

A Qualitative Approach in Examining HIV/AIDS Prevention Messages among African American and Latina Late-Adolescent Females

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OBJECTIVES



■ Literature Review

- Who is at risk of HIV-infection
- Statement of the Problem
- Theory of Gender and Power
- Purpose of Study

■ Methodology

- The Received View
- Employing a Qualitative Approach
- Methods
- Data Analysis

■ Results

- Survey
- Knowledge of HIV Transmission
- Thoughts and Behaviors about Sex, Participants' Sexual Experiences, Safe Sex, and Communication Patterns with Sex Partners
- Effective Past and Present HIV/AIDS Messages

■ Discussion

- Conceptual Model yielded from the Derived Themes
- Implication for New and Improved HIV/AIDS Messages
- Implication for Future Research

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Who is At-Risk of HIV-Infection?
- Statement of the Problem
- Theory of Gender and Power
- Purpose of the Study

Who is At-Risk of HIV-infection?

■ Adolescents

- 1/4th of new HIV infections occur among those under the age of 22 (Brown et al., 2000)
- Risk Factors:
 - Inconsistent Condom Use
 - Condom Negotiation
 - Condom Availability and Cost
 - Adversity to Condoms
 - Chemically-Altering Substances (e.g., alcohol)
 - Other Sexual Activities (Oral and Anal Sex)

Who is At-Risk of HIV-infection?

■ Women

- AIDS is the 5th leading cause of death in women (CDC, 2006)
- Female adolescents between ages of 13-19 account for 50% all AIDS cases (Futterman, 2003)
- Risk Factors:
 - Biology of women
 - Heterosexual Sexual Intercourse as primary route of HIV transmission
 - Inconsistent Condom Use
 - Power: Risk of Rejection
 - Power: Accusations of Infidelity
 - Power: Male Sex Partners and Condoms
 - “Serial Monogamy Strategy” (Jemmott & Jemmott, 2000; Newman & Zimmerman, 2000; Salina et al., 2000)

Who is At-Risk of HIV-infection?

- African-American and Latina Females
 - Disproportionate rate of infection:
 - African-American and Latina women make up ¼ of the U.S. population
 - African-American and Latina represent 3/4th of AIDS cases among women (Koenig & Clark, 2006)
 - HIV infection is leading cause of death among African-American females between the ages of 25-34 (CDC, 2006)
 - Latina Adolescent Females:
 - Highest rate of sexual activity in the past month (Faryna & Morales, 2000)
 - Less likely to engage self-protective sexual practices (Romo et al., 2002)
 - Risk Factors
 - Cultural Norms: Childbearing
 - Cultural Norms: Traditional Masculine Roles
 - SES and Education (Wingwood & DiClemente, 2000)

Theory of Gender & Power

by Robert Connell (Wingood & DiClemente, 2000)

- Based on Sexual Inequality and Power Imbalances between Gender as evident in three major social structures:
 - Sexual division of labor
 - Sexual division of power
 - Structure of cathexis
- Implications:
 - Considers contextual/environmental/social factors
 - Produces new kind of data
 - Asks new and broader questions
 - Creates new options for prevention



Statement of the Problem



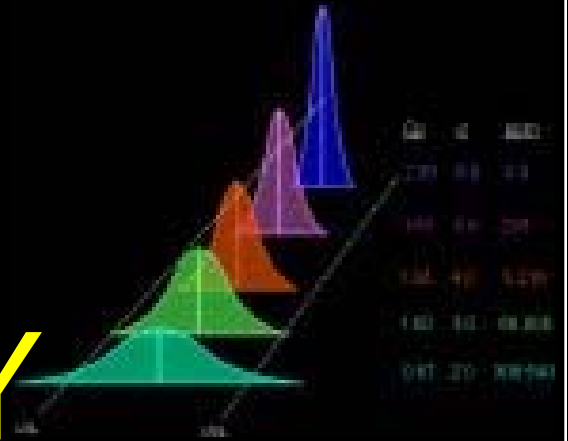
- There lacks a clear understanding of why these youths are still being infected with a disease that ultimately results in death and yet is preventable
 - Examination of Antecedent Factors often studied in isolation (Fasula & Miller, 2006; Pivnick & Villegas, 2000)
- Over reliance of quantitative measures to understand complex problem
- The intersection of multiple risk factors and barriers to condom use disproportionately place specific populations at risk of HIV infection—African American and Latina late-adolescent females—is needed (Fasula & Miller, 2006; AIDS Action, 2005).

Purpose of Study

- To explore and understand the intersection of the multitude of risk factors for HIV infection among African American and Latina late-adolescent females in hopes of creating concrete HIV/AIDS prevention programs that are culturally-relevant, gender-appropriate, and age-specific

- Ascertain the participants' perceptions on the following areas:
 - Knowledge on HIV Transmission
 - Thoughts and Behaviors about Sex, Safe Sex, Participants' Past and Present Sexual Experiences, and Communication Patterns with Sex Partners
 - Effectiveness of Past and Present HIV/AIDS Messages

METHODOLOGY



- Current Methodological Practices
- Rationale for Employing a Qualitative Approach
- Methods:
 - Participants
 - Data Analysis: Questionnaire and Sections
 - Data Analysis: McCracken's Five-Stage Analysis

Current Methodological Practices

- Conventional Methodology:
 - Assumption is that there is one reality which can be viewed objectively through the quantification of the subject matter that is being studied.
 - Achieving Objectivity
 - Context-Stripping
 - Application of the Scientific Method
 - Use of Statistical Analysis
 - Gold Standards = Legitimate Knowledge

- Critique of the Positivism Paradigm
 - Objectivity really attainable?
 - Researcher's community
 - Researcher's positionality
 - Researcher's worldviews
 - Context-Stripping
 - Single factors
 - Plethora of variables in their natural settings

A Different Kind of Knowing:

Constructivism Paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1994 & 1989)

- Constructivism Paradigm
 - Ontological: Realities are socially constructed
 - Epistemological: Knowledge is a culmination between the observer and what is observed
 - Methodology: Textual Analysis via Qualitative Research
 - Method: Semi-Structured Interviews

Rationale for Employing a Qualitative Approach

- Exploratory and Inductive:
 - What are the cognitive reasoning as well as the behavioral and environmental context for engaging in sex, safe sex, and discussion with sex partners among late-adolescent females?
 - What lessons are being learned from past and present HIV/AIDS messages?
 - What kind of HIV/AIDS messages are needed to increase safer and more consistent sex practices?
- Insight and Interpretation from the perspectives of the participants' who have intimate knowledge about the subject matter (Aucherbach & Silverstein, 2003; Neimeyer & Resnikoff).
- A culturally sensitive method (Lichtenstein, 2000)
- To unveil cultural and implicit assumptions of the phenomenon being studied (McCracken, 1988)

Methods

■ Measure

- Piloted the questionnaire
- Semi-Structured Interview comprising of 15-item closed survey and 18-item open questionnaire

■ Procedure

- Recruitment via flyers, e-mail to special interest groups, snowball approach
- Eligibility via Script and Informed Consent
- Administration of measure
- Audio taped

■ Participants

- 10 African-American Females
- 9 Latina Females
- Age Range: 18-22 and Mean Age: 20
- Gender: Female
- Heterosexual Sexually Active

■ Researcher

- Age: 31
- Education: 4th year in CP doctoral program
- Expectation and Biases to ensure quality
 - Be less candid on sensitive topics
 - Find HIV/AIDS messages as ineffective
 - Responses were direct and straightforward

Data Analysis: Questionnaire and Sections



- Knowledge of HIV Transmission
 - What are the respondents' understanding of how HIV is transmitted?
 - How do the women think of themselves in relation to HIV?
- Thoughts and Behaviors about Sex, Participants' Sexual Experiences, Safe Sex, and Communication Patterns with Sex Partners
 - Definition of Sex
 - Personal Accounts of the Participants' Past and Present Sexual Experiences
 - Definition of Safe Sex
 - Communication Patterns with their Sex Partner
- Effectiveness of Past and Present HIV/AIDS Messages
 - Types of Past HIV/AIDS Messages
 - Types of Present HIV/AIDS Messages
 - Suggestions to Increase Consistent Condom Use and HIV Awareness

Data Analysis:

McCracken's Five-Stage Analysis (McCracken, 1988)

- **Stage 1: Extract “Utterances”**
 - Within each section & Within each interview
- **Stage 2: Contextualize Utterances**
 - Across Sections: Within each interview & Within Race/Ethnic Group
 - Derive “Observations”
- **Stage 3: Cross-Analysis of “Observations”**
 - Within each section
 - Across interviews
 - Within Race/Ethnic Group
- **Stage 4: Development of “Themes”**
 - Themes within section
 - Themes across race/ethnic group and interview transcript
- **Stage 5: Conceptual Model**

Results

- Survey
- HIV Transmission
- Thoughts & Behaviors about...
 - Sex
 - Participants' Sexual Experiences
 - Safe Sex
 - Communication Patterns with Sex Partners
- Effectiveness of Past HIV/AIDS Messages
- Effectiveness of Present HIV/AIDS Messages
- Increase Consistent Condom Use and HIV Awareness

Results: survey (Table 3)

	Mean Age	Class Level 1 = Fresh. 2 = Soph. 3 = Junior 4 = Senior	Mean: <i>n</i> Sex Partner	Range: Number of Sex Partners	Mean <i>n</i> Sex Partners without condom Use	Range: <i>n</i> Sex Partners without condom use	HIV Test	Obtain results of HIV Test
African-American (<i>n</i> = 10)	20.8	3.5	13.9	1-50	2.4	1-5	8	6
Latina (<i>n</i> = 9)	19.8	2.2	7	1-23	3.8	1-15	2	2
Total (<i>n</i> = 19)	20.3	2.89	10.4	1-50	3	1-15	10	8

Results:

HIV Transmission

Question	Themes	(<i>n</i> = 19)
Mode of Transmission	Sexual Contact	18 Total
	Vaginal Sex	7
	Oral Sex	7
	Anal Sex	5
	Intravenous Needles	12
	Exchange of Bodily Fluids	8
	Blood Transfusion	7
Relation to HIV/AIDS	No	9 Total
	African-American	3
	Latina	6
	Yes	10 Total
	African-American	6
	Latina	4

Results:

Thoughts and Behaviors about Sex

Themes	African-American Female (<i>n</i> = 10)	Latina Female (<i>n</i> = 9)
Penetration	8	7
Intimate Expression of Love and Affection	2	2
Heterosexual Sexual Activity	0	2

- 12 total stated anal and oral sex constitutes sex
- 2 African-American and 5 Latina Females: Varied Responses
 - Degree of Penetration
 - Cultural Norms and Taboos
- Age: Middle School (4th – 8th grade) (*n* = 13)
- Source: School (*n* = 9); Family (*n* = 9); Media (*n* = 6)

Results:

Thoughts and Behaviors about Participants' Sexual Experiences

Subgroups	Low Number of Sex Partners (1-4 sex partners)
African-American	1
Latina	5

- Themes among low number of sex partners
 - “Just-Kind-of-Happened” phenomenon ($n = 6$)
 - Belief that the relationship had potential for a long-term commitment
 - Yet, sexual relations in context of it “*Just-Kind-of-Happened.*”

Results:

Thoughts and Behaviors about Participants' Sexual Experiences

Subgroups	Moderate Number of Sex Partners (5-10 sex partners)
African-American	3
Latina	2

- Themes among moderate number of sex partners
 - Inconsistencies between their Thoughts & their Behaviors ($n = 6$)
 - “Woed-Effect” ($n = 4$)
 - Attraction ($n = 4$)
 - “Just-Kind-of-Happened” phenomenon ($n = 4$)
 - Sex as a Requirement to sustain relationship ($n = 2$)
 - Trust ($n = 2$)

Results:

Thoughts and Behaviors about Participants' Sexual Experiences

Subgroups	High Number of Sex Partners (> 11 sex partners)
African-American	3
Latina	2

- Themes among high number of sex partners
 - Nonmonogamous Relationships (n = 5)
 - All experienced “one-night stands” and many of their sexual encounters did not occur in either a monogamous or emotionally meaningful relationship.
 - Emotional Detachment and a Need for Retaliation are Mechanisms to Seek Personal Power and Control (n = 5)
 - A sense of indifference toward sex partner and sexual relationship
 - Need for Validation and Acceptance (n = 5)
 - Implicit but nonetheless, clearly evident as their motivation to engage in sex

Results:

Thoughts and Behaviors about Safe Sex

■ African-American

- Condoms ($n = 10$)
- Birth Control ($n = 3$)
- Knowing partner's sex history ($n = 3$)

■ Latina

- Condoms ($n = 9$)
- Birth Control ($n = 5$)
- Knowing partner's sex history ($n = 3$)

■ African-American & Latina Females *Myths in Practicing Safe Sex*

- Having “fewer” sex partners
- Being hygienic when engaging in sex
- Avoiding the “swallow” method
- Practicing the “withdrawal” method
- Getting tested

Results:

Thoughts and Behaviors about Safe Sex

Motivational Factors Not to Employ Condoms

■ African-American

- Serious, Monogamous, Committed, Mutually-Exclusive Relationship ($n = 10$)
- Spur of the Moment ($n = 5$)
- Getting Tested ($n = 3$)

■ Latina

- Serious, Monogamous, Committed, Mutually-Exclusive Relationship ($n = 4$)
- Spur of the Moment ($n = 4$)
- Condom Availability ($n = 3$)
- Adversity to Condom Usage ($n = 3$)

Results:

Thoughts and Behaviors about Communication Patterns with Sex Partners

- African-American Females
 - Getting Tested ($n = 5$)
 - Newly Acquired Information about HIV/AIDS ($n = 4$)
 - Cheating ($n = 1$)
- Latina Females
 - Getting Tested ($n = 4$)
 - Newly Acquired Information about HIV/AIDS ($n = 0$)
 - Cheating ($n = 2$)
- Reasons for not having direct talks about HIV/AIDS with sex partners
 - Both sex partners were either wearing a condom or were virgins
 - Being with one partner
 - Not being in a committed, long-term, mutually-exclusive relationship did not lend itself to discuss a “heavy topic” (HIV/AIDS)
- Ways to Increase Communication about Practicing Safer Sex
 - Forums that are Dialogue-Oriented, Personal, and Candid (AA = 3; L = 2)
 - Feel Comfortable and Safe (AA = 2; L = 1)
 - Scare Tactic (AA = 3; L = 0)

Results:

Effectiveness of Past HIV/AIDS Messages

	Condom Use	Familiar: "Gay Disease" & IV drugs	Fear Tactic: HIV leads to Death	Everybody is At-Risk of Infection	Multiple Partners
African-American (n = 10)	6	5	5	4	-
Latina (n = 9)	5	4	-	-	3

	Effective Past HIV/AIDS Messages	Ineffective Past HIV/AIDS Messages	Mixed Reaction of Past HIV/AIDS Messages
African-American	6	0	4
Latina	4	3	2

Results:

Effectiveness of Past HIV/AIDS Messages

- **Mixed Reaction of Past HIV/AIDS Messages**
 - Vicarious Learning Moments
 - Effective for the young, but ineffective for adolescents who are sexually active
 - Ineffective for those who are the only virgin on a university campus
 - Condom use effective for pregnancy prevention but not STD
 - Effective for “one-night stands” but ineffective for long-term relationships
 - Ineffective because she was not sexually active at the time of the messages were delivered

Results: Effectiveness Present HIV/AIDS Messages

- African-American ($n = 10$)
 - Conflicting HIV/AIDS messages that center on Mortality versus Longevity (3)
 - Epidemiology and Statistics of HIV/AIDS (2)
 - Public Awareness Promoted by Celebrities (2)
 - Black Men on the Down Low (1)
- Latina ($n = 9$)
 - Increase Condom Use (6)
 - Knowledge of partner's sex history (2)
 - Infidelity (1)

Results: Effectiveness Present HIV/AIDS Messages

	Improvement	No Improvement	Decline	No Response
African-American	7	2	1	0
Latina	4	3	1	1

■ Improvement

- Increased Relevance
- Increased Condom Availability
- Hands-on volunteer experiences

■ Decline

- AIDS no longer a death sentence
- Messages not geared to rural communities (boredom)

Results:

Increase Consistent Condom Use and HIV Awareness

- African Americans ($n = 10$)
 - Empowerment-Focused HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaigns.....5
 - Direct, Fact-Based, & Honest.4
 - Age-Specific HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaign.....3
 - Issues Centering on Testing...3
 - African-American-Focused HIV/AIDS Prevention Messages.....3
- Latinas ($n = 9$)
 - Condom Use.....6
 - Direct, Fact-Based & Honest.....6
 - Issues Centering on Testing.....5
 - Empowerment-Focused HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaigns.....4
 - Age-Specific HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaign...3

DISCUSSION

- Knowledge of HIV Transmission and Awareness
- Multiple Definitions of Sex
- Practical Implications Drawn from Past & Present Sexual Experiences
- To Use or Not To Use Condoms
- Summary of Communication Patterns with Sex Partners
- Utility of Evaluating HIV/AIDS Message
- The Big Picture
- Implication for New and Improved HIV/AIDS Messages
- Implication for Future Research

Discussion: Contextualized Themes

- Knowledge of HIV Transmission and Awareness
 - Blood Transfusions

- Multiple Definitions of Sex
 - Discrete Sexual Activities (e.g., cunnilingus, fellatio, and anal sex)
 - Families
 - Elementary versus Middle School

- Practical Implications Drawn from Past and Present Sexual Experiences
 - “Just-Kind-of-Happened” phenomenon
 - Forms of External Pressures and Threats
 - The Need for Validation and Acceptance, including the Wooped-Effect
 - Emotional Detachment and a Need for Retaliation are Mechanisms to Seek Personal Power and Control

Discussion: Contextualized Themes

■ To Use or Not To Use Condoms

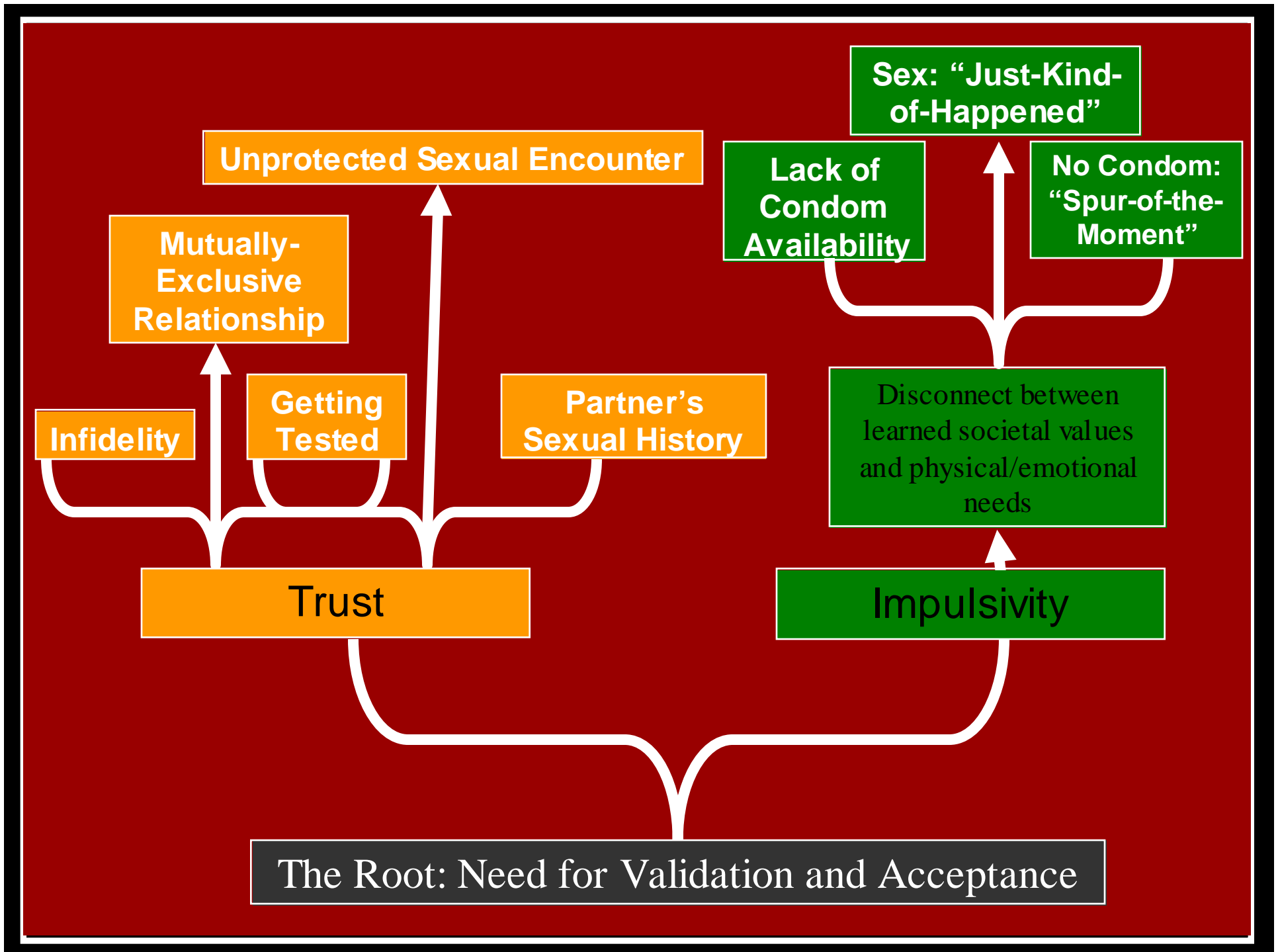
- Monogamous, Mutually-Exclusive Relationship
 - Getting Tested
 - Spur of the Moment when condoms were not immediately available
 - Condom Availability
 - Adversity to Condom
- Trust
- Impulsivity
-
- ```
graph LR; A[Monogamous, Mutually-Exclusive Relationship] --- B[Trust]; C[Getting Tested] --- B; D[Spur of the Moment when condoms were not immediately available] --- E[Impulsivity]; F[Condom Availability] --- E; G[Adversity to Condom] --- E;
```

## ■ Summary of Communication Patterns with Sex Partners

- Getting Tested
  - Cheating
  - Perception of Relationships as Being Insignificant
  - Newly Acquired Information on HIV/AIDS
  - Ways to increase communication
    - Forums that are Dialogue-Oriented, Personal, and Candid
    - Need to Increase Feelings of Comfort and Safety
    - A Personalized Scare Tactics
- Trust
- 
- ```
graph LR; A[Getting Tested] --- B[Trust]; C[Cheating] --- B;
```

Discussion: Contextualized Themes

- Utility of Evaluating HIV/AIDS Message
 - Condom Use: Condom Availability, Social Stigma, and Poor Fit
 - Direct, Fact-Based, and Honest HIV/AIDS Messages
 - Empowerment:
 - Approval need not come from external sources
 - Double standard of carrying a condom
 - Intrinsic right to speak up when sensing discomfort without a backlash
 - Be more future-oriented with regard to their personal, vocational, and educational goals
 - Getting Tested



Discussion:

Implication for New and Improved HIV/AIDS Messages



- “What” of the Message: Content
 - Accurate and up-to-date information of mode of HIV transmission
 - Clarity on Discrete Sexual Behaviors
 - Empowerment and Future-oriented
 - Address Trust Issues
 - Assumptions and Issues around Getting Tested
 - Assumptions and Issues around Condom Use Geared for Females
- “When” of the Message
 - Elementary
 - Age-appropriate and grade-relevant each subsequent year thereafter
- “How” of the Message
 - Increase moderate levels of Fear to Increase motivation
 - Peer-led group forums
 - Gestalt-Techniques for those who Disconnect from the topics
 - Interactive and Dialogue-Based
 - Families
 - Peers
 - Sex Partners

Discussion:

Future Research Implications

- Differentiating the term sex into discrete sexual acts
- Ascertaining future participant's child sexual abuse (CSA) statuses as there is sufficient evidence in the correlation between CSA and adult sequelae
- The cognitive-defense mechanisms, *dissociation* and *trust*, may correlate with internal attributions, locus of control. Can these multifaceted cognitive processes intersect and moderate in a way that may explain for the justification and rationalization of engaging in sexually risky behavior among adolescents females?
- Cross-cultural studies among various racial/ethnic groups that come from a wide range of parenting styles may garner rich data in how compliance and trust are implicitly intertwined and become manifested in risky sexual behaviors
- Examining a potential relationship between types of messages and the degree of fear the messages elicit in hopes of motivating them to discuss sensitive topics, while simultaneously having a need to feel safe when addressing HIV/AIDS to the prospective sexual partner

Questions and Comments

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