



MOTHEO TVET COLLEGE

EXPLORING FACTORS THAT PROMOTE THE BLESSER-BLESSEE PHENOMENON AMONG TVET COLLEGE STUDENTS

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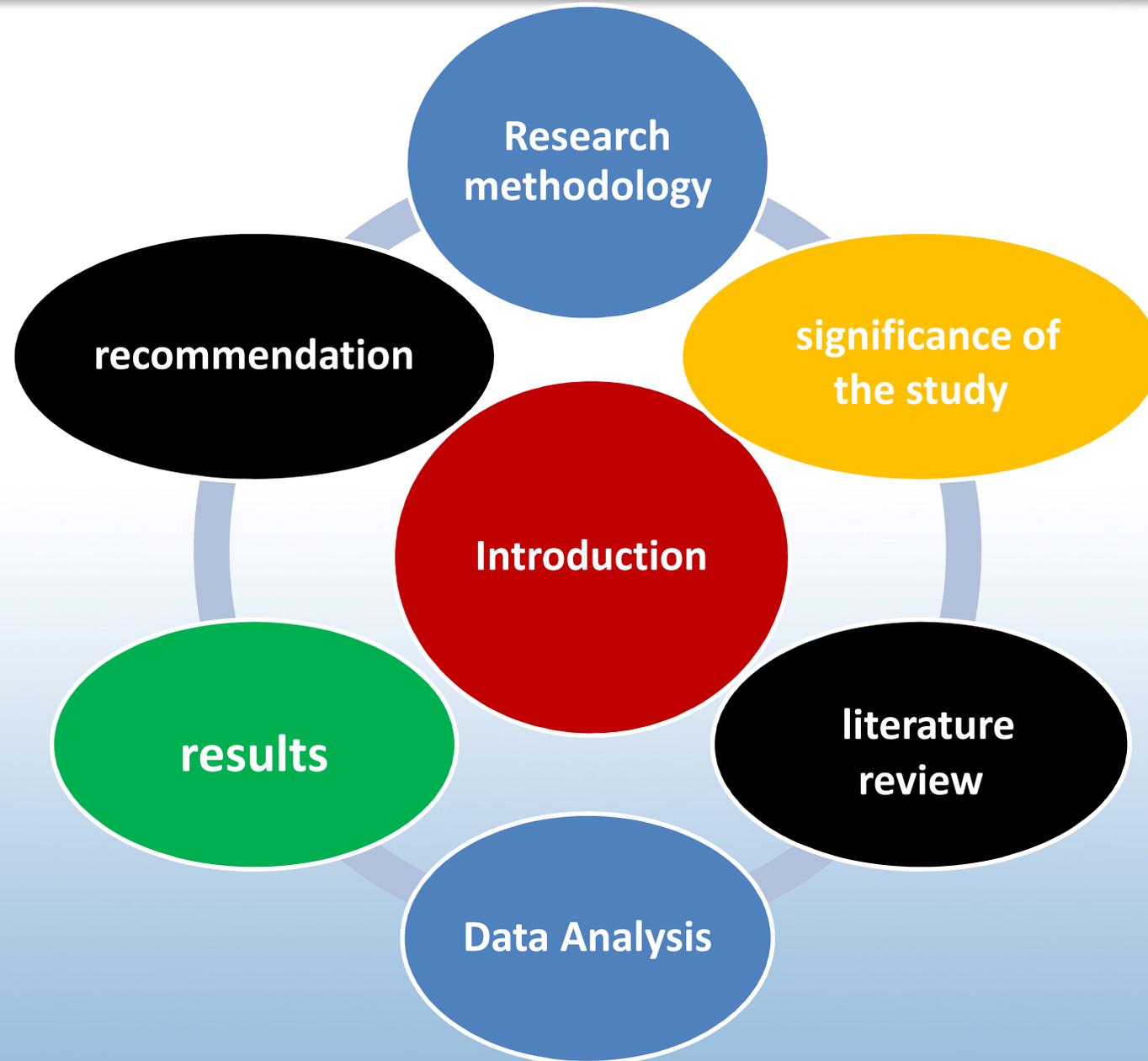
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MOTHEO TVET COLLEGE

Outline



INTRODUCTION

- In 2016 the “Blesser-blessee” trend took South African media by storm. The commotion about the “Blesser-Blessee” sensation emerged when several young women appeared on social media posting pictures of themselves shopping overseas, driving expensive cars, and wearing expensive clothing brands. According to them, this flamboyant lifestyle is an indication that they are being blessed.
- The “blesser-blessee” phenomenon is not new, however it has recently acquired significant attention in the South African public space. This phenomenon is known as “transactional sex” which is understood as the exchange of favours, gifts, or money for sexual activities. Because the “blesser-blessee” phenomenon involves multiple and concurrent partners, it increases the chances of HIV/AIDS infection, unwanted pregnancy and other diseases.



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- Tvet colleges had been excluded in the health education programs until HEAIDS addressed this matter, and the exclusion left students without effective intervention programs on HIV/AIDS and related diseases. In addition to this, an intervention to already existing interventions dedicated towards effectively reducing the rate of HIV/AIDS among young people in South African higher education institutions Colleges, there should be a program on discouraging “Blesser-Blessee” phenomenon.
- This study seeks to explore the factors that encourage the “blesser-Blessee” phenomenon among students at Tvet Colleges, including recommendations in respect of interventions that facilitate health and wellness programs that will assist in reducing the rate of HIV/AIDS among Tvet college students.



Research Methodology

Research Design Data Sources

The study employed a qualitative research method

Interviews were conducted to explore the factors that promote the Blesser-Blessee phenomena among Tvet college students.

Sampling

Convenience sampling was used to find participants for the study which meant selecting students from Motheo Tvet college in the Free State province.

The participants were 150 female students drawn from different faculties.



Significant of the Study

- Historically, the wellness and health of Tvet colleges has received little research and attention as compared to the established universities and/or universities of technology.
- Therefore, the key reason why this study is important is that it identifies factors that higher education sector need to grapple with toward reducing and eradicating HIV/AIDS infection among the students.
- This study is significant in that it makes an effort to understand factors that promote the “Blessed-Blessee” phenomenon among the students.
- Furthermore, this study will contribute significantly in the body of knowledge and general development dialogue, particularly from a Tvet sector perspective.



Literature Review

Blesser-Blessee relationship OR Transactional Sexual Relationship

- Financial and material exchange as a motivating force underlying sexual relationship is well recognised dynamic in the HIV pandemic, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (Luke, 2003).
- Blesser-Blessee relationship trend, often referred to as transactional sexual relationship, is one other motive force encouraging women to have sex in situations where they might otherwise refrain. In addition to that, it has also been noted to be a potential source of women vulnerability to gender based violence and sexual exploitation (Hunter, 2002; Luke, 2003; Nyanzi et al., 2001).



Literature Review

- Transactional sexual relationships among women are often motivated by basic survival and subsistence needs, however young women whose access to resources is circumscribed, use transactional relationships to help advance their education, gain employment or business opportunities or simply gain superior status in youth cultures which prioritises conspicuous consumption (Hunters, 2012; Luke, 2003; Nyanzi et al., 2001).
- Of particular concern is the way in which financial and material needs can introduce explicit power imbalances into sexual relations. Accepting financial or material things from a man means accepting sex on his terms, which very often means without a condom (Hunter, 2002)



Data Analysis

- A life history approach was adopted in conducting the interviews to obtain an understanding of the participants life's background.
- The interview data were later transcribed for data analysis. The grounded theory approach (Cohen et al. 2007) was adopted to analyse the interview data, through which the categories of learners' perceived motivations emerged naturally from their narratives.
- This evolving process comprised the following steps: (1) careful and repeated reading of transcriptions; and (2) open content coding to signify any units of meaningful narratives in the passages.



Results

Background and Employment status of your partner

Most of the students stated that their partners are employed. A small number of students indicated that partners are either students or unemployed.

Students understanding of “Blesser-blessee” trend

Majority of the students mentioned that a Blesser is a person who provides a blessee with financial support in exchange for sex. Some responses received:

“A blesser is a person older than you who gives you money”

“A blesser is someone who provide financial and other means of support to a blessee who in turn gives sexual favours in return”

“A blesser are older married man who support young immature girls financially and get something in return as in like sex”



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Are students' partners blessers?

The results indicate that majority of the students do not regard their partners as blessers. The reasons students do not regard their partners as blessers are because their partners are not older than them and they do not pay their school fees, transport, food, and so on.

"I do not regard my partner as a blesser reason being that a partner should be someone you share everything with regardless of financial support".

Why did you choose to date your partner?

Most students stated that their reasons for dating their partners is based on pure love e.g. understanding, good looks and doing fun things together. Furthermore, others emphasised that their partners respect women, and they are also serious about education and knows what they want.



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What favours does your partner provide you with?

Majority of students explained that their partners provide them with financial support, e.g. pay school fees, rent, transport fare. They also mentioned that their partners provide them with emotional and moral support.

“My partner supports in my school work and in return expects good results”

Does your partner want anything from you in return of favours/support?

Majority of students indicated that their partners do not want anything in return.



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Discussion

Poverty and unemployment are the main driving forces of HIV transmission in women. According to Ramjee & Daniels (2013) many women resort to transactional sexual relationships to sustain their livelihoods and younger girls are often coerced into sexual activities with older man for the purposes of survival.

The study strongly suggests that as a result of the poor socio-economic background of students, most of the students prefer to date employed partners because they would assist with financial support and basic necessities like transport fare, rent and school fees.



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The study revealed that one of the respondents does not use condom - and reason being that the boyfriend doesn't like using a condom.

Ngubane (2010:3) established a similar finding by indicating that patriarchal gender norms contribute to the high rates of oppression and unequal decision making in sexual relations. There is also a male dominance in African culture contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa. And for most women it is almost impossible to contemplate assertiveness in a sexual relationship with a man and negotiate safer sex



Recommendation

- Cultivate awareness amongst and disseminate information to students about sexual education and Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Students must be encouraged to use condoms in order to reduce the health risk of engaging in unprotected sex behaviors
- Programmes should be designed by SSS to build up self -esteem and empower young women to make healthy life decisions.
- There should be campaigns to discourage blesser-blessee relationships.
- There should be a campaign that targets specifically men around the protection of women in respect of ensuring safer sex.
- The college should have an intensive and extensive campaign on access to NSFAS and other funding mechanisms. This will insulate students against ending up forced to date for money, with imminent consequences of high likelihood of HIV infections and unplanned pregnancy very high.
- There should be an improved synergy between the College and the NSFAS central office in respect of administration of funding processes of students. This will ensure that there is a speedily processing of applications and payments. Students will not be forced to date for money in order to buffer for the period when payments in delay.



THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
RE A LEBOGA!!!!!!!!!!!!
BAIE DANKIE!!!!!!!!!!!!

