component in the social drama increases the message acceptability among the drama’s audience.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

The research rests on theories of behaviour change, exploring how radio drama can be informed by these theories.

No single communications model or theory can successfully claim behavioural change in people through exposure to a message but an integration of behavioural change theories and models can produce results over time. When important developments in HIV and AIDS take place, these developments need to be diffused to the people using the most effective and appropriate medium of influence, and preferred programme format, in this case Ukhozi FM radio station and the drama serial.

The diffusion theory was developed to explain how a new idea or behaviour spreads through a social system (usually a group or community) over time. The mass media, in this case Ukhozi FM radio station, introduces information about HIV and AIDS into the social drama series to reach the audience (a community). Ultimately it is also the “social networks and interpersonal communication that spread the information further within the community” (Fossard, 1996:5). Exposure to the message will help the audience to reflect on it and evaluate and determine further action on it.

The theory of reasoned action (Fossard, 1996:4) indicates that before taking action on the new idea or innovation, people tend to weigh the merits and de-merits of adopting the innovation and give deep thought about what other people’s reactions might be. This emphasises the fact that people do not always make impromptu decisions on new ideas but do so after considering alternatives and not simply because someone advised them on the course of action to take, regardless of the credibility of the source of innovation.

The health behaviour model (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:132), on the other hand, is based on the assumption that individuals will take preventive action only if they perceive that the consequences of not adopting the preventive measure will be severe, and where the benefits far outweigh the barriers through which one passes in taking such preventive action.
Although communication has a marked effect on behaviour, research shows that behaviour change rarely happens immediately upon exposure to the message. Usually people must pass through a series of stages, quickly for some (the early adopters) and more slowly for others (the late adopters) (Fossard, 1996:6). This normally begins with the section of the community that takes the lead in embracing the idea, the innovators, who are generally the minority, whilst the majority probably adopt a “wait and see” approach. The sceptic early adopters and early majority are then followed by the late majority (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:125).

The above theories and models tend to focus on the individual’s emotional capacity to reason out an innovation before adoption and yet other elements also play special roles in behaviour change. The individual’s belief in self-empowerment (Bandura, 1994:25), role-modelling, which is the observation of “other people performing a behaviour in real life or drama” (Fossard, 1996:5) and para-social interaction which occurs when people start to visualise fictitious characters in the drama as being real people are all important.

Research methods and methodology
This research is an example of inductive research, in that the study begins with observations and then generates a hypothesis that fits the data. This involved a “post-broadcast” evaluation activity, where semi-structured and focused interviews with the radio station management, writers and production staff were planned and executed. The questions for these interviews were based on the theories of behaviour changes discussed above, as well as the notion of EE and the role of the public broadcaster in HIV and AIDS education. While the study was originally planned to include an investigation into the content, audience reach and reception of the drama series, this was rendered impossible by the lack of archives held by the radio station. Neither recording scripts nor feedback material like letters and telephone call registers were available. This means that all of the collected data was only from officials at the radio station, and may therefore be biased.

Key findings
Ukhozi FM has a participatory tripartite content decision-making process comprised of the station personnel, the audience and the creative talent (writers). These collective considerations become the basis for the selection of drama themes, although the editorial and production decisions are the prerogative of the station personnel. The station personnel select recording material, which they perceive to be culturally relevant and pertinent to the community who are the audience. This material is subsequently adopted for recording.

The drama scripts go through a structured vetting procedure, which is undertaken by academically qualified and culturally sensitive personnel. The popularity of the drama series lies in the entertainment element. The station collaborates with both public and private stakeholders in HIV and AIDS education. For instance, Ukhozi FM collaborates with Soul City in message design, as can be noted in the station’s adoption of the abstinence value as an AIDS-prevention intervention tool; and the condemnation of those people who use the media to promote dubious miracle cures which cause moral panic amongst the community. The writer (interview, 2002) also refers to the use of the Soul City literature as reference material in script formulation for his award-winning HIV and AIDS serial drama in 1994.

The formulation of the different characters for the series is the ultimate responsibility of the writer. The studio producer determines that the storyline and character formulation should always include localised issues, local actors and positive characters that are always meant to predominate and become victorious in their roles in the dramas. Respondents noted that the audience emulates the positive characters in the Ukhozi FM drama, citing evidence that taxis and people have been named after positive characters in the drama. They also suggested that the series encouraged open-discussion amongst people about the drama. However, it was not possible to verify these claims during the research process.

What is clear is that there is next to no HIV and AIDS message presence in the drama. HIV and AIDS education and awareness is
carried in other general programming but not in the drama serial. The respondents’ sentiments were that “HIV and AIDS depresses people, if you are writing drama, you always make sure that people will be interested in your drama, that’s why most of the writers do not talk about AIDS and HIV” (interviews, 2002). In addition, from the list of eight different drama themes adopted by Ukhozi FM, there is a glaring absence of HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, as preferred themes.

Generally, the respondents expressed their satisfaction in the high popularity of the drama series. They base these unsubstantiated convictions on the (1) high number of letters that were sent in after the completion of the series, (2) high numbers of telephone calls during and immediately after the series finished airing; and (3) inter-personal interaction of audience in public spaces such as taxi ranks and streets. The researcher was, however, not privy to these letters and the telephone register due to the disposal of these by the station.

Conclusions and recommendations

Although the research reflected that some HIV and AIDS material was used by the scriptwriter for a previous drama series, it is apparent that Ukhozi FM has not managed to capitalise on the popularity of its radio drama series to fulfil its social responsibility mandate with regard to HIV and AIDS education. The lack of a clear pro-social HIV and AIDS agenda in an area beset with an uncomfortably high incidence of the disease is of concern.

The assumption is that the station, in the highly competitive market-driven broadcast environment, needs to respond to audience preferences. The respondents felt that the subject matter of HIV and AIDS would decrease the popularity of the radio drama. Boring educational programmes on health matters which invariably take on the instructional format in news, magazine programmes and features, are a turn-off for today’s highly critical and participative audience, especially for an audience with a wide choice of information source centres.

When the “first law of mass entertainment” (Singhal & Rogers, 2001:11) is observed and most people are confronted with a choice between deriving pleasure from serious non-entertainment fare or from non-serious entertainment fare, they will choose the latter in much greater proportion than the former because of the attractiveness of the message content. Radio drama script writers should then “piggy-back” on the crest of this entertainment appreciation wave as long as there is no great value shift where the education content is completely lost in a bid to entertain. This piggy-backing could form part of an integrated AIDS-education plan, as advocated by Tomaselli and Shepperson (1996).

Behavioural change is predicated on the dissemination of one AIDS message by all media, and the modelling of an Entertainment Education strategy by Ukhozi FM could slot in with this singular message and become part of a multimedia approach to the pandemic. Ukhozi FM could go a long way to fulfilling its social obligations by developing an AIDS message and aligning it with other media campaigns to move towards a single AIDS-education objective.

One wonders why there exists the noticeable absence of this subject matter on the station’s drama agenda when, through the popularity of the time slot, it has been ascertained that the Entertainment Education drama can play a crucial role in facilitating communication about HIV and AIDS in a participatory manner “between the change agents and the ‘grass-roots’ of society” (Kerr, 1997: 1).

The research suggests that there is a lack of clear policy formulation, and implementation with regard to HIV and AIDS content at Ukhozi FM. Such policy may ensure that the HIV and AIDS subject matter becomes one of the permanent features in the drama serial cycle. While radio cannot provide “foreground communication” it is an appropriate medium for serving the vital function of “background communication” (Parker et al, 2000:12). Ukhozi FM could and should be playing this role.
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An analysis of the partnership between Radio Yfm and loveLife

Nisha Ramlutchman and Kamini Moodley (Honours, 2003)

Problem statement
Radio has become an intense, fast and informative way of projecting ideas around certain health issues. HIV and AIDS organisations have utilised this mass media mechanism to influence, adopt and even change attitudes and behaviours. Health promotion through the intricate structures of radio has made possible positive outcomes in some instances.

The organisation loveLife has used the youth radio station, Yfm to broadcast a health promotion talk show (Youth Crossfire) to target teenagers with messages about HIV and AIDS and sexuality. In relation to the concept of Education Entertainment, Yfm catered to the entertainment aspect of the programme, whilst loveLife provided the educational information. However, both loveLife and Yfm ascribe to a multi-media approach, and thus the boundaries between the entertainment medium (Yfm) and the information carrier (loveLife) became somewhat blurred. Yfm and loveLife have since April 2002 discontinued Youth Crossfire on the airwaves.

Objectives
This research is an investigation into the relationship between Yfm and loveLife, focusing on the reasons behind the partnership, the strategic processes adopted by loveLife in the implementation of the programme, and the reasons behind the discontinuation of Youth Crossfire on air.

This included the following research questions:
• Why did loveLife benchmark Yfm as the first radio station through which to be introduced to radio broadcasting?
• Does loveLife benefit from such an affiliation specifically with Yfm?
• Has Yfm incurred any losses in rating since the discontinuation of the partnership?

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review examines the use of radio for broadcasting public health messages, and explores the history and the relationship between loveLife and Yfm.

The medium of radio is often used for social benefits. Esta de Fossard observes that: “radio is a universal and versatile medium of communication that can be used for the benefit of society. Throughout the world, radio has been used to encourage positive individual behaviour change and constructive social change” (1997:2).

Launched in South Africa in September 1999, loveLife is an ambitious effort to reduce the number of HIV infections amongst South African youth, targeting 12 to 17 year olds. loveLife often refers to itself as a research-intensive intervention. Major funding for loveLife is made possible by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Henry J Kaiser Family Foundation, as well as additional funding by the South African government (loveLife, 2003).

loveLife uses “high-powered mass media complemented with service delivery and outreach support to promote alternative lifestyles to youth” (loveLife, 2003). It also uses a multi-media approach, with media programmes that “provide access to knowledge in the hope of influencing attitudes toward sexuality through radio, television, print and billboard” (Stadler & Hlongwa, 2002:366).

loveLife is geared towards creating, developing and maintaining their brand image, and to ensure this, “loveLife” the name,
needs to be popular amongst the youth of South Africa, to be a recognisable brand. loveLife’s branding strategy recognises the high degree of brand awareness, association and loyalty amongst young South Africans. David Harrison (CEO of loveLife) explains that loveLife aims to “create a brand so strong that young people who want to be hip and cool and the rest of it, want to associate with it” (Delate, 2001).

In South Africa, the medium of radio as a form of entertainment reaches a far wider audience than any other medium, such as television or the print media. However, radio as a medium through which to entertain and educate has not been fully utilised. loveLife was quick to identify this gap and negotiate a partnership with radio Yfm to formulate a radio programme.

Established in 1997, Yfm had a rapid ascent in popularity and now enjoys unparalleled loyalty from South Africa’s urban youth, ages 16 to 29. Yfm is touted as “the biggest regional radio station in South Africa pulling 1 552 000 listeners per week and currently enjoying the 8th consecutive ratings increase” (Yfm, 2003). Yfm combines strong marketing, advertising and promotional skills in creating and maintaining their brand image. This is accomplished by their multi-media approach, using various mediums, channels and outlets to disseminate their brand image. In 1998, Yfm released a national youth lifestyle magazine called YMag, which, in 2003, was still going strong. In 2000, YWorld, its website, was the number one urban youth portal in Africa and the Yfm Rewards Club, a card-based loyalty programme targeting loyal listeners, was created (Yfm, 2003).

Apart from the strong branding of the Yfm station, its personnel are actively marketed into strong personality figures in the community. The radio station’s DJs are hip and young, reflecting and enhancing the image of the station itself. The uniqueness of Yfm, though, lies in the fact that the station does not adhere to a single broadcasting language. This makes it an ideal medium through which to reach a multi-cultural group of young people.

In addition to this, Yfm has a strong social responsibility agenda. Yfm “acknowledges and accepts its social responsibility” (Khumalo, 2002:4) in providing its youth audience with information on sexual awareness. The social responsibilities approach “can make a significant contribution… to helping society cope with its social consequences” (Adam and Harford, 1999:33).

Concepts and theory informing the research

This research project falls under the broad framework of Entertainment Education (EE), and theories supporting EE are used to inform the research approach. Underpinning the Entertainment Education approach are four key factors: marketing, persuasive communication, play theory, and social learning coupled with self-efficacy.

Marketing necessitates an analysis into consumer behaviour, needs and desires as well as understanding your product. EE builds on this by marketing persuasive health messages. Persuasive communication looks at the need to develop messages and programmes that provide rational and/or emotional appeals. It also takes into account the heuristic cues, why people decide to reject or accept a particular message.

Persuasion theory draws attention to the message factors and source factors in influencing an audience. The message factors take into consideration the length of the message, the language to be used, how the message should be presented, using fear, humour or logic, etc. It takes into consideration that different audiences will have different preferences for message style. Building on this, EE makes use of play theory, which depicts pleasure as a legitimate form of escapism, providing people with information and para-social interaction. Thus the messages encapsulated in EE are both playful and persuasive.

Albert Bandura’s social learning theory (1977) focuses on “modelling” and “trial and error” experiences. This notion of social learning centred around the ability of individuals to learn and acknowledge after engaging in an activity, and then to build on that experience. The second area, of modelling, discusses how
individuals actually learn from others in that they want and need to be and act just like the individual being modelled, in terms of social responsible behaviour (Bandura, 1977:21).

The social learning theory draws attention to the social rather than the individual aspects of communication and behaviour, although it is still largely concerned with how individual people make sense of the social environment and decide what to do, this involves efficacy, modelling and para-social interaction. Self-efficacy stresses the belief in the ability for people to make changes in their own interest. It also accounts for collective efficacy, people or a community joining together to facilitate a change (Coleman, 1999).

This project pays attention to a particular aspect of Education Entertainment, that is, how partnerships between (in this instance) a media channel (Yfm) and a health-awareness intervention (loveLife) effects the dissemination of the message, and the creation of an awareness of health issues amongst the youth.

Research methods and methodology
The research comprised of in-depth, semi-structured interviews as well as extensive internet research. These interviews were conducted with key personnel at both Yfm radio station and loveLife. Interviewees included key members from both organisations, including the Director of Radio (loveLife), Tamblyn Warnasuriya; the Yfm DJ, and Head of Social Responsibility Desk, Andile Gaesiwe; Yfm DJ, Advisory Board Member of LoveLife, and host of Youth Crossfire, “Rudeboy” Paul; and the Yfm Station Manager, Dirk Hartford.

A limitation of the research was that interviewees from both organisations knew the interview questions in advance. This could have impacted on their responses to the questions, in that they may have consolidated their information, and even perhaps “agreed on a common position” with regard to the discontinuation of Youth Crossfire.

Key findings
The research data reflects that loveLife was aware of the benefits of targeting Yfm, in that they have a strong youth audience and a loyal youth brand image. Yfm acknowledges that they provided the channel through which to disseminate the messages.

It is apparent through the collected data that loveLife needed Yfm in order to develop their brand, and to an extent, this suggests that loveLife “piggy-backed” on the Yfm brand image, using Yfm’s well-developed brand loyalty to their advantage.

Although all the key members interviewed agreed that Youth Crossfire was a success, they disagreed as to the reason why the programme was discontinued. loveLife attributes the discontinuation of the programme to changing time slots of Yfm. Although respondents strongly stress that loveLife wanted a “one hour” programme on Yfm, this is in fact not the format at the SABC radio stations (Systems Approach, 2003). This suggests that the hour-slot format was not the only reason for discontinuation.

Respondents from Yfm acknowledged that the change in the time slots at the radio station had affected the partnership with loveLife. But they also claim that the programme was discontinued as “it became too boring and monotonous” (interviews, 2003). However, Yfm staff were under the impression that loveLife would later contact them to resume their partnership, developing a new programme on air. There is a suggestion that issues of both finance and politics came into play in the decision to end the partnership.

The partnership formed between loveLife and Yfm was the development of a “health-awareness” programme for radio. Since loveLife and Yfm have discontinued their initial project, there has been no clearly discernible ratings loss at Yfm (SAARF, 2003). After the discontinuation of Youth Crossfire, Yfm developed a new health-awareness programme in partnership with the Department of Health.
Conclusions and recommendations

The question that still needs to be further answered is why loveLife discontinued their partnership with Yfm. Was it purely a management problem, or a change of scheduling on the part of Yfm? Was the programme becoming “too boring and monotonous”?

From the interviews conducted, it seemed that Yfm was expecting loveLife to resume their partnership and develop a new programme. loveLife, however, had another development in mind; loveLife began negotiations with SABC radio stations whilst still on air at Yfm. Why did loveLife leave Yfm for the SABC? The answer that immediately springs to mind is the likelihood of a greater target audience, thus increasing the popularity and branding of loveLife amongst South African youth across cultural barriers. The stipulation in the new contract, which states that loveLife has to produce programmes exclusively for SABC stations, suggests that loveLife was fully aware that they would have to terminate their partnership with Yfm. This implies that the discontinuation of Youth Crossfire on Yfm was a strategic move on the part of loveLife. However, why would loveLife cease a programme that was considered by all the key stakeholders (our interviewees) to be popular and successful?

Perhaps the answer here lies with the strong branding of both loveLife and Yfm. At the outset of the partnership, Yfm was the stronger brand, having a loyal target audience and a recognisable brand. loveLife, on the other hand, still needed to establish their brand image within the youth market and to nurture and grow brand loyalty. This suggests that loveLife used the Yfm brand to establish itself (in developing, sustaining and maintaining brand loyalty), and once this was achieved, loveLife discontinued the programme, taking away what they had initially set out to achieve – a “fledgling” brand image of their own.

The strategic move to cease the partnership also suggests that loveLife did not want to be synonymous with the brand image of Yfm only, but rather wanted to develop a fledgling brand image into something which would be able to “stand on its own”, and be recognised on its own merit. Succinctly put, loveLife wanted to be a brand and not just “piggy-back” on an established brand forever.

In all partnerships, there are normally mutual benefits earned by both partners. In this instance, it seems that loveLife emerged as the partner that gained the most. Yfm, although not displaying any clear benefits, did not clearly exhibit any losses. This research gives some insights into this particular partnership, and may serve as a springboard for better understanding how partnerships can serve the process of developing and delivering effective EE campaigns.

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CHAPTER 5
Drama as a Development Communication Tool

Theatre and drama are recognised as more inclusive, accessible, cost-effective and participatory than many other modes for communicating about development issues, and may therefore succeed where other methods have failed. The key to the success of theatre in this arena is that it makes use of interpersonal communication, which allows both the creators of the theatre and its audiences to explore human interaction, and to explore the personal side of development issues. In the context of southern Africa, theatre has the potential to be a democratic medium that integrates indigenous and popular modes of communication for both the production and distribution of messages.

While acknowledging theatre as an effective medium to transmit information, there has been some scepticism about the ability of theatre to have a significant impact on attitudes, and on behaviour change. Some of the student research in this area looks at drama and theatre-based interventions as examples of Entertainment Education, where programmes are purposefully designed to inform and influence audiences, while others take a more nuanced look at the processes of drama that are indicative of communication for participatory development.

This chapter covers some of the theory and uses of live drama as a communication tool in the development sphere. The case studies and research projects that are included in this chapter examine participatory play-making processes and other drama and theatre projects. The chapter includes summaries of four post-graduate

Manyozo and Dlamini’s honours research (2002) explores the process of creating a play on gender equality with young school-going children. The problems and pitfalls of the participatory approach are investigated in this paper.

Memela, Mbatha, Mgugudo and Nqoko’s honours research (2009) examines the use of participatory workshops as a basis to generate topics and content for a participatory forum theatre intervention on the links between alcohol use and risky sexual behaviour with university students. They find that the participatory nature of the work allows for students to start interrogating their own ideas about these links.

Khumalo’s honours research (2009) explores peer education and the effects of a student-generated HIV and AIDS play for university students. This research concludes that innovative and interesting theatre created by a peer group has the ability to move students and encourages them to commit to taking action with regards to HIV testing.

Durden’s PhD research (2011) examines three separate case studies that investigate how participation happens in theatre for HIV and AIDS change. She concludes that greater participation by project participants results in a greater impact on both the participants and the audiences for such theatre.

Challenges of collaborative play production on social issues: An Entertainment Education project report on Ximba Primary School participatory play-making

Linje Manyozo and Lungile Dlamini (Honours, 2002)

Problem statement

Given the disparities in gender relations in South Africa, and the impact that beliefs about gender roles have on both the household economy and the national economy, the researchers set out to use a participatory process of creating theatre to explore how school-going children in a rural area outside of Inchanga, KwaZulu-Natal, experience and think about these issues.

The researchers ascertained that most of the school learners carry out tasks before and after school. In the morning, the young boys have to clean the household surroundings whilst the girls may have to draw water and clean cutlery. When they come back from school, the boys herd cattle or goats, assist the men in building fences or play football. The girls come home from school and take on household responsibilities such as collecting water or firewood, washing clothes, planning for the evening meal, and taking care of babies or younger siblings. The boys have more free time to get together to play and talk, while the girl’s gatherings focus around their chores.

The research project set out to examine these differences and the impact that gender roles have on the lives of the participants and on the community through theatre.
Objectives
The research revolves around an intervention that sets out to engage young people in a process that would allow them to critically question how gender power relations affect the domestic economy in patriarchal communities. In particular, the research aimed to establish what the community (and the young people therein) refer to as “men’s jobs” and “women’s jobs”; to establish community attitudes and perceptions regarding the relationship between gender and household chores; and to produce a workshop play on the gendered nature of the domestic economy.

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review explores the field of Entertainment Education (EE). The work notes Patrick Coleman’s recognition of entertainment as an integral part of human life since the beginning of time, where people have used paintings, songs, dance and drama for enjoyment, education and to communicate social values and morals (Coleman, 2000:75). The research is informed by the notion that entertainment evokes emotions that help people to remember the content and messages of a play, and that it encourages audiences to action by engaging them on an emotional level. Coleman argues that people are prone to talk about issues raised in entertaining media, and that this discussion may inspire audience members to want to change their behaviour accordingly (2000:78).

However, the research project does not adopt the top-down approach common to many mass media EE projects. Rather, it is informed by the notion of theatre for development, and is grounded in Paulo Freire’s participatory education (Freire, 1970). This denotes a move away from the conventional work of the modernisation paradigm where extension workers “advise” rural people on how to live their lives; which is recognised as a tactic for making “the other” change his/her ways and adopt new, “better” and “civilised” lives (Mulenga, 1999).

Theatre for Development (TFD) is based on methodologies employing song, drama and dance as modes of sensitising and empowering communities to improve their status quo. This theatre is participatory in its approach, and members of a targeted community are involved in the process of creating and generating messages that affect their own lives. TFD is based on traditional popular theatre, incorporating songs and dances that are popular with the local community audience. Rather than simply showing a performance, the process of creating the theatre play in the process of theatre for development is used to research, analyse and resolve critical issues within communities so as to change people’s knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding social issues (Kamlongera, 1988:161).

The process of working with the Ximba Primary School learners was inspired by the work of DramAidE, in particular the facilitator’s guides: How to make an AIDS Play (2001) and See you at Seven: Mobilising young men to care (2001); as well as Pamela Brooke’s Traditional Media for Gender Communication (1996). These materials guided the discussion and play-making processes of the project by explaining the role of the facilitator, the relationship between the researchers and the workshop participants, how effective explanations regarding the objectives of a project can result in a successful and effective performance, and a step-by-step guide on how to make a play. The materials also covered issues of women’s empowerment, gender equality and building gender responsibility amongst young people.

Concepts and theory informing the research
The central concepts that inform the research are the notions of participation and conscientisation. Vital to theatre for development is the participation of community members in a number of processes, to research and analyse development problems, to create critical awareness and to create the potential for action to solve development problems facing the community (Mlama, 1991:65).

When the solutions to these development problems come from inside the community itself, through a process of examining their reality and then acting to transform it, then theatre becomes a way of transforming society. TFD can also be seen as a development support communication model, and as a postcolonial space
and discourse, where local memories are performed (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1987). It involves theatre created by and for the people in their own language, and the theatre functions therefore as a weapon, a discourse and a postcolonial public sphere (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1987).

Research methods and methodology
Preliminary research for the project involved visiting the area, making arrangements with community leaders, explaining the details of the project and making arrangements as to how the researchers intend to carry out the project, and to clarify what both the researchers’ roles and the roles of community members would be.

Teachers from the chosen Ximba Primary School then selected a group of young people from one year of study to work with the researchers. The researchers worked with these young people over a process of three and a half weeks, using games to focus and orient the participants, discussions that focused on problem identification, and developing messages and discussion themes for the proposed play-making process.

These scenarios formed the basis of a play that the learners worked on, both with the researchers and on their own. The researchers gave input in the form of basic performance techniques, and assisted the learners in linking the skits with songs and dances. This play was then performed to all of the other learners in the school, and to the school teachers. A short project evaluation was then conducted, and the report and findings were sent to the school.

Key findings
The initial phase of the project involved finding out what the learners thought about gender relations within their communities. They were initially very clear about what women or men “should” do. Given the clear separation in gender roles in the community, the group of participants were divided into a separate group of boys, one group of girls, and a third mixed group. These groups were asked to define and assign roles for the different genders, and these discussions created much debate and disagreement.

In order to get the groups to understand the burden of these imposed gender roles, they were asked to create a short dramatisation of what life would be like for men without women, and for women without men. This process showed more clearly how household tasks are defined along gender lines. The male participants noted that women’s chores included cooking for the family, washing clothes, cleaning the house, collecting water from the river, ironing clothes for the family, washing dishes, working in the fields and collecting firewood from the forest. The female participants noted the males’ roles as looking after cattle in the fields, sweeping the yard, milking the cows, cutting grass, washing windows, getting water from the river using a wheelbarrow, building houses and toilets, fencing, hunting, and washing cars.

Feedback from discussions about these scenarios, and the question of what would happen if there was a fair, gender-blind distribution of household tasks provided the third group with the material on which to base their scenario. This group took longer to record their activities because there was constant negotiation over certain household chores. It emerged that the female learners argued all the heavy work is for men whilst the men noted the “feminine” jobs are for women.

The process of the play-making reflected how young people see their own roles in their society, and how they see the impact of these strictly gender-defined roles. The three scenarios that made up the play explored how the different gendered groups would have to adapt if they lived without the opposite sex.

In the boys’ group, the learners noted that without women, their living environment would not be clean. When the boys took on the chores normally assigned to women (in the performance), they realised that some of the women’s work was physically taxing. The boys wished for women to help them with these chores, so that they could get back to “what they did best, looking after cattle”.

In the girls’ group, the scenario showed a situation where women living without men had to do heavy work such as grass-cutting,
fence-building and milking. They portrayed these tasks as difficult, and the girls could not complete all of these tasks adequately, wishing that they had brothers to help them.

In the mixed group, the learners portrayed a scenario where the children in the family (a boy and a girl) helped each other around the home. There was a sharing of responsibility in the home and there was no distinction as to what a boy or girl “should” do around the home. Gendered roles were recognised, but ignored for the sake of working together efficiently as a family. The children worked peacefully and harmoniously together and their mother appreciated the good work that they had done for the day.

On watching the play, the school learners commented that they had learnt a lot, and the school prefect noted that all of the learners should learn from this and share household chores. However, time constraints meant that a more in-depth analysis of the reception of the piece by the audience could not be conducted, and its genuine and long-term impact is not assessed by the research.

Conclusions and recommendations

The research process reflected that the Ximba learners had clear ideas about the roles that were allocated to boy and girl children, and to men and women in their community. They noted though, that working together and sharing chores could be beneficial for the household and the family. While the learners themselves provided information from their lived experiences in the different households within the community, the researchers did not have the opportunity to visit the homes or to talk to parents and get an understanding of how adults viewed these roles.

Given the time constraints of the project, the researchers took on the role of “directing” the plays, which put them in a position similar to outside organisations conducting extension work activities, rather than the process being driven by the participant community itself. The process was therefore initiated and directed by outsiders, although the pupils did enjoy participating in and watching the performance. The level of intervention from outside of the community may have been greater than the level of participation from within the community. This raises questions about genuine community participation in the project, which is a major issue in Freire’s notion of educational praxis (Freire, 1970).

The research found that time constraints pose challenges to Entertainment Education projects because participants have their own pace of comprehending and understanding issues. It takes time for community members to open up to outsiders and to critically examine issues from new perspectives, thus strict time frames “force” participants to understand quickly, which limits their processing time, and may result in forced understandings. The researchers also found it difficult to evaluate a once-off play, with feedback being short and formal, not allowing for a full expression of the audiences’ experience of watching the play. This difficulty in the evaluation process points to the fact that outside organisations may do good work within communities, but lack the capacity to take stock of the positive contributions their efforts have added to the lives of people.

The research reflected that there are a number of challenges in designing and implementing development support communication programmes. The issues of the tight time frame for the project, the lack of context for the discussions (the absence of parents and their exclusion from the process, considering the nature of the assignment) and the lack of skills on the part of the researchers in negotiating the parameters of the project may have impacted on its efficacy. The research concludes that for genuine community development, more time and the greater involvement of communities at all levels of the project are vital ingredients for such work.
Forum theatre for HIV and AIDS awareness: Investigating first-year UKZN students’ perceptions of alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviour in relation to the transmission of HIV and AIDS

Lunga Memela, Zamashandu Mbatha, Peleka Mgugudo and Cindy Nqoko (Honours, 2009)

Problem statement
Many of South Africa’s social and health problems are attributed to the misuse of alcohol, with sexual-risk behaviours considered to be one such problem. However, there has been a limited amount of research on the first year UKZN students’ perceptions of alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviour within South African universities.

Objectives
Using the communication for social change model, this study aims to investigate first year students’ perceptions of alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviour in relation to the transmission of HIV at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College. It also draws on applied theatre, not only on theatre as an art form, but also as a means of communication. Through applied theatre, the study seeks to explore whether forum theatre encourages critical thinking and change student’s perceptions.

The key questions driving the research included:
1) What are the underlying factors to students’ perceptions of alcohol consumption?
2) What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and sexual-risk behaviour?

3) How is forum theatre an effective communication strategy in dealing with alcohol consumption?

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review explores the context of student life, and the links between sexual behaviour and alcohol use.

The transition from high school to university is a significant milestone in a young person’s life. This period is marked by new social environments in which young people assume adult roles as they tend to be independent from parental control (Wechsler & Nelson, 2008). A study by Kelly (2001) found that large numbers of students were sexually active, and for many, the commencement of university studies was concurrent with the onset of such activity. Kelly (2001) also revealed that social life on South African university campuses often involved high-risk behaviour, including “sugar daddy” practices, sexual experimentation, prostitution, unprotected casual sex, gender violence and multiple partners.

In many instances, this sexual behaviour is linked to alcohol use. Adolescents transcending from high school into tertiary education are at a high risk of experimenting and actively consuming alcohol (Wechsler & Nelson, 2008). Alcohol use has been correlated with a lifetime tendency towards high-risk sexual behaviours, including multiple sex partners, unprotected intercourse, and sex with high-risk partners (Wechsler & Nelson, 2008). In many cases, young people’s perceptions on sexual behaviour and alcohol are largely uninformed and founded on falsely set “in-group” ideologies (Burges: 2002). Cooper (2006) concludes that the relationship between alcohol use and risky sexual behaviour appears to be both complex and highly circumscribed (Cooper, 2006). This necessitates an exploration of these issues in the context of first-year university students.

The research group chose to explore these issues through the processes of participatory forum theatre. Theatre is recognised as a means of educating at the same time as entertaining an audience, in the process of Entertainment Education (EE). EE poses as a plausible communication strategy as “[t]he process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience knowledge about an educational issue, create favourable attitudes, and change overt behaviors” (Singhal & Rogers, 1999:265).

Rather than simply influencing an audience, forum theatre raises questions to allow the audience to examine the realities of a problem situation. Paulo Freire (1982) maintains that this problem posing methodology permits students to learn, and learning is not just about the consumption of ideas, but it is about questioning, discovering and creating new ideas. Building on these ideas, Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal (1979) developed Theatre of the Oppressed (TO), and the forum theatre method, to use theatre as a vehicle of participatory social change.

Forum Theatre is designed to maximise participation of the audience in a performance by shifting the central focus of the dramatic event from the stage to the audience. Audience members are recognised as equal performance partners from the very start through group integration exercises and games, and audience members being invited onto the stage to participate in the action of the play. Boal describes this process as “collective rehearsal for changing reality” (1998:57).

Forum theatre encourages collective problem solving for collective action, and serves to build a sense of community amongst the audience members (Durden, 2004). It is thus a useful vehicle for the opening up of dialogue about the issue of alcohol use and risky sexual behaviour for students.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The concepts informing the research include communication for social change (CFSC), advanced by Figueroa et al (2002), and the convergence model of communication.
CFSC allows for a horizontal flow of communication which encourages participation and feedback from project participants and uses a multiplicity of communication tools, techniques and media that can serve as catalysts in participatory information transfer (Moodley, 2007). In essence, CFSC surfaces the significance of effective communication in social change; “a process by which alteration occurs in the structure of a social system” (Burgd & Rogers, 1972:10). The research is modelled on the convergence model of communication (CMC) which is based on dialogue, information sharing, mutual understanding and agreement, and collective action (Figueroa, 2002).

The dialogical process requires what Figueroa (2002) and Melkote and Steeves (2001) coin as a “horizontal” form of communication; an equal voice and participation between the two parties for effective social change results. Figueroa argues that “information is shared or exchanged between two or more individuals rather that transmitted from one to the other” (2002:3). Therefore, in the process of dialogue, it allows the participants to engage amongst themselves and resolve posed problems on their own. The CMC model stresses that all participants are active in the information, and there are no passive receivers.

Figueroa further argues that, “[t]he outcomes of information processing by the participants are social – mutual understanding, agreement and collective action – as well as individual – perceiving, interpreting, understanding and believing” (2002:3). He poses that all the participants in CFSC projects should be of the same level; no one individual is above the other. This model practises equality for all the participants involved.

The CMC under CFSC thus invites various communication tools and strategies to enhance the participatory and dialogical process, especially in public health communication.

**Research methods and methodology**

This study was conducted with students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College). The researchers conducted an all-day workshop with first-year students as formative research for a health communication intervention. Through purposive sampling, 25 first-year students were selected to participate in the workshop. These students were drawn from various academic disciplines and were of different race and gender.

Three research instruments were employed to gather qualitative data on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of first-year students. These included pre- and post-workshop questionnaires, participant observation, and a focus group discussion. The pre- and post-workshop questionnaires consisted of closed questions that supplied facts about the participants and their perceptions of alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviour in relation to the transmission of HIV and AIDS.

Participant observation was used to elicit first-year students’ attitudes and reactions to the material presented in the workshop. Such material included the “Scrutinize” animated advertisement (animert) on alcohol consumption and sex, and participatory discussions of sensitive topics such as sex and risky sexual behaviour. Participant observation also examined whether the participatory theatre strategies that were employed in the workshop encouraged critical thinking about alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviour.

Focus group discussions were used after the workshop to elicit further data, which was more descriptive and exploratory. The focus group discussion comprised of ten students and was audio-taped with the consent of the participants. The data was then transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

The central themes that were derived from these three methods fed into a forum theatre intervention which was created by the research group and performed and facilitated for the broader student body to raise critical consciousness on alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviour. The forum theatre intervention was followed by informal interviews with participants.
Key findings

The pre- and post-workshop questionnaires revealed that 85% of the first-year students who participated in the study said that they had experimented with alcohol prior to enrolling at university. Of the students who had not experimented with alcohol prior to enrolling at university, the majority reported that they now actively consume alcohol as a “social phenomenon”. There is therefore a high prevalence rate of alcohol consumption amongst the first-year students.

The majority of respondents affirmed that their social life influenced their consumption of alcohol. Friends and party environments are set up to make alcohol consumption easily accessible and socially acceptable. There was a widely held belief amongst the students that alcohol consumption can affect the decision-making process. The findings concluded that there are notable percentages of students engaging in risky sexual behaviour under the influence of alcohol.

In the pre-workshop questionnaire, 56% of respondents admitted to using condoms when sober, however only 50% admitted to being sexually active. In the post-workshop questionnaire, 69% admitted to being sexually active and in addition only 46% admitted to condom usage when sober. This disparity suggests that the workshop process stimulated honesty, and students were more likely to accurately reflect on their sexual practices after participating in the workshop.

Participant observation during the workshop noted that participants were able to identify with the themes raised by the screened animert, and used the theatre methodologies to elect themes to discuss. The process of information sharing and dialogue lead to consensus and understanding amongst the groups as they engaged with the themes using the theatrical forms of role-play, stop-start theatre, image theatre and hot-seating.

The focus-group (FG) interview that was conducted after the workshop centred on the medium that the participants felt they would like to apply as the best way to prepare for an intervention. Almost all of the FG participants found the stop-start theatre methodology the most appealing. The data gathered in the FG discussion included insight into the students’ perceptions and attitudes of alcohol consumption, and risky sexual behaviour in relation to the transmission of HIV and AIDS. This informed the creation of the forum theatre intervention.

During the created forum theatre session, performers presented improvised scenes based upon the issues of peer pressure, condom use, multiple concurrent partnership and transactional sex. In this intervention the actors performed their play once through to the end. The play was then replayed from the beginning, where actors repeated the same problem, but this time the facilitator (“joker”) invited the audience to intervene and then enact the scenes.

During this session the majority of the audience members demonstrated that they were enjoying the play, some were nodding, laughing and even pointing at what was happening on stage. Audience members who came onto the stage provided alternatives to the problems posed by the play. Towards the end of the session there were a number of people who wanted to comment on what was happening in the theatre, but unfortunately the allocated time was limited. At the end of the intervention, members of the audience were informally interviewed and some approached the actors, saying how much they had enjoyed it.

All of the interviewees agreed that the forum theatre had created a space in which audience members could engage in a meaningful discussion about alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviours. They were able to identify with the core themes of the forum theatre piece and with the characters portrayed.

Although some audience members did not actively participate in the theatre process, they felt comfortable engaging in small discussions amongst themselves. The students felt that the methodology was very effective and should be used on campus to address various social and health issues facing students.
Conclusions and recommendations

The research found that there is a clear gap in the transition from high school to university, and current efforts by the university have proved insufficient in assisting first-year students to adjust to university life. Many students are not well informed about or equipped to deal with the dangers of alcohol consumption and risky sexual behaviour. Based upon this study’s research findings, the researchers recommend that an Entertainment Education approach be incorporated into the first-year student orientation programme, to address such issues.

The study found that parental guidance, personal beliefs, one’s social environment, and mass media consumption all appear to play an important role in shaping the students’ perceptions on alcohol and alcohol consumption. However, the top-down, information-giving approach adopted by the university with regard to communicating with students has proved ineffective. The researchers propose that a new approach be used to get messages across to students with regard to the university policy on alcohol consumption on campus. This communication could be influenced by student input, so that it is audience-appropriate.

In addition, the research team recommend that existing organisations on campus employ a more innovative approach in assisting first-year students with the transition into university life, providing them with better resources and information. These approaches could make good use of Entertainment Education strategies. Forum theatre proved to be an effective communication strategy in encouraging student dialogue and participation and establishing the link between alcohol use, risky sexual behaviour and HIV transmission for university students.

Bibliography


Investigating the role of participatory theatre in the awareness of HIV and AIDS: A case study of Durban University of Technology (Steve Biko, Ritson, M.L. Sultan, and City campuses)

Nothando Khumalo (Honours, 2009)

Problem statement
Currently there are numerous HIV and AIDS prevention programmes being offered at tertiary institutions that aim at promoting awareness and prevention activities. These programmes have proven to have very little effect as the number of infected as well as affected students is increasing (Centre for HIV and AIDS DUT, 2009). This research examines the development of the HIV and AIDS awareness and prevention theatre campaigns being offered at the Durban University of Technology (DUT), and investigates the prevailing knowledge and attitudes towards HIV and AIDS amongst students.

Objectives
Using the communication for social change model, and peer education theory, this study aims to investigate students’ perceptions of theatre for HIV and AIDS prevention. It seeks to ascertain to what extent theatre assists in the prevention of HIV and AIDS. It further identifies the messages that are communicated through theatre.

The key questions driving the research included:
1. What significant role does theatre play in the prevention and awareness of HIV and AIDS?
2. What are the students’ perceptions of their risky sexual behaviour after viewing theatre for HIV and AIDS?
3. To what extent does theatre assist in raising awareness and prevention of HIV and AIDS?
4. What are the prevention messages about HIV and AIDS being communicated through theatre?

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review examines potential unsafe sex practices amongst young people, and the potential for using theatre to address these.

Universities and institutions of higher learning are susceptible to numerous practices that may exacerbate the spread of HIV and AIDS, such as sugar-daddy practices, prostitution on campuses, experimentation with sex, multiple sexual partners and other high risk activities (Katjavivi & Otaala, 2004:579). Lovell (2002:3) focuses on the dangers of the practice of young girls having sugar daddies by firmly stating that the lives of young women are lessened through sex which is frequently unintentional but relatively forced, pressurised or substituted with “sugar-daddy gifts”. Such practices make young women in particular susceptible to HIV infection.

Given that the infection rate at universities and institutions of higher learning is high, new methods need to be found that mitigate against this. According to Durden and Nduhura (2003) there are numerous advantages of using the performing arts, theatre in particular, as a tool for encouraging change and development in the context of HIV and AIDS. The advantage with using theatre is the fact that it easily makes use of local languages and other cultural forms such as song and dance which can encourage debate and participation amongst the audience.

The use of theatre to raise awareness about sensitive issues such as HIV and AIDS can be challenging, yet effective. Theatre creates space and distance, allowing sensitive subjects like sexuality to be dealt with indirectly. Some subjects feel too close and difficult to tackle in public, and theatre enables people to explore personal
issues firmly and outside taboos. By discussing characters and their inspiration, audiences can express their own ideas without feeling exposed and with confidence (Dalrymple & Preston-Whyte, 1994:116). Participatory theatre creates an intermediary space where participants can safely attempt different roles and experiment with new ways of behaving, before using them in actual life (Boal, 1979). Participatory theatre can help participants to make sense of the world around them.

Concepts and theory informing the research
The research is informed by communication for social change and peer-education theories. Communication for social change (CFSC) emerges from decades of theory and practices across a variety of fields concerned with communication such as social marketing and communication for development.

Communication for social change is defined as:

A process of public and private dialogue through which people define who they are, what they want, what they need and how they can act collectively to meet those needs and improve their lives. It supports processes of community-based decision-making and collective action to make communities more effective and it builds more empowering communication environments.

Gray-Felder & Deane, 1999:15.

The sustainability of social change is more likely to occur if the individuals and communities most affected take control of the process and content of communication; in other words, they are responsible for their own communal change. CFSC was used as a framework to guide this study, as the study involves the use of theatre developed by students to communicate HIV- and AIDS-awareness messages to other members of the student population. This means that the students themselves are responsible for their own communal change.

CFSC should be empowering, horizontal, give a voice to the previously unheard members of the community, and be biased towards local content and ownership (Gray-Felder & Deane, 1999; UNFPA, 2002; Reardon, 2003; Waisbord, 2001; Servaes, 1999; Singhal, 2001).

In the current study, there is dialogue amongst the students as they collectively develop and expand their ideas of creating an effective theatre piece that would impact possible behavioural change. The students are also empowered through this process as they are in total control of the content. Communities should be agents of their own change (theatre done by students for other students) and emphasis should shift from persuasion and the transmission of information from outside technical experts to dialogue, or a two-way flow of communication.

A further theory guiding the study is peer-education theory. Peer education can be defined as the process whereby well trained and inspiration-driven young people take on informal or organised educational activities with their peers (person who is of the same age group, background or interests) over a period of time aimed at developing their knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and skills and enabling them to be responsible for their own health (India HIV/AIDS Alliance, 2006.)

The relevance of this approach in the study is chiefly in the involvement of trained drama students to educate other fellow students and create awareness about issues concerning HIV and AIDS. A young person’s peer group has a great influence on the way he or she behaves (Turner & Sheperd, 1999). Peer education can help in a variety of ways in HIV- and AIDS-prevention and care, for example, by improving the confidence and sense of self-worth of peer educators who then serve as role models for the rest of the community. It can also assist in the facilitation of the key populations to appear as social-change agents and health educators (India HIV/AIDS Alliance, 2006).
Research methods and methodology

In conducting this study a three-cross campus study design was used to collect data on students’ perceptions of theatre and the role of theatre in the prevention of HIV and AIDS. To conduct the study both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. A qualitative ethnographic approach was used, because this research method is effective in generating data when little is known about the phenomena. This is the case with students’ perceptions after viewing of theatre for HIV and AIDS awareness. In collecting qualitative data the following were employed: observations, in-depth interviews, questionnaires and collection of documented information on the HIV- and AIDS-prevention communication programmes currently being offered at the Durban University of Technology (DUT). Three HIV and AIDS awareness theatre performances were observed at DUT.

The study population consisted of a subset of the student population from DUT. These students were from different fields of study and their age ranged from 17 to 30 years of age. The research used random sampling, where students were approached at random after each of the theatre performances on the three different campuses. Ten students were selected for interviews, six students were selected for focus group discussions and 38 questionnaires were distributed after every theatrical campaign. In total, the size of the sample was 54 students.

The approach that the students used in creating a theatre piece was observed as part of the research (inquiring whether they adhered to participatory communication principles). In addition, other students’ responses and reactions to the theatre, as well as their perceptions after viewing the theatre, were observed. All observations were written down in the researchers’ field notebook.

Field notes were taken during the interviews with students, where they were requested to reflect on what they had just viewed and experienced with a view to understanding their perceptions of the theatre performance, as well as their response to other campus-based interventions. In addition, one focus-group discussion was held, where participants were encouraged to actively engage in the discussion about the available on-campus HIV and AIDS interventions, and their perceptions of the theatre that they had seen.

After each theatrical performance, questionnaires were handed out randomly to the student audience who viewed the theatre. The students were requested to answer the questionnaire and then return it to the researcher. The students’ responses to these questions helped identify students’ perceptions of the theatre in the prevention of HIV and AIDS. Questions centred on what students thought about the theatre performance, whether it had made them think differently about their own relationships, and whether the intervention would help students to talk more openly about relationships and issues of trust and love, and HIV and AIDS issues in their relationships.

Key findings

The observations revealed that the approach which the drama students used in creating an effective theatrical piece was a participatory approach which encompassed the inclusion of students in the processes of developing and articulation of the final product. The participatory nature of the theatre encouraged learning and distribution of knowledge and created a sense of community (unity) within the student population.

The observations further gave insight into the messages that were communicated during the theatre. Messages included: “I pledge to get tested in the next fourteen days”, “Bring back condoms”, “Go away virus” and “Make the right change”.

The student performers indicated that the students’ responses were unexpected (lively, active audience), and it encouraged them to put more energy and liveliness into the performance. The positive response of the audience is an indication that the performers understood the audience (their preferences, attitudes, what makes them tick, and their interests). As performers they indicated that their motives were to create HIV and AIDS awareness for fellow students, change stigmatisation of HIV-positive people and to create an effective theatre piece that would have people talking and thinking about their risky sexual behaviours.
The interviews that were conducted with the students from the audience revealed that 80% of the students who watched the theatre pledged to get their HIV status checked within the next fourteen days. 80% confessed that watching the theatre made them change their views about HIV and AIDS, and they vowed to adopt a more positive way of living, which is free of risky sexual practices such as having unprotected sex. The interviews also revealed that 70% of the students interviewed thought that other students were also motivated to get tested. The students also commented that they seldom have any HIV and AIDS campaigns of this nature (theatre) on campus and they were usually not given an opportunity to actively participate in the development and presentation processes.

The focus-group discussion revealed that 90% of the participants felt that the most effective strategy adopted by DUT is the peer-education strategy, as it allows them to discuss HIV and AIDS concerns openly with people of their own age, making it easy to relate to each other. However, the other 10% argued that confidentiality is not assured in peer education and felt that it is too risky, because young people are scandalous and could easily disclose confidential information to their friends.

The focus-group discussion further revealed that the majority of the students surveyed felt that the campaigns should be done more regularly so that more and more students become aware of their risky sexual behaviours.

Out of 38 questionnaires that were distributed, 80% of the respondents indicated that the students enjoyed the theatre and found it engaging yet educating. Furthermore, 40% indicated that there should be English translations where the performers expressed themselves in Zulu, causing a communication barrier. The questionnaire responses also acknowledged that the students enjoyed the fact that they were part and parcel of the whole campaign and they were deeply involved in the action on the podium as they were requested to comment on some of the issues that were articulated in the theatrical performance.

Conclusions and recommendations

The method of using peers to create theatre performances for HIV and AIDS awareness was useful in that audiences responded well to these performances, and found the shows interesting and informative. The performances had the potential to move people, by encouraging them to commit to a particular action (testing for HIV). Based on the aforementioned findings it is evident that the use of participatory theatre in the DUT awareness campaign succeeded in capturing the attention of the students and in increasing their knowledge of HIV and AIDS.

The responses to the research questions reflected that students had not previously experienced innovative theatre projects that talked about HIV and AIDS. This is evidence that there is still a major gap in HIV and AIDS communication at DUT which needs serious attention. Future similar interventions would be useful, but should take into account the multi-lingual nature of the audience.

The method of drawing the audience into the performance and the action opened up equal dialogue between students, and as such was an example of communication for social change. It is recommended, therefore, that this project be maintained while at the same time continually researching new ways of getting students involved and fully participating in the planning and implementation processes. The continuation of this approach to HIV and AIDS communication is of vital importance as it will attract the attention of new students. It is recommended that the relation between HIV and AIDS education and participation should be reinforced throughout all agenda of academia.
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Staging Empowerment? An investigation into participation and development in HIV and AIDS theatre projects

Emma Durden (PhD, 2010)

Problem statement

South Africa has long been at the epicentre of the AIDS epidemic, and numerous scholars have set out to understand why, despite efforts to communicate about the disease, infection rates continue to rise. Given the context for the increasing infection rate in South Africa, it is argued that simply addressing HIV and AIDS as a health issue may exacerbate rather than alleviate the crisis. The epidemic should rather be seen as a development issue.

The challenge for those then involved in communicating about HIV and AIDS is to find a way to communicate about the issues not in a health-focused, information-based manner, but in a way that encourages the development of those exposed to the communication methodologies.

Theatre has long been used as a vehicle for communicating about development issues, and this research focuses on how theatre can provide a more development-oriented approach to HIV and AIDS. This research explores how participation can be encouraged through theatre programmes to maximise the development for both theatre participants and audiences.

Objectives

The objective of the research was to test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Participation in theatre projects happens at different levels and in different ways.

Hypothesis 2: Practitioners who are aware of appropriate theory will create theory-driven interventions that are consciously designed to meet their goals.

Hypothesis 3: Participants in inclusive participatory theatre projects are likely to feel a sense of empowerment through their involvement in the projects.

Hypothesis 4: Practitioners who ensure that their work is participatory are likely to achieve greater success in bringing about development and social change in the communities in which they work.

Particular questions that focused the research included:

• What is the current practice in participatory theatre projects in South Africa that deal with HIV and AIDS?
• How is this practice influenced by theory about development and empowerment?
• How is participation envisaged by those who create projects in the field of HIV and AIDS?
• How are participation and empowerment experienced by those involved in the projects?

The research set out to answer these questions through a survey of contemporary theatre for AIDS communication (TFA) practitioners, and through the scrutiny of three distinct case studies that use TFA as their primary method of communication.

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review explores the impact of HIV and AIDS in South Africa, and previous communication campaigns to mitigate against this.

While there is a high level of awareness about HIV and AIDS in South Africa (Gow & Desmond, 2002) the continuously high prevalence figures suggest that this awareness has not always translated into individual behaviour change and the adoption of safer sex behaviours. This may be a result of poorly conceived
national communication campaigns that have had little effect on the population.

Broad awareness campaigns that provide information alone are not sufficient to reduce the risk of HIV infection, as access to information does not necessarily bring about a change in behaviour (Francis & Rimensberger, 2005). This may be because a range of social and cultural factors that feed the epidemic and give rise to behaviours and practices that place people at risk of HIV infection are not directly addressed in these campaigns. More detailed and segmented campaigns that address these factors from a development perspective may be more effective in curbing the epidemic.

A simple instructional approach to changing behaviour does not take into account issues such as poverty, social inequality, gender inequality, taboo and fear, which feed the AIDS epidemic. As such, it cannot hope to bring about lasting change for the audiences that it reaches.

In addition to these contextual factors, decisions about sexual behaviour are intensely personal and often not rational. Because HIV is predominantly spread through sexual contact, which is both intimate and emotional, the reasons for a person adopting or ignoring HIV-prevention messages are going to be less rational than when considering other health threats. Decisions regarding sexual behaviour are driven by factors including gender relations, sexual identity, desire, pleasure, preference and self-expression (Gumede & Durden, 2010). This means that campaigns dealing with HIV and AIDS should not centre solely on questions of health, but should take a more holistic approach and include issues of gender and sexuality.

Reasons for changing behaviour are also mediated by the society in which individuals find themselves. Health messages must therefore take into account how HIV and AIDS are framed and discussed in the local context, and must engage with “the broader structures of social conduct within which meaning is articulated, circulated and appropriated” (Kunda, 2010:1). Applying a development perspective necessitates a deeper understanding of the social, economic and cultural processes that gave rise to the epidemic and are in turn impacted on by the epidemic. The medium that is chosen for communicating about the epidemic therefore needs to take this more exploratory approach, rather than imposing potentially inappropriate health information on a particular target community.

Theatre as a strategy for education or empowerment has been theorised and delineated over the past 50 years to improve understanding of the practice. Christopher Kamlongera (1989), Zakes Mda (1993), Lynn Dalrymple (1995; 1997), David Kerr (1995; 1997) and Ross Kidd (1983) have detailed numerous experiences of theatre that functions as education, to comment and reflect on the lived experience of their audiences.

This research argues that this form of “applied” theatre is a useful and effective vehicle for communicating about HIV and AIDS, and that it is a popular and accessible medium. Helen Nicholson (2005) suggests that the aim of applied theatre is to break down the predominantly Western view of theatre as something that can only be appreciated by the educated elite, and to make it a more accessible medium, where theatre becomes integrated with other parts of daily life. As such, it may be an ideal vehicle to encourage participation in development initiatives.

Using popular media to communicate about health issues is known as Entertainment Education (EE), and is based on the premise that health messages couched in familiar and entertaining forms are more likely to reach their target audience. EE projects have the potential to influence audiences and to draw participants into performances through music, storytelling, dance, theatre and other popular folk media.

Current thinking in EE recognises that including local voices in message creation makes for more effective messaging, and promotes ownership by a community of the messages that could bring about change (Tufe, 2005). It is argued by Airhihenbuwa & Obregon (2000), amongst others, that participation in HIV and AIDS communication in particular, is an important factor in ensuring that messages are locally appropriate and effective. Theatre as a live and immediate medium that is popular and
encourages participation has a particular appeal and can provide a powerful vehicle for this participation.

However, there is much debate about how participation occurs, who participates, to what degree, and with what effect (Cleaver, 2001; Cadiz, 2005; Narayanasamy, 2008). Participation can be at a range of different levels and can be hindered by a number of factors. This research explores the role that participation plays in theatre for development projects that focus on HIV and AIDS.

The recurring question in this literature on theatre for development is the relationship between participation and intervention (Mda, 1993; Page & Czuba, 1999; Nederveen Pieterse, 2001). This has been a particular concern of those investigating the use of entertaining media to disseminate health information, where beliefs led by the target community may be contradictory to the dominant Western thinking (Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000). Focusing on HIV- and AIDS-related projects, the research for this thesis will explore this intervention–participation relationship.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

This research builds on development communication and empowerment theories. Development communication is understood to be communication specifically planned for the purposes of development. The nature of development communication is explored by authors such as Servaes (1995; 1999; 2007) and Tomaselli (1992, 2001), who identify a range of different approaches to communication for development. They note distinct paradigms of development communication which include modernisation theory, dependency theory, development support communication, and “another development” (participation). These theories are useful in understanding the political and philosophical approach to development and the subject community by the donors or those in power.

Current trends in thinking about development recognise that development is a human issue rather than an economic one. There is a renewed focus on people in the contemporary paradigm of human development, which focuses on “creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accordance with their needs and interests” (UNDR, 2009).

This view of development necessitates a focus on the individual, and the need for development to be people-centred. However, the individual is seen as part of a broader community and this is the environment that needs to be changed to support personal development. In this way, we can see individual and societal development as two parallel and inter-dependent tracks. In the context of HIV and AIDS, this means that individual behaviour change must be supported by community change, and this requires development beyond personal awareness and empowerment.

These dual notions of individual and communal empowerment are central to the research. Robert White (2004) suggests that while individuals might be “empowered” within a particular context, true empowerment can only occur if all individuals within that context are empowered. Maire Dugan (2003) also emphasises the communal nature of empowerment, defining empowerment as “processes through which disenfranchised social groups work to change their social surroundings, change detrimental policies and structures” (2003:2).

There is general consensus that the issue of empowerment involves the transfer of power from institutions to previously powerless individuals. There are three primary components to empowerment, namely that it is multi-dimensional, social, and a process. Page and Czuba (1999) assert that empowerment can occur within sociological, psychological, economic and other dimensions, and at a range of different levels, including the levels of the individual, the group, and the broader community. Empowerment is therefore a social process influenced by and in turn influencing the relationship between the individual and the community.

Further to this, empowerment should be viewed as a process, and not a finite end, since people continually change and develop and become more or less empowered as the context in which they live changes.
Four key elements to empowerment are identified by Narayan (2002) as being: (1) access to information, (2) inclusion or participation, (3) accountability, and (4) local organisational capacity. Access to resources and information may ensure that those in the community under development develop the necessary skills to take control of their own development. Inclusion and participation in the project may give them access to the power to take this control. However, it is important that the concepts of empowerment and participation are not conflated. For the purposes of this study, participation is not seen as an end in itself, but as a means to facilitate empowerment.

Empowerment theory rests on the central concept of power, and bringing about the shift of power in social structures so that the previously powerless gain control of their own circumstances. Participation in this study is therefore seen as a process of facilitating the necessary shift in power to allow individuals to regain control over their own lives and behavioural practices in order to reduce the risk of HIV infection and to lessen the devastating impact of AIDS on their communities. The premise of participation is that through dialogue the sharing of ideas and experience, knowledge will grow. Through this process, empowerment education aims to reduce dependence on outside knowledge and expert opinion. This assumption is based on the pedagogy of Paulo Freire (2001). Freire’s notions of dialogue, equality, problem-posing, conscientisation and praxis were used as measures in this research to explore the empowering potential of the three case studies.

**Research methods and methodology**

This research makes use of multiple methods, including those from both the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. The research is essentially descriptive, examining the practices of theatre for development in the field of HIV and AIDS in general, and examining in particular the recent theatre projects of three specific organisations as case studies. The descriptive research approach allows the researcher to describe, analyse and interpret the phenomenon of participation in this work.

For this study, the researcher developed three research tools, including a survey questionnaire to interrogate what informs current practices in the field, an interview schedule for interviews with project managers, and a guide for focus-group discussions with project participants, to allow for closer scrutiny of the three case study project examples.

The survey questionnaire was designed to find out more about TFA practitioners and their projects. It included questions that explored the respondents’ conscious or unconscious application of theory in their projects, which theories they applied to their projects, the processes of their projects and the levels of participation in their projects.

A self-selecting sample of 35 practitioners chose to complete the survey. The population group (of 100 people) was identified as participants at the Africa Research Conference in Applied Drama and Theatre held at the University of the Witwatersrand in November 2009. Data from these questionnaires involved two complementary processes, firstly, manually collating the information, and secondly, using the computer programmes SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). This allowed for confirmation of the findings that SPSS collated.

The qualitative element of the study involved a more in-depth analysis of three purposely selected examples of participatory HIV and AIDS theatre projects, namely: the SACTWU AIDS Projects’ Sinolwazi Drama Club, the DramAidE/DUT AAA-HA project, and the UVHAA Man-to-Man project.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the programme managers of the three case study groups. These interviews were two-fold, making use of the questionnaire from the broader TFA practitioner survey, followed by other questions that focused on their experience of using theatre, and the levels, challenges and benefits of participatory practice.

Finally, a focus-group discussion was conducted with a handful of participants from each of the three case study projects. The questions for the discussions were designed around the participants’
own experience of the projects, and their input and participation in the projects. The central theme for the focus-group discussions was that of personal development and growth. The discussion also focused on the concept of empowerment and what it meant to them.

**Key findings**

**Hypothesis 1: Participation in theatre projects happens at different levels and in different ways**

The collected data proves this hypothesis, and reflects that participation does happen in theatre projects in a range of different ways and at different levels. The scale of participation developed through the research process as a measure for this reflects the different strategies that are used by intervention organisations to draw participants into their theatre projects.

![Figure 1: Levels of Theatre Participation](image1)

**Hypothesis 2: Practitioners who are aware of appropriate theory will create theory-driven interventions that are consciously designed to meet their goals**

While the research data suggests that most practitioners work in projects that are theory-driven, their practice does not reflect that these theories are strictly applied. Rather, it is apparent that TFA practice is influenced by a wide range of theories and that these practitioners adapt and adjust these theories to suit their needs.

The theory of Paulo Freire is the most commonly applied theory that informs practice amongst the surveyed TFA practitioners. This is followed by theatre and performance theories. Communication for development theory and behaviour change theories are used to a lesser extent to inform the work of TFA practitioners. However, the practice of the surveyed practitioners reflects that their work adheres more to the theories of behaviour-change communication than to participatory development theories.

It appears that the surveyed TFA practitioners are primarily guided by the specific goals of increasing awareness about HIV and AIDS and changing behaviour to reduce HIV prevalence. Driven by these imperatives, current practice in TFA remains in the realm of modernisation and development support communication but makes use of participatory strategies. These strategies draw in community members to participate in theatre projects, but are not based on Freirean theory and the principle of equality that is a necessary component to bring about empowerment.

To some extent then, the research findings disprove this hypothesis, as practitioners are not guided by theory, but are rather guided by their goals, which are to a great extent determined by project funders and other gatekeepers.

**Hypothesis 3: Participants in inclusive participatory theatre projects are likely to feel a sense of empowerment through their involvement in the projects**

All of the case study examples reflect that participating in TFA projects has enormous benefits for the participating individuals and can build a sense of empowerment for these participants. The
participants develop a sense of “power to” and are able to effect change in their own lives. However, the benefits seem to be limited to the immediate participants and there is limited potential to expand this sense of power without developing a greater sense of critical consciousness.

The surveyed projects and case study examples show that current practice is dominated by a behaviour-change approach to communicating about HIV and AIDS. This means that in most cases, communication is based on bio-medical information about HIV transmission and prevention, with instructions to the audience as to how to avoid or to treat HIV infection. To address the problem more comprehensively than simply providing solutions, communication about HIV and AIDS must explore the more complex personal and political issues around sex and sexuality, gender, relationships and power. Without this critical exploration, HIV and AIDS interventions are likely to remain at the level of raising awareness.

While this awareness about HIV and AIDS is vital in curbing the epidemic, HIV prevalence rates will not reduce without behaviour change. The research data provides evidence that individuals can be encouraged to make changes in their own lives through participating in theatre projects. This individual behaviour change can be spread throughout pockets of the community through social networks and through the opening up of dialogue about HIV and AIDS.

Empowerment, as defined by Sadan (1997), relates not only to the actual but also to the perceived ability to make changes and take control of a situation. The hypothesis that participants in inclusive participatory theatre projects are likely to feel a sense of empowerment (this perceived ability) through their involvement in TFA projects is proven in this study, where there is evidence of a sense of personal empowerment for all of the participants in the case studies. This sense of empowerment creates agency for these participants, who are then able to bring about changes in their own lives.

Hypothesis 4: Practitioners who ensure that their work is participatory are likely to achieve greater success in bringing about development and social change in the communities in which they work

While all of the surveyed projects reflect that they make use of participatory strategies, theories of participation and empowerment suggest that the extent to which this participation happens is unlikely to bring about development and social change for the beneficiary communities. The low levels of participation encouraged by contemporary TFA practice mean that there are essential elements to empowerment missing from these projects.

Freire calls for liberatory education to involve an investigation into the root causes of oppression. In the case of HIV and AIDS, this would mean to fully understand how the epidemic affects the target community in question, and how to overcome the associated problems. While the simple medical answer to the question of what causes AIDS is HIV, any deeper understanding of the epidemic should explore the patterns that explain how and why HIV is transmitted as it is within the target community, and why AIDS has such a devastating effect on development in South Africa.

My hypothesis that practitioners who ensure that their work is participatory are likely to achieve greater success in bringing about development and social change is disproved through this research. Rather than guaranteeing development, participating may in fact hinder it, if it is used as strategy to bring about compliance rather than to develop critical consciousness.

Conclusions and recommendations

While the case studies reflect different ways of participating and the different effects of this, it may be useful to do a comparative study of these effects for both the participants and the beneficiary community at large, to investigate if any one way is better than another.

The scale of theatre participation developed through this research process may be a useful tool for further study. This scale is
particularly designed to measure projects that work towards a theatre performance at the end of a participatory process with individuals who are based in the beneficiary community. It is therefore not a suitable measure for other projects that may work only with role-play and other drama games, as many of the surveyed contemporary practitioners do. However, this scale can be adapted to measure other types of interventions.

While the noted personal growth and more critical thought processes encouraged through participatory theatre practices provide an example of problem-solving on an individual level a solution to the AIDS epidemic will not be found unless opportunities are created for people to examine the conditions that have escalated the epidemic, particularly issues of social inequality and gender inequality. HIV and AIDS interventions must address these conditions, and provide a greater space for problem-posing.

If practitioners wish to escalate the effects of their projects from bringing about individual change to encouraging a re-examination of power structures and to bringing about societal change, then participatory theatre projects need to encourage participation at all levels, to build a greater critical consciousness.

The key factor in empowerment education is problem-posing and not problem-solving. Neither the surveyed theatre projects nor the case studies provide convincing evidence that problem-posing is always present in their participatory processes. I would argue that the impetus to change cannot be presented in a staged play. It is only through participating in structured dialogue that a genuine consciousness can be created, and communities can find ways to take action towards addressing the specific conditions that continue to feed the epidemic. The essential element of praxis is missing from current practice.

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Television as a Mass Medium Intervention

Television is one of the most popular mass media in South Africa. Shisana et al. (2008) find that over half of the South African population has access to television more than a few days per week. More than 60% of surveyed South Africans over the age of fifty find television a useful and understandable source of information about HIV and AIDS in particular, and more than 70% of people under the age of fifty recognise its use. Television is rated highly by viewers as a medium that makes them take HIV and AIDS more seriously.

This chapter covers some of the theory and uses of television as a communication tool in the health and development sphere. Case studies are provided of a wide variety of television programmes that have aired on South African television stations over the past ten years, and the efficacy that these specifically designed programmes have in moving audiences to think and act on social issues such as HIV and AIDS. The chapter includes summaries of five post-graduate student papers. Contributors include: Arthi Maharaj (2002); Alison Copley and Mbuso Christian Mkhize (2005); Udesha Moodley (2008); Thandokuhle Mkhize (2010); and Geraldine Coertze (2011).

Maharaj (2002) examines the long-running soap opera Generations as a means to bridge the generation gap in communicating about relationships and sex. Copley and Mkhize (2005) examine the reception and perceptions of young people exposed to the Soul City television series, and find that the series reflects many of their lived experiences and opinions. Moodley (2008) looks at how traditional healers are portrayed in the media, and how the documentary Deadly Myths reflects and perpetuates the stereotyped view of these health practitioners. Mkhize (2010) examines responses to the more recent television programme, 4play: Sex-tips for girls, and concludes that it has the potential to influence viewers, but that the choice of actors who play particular characters might have unintended effects, as they appear regularly in gossip columns exhibiting negative health behaviours.

Coertze (2011) focuses on Takalani Sesame, the South African version of the American series Sesame Street, the purpose of which is the promotion of school readiness. This research compares changes in life skills-related lessons between the test group and control group, over a six-month period, in an attempt to anchor the decoding of messages, especially in relation to HIV and AIDS.

This collection of papers reflects a diverse interest in television as a popular and effective medium for health messages, but points out some of the potential unintended effects of this, and makes recommendations for improved interventions.

Sources:
Generations – bridging the communication gap. A follow-up qualitative study into the breakdown of communication between parents and teenagers, and the benefits of soap opera as an Entertainment-Education intervention

Arthi Maharaj (Honours, 2002)

Problem statement

In a society where people living with HIV and AIDS are often victimised, designers of Entertainment Education (EE) programmes make a deliberate effort to integrate educational material into the entertainment content of a programme so as to convey important messages in a pleasurable way. Although the media is not directly responsible for bringing about change, its pervasive influence does set the wheels in motion to facilitate behavioural or social change.

As a communication strategy that uses entertainment to convey educational messages of importance, EE builds on the notion that individuals adapt their behaviour according to observation and role-modelling.

Generations, sometimes classified as a soap opera, and other times a prime-time drama series, will be explored to assess if drama is a medium for communication and the possibilities of integrating an Entertainment Education message into a local soap opera.

Objectives

This research serves as a follow-up study from research conducted among secondary school pupils from the Reservoir Hills, Durban district on the loveLife campaign and the necessity of interactive, peer-group education. This research found that high-school students were more receptive to the idea of sex education than their parents. Using a qualitative analysis, this study aims to investigate the reason for parents’ reluctance to speak about sex to their children. The possibilities of using a local soap opera or drama series to highlight these issues are explored by investigating the advantages of using drama as a communication strategy. The television programme that will be the focus of discussion is the popular local soap opera/drama, Generations.

Links to other literature in the field; and concepts and theory informing the research

The literature review focuses on understanding the soap opera genre, and the efficacy of drama and character identification on an audience.

The first defining feature of soap operas is its multitude of characters, plots and points of view, with the constant repetition of the problem from many perspectives (Brown, 1994:51). The second characteristic of soap operas is the focus on problem solving through the detailed explication of situations (Brown, 1995:54). Intimate conversations and a focus on dialogue also ensure that controversial subject matter can be dealt with extensively rather than cursorily, where both positive and negative aspects of issues are highlighted. The soap/drama Generations fits well into the predominantly dialogue-orientated feature of soaps, where action is relegated to a very small proportion of each episode. The dialogue is what drives the plot, the characters all speak to each other about the actions they are going to take, the actions they have already taken and the consequences of both the predicted actions and the already executed ones. The dialogue serves as a learning feature by introducing contrasting viewpoints and reconciling them in an ultimate solution.

In order to gauge the effectiveness of drama, Kincaid (2002) outlines the various ways in which drama may be used for effective communication. Kincaid (2001) states that in order for drama to entertain, it must have a captivating story because most
stories tend to affect us by way of analogy. These stories capture our attention and relate familiar moral lessons that parallel our lives. Identification is the most important indicator of audience involvement with television dramas. This concept of identification refers to the extent, to which the viewer perceives himself/herself to be like the character, or wants to be like the character, or even cares about what happens to the character. Kincaid (2001) states that the observation of emotional responses of actors in a drama have been shown to induce a similar emotional state in the viewers.

Kincaid (2001) put forth five hypotheses about drama’s effects. The main variables in each of these hypotheses are as follows: identification; empathy; sympathy; understanding of the causal structure; and the perception of character change or transformation. All these variables are likely to create a progression from exposure to the drama to a behavioural response in the viewer. According to this line of reasoning, cognitive and emotional involvement in a drama that involves elements of HIV and AIDS is more likely to affect sexual behaviour change in the audience. This is particularly relevant and necessary in contexts where individuals have been unresponsive to other forms of sexual education and remain inflexible in their attitudes, as was found to be the case with the parents of the Reservoir Hills learners.

The basic premise of drama theory and the convergence theory of communication is that the audience must be engrossed by an engaging story to be affected by it. The audience must be emotionally involved in the transformations of the characters with whom they identify. Their emotional involvement is the catalyst for change in their perceptions and so the drama must appeal to their emotions through confrontations between the characters which builds up to the climactic conflict and then resolution. For a drama to be a successful EE endeavour it must depict a plausible story. The audience must be able to establish a link between the situation in the drama and their own reality.

Research methods and methodology
This study built on a previous study conducted with the Indian community where findings demonstrated that parents did not perceive the loveLife campaign to be targeted at them. The total number of participants for this study was a sample of twenty individuals, ten males and ten females, all aged from thirty-eight to fifty-five years old. The participants were interviewed separately with a brief set of questions to guide the interview process. These were all open-ended questions designed to elicit specific information that would serve to highlight the theoretical views on the influence of societal norms, gender affirmative behaviour and culture on an individual’s attitude. The recurring or dominant themes that emerged from the interviews were documented and analysed through a qualitative analysis.

All participants were briefed on the nature of the study and participation was voluntary. They were assured of confidentiality and their anonymity. Parents were randomly selected and interviews were done with each participant individually and privately. The reason for choosing personal interviews with open-ended questions was to allow for more in-depth research results to be obtained. The participants expressed that it was easier to speak generally than to fill in a rigid questionnaire.

Key findings
A total of 80% of females and 80% of males involved in the study suggested that they were “very uncomfortable” to talk about sex with their children, with the vast majority stating that it was “just something you don’t talk about”. In response to the question of whether they believed that their children may be sexually active teenagers, 80% of the males reported that they were certain that their children “understood their expectations” of them and “know the rules of the house” and a similar 80% of the females were “sure” that their children “know right from wrong” and that they “wouldn’t disappoint us” by having sex. An interesting outcome of the interviews was that most parents seemed to avoid confronting teenage sexuality in their own children, yet many admitted to be adventurous and experimenting themselves as youths.
This avoidance strategy is clearly evident in their responses to the question on their own relationships with their own parents. All of the females interviewed reported that they did not discuss anything about their private lives with their parents, and their parents had not permitted them to socialise as freely as they would allow their brothers/males to as it was not considered “appropriate behaviour for girls”. In contrast 80% of the males stated that they were relatively “free to do as they pleased”. Most of the parents identified issues of gender affirmative behaviour where there was one set of rules of conduct for males and another for females which are decided by society. The reasons cited for this was that “people do not point fingers at boys” and “girls can never be like men”, all this basically suggesting that society is more indulgent when it comes to males and more discriminating with females.

This gender-affirmative behaviour is still evident in the fact that some of these women participants were prepared to accept the fact of their husbands being unfaithful. At least 50% admitted that it was not uncommon for “men to stray” because “they are like that”. They justify this sort of behaviour and further endorse socially defined gender roles by stating that “a good wife will not leave her husband” because “she is married to him” and that “he must come home eventually”. This type of rationale is an example of the destructive behaviour patterns that are passed on to teenagers. They (teenagers) come to view this unequal balance of sexual power as a norm and hence lack the ability to differentiate between healthy relationships and unhealthy ones.

Another interesting revelation was that most of the research subjects confessed to being sexually active prior to marriage, a practice that was not at all tolerated by their parents. The majority of the participants admitted that from their late teenage years until they were married they had engaged in sexual encounters; but that these were very much kept secret from their parents. When questioned about the fact that their children could be engaging in the same secret sexual behaviour, most respondents argued that they would definitely know about it. A second reason for denying the possibility was that “they know about AIDS” and “my children won’t do things like that” or even “they know how dangerous it is”. Some parents replied that they would not be happy about their children engaging in sex because of the tremendous risks, but if they suspected that it was the case, then they would attempt to educate them about precautionary methods against pregnancy and STIs.

It appears that this conservative attitude toward confronting and accepting sexuality still prevails in the lives of most of the participants. 50% of the females responded that their community did not tolerate public displays of affection between couples. The other 50% of the females reported that they were comfortable with displays of affection both in front of their children as well as other people. 40% of the males stated that they were not publicly affectionate because emotional expression was to be a private affair, whilst the remaining 60% reported that they were affectionate with their spouses in public.

All the participants were aware of HIV and AIDS and how to prevent transmission. They all knew that it was incurable. A significant number of participants were cognisant of the fact that HIV and AIDS are very much a real problem affecting all walks of society regardless of social standing and race. There were, however, 30% of males that believed it was mainly “a black problem” (referring to the black community in South Africa) and that it was due to a “lack of morals” and “lack of education”. 10% of the females believed that it was “not so much an Indian problem” and that “whites and blacks get it because they always sleep around”. These participants were all employing defence mechanisms to cope with the issue of AIDS and sexuality. They employ the defences of stereotyping and projection to distance themselves from the problem, making it the concern of another race group.

It is then with these findings that this research attempts to establish how a drama series like *Generations* can be effectively utilised to serve as an Entertainment Education intervention strategy. A total of 70% of the female respondents stated that they were regular viewers, and only 40% of the male respondents were regular viewers.
Generations portrays many of the social issues relevant to our society at present. In light of the research results obtained, it seems that drama may be useful in educating the public about sexuality and about communicating sexual matters to their children. Generations has briefly touched on the issue of sex amongst the Indian community with two of its characters—a couple, Shaan Naidoo and Deven Maistry. This couple were living together and involved in a premarital sexual relationship. However, a visit from Shaan’s aunt prompted her to evict her fiancé from their home as she did not want to upset her relative with the news of their cohabitation. The encouragement of such secret sexual behaviour presents a problem as it reinforces negative perceptions about sex and secrecy. Generations should revisit this issue and perhaps provide a more positive resolution to the issue of premarital sex, showing that through the use of condoms, it can be responsible and safe. They could integrate the issue of teenager–parent communication about sex through the introduction of new characters, for example Deven’s playboy nephew and Shaan’s niece. The condoning of stereotypical gender behaviours could be addressed from the perspectives of the characters themselves.

Another storyline in Generations that involved parent–child communication or generation-gap problems is the blossoming relationship between the young characters, Jonathan and Lindiwe. This situation parallels the trend of the masculine gender affirmative discourse where Sarah-Lee is extremely protective of her daughter, Lindiwe, but Khaya believes that his son, Jonathan should be left to his own devices as he is young and his interest in Lindiwe will be fleeting. The dominant theme of the masculine gender-affirmative discourse that is prevalent in Generations, and in the responses of the research respondents, may be attributed to the deep-rooted hold of patriarchal beliefs that circulate in society.

The genre of soap opera is one site at which these patriarchal belief systems can be manipulated and utilised to the benefit of its viewers. It is potentially empowering, having the scope to redefine assigned gender roles to foster greater equality. In this way, Generations could fulfil its social responsibility. The seriality of Generations means that it could interrogate the issue of sex and the communication gap between parents and their children more intensively.

Through the processes of identification, empathy, sympathy and understanding of the causal structure of the drama, the audience may come to understand the inherent message. The character transformation could be in Shaan, Deven, Khaya or even Julia, who comes to realise that they have to change their attitudes in order to live a more healthy and fulfilled lifestyle. They can then spread this new-found positivity to other characters as they endorse this new attitude of open communication. Talking about sex to their children might be considered a tall order right now, considering the conventional social attitudes that prevail, so it might be safe to suggest that just talking in general might be a promising start.

Conclusions and recommendations

The research reveals a peculiar “avoidance” tactic amongst parents, whereby they refuse to recognise the issue of youth sexuality. This research has investigated the sexual attitudes of three different generations amongst the Indian community, and the findings serve to reinforce the notion of “the generation gap”. It appears that from the outset the first-generation parents were unable to tackle the subject of sex with their own children. Those same children grew up into the second-generation parents and continued this trend with their own offspring. It is easy to see how a cycle has been created, and this raises questions about how one goes about restructuring such an ingrained habit.

An issue like sex or sexuality which has been categorised as belonging to the personal or private realm—it to the extent which couples do not communicate openly about it with each other is difficult to reintroduce into the public realm overnight. The conventional belief amongst the Indian community seems to be that sex is an extremely private domain and female sexuality is even more so. This phenomenon is reflected in the inter-generational relationships between parents and their children. The issue of talking about sex to one’s children is problematic in the sense that it fails to take into account the interplay of these
socialisation processes and the question of morality to which these people subscribe. Many of the responses tend to lean toward a male bias which supports or condones male sexuality and this in turn ignores or suppresses female sexuality.

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The Soul Goal: Reception analysis among high-school children of selected episodes of Soul City VII

Alison Copley and Mbuso Christian Mkhize (Honours, 2005)

Problem statement
Poverty and disease are wide-spread in southern Africa and are major factors in the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS. Such problems can only be solved by educating the South African population through initiating public health interventions that will result in behaviour change. Existing television-based interventions that have utilised an Entertainment Education (EE) approach are Soul City, Tsha Tsha and Soul Buddyz. Soul City is the focus of this project.

Soul City (the organisation) uses a multimedia approach, which includes print (education, training, development and advocacy materials), radio (Soul Expressions), television (Soul City and Soul Buddyz) as well as brand-building campaigns. “By using a multimedia approach, Soul City sustains a campaign atmosphere throughout the year. Each medium reinforces the popularity of the Soul City television series while appealing to a different target audience” (Singhal & Rogers, 1999:215). Soul City has been broadcast since 1994 and has run for six seasons, each addressing specific public-health issues in a way that would lead to behavioural change.

Objectives
This project investigates the reception of two episodes of Soul City VII (episodes two and three) which deal with the following issues: HIV and AIDS treatment; masculinity and manhood; and
volunteerism. The study was conducted at Chesterville Secondary School in Durban. Chesterville was chosen since it encompasses numerous similarities to the fictional township in which the series is based. It is a township that is surrounded by informal settlements.

The key question in this study is: What messages and perceptions are students attaining from watching Soul City VII?

This question is divided further into five focus questions, which form the basis of the analysis:

1) Did the students appreciate the EE format of Soul City VII – the combination of health information in a drama series?
2) Did the students find Soul City VII credible and realistic?
3) Did the students become involved in the health issues of Soul City VII or did it encourage behaviour or perception modelling?
4) Did the health information in Soul City VII have an impact on their everyday lives in terms of reflection?
5) Were there any unintended effects of the content in the two episodes of Soul City VII?

Links to the literature in the field; and concepts and theory informing the research

The uses and gratifications approach: appreciating the EE formula

The uses and gratifications approach presents the use of media in terms of the gratification of social or psychological needs of the individual (Blumler & Katz, 1974). Gratifications can be obtained from a medium's content (e.g. watching a specific programme), from familiarity with a genre within the medium (e.g. watching soap operas), from general exposure to the medium (e.g. watching TV), and from the social context in which it is used (e.g. watching TV with the family) (Chandler, 1994).

Research indicates that the cognitive processing of information occurs best when triggered by a positive affective evaluation. Emotional appeals can lead to attitude change, especially when people’s motivation to think about the message is low (Pieters & van Raaij, 1988; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Cafferata & Tybout, 1989). Entertaining the audience is the aim of all programme makers, and even those who seek to inform and educate know the importance of attaining and maintaining audiences (Bouman, 1999:61). “To entertain and inform without alienating an audience and to keep them hooked on the programme is vital” (Hobson, 1982:47). Singhal et al (1992) state that the repetition of the educational content in an EE message is important, but warn against making the content too blatant.

Realism: credibility and realism in EE

For health communication such as Soul City to be effective, “it is essential that the message is realistic and credible to the audience, in the sense of “true to life characters” and realistic, credible plots and storylines” (Bouman, 1998:61). Raymond Williams (1977) lists three main characteristics of realism in drama:

- It has a contemporary setting;
- It concerns itself with secular action (human action described in exclusively human terms); and
- It is socially extended (it deals with the lives and experiences of ordinary people).

Social learning theory: modelling and identification in EE

Television is able to construct a reality within which actors perform certain roles. These actors are able to be “models” for viewers, who can consequently re-enact the behaviour that they have witnessed. Television therefore has the capability to induce social change, intentionally or unintentionally. Albert Bandura’s (1977) social learning theory is thus fitting in order to explain the effectiveness of Soul City VII in influencing individuals’ thoughts and behaviour towards specific social issues, particularly those relating to HIV and AIDS.

Social learning theory is an interpersonal theory that states that no individual carries out a behaviour in a vacuum; individuals
exist within social environments in which other people’s actions, attitudes and emotional support affect their own feelings, and behaviours (Piotrow et al., 1997).

Bandura identified three processes through which viewers are able to “take on” the behaviour of the actors on screen. These are imitation, identification and modelling. Imitation is the process by which one individual matches the actions of another, usually closely in time. Identification is the process through which an individual takes on a model’s behaviour and/or personality patterns in some form. Modelling is the psychological process in which one individual matches the actions of another, not necessarily close in time (Bandura, 1988; 1986).

Bandura introduced the concept of observational learning, whereby a viewer acquires new knowledge about certain rules of behaviour from a model through the cognitive processing of information (Bandura, 1977). Bandura found that imitation or modelling could be influenced by the type of reinforcement the role model received; role models who were rewarded were more likely to be imitated than those who were punished (Signorielli, 1993).

Agenda-setting: “talking with others” about EE
Agenda-setting describes a very powerful influence of the media – the ability to dictate which issues are important and should be given attention. Maxine Bouman notes that “television programmes can direct viewers’ attention to issues and problems” (1998:61). This can encourage viewers to talk with others (neighbours, family and friends) about the problems which were introduced in the programme.

Research methods and methodology
Research was conducted with the high-school students of Chesterville Secondary School. The majority of Chesterville falls into the lower-income social groups, at whom Soul City VII is aimed. The research was conducted with two Grade Eight classes in the Chesterville Secondary School hall. This amounted to 94 African students between the ages of 12 and 19. The students watched two Soul City VII episodes (episodes 2 and 3) and then filled in a self-completion questionnaire of twenty questions written in Zulu (the home language of the participants).

The questionnaire was constructed requiring both quantitative and qualitative answers. Quantitative research questions focused on certain measurable aspects of the students’ reception of the programme, such as whether they were a regular viewer of the programme, whether they knew the meaning of volunteerism or whether they knew the correct ARV dosage, which was information contained in the screened episodes. Qualitative research questions analysed students’ perceptions of the characters and whether the programme related to their own lives.

Key findings

Entertainment Education format
The respondents were divided into regular and non-regular viewers of Soul City VII. 78% of the respondents were regular viewers. Of these, 80% were male. Those who watch the programme regularly did not show more understanding of the content than the non-regular viewers.

Only 31% of the regular viewers appreciated the EE format, recognising that a mix of entertainment and education is important. The majority (59%) felt that the programme was largely educational, while only 10% found the programme wholly entertaining. Of the non-regular viewers, only 10% appreciated the EE mix. Rather, 81% saw the programme as solely educational, with few finding it mostly entertaining.

This shows that most of the respondents, even though they do watch Soul City VII, find it educational and do not watch it for its entertainment purpose. Soul City VII has created a perception of being an educational programme amongst its viewers.
Retention and attention

A number of the questions focused on the participant’s recall of medical information from the episodes viewed. Only 29% of the respondents could correctly answer questions related to one character’s CD4 count, and only 22% of the respondents could correctly identify her diagnosis. 29% knew the correct dosage of ARVs, and 50% recognised that one should not drink alcohol when one is on ARV treatment. Positively, though, 86% of the respondents knew that children under six do not pay for treatment. The audience may have recalled this situation and decoded it better because it was more familiar and situational, rather than factual and medical.

There may be a number of reasons for this poor recall. The medical information may be perhaps too dense for the viewers to remember; the students may be experiencing HIV information “overload” and refuse to listen further; and the nurses on the programme speak very quickly, which may hinder the students’ understanding of the message.

In addition, students may find it difficult to decode messages where a lot of code-switching is used in the process of encoding the message. This could be considered as one of the disadvantages of Soul City VII. There seems to be too much emphasis on the reach of the message rather than its impact. In each episode, approximately five languages are used; these include Zulu, Xhosa, tsotsitaal and scamto, as well as English subtitles that flash on the bottom of the screen. This may have a negative impact on those that are not bilingual, and cannot read or make sense of the fast English subtitles.

Credibility and realism

A high frequency of 91% of the respondents felt that Soul City VII was realistic and accurately depicted the “township life” or the life lived in Chesterville. Many respondents pointed out the HIV and AIDS content which they felt was realistic. Other students alluded to issues which were not covered in the two episodes shown, but which were covered in the Soul City series as a whole, which shows evidence of familiarity with the programme’s past seasons.

A further area in which respondents saw Soul City VII’s message as being realistic, was in the fact that it was educational and could operate as a support to others going through the same situations as the characters.

Questions relating to a particular character, Sello, showed that respondents identified with him as a realistic character in a situation which resembled that of many of the people in the township. 55% of the respondents identified with Sello’s plight and felt that they would find it difficult to find a job after matric. They understood the realism of their own material social conditions as represented by the programme. Most of these respondents were boys, as most related to Sello and his position. This illustrates that he is a credible character that adheres to the notions of Bandura’s social learning theory.

Modelling and identification

Zandi is an attractive transitional character in Soul City VII who undergoes an attitude change before she accepts her status as HIV positive. She moves from being a negative role model to being a positive role model. When asked whether it is important to check one’s HIV status, 85% of the students agreed that it was important. This high percentage in agreement with Zandi could be due to the respondents modeling her perception of the situation. Many of the respondents’ comments reflected their approval of her admirable behaviour.

The character Zukiswa participates in volunteerism. She is included as a positive role model, but undergoes conflict and faces resistance to her volunteering. 81% of the male respondents claimed that volunteerism was a respectable job, even though only 28% noted that they had been volunteers previously. 100% of the girls saw volunteerism as respectable. This shows the modelling of their perceptions on Zukiswa’s. They saw how she viewed it and adopted this as their view. This proves that many respondents did accept Zukiswa’s behaviour as positive, since they viewed volunteerism as positive and supported her free will.
Venter is positioned as a negative role model, presented with an attractive lifestyle, which includes girls, cars and money but with links to crime. Some participants did identify with Venter and did not perceive hijacking and stealing as negative behaviour. 9% of the respondents did not see hijacking as an unacceptable idea, and would do the same themselves. This infers that these students were attracted by Venter’s lifestyle and modelled their behaviour on Venter’s. This is an unintended effect, since the programme directors would not have expected this to be a result. They would have hoped to repel viewers from crime instead of attracting them to it.

Talking with others
The two episodes included in this study dealt with the issues of living with HIV and AIDS, masculinity and volunteerism, which were interlaced into the narrative. The presence of these issues encouraged interaction between the respondents and their family and community. 69% of the respondents stated that they were encouraged to “talk with others” about the content and issues in Soul City VII.

This infers that Soul City VII has an agenda-setting element, since viewers’ attention is directed to certain issues. In these episodes the viewers were encouraged to check their HIV status, were educated on ARV treatment information, and were encouraged to view volunteerism as a positive action. This was done through certain characters such as Zandi and Zukiswa who modelled these perceptions and behaviour in order to show the audience how to live a better life. The comments included throughout the project illustrate that the respondents’ attention was indeed directed to discussing certain issues.

Conclusions and recommendations
The students considered the Soul City message as educational which meant that they understood it as a programme with more of an intellectual, rather than entertaining, nature. This proves that the majority of Soul City viewers do not appreciate or realise the EE formula, which is a negative outcome, because the viewers may actually switch to watching other programmes that suit their desires and gratify their needs. As Bouman states, “If viewers do not appreciate the EE formula they will stop watching and become less receptive to the message” (Bouman 1999:61). In such a competitive environment, Soul City VII has failed to highlight its entertainment aspect, which may have crucial consequences in terms of maintaining a dedicated audience during prime-time television.

The students’ focus on the educational aspects could be due to the frequent use of medical jargon and acronyms in the programme. This also gives an indication that the Soul City marketing strategy may have set an educational image rather than one that involves a mix of both entertainment and education.

The students found Soul City VII to be a realistic series that they could relate to, since it depicted an environment, as well characters, which mirrored their material social surroundings. This is a positive result because it enabled viewers to find role models that they felt led similar lives to their own. This result also highlights the “research” aspect of Entertainment Education interventions that distinguishes Soul City VII from purely entertainment-based programmes. The students’ responses indicated that formative research is fundamental to EE interventions, as it has benefits in terms of creating messages that are credible to the audience. With the advantage of using formative research, Soul City is able to produce characters that the viewers can be drawn to as well as sympathise with. As a result of this, they found it “helpful” in terms of educating them about issues such as HIV and AIDS, as well as guiding them in leading healthy lifestyles.

This aspect of Soul City VII also leads to the agenda setting ability of the programme. As a result of having strong and emotionally appealing characters, viewers were inspired to talk about what they saw in the intervention. This was a positive aspect of the reception, because it showed the potential for behaviour change.
This study has demonstrated how audiences respond to messages encoded through such an intervention and thus allows us to propose pointers that could result in better audience reception for future series. Recommendations include:

• Minimising code-switching while the characters are communicating, as this interferes with message reception.

• The subtitles flash rapidly at times. They should be shown for longer periods as Soul City VII’s target audience is not predominantly English-speaking, which means they will have difficulty reading these fast-appearing subtitles, which interferes with message reception.

• The producers must maintain the educational issues through the different episodes so that the audience can remember and learn by means of repetition.

• The respondents saw Soul City VII as an educational intervention rather than an Entertainment Education one. This means that Soul City should rather air during a different timeslot, as the message environment in which it is currently competing has popular shows that are of a pure entertainment genre.

• Soul City VII should consider using celebrity guests to conduct epilogues at the end of each programme, as this will enhance the impact of the health messages as well as speed up the behavioural change process.

• Soul City VII should look at advertising themselves more when introducing a new series, as this creates audience anticipation and gains viewership. We almost missed the first episode because of lack of this. Soul City VII changed its whole image in terms of its logo on the Television programme. Awareness is one of the most important factors of advertising, which Soul City VII did not adhere to.

• Soul City VII introduced new characters to take the lead roles which may have had a negative effect on loyal viewers from the past seasons. This includes the lead male and female characters (Sello and Zandi).

• Soul City VII should also invest in popular actors and actresses in order to increase viewership as well as make the transitional process of Bandura’s Social Learning Theory easier (modelling theory).

Bibliography


UKZN students’ perceptions of traditional healers in the documentary Deadly Myths

Udesha Moodley (Honours, 2008)

Problem statement

When introduced to the idea of communication for social change we found that cultural differences were one of the main reasons why some forms of health communication did not work. The mass media has been used as a form of education and entertainment and has an influential role in society.

Knowing the discrepancies that can occur in media transmission of messages and the media’s occasional disregard of public opinion, we chose to research the representation of traditional healers in the media. Previous research focuses on traditional medicine in comparison to Western medicine; but there is no evidence of research on the media’s depiction of traditional healers. Therefore we focused on the impact of media representation of traditional healers on the general public.

Taking into consideration the pivotal role that traditional healers play in African communities, it could be implied then that traditional healers possess great power and influence over their mass followers. The manner in which traditional healers are depicted by the media and consequently the way they are received by its audience assumes an integral position in the effort toward communication for social change.

Objectives

The research team chose to investigate the perceptions of four main race groups of university students to the traditional healers depicted in the documentary Deadly Myths. We also investigated how cultural values affect students’ perception of traditional healers.
Specific research questions included the following:

• What are students’ views of the representation of traditional healers in *Deadly Myths*?
• Are there any differences in perceptions of representations of traditional healers among students from various race groups?
• What are the discourses that inform students’ interpretations of the representations of traditional healers?

**Links to other literature in the field**

Traditional healing is a holistic practice; it does not focus on only the physical ailments of a patient. Healers from different cultures all attest to their methods of administering to all aspects of their patients’ lives, not only prescribing medicinal remedies for illness but also administering to their spiritual, emotional and mental well-being through counselling and prayer. The term “traditional healer” in Zulu culture is used to refer to a wide variety of indigenous health practitioners; ranging from birth attendants, herbalists, faith healers and prophets. The World Health Organization’s definition of a traditional healer highlights the differences between the traditional healer (sangoma or inyanga), and the witchdoctor (umthakathi); and suggests that many people remain confused between the two (Schuster Campbell, 1998; Dlamini, 2001).

Devenish (2003:1) shows how traditional healing has come under attack for supposedly harmful and destructive practices. Healers are accused of spreading the HIV virus by re-using razor blades amongst patients as well as perpetuating the belief that sleeping with a virgin will cure a person of HIV and AIDS. Whether blatantly or through suggestion, traditional healers are being held partly responsible for the spread of HIV and AIDS amongst the black population. These media images observed in South Africa only help to continue the marginalisation of traditional healers and to perpetuate the notion that traditional healers and medicines are inferior to those of the West. The Tanzanian media is supportive of traditional healers; however, South African media should treat traditional healers with the same dignity and respect they afford Western doctors (Madlala, 2005). Despite stereotypical views propagated by various forms of media, traditional medicine remains an integral part of many African homes (Madlala, 2005).

Schuster Campbell (1998) writes about a new kind of educated healer who combines traditional rituals with modern practices. Her research clarifies the mystery surrounding traditional medicine and its practitioners, and is useful in giving a clearer picture of what goes on within the wide range of traditional healer communities. This study is written from the perspective of the healers and biomedical doctors; it fails to give personal accounts from patients who have been healed and how they understand the practice and what role it plays within their lives.

Sherry Ayres’ (2002) study of traditional healers suggests that traditional and cultural practices can be improved by adopting medical safety measures. Traditional healers were trained by health professionals to help them because of their close relations and trusted positions amongst community members. The healers were happy with the new skills and knowledge they acquired, but wary of not being asked to impart any of their own particular skills and knowledge.

Extensive research has been done on the collaboration between health professionals and traditional healers, although it is criticised for being unidirectional in nature (Dlamini, 2001; Ayres, 2002). Concurring with others on this subject, Devenish (2003) concludes that traditional healers can be professionalised. The view of traditional healers in media articles has sometimes portrayed the practice of traditional healers as primitive and obsolete (*Mail & Guardian*, December 31, 2006), but even though the promotion of state clinics and other facilities have forced traditional healers into the background, the two spheres can work together (Ayres, 2002:120; Schuster Campbell, 1998:151; Devenish, 2003).

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

The study rests on theories of textual analysis, including semiotics analysis and audience reception, as well as conversational analysis,
content analysis and thematic analysis. Semiotic analysis and audience reception dealt with understanding *Deadly Myths* in relation to the documentary as text and how the audience reacted to it. Conversational, content and thematic analyses were used to identify the information received from the focus-group interviews conducted.

According to Daniel Chandler (2001), the study of semiotics can be applied to anything that can be seen as signifying something, which refers to all things that have meaning within a culture. Textual codes such as camerawork, lighting, costume, subtitles and translations, and social codes such as body language, for example, gestures and facial expression, can contribute to the reading of film texts. The ideological meanings behind symbols are also considered. The “text-context” is usually ignored in semiotics analysis so we refer to this relationship in our analysis to provide a coherent link between *Deadly Myths* and the larger context of the “media”.

Audience reception theories are based on the assumption that audiences do not simply accept a text passively but will interpret the meanings of the text based on their individual cultural background and life experiences. Stuart Hall’s (1997) encoding/decoding model of the relationship between text and audience is used in this study. The model showed that there can in fact be great discrepancies between the intended or preferred reading of a text and how an audience interprets it.

Conversational analysis is concerned with the study of verbal communication that people conduct in everyday interactions. Developed from ethno-methodology, conversational analysis provides an analytical method by which to address conversation (Hutchby et al, 1988). Essentially, conversational analysis exposes structures and rules in day-to-day communication and how communication is governed. Conversational analysis is used to address students’ responses to the documentary, each other and their environment. This includes analysing how they deliver their speech considering their pauses, intonation and intensity. We take into account the manner in which respondents interact with each other and the researchers for example, considering how they take turns to respond.

Content analysis is used to determine “the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts” (Palmquist et al, 1997). From analysing the content, inferences can be made about the messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and the culture and context of the text. Content analysis is used in examining the data collected in the focus group sessions, as well as examining the content included in the questionnaire. Thematic analysis is concerned with the creation and application of “codes” to data. These codes “may be a list of themes, a complex model with themes, indicators, and qualifications that are causally related, or something in between these two forms” (Boyatzis, 1998:4).

**Methodologies and methods**

This study was conducted through ethnographic research using a combination of two main research strategies; qualitative research in the form of a focus group, and quantitative research in the form of questionnaires. A sample group of students from Howard College at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was selected as the research participants, including forty-two individuals for the focus group and sixty for the questionnaires.

Five stratified focus groups were conducted over a period of a week, using the snowball sampling method. The ratio of male and female participants was kept at 50/50 where possible. The groups were segregated into different race groups, in order to compare racial and cultural perceptions. The focus groups began with guiding questions to assess the general knowledge of the participants on the subject of traditional healers. A seven-minute segment of the documentary *Deadly Myths* was then screened, and questions were posed to discover if and what affect the documentary had on the participants. The analysis of the *Deadly Myths* segment was informed by the theory of semiotic analysis. We analysed codes and the meanings of these that were present in the text. This analysis was important so that comparison between our (educated) reading of the text and the reading of the audience...
(focus group participants) could be examined. (Editor’s note: due to space constraints, the semiotic analysis of the documentary is not included in this paper).

The questionnaires focused on student’s perceptions of traditional healers in the media. Fifty-five questionnaires were completed and analysed.

**Key findings**

*Traditional healing and religion*

The Indian, coloured and white groups did not have much personal experience with traditional healers (sangomas) and had a largely negative view of traditional healers, associating them with evil. At the same time they compare those traditional beliefs to those of their own various religions and tried to remain unbiased by using “culture” as the reason for which it was prasticed. The black groups also explained traditional healing in terms of religion, but made a clear distinction between Christianity and traditional healing, saying that the two could not co-exist, but in their opinion should be combined. The black groups were able to understand and incorporate traditional healing and religion because of the fact that they had been raised within this cultural and religious discourse.

*Word patterns*

There was great confusion in all groups, excluding the black groups, surrounding the definition of a traditional healer. In most cases sangomas and witchdoctors were assumed to be the same. The black groups were very comfortable with all the relevant terminology and concepts. Common word patterns across the focus groups were the use of “Western” in terms of modern medicine and doctors, as well as the already mentioned confusion of the terms, “witchdoctor”, “sangoma” and “traditional healer”. One can attribute how students referred to the different forms of traditional healers in relation to the amount of prior knowledge that each student had about traditional healers.

**Western medicine vs. traditional healing**

All groups brought up the point of Western medicine being held to a strict standard; whereas most believed it is not possible to hold traditional healers to a similar set of regulations. All groups agreed that the training of traditional healers was secretive and therefore it is difficult to trust its validity; whereas Western doctors attend university for 7 to 10 years, which is seen as a more legitimate form of education. It was also agreed that Western doctors do not have all the answers, and drugs are certainly not always the best method of healing. The herbal medication of traditional healers was respected by all groups, even being compared to homeopathy or the origins of modern medicine but the comment was made that if “muti” killings formed part of the medicine, this became unacceptable. However, some groups felt that as bio-medical progress has been made, so perhaps this practice of traditional medicine has become outdated. The black group alone appreciated the purity of traditional forms of medicine.

*Gender relations*

Due to the snowball sampling method, most participants in the groups knew each other; therefore they were not intimidated by gender in their responses. It was found that in general males were more critical of certain rituals within the practice, whereas females tended to be more liberal and quite defensive of the cultural beliefs surrounding traditional healing.

*Media and other influences*

It was found that the media representation of traditional healing is constantly compared to Western medicine, undermining the practice of traditional healing and that these negative representations do affect their perception. Individuals’ culture and family informed and reinforced their ideas about traditional healers. In the black group, traditional healing forms part of their traditional background through personal experience and communal roots, and they felt that their reality is not accurately represented in the media.
Reactions to Deadly Myths
Most participants across the race groups, excluding the black groups, felt that the documentary did not change their initial perceptions, and felt that the representations contained in Deadly Myths were largely accurate. The black groups did not agree with the representation but were not shocked by this, as they felt that this was the norm within all other representations of traditional healers in the media. The other three race groups did not have the same advantage as the black groups, making their understanding of the practice of traditional healing more limited.

Questionnaire responses
The results of the questionnaire show that UKZN students are exposed to a wide range of media, although the dominant forms were television and the internet. The majority of the participants believe that media plays an influential role in their everyday lives and 80% of participants across the different races also admitted that the media has influenced their decisions about traditional healing and traditional medicine.

This also confirms that documentaries such as Deadly Myths may not hold influence on their own, but it is the constant flow of small messages that change a person’s opinion, it does not come from one source. 49% of participants were indifferent to traditional healers, this may stem from ignorance, but it was interesting that 60% of black females were also indifferent; this is in conflict with the racial stereotype regarding traditional healers.

The data indicates that 51% of all participants know what the difference between a sangoma and a witchdoctor is, but when examined further, the black participants made up the bulk of this figure whereas the white participants had no idea there was a difference. This corresponds with the results of the focus group, which shows that the cultural differences and lack of personal experience affect students’ prior knowledge about traditional healers.

Influences are not weighted from one particular source, thus making it clear that knowledge about traditional healers came from varied discourses. 82% of participants had not used a traditional healer, limiting their knowledge on the topic, though many knew someone who has used traditional healing and would be open to trying it in the future. 60% do not believe in traditional healing based on their previous knowledge. Interestingly, 70% of the black females form part of this group, again this is not in line with the black cultural stereotype held by some of the participants of the focus groups.

Conclusions and recommendations
The manner in which traditional healers are depicted by the media and consequently the way they are perceived assumes an integral position in the effort toward communication about health issue and influencing social change. The majority of research participants declared the “media” as the source of negative beliefs about traditional healers. For that reason, media messages should allow traditional healers to participate in the design process of development communication messages rather than make arbitrary judgments about the practice as a whole.

Previous research on traditional healers was confined to the comparison between traditional medicine and Western medicine and the possible collaboration of the two. Consequently the “spiritual war” referred to in Deadly Myths develops into a form of conflict.

The media is viewed as reinforcing negative stereotypes surrounding traditional healers, rather than clarifying these misconceived ideologies. Therefore negotiation should play a role in the advancement of a greater sense of truth or legitimacy surrounding the representation of traditional healers, which will promote the use of communication as a mechanism to development. Although Deadly Myths was not made to enhance misconceptions around traditional healers, it did so and reinforced negatively associated perceptions about traditional healers and the practice itself.
Bibliography


Assessing the entertainment and education balance of 4play: Sex Tips for Girls: A reception analysis of the entertainment-education nature and value of role models within the series

Thandokuhle Mkhize (MA, 2010)

Problem statement

4play: Sex Tips for Girls is a South African drama series’ initiative about four women; it is built around the Entertainment Education (EE) model and aired on eTV. The series was written and produced by Johannesburg-based Curious Pictures, for Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa (JHHESA), and examines many health and development issues, imparting information and impacting on social norms, attitudes and practice. Its impact is aimed at the level of both the individual and the community.

4play: Sex Tips for Girls (4-play) incorporates health issues like HIV and AIDS through the use of celebrity appeals. However, there has not yet been a study that aims to assess audience reactions toward this EE-based series. There is a need to investigate the relationship between intended behaviours and the actual behaviours of audiences after they have watched the series, in order to identify if the series has the potential to not only entertain, but also to educate audiences on positive healthy behaviour. This study investigates the entertainment and education balance of 4play through a reception analysis to the EE content of the programme, and the value of role models within the series.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to examine if 4play achieves a good balance between the educational and entertainment aspects, and if it creates an entertaining learning environment for viewers. In addition, this study seeks to ascertain the value of role models within an EE programme.

The particular research questions included the following:

1) In what ways (if any) does the 4Play audience identify with the characters?
2) Do audience members value the series’ content in terms of both the entertainment value and the educational value?
3) What educational messages are identified by the audience?
4) What lessons (if any) are learnt through the actions of the characters within the show and do the audience members apply these to their own lives?

Links to previous literature in the field

Mass media have become worldwide popular sources of entertainment as well as health information, due in part to advances in technology and media penetration (Papa et al, 2000:123). EE places emphasis on increasing audience members’ knowledge about an issue, creating favourable attitudes, shifting social norms, and changing the overt behaviour of individuals and communities (Papa et al, 2000). EE programmes allow audiences to examine the problems that fictional characters face on television, in terms of their own lives (Bandura, 1995:23). Audience members are usually reluctant to discuss the details of their personal life in public; but feel comfortable talking about the lifestyles of their characters, and commenting on the accompanying consequences (Singhal & Vasanti, 2004).

Research evidence has shown that the EE strategy has been consciously applied to improve health behaviour in multiple forms. Although there is abundant research that advocates EE as an effective tool for promoting different social and health goals in different social contexts, many studies (cf. Arroyave, 2008) focus on the effectiveness of EE’s potential to spark discussions among audience members. Martine Bouman (2002) focuses on how health communication professionals and television professionals
collaborate in the design and implementation of producing an EE television programme. Making a television programme is the result of a negotiated agreement in which all partners participate. If the entire EE programme design process stays under the control of television professionals, it might be complicated by the multidimensional character of the medium (Bouman, 2002). The shift in the balance of power during the collaboration process suggests that “when education and entertainment are combined, the straight educational message tends to disappear behind the entertainment” (Bouman, 2002:234).

Wilson and Beck (2002) explore the optimal balance between entertainment and education components. Evaluating whether entertainment and education mutually supporting each other could improve the EE strategy (Okan, 2003:26). Thomas Tuft (2003) explores the opportunities as well as limitations on capitalising on the EE experience in order to further the strategic use of telenovelas for social change. The success of telenovelas is determined by the correct application of EE characteristics.

The analysis of the telenovelas provides insights into how the careful application of an “enter-educate” approach involves the audience in processes of identification and dialogue in the EE programmes (Tuft, 2003). Due to the fact that television is originally used by the audience to seek pleasure, television might generate “an unintended effect of battering habits congruent with serious learning” (Okan, 2003:258). This raises profound questions about the value of education in the entertainment format. It remains an issue of controversy and debate about how and to what degree audiences are influenced by what they see and learn by observing role models.

**Concepts and theory guiding the research**

The heritage of EE strategies lies in a series of psychological and psycho-social theoretical schools, including social cognitive theory and play theory (Tuft, 2001). This study is guided by behaviour change theories that inform the practice of communication for social change (CFSC). The CFSC approach explains that people and communities are agents of their own change and encourages a process of public and private dialogue through which people define who they are, what they want and how they can get it (Figueroa et al, 2003). There is also an emphasis on improving the lives of marginalised people which is informed by principles of self-efficacy.

Social cognitive theory is at the core of understanding the process of EE, seeing that it frames the role of learning through communication. Albert Bandura states that individuals learn by watching the behaviour of others (both positive and negative role models) in real life or on television (Bandura, 1977). He proposes that audiences identify with characters in programmes that use celebrities (fictional characters), colloquial language, and are similar to them in age, status and race (Bandura, 1994:28). Audience members relate to characters that express their emotions, and allow the audience insight into their lives and actions (Piotrow et al, 1997). Audiences can then choose to copy the desired behaviour or discard it; thereby enhancing self-efficacy perceptions. This theory is applied to investigate the level at which audiences identify with the 4play characters, and whether or not they can learn about healthy sexual behaviours through the use of role models.

The extent to which viewers form relationships with television characters and personalities has shown to have an influence on how they learn from and even mimic characters they have seen on television. Of particular interest in this study are the concepts of identification and para-social relationships. Identification has been described as “the process by which media consumers imagine themselves to be in the place of the performer so that they experience the events from his or her perspective and share the performer’s feelings and responses” (Chory-Assad & Yanen, 2005:183). Central to the concept of identification is that the viewer takes on another identity in which they adopt the views, and even attitudes of the characters they are watching. This is different from simple imitation, because it requires that the viewer “forgets themselves and become the other – that we assume for
ourselves the identity of the target of our identification” (Cohen, 2001:252).

Unlike identification, parasocial interaction is not internalised, but is external to the viewer. Para-social interaction occurs when people start to visualise fictitious characters in the drama as being real people (Papa et al, 2000). Rubens and Perse (1987) divide this phenomenon into three distinct categories: cognitively, affectively and behaviourally oriented parasocial relationships. They describe cognitively-orientated parasocial interaction as “the degree to which audience members pay attention to a particular media character and think about the character’s actions” (Rubens & Perse, 1987:34). Affectively-orientated parasocial interaction is described as “the degree to which an audience member identifies with a media character, and believes that his/her interests are joined” (Ibid, 1987:34). Behaviourally orientated parasocial interaction is “the degree to which individuals overtly react to media characters, for instance by talking to these characters or conversing with other audience members about them” (ibid, 1987:34).

These examples are ongoing communication vehicles, where the key in their establishment of trust and loyalty lies in the principle of building parasocial relations between the audiences and the characters of the programme (Papa et al, 2000). What makes such parasocial relations possible is the fact that the characters are credible, relevant for the audience and perform recognisable dramas from everyday life (Tufte, 2001). These definitions inform the analysis and concrete signs of parasocial relationships in the form of behaviour or thought practices being relayed through viewing the series.

This study was also based on audience reception theory, which assumes that there can be no “effect” without “meaning” (Jensen & Jankowski, 1993). Audience reception theory seeks to understand the production of meaning from the perspective of the audience in light of social and media structures. Audience reception, however, observes how messages are received, perceived and interpreted by viewers, keeping in mind the text of the media as well. The encoding/decoding process is described as “asynchronous”, explaining that “at each point of the communicative process there is a scope of indetermination which allows for several potential meanings and impacts to be enacted” (Jensen & Jankowski, 1993:137). The production of “meaning” in terms of “decoding” is a process by which individuals create their own interpretations of the messages put forth by the media (Hall, 1973).

Research methods and methodology

This investigation into the reception of 4play involves a qualitative research approach. A focus-group discussion and informal interviews were the most appropriate means for investigating the entertainment and education balance and the value of role models within the series, given that much of the information of interest is related to social change. The sample comprised of eighteen university students (thirteen females and five males, ranging from the age of 18 to 24) that were purposively chosen for their assumed knowledge resulting from their frequent viewership of 4play. They came from varying social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. The sample for this particular study was selected using the method of non-probability sampling, to allow me to handpick participants to build up a sample that is satisfactory to my specific needs (Cohen et al, 2001). A further tool for collecting data included correspondence via emails with fans on the 4play Facebook page. The data collected from this tool was applied in general to corroborate findings rather than to generate any sort of hard data. Three interviewees were recruited from the 4play Facebook page. Many fans showed interests in the study although they were only three fans who were consistent throughout the interview, as I believed that some of the answers required clarification or elaboration.

One of the limitations of this study was the small sample size, which cannot be considered as a fair representation of the students at Howard College Campus (UKZN). Another inhibiting factor was the uneven gender representation within the focus groups, as a majority of participants were female. This translated into the female participants dominating the interactive session.
Key findings

EE programmes

While the focus-group (FG) discussion around combining the entertainment and education components of 4play was polarised, the participants reported a significant amount of learning from interactions shown on EE programmes. Some respondents thought that EE programmes were educational in an attractive way, citing that they have never thought of the risk of a sexual network until it was demonstrated on TV. On the other hand, a few of the participants felt that all EE programmes addressed the same issues, namely, unsafe sex and AIDS.

The data provides evidence that education does not necessarily need to be dull, but it can incorporate entertainment formats to generate pro-social attitudes and health behaviour. It also demonstrates that viewers are not passive recipients; they are always in constant decoding and encoding. This has a significant role in how they interpret messages irrespective of the intended meaning. This is in line with Tufte’s (2003) study that showed divergent views amongst the viewers who argued that they seek pleasure from television and this might generate unintended effects.

Am I learning or being entertained?

While the participants differed in their responses about 4play, it seems most of them have, at one time or another, found themselves affected, or at least provoked, to think about various issues as a response to watching. While some respondents pointed out that there really are not many life lessons to be learned from 4play, they did however think that perhaps it could influence viewers to be conscious of AIDS.

On the other hand, some of the participants felt that there were definitely elements of real situations that made them think. The programme made the participants think about ethical issues, norms related to unfaithfulness in relationships, alcohol use and unsafe sex, and the consequences of certain behaviours. In many ways, the participants felt that watching the consequences of actions that the characters face proved to be a useful learning tool, which mentally prepared them to deal with certain situations in future.

Self-efficacy is evident in how the participants identify with 4play. Self-efficacy shows self-determination in how they discard negative behaviour and attitudes of the characters and adopt positive behaviour. This is consistent with Bandura’s idea that the process of viewers watching and copying the behaviour of role models can result in behaviour change. Some respondents noted that watching 4play helped prepare them for situations that they had not yet experienced, and watching other people go through situations was valuable for understanding on a personal level and for giving them a perspective on various options for handling life situations.

Some participants noted that constantly seeing people who are HIV positive and watching them interact with other characters even in other programmes, like Soul City, may have played a role in making them more accepting of people living with AIDS. Pérez (2009) finds that an audience’s frequent exposure to pro-social messages reduces prejudice and stigma associated with AIDS.

The interviewed 4play viewers indicated that the events and the behaviour of the characters has prompted them to think about issues such as drinking, cheating and sex. Many of them felt as though watching real people go through conflicts and difficulties and, at times, suffer the consequences of indiscretions caused them to subconsciously reference it to their own lives.

For many participants, watching 4play was useful for observing how other girls live their lives and how to avoid mistakes. The participants provided exemplary support for Cohen’s (2001) assertions about the ways in which anti-social messages of the media should not be dismissed as superficial and mindless but should be closely examined to analyse the potential of entertainment to educate audiences. Therefore, it can be argued that EE is capable of creating favourable attitudes as the participants echoed that they have become more accepting and tolerant as a result of watching 4play.

It was unclear whether or not the drama that many participants found to be entertaining in 4play was also perceived as educational.
When they were asked if they found the content in 4play more entertaining or educational, many participants used Soul City as a basis for comparisons, noting that Soul City was “too informational”. Some felt that the more 4play got dramatic, the more it did not appear as an educational programme.

While watching 4play helped educate most of the participants about the consequences of certain behaviours, none of them said they made direct mental references to 4play when facing similar situations themselves. But several participants reported that they stored information in the back of their minds that subconsciously came up when it was relevant.

**Audience identification with media characters**

The perceived celebrity status of the cast members of 4play appeared to be directly related to the occurrence of wishful identification and parasocial interactions. Given that perceived similarity has been shown to be a factor in wishful identification, it seems that viewers are most likely to wishfully identify with those who they perceive to be of similar status. However, admiration appeared to be from afar. Not many participants expressed any desire to be like the personalities on 4play, despite the fact that they were perceived as living a lavish life that everyone aspires to. However, some participants said that they had aspirations to imitate the character Noma. In their cases, it seems that perceived similarity played a significant role, as both of them discussed having similar personalities, career goals and fashion sense as Noma, although they viewed her as a celebrity. This supports Cohen’s (2001) assertions that perceived similarities are correlated with wishful identification. However, it may also be concluded that the social status of the object of wishful identification may play a role in whether or not the phenomena occurs.

This type of self-validation may be viewed as a form of parasocial interaction. It also may offer an explanation, beyond mere voyeurism, as to why the participants said they were provoked by watching the characters fight and getting into troubles, such as they reported that it made them reflect on their own lives.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The study had set out to investigate the entertainment and education balance of 4play: Sex Tips for Girls and to ascertain the value of role models within the series. This study has provided numerous instances that support scholars’ theoretical proposition about how parasocial interaction may socialise viewers, and how perspectives on the world may be cultivated by frequent television viewing (Horton and Wohl, 1956).

From the information obtained, it is apparent that the EE intervention had a positive impact on the participants’ lives. Many of the participants considered the intervention to be a real eye-opener to issues concerning HIV and AIDS. Participants reported that they were able to learn about different groups of people, such as people with AIDS and homosexuals, with whom they were not personally acquainted. This seemed to have a positive effect and speaks for the potential of EE to foster simultaneous learning and entertainment. EE is in an excellent position to serve as a window from which viewers can watch and learn about health in an entertaining way.

EE proved to be an effective strategy, especially when dealing with young adults, as they are most receptive to an entertaining learning environment. It attracts the audience by adding the element of entertainment which seems to be a major motivating factor for the participants to watch. The participants’ responses demonstrated that good entertainment can also incorporate educational messages. EE’s use of creative techniques such as drama series has attracted intense audience involvement with the educational content reaching them both subconsciously and consciously.

However, new things did emerge like how the participants indicated the danger of using celebrities, for example, some 4play cast members’ behaviours were considered as not matching that of the characters they portray in the series. It was suggested that producers of EE programmes should ensure that they use actors who are not exposed in paparazzi gossip columns. This will be an interesting area for future research.
Overall, the study did achieve its objectives as most of the participants reported that they have learned from the interactions and consequences that befall the characters. Few participants that confessed that 4play did not change how they think, nevertheless, admitted the potential of 4play to affect viewers positively.

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Problem statement

Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes are seen as essential and integral to the development of school readiness in preschool learners. A lack of access to such programmes, especially in the reception year (Grade R) which is offered to five-year-old children in preparation for their progression from pre-primary school to primary school, hinders not only the development of these foundational skills but also disadvantages various aspects of learners’ development in the years that follow (UNESCO, 2007). In South Africa, enrolment in Grade R programmes has remained voluntary, but has been highly recommended for learners before entering the formal schooling system. Added to this is the issue of the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in the school setting. Although numbers of learners being taught in their mother-tongue languages have improved dramatically over the past decade, there remains a minority of 20% of learners in the Foundation Phase who are being taught in a language which is not their home language. These two main reasons, the importance of access to quality ECD programmes and the value of mother-tongue education, formed the basis of this research.

This study focuses on Takalani Sesame, an Entertainment Education (EE) series, which is the South African version of the American series Sesame Street, the purpose of which is the promotion of school readiness and the support of the reception year (Grade R) of South Africa’s national education curriculum. This research compares changes in lifeskills-related learnt data between the test...
group and control group, over a six-month period, with a focus on “guiding” the viewings through researcher-led discussions of selected segments of episodes, in an attempt to anchor the decoding of messages, especially in relation to HIV and AIDS.

Objectives
The main focus of the research was to determine how the guided viewing of the Takalani Sesame television series, plus the incorporation of researcher-led discussions and follow-up activities, would impact on lifeskills-related learnt data amongst Grade One learners at a primary school in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

This study offers guided viewing of Takalani Sesame, followed by researcher-led discussions about the associated activities’ impact on changes in lifeskills-related learnt data amongst Grade One learners. It explore the levels of attention shown to the Takalani Sesame television series and questions the levels of enjoyment of and engagement with the series, as well as identification with the characters noted to exist amongst the selected viewers. It further explores how Takalani Sesame’s encoded messages are interpreted by the selected Grade One learners. The study concludes with assessing the educational feasibility of utilising the Takalani Sesame series as a permanent educational resource at Grade One level within appropriate schools.

Links to other literature in the field
Television is often portrayed as an important socialising agent in the lives of children. Despite the several negative influences of television, some proven positive effects of viewing television include the stimulation of imagination (Singer & Singer, 1986); increased creativity and tolerance of others (Rosenkoetter et al, 1990); and the effective teaching of pro-social behaviour. It has also been noted to increase levels of nurturance and sympathy in children (de Groot, 1994). With this in mind, television has been vested with the potential to do both harm and good, dependent on the programmes which are viewed and the understandings and interpretations thereof (Shaffer, 1999).

Rosengren, Windahl and Dervin (1989) found that general entertainment television content viewed by pre-schoolers tended to result in negative school performance, in contrast with the viewing of educational programmes specifically, which showed an association with better first-grade results and later, the same children’s sixth-grade results. Findings of other research have suggested that it is not television viewing itself which determines the relationship with language development, but rather, the interplay between the television content, the circumstances in which viewing takes place and the type of parental mediation which is involved (Linebarger & Walker, 2005).

Television is regarded as an early window through which a number of valuable lessons would be able to be taught, should content be altered in specific ways. However, criticisms of educational programming include the assertion that it is essentially a one-way medium, where the pupil is seen as a passive recipient of information, as opposed to an active constructor of knowledge (Shaffer, 1999). Further to this, there is the argument that young children are often hyperactive and restless, resulting in only secondary attention being paid to the television set, which could impact on positive effects (Miron et al, 2001). Yet, research has shown age-appropriate, educational television programmes have “positive and enduring effects on children’s development” (Huston et al, 2007:55). Claudette Galaun (1979) found that pre-primary school children who viewed a specifically designed education series acquired cognitive skills from the viewing of this series and performed better than the control group on a variety of tests.

Takalani Sesame is the South African multi-media co-production of the US series Sesame Street. The numerous assessments of Sesame Street which have taken place have ranged in their nature from experimental studies (Ball & Bogatz, 1971) to longitudinal studies (Rice, Huston, Truglio & Wright, 1990) to national surveys (Zill, 2001). Two early research studies on the US Sesame Street
by Bogatz and Ball (1971) found that children who viewed the series more frequently showed the greatest educational gains in comparison to those who viewed less frequently or not at all.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

This research rests on the theories of the active audience (Lull, 1995), Entertainment Education (EE) and social cognitive theory. The concept of the “active audience” is based on the premise that age, race, class and gender are seen to impact on the decoding and interpretation of media texts (Lull, 1995) and audiences are capable of creating meaning in various ways, often different from that which is intended by the encoders of media messages, resulting in a degree of audience autonomy and resistance (Budd et al, 1990). Children are by no means excluded from this notion of the active audience, as through research, they have been identified as being active interpreters and processors of meaning (Buckingham, 1996).

EE interventions are well known for involving audience members emotionally, thereby earning high audience ratings and promoting/encouraging interpersonal dialogue on related topics, which has been seen to lead to changes in the social discourses of peer groups. This usually occurs as a result of audience members feeling more comfortable discussing the lifestyles and problems of characters, as opposed to those which are personal, as well as the desire to share with and demonstrate to others facts that have been learnt (Singhal & Rogers, 2003).

Social Cognitive Theory focuses on the way in which modelling of behaviour and vicarious or observational learning has an effect on increasing levels of self-efficacy and individual behaviour change (Bandura, 1986; 1994). The theory is said to lie at the centre of Entertainment Education, due to learning occurring as a result of the observation of characters, with such observation having been noted to be both more effective and efficient than direct experiential learning (Singhal & Rogers, 1999).

**Research methods and methodology**

Two main components made up the design of this research, namely a field experiment and a reception study. The field experiment consisted of the use of pre- and post-test questionnaires to measure changes in certain lifeskills-related learnt data. This was specifically done at the commencement and termination of the six-month research period during which the researcher incorporated Takalani Sesame into the Grade One curriculum as an educational resource.

The reception study component included participant observation, researcher-led discussion sessions (resulting in “guided viewings”), post-viewing drawing and discussion activities, parent/caregiver–child homework tasks, holiday activity books and focus-group discussions.

Sampling was carried out in two phases. Firstly, “simple random sampling” was used in order to allocate each of the two Grade One classes at the chosen school to either the “test” or “control” group. Secondly, “stratified random sampling” was used in order to select twelve sample group children from each group. In the present study, this was done on the basis of race and gender, with age and ability being controlled as a result of all learners being Grade One non-repeaters, with the classes originally being divided according to mixed ability. Within the test group, the selected group of children comprised of six boys and six girls, ranging between the ages of six and seven. All girls were African Zulu-speakers, representative of the female portion of the class. Amongst the boys, five were African Zulu-speakers and one was coloured, English-speaking. Within the control group, six boys and six girls were also selected, with all being African Zulu speakers.

The field experiment which was conducted at the school took place over an extended period of six months, beginning in April 2007 and ending in September 2007. The independent variable which was manipulated by the researcher was the act of exposure of the test group to the television series Takalani Sesame and related activities. The dependent variable, namely changes in lifeskills-
related learnt data, was then able to be determined, not only in the test group but also in the control group of children who were not exposed to the Takalani Sesame series in the school context.

The 24 learners (twelve from the test group and twelve from the control group) were administered a standardised, age-appropriate questionnaire by the researcher, both prior to the commencement of the viewing period and shortly thereafter. The focus of the questionnaire was on various pre-selected life skills learning areas that appeared in segments on the 14 Takalani Sesame television episodes that comprised the series.

At the close of the research study, structured interviews were carried out with the two class educators, in order to discuss topics relating to the 24 children who took part in the research. This was in order to understand their perceptions on the various aspects of these learners, including general ability and personality, as well as to gain information on their knowledge of the children’s individual backgrounds. Structured interviews were also carried out with seven parents/caregivers of learners within the test group, at the close of the research.

**Key findings**

**Attention to the Takalani Sesame series**

Overall, from the results of the field experiment, the learners’ levels of attention to the Takalani Sesame series during viewing appeared to fluctuate according to various factors. The learners were often noted to monitor an episode using their auditory senses, returning their focus to the screen when something interesting was heard, as distinguished by auditory cues. Attention was noted to be maintained for a period of time until the learner became distracted again. This is reflective of Bazalgette and Buckingham’s (1995) assertion that children actively screen television contents for images, sounds and themes, which are thought to be attractive and understandable to them.

Episode content that tended to attract higher levels of visual attention included segments using Zulu (the mother tongue of the majority of the learners); other ethnic languages such as Sesotho; and English and Zulu used together in a blended manner. This shows that the learners seemed to instinctively respond more to segments that were in their mother tongue, or failing that, in an ethnic language with similarity in sound. Other segments that were also seen to attract high levels of attention, most of the time, were those including American muppets, especially when singing songs as well as animated segments, live action segments, fast-tempo songs, unusual noises, children’s voices and regular segments.

Another aspect that seemed to impact on visual attention was the amount of time since the last researcher-led discussion had taken place. The two-to-four short discussions slotted in between the 12 to 17 segments per episode provided a change of focus and assisted in regaining and/or increasing learners’ visual, as well as possibly auditory, attention to the series. This is attributed to an understanding of learners’ expectations, as well as what was expected from the learners. The fact that the researcher-led discussions were observed to increase attention to the series is significant, as this was one of the goals of the inclusion of the researcher-led discussions – to improve learner’s attention to the screen, which would then hopefully impact on retention, changes in learnt data and the potential for behaviour change.

**Enjoyment, engagement and identification**

Levels of attention are closely linked to levels of enjoyment, engagement and identification, as in order for enjoyment to be realised and for the learners to engage and identify with the series, attention levels must first be suitably high and when these fluctuate, levels of enjoyment and engagement can be seen to fluctuate accordingly.

The research established that the learners appeared to enjoy viewing the television series at school through several examples, which highlights how they responded to and engaged with the series during viewing periods. Various activities were noted, including singing, dancing, imitation of behaviour, laughter, clapping, discussion surrounding activities seen on screen, answering questions and asking the characters questions. The test-
group learners’ engagement with the series could be seen to be reflective of “parasocial interaction” (Horton & Wohl, 1956) with the characters, noted in the way that the learners were often seen to empathise with the characters, showing sad facial expressions when a character was sad or getting upset because the character was getting hurt. This was noted in the focus-group discussions where the learners repeatedly referred to a specific character as being a friend, often offering reasons for these choices as being based on a muppet’s fur colour, hair type/colour or clothes.

Another indicator that reflects the fact that the learners enjoyed watching the series included the increase of eight test group learners who identified *Takalani Sesame* as being one of their favourite programmes at post-test. Yet another indicator of enjoyment was the reported level of home viewing of the series. The fact that the majority of the test group learners reportedly maintained their viewing of *Takalani Sesame*, coupled with an increase in the number of control group learners who reported watching the series at home, could possibly be seen as a result of increased awareness and/or enjoyment due to the research intervention.

Seven of the twelve caregivers responded to the request for an interview, which could be seen to show that the parents had engaged with the intervention. The caregivers offered interesting insights into their children’s interactions with the series, adding richness to the data. They were able to verify the children’s enjoyment of, and engagement with, the series, to discuss the fact that most of the learners were enthusiastic to complete their homework tasks and to identify specific areas that they thought that their children had improved in during the course of the research intervention.

As the learners in the research were seen to engage with the series, varying levels of identification were also noted to exist with the characters. These were seen during participant observation, when drawing pictures in the post-viewing activity books, during the interactive activities included in the post-test questionnaires and in the context of the focus-group discussions.

In some cases, the learners were seen to draw the same characters after each episode, which could indicate high levels of identification with this character. The fact that Moshe, Zuzu and Neno were the characters drawn most often by the learners could be seen to indicate that these characters were those with whom the majority of learners most identified. Thus it is clear that different groups of learners were seen to identify differently with the characters, most probably dependent on various factors including intervening variables (Potter, 1998) such as developmental stage, personal information, as well as other factors relating to similarities between viewers and characters, such as the estimation of the characters ages and genders in relation to their own (Comstock & Paik, 1991).

**Message decoding**

In much the same way that the learners’ levels of attention were seen to be linked to levels of enjoyment, engagement and identification with characters, these aspects were also noted to be related to the process of decoding of the messages embedded in the series.

The research revealed that most of the *Takalani Sesame* series’ encoded messages were decoded by the learners in the ways in which they were intended by the producers. However, there were cases in which incorrect or erroneous decoding was identified. These were mostly noted as a result of language incomprehensibilities that resulted in certain important aspects of a segment not being understood. Where possible, these were rectified through the use of the researcher-led discussions.

Whilst a relationship was noted to exist in terms of increased attention levels and reductions in the general incidences of erroneous decoding, the current research still saw cases of learners’ erroneous decoding or “oppositional” readings (Hall, 1980). There were also cases of creative decoding noted, where certain segments were seen to be decoded in a seemingly unusual way, dependent on the learner’s expectation or their personal characteristic which they brought to the story. This highlights the role of the active viewer (Hawkins & Pingree, 1986), showing that not only were the learners active in terms of choosing what they would like to attend to, but also which messages they would oppose or accept (Lull, 1996) and which they would decode in a
manner which made the message more relevant to their own frame of reference. The mediation which was offered by the researcher in the context of the researcher-led discussions was carried out in English, which did not appear to be problematic and was deemed to be successful in anchoring messages and receiving feedback on the topic of message decoding and enjoyment.

Both the test and the control groups showed an increase in the number of learners who perceived Takalani Sesame to have educational value over the course of the research period. For the most part, the learners correctly decoded information on the ages, races and languages of the characters. Disparities were noted in the context of the focus group discussions when the characters’ ages and genders were discussed. In many cases, these were different to the answers given by the learners in their holiday books, which were mostly correct. This shows that talk surrounding television is part of a process of social negotiation (Jordin & Brunt, 1988) and cannot be regarded as a finite product, nor can it always be regarded as evidence of viewing skills, but rather as a communicative process (Buckingham, 1993).

**Attainment of Curriculum Goals**

In terms of changes in learnt data relating to the three specific life skills areas, this process was seen to be tied up with attention, engagement, identification and the decoding of messages.

Due to the small sample size of the learners, one cannot say that any effects, positive or negative were definitively as a result of the Takalani Sesame intervention. However, there were many cases in which changes in learnt data were noted to take place, with results being indicative of being due to the Takalani Sesame intervention. Both specific content-related learning, as well as incidental learning appeared to have taken place during the time of the research intervention. While learners in both the groups experienced high degrees of content-related learning, the test group learners showed the highest levels of these.

In the twenty key life skills areas included, there were 34 instances in which the control group learners were seen to show benefit. Instances of incidental learning, both at school and at home, could have contributed to these gains. Parents/caregivers who took part in the interviews noted that their children had improved in various aspects relating to language, including letter recognition, sentence creation, pronunciation and English-language skills. Whilst this could be a possible effect of the Takalani Sesame intervention, it is understood that the series would only have been playing a supporting role, cementing the language skills that the learners were being taught daily in the English language during normal classroom activities. In the interviews, the parents/caregivers further asserted their belief that it is not only children who benefit from the series, but that adults and caregivers could also learn from Takalani Sesame. This underscores Ghebregziabher’s (2008) research which showed that all parents in his research sample felt that the viewing process (in cases where co-viewing had occurred), had been a gainful activity for them, with many reporting personal enjoyment. Each of the three life skills topics is discussed below.

**Nutrition**

In the area of nutrition, the test-group learners as well as the control-group learners were able to identify more instances of healthy foods at post-test, although the test-group learners showed a greater improvement than the control group. Learners in both the test and control groups were able to increase the numbers of less healthy foods which they were able to identify. At the same time, however, there were also increases in the numbers of healthy foods which the learners erroneously identified as unhealthy/less healthy. This appeared to be as a result of the learners being unable to differentiate between perceptions of foods which were unhealthy to eat every day and foods which they simply did not enjoy eating. This result indicates a possibility for further research as nutrition continues to be an important factor contributing to long-term health and well-being. Recognition of this importance is seen in the topic’s inclusion in the Foundation Phase curriculum.
**Safety and security**

In the area of safety and security, the test-group learners were noted to become more pragmatic in their perceptions of danger, and showed positive changes in both the home-safety and vehicle-safety areas. Some gains were also noted amongst the control group learners which, as previously mentioned, could have been as a result of the impact of the questionnaires or changes in developmental levels. The main difference noted between the two groups was the way in which the test-group learners showed more increases in areas that pertained to safety messages that were less common than those encountered every day, but which were featured on *Takalani Sesame*. Examples of these included safety messages were those pertaining to electricity cables, trains and playing with vehicle door handles. This result indicates a possible opportunity for including additional safety messages for specific areas, for example personal protection and awareness relating to crime and domestic violence.

**HIV and AIDS**

In the area of HIV and AIDS, there were many positive effects noted, although in some cases, reticence introduced in the domestic situation impinged on the learners’ responses, even at post-test. This is not to discount the improvement in open discussion which was noted amongst the test-group learners both in the school and the home context, particularly in reference to HIV and AIDS. Importantly, the results of the structured interviews with the parents/caregivers of the test-group learners also indicated positive changes and impacts from the intervention. A remarkable positive change was noted in the test group learners with regard to their perceptions of how HIV is not able to be spread. These research results present positive indications of the efficacy of the researcher-led discussions, post-viewing activities and homework elements in strengthening accurate information around HIV and AIDS, which can be taken forward and possibly used in other EE and educational age-appropriate information and education programmes.

**Use of Takalani Sesame as a Grade One educational resource in specific schools**

Mother-tongue languages are seen to be linked to a person cognitively, linguistically and emotionally and are noted to be a key indicator of academic performance (DoE, 2006). Similarly, Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes are seen as essential and integral to gaining linguistic, cognitive and social skills which form the foundation of a child’s future. The fact that these issues were taken into account in this research and that they were validated indicates the importance of these two issues and underscores the opportunity presented by effective education which is an important factor for development and positively impacting on peoples’ lives.

An intervention of this sort could be seen as critical for South Africa, with its current education challenges and the promise of a new generation of learners for 2020 and beyond. Further to this, if recommendations are followed and EE is more fully used, this medium could then assist South Africa in achieving Millennium Development Goal 2, as well as the Education for All goals, impacting on the global progress made in these regards.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

Based on the data obtained during the course of the research, it is evident that the learners attended to the series to a satisfactory degree, with attention levels seen to be higher in cases where Zulu or a mixture of Zulu and English languages were used. Concurrent activities were noted to take place and these were seen to impact on the learners’ levels of attention to the series. Importantly, the researcher-led discussions were noted to increase learners’ levels of attention to the series, and communication levels, as well as assisting in anchoring messages and clarifying meanings in instances of erroneous decoding having taken place. This is important in the context of television co-viewing where discussions which take place during this process result in the pooling and sharing of knowledge (Miron et al, 2001) and although EE series contain an obvious education component, there remains the possibility for
misinterpretations which could end up being counterproductive to the intentions of the series (Papa et al, 2000). In the case of this intervention, many of these unintended misinterpretations were able to be addressed and mitigated.

Using Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) as the basis of the research indicated that positive results are possible and initial foundations for increased behaviour change and social change. This is as a result of modelling behaviour, which feeds into increased levels of self-efficacy, as well as better understandings of outcome expectancies and behavioural capabilities which lay the initial foundations for increased behaviour change and social change.

It is clear that EE is an important medium in South Africa and that co-viewing with follow-up activities is also important, allowing for television to be integrated into the total learning experience. Adult mediation, which shows additional benefits, means that other life skills-related topics that are not in the curriculum could be explored.

Bibliography


CHAPTER 7

Visual Media

The term “visual media” is a contentious one. Mitchell (2005) argues that it is an inexact colloquialism, and in fact, “all the so-called visual media turn out to involve the other senses” (2005:257). However, in the context of the research presented in this chapter, the visual media are those items that are seen and read, and there are no other senses involved. This means then that the words and images that are selected in these media are vital as the primary message carriers. Where words or images are difficult to decipher, or are ambiguous, then messages are likely to be received by their intended audiences in different ways and the desired effect of the media may not be reached.

This chapter covers some of the theory and uses of visual media as a communication tool. Case studies are provided of billboards, posters, pamphlets and other visual media, and how audiences read and receive the development messages portrayed in these media. The chapter includes summaries of four post-graduate student papers. Contributors include: Bailee-Kate Griggs, Jenna Robinson and Tim Wohltmann (2004); Caitlin Watson, Sarah Strauss, Katherine Wood and Nicolaas Kroone (2009); M.J. Khan and Nasreen Rasool (2005); and Tamryn Maxwell (2010).

Griggs, Robinson and Wohltmann (2004) examine the efficacy of outdoor billboards as an effective medium for Entertainment Education, focusing on the “Break the Silence” billboard campaign of Art for Humanity. The billboards were created as a
way to promote dialogue about HIV and AIDS, to break stigma and promote a wider “moral ownership” of the epidemic.

The research problematises some of the issues involved with using billboards to promote pro-social change and health. Amongst these are issues regarding visual literacy and cultural appropriacy. The researchers argue that, whether culturally appropriate or not, the billboards have the potential to create dialogue and to promote debate.

Watson, Strauss, Wood and Kroone (2009) also explore the use of billboards. This study explores the role of participatory communication in promoting safe sex amongst first-year UKZN students. The study questions the communication model used in loveLife’s billboard campaigns, and explores how participatory involvement can decrease “miscommunication” and allow for peer-led learning to occur within workshops.

Visual images in photographs were found to be an effective way of using visual media to promote discussion and understanding amongst young people. Khan and Rasool (2005) investigate how effective visual material (particularly photographs) can be used in Entertainment-Education interventions, and how these can challenge stereotypes and promote understanding.

Traditional print media such as posters have long been methods used to communicate about public health issues. The efficacy of this is explored by Maxwell (2010), in her reception study into the posters for the Brothers for Life campaign aimed at men and responsible masculinity. The research questions which images used in the campaign are the most appealing, and why.

References:
fine art prints created by 21 South Africans and 10 international artists.

Objectives
The aim of this research was to investigate the potential of billboards as an effective EE medium, exploring both the opportunities and challenges provided by billboards. The research questioned whether the Art for Humanity (AFH) campaign met the set objectives of encouraging the community to “break the silence” with regard to talking about HIV and AIDS.

Links to other literature in the field
The research reviews literature regarding communication models and their application to EE.

The sender-message-receiver (SMR) model of communication (Shannon & Weaver, 1949) is the model which defines communication. The sender must effectively create or encode a message, which will be understood by the intended receiver of the message. According to Goodman (2002), people think in either words or pictures. The process of thinking is, in effect, whereby a thought (a biochemical reaction in the brain) is translated into either words or images that represent the reality that is stored in the memory. It is at this stage, ultimately, that the communication process is broken down and the brain begins to decode the message (Goodman, 2002).

At this point, the brain is more likely to capture an experience and a feeling, but not necessarily details, which are expressed through signs and symbols. It is therefore pertinent to say that one’s ability to encode signs and symbols falls behind in our ability to mentally conceive of an image and words. It is therefore essential that in order for a sender to communicate specific information and messages, the sender must be conscious of a clear thinking pattern, and must understand the message, in order for the receiver to do so as well.

In EE this is particularly important, as the senders’ intended audience may be from a different culture and may have different thought patterns. With the connection of similar language, people interpret the world in a similar way (Hall, 1997). Where the sender and audience for a message are different, this shared conceptual map may be lacking. In these instances, there may be no common language of both words and images that link our concepts and ideas.

In addition to this shared understanding, the medium of the message is also important. An appropriate and acceptable medium may reduce the interference that prevents audiences from receiving the message. Billboards are a popular, accessible public medium for messages (Farquhar, 2003). Billboards however rely on the linear SMR model of communication, and there is no room for audience feedback in the communication process. This may present challenges for its use as an effective medium in EE.

Concepts and theory informing the research
The research relies on behaviour change theory to understand how the billboards for AFH may be received. To encourage behaviour change as a process, Piotrow (1997) notes that it is essential for programming officials to be aware of the changes that an audience may go through before, during, and after a campaign. One must also be aware that social norms and public policies influence an individual’s behaviour change process (Piotrow, 1997). There are three core levels that enable one to understand the nature of the audience and its ability to change. These include the intrapersonal (individual) level, the interpersonal level and the community level.

Behaviour change is influenced at the intrapersonal level by an individual’s characteristics, which include knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and personality traits (Glanz & Rimer, 1995). Although these characteristics may change during one’s life, they are mostly inherent to the individual because of factors such as culture, tradition and the social environment.
Theories at the interpersonal level assume that individuals live in an environment where other people’s thoughts, examples, assistance and emotional support have a substantial effect on their own feelings and behaviour (Glanz & Rimer, 1995). These theories recognise that both the individual’s beliefs and the social environment need to be influenced in order to encourage behaviour change. Social learning theory works at this level. Communication based on this theory aims to produce a model of behaviours which the individual and the community should conform to.

The community level is probably the most effective level of communication and theories related to the “Break the Silence” campaign under discussion. It is at this level that a framework is created for understanding why and how social systems function, how and why they change, and how communities can be stimulated (Glanz & Rimer, 1995).

The community is the basis for role modelling, and the foundation for goals to be aimed and achieved. This is the point where individuals are offered positive guidance and the community becomes a place of learning and adopting new behaviours and beliefs.

Research methods and methodology

The research involved interviews with the AFH project coordinator to understand the thinking behind the campaign, and to gather feedback about how the campaign was received. The limitation in this research is that the intended audience themselves were not interviewed to understand their first-hand reception of these billboards.

Key findings

The concept of “moral ownership” envisioned by the AFH campaign implies that the public must recognise the AIDS epidemic and the spread of HIV, and taking ‘ownership’ of the epidemic. By taking ownership of the problem, it was anticipated that the public would speak more freely about it, creating dialogue with the community and taking responsibility for their behaviours and actions.

The campaign coupled the use of art with billboards in an effort to employ a medium in which the message is embedded, to fit into the context and the communities themselves, where the billboards are situated.

As people think in terms of both words and images, it was anticipated that the incorporation of both would be doubly effective. The use of fine art in the campaign revolved around its significance as a forum for and of social documentation. The billboards have an enlarged artwork accompanied by the campaign slogan “Break the Silence”. This bold message does not tell the viewer what the message is, but rather encourages them to think for themselves. This encouragement of critical thinking was useful and resulted in some of the artwork being used in schools as a teaching tool.

The encoding process of this communication model was a dual one, with artists encoding and interpreting the notion of “Break the Silence” and creating artwork based on this; and then audiences exposed to the billboards decoding this artwork for themselves. As the billboards were placed in communities for a long period of time, they became part of those communities, and were engaged with on an ongoing basis.

An issue of concern for the project was how community audiences would respond to and encode this “fine art” without formal arts and visual literacy education. This was, however, what gave the project its vibrancy, as the project managers felt that when people are confronted with an abstract image, they reflect on it more deeply and make something of it for themselves.

Some of the artwork was found to be challenging for the audience, in that it challenged stereotypes and gender roles in particular. This created public debate on radio, and ultimately resulted in greater community engagement than anticipated. To some extent, this controversy has caused a pattern of change and maturation towards the stigma around HIV and AIDS.
Conclusions and recommendations

The use of cultural, traditional, conventional and unconventional artwork with defining emotional messages incorporated years of tradition, and contrasted this with folklore and patriarchal systems. This may have changed the perspectives of the billboard viewers.

The billboards reportedly made people think about and identify problems that they were facing with regard to HIV and AIDS, thus breaking the silence around the epidemic. The use of culture, and breaking the mould for an HIV and AIDS intervention has been successful. The research found that billboards can be used as a form of effective EE intervention if theories are adopted and the use of culture and representation are explored clearly, and connect significantly in terms of health issues.

However, the AFH organisation had not effectively evaluated the campaign. Focus-group discussions and interviews with the audience may enable them to gain greater insight into the reception of the billboards, and to improve an already successful campaign.

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“Let’s get active”: A participatory approach to analysing and designing billboard adverts

Caitlin Watson, Sarah Strauss, Katherine Wood, and Nicolaas Kroone (Honours, 2009)

Problem statement

Extensive resources and information are available on HIV and AIDS, but there remains a gap in research conducted with young people, particularly students at tertiary institutions (Moodley, 2007). Comprehensive health communication campaigns aimed at the youth are vital in promoting safe sex and reducing the risks associated with sexual behaviours. These campaigns need to be holistic as well as applicable to their related target audiences, as research demonstrates that health communication messages can be misunderstood (Delate: 2001; 2007). This study aims at exploring first year students’ understanding of loveLife billboard adverts as well as exploring the benefits of using a participatory approach (Freire, 1972) to conceptualising and creating billboard adverts.

Objectives

This study explores how students perceive and interpret the safe-sex messages encoded in the loveLife billboard adverts. These perceptions and interpretations are analysed in relation to the participants’ responses relating to their previous perceptions and exposure to loveLife messages. The study also seeks to determine the effectiveness of using a participatory approach in aiding the conceptualisation and creation of billboard adverts. This was done through a participatory workshop through which participants designed their own billboards.

There are three main research questions that form the foundation of the study:

1) How do the participants perceive and interpret the messages in the loveLife billboard adverts?
2) What issues do the participants highlight in the creation of their own billboards?
3) What were the advantages and disadvantages of using a participatory approach in creating billboard adverts?

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review includes issues of exploring health communication through the media, and in particular the promotion of safe sex through the medium of billboards.

Health communication is a broad area of study which consists of multiple levels and channels of communication including interpersonal, group, organisational and societal communication (Torkkola, 2009). Of particular importance to this research project is the media and mass communication, or what Kreps, Bonaguro and Query (1998) refer to as “societal communication”. Societal health communication examines “the generation, dissemination, and utilisation of relevant health information communicated through diverse media to a broad range of professional and lay audiences to promote health education, health promotion and enlightened health-care practices”.

Although the focus of this research project is mainly safe-sex promotion through one level (billboards), the researchers aimed to also incorporate communication at the interpersonal level through dialogue. The critical thinking, arguments and discussions that the research participants engaged in was fundamental to their overall understanding of safe sex. Thus the process of health communication itself is vital and has the potential to contribute either directly or indirectly to individual attitude and behaviour change (Evans et al, 2009).

Although there are many different arguments relating to the effectiveness of health communication, they are all based on a pivotal element which revolves around the idea that the failure...
of communication means that the effect of the communication process is different from what was intended by the sender (Torkkola, 2009). This element is of particular importance in this research, as the loveLife campaigns have largely been criticised for the discrepancy that exists between the intended meaning of their adverts (designed by the sender) and the actual reading (received by its audience) (Delate, 2001; 2007).

Of particular relevance to this current study were two studies conducted by Richard Delate (2001; 2007). The first study explored loveLife's use of billboards as one of the tools in their health-communication campaign, and finds that there is ongoing confusion on the meaning of these billboards. Delate suggests that future loveLife campaigns should involve young people in testing the messages, to determine whether or not they are appropriate. The second study focuses on the fact that the intended meanings encoded into loveLife adverts does not match the messages decoded by the audience (Delate, 2007).

Building on these findings, the current research investigates a participatory approach to media creation. Rawjee (2002) highlights the “need for theories and models commonly used in HIV and AIDS communication campaigns to be re-articulated so that they are less linear and individualistic and more flexible so that they may be adapted for application within various contexts” (2002:7). She suggests Freire’s underlying principles of participation in including the acknowledgement of cultural contexts when creating mass media campaigns. Similarly, Moodley (2007) found in her study at the University of KwaZulu-Natal that students were not supportive of programmes with a top-down flow of communication. Rather they preferred a more participatory approach to the development of HIV- and AIDS-related messages.

**Concepts and theory informing the research**

The conceptual framework used to guide the research is that of communication theory, and in particular the paradigm of development communication.

Communication for development is defined as: “an interactive process where community dialogue and collective action work together to produce social change in a community” (Manyozo, 2008:35). Community engagement strategies are built on “participatory generation, sharing and utilisation of knowledge towards building sustainable communities, livelihoods and environment [with] the emphasis on empowerment, social change, local and indigenous knowledge” (Manyozo, 2008:35).

This notion of empowerment is contrasted with the dominant communication paradigm of modernisation, where development is viewed as a “unilinear, evolutionary perspective” (Servaes, 2006:284). Within this paradigm, mass media played the role of a change agent as well as an indicator of development and was perceived to increase the rate of modernisation, exposing underdeveloped nations to developed cultures, facilitating the transition from traditional to modern society (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:114). Schramm (1964) reiterates the role of mass media as a way to “speed and ease the long, slow social transformation required for economic development” (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:118).

The paternalistic sender-message-channel-receiver-elicited response communication model (SMCRE) (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) provides a structure for understanding communication processes that suggest a one-way/top-down flow of communication. The SMCRE model is composed of sender (S): the funder, NGO, initiator or donor of a development initiative; M (message): representing the knowledge, ideas, techniques and technology to be transferred; C (channel): the mass media, visual media and word of mouth; R (response): the intended audience; and E (elicited response): the new behaviour change elicited (Ascroft & Agunga, 2006:418).

A structure such as this allows for easy control over development projects, resulting in goal-based vision and strategy beneficial when dealing with time constraints and emergencies, whilst neglecting dialogue (Ascroft & Agunga, 2006:418). This results in the beneficiaries of development being placed into subordinate
roles with no chance to direct and channel their opinions of development.

The traditional sender–receiver model of communication (e.g. SMCRE model) is criticised by Servaes and Malikhoa (2005), who emphasise that, although it is easier to give lectures than to encourage dialogical learning, the former has proved problematic in development strategies of the past. Servaes (1996) puts forth that the participatory development paradigm arose in response to there being a desperate need for a development communication model which emphasised human dignity, respect for others’ cultural diversity, open communication channels and media to all people, not just those in power, and giving the people a voice and mode of action so that they can produce and implement their own methods of development.

Participatory communication is partly based on the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire. Freire is said to draw on the theology of “respect for otherness” and existentialism, and “insists on a dialogical communication approach whereby subjugated peoples must be treated as fully human subjects in any... process” (Servaes & Malikhoa, 2005:96). Therefore, participatory theory is one which insists on a communication process which values dialogue, listening and trust. Melkote and Steeves (2001:338-339) stress the importance of open communication channels which are used to generate a dialogue, so as to let people understand each other, each other’s problems, and a community’s collective problems.

The focus for this research is to test whether the inclusion of individuals’ stories and their opinions generated from their own experiences and beliefs, in the creation of a health promotion message aimed at individuals whom they see as their peers can create a sense of empowerment. In this way a sense of power is handed back to marginalised people when a form of respect is given to their voice. Melkote and Steeves (2001) discuss how local stories are usually only heard through the form of public media, “the power to create, select, and tell stories about one’s self, one’s group, or other people is controlled by elites through organisations, networks, agents, or genres” (2001:355). Thus minorities are robbed of an important cultural resource – the right to tell their own stories, “People’s right to communicate their stories should be at the heart of the participatory strategies leading to empowerment” (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:355).

**Research methods and methodology**

The research approach is based on the interpretive paradigm and involved both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Using non-probability (non-random) sampling, the research focused on the responses of 18 first-year students from the Media Department at UKZN. A questionnaire was handed out to the participants, in order to gain insight into the participants’ knowledge and perceptions of safe sex, as well as their exposure to safe-sex advertisements and the loveLife campaign. This was followed by a focus-group discussion with all eighteen participants, where ten loveLife billboard advertisements were discussed.

The viewing of the different billboards was followed by dividing the participants into four groups. Each of the groups was then asked to design a billboard that presented a problem or solution to any issue they felt was important with regard to safe sex. Once their billboards were completed, the groups explained their decisions behind the specific issue chosen as well as their reasoning behind choosing certain images, colours and slogans for their billboard. This was followed by a session where the participants were given the opportunity to express their opinions and suggestions pertaining to the participatory process.

**Key findings**

The questionnaire was divided into three sections: the first section included questions involving sexual activities and behaviour, the second section revolved around safe-sex communication and the third section related to the safe-sex messages of loveLife.

**Sexual activity**

The questionnaire showed that 76% of the respondents stated that either they or people in their social group were sexually
active. 72% stated that age of sexual debut was more likely to be between the ages of 16 and 18. 83% said that condoms were the contraceptive of choice when engaging in sex. Despite the fact that the majority of the participants or their peers were engaging in sexual activities and not using contraceptives all of the time, only 23% felt that either themselves or their peers were at a very high or a reasonably high risk of contracting HIV. This finding highlights the discrepancy between actual behaviour and perceived risk.

Safe-sex communication
All of the respondents had been educated at school about safe sex, although 17% felt that safe-sex practices were not effectively discussed. Half felt that it was primarily their parents’ responsibility to educate them about safe sex, while only 17% felt that it was a combination of parents, school and the media’s responsibility. Despite the fact that all of the respondents indicated that they had come into contact with different media channels promoting safe sex, only 17% felt that it was the media’s responsibility to educate them about safe sex.

Exposure and perception of loveLife
All of the respondents indicated that they had heard of loveLife, with 41% having been exposed to loveLife through television adverts, and 24% having been exposed to loveLife through billboards. Overall the respondents felt that loveLife’s messages had the capacity to change people’s attitudes and behaviour towards safe sex; and thus were effective in promoting safe sexual practices. It is important that the questionnaire was completed prior to the analysis of the billboards and the conceptualisation of their billboards, as the latter research proved to contradict this finding.

Thematic analysis of loveLife billboards
Ten billboards were analysed by the focus group. The most negative feedback received concerning the loveLife billboards deals with discrimination against people with HIV and AIDS. Participants brought up concerns revolving around how a particular billboard could evoke negative connotations for people born with HIV, and could marginalise people with HIV. The negative decoding of this billboard is a concern as there is a clear discrepancy between the intended message and the actual reading of the message.

Another interesting outcome from the focus-group discussion related to the use of language in the billboards. All of the participants felt that there needs to be an inclusion of languages other than English. They felt that this was particularly applicable in rural areas where the majority of the people do not speak English as their first language. Thus it is vital that billboards be developed and adapted to suit the individual needs of specific contexts, and that they are relevant to specific target audiences.

A significant point raised by several participants was the fact that many of the billboards could not be fully understood because they were not put into context. Considering that billboards are encountered by their audience at a glance, they have to be simple and easy to understand. Three of the billboard adverts shown directly relate to each other. In order to fully understand the entirety of their message they need to be viewed in conjunction with one another. This proved problematic for the participants, as they could not understand the message of each of these billboards when they were viewed separately.

There were many issues raised on the intended meanings of many of the billboards, where the focus group respondents had an oppositional reading, dissimilar to the intended meaning. Both characters and messages were misinterpreted. Relatively strong feelings were expressed regarding the use of power relations within the loveLife adverts. In particular, respondents cited the depiction of the gender roles of male and female characters, which they felt was not always accurate. Racial stereotypes that were depicted were also raised as problematic.

Creation of their own billboards
The respondents were divided into four groups, and each created their own billboard health messages. A trend that ran throughout
the four billboards was the use of condoms. The participants felt that the promotion of condom usage was a vital issue which their peers need to be aware of. In two of the four groups, the full ABC messaging was evident, promoting abstinence and faithfulness as well as condom use.

The groups felt that messages relating to safe sex and HIV and AIDS should be communicated within a broader understanding of unity (the rainbow nation); understanding (sex is a part of the “circle of life” and is natural); and condom usage (if abstinence is not the first choice of the majority of their peers, they feel that the use of condoms should be their golden rule). Issues of trust and loyalty were also incorporated. Images and messages were clear in order to minimise the chances of ambiguous interpretations.

Language was another important issue, with some of the created adverts incorporating multiple languages, as well as the popular shortened slang of cellphones, Mxit and Facebook. All four groups chose to use an assortment of colours when illustrating people, to be as inclusive as possible of South Africa’s many different races.

When the four groups presented their work, they discussed the conceptualisation process that went into the creation of their billboards. The process behind participatory interventions is significant in the sense that it provides a platform for issues that are deemed as relevant and important by participants to be discussed and explored.

**Feedback on the intervention**

The majority of the group felt that participatory approaches should be used in the creation of health promotion adverts.

All of the respondents stated that they learnt from speaking with each other and listening to each other’s opinions when analysing and designing billboards. This participatory intervention drew together individuals from different backgrounds that were part of the university community. Allowing dialogue between individuals from different groups provides insight and understanding into the perceptions of the “other”.

The participatory environment of the focus group allowed for the expression of differing opinions between participants, thus Kincaid and Figueroa’s (2009) notion of convergence and divergence was brought into play. Freire’s emphasis on dialogue was also expressed through this interaction.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The study illustrated that the perceptions and interpretations of the loveLife adverts by first-year UKZN students were largely oppositional in nature. Their perceptions were not in line with intended health-communication messages regarding safe sex. From the research findings it can be deduced that a participatory approach in the creation process is more conducive in the dissemination of health-communication messages. This allows for an open forum where Freire’s (1972) values such as dialogue, peer education, ownership and conscientisation are apparent.

All four groups dealt primarily with the issue of safe sex and contextualised this issue in a way that they could identify with. Issues of representation and language were common themes portrayed through the use of different images and texts within their billboards. Many elements of the billboards were localised by the participants to be relevant within a South African context.

The participatory nature of the workshop enabled greater discussion and understanding of the issues at hand through the concepts of conscientisation, empowerment and ownership. Although the billboards produced were not of a professional standard and could not be used “as is”, the process involved in the conceptualisation and creation of the billboards was invaluable. It was through dialogue and communication that the participants attained a greater understanding of issues surrounding safe sex. Therefore the process involved in the focus group was of greater significance than the actual product of the focus group itself.

By employing participatory methods, health-communication campaigns directed at promoting safe sex will have more of an impact on an individual’s knowledge and attitudes and therefore
behaviour. This is largely due to the fact that an individual is more likely to engage and internalise the issues at hand.

Although the study clearly shows the benefits of incorporating a participatory approach in the analysis, conceptualisation and creation of billboard adverts, it does have certain limitations. Further research needs to be conducted which aims to apply similar methods to other mediums used in health-communication campaigns. At the same time this approach needs to be implemented on a larger scale in order to validate our findings.

Ultimately, in order to combat the many negative outcomes associated with risky sexual behaviours, a participatory approach to health-communication campaigns needs to be adopted. HIV and AIDS health-communication campaigns need to be relevant to their target audience, and one way of achieving this may be by adopting a participatory approach.

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“Pieces of me”: An investigation into the use of still images in an Entertainment-Education context in overcoming stereotypes

M.J. Khan and Nasreen Rasool (Honours, 2005)

Problem statement

ARROW (Art: a Resource for Reconciliation Over the World) is a response from within the College of St Mark and St John to the events of September 11th, 2001, the build-up to war in Iraq and increasing racial tensions in Britain. Since then the project has expanded into countries like Palestine, Kosovo and South Africa, where racial and religious tensions have left each of these nations in dire need of reconciliation. ARROW aims to use participatory methods in the form of creative arts (such as dance, drama and visual art) as a means of bridging cultural gaps amongst children and deconstructing existing stereotypes. The ultimate goal of the project is “reconciliation, cross cultural understanding, the peaceful reconciliation of conflict and the encouragement of a deeper understanding of the crucial principles of interdependence” (Arrow, 2005).

This research investigates how visual material is used in the ARROW programme at the Bechet Secondary School in Sydenham, Durban. This school has a multi-racial population and the learners are predominantly from disadvantaged backgrounds. This particular intervention allows for cross-cultural dialogue, socialisation and positive identity formation amongst children in their prime developing years.

Objectives

The main objective of this project was to investigate how effective visual material (particularly photographs) can be in Entertainment Education (EE) interventions targeting the youth. It also sought
to explore how this method could be used in dispelling cultural stereotypes. The South African students were asked to think about other teenagers in Kosovo, because we were trying to steer away from the stereotypical perceptions of Kosovo as a war-ridden country. Our aim was to get the students to see teenagers in Kosovo as real people, just like themselves, who had similar needs and interests.

Links to other literature in the field; and concepts and theory informing the research

The intervention (or change strategy) relied on photo-elicitation, which “is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview” (Harper, 2002).

The common in-group identity model (Gaertner, Dovidio et al, 1989; 1993) was applied to the research, as it identifies members of two different social groups and how they can overcome attitudes of prejudice to one another. The model suggests that when individuals belonging to different groups come to perceive themselves as members of a single group, their attitudes toward each other become more positive. This increases contact between members of the groups, which reduces intergroup bias still further (Gaertner, Dovidio et al, 1990; 1993).

This theory suggests that it is possible for shifts or recategorisations in the boundary between “us” and “them” to be used to reduce prejudice (Baron & Byrne, 1997:218). Below is a representation of this theory, based on suggestions by Gaertner, Dovidio et al (1990; 1993, cited in Baron & Byrne, 1997:218).

In the case of this research, the two social groups were the students of Bechet High School involved in the project, and the Kosovan children (represented in the pictures). According to the model there is the potential for prejudice or hostility to exist between these two groups, based on incorrect information or media representations.

Research methods and methodology

The research centred on a participatory activity with the ARROW Bechet learners. Photographs of young people from Kosovo were inserted into focus-group interviews to generate discussion. Participants were thus able to see “ordinary” people as opposed to war images that lead to stereotypes. They were asked to draw pictures of what they thought Kosovan teenagers were doing at that moment before and after they saw the photographs. The learners were then engaged in discussion about these images.

Key findings

“Before” pictures indicated a lack of knowledge regarding Kosovo; such as its geographic location, language and culture. “After” pictures were more detailed and many depicted ordinary activities such as schooling and recreation, as well as images of war such as guns and food camps. This was interesting as none of the photographs shown consisted of war images.

The interventions showed that photographs are helpful in creating an awareness of global knowledge, because they are an engaging
medium. The participants were able to have a group discussion around each picture, thus learning from each other and voicing their thoughts and opinions. The photographs also helped respondents to visualise the context in Kosovo, as a comparison between drawings from the before and after sessions indicate. Responses went from having no idea of what Kosovo or its people looked like, to having enough visual imagery to draw on.

However, the researchers also found that the photographs themselves were not enough in disseminating information, and a verbal explanation had to be provided surrounding each picture in order to clear up misconceptions. When used by themselves, the photographs had the ability to elicit a series of unintended readings (Hall, 1980).

There were some unintended effects to the intervention. Some respondents drew violent, stereotypical images of war after seeing the photographs, while our aim was for them to see young Kosovans as being like themselves. However, the intervention helped to create a more holistic understanding of what Kosovo was like, as the pictures also depicted other aspects of daily life, such as going to school and recreation.

The intervention was successful in helping participants to decipher for themselves (as opposed to being lectured to) that teenagers in Kosovo were ordinary people, with similar needs to themselves. We found that the common in-group identity model was helpful in terms of decreasing prejudice.

Conclusions and recommendations

A discussion surrounding both the merits and limitations of photo-elicitation provides useful pointers for researchers interested in utilising this method. The method of photo-elicitation is a useful tool for EE interventions, but it must be used in conjunction with interpersonal communication for effective behaviour change.

Bibliography


“Be a Man”: A reception analysis of the Brothers for Life campaign posters

Tamryn Maxwell (MA, 2010)

Problem statement
Brothers for Life (BFL) is a national men’s campaign and “draws upon the spirit of brotherhood that exists among South African men and to encourage men to positively influence each other as men, partners, parents and as leaders” (Brothers for Life; 2010). The campaign’s target audience is men that are over the age of 30 and addresses issues such as the risks that are involved with having multiple and concurrent partners; the lack of knowledge of HIV status; the low levels of testing and disclosure of one’s status; and the problem of violence against women.

Aspects that the campaign stands for involve men who stand for “responsible relationships, responsible parenting, responsible behaviour, brothers who do the right thing and brothers who stand for life” (Brothers for Life; 2010). The campaign is a joint initiative by organisations such as John Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa (JHHESA), USAID and Sonke Gender Justice.

BFL is a relatively new campaign and any research conducted on it could be of great importance in assessing the success of the campaign. This study explores whether the intended message of the encoder has been successfully decoded by the reader. This aspect is crucial in all campaigns as a campaign can be seen as unsuccessful in its intension if the correct message has not been interpreted by the reader.

Objectives
This study aims to evaluate how male students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) receive the BFL campaign, specifically focusing on their opinions on the campaign’s posters.

The major objectives of this study were to:
1) Explore the understanding respondents have of the BFL campaign and whether their understanding corresponds to the objectives of the campaign;
2) Assess the effectiveness of the campaign’s posters, taking into account the construction of the posters, which include the images, colours, words used, etc.;
3) Determine the effectiveness of the messages by examining whether the messages on the posters had been decoded as the producer of the messages intended them to be;
4) Determine who the respondents feel is the campaign’s target audience; and
5) Discuss the use of professional sportsmen versus the use of men that are unfamiliar to the public.

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review consists of two studies that contain elements similar to the areas of interest within this study. Rosalia Martins (2007) investigated whether the organisation loveLife’s billboard producers had succeeded in communicating their intended message to the readers of the billboards. Martins compared two groups of rural and urban school-learners in their reception of the billboards and their identification of themselves as a target audience for the billboards. Using the “circuit of culture” (Du Gay et al, 1997) as the theoretical framework to her research, Martins primarily focused on the moment of representation to discover how the billboards carried meaning to the intended audience (Martins, 2007).

Findings from this study revealed that the different respondents assigned different meanings to the loveLife billboards. The messages were not obvious to all respondents and, therefore, the intended messages assigned to the billboards by their producer were lost. All respondents felt that they were the target audience of the campaign. However, the respondents also felt that the messages the billboards were trying to convey were of too complex a nature
for younger audience members to comprehend. The notions of representation and reception are explored in the current BFL study.

Robin Larson et al (2005) studied the response by Americans to celebrity endorsements of cancer screening and whether such endorsements influenced their decisions about cancer screening. It considered two ways in which celebrities delivered messages about the need to go for cancer screenings, either when celebrities endorsed cancer screening on the news due to their own diagnosis or when they did it through involvement in promotional campaigns.

The findings revealed that over half of the study respondents had seen or heard celebrity endorsements of cancer screening tests. Most of those respondents stated that these celebrity endorsements would not increase the likelihood of them going for cancer screening tests; however, a quarter of them that had seen or heard these celebrity endorsements stated that it did make them more likely to go for cancer screening tests.

This study is of interest to the current research as it explores the effectiveness of health campaigns that use celebrities to endorse a specific behaviour. Celebrities’ endorsement of specific health-related problems can in fact result in individuals’ increased awareness of a health problem and may even prompt them to take the celebrity’s advice. The response to celebrities in the BFL campaign is explored in this research.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The research is informed by the social ecological model, the “circuit of culture” model, and the notion of modelling healthy behaviour.

The social ecological model

The BFL campaign operates within the social ecological model of health promotion. This model is rooted in “certain core principles or themes concerning the interrelations among environmental conditions and human behaviour and well-being” (Stokols, 1995:285). There are six guidelines that should be followed based on the central principles and concepts of the model, including:

- The multifaceted nature of environmental influences on well-being;
- The interactive effects of intrapersonal and environmental factors on health and illness;
- The relevance of person–environment fit and perceived environmental controllability for individual and collective well-being;
- The importance of identifying behavioural and organisational leverage points for health promotion, and considering both personal- and other-directed health behaviours as targets for change;
- The interdependencies that exist among a person’s or group’s major activity settings and life domains; and
- The value of combining biomedical, behavioural, educational, environmental, organisational and regulatory interventions at several community levels, and adopting an interdisciplinary, multi-method approach to evaluating the outcomes of health promotion programmes.

The social ecological model of health can be characterised by its use of multiple levels of influence on behaviour, namely individual, relationship (social), institutional, community and societal (Elder, 2006:1). This complex interplay between levels needs to be considered in designing a health promotion campaign. The BFL campaign targets all these levels of influence.

The “circuit of culture” model

The study focuses on the “circuit of culture” model (Du Gay et al, 1997). It is through the five “moments” within the model that culture gathers meaning and these moments work together to create meaning (Gaither & Curtin, 2007:38). These five moments are: production, representation, consumption, identity and regulation. Of particular relevance to the study are the moments of production and consumption.

Production is “the process by which the creators of cultural products imbue them with meaning, a process often called...
encoding” (Gaither & Curtin, 2007:39). These producers need to take into consideration all aspects of their target audience (their cultural orientation and demographics) to ensure that the intended message within their product is interpreted correctly.

Consumption is when “messages are decoded by audiences” and this audience “brings their own semantic networks of meaning to the communicative exchange” (Gaither & Curtin, 2007:40). When material is interpreted as its producer intended, it is said that the reader accepts the “dominant” or “preferred” meaning of the material (Hall, 1980).

In the moment of consumption, the material is not decoded as was intended. An audiences’ decoding of material does not automatically constitute the same meaning as one initially encoded by the producer (Hall, 1997). Rather, the receiver of a message is an active participant in the creation of meaning, which is an interactive and dialogic process of translation (Hall, 1980; Hall, 1997).

Modelling behaviour

Many health-promotion campaigns make use of celebrities to endorse a product or message of a campaign to the public. The use of celebrities in these promotion campaigns can be associated with the concept of “modelling”, which is a concept within Albert Bandura’s social learning theory (1971). Bandura discusses the process of an observer’s change in behaviour after viewing the behaviour of another person. Modelling is the process of imitating or copying other people’s behaviour (Swartz, 2006:178).

Bandura (1986) acknowledges that an observer is more likely to imitate the behaviour of the model if they possess characteristics that are attractive to the observer. Libby Wilson (2009:1) further comments, “people are likely to imitate the behaviour which they associate with success or successful people”. It is this statement that is of value in the use of celebrities in health promotion campaigns as the public, through the observation of health messages endorsed by celebrities, may model their behaviour on that celebrity.

However, the modelling of behaviour endorsed by a celebrity is not always achieved. Bandura (1986) outlines certain steps that need to be followed in order for the modelling process to be effective. The first step is attention. The observer needs to pay attention in order to learn the behaviour. If the model is of interest to the observer, they may give them their full attention, which would aid in the learning process. The next step, retention, applies to the observer’s ability to store the information that they have received. The third step is that of reproduction, where the behaviour of the model is performed by the observer. In order for observed learning on model behaviour to be a success, the last step, motivation, is required. This means that the behaviour will only be continued if there are benefits for the observer.

Research methods and methodology

The research was conducted in an interpretive and constructionist paradigm, using qualitative research methods. A small sample group of six people was purposively selected for a focus group discussion about the BFL poster campaign that had been implemented at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The sample group consisted of male students of different ethnicities, between the ages of 18 and 23, who attended Howard College, UKZN.

During this focus group, the technique of aided and unaided recall was used. Unaided recall is when an individual, unassisted, is able to describe the posters they have seen and what appealed to them about the posters. Aided recall involved the same posters that were positioned around campus being shown to the focus group, in order to generate discussions about these posters.

Key findings

It was revealed that all respondents in the study had been exposed to the BFL campaign through adverts on television during the FIFA Soccer World Cup, radio adverts, billboards and posters. The respondents’ understanding of the BFL campaign revealed a number of opinions. Words used in association with the campaign were “be a man”, “be responsible”, “be careful”, “have safe sex”,

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“HIV and AIDS”, “trust”, “unity” and “a fraternity thing”. Many of these comments reflect the campaign’s own ideas of what BFL stands for.

The BFL posters contained images of both black and white professional sportsmen and ordinary men. When questioned as to what caught their attention about the posters, the respondents noted that it was the sportsmen used in the posters and the colours used. All respondents could recall the use of professional sportsmen in the BFL campaign, and all respondents, with the exception of one, were able to recall the dominant colours used in the campaign, namely black, red and white. Not one person recollected having seen any posters with everyday men in them.

When the respondents were asked to look specifically at the campaign posters, they again noted the effectiveness of the colours used. In discussing the text used in the posters, the respondents commented that in all of the posters, the text was easy to read as the writing was large and made use of bold, eye-catching colours. The only poster that the respondents did not feel was effective was the poster displaying the “manifesto” of the campaign, as it contained too much writing.

The messages of the campaign are encoded in an extremely literal manner. All respondents felt that the messages on the posters were simple and easy to understand. The respondents’ understanding of the messages was in line with the intended message produced by the campaign designers.

The respondents preferred the use of graphics that depict people, preferably recognisable figures, and clear-cut scenarios where the readers do not have to negotiate meanings. However, there was no consensus regarding the age group of the intended target market for the campaign. Respondents generally agreed that the age of the representatives seen on the posters had influenced their thinking about whom the campaign was directed to. The majority of respondents felt as though the campaign targeted a more mature audience, as the messages were delivered by representatives older than themselves, and in a serious manner. However, all respondents still felt that the messages on the posters were relevant to their own lives.

All respondents agreed that they preferred the use of sportsmen on the posters, instead of the use of ordinary men. They mentioned that the use of sportsmen is what caught their attention and they were interested in what they had to say.

Conclusions and recommendations

By analysing the respondents’ responses, this study’s aim was to evaluate how male students from UKZN received the BFL campaign, specifically focusing on their opinion on the campaign posters.

From the respondents’ responses, it appears that the first two steps outlined by Bandura (1986) that need to be followed in order for the modelling process to be effective have been partially achieved. The first step, attention, was seen to be achieved as all respondents agreed that the models used in the campaign captured their attention, as they were people of interest to them due to their status as professional sportsmen. The second step, retention of information from the campaign, including the posters, is shown to have occurred within the study, as respondents were able to relay messages from the posters, unaided, which shows that this information had been stored. Some respondents, although they could not recall detailed messages from the campaign, were able to associate words they felt represented the campaign.

The study was unable to determine whether the third step, reproduction, and the fourth step of the process, motivation, had been implemented. However, answers from respondents regarding the messages of the campaign are positive and could be associated to the third step of reproduction of the modelled behaviour. With the above being said, the study has found similar findings to the study by Larson et al (2005) in that the endorsement of a specific health-related issue by a celebrity or professional sportsman could result in an individual’s increased awareness of a health problem, and could prompt them to take that person’s advice.
The BFL campaign aims to “create a movement of men that will ignite and spread through South Africa” (Brothers for Life, 2010). With the use of high-profile sportsmen and adverts during the Soccer World Cup, the campaign has certainly generated interest and attracted attention. At this stage, however, the extent to which the campaign has achieved its objectives is yet to be determined and only time will be the judge of the campaign’s overall success.

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Print media is a form of mass media, in that a large group of people can be reached through the media with the messages coming from a single source. This means that the end media are open to a wide variety of interpretations by their readers or consumers.

This chapter covers some of the theory and uses of print media such as booklets, pamphlets and magazines in passing on health-related messages. Case studies are provided and discussed with regard to their efficacy in bringing about change. The section includes summaries of four post-graduate student papers. Contributors include: Mpolokeng Mpeli (2005); Richard Delate (2007); Wendy van de Weg and Phiwokuhle Mabunu (2007); and Nimeka Dupree (2007).

Mpeli (2005) looks beyond South Africa’s borders, to the reception of the booklet *Choose Life* that was introduced in Lesotho as a spin-off from the Soul City initiative. Her research points to the importance of partnerships when adapting materials for new contexts, and notes in particular issues of age and culture that affect an audience’s reception of such materials.

Delate (2007) explores the notion of branding and brand identities in relation to public health communications. The study explores the meanings represented by loveLife, through examining the images and texts from the television and radio programmes, outdoor media, print publications and public relations produced by loveLife. Delate concludes that the encoding of these media is not always understood and decoded in the same way by its consumers, which may have negative consequences.

Van de Weg and Mabunu’s (2007) research project analyses two youth publications, *Seventeen* and *Uncut*, with the intention of assessing the potential for consumer magazines to act as an Entertainment Education (EE) medium. The research found that consumer magazines such as *Seventeen* were more effective than specifically designed EE publications, such as *Uncut*, in reaching and educating young girls.

Dupree’s (2007) research investigates a newly created pamphlet and DVD that addresses infant-feeding messages. Dupree analyses the media against a set of criteria, and finds that there are some serious gaps in the information provided. This research points to the importance of using professionals in the media-making process, and to ensuring that potentially life-saving health information is both correct and consistent.

This collection of papers highlights the many pitfalls of written materials for health messages, and the possibility for misinterpretation by audiences. Each of the papers contains recommendations for improved communication campaigns.
A reception analysis of Soul City beyond South Africa: The case of Choose Life in Lesotho

Mpolokeng Mpeli (Masters, 2005)

Problem statement
Lesotho has the fourth-highest prevalence of HIV and AIDS in southern Africa. This research is designed to contribute to the development and enhancement of existing and future communication strategies for social change in the fight against HIV and AIDS and other social issues in Lesotho. This includes internal and external communication interventions. Additionally, the research is intended to support a clear understanding of the application of theory in communication campaigns aimed at social change.

Objectives
The study investigates how message-decoding practices of the target audience in Lesotho come to bear on a product originally designed for a South African audience. The sample’s interpretation of the Choose Life booklet is assessed to determine the extent to which their reception produced preferred, negotiated or aberrant meanings. This is with the view that it is possible to separate the two countries culturally; although their proximity to each other and migration suggests that there might be notable cultural similarities. The study also explores whether exposure to Choose Life would have any bearing on the reception of the Soul City television series being presently broadcast on Lesotho television. The Soul City organisation is involved in this initiative in collaboration with the Lesotho-based Phela Health and Development Communications (Phela).

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review provides a brief overview of public communication campaigns. It also provides an outline of how the Choose Life project was developed, produced and implemented in Lesotho. The chapter emphasises the need to evaluate the appropriateness of the Choose Life booklet for a Lesotho audience.

Public health communication campaigns involve one group’s intention to change another group’s beliefs and behaviour. Most HIV- and AIDS-orientated public health communication campaigns are guided by behaviour-change theories. These theories include the health-belief model (HBM), the theory of reasoned action, social learning theory, diffusion of innovations and social marketing, and emphasise individualism.

Soul City formed a partnership with LENASO (a consortium of NGOs working in the HIV and AIDS field) in Lesotho. LENASO’s role was to introduce the Choose Life material to local people and to coordinate who would be in the booklet. LENASO was also to consult with all stakeholders and gatekeepers and solicit their input for the booklet. Some LENASO stakeholders were unhappy with the booklet and considered it inappropriate for youth. However, youth in the pre-test of the booklet were happy with the content that LENASO did not approve of.

The Lesotho Ministry of Education approved a draft version of the Lesotho Choose Life booklet, citing its comprehensiveness and relevance for youth. A total of 435 000 booklets were distributed in Lesotho. Unfortunately, evaluation of Choose Life in Lesotho was wholly inadequate and communication barriers between Soul City and LENASO led to a lack of knowledge of any evaluation at all on LENASO’s part.

Soul City later formed a partnership with Phela, an organisation that was tasked to adapt Soul City material for a Lesotho context and audience. Phela claims to be independent of Soul City but is wholly dependent on them for financial support. This may make it difficult for Phela to make independent assertions and decisions regarding the materials.
Concepts and theory informing the research

The principle theories that inform this study are Stuart Hall's (1980) encoding/decoding model, and development support communication theory (Mowlana & Wilson, 1990; Mowlana, 1995; Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Singhal & Rogers, 1999).

Encoding/decoding

Hall’s (1980) encoding/decoding model highlights the importance of active interpretation. Encoding refers to the making of messages, whilst decoding refers to the interpretation of those messages. Hall identifies certain “moments” in the communication process, specifically: production, circulation, distribution/consumption, and reproduction. Each moment is necessary to the circuit but cannot guarantee the next. The audience may not always decode a message as the creator of that message intended. The encoding/decoding model does have limitations. David Morley argues that social subjectivity influenced the construction of meanings more than textually produced subjectivity, which only exists at the moment of reading (in Fiske, 1987:62). The circuit of culture model is Hall’s theoretical revision of the influence of the media. The model explains how a viewer/reader/consumer receives and perceives text/products. Hall argues that there are many processes at work.

Development support communication

The theoretical framework also draws from development communication theory. Development refers to the commission of improving people’s livelihoods, which may mean different things for different people (Melkote & Steeves, 2001). Participatory models of development stipulate that strategies adopted for development must be designed in consultation with the community in order for them to be relevant.

Development support communication (DSC) was a term coined by Western fieldworkers in response to the realities they found in developing countries. DSC was seen as a tool to support the self-determination of people at grassroots (Ascroft & Masilela, 1994).

The structure of DSC would be semi-participatory in the sense that donors would still define projects and their objectives, while communities would participate in the formulation of the message to suit the local context. The limitation of this approach is that, although participation of beneficiaries is encouraged and there is collaboration between experts and the people, there is no real empowerment because the design and control of messages is left with the experts (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:350).

Participation in development communication is conceived as a normative principle to which to aspire. Participation in development communication can refer to participation in implementation, evaluation, benefit or decision-making of a project. Soul City’s approach can be described as drawing on development support communication. Participation is not the ultimate goal, and the organisation still defines the goals, however, there is cooperation between the beneficiary communities and the donor.

Research methods and methodology

This study applies a triangulation of methods of inquiry, in which several research methods are applied in order to overcome the biases or weaknesses of using a single method. Reception analysis and content analysis are both utilised in this study. Reception analysis employs an interpretive mode of study by attempting to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them. The research assumes that social reality is historically constituted and that it is produced and reduced by people.

A content analysis of the Choose Life booklet is used to provide a base line for whether the reception of the booklet was preferred, negotiated or oppositional. Content analysis consists of coding and tabulating the occurrences of certain forms of content that are being communicated into manageable categories such as words, phrases or themes (Rubin & Babbie, 1993:406).

Focus group discussion, questionnaires and interviews were used as a method of inquiry. Focus groups and questionnaires provided for a convergence of analysis of Choose Life’s reception.
by its target audience. Interviews also provided a convergence of views from stakeholders and the target audience regarding the implementation of the project.

The researcher analyses and interprets the respondents’ views in an attempt to explain how and why Choose Life was received by the target audience in Lesotho. Hall’s encoding/decoding model, forms the basis of the analysis and interpretation of the data. The data is also analysed in terms of the participatory strategies advocated in the development support communication model of development.

Respondents’ were profiled according to age group, geographic location, gender, relationship status, sexual activity, attitudes towards condoms and VCT, and their perceptions of Choose Life. Participation in and attitudes toward Choose Life are discussed. In a previous evaluation, Soul City sought participants’ views on the content of the Choose Life booklet, with the aim of determining if the views in the booklet correlate with participants’ views. Some of the areas of focus were: sex versus emotional involvement; views on fun without sex; perceptions of condoms; responsibility on the use of condoms; and views about violence in relationships.

Key findings
It was found that no one in the random sample taken for this study had previously heard of Choose Life. LENASO’s participation in the adaptation of the Choose Life booklet was relatively limited. Respondents found the design of the booklet appealing in terms of pictures and its layout. The pictures of local soccer stars and popular radio disk jockeys were alluring to readers.

Most respondents in the target audience of Choose Life (12 to 16 years of age) indicated that the booklet had a positive impact on their attitudes and beliefs, such as the meaning of love and alternative means for sexual pleasure, such as masturbation. Most respondents described being in love as having trust, honesty, respect and the ability to share ideas and problems with a partner. The majority felt that being in love did not mean having sex, and agreed that activities such as dates; studying together, talking and kissing could give pleasure.

The respondents who were already engaging in sex did not believe that two people in an intimate relationship could have fun without penetrative sex. The respondents unanimously agreed that it was not easy to abstain from sexual relations once they had commenced this.

All the participants knew the risks of not using condoms and agreed that it was essential for condoms to be used in a sexual relationship. A few felt that there was no need to use a condom if partners were faithful. However, they also pointed out that since faithfulness is hard to verify, condoms should be used regardless of how much a partner is trusted. Some participants said that sex with a condom was less enjoyable. The majority of respondents were of the view that it is the responsibility of both partners to have and use condoms. Generally, girls expect boys to carry condoms, and girls are expected to insist on condom use. If a boy does not have a condom, the couple might engage in unsafe sex. Female condoms are not as accessible or widely used as male condoms. Older women are more likely to obtain “femidoms” or female condoms than adolescent girls.

Both Soul City and Choose Life discouraged violence against women. Most respondents (both male and female) in the focus group discussions agreed that it was wrong to hit a girl. Despite this view, some still believed boys were sometimes justified in using violence on their girlfriends, especially when a girl has cheated on her boyfriend. Violence is used to show the girl “who is in charge” in the relationship. The respondents pointed out that “a girl would never say yes unless she got beaten”. It was indicated in the research that in the rural areas girl-battering is not considered as violence because “girls like it”. Violence in this case showed “the boys really love them”. These responses indicate that women are still perceived as subordinate to men.

Several factors influenced how Choose Life was received by youth in Lesotho. These include: perceptions of Lesotho youth regarding South African youth; perceptions about rural versus urban youth;
their relationships with their parents; peer pressure; the media focus on HIV and AIDS; and their relationship with other Soul City media.

Conclusions and recommendations

Although the booklet was designed for 12 to 16 year olds, it reached a much larger audience. Unfortunately, due to its narrow focus on youth, it failed to resonate with older audiences. Young people in Lesotho do not live in a vacuum; their peers, families, communities and cultures influence them. Choose Life failed to consider these contextual factors when designing messages for the target audience. It would be futile to provide young people with preventative and lifestyle information when such information may be opposed by cultural values, attitudes and behaviour.

This research indicates that: it is necessary to involve beneficiaries in message design in order to understand their way of thinking; the term youth is broad and what is suitable for youth in one setting may not be in another; HIV and AIDS information should be complimented by other life-skills information that can aid youth in their decision-making processes.

This research finds that Choose Life was not a worthwhile exercise. The project lost credibility due to a lack of formative research. Not involving the target audience in the message design resulted in a disjoint between young people's perspectives on HIV and AIDS, life and relationships, and some information in the booklet. Target audience involvement at the early stages could have resulted in more effective messaging.

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Us and Them: loveLife, commercial brands and everyday life

Problem statement

The formation of loveLife in 1999 represented a unique opportunity to impact on new HIV infections, through blending together traditional marketing principles that combine media with quality service delivery to young people.

In 2001, David Harrison, Chief Executive Officer of loveLife, said in an interview that loveLife aimed to provide young people with an opportunity to both “see and taste” the loveLife lifestyle much like a conventional brand. As a well-funded organisation, its media programme alone was larger than many commercial brand managers have at their disposal to promote their products and services.

However, in 2001, questions on the new programme were raised. In particular these questions focused on its outdoor media programme. One of the first critiques in this regard was an article by respected HIV-prevention experts Daniel Halperin and Brian Williams, who questioned the impact the outdoor media was having on bringing about social and behavioural change. At the same time, religious groups started lodging complaints about loveLife with the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa, regarding the representation of young people and their sexuality. People living with HIV also started to question the way in which loveLife represented them in its mass media programme.

While experts and adults were being heard regarding the loveLife outdoor media programme, the voices of young people remained silent. In 2001, a study found that despite the huge resources being invested by loveLife in its outdoor and media programme, there was a discrepant decoding by young people of the loveLife outdoor media in relation to that intended by its producers (Delate, 2001).

This research builds on the initial study, and draws upon the circuit of culture to explore the manner in which the meaning of the loveLife lifestyle brand discourse is constructed, produced, distributed and consumed through using a semiotic approach.

Objectives

The research explores how young people aged 12 to 17 from different socio-economic backgrounds consume and make meaning of the loveLife brand, images and concepts, to express meaning about themselves in their social interaction. It also seeks to understand how networks of power comprising parents, religious groups and AIDS organisations have sought to regulate the meaning and social identities that arise from the representation of the brand.

Particular questions that this study focuses on are:

1) What are the meanings that young people ascribe to the commercial brands with which they identify in relation to their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and the manner in which these are appropriated within their daily lives?

2) What are the meanings that young people from different socio-economic backgrounds ascribe to the loveLife lifestyle brand, and the manner in which they appropriate these within their daily lives?

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review examines the loveLife history, and the notion of brands. The manner through which we come to interpret the brand is dependent on past communication, and the manner in which the brand signs are strung together in different discursive statements; and which allow a consistent understanding of the brand to be formed. This understanding is learned as a product of marketing, repetition in advertising, public relations and design.
Representation is the use of language to convey meaning through combining signs that come to “stand for” or represent cultural artefacts (Hall, 1997). The language of brands comprises enduring and non-enduring signs that combine together into the brand code that, over time, comes to represent the brand discourse that represents the brand identity.

The enduring signs of the brand start off as empty signifiers devoid of meaning, but over time and through continuous association with the non-enduring signs used in different marketing activities, they come to signify a meaningful discourse that defines who and what the brand represents, which differentiates it from similar offerings. The brand discourse provides the product with a given symbolic identity that enables the product to move between the physical world of goods and services and the symbolic world of signs and representation. The brand discourse is encoded within the brand code and is articulated at different points in the circuit of culture to enable the reader to interpret and understand what the brand discourse represents (Du Gay, 1997).

Over time, the enduring and non-enduring signs give rise to the brand identity. The enduring signs are those that remain consistent over time and are repeated in association with different texts that represent the brand. The enduring brand signs comprise the brand-naming system consisting of the brand name, the slogan, the sub-brand and product names, the brand symbol and the brand colour. The meanings of the enduring signs are articulated and learned through repetition in association with the non-enduring signs that enable the consumer to form a mental image of the brand discourse over a period of time, primarily through constructing and representing stories and stereotypes in marketing campaigns that draw upon other existing discourses.

The non-enduring signs comprise the stories and stereotypes produced and represented in advertising, visual design, public relations, sponsorships and interpersonal communications that over time construct and represent the brand discourse and give meaning to the enduring brand signs.

In public-health communications the non-enduring signs are constructed for a given period of time into campaigns with the intent of targeting critical intervening variables, such as knowledge, skills, self-efficacy and gender norms and values, with a view to changing or reinforcing a specific health outcome, such as practicing safer sex (Holbert & Stephenson, 2003).

When studying the discourse of brands it is not possible to isolate one moment of identity. In the moment of production its producer produces the identity of the brand as “this is I”. In representation the brand hails the consumer as “hey you there”. In consumption or the appropriation of the brand discourse within everyday life by the consumer, this is expressed as “yes, that’s me” or “no, that’s not me”. The adoption of this position is an expression of identification with the discourse, and the subject becomes interpellated within the discourse through the use and appropriation of the enduring brand sign in everyday life and social settings (cf. Althusser, 1971).

The brand or communications strategy is creatively encoded by the cultural intermediaries of marketing, advertising, design and public relations who encode these meanings into signs and symbols that come to represent the brand discourse.

Concepts and theory informing the research
The research examines the manner in which brands come to have meaning through using theoretical approaches within cultural studies, including semiotics and discourse.

Cultural studies define culture as being concerned with the production and exchange of meanings among members of a society or group. Meaning is dependent upon the members of a society being able to make sense of the world in roughly the same way. This requires that they share the same conceptual frameworks to place and understand the meanings of the cultural artefact, to formulate ideas and communicate about it.

Cultural meanings include the social practices that arise through the manner in which the meaning of cultural artefacts are integrated into daily life. These meanings are dependent on the way in which
they are represented, utilised, thought about, interpreted and integrated within everyday life to stand for or express something about those that use them (Du Gay et al, 1997a).

Artefacts and social practices in and of themselves have no meaning. Meaning is produced through language that combines signs to give rise to a particular discourse, comprising a number of discursive statements that together enable knowledge to arise about a particular topic, object or concept within a given point in time. In order to read and make sense of the signs and the discourse, the audience has the same conceptual maps of meaning through which they can place the discourse, contrast it with others and appropriate it within everyday life (Hall, 1997a).

Discourse is not only concerned with how things come to mean, but the manner in which this meaning is produced according to the “rules of formation” that enable them to become part of our language. This is dependent upon a complex set of relationships. These include the institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification and modes of characterisations that enable the discourse to appear; and through which we can place it, juxtapose it, situate it in relation to others, and define its difference and its heterogeneity (Foucault, 1969).

As Foucault (1969) indicates, discourse not only gives rise to knowledge, but hails us as subjects to take up that knowledge and to appropriate it within everyday life. By doing so it seeks to interpolate the audience as subjects, thereby making the audience the bearers of the discourse through using it to express meaning about themselves. That gives rise to social practices that define “us” and “them”.

The production of knowledge implies a symbiotic relationship of power between those that produce or encode meanings, and those that receive or decode meanings. The struggle for meaning relates to that which the producer of the discourse produced, or the dominant meaning, and that which is decoded by the receiver of the message. The extent to which the decoded meaning correlates to that intended by the producer is dependent upon the degree of symmetry of the signs employed by the producer to represent the cultural artefact.

The representation of the cultural artefact over time enables the audience to form a mental picture of the discourse that the artefact represents. Identification with the representation of the artefact may result in the target audience appropriating the artefact within their daily lives to express meaning about themselves. Therefore the struggle for meaning is not only confined between the producer and the audience; but also between those that appropriate the artefact to express something about themselves within their everyday lives, and those that do not, which gives rise to group formation.

The “circuit of culture” provides a framework through which an analysis can be undertaken of the meanings of cultural artefacts through different linked but distinct moments, namely 1) the manner in which they are represented, 2) how they are produced and distributed, 3) how they are consumed by consumers to express social meanings and identities and of themselves, and 4) how institutions and people attempt to regulate these (Du Gay, 1997a:3). The circuit of culture provides the framework through which the meanings of brands can be studied as cultural artefacts.

Research methods and methodology
In studying the representation of the loveLife lifestyle brand, this research draws upon a selection of the loveLife outdoor media advertisements and print inserts undertaken in the period 2000–2006. The selection of print media inserts were drawn from a random sample of 100 copies, choosing every fifth publication from the sample. The selection also draws upon the loveLife print publications targeting young people aged 12 – 17 namely:

• loveFacts, a collection of three leaflets providing information on sexual and reproductive health behaviour;
• Tell me more, a booklet providing information on sexual and reproductive health behaviour for teenagers;
• Love them enough to talk about sex, a publication targeting parents on talking about sex with their youth;
• Talking and Listening: Parents and teenagers together find out how to make it easier, a publication targeting parents to talk to their youth about issues relating to HIV; and
• Codi Loud and Clear: Tips on talking to your children about difficult things!

This thesis examines the production of the loveLife “lifestyle” brand by examining how the meanings of the visual and verbal were encoded by loveLife to signify its “positive lifestyle” brand. It explores the processes through which the meanings of the brand were produced and the discursive events through which these meanings were circulated. It demonstrates how loveLife has attempted synergy by combining the media with reproductive health and HIV-prevention services for youth.

In exploring the production of the loveLife lifestyle brand, unstructured individual in-depth interviews were undertaken with key individuals involved in the design and execution of the loveLife programme in the period 2000–2002. These interviews provide valuable insight into the origins, design, development, and organisation of work within loveLife and are therefore still valid for the purposes of this study. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed and records were kept. To examine the evolution of loveLife post-2003, this study draws upon official loveLife documentation from its website, media articles on loveLife and other academic research.

In examining consumption, six focus-group discussions were undertaken involving four to eight participants per group. Using a convenience sample, four focus groups were conducted in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal during October 2005, and two in Gauteng during March 2006.

All focus-group discussions were undertaken in English, which in some cases is limiting when talking with young people whose home language is not English, particularly in relation to explaining complicated marketing and personal concepts.

The focus-group discussion was divided into two sections. The first section explored issues relating to the use of mass media and commercial brands by young people within their daily lives. The second section of the focus-group discussion focused on issues relating to the loveLife brand. In both instances unaided recall was used as this allows for probing around the aspects of brands that most appeal to young people. All discussions were tape recorded and transcribed.

Key findings

Representing loveLife

Brands compete to appeal to as large an audience as possible through the social identities that they construct and that invite the audience to take up that which is reflected within the representation of the brand. These identities are created over time through the discourses upon which the brand draws, which allows the audience to form a mental picture of that which the brand represents. This constitutes a distinctive brand discourse that gives rise to the brand identity myth. The identity myth of the brand symbolically defines the boundaries of who is included and who is excluded.

An examination of loveLife’s print publications show that in its representation, the dominant identity myth of loveLife leans more towards the connotative meaning of the brand name – namely that of sex and relationships. The use of English as its dominant language, and its representation of the “rainbow youth” where language, culture, race and socio-economic differences are brushed over, position the brand as one that is predominantly urban and middle class. The middle-class consumerism of the brand is reflected through the representation of young people in the latest fashion brands and youth accessories, and where consumption of these will act as an antidote to HIV infection.

The relevance of the graphics used by loveLife in relation to its target audience needs to be questioned. The representation of adolescent sexuality as something that is cool and something in which everyone is engaged may unintentionally increase peer pressure...
on young people to engage in sex; rather than challenging young people to abstain or be faithful to their sexual partners. Rather than challenging conventional stereotypes relating to adolescent sexuality and gender, loveLife reinforces these, positioning young women as sexual objects for the gratification of young men. Young men are sexually in charge, and young women are portrayed as passive objects of their desires. While loveLife claims to be a brand for all young people, discourses of “Born Free” and the “AIDS-Free Generation”, symbolically places the loveLife brand in the realm of those that are HIV negative, excluding those that are HIV positive.

loveLife positions HIV as something that is an individual decision, rather than an outcome of the complex social environment within which young people live in South Africa, which shapes and informs their sexual behaviour. These include the contextual factors relating to the political (which extends beyond government to include traditional and community political contexts), socio-economic (poverty), gender (the power relations between men and women) and the spiritual environments that impact upon where and how sex takes place.

While loveLife’s stated objective is to bring about national discussion on youth and adolescent sex and HIV prevention, its representation fails to encourage this discussion and rather portrays parents and youth in oppositional relationships, where parents are seen as withholding from their children the secrets of sex that loveLife will reveal.

The dominant representation of adolescent sexuality by loveLife, and the positioning of loveLife in relation to other stakeholders, may impact negatively on loveLife. Stakeholders such as people living with HIV, parents and religious groups may attempt to regulate access to loveLife publications or limit the participation of their youth in loveLife programmes if they feel that the identity being offered to their young people does not correspond with their norms and values.

Producing loveLife
loveLife is a cultural industry that defines its lifestyle according to a given strategy, and employs the services of cultural intermediaries to give creative expression to the meanings it wants to convey through encoding the enduring and non-enduring brand signs with meaning. loveLife makes use of cultural distributors comprising the mass media to circulate its messages, but also provides physical spaces through which its meanings can be conveyed through interpersonal communication.

To link production to consumption, loveLife undertook formative research that defined the target audience, approach and key principles of the programme. A key oversight was the lack of the establishment of baseline data that would have enabled the programme to monitor its impact over time. It uses feedback mechanisms such as competitions and monitoring and evaluations of its programmes to gauge the extent to which it is reaching its goals and objectives. However, it is not evident how this research and independent studies conducted on loveLife are used to inform the programme design, so that it better responds to the needs of its target population.

loveLife is an attempt to establish what Negus (1997) calls “media synergy” by combining cultural software (branding and media) with HIV-prevention hardware (services). The meanings of loveLife are produced by the makers of the brand, in this case, loveLife. The enduring signs of the brand are prominently displayed and promoted across a range of media, entertainment products and leisure goods. Yet the loveLife name, the colours that it uses and the images portrayed through its media products, stand for and represent meanings that loveLife wishes to communicate, messages that are produced. The prominent display of the enduring signs of the brand at its youth services and programmes symbolically construct these places as texts that sustain meanings and practices that extend beyond just the name of the brand, but represent a distinctive discourse of positive lifestyle and positive sexuality – the loveLife discourse.
While loveLife may have created the brand and all the associations that it places on it using its research, this does not necessarily mean that that is how everyone else interprets the brand. To explore the meanings that young people give to the loveLife brand it is necessary to examine how young people decode and consume the meanings of the loveLife brand, through the manner in which they appropriate the brand within their everyday lives to signify meaning about themselves to others. It is not only young people that consume the loveLife brand; adults also consume the meanings of the brand and may try to regulate these meanings, especially where they feel that such meanings may not resonate with their cultural norms and values.

Consumption: loveLife, commercial brands and everyday life

The focus group discussions reflected that young people’s decodings of loveLife and commercial brands were dependent upon the media they had access to, which are related to their socio-economic situation. Youth in rural and peri-urban areas were more likely to engage with the loveLife interpersonal services and local radio programme and less likely to engage with the loveLife publications and outdoor media. Middle-class and upper-middle class youth were exposed to loveLife primarily through its print media products and outdoor media. These youth have greater media at their exposure through satellite television and programmes.

Decodings of the meanings of loveLife were dependent on the media through which young people came to understand the meanings of loveLife. Youth exposed to loveLife through its interpersonal services and radio programmes had a narrower decoding that correlated more closely to those intended by loveLife. Youth exposed to loveLife only through its mass media programmes had discrepant decodings.

This study also questions the assumptions by the producers of the loveLife brand that young people who interact with the loveLife billboard will also interact with the other media through which loveLife circulates its meaning. Rather, the meanings of loveLife are constructed through the fragments of messages that young people are exposed to over time, which enable them to construct a global picture in their minds of what the brand discourse – loveLife – represents.

loveLife competes for the attention and the limited free time that youth have available to participate in its interpersonal services. Participation competes with household chores, school activities and other activities that young people undertake. loveLife's media products compete with other media programmes for the attention of young people. The participation of young people is dependent on the extent to which they self-identify, or do not self-identify, with the loveLife discourse.

The most popular loveLife messages recalled by young people across the socio-economic divide were those messages that affirmed and represented positive images of youth, such as “love to be there 2010”. There were very low levels of unaided recall by young people of the highly sexualised images of youth represented by loveLife in its media products. The highly sexualised imagery of girls gave rise to the impression that loveLife services are a place to which girls engaging in sex could be sent so that they could change their behaviour. Young people who did not identify with the loveLife brand discourse were unlikely to consume the loveLife services, such as young people who were religious, or those that did not identify with the behaviours being promoted by loveLife.

Identification with the loveLife discourse is dependent upon young people being able to make sense of the language used by loveLife. In non-English-speaking areas, where groundBREAKERS used English, there were lower levels of identification with the brand discourse. In areas where young people were unable to decode the sub-brand and product-naming system, loveLife was seen as excluding them.

As indicated in the study, in the decoding of loveLife there is not one dominant meaning but rather many meanings informed through the degree and media of exposure to the representation of the loveLife brand. These meanings vary. Exposure to the loveLife interpersonal programmes results in the brand being decoded as a signifier for sports and cultural activities, sexual and reproductive health meanings, issues relating to motivation and belief in the
future. This illustrates the benefit of interpersonal communications in unpacking complex themes and messages that enable young people to form an understanding of the meanings that loveLife is wanting to convey.

However, unmediated, the outdoor and print media give rise to a discrepant decoding of the positive lifestyle that loveLife is attempting to convey that may result in unintended consequences of added peer pressure for young people to engage in sexual activities.

The inability to decode the meanings undermines identification. For example, the groundBREAKERS were described as "speaking shit" when talking to young people in English. Another group felt that loveLife was not for them, as the product-naming system used codes they were unable to translate and identify with.

Identification occurs through the consumption of the enduring signs of the brand discourse. This includes: 1) the symbolic display of the brand name and/or symbol on a piece of clothing or a uniform, such as the S'camto groundBREAKERS uniform or wearing a loveLife T-shirt; and 2) frequenting services (such as a youth centre) or participating in programmes (such as a volunteer or the loveLife Games) that are branded with the brand name and symbols.

loveLife promotes a positive lifestyle, the meaning of which is defined by those who buy into the lifestyle proposition as a set of values relating to sexual and reproductive health, future and motivation. The symbolic demarcation of boundaries of that which are considered right and wrong gives rise to a symbolic membership of a group, much like a gang or a sub-culture, which is engaged in a struggle for meaning and membership. This demarcation of behaviour has given rise to an opposite social movement that seeks to undermine the discourse that loveLife uses to regulate the meanings that loveLife is attempting to convey. This is done through distorting the loveLife messages to signify the meanings that they wish to convey.

In the case of loveLife, the branding of this lifestyle has given rise to an opposition discourse that gives names to those participating in the loveLife programme, and slogans that draw upon those produced by loveLife, but that are distorted to reflect an opposite lifestyle to that which loveLife is promoting. While the formation of opposition movements may seek to regulate the meanings of loveLife within the social setting, other audiences that interact with the meanings that loveLife transmits may also seek to regulate these meanings.

Regulating loveLife

There are carcereal networks of power at play that do try to regulate the meanings that loveLife circulates through its mass media. As with youth decodings of loveLife, there is not one meaning that parents decode of loveLife. Rather, there are many meanings and often these are contradictory to those intended by the producers. Where the meanings and social identities proposed by loveLife are seen to undermine the moral standards of the household, this results in parents limiting the access of their children to participate in the loveLife programme.

Religious groups that regard the meanings as contradictory to their stated moral points of view also seek to regulate the meanings of loveLife through using formal channels of regulation that relate to the legal and policy remit such as the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa.

As Piotrow et al (1997) point out, parents and religious leaders are gatekeepers through which public health programmes need to move to be able to reach their intended target audience. If these audiences feel alienated from the programme or if the programme is perceived not to be in the interest of their children, they can block access.

Conclusions and recommendations

The circuit of culture provides a framework through which the articulation of brand discourses can be studied. Each brand has its own circuit of culture through which we can study its
1) representation, 2) the manner in which it is produced and circulated, and 3) the meanings that consumers decode of the brand and the manner in which these meanings are appropriated within everyday life through the bearing of the brand or through frequenting spaces and places that are symbolically constructed as text and that are regulated through other audiences. The manner in which we come to understand brands is through the relation of each brand circuit of culture to its “opposite”. In this manner brands come to serve as both markers of similarity in relation to the product field and markers of difference in relation to competing brands in the same product field.

The meanings of loveLife were produced by the organisation to advance its objectives of reducing HIV amongst young people using a branding strategy. In circulating its meanings, loveLife has attempted to achieve synergy through combining the software for HIV prevention, namely the mass media with the hardware, namely that of HIV-prevention services for young people. While its media programme may have resulted in an awareness of its name, this has not translated into consumption of its services. This is owing to the lack of its media adequately representing its service delivery through its marketing activities, the lack of widespread availability of its services that hamper participation by young people, the lack of identification with the symbolic representation of the brand discourse, which undermines participation in its programmes and gives rise to peer pressure.

The research concludes that the representation of the loveLife lifestyle brand has given rise to a brand identity that positions adolescent sexuality as something that is cool and that everyone is engaged in. This representation has been the result of a deliberate brand strategy by loveLife that has sought to encourage more open discussions between parents and youth on issues relating to sex and sexuality.

The unintentional consequence arising from this representation is that in their consumption of the meanings of loveLife, loveLife’s interpersonal facilities are decoded by others in the community as being spaces that encourage sexual interaction by young people. Young people who attend these facilities are by implication decoded as being sexually active. This undermines the intention of the producers, of creating spaces where young people can engage and interact in a variety of recreational activities, including learning about sexual and reproductive health.

An additional unintentional consequence of the representation is that stakeholders who exert power over young people, such as parents and religious leaders, have actively sought to regulate the meaning of the brand either through using formal channels of protest or through preventing their youth from participating in loveLife’s interpersonal programme.

This study proposes that the quality of media messages be measured in relation to the meanings that consumers and those that interact with them decode. This includes exploring the social identities that these meanings give rise to, and the manner in which these find meaning through everyday interaction and the extent to which these meanings correlate with those intended by the producers of the message.

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Big Sister, Big Responsibility? A comparative analysis of HIV and AIDS and sexual health coverage in Seventeen magazine and loveLife’s Uncut

Wendy Irene van de Weg and Phiwokuhle Mabunu (Honours, 2007)

Problem statement
Magazines, as a mass-market medium, deal with issues such as sex, gender and the erotic; and their representations of these and other social issues make them an effective means of communicating to the youth. What magazines do, firstly because they are a form of entertainment, and secondly because they act as a source of knowledge and information, is take the two aspects of entertainment and education, and combine them to create a communication medium that is both textual and discursive. However, the textual and discursive practices within health education are perhaps what have slowed down the effectiveness of some health-promotion campaigns over the years.

As magazines speak to youth in their vernacular, much like a peer, they are able to deconstruct, more effectively, stereotypes attached to social issues such as HIV and AIDS. If Entertainment Education campaigns were to create a closer relationship to magazines, it would be as good as “befriending” their thousands of female readers, as well as a large portion of male readers due to the “pass-along reader syndrome” (Muller, n.d.:168). As young people “turn to these magazines as a valued source of advice about their personal lives” (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004:1), such media have the ability to reach young people. Consumer magazines could therefore have the potential to educate, inform, and possibly change damaging behaviour patterns simply because they are trusted, non-invasive and reach young people by speaking their language.
Objectives

This research sought to assess this potential from a South African perspective, and to identify the extent to which young girls’ consumer magazines can act as an EE medium. Using six articles from two South African youth magazines, Seventeen and Uncut, the researchers conducted focus group research to assess high-school girls’ needs regarding information acquisition, reportage style and their desire to be entertained, when reading about sexual-health issues, and analysed the results alongside content and visual analyses. The overall objective of the research was to assess the impact that consumer versus EE magazines have when addressing sexual-health issues, and to consequently make recommendations about the type and frequency of coverage currently offered by consumer magazines, and their role in the national AIDS struggle.

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review covers issues of the impact of HIV and AIDS on young women, and focuses on coverage of sexual-health issues in media, with a focus on the two media under study.

Previous research into teenagers and magazines suggest that magazines play an important role in the lives of teenage girls (Brounstein & Weitz, 2000). Walsh-Childers (1996) offers an extensive analysis of the amount of coverage given to various sexual-health topics (such as pregnancy, contraception, STIs and HIV and AIDS) across women’s, girls’ and men’s magazines, over a ten-year period. An interesting finding is that in American teen magazines, two out of every five articles on sexual issues focused on issues of sexual health. Similar research into the effects of teen magazines on their readers, in terms of sexual-health knowledge, has not yet been conducted in South Africa.

In South Africa, research into EE media campaigns has been conducted quite extensively, particularly regarding loveLife. Warren Parker (2003) critically examines the effects claimed by loveLife in terms of its influence on the youth, and also its representation of HIV and AIDS. Rather than providing an insight into youth and HIV and AIDS, this research highlights the need for all campaigns to be viewed critically, for their methods to be reviewed and for their findings to be verified.

Richard Delate’s (2001) research offers an in-depth analysis of loveLife’s billboard campaign. Using a semiotic methodology he finds the messages used on the billboards to be obscure, advising loveLife to ensure that “when designing future campaigns that the meanings are clear to the target audience that they are trying to reach” (Delate, 2001:23). These two research projects on loveLife contribute to this study, by conducting a critical analysis of content, we seek to identify ways in which popular media, in particular consumer magazines, can improve their coverage of sexual health issues and HIV and AIDS.

Seventeen magazine originated in the United States in 1944, and has since generated titles across the world (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004:1). Aimed specifically at teenage girls, the South African version “is every girl’s quintessential life guide – stylish, sussed and centred, it’s her fashion compass, celebrity hotline and trusted confidante; challenging the status quo and empowering her future” (Seventeen, 2007:2). The magazine is a blend of fashion, music, beauty, boys and life skills, packaged within vibrant glossy pages. It defines its reader as being between the ages of 13 and 19, urban, of all races and from middle- to higher-income groups (Seventeen, 2007:4). The retail price of Seventeen in 2007 was R19.95 in South Africa.

Uncut is a national monthly magazine published under the auspices of loveLife. Judging from its content, its readers are young people between the ages of 14 and 20, from all races and from a middle-income group. As the publication is distributed with daily newspapers or at shops such as Pick n Pay, it seemingly also intends to reach an urban audience. Regular features deal predominantly with issues of sexual health such as sex, HIV and AIDS and pregnancy; additionally topics such as race, religion and gender equality are also covered. Designed like any other youth magazine, Uncut has a “letters to the editor” section, book, music and movie reviews, and regular competitions. There are a few differences however; Uncut is printed on newsprint paper instead
of the glossy paper used for Seventeen. Also the publication is quite short, totalling about 50 pages per issues compared to Seventeen’s 112. This is probably a result of the fact that, unlike consumer magazines, Uncut is free. Unlike Seventeen which abounds with advertising, there are very few adverts in Uncut, although it is interesting to note that in one of the issues used for this research, an advert for Seventeen appears.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The theory of content analysis and visual analysis guides the research.

Content analysis

Content analysis involves an expansive view of the visible aspects of a text, such as words or topic, in order “to establish the incidence of such phenomena by some form of measurement” (Deacon et al, 1999:114). This is largely implemented when attempting to establish the frequency with which certain kinds of stories occur. Although the purpose of content analysis is “to quantify salient and manifest features of a large number of texts, and the statistics are used to make broader inferences about the processes and politics of representation”, it is the qualitative approach that goes past the manifest content of communications to the crucial meanings which lie beneath the textual surface (Deacon et al, 1999:116). In analysing Seventeen and Uncut the researchers examined three main qualitative points: text positioning, composition and intertextual relations.

Intertextuality, positioning and composition

The text’s placement within the magazine as a whole and also within the page plays a significant role in how its meaning will be interpreted. While intertextuality refers to relations between articles, positioning refers to the article’s placement within the magazine in terms of its page number, or the section it is located in. When examining a text’s positioning, one should ask questions such as What does its [the texts] initial and overall positioning tell you about the significance it has been accorded? What does such positioning suggest to you about the relative values of newsworthiness it has been felt to have as journalistic copy? (Deacon et al, 1999:175). A compositional analysis on the other hand is more concerned with aesthetic aspects, and examines the texts’ typographical arrangement and style. This includes how it is laid out on the page and, for a story which continues on a subsequent stage, its initial compositional set-up (Deacon et al, 1999:175).

Visual analysis

While content analysis is useful when analysing quantitative aspects of a text, it can be limited in its approach in that it works mainly with manifest content rather than the visual dimensions of a text (Deacon et al, 1999). Content analysis was combined with an image analysis of the visual components of the articles for this research, using semiotics as a theoretical point of reference. The specific aesthetic items used in our image analysis consisted of any images, drawn or photographic, coloured text and headings, and coloured “info boxes”.

Keyan Tomaselli defines semiotics as “the study of how meaning occurs in language, pictures, performance, and other forms of expression” (1999:29). Semiotic theory provided a conceptual framework within which to make sense of media texts and images, and a way in which to structure the analysis.

Research methods and methodology

The research makes use of three methodologies: content analysis, visual analysis and focus groups. The textual analyses are used to provide quantitative and qualitative data for the articles in the form of stylistic and editorial trends, while the focus group guides the interpretations of how effective or ineffective these trends are when addressing issues about sexual health. The focus group discussion included seven young women aged between 17 and 18, the target age for both publications.

The sample size from Seventeen was limited to three issues, with one article from each: “Condoms 101”, “Sex Survey”, and “Real
Life”. The sample was randomly chosen amongst other articles which dealt with HIV and AIDS and sexual behaviour to create a more objective, unbiased analysis. The sample was kept small as the focus group was going to have to read all three articles, including those from Uncut, and conduct a forum about their readership experience as well as complete a questionnaire.

The three articles chosen from Uncut each have quite different intentions. The first article, “ABCs of HIV” is informative and does not follow a conventional narrative format. The second, “Got Ambition?” is a feature article written in a true-life-story form, and the third, “Get Real with HIV” is educational and slightly scientific in its approach. Like the sample from Seventeen, the Uncut sample was chosen randomly to create a more objective, unbiased analysis, and was limited to three articles.

**Key findings**

In Seventeen, on average, the occurrence of the words “HIV” and “AIDS” is quite low, leading one to conclude that the articles deal primarily with sex and sexual behaviour and secondly with the dangers that are involved, which is apparent through their mention of the words “STD”, which occurs five times and “pregnant/pregnancy”, which occurs three times. The articles also promote safe sexual practice as the word “condom” occurs six times.

In comparison, the articles in Uncut had a high rate of occurrence of terms relating directly to HIV and AIDS. While this is foremost a result of the article’s subject matter, as it deals directly with HIV, it does still prove a general preoccupation of the magazine to promote HIV issues and awareness, often quite blatantly.

In terms of gender, the articles in Seventeen show an equal occurrence of “female” words; such as “women”, “girl” or “female” in comparison to “male” words; such as “guy”, “man” or “male” as they appear over a total of nine times each in all the articles. This is interesting to note as, although the magazine is targeted at the female audience, it still takes into account that males do read their magazine and it acknowledges the equal role that men and women have to play when it comes to sex.

The Uncut articles show a higher occurrence of “female” words compared to “male” words. Although the magazine claims to have an equally gendered target audience, it still addresses women more often than men in its articles. Similarly, by mentioning women more often, the article will speak to women more so than to men, and therefore may be found to be more relevant to women.

The articles’ use of “sex words” was found to be quite distant, as the words used were often un-emotive or free of any stigma. In this way, the articles’ representation of sex can be said to be slightly removed, and not engage with any in-depth discussion of the topic. Less controversial words such as “pregnancy” and “condom” had the highest occurrence, while words which are more emotive such as “sperm” and “abortion” only occurred once each throughout the entire sample.

In the focus-group discussions, the girls were asked to separate the six magazines into three piles, “best”, “alright”, and “boring”. The three Seventeen articles were placed in the “best” pile, one article (from Uncut) in the “alright” pile, and the remaining two from Uncut in the “boring” pile. The respondents found the Uncut articles to be complicated, referring especially to the diagrams used. In the visual analysis, the researchers deduced that this diagram is a scientific image which is informative and quite medical in its approach, and could therefore connotatively isolate the disease from the reader and not relate to the magazine’s target audience. This is contrasted with the diagram used in Seventeen which depicts a man putting on a condom. While the subject matters may differ, in that the prior deals with a medical subject, they both depict something that is sexually related. While the Uncut diagram is very detailed, the respondents preferred the Seventeen diagram as it is informative but simple.

This shows that young female readers prefer images that are non-threatening and colourful, conveying only the most important information needed. While they responded that visually graphic images relating to sexual health would have a great impact, they asked for these images to be located on a separate “pull-out” pamphlet or supplement, and not used in the actual magazine.
The layout chosen makes use of both paragraphs and info-boxes. The respondents commented that while the loveLife article had too many boxes, they enjoyed Seventeen’s use of “pop-facts”. While these compositional aspects were quite popular in the discussion, the respondents did not appear to prefer any particular narrative style; the three Seventeen article’s grouped as “best” use various narrative forms, however, their language use is the same. While Seventeen’s reportage style is quite colloquial and relaxed, the respondents felt that the Uncut reportage style was “a bit too contrived, like they’re trying too hard to come down to your level”. They also agreed that they preferred direct words, such as “sex”, over euphemisms.

In the content analysis, the researchers found that while the Uncut articles used the term HIV often (44 times in total), Seventeen used it very little. While this could be related to the fact that the Uncut articles dealt more directly with HIV and AIDS, this high occurrence could also have contributed to the respondents dislike of the Uncut articles. When viewed in conjunction with their response that they hear “the same information over and over” and are “sick of HIV information”, this indicates that the term “HIV” itself might be off-putting for some readers as they associate it with repeated information. However, the need to address HIV and AIDS and the respondents’ request for direct wording prompted us to discuss the subject using HIV-related terms quite openly.

Conclusions and recommendations
The research findings showed that consumer magazines such as Seventeen are more effective than EE publications, such as Uncut, in reaching and educating young girls. While, as a loveLife publication, Uncut is designed specifically as a medium in which to discuss these issues, a bi-yearly partnership with a consumer magazine would provide information and educate, without seeming redundant.

As Seventeen’s popularity can be linked to its entertainment appeal, Uncut could regain popularity by adopting some of the stylistic devices used by Seventeen such as its use of different font sizes and colours, and by approaching its subject matter in a more informal tone. Seventeen’s editorial style and layout could be used to present sexual-health content backed by loveLife. Already a dialogue can be seen between the two publications, as Seventeen is advertised in Uncut and loveLife in Seventeen. However, both use quite different, and sometimes ineffective, reportage styles when addressing sexual-health issues.

We recommend that EE publications aiming to inform young urban girls interact more directly with consumer media. In this way they would reach their target audience more efficiently, and engage with them in their own vernacular. Health organisations could “piggy-back” on consumer media’s already established target audiences, and remove much of the resistance often attached to educational media. This could be done by including an advice pamphlet in the magazine bi-yearly, produced as a joint initiative between loveLife and Seventeen.

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An analysis of media used to diffuse flash-heat treatment as an infant-feeding method

Nimeka Dupree (Honours, 2007)

Problem statement
Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV has become an increasing concern for health professionals. With the effective reduction of MTCT during pregnancy, the focus has now been turned to post-natal prevention. HIV-positive women are faced with the challenge of feeding their child without transferring the virus through breast milk (Kaul, 2006; Downs & Cooper, 2007).

In addition to exclusive breastfeeding and exclusive formula feeding, which are both problematic for women in developing countries, the WHO recommends modified feeding practices such as heat-treatment of breast milk in order to reduce the risk of HIV transmission while providing breast milk’s immune qualities to protect the infant from common childhood infections (Israel-Ballard et al, 2007).

Health practitioners at the Umkhumbane Clinic in the Cato Manor area of Durban, South Africa have extensively researched a new method of PMTCT called flash-heat treatment, and would like to diffuse this innovation to patients using a DVD and pamphlet. However, there may be some barriers to effective communication through these media.

Objectives
This research reviews the proposed media on flash-heat treatment according to three parameters: their ability to communicate the protocols of flash-heat treatment; their ability to effectively use diffusion of innovations theories and methodologies; and their
ability to effectively use Education Entertainment theories, all with the goal of reducing MTCT by persuading women to adopt and correctly use and sustain flash-heat treatment as their method of infant-feeding.

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review covers the concepts on Entertainment Education (EE) and participatory action research (PAR). EE theorists agree that effective EE interventions are also a type of participatory action research or PAR, which is defined as a process in which “researchers and participants, systematically work together in cycles to explore concerns, claims or issues that impact upon or disrupt people’s lives” (Koch & Kralik, 2006).

The underlying principles of effective PAR and EE interventions allow researchers to learn from subjects and vice versa. Audience participation gives the researcher more assurance that the message is correctly interpreted by the audience, which is key for a successful EE intervention. Many different EE methodologies have been developed to create successful interventions. For the most part, they apply similar underlying theories that guide the process. The theories that are most prevalent are social marketing, persuasive communication and behaviour-change theory. From these theories, methodologies have been developed in order to create a successful Entertainment Education intervention. These methodologies can also be used to assess the effectiveness of an intervention.

Patrick Coleman (2000) proposes a comprehensive methodology for evaluating an EE campaign, and advises researchers to do the following:

• Follow a research-based scientific method;
• Choose the appropriate medium to reach the intended audience;
• Use a multimedia approach for large-scale projects;
• Enlist professionals with experience in the chosen medium;
• Use a popular medium to reach a large audience for large-scale projects;
• Conduct baseline and end-of-project surveys to determine the impact of the EE intervention;
• Define roles and responsibilities in partnership agreements with commercial entertainment companies and individuals;
• Involve donors from the beginning in consultation and discussions with those in the commercial entertainment industry;
• Expect a reasonable and attainable impact from the EE intervention;
• Leave creative decisions to those who make their profession in such areas;
• Ensure that the messages delivered are in line with prevailing social values and norms;
• Choose as the manager for an EE project someone who has the ability to communicate clearly; and
• Make the entertainment component as important as the education component.

Concepts and theory informing the research
This research is based on the theory of diffusion of innovations. Diffusion is defined by Everett Rogers as “the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (Rogers, 2003:5). According to Rogers, diffusion is “a special type of communication, in that the messages are concerned with new ideas” (Rogers, 2003:5). It is important for concepts regarding the diffusion of innovations to be considered when communicating new health ideas to a population because the way in which information is distributed could make or break a health campaign.

The first thing that should be considered when diffusing new information is the uncertainty involved in receiving new
information (Rogers, 2003). Rogers defines uncertainty as “the degree to which a number of alternatives are perceived with respect to the occurrence of an event and the relative probability of these alternatives. Uncertainty implies a lack of predictability, of structure, of information” (Rogers, 2003:6). When people learn new information, the first response is scepticism. This scepticism derives from a lack of experience and an inability to predict the consequences of the new information. However, this uncertainty can be reduced by providing information (Rogers, 2003). The more information people have about an innovation, the more likely they are to accept it because they are more certain that the innovation will add to their quality of life in some way.

Communicators must also be aware of the type of innovation they are creating. Teaching flash-heat treatment would be categorised as an optional innovation decision, meaning that the individual has the choice to adopt or reject the innovation independent of the decisions of the other members of the system (Rogers, 2003). This means that the innovation is not forced upon the individual by the government or some other authority. The decision to adopt is entirely up to the individual. However, even so “the individual’s decision may be influenced by the norms of the system and by communication through interpersonal networks” (Rogers, 2003:28). For optional innovations, the level of uncertainty should be as low as possible, while making the innovation easy to adopt.

When creating an intervention, communicators need to be aware of the four elements of diffusion, which are: the innovation, communication channel, time, and social structure (Rogers, 2003). Each of the elements will be discussed in more detail with respect to the DVD and pamphlet used to teach flash-heat treatment.

**Research methods and methodology**

Following an extensive literature review that includes a review of flash-heat treatment, diffusion of innovations, and EE, the material provided to teach nursing mothers about flash-heat treatment was reviewed and analysed to assess their effectiveness as tools to persuade new mothers to adopt this new PMTCT method. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with the creators of the media and administrators from King Edward Hospital, in order to obtain further information about the media where questions might arise.

**Key findings**

As a diffusion of innovations intervention, the pamphlet and DVD have several short-comings as well as strengths. The first point of consideration is the ability of the media to reduce uncertainty. The strengths of the media include their inclusion of flash-heat treatment as a method of infant feeding for working mothers. The specific benefits of the method are highlighted. Additionally, the method is outlined in some detail.

However, the pamphlet does not include enough information for women to correctly flash-heat their breast milk. Research conducted on flash-heat treatment is very specific. It has only been shown to be effective if mothers use a specific volume of milk, a specific volume of water, a specific type of jar, a specific type of pot, boil the milk for a specific amount of time, and take the lid on and off at specific points in the process. The explanations in the pamphlet do not include these specifications and thus are not specific enough to ensure that mothers do not make mistakes, like using the wrong type of pot or heat-treating more breast milk than is safe at a given time.

Neither the pamphlet nor the DVD include all necessary protocol to teach mothers to correctly flash-heat treat their breast milk, which could lead to mothers incorrectly using the method and transferring the virus to their infants. Not only does leaving out important details reduce the likelihood that the method will be adopted, but it could also lead to infant morbidity and mortality, which is disastrous. Also, issues that were cited by researchers as deterrents of heat-treating were not specifically addressed. A specific example is the challenge of hand-expressing breast milk. By excluding this information, the researchers are not adequately preparing mothers who were initially persuaded to try to adopt flash-heat treatment to face the challenges that arise as they adopt...
the method. Overall, the amount of uncertainty is still large compared to the life changes that will have to take place in order to adopt this method.

The DVD is a more comprehensive tool to use to teach mothers how to heat-treat breast milk. The DVD has full explanations of all the steps of flash-heat treatment along with answers to questions that might arise during the process. The use of a full demonstration is also helpful so that mothers better understand and better remember how to correctly heat-treat their breast milk. The only error in the DVD, according to flash-heating protocol, is the failure of the mother to wash her hands with soap before expressing her milk. Additionally, the instructions at the end, like the pamphlet, do not specify the fact that mothers must strictly adhere to what was seen in the video including the type of pot, jar, and quantities of milk and water. Furthermore, the text of the pamphlet is in English, while the entire DVD is spoken in Zulu, which is the preferred language of the audience.

The media had both strengths and shortfalls with respect to the four elements in diffusion. The innovation, which is flash-heat treatment, is composed of a technological innovation, information, and uncertainty (Rogers, 2003). Technology has both a hardware or material component, and a software or information component. With flash-heat treatment, the hardware component was partially covered because the hospital is able to provide glass jars with lids and the specific pot that needs to be used. The other materials, like access to soap and water, are assumed to be there. The software component was also partially covered, but had some omissions that could be deleterious to the health of the infant.

The communication channel was also not ideal for the type of innovation being diffused. The issue of infant feeding is a very personal issue that has deep cultural, historical and familial ties. It is unrealistic to expect a video and pamphlet alone to change strong opinions that already exist concerning infant feeding. Taking time into consideration is difficult considering the setting, but should not be excluded all together. Time is considered using the innovation-decision process, which is “the process through which an individual (or other decision-making unit) passes from first knowledge of an innovation, to the formation of an attitude toward the innovation, to a decision to adopt or reject, to implementation and use of the new idea, and to conformation of this decision” (Rogers, 2003:20). Because many of the mothers who visit King Edward Hospital will only be seen once, it is difficult to include information that addresses each stage of the innovation-decision process. However, the inclusion of time would greatly increase the number of mothers who chose to adopt flash-heat treatment.

Finally, the social system, which is defined as “a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (Rogers, 2003:23) must be taken into consideration. The most important considerations with respect to the social system are consequences, which are defined as “changes that occur to an individual or to a social system as a result of the adoption or rejection of an innovation”. They can be desirable or undesirable, direct or indirect and anticipated or unanticipated (Rogers, 2003:30-31).

This media addresses the issue of stigma by framing this method as an effective method for working mothers instead of HIV-positive mothers. Even though the bulk of research done on heat-treatment has been to prevent MTCT, the communicators do not want women to avoid the method because they will be branded as being HIV positive if they flash-heat treat. Consequently, all information is formatted to avoid framing this method as a method to purify milk of HIV, but rather to make milk as safe and healthy as possible for infants by eliminating all viral and bacterial pathogens both natural and unnatural.

With regard to the EE standards proposed by Coleman (2000), the created media missed the mark at a number of levels. The creation of the DVD and pamphlet as a means to diffuse a new health innovation did not apply a research-based scientific method. The medium chosen was popular and pervasive, therefore ideal because the audience was so specific that it would have been difficult to reach them in larger numbers without recruiting them in a hospital...
setting, however, without revision there is little chance of this becoming a large-scale project.

The researcher who developed this media is also responsible for conducting the research on flash-heat treatment and is therefore an expert on the method. However, communication, media and audio-visual experts were not recruited to improve the quality of the product. Creative professionals were not enlisted to make creative decisions concerning this media. Creative decisions were made by health professionals who are not trained in creative media.

Outside of casual conversations with the audience, researchers did not collect reactions from the audience, which is a critical component of a successful EE intervention. The researchers have not performed structured baseline, intervention, post-intervention surveys in order to assess the quality of the media from the audience perspective. However, an evaluation of the materials concluded that the messages were carefully worded to work within societal norms, and were formed in a clear concise manner that was specific to the audience it was designed to serve. However, the entertainment component was largely neglected, while the education component took centre stage.

Communicators are first preparing to support the entire population of lactating mothers who visit King Edward, which may be overzealous, but is reflective of the strong commitment to persuade mothers to adopt flash-heat treatment.

Thus far, no partnerships have been made with commercial entertainment companies or individuals to expand the project. Although donors have been recruited, they have not been consulted to provide assistance with entertainment value. The materials that are being used to assist mothers are provided by donors.

Conclusions and recommendations
The teaching of flash-heat treatment is open enough for mothers to misuse the method, which could have disastrous consequences.

In order to reduce the chances of mothers incorrectly heating their milk, researchers should provide more inclusive take-home information so that mothers have specific steps in front of them while heat treating. Communicators should also advise mothers about what not to do, as well as what to do, so that they know when they are doing things incorrectly. Furthermore, media should include information that anticipates problems and teaches mothers how to overcome those problems so that they continue heat-treating. Finally, all information, both written and spoken, should be in the preferred language of the audience to ensure complete understanding.

In order to more effectively diffuse the innovation, communicators should use focus groups, individual counselling, and more inclusive take-home materials to accompany the DVD and pamphlet. Focus groups or small group teaching sessions would allow for a more intimate discussion to discover and address fears and apprehensions regarding heat treatment. To address the issue of time, communicators should include information for mothers at each stage of the decision-innovation process, from first learning about the innovation to continuing with adoption.

In order to create a more effective EE intervention, communicators should include more lively graphics in the DVD, such as better background images and create media with more professional sound and video quality. This would add to the entertainment value of media so that mothers will be more engaged while watching. Additionally, communicators should cut unnecessary time from the video like the time spent expressing and boiling water, which easily lose the audience. Finally, communicators should enlist media experts to design the media portion of the project. Professional media experts will improve the overall quality of the media.

The DVD and pamphlet created to teach women how to use the flash-heat treatment method of infant feeding are a great start to communicating information about this innovation. However, there are shortfalls with respect to teaching flash-heat treatment,
diffusing the innovation and effectively creating an Education Entertainment intervention. After reviewing the recommendations, communicators will be able to use these media as a launching point for more effective media.

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Because of limited access to expensive technology, use of the internet has previously been the preserve of the wealthy and well-educated in South Africa. The internet has, however, been more widely accessible in recent years due to advanced cellular telephone technology.

The internet is a user-controlled medium, where the audience chooses when and what they would like to access. This suggests that articles on the internet are accessed by those with specific interest in the topic. The internet also allows a forum for ordinary people to voice their views through blogs as well as social networking sites such as Facebook, that are open for comments on news reports and other articles. This access results in the internet providing a platform for open discussion on a wide range of topics.

This chapter covers some of the theory and uses of the internet as a new communication tool in the development sphere. Case studies are provided of different websites and other internet-based technologies that purport to add to the available effective channels for development communications. The chapter includes summaries of 5 post-graduate student papers. Contributors include: Carla van Staden, Matt Clark and Simon Morgan (2005); Colin Murphy (2010); Mariclar Smit (2011); Temitope Ogunlela (2011); and Natasha Sundar (2011).

Van Staden, Clark and Morgan (2005) designed and interrogated an intervention with school learners, which focused on them using the internet as a way to communicate with learners from other
countries. Partnering with the ARROW project, they found that more accessible media such as Mxit are more likely to appeal to young people and allow them to develop more than superficial relationships which can break down barriers and cultural stereotypes.

Murphy (2010) explores the perceptions of an internet site for a community development project, and relates this to notions of design and reception.

Smit (2011) and Ogunlela (2011) explore user responses on the Facebook page that was set up to accompany the Intersexions television series. Intersexions (2010) is an award-winning South African produced EE television drama series, which features 26 independent (stand-alone), but interrelated episodes that follow the HIV-infection chain. The popular Facebook page gives insight into how the series was received, and the effect that it had on audience members.

Sundar (2011) examines the online identities and discussion themes apparent on the social networking website MyMsta (Make Your Move sta) of the organisation loveLife. She concludes that the site offers young people anonymity to connect and talk about their experiences in what appears to be a supportive environment. Young people have control over their own stories regarding sex and sexuality on the MYMsta forums, which gives them power to determine how they are represented.

Arrow Online

Carla van Staden, Matt Clark and Simon Morgan (Honours, 2005)

Problem statement
The research team worked with the Art: A Resource for Reconciliation Over the World (ARROW) group based at a secondary school in Durban. After much research and observation of the ongoing ARROW project, it became clear that the children had had little exposure to, or direct communication with, the ARROW groups in other countries. Communication between groups of young people in different countries was limited to the sending and receiving of art pieces and video footage. Due to limited resources, the children received group emails from the other ARROW children and replied in group format.

The research team felt that experiencing communication via the internet would be beneficial for the children in terms of communicating with children of other cultures, and also for the benefit of their computer literacy. A study into how the internet could be a means to encourage communication between children of different cultural backgrounds could also be useful in furthering the aims of ARROW.

Objectives
The main objective of the research project was to investigate how effectively communication over the internet could be to break cultural boundaries and to change perceptions between children of different cultural backgrounds. It also sought to explore if cultural stereotypes could be dispelled through the use of the internet.

Links to other literature in the field
The literature review explored notions of stereotyping, the consumption of messages and making of meaning.
Certain value dimensions have been identified which have “significant impact on behaviour in all cultures” (Samovar & Porter, 2001:65). The concept of individualism, for example has been identified as a phenomenon in European culture. It can be described as the emphasis on the individual and his self-realisation over the collective. South Africa, on the contrary with its variety of cultures can be argued to have significant traces of collectivism. Samovar and Porter define this concept by a “rigid framework that distinguishes between in- and out-groups. People count on their in-group to look after them. In exchange for this, they believe that they owe absolute loyalty to their group” (Samovar & Porter, 2001:67). Lack of awareness of such different cultural patterns may result in increased forms of stereotyping and ethnocentrism between different cultural groups.

In the light of post-modern theory and contemporary cultural studies, there is a strong academic argument that the individual in a late-capitalist society is increasingly confronted with an overabundance of images which function as a means of representation. In addition, the individual in the post-modern condition is not merely subjected to an infinite matrix of signs, but these images seem to provide the raw material through which identity is constructed (Baudrilliard, 1987). Image, in this sense is understood as any visual code that simultaneously functions as a representational system, such as fashion or clothing in general. This implies that we have a given set of representational factors which are determined by mass media and corporations from which identity is constructed.

Habitus is understood as a “system of dispositions, a system which organises the individual’s capacity to act” (Lury, 1996:83). The organisation and articulation of taken-for-granted preferences in art and consumption thus become a vehicle for shaping social experience. However, critiques such as Fiske’s (1989) have identified how individuals take an active part in appropriating means of representation to subjectively form an identity. One of these means could be new media forms of communication such as web chats, blogs and instant messaging.

Web chats enable people from different sides of the world to communicate via the internet; the typed messages are instantly delivered to the respondent and thus one is able to have a conversation in this manner. Weblogs or “blogs” are becoming more and more popular as people set up their own websites. People are thus able to access a person’s blog and read about that person, their interests, and whatever they may choose to include on the site. This means then open possibilities for individuals and possibly groups to create narratives to shape everyday existence, which can be effective in reworking stereotypes.

The notion of blogs and other internet-based social networking sites is explored in this research as a form of Entertainment Education (EE). ARROW online chosen to identify how digital media can be successfully accessed to facilitate EE interventions or supplement the core objective of the ARROW parent projects, namely the breakdown of stereotyping. When talking about digital media, it needs to be clarified that the main focus has been on interactive forms of communication such as web chats and instant messaging.

Concepts and theory informing the research

The ARROW online project was structured according to the P-process (Health Communication Partnership, 2003), developed by the John Hopkins University. The P-process is a strategy which is structured around the rational individual, assuming that behaviour change can be externally facilitated and maintained if the audience has been successfully addressed and notions of self-efficacy have been addressed.

The ARROW project can be said to be creating a bridge towards a third generation of EE that focuses on empowerment. Here, the key lies in acknowledging cultural, socio-economic and structural elements that often supersede individual behaviour and rational decision-making. Thomas Tufte argues appropriately that “the focus today is on problem identification, social critique, and articulation of debate, challenging power relations and advocating social change” (Tufte, 2005:162).
Using the P-process as the frame of reference, a campaign would be subdivided into various sections such as planning and strategic development; developing and pretesting concepts, messages and materials; implementing the program, assessing effectiveness and making refinements (HCP, 2003).

The ARROW online project has not rigidly applied all these steps in a systematic manner but allowed for maximum flexibility, in order to keep the group as an active agent in the formulation of issues and questions relevant to them. In addition, the ARROW online group has tried to allow for a two-fold process in the implementation of the programme, meaning that the intervention is planned and systematic on the one hand, yet acting as a tool for participant empowerment on the other.

Planning a strategic development
The planning process involved creating a bridge between the facilitator and the group, through casual sessions involving music and discussions about why and how people were involved in the project.

Developing and pretesting concepts
Based on the findings from the meetings and action research, it was decided to develop a strategy of empowering the group participants with the necessary skills to independently utilise digital media, to ensure that when the actual session was facilitated, the audience could focus on the message and interaction, without being distracted by the actual use of the medium. This is referred to as the “pre-session”.

Implementing the programme
The implementation of the programme took place a week after the pre-session. The first 20 minutes of the session were dedicated for a brainstorm on three areas of society that can be said to be of relevance, when dealing with perceptions of people from other cultures. The learners were encouraged to respond to these three questions:

1) What do your grandparents do?
2) What does it mean to be poor?
3) Can you tell somebody’s religion by looking at them?

The answers were captured with the intention of gaining a communal understanding, through open discussion and brainstorming on the perceptions of the group as a whole, thereby allowing for diversity of opinion.

In the next step the children were told to formulate these issues into quiz-like questions that were sent to the UK. The aim of this step was firstly to identify perceptions amongst the group itself, and secondly to contrast them to the responses from the UK school. Finally, the scholars were given sufficient time to check on the responses from the pre-session and formulate their own private messages that were posted on the webpage.

Assessing effectiveness
This part of the P-process was conducted through the use of focus groups, which make up the research component of the project.

Research methods and methodology
Two focus group sessions were conducted with the ARROW group of learners from Bechet High School. One group consisted of eight learners and the other of five learners.

Questions were asked by the mediator to which the learners responded. Each response was pursued further by the mediators to produce more in-depth answers and explanations. The learners were encouraged to talk freely. If the learners drifted off topic when answering questions, the mediator would let the discussion run before bringing the group back to the topic, creating a more conversational element to the focus group. The objective was to gain more rounded qualitative research that was a true representation of what was felt, rather than obtaining simple answers to justify our research (Kitzinger, 1995; Morgan, 1998; Kreuger et al, 1998). The focus-group discussion was captured on video and notes were taken.
Key findings
The focus group discussions revolved around the internet and its use as a means of communication for the ARROW learners, as well as exploring notions of social stereotyping whilst developing issues of identity.

The researchers found that most of the learners had not used the internet before, and did not have access to this through their homes or schools. However, all of them had used the cell-phone based network, Mxit, and expressed a great deal of interest in communicating further with overseas participants this way. They also felt that, given access, they would use the ARROW website again.

The focus groups revealed that the South African learners had imagined the UK learner’s grandparents in a particular way, and their imaginings were confirmed. The SA learners had imagined that UK grandparents lived in subsidised houses, and received money from the state. They also imagined that UK grandparents were less religious than SA grandparents. The SA learners had felt that they were in more direct contact with poverty that the UK learners, and that the media created stereotypes which often lead to misconceptions of poverty in South Africa by those in First-World countries. There was a fairly strong sentiment that they did not want the ARROW UK group to think that they were “living in huts”.

The only surprising finding for the South African learners was that most of the UK-based learners had access to computers at home, which was a remarkable difference from their own lives.

Generally the group had a sound knowledge of themselves and their community and although the responses from the UK group may have come as a surprise to some, most of the ARROW SA members had a firm grasp of basic societal issues in the UK. Many stated their perceptions had been influenced by the media, family abroad and previous communication with other ARROW groups.

During the focus group sessions, many learners expressed that they had realised that they were no different from many of the ARROW UK learners and displayed no sign of ignorance when it came to addressing common stereotypical barriers.

Conclusions and recommendations
The role of the internet in the ARROW project is seen as a substantial component to the communications process and was identified to be the glue that would bind the various ARROW groups together. One of the purposes of the focus-group sessions was to evaluate the internet and the ARROW online website as a realistic form of digital communications for the project.

Some of the identified strengths of the ARROW online project are that it allows for a central meeting point; it also keeps members up to date with ARROW news and events; and it allows for members to find information that could assist with projects. Some weaknesses of the project are that it is costly and there is limited internet access by Third-World groups; there is a high level of internet illiteracy, and a technological gap between participants in different countries; and there is no current structured internet programme within the ARROW project, and no instant message chat function.

At this point in time, the lack of internet access is a major deterrent for using this platform of communication. In order for this problem to be solved, all ARROW groups should have at their headquarters: accessible internet facilities, computer literacy and typing courses, and a structured internet correspondence programme which runs through all groups.

Without these facilities, a further option would be to focus the programme on Mxit instead of the internet. Mxit would open up doors to communication that in turn would break down barriers created by stereotyping. As the ARROW SA members do not have regular internet access, communication with their UK counterparts via the ARROW website is limited to a superficial level. With Mxit, ARROW members can freely share experiences through a communications programme which is meaningful and will allow members to create real relationships with members in the UK, Kosovo and Palestine. This would not mean abandoning
the existing ARROW website, but integrating the two platforms using the ARROW website to stimulate debate and interaction, whilst using Mxit for more casual interpersonal communication.

In terms of fostering intercultural understanding, it is felt that more personal communications would have a greater impact than general group discussions. It is only by creating real relationships with ARROW members abroad that the ARROW SA members will get a feel of the true way of life in those countries. The ARROW group has been raising funds and will be going to England in September 2006 to visit the ARROW group in Plymouth. The excursion will assist in this area as the group will be able to engage in interaction that is not purely digital; and which in turn will create the foundation for better future use of the digital communications platforms that are at their disposal.

Apart from the limitedness of the ARROW online project, the campaign provided some useful findings for an attempt to enter into a new generation of EE interventions. EE interventions that make use of direct communication through social media and social networking may rather aim at creating a participatory platform of communication, through which perceptions of others may be naturally reworked, without the intervention of a facilitator.

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Perceived implication versus received implication: A reception analysis of Indigo Skate Camp’s website

Colin Murphy (Honours, 2010)

Problem statement

Websites are often the link between a community programme and the outside world, a portal to a vast audience with which visitors can communicate and open dialogue. This research focuses on the website of the Indigo Skate Camp in the Valley of a Thousand Hills in KwaZulu-Natal.

Skateboarding is a sport that has grown in infamy through its portrayal in popular media, characterised through street culture and petty crime often incorrectly attributed to this traditionally urban sport. Over the past thirty years, skateboarding has been transformed from an almost taboo hobby, to a mainstream sport that has gained worldwide popularity. Skateboarding now has the ability to change people’s lives for the better, and provides a platform for many youths to showcase their own abilities.

The Indigo Skate Camp is a “sport for social change” programme, which stresses the benefits that sport can have on participants and the communities in which they live. Many such programmes use word-of-mouth advertising, as it is one of the most effective and cost-efficient ways to market a product or service. Other programmes, such as Indigo and the Laureus sports organisation, have developed websites, as they can reach a large audience, and can be maintained by a small group of people. These websites are the link between the programme and potential sponsors, supporters, beneficiaries and other interested parties.

Objectives

The aim of Indigo Skate Camp, according to its website, is to “unite people through skateboarding”. This study seeks to see if this aim is clearly communicated through the skate camp’s website.

The research is a two-step reception analysis of the Indigo Skate Camp website, aimed at challenging perceived implication (what the website creator assumes the viewer is receiving), versus received implication (what the website viewer really is receiving). The first process is an analysis of the Indigo founders’ views on the programme and his website, while the second process compares these views to opinions gathered from subjects familiar with the Indigo programme. This provides a detailed critique of the website, and ascertains whether or not it is being effectively used to communicate and/or attract potential visitors, while simultaneously providing them with sufficient information on the programme’s ethos, aims and outcomes.

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review explores the challenges facing research in sport for social change, and challenges faced by organisers of sports organisations.

Whereas sport has traditionally been perceived as the domain of children and athletes, Fred Coalter (2007) proposes that there is much more to sport than merely enjoyment and entertainment. He argues that sport in contemporary society has the potential “to alleviate a variety of social problems and generally to ‘improve’ both the individuals and the communities in which they live” (Coalter, 2007:1). However, that is not to say that sport for social change is not without its setbacks. Coalter lists four factors that he believes hinders sport for social change research, which in turn affects relevant policy making. The four factors are listed as: conceptual weaknesses, methodological weaknesses, insufficient conditions and limited literature (Coalter, 2007:1).
Coalter argues that the manner in which terms and definitions are used in writing about sport for social change is often too vague and lacks clinical precision, affecting issues of “validity and comparability” (Coalter, 2007:1). There is also a lack of “systematic and robust evaluations” which affects current and potential programme funders (Coalter, 2007:1). In addition to this, the literature available to sport for social change organisations is “selective and fails to provide information on the full complexities of programmes” (Coalter, 2007:2). Coalter further argues that while the perceived benefits of specific sport for social change programmes may seem evident, they ultimately do not guarantee success with their target groups due, in part, to a lack of understanding and/or consideration with regard to the participants’ external conditions.

John Amis and Trevor Slack (2003) highlight the internal and external attributes which most prominently hamper the operation and running of sports organisations and attempt to chart how these attributes affect the sports organisations themselves. Amis and Slack identify the factors external to sports organisation as “factors in the task and the general environment” (2003:201). They list the factors internal to a sports organisation as: “leadership, power and politics, decision-making and organisational culture” (2003:201).

What becomes evident in Amis and Slack’s research is that the factors which most prominently effect sports organisations are internal to those particular organisations, rather than external. They argue that the most challenging factor with regard to running a sport organisation is inherent in the organisation itself, through in-fighting, poor decision-making, power and politics. The primary issue of concern is that of leadership, and how a programme leader must be an acceptable role-model.

Organisational culture, which “comprises those things that give an organisation its meaning and identity” (Amis & Slack, 2003:214) is also important. This is generally linked to the participants of an organisation, and how their language/culture/background ultimately shapes the organisation in which they participate. It seems to be very much a two-way process, where the participants shape the organisations in which they feature, but conversely the organisations shape their participants in a positive way.

The external factors which most prominently hamper sports organisations relate to the current political, social and economic state of a government at any given time, which “have a direct, day-to-day impact on the way it [the programme] operates” (Amis & Slack, 2003:207).

Concepts and theory informing the research

Social development theory, and concepts and theories used in communication for participatory development, are used as a guideline for this research.

A community organisation can be defined as “the process of bringing about and maintaining a progressively more effective adjustment between social welfare needs within a geographical area at a functional field” (Ross, 1967:17). Indigo Skate Camp fits this profile, and is assessed according to the community development model, which “involves efforts to provide for the community’s advancement towards changes that are desired” (Ross, 1967:17).

Ross (1967) proposes that there are three types of approaches to the community development model. The “external agency” approach is usually government initiated and funded. This approach does not apply to Indigo Skate Camp, as it usually denotes a top-down system of operation by an external consultant. The “multiple” approach “involves teams of experts who provide a variety of services to help the community adjust” (Archer et al, 1984:54). The third “inner resources” approach “encourages members of the community to do the assessment and diagnosis of the problem themselves” (Archer et al, 1984:54). Both the multiple and inner resources approach can be applied to the Indigo Skate Camp, as they involve the collaborative development processes of both an external agent (Dallas Oberholzer, the project founder and manager), and the recipient community itself (the Isithumba community in KwaZulu-Natal).
This approach links with the notion of communication for social change (CFSC), where the focus is on the relationship between individual and social change (Cardey, 2006). Sarah Cardey (2006) argues that social change is more likely to be sustainable if the individuals and communities who are most affected own the process and content of communication. Communication should therefore be empowering, horizontal and give voice to the marginalised or unheard members of the community; and outcomes should move beyond a focus on the individual, towards social norms, policy, culture and context.

CFSC’s focus on the relationship between the individual and social change is unique from other communication approaches, as it stresses change of the social sphere rather than behaviour or policy change. Whilst behaviour change would be targeted more towards individuals, social change can benefit communities and groups on a large scale. Policy change, while having the ability to affect large numbers of people, is restricted by governments and their change processes, which can hamper policy making.

While Indigo Skate Camp has benefitted greatly from input and assistance by its organiser (Dallas Oberholzer), the emphasis definitely is on self-sustenance rather than dependence as the Isithumba community hope to one day be self-sufficient. In this sense, it can be seen to be representative of CFSC.

Indigo Skate Camp can be said to be employing a dialogic method of communication with which they empower the project recipients, reminiscent of the communication for participatory development model (Kincaid & Figueroa, 2007/2009), which focuses on human development. Indigo’s positive approach to communication is inclusive of all members of the Isithumba community. It is difficult, however, for the Isithumba to own and maintain communication processes (primarily related to the Indigo website), as the community members lack the skills required to maintain the website. There are therefore some inherent contradictions within the organisation, as the goals and the means are not always aligned.

Research methods and methodology

This research falls within the interpretative paradigm, with the researcher taking on an observer-as-participant role. Interviews were conducted with the programme manager of the Indigo Skate Park, regarding the operations of Indigo (the power relations inherent at Indigo), the challenges of running a successful CFPD programme, and his opinions on the Indigo website and whether or not he felt it was up to standard when compared to other cultural tourism programmes.

In addition, questionnaires were distributed to two purposely sampled individuals who were familiar with the skate park in order to assess their opinions of the Indigo website. The research is limited, in that it does not elicit responses from other website users who may be less familiar with the park.

Key findings

The research established that the website had been up and running for the last seven years, developed by a website professional with the help and input of the programme manager. The website had not been updated in over a year. The website needed to be updated in time for the Christmas period, when a lot of skateboarders would be heading to Indigo Skate Camp to participate in the programme. The website appears to be “user friendly” in its layout and flow. The website provides ease of use for visitors and simultaneously provides numerous photographs and information on Indigo Skate Camp. The programme manager felt that the website did effectively communicate with potential Indigo visitors. However, the lack of updating may make the project less able to successfully compete against other similar projects.

With regard to the power relations inherent at Indigo Skate Camp, the programme manager stated that he was “the boss”, and had employed educators to manage the children who participated in the project on a daily basis. Power was divided among some people working underneath the programme manager, in order for the programme to run when he was not present at the camp. This is a
primary example of the multiple and inner resources approaches, which “involves teams of experts who provide a variety of services to help the community adjust” (Archer et al, 1984:54).

The programme manager felt that most of the challenges associated with running Indigo were external to Indigo itself, and primarily focused on the lack of local government support, while the key factor was due to the fact skateboarding is still not recognised as a mainstream sport.

The second part of this research involved a reception analysis of the website. The general criticism of the Indigo website relayed the fact that the website had not been updated in quite some time. Respondents felt that if the website were to compete with other similar projects, it would need to feel as if the project spoke of more recent events. In the event that the website cannot be updated on a regular basis, then the respondents recommended that whoever updates the website should steer clear of using a date-emphasised style of writing. The respondents noted that certain pictures had not been hyperlinked properly, as when a particular picture was selected to view, another un-selected picture was enlarged. The respondents noted that more photographs of the park’s afternoon learning sessions should be posted, as this would make a welcome inclusion after numerous skateboarding pictures.

The “ethos” tab on the homepage was well received, as it seemed to contextualise the entire programme, and was useful to understand the thought processes behind the Indigo Skate Camp. This tab provided information which answered questions for the viewers of the website, including why the programme manager chose skateboarding, and why a skate camp was set up in KwaZulu-Natal. Questions such as these add to the allure of Indigo as a truly magnificent skate park, set in a truly unusual area.

The general consensus of the respondents was that in order for Indigo to well and truly compete for tourists, it needs to be updated regularly, although the content on the website itself is inviting and offers a great deal of insight into what constitutes Indigo.

Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, there are a number of challenges faced by coordinators of sport for social change programmes. These programmes are challenging to run no matter where they are situated, although location does play a key factor. If a programme was to gain external support, then it may be prone to infighting, or internal problems. On the corollary, if a programme were to have sufficient internal support, the challenges faced may be external to that particular programme. While neither of these is evident at Indigo, the general consensus regarding sport for social change programmes is that there is an overall lack of government support.

Greater communication about such programmes may increase the likelihood of them receiving support from government and elsewhere. This involves the programmes marketing themselves more effectively. For the Indigo Skate Camp, updating their website more regularly may serve to improve their marketing and subsequently increase their support base.

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The use of social media to advance HIV and AIDS awareness in South Africa: An investigation into how the Intersexions Facebook page is used for HIV prevention, care, support and treatment

Mariclair Smit (Honours, 2011)

Problem statement

Communication development professionals are constantly trying to find new and better ways of facilitating HIV and AIDS awareness. One of these methods is the inclusion of social media. Intersexions (2010), a South African-produced Entertainment Education (EE) television drama series, has been complimented by a social media approach, in order to facilitate HIV and AIDS awareness.

The advent of information and communication technologies (ICTs) have revolutionised the way people communicate – keeping them almost constantly connected through emails, instant messaging and social-networking sites – and thus also influencing communication within the field of communication development. ICTs facilitate a two-way communication process that is almost instantaneous. Thus any individuals that have access to the internet and ICTs can, almost instantaneously become a content creator or communicator (McNab, 2009).

Objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the use of social media to advance HIV and AIDS awareness in South Africa. The research involved the analysis of the Facebook page for Intersexions Episode 11. The research focused on the following questions:
1) Do the Intersexions messages facilitate any social or behavioural changes amongst the viewers/participants, and if so, how?

2) How do the viewers/participants use Facebook as a platform to discuss, react and provide feedback on the Intersexions episode and its messages?

3) Is social media an appropriate medium for the facilitation of HIV and AIDS awareness in South Africa?

Links to other literature in the field

The literature review explores some of the criticisms and ethical issues raised regarding the Entertainment Education (EE) strategy, and social networks as a support for EE.

Despite the evaluated success of EE strategies, it has still come under some criticism. Firstly, EE programmes have been criticised for their apparent top-down nature of dissemination (especially when the EE intervention involves mass media). This means that there can be very little participation and that the message producers decide what the audiences “need” or “want” (Singhal, 2007; Storey, 2006). Similar criticism stems from the ethical issue of who gets to decide what is pro-social? What constitutes as pro-social for the EE programme’s production team might not be considered pro-social by its audience. Thus, there are debates centred on the issue of whether it is “right” to use mass media as a persuasive tool to promote social change (Singhal & Rogers, 1999).

EE initiatives have also been criticised for allowing commercial interests to gain emphasis over social or audience-centred interests. Also, as with most communication initiatives, there is the issue of interpretation. Audience members process selectively and might interpret multiple meanings and interpretations from the message, which might not include the intended message. Any form of communication development is complex, and thus the consequences are not always predictable. Sometimes unintended/undesirable consequences may result (Singhal & Rogers, 1999). Selective processing also allows for selective recall and the selective use for one’s own purposes, which means that negative behaviours, stigma and prejudice may be reinforced rather than opposed (Singhal & Rogers, 2004).

Intersexions and social media

Mass media development initiatives, such as Intersexions, often involve information diffused in a hierarchical, one-way track, from sender to receiver, with little if any feedback from the viewers. However, many initiatives attempt to broaden the communication process to make it more dialogical, and get feedback from viewers. In an attempt to improve the effects and reach of EE initiatives, the Intersexions television drama series was complimented by a radio talk show (broadcast on the SABC’s eleven local language stations), a blog, and a group on the social networking site, Facebook. These new media outlets were included in order to provide additional and continuous information regarding the series, and HIV and AIDS.

The advent of social media is creating an entirely new environment for the worlds of commerce, communication and connection. Social media are ubiquitous, unavoidable, accessible, scalable, public, transparent and highly influential. Facebook is one of the world’s most popular social networking sites and is the dominant social media site in South Africa with over four million users (MWeb, 2009; Social Bakers, 2011; Social Media Dialogue, 2011).

The term social media can be defined as “the swift and easy development, creation, dissemination, and consumption of information and entertainment by both organisations and individuals” (Wollan, Smith & Zhou, 2011:xii). From this definition, it can be said that social media can be used by development communicators, in conjunction with EE, to disseminate information and entertainment, and to facilitate discussion regarding an educational issue. Through these media, audience members can ask questions, answer other questions and start new discussions.

The convergence of EE initiatives and social media thus facilitates participation and social learning (Odutolu, 2005:247). Traditional forms of media can only facilitate discussion amongst audience
members sharing immediate social spheres (such as working and living environments). Social media, on the other hand, expands these limits of dialogue and enables discussion to take place between people of various locations/spheres, and also allows discussion amongst media producers and consumers. Additionally, social media enables one-to-many and many-to-many conversations amongst individuals, and can enable almost instantaneous input, feedback and critique regarding the specific subject being discussed (Wollan, Smith & Zhou, 2011).

This research focuses on the Facebook response to Intersexions Episode 11, which explores issues of sexual orientation. In 1996 the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE) was one of the first constitutions to ground discrimination of sexual orientation as illegal. Before this, homosexuality/sodomy was considered an illegal act. Despite these progressions there is still a great deal of bias and stigmatisation against homosexuals and other sexual minorities in Africa. This bias and stigma is generally deeply rooted in cultural and religious values, and can often lead to the physical and verbal abuse of homosexuals and other sexual minorities (Fleshman, 2007; Avert, 2011).

Concepts and theory informing the research

The research is based on theories of social change and behaviour change, as well as media theory.

Social cognitive theory and self-efficacy

Albert Bandura’s (1976) social learning theory hypothesises a triadic, reciprocal relationship between the personal factors of the individual, the social environment and the behaviour itself. The environment can influence the personal factors, and eventually behaviour through observational learning or modelling (Odutolu, 2005; Glanz, Rimer & Viswanath, 2008; King, 2009).

Self-efficacy, which can be defined as an individual’s belief that she/he can exert control over his/her own emotions, thought processes, motivations and patterns of behaviour, plays an important role

in the causal structure of the social learning theory. This is due to the fact that efficacy beliefs not only influence change and adaptation in their own right, but also other determinants that influence them. The efficacy beliefs influence whether an individual thinks optimistically or pessimistically and in ways that could be self-enhancing or self-hindering. Thus they influence whether an individual chooses to undertake a challenge or problem, how much effort to expend on the problem, and how long to persevere when faced with obstacles or failures. The probability that an individual will act on a problem or challenge depends on the individual’s belief that he/she can implement the required actions to solve the challenge or problem (Odutolu, 2005; Bandura, 2001; Strong, 2008).

Fear appeals

Fear appeals (or persuasive messages that arouse fear) are behaviour-change models that are designed and utilised by development communicators to encourage the adoption of positive attitudes, intentions and behaviour changes (Ray, 2005; Witte & Allen, 2000). There are three variables relating to the fear appeal models: fear, perceived threat and perceived efficacy.

The perceived threat encompasses two dimensions: perceived susceptibility to the threat (the degree to which an individual feels at risk of experiencing the threat), and perceived severity of the threat (the degree of harm expected from the threat). While the concepts of fear and threat are distinct (the former being emotion and the latter cognition), they are intricately related: the greater the perceived threat, the greater the fear experienced.

Perceived efficacy is also composed of two components: perceived self-efficacy (the individual’s belief in his/her ability to act on the threat) and perceived response efficacy (the individual’s belief in the recommended response’s ability to avert the threat) (Witte & Allen, 2000). If a fear appeal message makes the health issue seem serious, and fosters a strong sense of self-efficacy, the audience members are more likely to implement behaviour changes (Green & Witte, 2006; Witte & Allen, 2000).
Social learning and participation

The concept of social learning refers to the acquisition of information from other individuals. The information could be related to various subjects, such as a new technology or the social, health and economic consequences of decision-making. Thus, social learning is the primary mechanism through which social networks influence and affect individuals. While an EE intervention has the potential to facilitate interpersonal peer communication regarding the EE message and what they learned from the message, the integration of social media could further encourage discussion (for example, topics that would not have been considered by the audience). Social media can transform one-way monologues into a participatory, collaborative interaction (Odutolu, 2005; Strong, 2008; Wollan et al, 2011).

Media theories

The media effects model is an approach that is used to measure the influence, effects and/or impact that media and their content have on their audience members (Morris, 2006). The model assumes that the media and their content will affect the attitudes, thoughts and behaviours of audience members, and that the audience members are passive recipients of the media content, messages and influence (Subrahmanyam & Smahel, 2010). The media effects model has been, however, criticised for its restrictive and linear focus, which does not consider all the potential influential factors such as individual experiences and social context (Hammer & Kellner, 2009; Morris, 2006; Banks, 1995).

Stuart Hall’s (1980) theory of encoding and decoding has a somewhat different argument than the media effects model. Hall acknowledges that media and their content can have an effect on audience members, but argues that the audience is anything but passive in their consumption of the media and their content, and that these are interpreted in different ways (Banks, 1995; Storey, 2003). Just as the media and their content are encoded or produced with the “raw material” of everyday life and the media professionals’ subjective selections, they are also decoded by the audience members in an autonomous social context. The decoding of the films and their content are determined by social context, class, culture, past experiences and other aspects. Audiences have the ability to reject, accept or adapt the messages, and the outcome or interpretation of the media messages can never be predictable. Media professionals can therefore never guarantee a specific outcome or interpretation and there is always the potential for misinterpretations (Storey, 2003; Devereux, 2003).

The uses and gratification theory, like the media effects model, is an approach that can be used to study the effects of mass media. The approach focuses on how audience members use media to “gratify” or satisfy their individual needs and desires, their media preferences and their patterns of use (Larson, 2009; Van Evra, 2004). It assumes that audience members interact actively with media and select various content, channels and mediums in order to meet their specific needs and desires. The motivations for selecting specific media content can be divided into escapism/diversion and self-evaluation/self-identity, information/surveillance (Van Evra, 2004; Wood, 2011; Larson, 2009; Watson, 1998).

The escapism/diversion motivation refers to our use of the media to ease tensions and worries (Watson, 1998; Wood, 2011). Surveillance/information refers to the information people need to effectively perform their daily tasks and function in society. The self-evaluation/self-identity motivation refers to the usage of media in order to resolve issues or problems. Audiences can be inspired to apply the solutions their favourite characters have for problems, and they learn, measure and gain reassurance with regards to their lifestyles, decisions and values through media content/messages (Watson, 1998:63; Van Evra, 2004:12).

This approach also assumes that audiences are not passive in their consumption; they derive their own meanings, from the media content, can determine which content is truthful or fiction, important or unimportant, and they are also capable of accepting or rejecting certain media messages (Asimow & Mader, 2004; Watson, 1998).
Research methods and methodology

The research focused on an analysis of *Interseions* Episode 11 and the Facebook discussions (data set) of Episode 11. Nvivo, a qualitative data-analysis package, was used for data analysis, and thematic analysis was used to analyse the data set. The data set for the episode included the comments of 715 participant/viewers.

Key findings

*Emotional response to the episode*

The sexual relations between Shaan and Jake (the two key characters in the episode) produced two different sets of responses from the viewers/participants. The first set of emotional responses involved fear and shock. 44 of the viewers/participants were shocked and horrified at the portrayal of their sexual activities. This shock was on two levels, the one of a married person cheating on their spouse, and the other of men having sex with men. It can be argued that *Interseions* utilised a fear appeal strategy to show to the audiences what could happen if they don’t talk about their relationships (an extreme, over-dramatised version).

The second set of emotions is related to the concept of sexual orientation, such as homosexuality or bisexuality. 72 of the viewers/participants felt anger and disgust at the sexual relations between Shaan and Jake. Most of the viewers/participants attributed their disapproval to religious beliefs. Only 30 of the participants argued in favour of homosexuality and men who have sex with men (MSM) it can be argued that *Interseions* viewers are predominantly homophobic.

Another interesting trend that emerged from the data set was that 82 of the respondents felt that it was more acceptable for a man to cheat with another woman than cheating with a man (or an individual from the opposite sex). It was viewed as normal to cheat with the opposite sex. Only 15 of the viewers/participants said that cheating was wrong, regardless of the sex of the individual that they are cheating with or the relating circumstances.

*Social or behavioural changes*

The responses of Facebook reflected that many of the viewers/participants did not experience a change in their views or opinions on the issue of sexual orientation. This is evident in the fact that a majority of the individuals were against the concept of homosexual or bisexual relations, as mentioned above. The EE professionals encoded the episode in order to create awareness on homosexuality and MSM, but the audience did not decode the episode as the professionals had hoped or intended. Therefore, a misinterpretation had occurred.

There is, however, also some proof that being exposed to the concept of various forms of sexual orientations through mass media can create some form of social change, as one respondent noted that previous television programmes had taught them acceptance of homosexuality. Further regular exposure to this concept might facilitate greater understanding and acceptance.

Additionally, the researcher believes that the context of the episode might have hindered the acceptance process, as the bisexual character, Jake, was portrayed as a promiscuous “home-wrecker”, which could sustain stereotypes concerning bisexual individuals. If a homosexual or bisexual character was portrayed in a different context, the viewers/participants might have interpreted this in a more positive way, and acceptance might have been a more prominent response.

In another section of the data set, the *Interseions* Facebook administrator asks the viewers/participants: “Do you know your lover’s lovers?” This is one of the key themes of the *Interseions* series and is asked in every episode’s opening scene. 34 of the respondents admitted that they do not know who their lovers’ previous lovers were, and that they were too scared to find out. Only 7 out of the 715 viewers/participants said that they knew who their lovers’ previous lovers were, but did not confirm that
they had found out or spoken to their lovers about it after watching an Intersexions episode. Thus, it can be argued that Intersexions did not trigger a behaviour change within the audience, and proves that simply having knowledge of a certain issue is not necessarily going to cause behaviour change.

A huge amount of the viewers/participants haven’t asked their lovers about their previous lovers, despite the fact that they have learned through observation that the Intersexions characters have a lack of communication with regard to relationships or their issues can have devastating results on either individuals involved. They thus, might not have the self-efficacy to accomplish this action, or they are viewing the issue from a pessimistic perspective (they believe that the suggested solution will have more negative consequences than their current behaviour). The data does not reflect that the episode encouraged dialogue (outside of the Facebook forum) with regard to relationships.

None of the viewers/participants directly relate/identify with any of the characters, in the sense that they have had similar experiences or issues, but 8 of the viewers/participants did, however, state that they understood and empathised with the characters.

The primary objective of this episode was to encourage people to talk about their relationships and to promote awareness/acceptance of various forms of sexual orientations. The episode did not manage to encourage the awareness/acceptance, nor did it manage to facilitate discussion about the issues portrayed in Episode 11, nor did it facilitate self-efficacy amongst the viewers/participants. Thus, it can be argued that the Intersexions episode did not reinforce any new skills or knowledge regarding HIV.

Additionally, 35 of the viewers/participants’ comments indicated that the entertainment value overshadowed the educational value of the programme. It can be argued that these individuals used the Intersexions programme purely for entertainment/escapism rather than any of the other uses such as attaining information. Thus, no behavioural or social changes occurred with these viewers/participants.

The Facebook page, on the other hand, did provide the viewers/participants with knowledge related to HIV and sex. Intersexions was able to provide the viewers/participants with additional knowledge that could have been but was not presented in Episode 11, such as the information on MSM and the facts of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) through the Facebook page.

The viewers/participants primarily used the Facebook page as a platform to proclaim their opinions or feelings about the events in the episode. Secondly, they use it to argue or try to change the opinions of some of the other viewers/participants, for example the group of viewers/participants who argue that homosexual and bisexual people have the right to choose their own sexuality and that no one has the right to judge them.

The Facebook page is also used to answer/comment on the questions/facts that Intersexions periodically post, or to ask questions regarding these questions/facts. Finally, the viewers/participants also use the Facebook page to give other viewers/participants information that they have on a specific subject. Thus, the Facebook page facilitates social learning and participation amongst the viewers/participants. The viewers/participants can share knowledge regarding the issues amongst each other, and they can provide Intersexions with feedback and suggestions concerning the episode and its contents.

Conclusions and recommendations

As the access to social media grows in South Africa, more and more individuals will have the ability to voice their opinions and suggestions, to share their knowledge and to ask for information on social media platforms such as Facebook. The EE programmes such as Intersexions do not always encourage positive behaviour changes and social changes, or provide their viewers with knowledge or awareness of HIV or related issues, but social media provides an ideal platform to provide additional information that was not or could not be included in the EE programmes.

The Intersexions programme engages the linear, hierarchical flow of information, which is often unsuccessful. The social media platform
facilitates participation and feedback from the viewers/participants (a two-way flow of information). Initiatives that embrace participation are often more successful at facilitating behaviour change, social change, and knowledge attainment amongst its participants. Thus, social media is an appropriate medium for the facilitation of HIV and AIDS awareness in South Africa.

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Problem statement

There has been a wide spread in the use of Entertainment Education (EE) in reaching out to a target audience on an array of issues that relate to human health in South Africa. An example is the Intersexions drama series which used EE in informing people about HIV and AIDS; and also in the promotion of behaviour change such as encouraging voluntary counselling and testing (VCT).

VCT is about the knowledge of one’s HIV status. It is when an individual voluntarily agrees to go for counselling so that they can decide whether to be tested or not that helps them to ascertain their HIV status. It is on the basis of free will and is confidential as the volunteer has the right to complete privacy. VCT is encouraged through Episode 13 of the Intersexions television series. Responses to this episode are noted on the Intersexions Facebook page.

Objectives

The purpose of the study is to collect the data set from the Facebook page of Intersexions Episode 13; to clean, sort and code the data; and to create themes and analyse them in line with the following research questions:

1) In what ways did social learning and fear theory influence the audience towards VCT?
2) How interactive and effective is social media in the communication of HIV- and AIDS-related messages?

3) How entertaining and educative was *Intersexions*?

The objective of the study is to examine and establish how EE and social media can be used in the promotion and awareness of VCT.

*Links to other literature in the field*

The literature reviewed includes discussion of VCT, EE and social media.

Communication has a key role to play in creating awareness, promoting and demand for support services like VCT and making available quality service delivery when people avail themselves or seek these services (McKee, Bertrand & Benton, 2004). The media is saddled with agenda setting for VCT.

The past years have ushered in the fast diffusion of communication technology and the expansion of the entertainment industry. Noshini Nishino (2003) argues that it is the mass media that educates and updates us about VCT, and EE strategies are used in mass media such as television. Examples of other television programmes that use similar EE strategies in promoting VCT are *4play: Sex tips for Girls*, *Tsha-Tsha*, and *Soul City*.

Social media has changed human experience, and is used to interact, communicate and connect with people to share and learn from their experiences. In South Africa, a lot of people are connected to social media and the highest use is through mobile phones. Social networking is a regular part of the lives of young people, and they use this on a regular basis (Konberger, 2009).

The emergence of the internet has drastically changed the pattern in which people use the media and youth happen to be the forerunners of this (Montgomery, Robles & Larson, 2004). Facebook is one of these media, and usage in on the increase in South Africa, which ranks eighth on the international Facebook users table (Cranston & Davies, 2009). This implies and establishes that in South Africa social media can be said to be an integral component of the everyday life of people and has gained acceptance among people as a means of communication.

Going by the extent to which messages are shared and exchanged globally via social media, Facebook can be said to be a viable communication channel to exchange and disseminate HIV and AIDS messages. To this end, the *Intersexions* Facebook page data set on Episode 13 was used to analyse how EE and social media can be used in promoting VCT.

*Intersexions* Episode 13 deals with a young married man named Des, who feels ignored and has an affair with an old flame, Ruth, who is single, rich and lives a life that he envies. Ruth has another sexual partner besides Des, and when she goes for VCT, she discovers that she is HIV positive. She takes the courage to inform Des of this and persuades him to go for VCT to ascertain his own HIV status.

*Concepts and theory informing the research*

The study is located within the social learning theory and the fear appeal. The rationale for this is that the social learning theory focuses on the observation, imitation and modelling on the part of an individual while fear appeal goes a little further, suggesting that fear in messages can propel an individual to imitate the observed role model.

*Social learning theory*

Albert Bandura’s (1970) social learning theory suggests that people learn from others through observation, imitation, and modelling. This means that people learn as they observe other people’s actions, attitudes and behaviour. However, people must also have an element of confidence that they can make these changes, known as “self-efficacy”. Fear leads to what Bandura calls “cognition”, which is the reasoning and internalisation of what was learnt by the viewer.

*Fear theory/appeal*

The general idea of fear appeals suggests that fear-arousing
messages reliably and consistently produce behaviour change. The rational use of fear can have positive effect on attitudes (Ray & Wilkie, 1970:54). According to Witte (1992), the evaluation of a threat perceived and perceived confidence (efficacy) in relation to a particular intervention determines the action process by the target audience after being exposed to a message containing a fear appeal. “If perceived threat elicited by the message is low, the individual is not motivated to further process the message; however, if and when perceived threat is moderate to high, the individual moves on to the second step – appraisal of the efficacy of the recommended action” (Dutta-Bergman 2005:105). According to Green and Witte (2006), the stronger the fear appeal, the greater the attitude, intention and behaviour change, as long as the individual’s perceived self-efficacy is high.

In the light of this research, this means that, on one hand, if the fear appeal used is low, the individual has no drive to further think of the negative effects of not going for VCT, or engaging in self-assessment to determine if they can go for VCT. On the other hand, if the fear appeal used is high, then the individual moves to the next stage of assessing their ability to go for VCT (this is related to the notion of self-efficacy).

Research methods and methodology
This research study adopts the inductive paradigm in qualitative research. The research design is a reception analysis of responses to Intersexions Episode 13 and how the messages influenced audiences into going for VCT. The rationale for this is that reception analysis helps to establish a better understanding of an audience, how they make meaning of media messages, and how they relate to broadcast messages.

The research involved watching the Intersexions Episode 13, and collecting data from the Intersexions Facebook page. In total, 139 responses were posted on the Facebook page. The data was analysed by the use of NVivo qualitative data-analysis package. Five broad themes created from the data set were: entertainment and education; VCT awareness; VCT intention; VCT reporting; and VCT not willing.

Key findings

Entertainment and education
The collected data shows that most Facebook respondents found this episode to be an educative, entertaining programme on the issues of VCT. Respondents not only added unsolicited remarks, but also responded to questions posed by the site administrator. This shows that the episode and the Facebook page combined had the element of being interactive, and therefore engaged in participatory communication, which is one way of giving the people a voice and ensuring that communication is not a one-way process. The entertainment and education elements of the feedback on Facebook were the highest ranking responses, with 88.9% of the respondents commenting on the entertaining or educational nature of the episode.

VCT awareness
Awareness of VCT was the second most frequent theme discussed amongst the respondents. Responses to the issue of VCT were both positive and negative, and either way, it can be said that the respondents were aware of VCT.

VCT intention
Some Facebook respondents were stimulated to go for VCT after watching the episode, and 5.6% of the comments noted this. Some, however, were afraid and were not looking forward to the process. This step in the process of the audience members is that of cognition, where the audience has been entertained and made aware of VCT, they had seen role models in the actors who went for VCT in the episode, and then made a personal assessment of themselves as to whether or not they can go for VCT. The respondent’s comments show that they have engaged in this process of personal assessment.
VCT reporting

This theme consists of those who actually went for VCT. The fear appeal in the episode makes the individual think and internalise feelings about what has been screened in the episode about not going for VCT. Theoretically, if the fear appeal in the episode is high, there is a tendency that most of the audience will go for VCT. The data shows that the fear appeal in the episode was low, and therefore can explain the relatively low number of respondents that actually went for VCT.

The data shows that the number of those intending to go for VCT (5.6%) is higher than those who actually went for VCT (3.9%). The discrepancy may be a result of a lack of self-efficacy amongst the respondents. This established that awareness can create consciousness amongst people, but does not necessarily make for behaviour change.

The data shows that some behaviour change was recorded as a result of the episode, as it was able to get people to avail themselves for VCT for the first time, and some respondents noted that they would continue with maintaining healthy lives after being tested.

VCT not willing

Some of the respondents noted that they were not willing to go for VCT. 3.5% of the respondents noted this in their Facebook postings. A range of reasons were given for this, including not seeing VCT as necessary for themselves, and being too afraid to find out the results.

Some of the comments specifically note that the respondents lack the courage to go for VCT. This shows their lack of efficacy with regards to being able to cope with the result of an HIV-positive diagnosis. This shows that awareness of VCT cannot be said to be a good reason why a person would go for VCT. This can be said to be the negative effect of the fear appeal, it makes some people scared and they create some form of resistance to the anticipated change and not willing to go for VCT.

Conclusions and recommendations

This study was able to establish that EE and social media can be used to create awareness of VCT; this is on the basis that EE and the interactive nature of social media can create a platform for behaviour change communication. Furthermore, they are veritable tools in the area of public health communication owing to the increase in the take up and acceptance of social media globally by people of all ages. Their strength lies in their ability to entertain and educate, and for social media to enable an interactive platform which could aid effective communication.

The social learning theory (role modelling) which establishes the basis for EE can be of greater effect on behaviour change if used with minimal but not low-fear appeal messages. The rationale for this is that high-fear appeals might have the tendency to get the individual to be too scared to actually engage in behaviour change, but a minimal use of fear appeal can get the individual to engage in behaviour change or a desired action which in the case of this study is VCT.
This research reflects that there is not always a relationship between awareness and behaviour change. EE and social media are efficient approaches towards the advancement of HIV and AIDS awareness. If well designed, EE can be used in capturing the attention of the audience as Intersexions did. The programme educates audience members and the interactive platform created by social media can be used as a tool to engage the audience further, as well as to encourage feedback from the audience. The research findings suggested that Intersexions was able to stimulate behaviour change for a small percentage of viewers, as some participants decided to go for VCT after watching the episode and engaging in the Facebook forum.

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An exploration of the loveLife generation on the mobile network MYMsta

Natasha Sundar (MA, 2011)

Problem statement
Young people, especially females between the ages of 15 and 24, are reported to be at most risk for HIV infections (UNAIDS, 2008; UNAIDS, 2010). HIV and AIDS communication aimed at this group do not always prove to be effective in terms of reducing risk-taking behaviour in sexual relationships. In June 2008 the youth-focused organisation loveLife launched MYMsta (Make Your Move sta). MYMsta is a social networking site (SNS) available on mobile phones with internet access that allows people to communicate with each other online. loveLife created this platform in order to communicate with young people interested in the loveLife organisation in areas such as sexuality, romantic relationships and HIV.

Objectives
The objective of this thesis is to investigate how young people engage on MYMsta, how they discuss relationships and sexuality, and discusses the question of whether MYMsta could be used as a tool for programmes which aim to combat the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Research questions include:
- How are young people negotiating their relationships and sexuality on MYMsta?
- What kinds of dialogues are created around sexual practices and their safety?
- In what ways can participation in discussion forums relate to formation of identity?
- Is the MYMsta site viable as a tool for communication concerning HIV and AIDS?
- How could the site be made more effective?

Links to other literature in the field
Social network sites (SNSs) are platforms that offer people the opportunity to connect with, expand and display their social networks in an online environment. Academics speculate as to "how social networking technology has changed and will change the way people communicate about issues and behaviours that impact on HIV vulnerability" (Cranston & Davies, 2009:2). Literature on discussion forums tends to focus on their use for educational purposes (Farmer, 2004). There are, however, discussion forums on a variety of different topics, including relationships and sexuality. Youth are usually pioneers in exploring new advancements in mobile technology (Ling, 2007:60). MYMsta is a South African example of an HIV and AIDS initiative utilising the new media to reach youth. Since this is the first publically available study of MYMsta, it is necessarily explorative.

Concepts and theory informing the research
This theoretical framework is informed by contributions from cultural studies, identity, patriarchal divide, the four dimensions of gender, participatory communication and the UNESCO debates. Cultural studies are a cluster of ideas, images, practices and ways of talking about forms of knowledge (Hall, 1996). Cultural studies offer a number of ways of understanding gender representation and identity, both of which are points of analysis in this research. Cultural studies also help to explain how MYMsta discussion participants construct and display their online identities on MYMsta.

Cultural theorists take an anti-essentialist approach to identity, arguing that identities do not possess universal qualities. Rather,
they are approached as discursive constructions constituted by representations – particularly by language (Barker, 2003:11; Foucault, 1972). This research centres on the postmodern subject and the fractured and decentered nature of identity identified by Hall 1992. The postmodern subject has no fixed, essential or permanent identity (Hall, 1992:277; 1996), being composed of various fragmented identities (Hall, 1992:277). The postmodern subject resembles most closely the on-line identity displayed by MYMsta members on the discussion forums sampled.

Connell (1987) outlines four main structures in modern gender relations. The first of these structures is power relations, followed by production relations, emotional relations and symbolic relations. Power is central to the concept of patriarchy.

This power is both organised institutional power, and diffuse discursive power (Foucault, 1977; Connell, 1987; 2002). Besides operating institutionally, power operates discursively (Foucault, 1977); in the way we write, talk and think. This power is intimately linked with our identities. Sexuality is a major factor in emotional attachments in adolescence. Most modern households are formed through romantic attachment between two people, of which sexual attachment forms an integral part (Connell, 2002:63). Misogyny, a prejudice against women, and homophobia, a prejudice against homosexuals, often form part of the emotional relations in society (Connell, 2002), and are discussed on the mobisite. Rules relating to how men and women should act have powerful consequences for identity and gender relations. When these rules are challenged a shift in the perception of what is feminine and what is masculine can take place.

Participatory development advocates two main approaches: the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1990 [1972]) and the ideas of access, participation, and self-management outlined in UNESCO debates of 1977 (Servaes, 1999; Servaes & Malikhao, 2005). This study will draw on both approaches in attempting to locate the pedagogical strategy applied by loveLife. Development communication theorists, including Freire, advocate forms of dialogue, both interpersonal and small group that will lead to expanded consciousness and power and therefore liberation (Freire, 1990). Participatory development views development communication as emancipatory, freeing people to live their lives. Participation implies collaboration between development agencies (like loveLife) and communities (MYMsta participants) in reaching set goals. The site does offer some possibilities for NGO-member interaction, but these are merely of an informational kind relating to entertainment events.

The UNESCO debates on access, participation and self-management are a widely accepted discourse on development communication. The MYMsta contributions are limited, for example, to participants' entries, rather than discussion on how the site should be managed. The site is managed “from above” while the discussion is “from below”, and the result is detachment, beyond the use of a profanity filter. The UNESCO discussions allow for gradual progression, where access foregrounds the process, but self-management can be postponed until it is feasible (Servaes, 1996:79; Servaes, 1999; Servaes, 2000; Servaes & Malikhao, 2005). Management of the site, for example, is not a feature of authors who use MYMsta.

Method and methodologies

The data used for this study was taken from the “debate space” on the MYMsta website. At the time the study was undertaken (4 January, 2010), the number of discussion forums under the title “relationships” totalled over 300. These are separate from the site’s other forum topic discussions such as “education” and “politics” whose totals are minimal in comparison. Ten discussions were sampled from the “most popular” or “the hottest topics” were selected. The sample discussions were transferred on Microsoft word format.
and uploaded to the NVivo qualitative software programme for thematic analysis.

**Key findings**

The table below shows ten discussion forum topics sampled for this study. Column 1 reflects the order in which the discussion forums appear on MYMsta, column 2 presents the discussion topic, column 3 indicates the username of the participant who initiated the topic, and column 4 displays the question posed in each discussion forum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>sex 4 things</td>
<td>(this question: MYMsta initiated the discussion)</td>
<td>Why do you think people have sex in exchange for something (like get a sugar daddy)? Is this happening around you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>should I move on or wait?</td>
<td>rudz</td>
<td>iv bin wit my bf 4 11mnths nd recently he doesntcal,he says his broke,its bin 7weeks nw...whnical at nyt he doesntanswer the n whni try again,its off...watshuld i do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>feelings 4 u</td>
<td>vector</td>
<td>Im a boy of 16 years old and have been dating girls for the past 3 years but now i've changed and i have feelings 4 the same sex and i want to tel my g.f,shudi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>lets talk</td>
<td>rl.licious</td>
<td>the issue of dating a lecturer...gud or bad?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>crazy</td>
<td>kedi</td>
<td>ifurg/f want u to send him/her ur naked photo wil u send it or what?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>getting tested</td>
<td>MYMsta</td>
<td>What do you think keeps young people from taking an HIV test? What do you think encourages them to do so?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>whom to date??</td>
<td>jimmiberto</td>
<td>If you are living at urban area, would you date someone from rural area? And also if you at rural area would you date someone from urban area?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All pseudonyms selected by the users appear as on the site, and it is not always possible to know whether the participant is male or female. The pseudonyms are written in italics in the text in order to make them easily identifiable. The discussion refers to themes that emerged in the analysis and codes under those themes. Themes represent trends in the data, and codes are units of analysis within the data.

**How are young people negotiating their relationships and sexuality on MYMsta?**

When discussing “sex 4 things” many of the participants indicate that sugar-daddy relationships lead to intergenerational and transactional relationships; as well as multiple and concurrent partnerships. The intergenerational and transactional relationships are often examples of unequal power relations between men in a superior economic and social position and women who believe themselves to be dependent on them. The discussion participants say that men will abuse women in these relationships. Women are not always forced into transactional and intergenerational relationships but are sometimes coerced or tempted by financial security. Wealthy men retain the benefit of attracting women from all classes who wish to gain financially (Connell, 2002:142).

Discussion three relates to sexual orientation. This discussion explores the perceived norm of male heterosexuality, and
participants struggle to accept and relate to vector, who admits to being drawn to members of the same sex. In response to vector’s question, truthfulness, honesty, fear of being ostracised, and homophobia are all pointed out by discussion participants as matters of concern. Many participants want vector to tell the truth and be true to himself, but fear he will be ostracised.

Discussion four deals with intergenerational relationships. The discussion assumes rt.licious is a student at the institution where the lecturer she wishes to date works. Rt.licious is using MYMsta to decide whether she should pursue a relationship with a lecturer. The forum introduces the ideas of intergenerational and transactional relationships and most users oppose them. The power relations between the lecturer and student would be unequal, and this is why many participants oppose the relationship.

Discussion five relates to whether or not to send a naked picture to a partner. We discover that kedi is using the forum to negotiate her situation and decides not to send a naked photograph of herself. Some participants say they would send a photograph of themselves if requested. Symbolic relations are evident in the differing ideas displayed of how women should behave. Some participants argue that sending the photograph to her boyfriend would harm kedi’s image.

In discussion ten, shy bt hot asks MYMsta participants for advice – she is pregnant and alone. Many of the participants advise her to keep the baby and raise it as a single mother as well as seeking child support from her ex-boyfriend. In a patriarchal society child rearing is traditionally a woman’s role.

What kinds of dialogues are created around sexual practices and their safety?

In discussion forum three, one participant tells vector to “play them both”. This means acknowledging men who are homosexual or bisexual. Some participants make homophobic comments, telling vector that he should ignore his feelings as he is supposed to be a man; that he should get help for this; and that he should pray and it will pass. Other participants express disbelief at what they describe as vector suddenly becoming gay after dating girls. One discussion participant, lizuy, says that she is Christian and thus against his feeling for the same sex, she says since he was not always this way this must be an artificial decision.

In discussion four, rt.licious asks whether it is good or bad to date a lecturer. Intergenerational and transactional relationships, as well as multiple and concurrent partnerships are generally not encouraged in the discussion. Many participants advise rt.licious to stay away from the lecturer as he probably has many girlfriends. Participants largely agree that sending a nude photograph of themselves via their cellular phones is not safe, and that it might fall into the wrong hands. For some, complete nudity is too much exposure, and they suggest concealing part of the body or face when sending the picture. Some of the participants think sending private nude photographs is equivalent to pornography. The discussion shows that some are willing and others uncomfortable to send their nude photographs to their partner.

The participants display considerable fear of HIV testing due to their risky sexual behaviours such as unprotected sex, multiple partners, sleeping around. Therefore, one of the conclusions drawn by participants is that risky sexual behaviour such as unprotected sex with multiple partners may lead to HIV infection. Symbolic relations in terms of dominant ideas of masculinity are present in the discussion, with some saying that many men have multiple partners in order to prove their manhood. Even with the questions of what dialogues are generated around sexuality and safe sexual practices explored, there still remains the question of identity which these young people are displaying and perhaps exploring on MYMsta.

In what ways can participation in the MYMsta discussion forums relate to formation of identity?

Identity construction is a social process. The participants explore and define who they are in the midst of other forum users and who they are relative to others. The circumstances in their background, their home life, socio-economic and cultural contexts, as well as their social exposure are referred to by them in their attitudes.
or behaviour. The forum participants seem to be in the process of acculturation, or learning and responding to how they are encouraged to act in society. For example, some of the participants condemn sugar-daddy relationships – these responses often involve arguments of morality. Many of the participants note that they or their peers desire expensive things – this desire is fuelled and nurtured by the consumer culture. The sensationalising of the distribution of nude pictures on social networks seems to have made many of the participants wary of sending sensitive content via communication technology.

Participants often refer to themselves as “us”, “we”, “us young people”; many tend to identify with other participants in terms of age, gender, social standing, culture, and perhaps even race, though this remains undeclared. These statements indicate a possible feeling of commonality and community among participants. The identities displayed by many of the participants are fragmented, as with any postmodern subject. The pull between being young responsible adults and scared irresponsible young people is visible in the sugar-daddy and HIV-testing discussions. Vector confesses to his homosexual feelings alongside his heterosexual relationship with his girlfriend. He is divided between his desire to tell his girlfriend and the desire to protect himself from censure.

The discussion participants convey the sense that their unconscious, rather than reason, motivates their desires and sexuality (see Freud, 1977). This is evident in their responses in the sugar-daddy and HIV-testing forums. Participants attempt to reconcile contradictions in their actions and identities by constructing comforting self-narratives. Some claim that what they do not know cannot hurt them when referring to their HIV status. Others avoid HIV testing by saying that they are not emotionally ready for the test, and that they will go when they are ready, older, or when they need to – as in the case of pregnancy, new relationships or family planning. Many identify themselves as young and able to avoid taking the HIV test in the immediate future. The postmodern subject can only obtain a unified concept of identity by constructing a comforting self-narrative (Hall, 1990).

Conclusions and recommendations
MYMsta affords discussion participants an opportunity to connect, in what appears to be a supportive environment, with those who have similar interests. Participants appear to seize the element of anonymity which MYMsta offers to explore their views regarding romantic relationships and sexuality. Young people have control over their own stories on the forums. This gives them power over how they are represented. loveLife relies strongly on the efficacy of peer support in HIV prevention (DasGupta, 2008). This is the reason why they as an organisation do not appear as facilitators or formally engage with users on the forums. The consequence of this “hands-off” approach is that incorrect, inappropriate or dangerous advice is a possibility of the “free” advice offered by participants on the forums.

Since loveLife does not choose to intervene in the forums, they cannot control statements that encourage risky sexual behaviour rather than dissuade them. However, given the frankness and the individual indecision at times displayed on the forums, the statements seem reflective of participants’ real experiences, rather than them attempting to pander to what they think they should say. This frankness might disappear if they were lectured by authority figures (loveLife staff or counsellors) on how to behave. If their behaviour were condemned they might not reveal how they really feel. There is no guarantee of honesty on forums but correspondents who admit to “irresponsible” behaviour or materialistic aspirations are aware that other participants are unlikely to be impressed.

There are no easy answers in evaluating an intervention that is probably the first of its kind. My study is the first documented study of MYMsta and is thus necessarily explorative. Similar studies, such as the Mxit content delivery pilot project, and the SexInfo service, though not comparable in scale, offer lessons in communicating with young people regarding HIV-related issues via a mobile medium. Both projects indicate the need for compelling content rather than the repetition of stereotypical health-related messages. Youth seem comfortable using a mobile media, and they
will seek information and support via that medium if it is available to them. MyMsta thus provides valuable insight into the potential of mobile media for HIV communication among young people.

Bibliography


APPENDIX 1

About the Featured Authors

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Linje Manyozo is a lecturer and programme director, MCD at London School of Economics and Political Science. Past: Researcher at Radio and Development.
Lungile Dlamini completed her honours in 2002.
Lunga Memela is a journalist for the Corporate Relations division, University of KwaZulu-Natal.
Zamashandu Mbatha is a senior facilitator at Drama in AIDS Education (DramAidE) and a CCMS Masters student.
Peleka Mgugudo completed her honours in 2009.
Cindy Nqoko is a community educator and recruiter at the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA).
Nothando Khumalo is a part-time English lecturer for Brooklyn (FET) College.
Emma Durden completed her PhD at CCMS in 2010; she is a health and development communications consultant and runs a consultancy called Act Two Training.
Arthi Maharaj completed her honours in 2002.
Alison Copley Logie is the online editor of Desktop Magazine, the leading monthly graphic design and design culture magazine in Australia.
Mbuso Christian Mkhize is a procurement manager at Paper & Board (South East Asia & Australasia) at Unilever Asia Private Limited, Singapore.
Udesha Moodley is a marketing executive at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.
Thandokuhle Mkhize is a public relations and communications professional.
Bailee-Kate Griggs is a senior new business and marketing executive at PHD Media, United Kingdom.
Jenna Robinson is a senior retail marketing manager at The Carphone Warehouse, London.
Tim Wohltmann completed his honours in 2004.
Caitlin Watson is completing her MA degree at CCMS. Previous editor of SUBtext (a student-led magazine).
Sarah Strauss is an assistant to Professor Keyan Tomaselli at CCMS.
Katherine Wood is Digital Junior Brand Manager at Mr Price Group.
Nicolaa Kroone is an explorer at Freelance Video Production & Photography, Netherlands.
M.J. Khan is the faculty coordinator for Applied Humanities at Rozebank College.
Nasreen Rasool is Head of Marketing, Administration and Copywriter for Shak Studios Media Production House.
Tamryn Maxwell works as an account executive at Ahoy!PR, a Public Relations company in Durban.
Mpolokeng Mpeli works on the National AIDS Commission (NAC) Lesotho.
Richard Delate is Managing Director at Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa.
Wendy van de Weg is a manager of travel websites (content, technical, business and marketing aspects) for Nevado in London.
Phiwokuhle Mabunu completed her honours in 2007.
Nimeka Dupree is a University of California exchange student (2007), studying public health and nursing.
Carla van Staden is a merchandiser at Globetex.
Matthew Clarke is in charge of Programs & Marketing at Jeunesses Musicales International (http://www.jmi.net), Belgium.
Simon Morgan is a solutions marketing manager, Johannesburg.
Colin Murphy completed his master’s in 2012, and is Senior Manager at Barcode mobile bar industry, Durban.

Mariclair Smit is a research assistant at CCMS and master’s student at CCMS 2012.

Temitope Ogunlela is a master’s student at CCMS 2012.

Geraldine Coertze works with Carol Browne of Kite Consulting in the capacity of part-time project officer.

Natasha Sundar is a research assistant and fieldworker at Cell-Life, Cape Town.

**APPENDIX 2**

**List of Full Student Theses Featured**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Electronic access</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oyvind Mikalsen &amp; Nangamso Zajiji</td>
<td>The people of St Lucia area: Point of view on health and development</td>
<td>Available from UKZN library. Not available online.</td>
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<td>Tesfagabir Berhe Tesfu</td>
<td>An evaluation of communication strategies used in the voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) campaign at the University of Durban-Westville</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=696&amp;Itemid=33">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=696&amp;Itemid=33</a></td>
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<td>Eliza Moodley</td>
<td>An assessment of students' perceptions of the ABC prevention strategy</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=876&amp;Itemid=33">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=876&amp;Itemid=33</a></td>
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<td>Abraham Mulwo</td>
<td>An analysis of students' responses to ABC &amp; VCT messages at three universities in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=949&amp;Itemid=35">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=949&amp;Itemid=35</a></td>
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<td>John Lengwe Kunda</td>
<td>They have ears but they cannot hear: Listening and talking as HIV prevention: a new approach to HIV prevention</td>
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<td>Given Mutinta</td>
<td>Investigating students' sexual risk behaviour, risk and protective factors and their responses to the Scrutinize Campus Campaign at universities in KwaZulu-Natal</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1119&amp;Itemid=35">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1119&amp;Itemid=35</a></td>
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<td>Matalimo Selebalo</td>
<td>Hands Free: the implementation of a hand hygiene campaign on the second floor restrooms of John Bews Hall, at Howard College, UKZN.</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1132&amp;Itemid=28">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1132&amp;Itemid=28</a></td>
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<td>Dominic Nduhura</td>
<td>Freireian pedagogy as applied by DramAidE for HIV and AIDS education</td>
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<td>Hannah Mangenda</td>
<td>A comparative analysis of the efficacy of a once-off forum theatre intervention and weekly ongoing workshops used by DramAidE</td>
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<td>Nothando Khumalo</td>
<td>Investigation the role of participatory theatre in the awareness of HIV and AIDS: A case study of Durban University of Technology (Steve Biko, Ritson, M.L Sultan, and City campuses)</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1130&amp;Itemid=28">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1130&amp;Itemid=28</a></td>
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<td>Arthi Maharaj</td>
<td>Generations – bridging the communication gap. A follow-up qualitative study into the breakdown of communication between parents and teenagers, and the benefits of soap opera as an Entertainment-Education intervention</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1124&amp;Itemid=28">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1124&amp;Itemid=28</a></td>
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<td>Udesha Moodley</td>
<td>UKZN students’ perceptions of traditional healers in the documentary, Deadly Myths</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1141&amp;Itemid=28">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1141&amp;Itemid=28</a></td>
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<td>Mpolokeng Mpeli</td>
<td>A reception analysis of Soul City beyond South Africa: The case of Choose Life in Lesotho</td>
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<td>Nimeka Dupree</td>
<td>An analysis of media used to diffuse flash-heat treatment as an infant feeding method</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1127&amp;Item">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1127&amp;Item</a> id=28</td>
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<td>Carla van Staden, Matt Clark &amp; Simon Morgan</td>
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<td>Colin Murphy</td>
<td>Perceived implication versus received implication: A reception analysis of Indigo Skate Camp’s website</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1125&amp;Item">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1125&amp;Item</a> id=28</td>
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<td>Mariclair Smit</td>
<td>The use of social media to advance to HIV and AIDS awareness in South Africa: An investigation into how the Intersexions Facebook page is used for HIV prevention, care and support and treatment.</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1147&amp;Item">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1147&amp;Item</a> id=28</td>
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<td>Geraldine Coetzee</td>
<td>Open Sesame! Learning Life Skills from Takalani Sesame: A reception study of selected Grade One learners in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1114&amp;Item">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1114&amp;Item</a> id=34</td>
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<td>Natasha Sundar</td>
<td>An exploration of the loveLife generation on the mobile network MYMsta</td>
<td><a href="http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1143&amp;Item">http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1143&amp;Item</a> id=34</td>
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The outputs below are available on the CCMS website. This is a selected list of peer-reviewed publications.


