

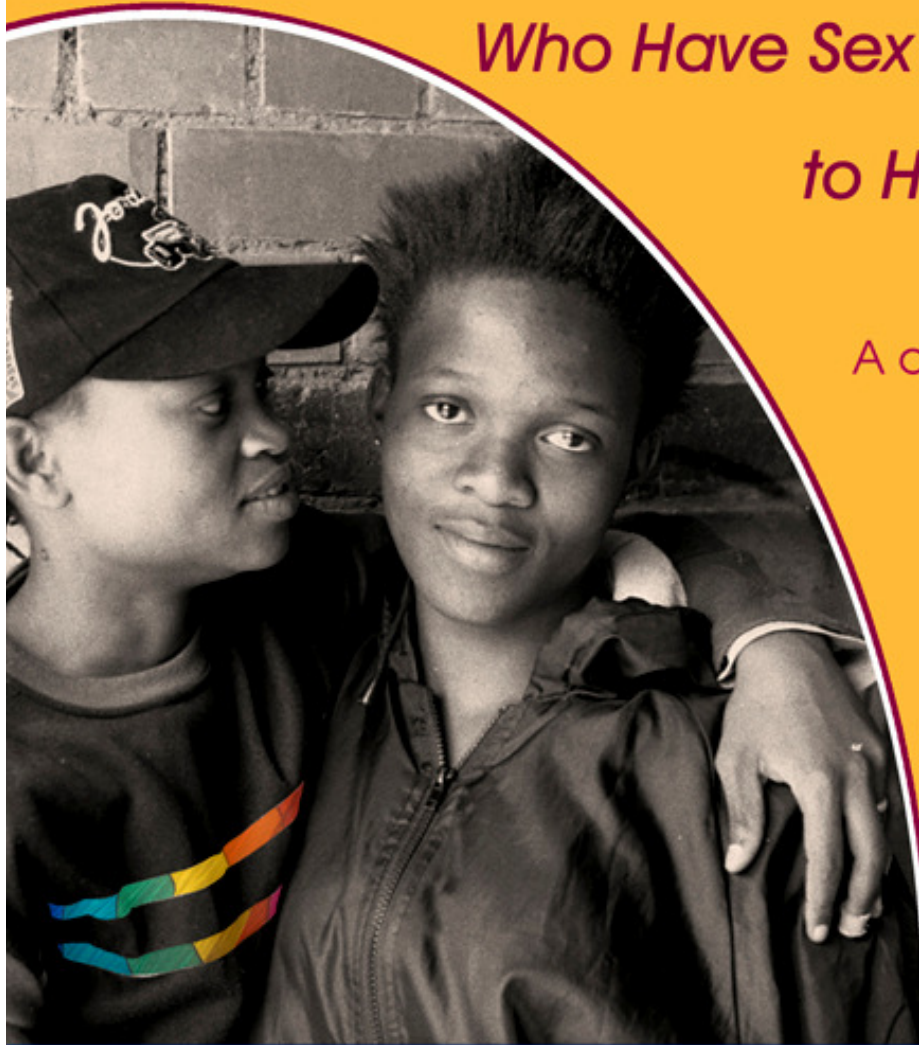
*Raising Visibility of Lesbian, Bisexual and Other Women
Who Have Sex with Women (WSW) in Relation
to HIV and AIDS in Southern Africa:*

A cross-country project addressing health and
community-building for advocacy

SATELLITE

5th SA AIDS Conference, Durban

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HIV CENTER for Clinical and Behavioral Studies
at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and Columbia University





THE RESEARCH STUDY: AN INTRODUCTION

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PhD*

In collaboration with the Southern African WSW Research Team



HYPOTHESIS: INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL

- Women's health in general, and the health needs of WSW , lesbian and bisexual women is not high on the agendas of neither policy makers, health service providers, nor researchers.
- Lack of attention is partly based on the fact that adequate knowledge of the complexities and issues around the provision of appropriate health services for WSW, lesbian and bisexual persons is missing.
- There are huge gaps in knowledge about sexual practices and preferences, including the frequency of same-sex conduct, the number of people who claim same-sex identities, violence against the LBT community as well as the more positive aspects of LGBTI life.
- The voices, experiences, and issues of the diverse groups of WSW, lesbian and bisexual persons are glaringly absent from the research agenda.

STUDY AIMS AND INTENTION

- Build arguments for policy change
- Increase visibility for WSW and LBT women
- Influence and affect HIV/AIDS, other health and rights based policies relevant to WSW
- Identify advocacy strategies arising from research
- Further strengthen capacity of communities and community building



AN INTENDED OUTCOME

- To ensure quality and appropriate health services that address the diverse and specific needs of women who have sex with women (WSW), including lesbian, bisexual women, and other WSW



RESEARCH FOCUS

- HIV and STI are relevant issues for all WSW and Lesbian other WSW.
- HIV/STI vulnerability, the way in which this population perceives and negotiates HIV/STI transmission risks, impact of HIV/AIDS, and the health care experiences and needs
- Study sites: South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To conduct research into the perspectives of WSW, lesbian, bisexual and other WSW with respect to:

- HIV/STI vulnerability
- Perceptions and negotiation of HIV/STI transmission risks
- Impact of HIV/AIDS
- Health Care Experiences

2. Experiences of living with HIV in relation to:

- Meaning of same-sex sexuality for women
- Meaning of sexual practice and identity
- Social organisation and expression of different WSW communities
- Barriers to expression and needs in terms of health, HIV, prevention, care & treatment

RESEARCH AND OPERATIONAL TEAM

Overall Oversight:

- Vasu Reddy, PhD, HSRC (Project Leader)
- Theo Sandfort, PhD, HIV Center, Columbia University (Lead Quantitative)
- Zethu Matebeni, PhD, Wits University (Lead Qualitative)

Funding and Technical Support:

- Vicci Tallis, PhD, Open Society Initiative for SA (Funder)
- Susanna Fried, PhD, UNDP (Funder)
- Heather Doyle, OSF (Funder)

RESEARCH OPERATIONAL TEAM

Participating Organisations:

- Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (Patience Mandishona)
- LeGaBiBo (Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana)
- OutRight Namibia (Linda Renate Baumann)
- Triangle Project (Jill Henderson) **SA**
- Durban Lesbian and Gay Community & Health Centre (Nonhlanhla Mkhize) **SA**
- Forum for the Empowerment of Women (Phindi Malaza) **SA**
- OUT LGBT Well-Being (Noma Pakade) **SA**
- Behind the Mask (Thuli Media) **SA**



AUDIENCE FOR RESEARCH

PRIMARY AUDIENCE:

- Health Policy Makers in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe

SECONDARY AUDIENCE:

- Funding Institutions



METHODOLOGY

- **HSRC Ethics Approval** (Study Instruments) and informed consent
- **Participatory** and community building model to research design and capacity enhancement
- Feminist and **gender** analysis
- **Quantitative** (questionnaire) (n = 561)
- **Qualitative** (in-depth interviews; n= 24 HIV positive women)

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (1): COUNTRY/NATIONALITY

COUNTRY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
South Africa	351	62.6
Botswana	48	8.6
Namibia	99	17.61
Zimbabwe	63	11.2

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (2): AGE

AGE	N	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
Age	561	18	65

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (3): HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
PRIMARY	8	1.4
SECONDARY	267	47.6
HIGHER	282	50.3
Missing System	4	0.7
Total	561	100.0

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (4): SEXUAL ORIENTATION

ORIENTATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Lesbian	430	76.6
Bisexual	105	18.7
Gay	3	0.5
Heterosexual	10	1.8
Other	11	2.0
Missing	2	0.4
TOTAL	561	100

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (5): WORK STATUS

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Full time employed	184	32.8
Part time employed	74	13.2
Student	94	16.8
Unemployed	188	33.5
Self-employed	21	3.7

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (6): Current regular sexual partner?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes, I have one regular sexual partner	353	62.9
Yes, I have two or more regular sexual partners	106	18.9
No, but I have one or more casual sexual partners	32	5.7
No, I am not currently sexually active	59	10.5
Missing from System	11	2.0
TOTAL	561	100

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (7): If in relationship: Living with your partner?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	192	34.2
NO	316	56.3
MISSING	53	9.4
TOTAL	561	100

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (8): SEX IN PAST YEAR?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes, with a women	561	100
Yes with a man	94	16.8
No with a man	177	31.6
Missing	290	51.7

BASED ON DATA COLLECTED, PRESENTATIONS TO FOLLOW ADDRESS:

- Understanding the Risky Sexual Practices of Lesbian and Bisexual Women (Linda Baumann)
- HIV Testing Patterns of Lesbian and Bisexual Women in Southern Africa (Patience Mandishona)
- Profiling HIV + Lesbians: Who and Why? (*Lorraine Setuke*)
- Protecting her: Experiences of lesbians living with HIV (Zethu Matebeni)
- Policy Implications (Vicci Tallis)