



MTV Shuga 3000 South Africa: Rapid Polling Results and Key Considerations

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Contents

1. Summary
2. Background
3. Objectives
4. Methodology
5. Findings
 - a. Youth participant profile
 - b. Stigma
 - c. Risk
 - d. Sources of sexual knowledge and SRH support
 - e. Sex, sexuality and relationships
 - f. Enjoyment and engagement
 - g. Social media
6. Key considerations for South African schools and MTV Series 5 in South Africa
 - a. Thoughtful process
 - b. Boys and sexually active status
 - c. Condoms and prevention
 - d. HIV counselling and testing
 - e. Pregnancy
 - f. Abortion
 - g. Sexual coercion
 - h. Sexual expectations
 - i. Gender identity and sexual risk
 - j. HIV stigma
 - k. Sources of sexual knowledge and SRH support
 - l. Final remark

1. Summary

In October of 2015, the MTV Staying Alive Foundation tasked Dr. James Lees and Mr. Joachim Jacobs of South Africa to conduct a rapid polling assessment of MTV Shuga Season 4 with young 1000 people between the ages of 14 and 20 in five schools in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Results of the polling were reported to the MTV Staying Alive Foundation in December 2015.

In May of 2016, the MTV Staying Alive Foundation again approached Dr. Lees and Mr. Jacobs for rapid assessment polling with an additional 2000 young people, 1000 in the Gauteng province and 1000 in Kwazulu Natal, as they watched Season 4.

In June of 2016, a total of 2538 young people in Gauteng and Kwazulu Natal were successfully polled with an instrument containing 117 questions designed for this purpose by Dr. Lees and Mr. Jacobs. Combined with the 2015 polling of 1080 youth participants in the Western Cape after data cleaning, this report speaks to the experiences of 3618 young people watching MTV Shuga Season 4 and the contextual situations of their lives related to HIV, health and sexual behaviour.

Results from polling point to the awareness and intent for change inspired by viewing MTV Shuga and on the particular situation and challenges of South African high school youth. The polling results also indicate that MTV Shuga is able to address some of the most problematic challenges of HIV prevention among young people as highlighted in the 2013 South African Youth Risk Survey conducted by HSRC and the 2012 South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence and Behaviour Survey conducted by the by HSRC with financial support from the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), PEPFAR, UNICEF and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

MTV Shuga polling findings include, but are not limited to the following:

- Prior to watching MTV Shuga Season 4, 16% of the young people said they will 'never' use condoms. After watching the episodes, this number reduced to 7%. While the percentages may seem small, they represent a segment of the youth population particularly resistant to HIV messaging and are the most likely to be at risk for receiving and transmitting HIV. **That viewing alone reduced this group's resistance to using condoms by more than half is very significant and shows MTV Shuga's ability to reach some of the hardest to reach youth.**
- Behavioural change begins with self-awareness and intent. Self-awareness and awareness of risk are key to HIV prevention. MTV Shuga Season 4 has been successful in motivating young people to reflect on themselves and think about their future actions. At the end of episode 2, 39% of the young people reported that the episodes are making them think about their own lives. By the end of episode 4, that figure has increased to 45%. After watching MTV Shuga Season 4 completely, 84%

said that because of Season 4, they will definitely be more careful about HIV; 80% said they will be more careful in relationships; 81% more careful about sex; and, 77% more careful about getting pregnant.

- Turning to the situation of high school youth in South Africa, 32% of girls reported that a girl does not have a right to ask a boy to stop kissing her if she no longer wants him to kiss her as seen in MTV Shuga Season 4 in a scene with Leo and Sophie. If young people believe that a girl does not have a right to ask a boy to stop kissing her, what about her right to ask him to stop touching her body and proceeding with intercourse? **The youths' answers reflects the conflicted and disempowered relationship to their own bodies many South African girls hold, and the right to girls' bodies felt by boys.**
- 61% of the high school boys and 21% of the girls report that they have already been sexually active. **15% of the overall sample of girls report they have been pregnant. If 21% of the girls are sexually active and 15% of the girls have been pregnant, we can assume that 70% of sexually active girls have been pregnant.**
- While a direct question about abortion could not be asked, **46% of the youth reported that they know at least one girl who has had an abortion.** 19% know more than five girls who have had abortions. **39% of youth reported that they believe girls go to illegal, 'back street' abortion providers** so that no one knows they have been pregnant. In conversations, the girls spoke of not going to local clinics for abortion services because they will be seen and known, and because of the attitudes of the public clinic staff. **41% of the youth reported that they did not get the sexual and reproductive health information and support they were looking for at a public clinic because of the attitudes of nursing sisters. (NB: This finding alone reflects a need for youth-friendly SRH services as part of HIV and pregnancy prevention programming in South Africa.)**
- **61% of the youth report that their teachers have 'never' spoken about contraception and pregnancy prevention.** Only 12% of girls and boys report that their parents are the primary place they learn sexual information, **with 44% of boys reporting that they learn the most about sex from internet pornography.** If these figures showing a lack of support from teachers and parents for SRH and pregnancy prevention support are combined with the figure of 41% of youth not getting the support they were looking for from public clinics, it might not be surprising that 15% of the overall sample of girls indicated they have been pregnant, a figure when factored against girls reporting they have been sexually active resulting in **70% of sexually active girls having been pregnant. Girls are blamed for becoming pregnant, but the entire medical, social and family system that can support them for preventing pregnancy has room for improvement.**
- **25% of boys reported that they have 'sexually forced' someone against their will. 18% of girls report being sexually forced by their boyfriends.** Factoring in that 21%

of girls reported being sexually active, the figures point to **86% of sexually active girls experiencing being sexually forced by their boyfriends**. These figures are very important and reflect a need to understand what is going on within heterosexual relationships and the experience and position of risk within those relationships. It also calls for HIV prevention efforts to help build safe and supportive norms within relationships.

- 56% of boys 'expect' oral sex from girls when they take them out.
- **The 7% of young people who identified themselves as belonging to the 'other' gender category consistently poll at equal or higher risk than those who report their gender as 'female' or 'male'. HIV, pregnancy and violence prevention programmes to support these young people should receive.**
- Stigma toward people with HIV has been a persistent challenge in South Africa. One measure of HIV stigma is the willingness to be in a romantic relationship with someone who is HIV+. MTV Shuga Season 4 directly addresses stigma through the relationship between HIV+ Femi and HIV- Shelia. Viewing MTV Shuga increases young people's willingness to be involved in a romantic relationship with an HIV+ partner by 72%. **This is an extremely significant measure for stigma and literally goes to the 'heart' of how people with HIV are accepted.** Along with the findings to follow, the above should be understood as change coming from viewing only. Earlier University of the Western Cape research by Ms. Hamila Lila and Dr. James Lees indicated that following MTV Shuga with a one-hour discussion doubles the positive change created during viewing.
- 46% report that they believe the South African public would openly judge a couple like Femi and Shelia in Season 4 if they came out on public stating that one of them is HIV+. 4% said they would be physically harmed. **This indicates the fear-filled environment South African young people are still growing up in when it comes to HIV. Fear keeps people silent, and silence feeds everyone's risk for HIV and for not getting the care and support they require to address HIV infection.**
- Finally, there exists a popular myth in South Africa that young people are tired of learning about HIV and sexuality. The polling with 3618 high school youth shows a different picture. At the end of MTV Shuga Season 4, 70% report they would like support from their family around HIV, pregnancy and sexual & reproductive health. 67% report they would like more support from their teachers. **Whether MTV Shuga inspires the young people to want to learn more about HIV, pregnancy prevention and sex or if they have been secretly harbouring this desire, the finding is clear: young people are asking for support.**

2. Background

MTV Shuga is a popular and successful television series and transmedia campaign created by the MTV Staying Alive Foundation to address matters related to HIV and sexuality in the lives of young people. The Foundation has currently produced four seasons of MTV Shuga, seasons one and two filmed in Kenya, seasons three and four filmed in Nigeria.

The MTV Staying Alive Foundation is currently preparing to film Season 5 of MTV Shuga in South Africa.

3. Objectives

The purpose of the work was four-fold, to:

1. Understand young people's responsiveness to and engagement with MTV Shuga Season 4;
2. Understand the ability of MTV Season 4 to create moments that generate self-awareness and self-reflection on the part of young viewers and how these reflective moments can create a change in attitudes, knowledge levels, perceptions and behavioural intent;
3. Better understand the social and emotional contexts and challenges specific to South African high school youth in ways that can inform the production of MTV Shuga Season 5 and its use to engage South African high school learners, including a general risk profiling of South African high school youth;
4. Assess the possibility and potential impact of young people using DVD copies of MTV Shuga Season 4 with each other, in their schools, with their families and in communities.

4. Methodology

The assessment was conducted by means of rapid polling technology which allowed young people to answer questions via electronic key pads in the form of a hand control. The polling instrument was revised in May of 2016 after the first round of polling of 1080 young people in the Western Cape in November of 2015.

Preliminary and baseline questions were asked before and after screening of MTV Shuga. Screening of MTV Shuga was also paused at strategic points to allow for questions related to themes in the episodes to be posed to youth and to assess young people's level of engagement with those specific themes. Questions were also asked about what young people see as norms related to health and sexual behaviour and about their own experiences, attitudes and perceived influences on their lives.

The polling took place with five schools in the Western Cape Province, three schools in Kwa Zulu Natal and three schools in Gauteng. One school in each province was located in a rural area.

Relationships were formed with each school principal directly by Dr. Lees and Mr. Jacobs. School principals are the primary gate-keepers of schools and must be on board with any project if teachers and learners are to be successfully engaged.

Polling 200 to 400 learners at a time requires the effort of many adults and a strong programme that keeps the attention of young people. In this case, teachers were encouraged to participate as role models and to help with any emerging discipline challenges. As learners were coming from classrooms and exams and had not eaten, they were first given a snack-pack of popcorn, three different candy bars and a fruit juice. At the end of the screening and polling, they were given a hot meal and a soda. The anticipation of a final meal helped focus the attention of these large groups of youth.

Each learner was given a wireless hand-held keypad to answer questions projected onto a screen in the front of the hall. This allowed learners to both hear and read the questions and contributed to greater accuracy of responses. Each question was read aloud by the session facilitators before answers were allowed to be submitted. Learners were told not to exchange their keypads with anyone else during the polling session or discuss their responses as this would affect data.

Each polling session lasted between 3 and 3.5 hours. While this is a long time to keep young people seated and focused on television episodes and answering questions, the fact that they were willing to 'hang in' until the end speaks to the ability of MTV Shuga Season 4 to capture and sustain their attention.

The instrument used for polling consisted of 117 questions clustered around 6 themes listed below:

- HIV Stigma
- Risk
- Sources of sexual knowledge and SRH support
- Sex, sexuality and relationships
- Enjoyment and desire to learn
- Social media and technology use

Data were captured and arranged in such a way as to allow for disaggregation of findings based on age and gender. Data received from the polling has been cleaned for errors with the removal of individual respondents whose sporadic answering reflected they were not seriously engaged in the polling process. Analysis of data was done using the Statistical

Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), a computer software package that allows a variety of statistical techniques to be employed.

The findings in this report apply to the sample of 3618 high school youth at hand and should be generalized to the broader population of school going youth in South Africa with caution.

5. Findings

a. Youth participant profile

Of the 3618 young people polled, 40% were male, 53% female and 7% answered ‘other’ when asked their gender. The question of ‘other’ as a gender identity was carefully asked with the explanation that if anyone selects ‘other’ they should do so responsibly, and that ‘other’ means that the sex of their bodies does not correspond to how they feel themselves to be on the inside. In the context of this report this the term ‘other identified’ will be used to refer to this group.

Youth included in this program varied in age from 14 to 20 years old according to the following table. The weight away from 18 year olds is a factor of 18 year old learners being in their final year of study and often kept away from activities outside the classroom that do not have direct relevance to their matriculate examination in October. Compared with the grade levels, however, there is a good distribution of youth from each grade.

Age	%	Grade	%
14	30%	8	29%
15	20%	9	23%
16	17%	10	18%
17	12%	11	17%
18	8%	12	13%
19	4%		
20	8%		

Table 1: Age and school grade

Of the total group of 3618 youth 43% reported that they had previously watched at least one episode of MTV Shuga in the past.

40% of the total sample of respondents report that they are or have been sexually active. In Gauteng and KZN, 61% of boys reported they are or have been sexually active compared with 21% of girls reporting they are or have been sexually active.

When asked if they used a condom at last sexual encounter, 45% of sexually active youth reported they did not use condoms. A gender analysis did not reveal any significant difference in condom use among male, female and other identified youth.

Only 36% of the overall sample of youth report they have been tested for HIV. When the data is analysed according to gender, 43% of males, 45% of 'others' and 29% of females have tested for HIV.

In the Gauteng and KZN samples, 15% of the girls reported that they have been pregnant and 27% of the boys reported that they have made a girl pregnant. 19% of the 14 year old respondents reported they had either been pregnant or made someone pregnant. This figure rises steadily with the 38% of the 19 year-olds reporting that they had been pregnant or made someone pregnant. A gender breakdown of youth from these two regions show a clear difference between boys and girls. An age breakdown indicates that the highest frequencies are in the older categories (age 18 years and up) as indicated in the table below. The higher percentage for the 14 year age group compared to peers in their age cohort is an area of concern as it indicated a higher vulnerability for this group and raises the question of programming for pre-14 year-old youth.

Age category	Pregnant or made someone pregnant
14	19%
15	15%
16	18%
17	11%
18	30%
19	38%
20	39%

Table 2: Percentage ever pregnant or making somebody pregnant by age category

The implication of this finding is the need for work to be done with male and female youth age 14 and under to prevent pregnancy. This argument is strengthened with the figure that while 14-year-olds are sexually active, only 21% have been for HIV testing while 53% of 19 year-olds have tested for HIV.

Also in Gauteng and KZN samples, 46% of the youth know at least one girl who has had an abortion and 19% know more than five girls who have had abortions. 39% of the youth believe that girls go to illegal sources for abortion services.

The focus on sexual coercion was covered by the question: 'Has a boyfriend forced himself sexually on you or have you forced someone sexually?' 25% of boys indicated that they have forced themselves on someone sexually. For girls, 18% report that they have been sexually forced by a boyfriend. 27% of the group 'other' indicate that they have been forced or forced someone.

Of those youth from Gauteng and KZN who reported being confronted by someone trying to force them sexually, 15% said they were unable to stop the person and 16% said they were

‘sometimes’ able to stop the person. This raises questions about multiple situations where young people face someone trying to force them sexually against their will.

In Gauteng and KZN, youth were asked how many friends they have who have been forced to do something sexual against their will. The responses are indicated in the table below.

Count	Percentage
None	68%
1	18%
2	4%
3	2%
4	1%
5	1%
More than 5	7%

Table 3: Total who have been forced to do something sexual against their will

In Gauteng and KZN, youth were also asked how many friends they have who have forced someone to do something sexual against their will. The responses are indicated in the table below.

Number of persons	Percentage
None	68%
1	20%
2	3%
3	1%
4	2%
5	1%
More than 5	6%

Table 4: Know friends who have forced someone

In Gauteng and KZN samples, Youth were asked if boys expect oral sex from girls when they take them out. 61% of girls and 56% of boys report that oral sex is expected from girls.

In Gauteng and KZN samples, 45% of boys and 65% of girls believe that boys pressure girls to have anal sex.

b. HIV Stigma

One of the strongest areas of impact of MTV Shuga Season 4 was in the reduction of stigma toward those who are HIV+. The polling shows the success of the depiction of Femi and Sheila's relationship and its juxtaposition with that of Weki and Leila. While Weki and Leila's parents are absent, the characters of Sheila's parents and brother challenge young viewers to think and evaluate for themselves how they will relate to HIV+ people. At its apex, stigma comes out in one's willingness to be in a romantic relationship with someone who is HIV+. The depiction of Sheila and Femi as a discordant couple automatically opens the door on the internal question 'Would I be in a relationship with an HIV+ person?'

The issue of HIV stigma and the possibility that watching the series has on stigma reduction is covered by six questions in the instrument. The first of these relate to being in a romantic relationship with an HIV+ person. The remaining questions related to attending a support group for persons infected and affected by HIV.

The youth polled in this research showed a significant increase in their willingness to be romantically involved with an HIV+ person. The question was asked three times. At the start of the episodes, a baseline score of 22% was recorded for willingness to be in a relationship with an HIV+ partner. After episode 3, 37% were willing. By the end of the final episode, 38% said they would be willing to have an HIV+ romantic partner. These numbers show a significant increase between baseline (before watching MTV Shuga Season 4), during and after watching the episodes. A 72% increase is shown in willingness to have an HIV+ partner. This number is more significant because the impact comes from viewing MTV Shuga episodes only, with no follow-up discussions provided. According to previous research on MTV Shuga, discussions that follow viewing of the episodes doubles the likelihood of a change in self-perception and behavioural intent.

For the remaining two stigma measures, 86% said they would attend a support group for HIV+ people if they were HIV+. This is reinforced by the images of Femi and Weki attending their support group. In addition, 87% said they would support a friend or romantic partner with HIV by going to an HIV support group with them.

Reflecting on the theme of Sheila's family's negative reaction to Femi being HIV+, the question was asked after the scene, "What would you do if a family member announced that their romantic partner in HIV+?" 66% said they will support their family member. 18% would try and break up the relationship. 16% would remain silent.

Continuing with the theme of stigma and attitudes toward people with HIV, 70% believed that Sheila’s brother was wrong in planning to break his sister up with Femi. 64% reacted positively to Femi coming out as HIV+ on television with 13% uncertain and only 23% thinking it was a ‘stupid’ thing to do. 71% said they would congratulate Femi if they met him on the street and only 18% said they would criticise him. Femi coming out in public is a powerful scene in Season 4 and clearly makes young viewers think.

When asked how the South African public would react if a real character like Femi disclosed he in HIV+ on television, only 44% believed the South African public would be supportive, 46% believed the public would openly judge Femi and 4% believed that someone would try to harm both Femi and Sheila. These figures can be interpreted in two ways: one, that the attitudes of young people toward those with HIV are more accepting than what those same young people see as attitudes in adults; and, two, that the fear of youth stigmatising other young people for having HIV is greater than the actual stigmatising behaviour itself.

c. HIV Risk

In the pre-test, 81% believed they were at no or little risk for HIV, 19% believing they were at moderate or high risk. In the post test, the percentage of those believing they are at risk dropped by 4% after viewing MTV Shuga Season 4, a slight downward movement and perhaps a more accurate assessment of their risk.

Overall the personal HIV risk perception of girls indicates that they consider themselves to be at lower risk compared to reports from boys. For the category at High Risk a fairly even distribution was found for boys and girls, but a significantly higher risk perception for ‘other’ identified compared to male and female (see table below).

Gender	No Risk	Some risk	At Risk	High Risk
Boys	64%	10%	7%	18%
Girls	77%	8%	4%	11%
Other	52%	11%	13%	24%

Table 5: Personal level of HIV risk by gender - Percentage

Participants were asked if they intend to use condoms the next time they have sex before and after watching MTV Shuga Season 4. Subsequent to watching the episodes, with no discussions, the figure of 16% who reported they will never use condoms before viewing the episodes was reduced by more than half to 7% after watching Shuga. This is very significant as those reporting they will ‘never’ use condoms are a high-risk group and have attitudes that are often difficult to change. That the episodes had this kind of effect on their intent to use condoms points to the strength of the overall MTV Shuga Season 4.

d. Sources of sexual knowledge and SRH support

Overall, the findings reveal a gap between the young people’s desire and need for SRH knowledge and the support and knowledge they are receiving.

34% report they do not know the difference between HIV and AIDS, a part of the content of the Life Orientation curriculum.

22% report that they get little or no pregnancy prevention support from their families.

46% report they get little or no pregnancy prevention support from their teachers.

61% report that their teachers have not spoken with them about contraceptives and birth control. This is significant within a context of high rates of teenage pregnancy if 61% of teachers are not talking about contraceptives and birth control.

The instrument posed the question “Where have you learned the most about sex?”

Source of sexual information	Percentage
Parents	12%
Teachers	34%
Friends	18%
Pornography	27%
Internet info sites	9%

Table 6: Sources of sexual information for youth

When broken down by gender, the reliance on pornographic material as a learning resource for boys is revealed to be very high, while all three gender categories seem to have little reliance on learning about sex from their parents. In essence, the figures show that conversations about sex are unusual within parent-child relationships.

Listed according to their top three sources for information about sex, boys report porn (44%), teachers (28%) and Parents (12%). Girls report Teachers (38%), Friends (15%) and Parents (9%). For others, porn (33%), teachers (30%) and parents (12%).

23% report that they receive little or no HIV prevention support from their family. By the end of the episodes, 70% reported that they would like some level of support from their parents around sex, pregnancy and HIV prevention, 39% saying they would like a ‘lot’ of support from them.

51% report they get little or no HIV prevention support from teachers. By the end of the episodes, 67% reported they would like support from their teachers around sex, pregnancy and HIV prevention, and 31% saying they would like a 'lot'.

e. Sex, sexuality and relationships

Young people's attitudes toward themselves, their bodies, sex, relationships, each other and alcohol and drugs all factor into their level of risk for HIV and sexual harm. The story line around Leo and Sophie provides an important opportunity to understand young people's attitudes and beliefs around alcohol and sexual aggression. In an early scene when Leo is kissing Sophie, Sophie asks Leo to stop because she is not ready to move further in their relationship. The question was asked, "Is it OK for Sophie to ask Leo to stop kissing her?" 68% answered 'yes', which can be considered low when 32% believe a girl does not have the right to ask a boy to stop kissing her. Advance this to whether a girl has a right to stop a boy from entering her with his penis if the kissing has advanced to that stage and one has to wonder if girls and boys believe it is actually 'ok' to stop the physical activity at that point.

In a later scene, Leo has been drinking and as he and Sophie begin to kiss, he ends up on top of her in bed, holding her wrists while he is kissing her and grinding into her. The young people were asked, "Does the fact that Leo had too much to drink excuse him from trying to force himself on Sophie?" 67% answered 'no'. But that means 33% believe that alcohol is an excuse for aggressive sexual behaviour.

In a final question, the youth were asked if Leo understands what he did to Sophie. Only 64% said 'yes', leaving 36% believing that Leo did not understand that Sophie felt she was being violated.

Age disparity between girls and their older sexual partners has long been identified as a driver of the HIV epidemic in South Africa. One manifestation of these age-disparate relationships is the existence of Sugar Daddies and the degree to which they are socially accepted. 88% of youth believe that 'girls really do flirt with older men'. 48% say they are aware of a girl whose parents are know that she has a sugar daddy. In the case of Nii who is trying to develop a sugar-daddy relationship with Mary in the Shuga episodes, 57% indicated by the end of Episode 4 that Mary was in over her head and could not handle Nii. 56% of the youth indicated that they know one or more girls who have sugar daddies. 23% indicate that they know more than five girls who have sugar daddies.

Access and intention to use condoms is an important issue in HIV and pregnancy prevention. 88% know where to get condoms if they need them. Of those who have been sexually active, 53% report they will use a condom at their next sexual encounter, 11% say they will 'never' use condoms, and 36% say that is 'depends' on the situation. These figures should be a red flag. 11% of sexually active high school youth already declaring that they will never use condoms indicates high risk levels. 36% saying it 'depends' is problematic in terms of

how young people judge situations and make decisions. Is it safe to proceed without a condom because the partner looks healthy, is rich, comes from a good family, etc.? These issues were addressed in MTV Shuga Season 1, but perhaps they should be revisited in future South African seasons of Shuga.

Young people were asked if and where they ‘keep’ condoms. The results were as follows and raise questions about real ‘accessibility’. If sex is not planned for, and much of teenage sex is not planned for, locating condoms at public clinics and schools may not be enough.

Where condoms are kept	Percentage
Keep condoms at home	20%
Carry with me	13%
Keep both at home and carry with me	13%
Don't keep condoms at home or carry with me	54%

Table 7: Where condoms are kept

The above should be understood in the context that of the 40% of the youth polled who claimed they have been sexually active, 45% said they did not use condoms at their last sexual encounter.

Access to condoms and information are essential for SRH. A scene in MTV Shuga Season 4 shows Mary and Bonggi being humiliated by a nursing sister when they go to a clinic seeking SRH information and support. 41% of the young people polled reported that a nursing sister's attitude has kept them from getting the SRH information and support they were looking for to prevent pregnancy and HIV. This is an issue of access to condoms as well as about where young people learn about SRH, HIV and birth control. The above figures already indicate that 23% get little or no SRH/pregnancy prevention support from their parents and 46% report they get little or no SRH/pregnancy prevention support from their teachers. 61% report that their teachers have never spoken about contraceptives and birth control. This is particularly true for boys as compared to girls. Boys reported to have received less support from teachers. Respondents who are other identified have the highest frequency for level of support indicated as None.

Level of support received	Boys	Girls	Other
None	45%	30%	58%
Little	12%	14%	13%
Moderate	11%	16%	9%
Very Good	32%	40%	21%

Table 8: Level of SRH support received breakdown by gender

In Gauteng and KZN, 75% of the young people report that they know someone their age who have sexted. They believe that 64% of girls feel some level or pressure to sext while

they believe 61% of boys feel pressure to sext. There is a perception by the respondents that both girls and boys are under significant pressure to sext.

The youth in Gauteng and KZN were asked how often they watch pornographic material. The results are indicated below:

Frequency	Percentage
Never	60%
1x/month	16%
1x/week	4%
1x/day	6%
Up to 5x/day	2%
Up to 10x/day	1%
More than 10x/day	11%

Table 9: Use of pornographic material

f. MTV Shuga Season 4 enjoyment and engagement

Young people’s reported enjoyment of Season 4 is a reflection of how much they are engage in the episodes. The question was asked at three different times during the screening and is reflected in the chart below:

Level of enjoyment	End episode 2	End episode 3	End episode 6
A lot	47%	71%	79%
Some	23%	15%	9%
A little	10%	6%	5%
Not at all	20%	8%	7%

Table 10: Level of enjoyment of Shuga Season 4

These figures show that by the end of episode 3, the viewers are engaged and their engagement not only sustained, but built to the end of the episodes. It must be noted that the environment of viewing for polling was not conducive to engagement, with 250 to 400 young people in one room for 3.5 hours at a time. It is our belief that shown with smaller groups in more supportive environments will increase these already high numbers. It is a tribute to the episodes that they capture young people’s attention in less than conducive circumstances. The level of enjoyment has specific gender nuances, with girls finding the episodes more enjoyable than boys. This all-important issue of gender and the emotional expressiveness of boys is an aspects that will require careful consideration in the scripting of the next series of Shuga.

When asked at the end of episode 2 if MTV Shuga is making them think about their own lives, 39% said yes, a lot. By the end of episode 4, that number increased to 45%. These figures are important as self-reflection and self-perceptions have long been shown as essential for the development of awareness of behaviour and effective decision making which are elements in the behaviour change process. The series of questions in this survey allowed for probing into specific change themes. At the end of episode 8, survey probes youth to reflect on whether watching the series has made them more mindful and careful in relations to six dimensions of the HIV epidemic. The questions asked were, “Because of MTV Shuga Season 4, I will be...”

Dimension	Definitely	Somewhat
More careful about HIV	84%	10%
More careful in my relationships	80%	9%
More careful about sex	81%	10%
More careful about alcohol	58%	19%
More careful about getting pregnant	77%	8%
Less likely to have a sugar daddy	70%	5%

Table 11: Shuga Season 4 making youth reflect on key risk factors

Again, it should be remembered that these substantial attitude and self-belief changes have come after viewing MTV Shuga episodes only with no follow-up discussions of a formal or informal nature. One can see, however, that alcohol use is complex and remains a challenge, suggesting by these figures that more work needs to be done with young people to understand their motivations and dynamics around alcohol use. The same can be said about the role of Sugar Daddies in girls’ lives.

As a further exploration on the theme of change, young people were asked at the completion of the episodes about their desire to learn more about the themes captured below:

Theme	Percentage
Learn more about HIV	71%
Learn more about relationships	73%

Learn more about sex	74%
Learn more about alcohol	64%

Table 12: Desire to learn more about core aspects

These are important figures because they indicate that the episodes leave young viewers with a desire to learn about these four areas vital to personal health and wellbeing. These figures are contrary to popular beliefs that young people do not want to engage around these subjects. They do, and MTV Shuga polling shows that. The question needs to be answered, ‘Who do they want to engage with around these subjects?’ MTV Shuga episodes have already engaged them, and they want more. These are important impacts of the episodes.

81% of the youth report that MTV Shuga is ‘definitely’ a good way to educate young people about HIV, sex and relationship, and 8% responded ‘somewhat’.

84% believe that MTV Shuga should ‘definitely’ be shown in schools.

75% feel ‘definitely’ more informed about health, contraception and HIV after watching MTV Shuga Season 4, 12% feeling ‘somewhat’ more informed.

64% reported that they feel encouraged to talk about sexual health, contraception and HIV with friends after watching MTV Shuga Season 4, with 15% reporting they felt ‘somewhat’ encouraged to talk. These figures are very significant given that 18% reported friends as the place where they learn the most about sex. That MTV Shuga viewing alone encourages young people to engage with each other around issues of sexual health and contraception indicates the potential held in the series to create a dynamic of regular, helpful and informed conversations happening among young people themselves.

42% report they would feel more comfortable discussing MTV Shuga in single-sex groups while 58% would feel more comfortable in mixed sex groups. This finding indicates that there is a place for both single and mixed sex groups for discussing MTV Shuga episodes and themes.

Each young person who participated in the polling was given their own DVD copy of MTV Shuga Season 4 and asked to show them wherever possible and to whomever possible. 61% reported that they feel ‘very confident’ that they will be able to show MTV Shuga to their families, 19% feeling ‘confident’. This is significant as only 12% of the youth reported that their parents are their primary source for learning about sexual matters, while 70% reported that they would like to have some level of support from their parents around these matters.

g. Social Media

MTV Shuga episodes are part of a broader strategy of the MTV Staying Alive Foundation to engage young people around issues of sex, HIV, pregnancy and SRH. The following questions indicate the types of communication and social media platforms the respondents use. The favourite social media platform is Facebook as indicated in the table below.

Social media platform	Percentage
Facebook	55%
Twitter	5%
Snap chat	3%
Instagram	21%
YouTube	17%

Table 13: Favourite social media platform

Youth rated What'sApp as their favourite messaging platform as indicated in the table below.

Messaging platform	Percentage
What'sApp	90%
WeChat	1%
Facebook messenger	3%
SMS	2%
Other	3%
Don't message	2%

Table 14: Favourite messaging platform

Most of the youth indicated that they use their cell phones for making calls followed by taking pictures as indicate in the table below.

Phone use	Percentage
Phone calls	43%
SMS	7%
Taking pictures	29%
Watching movies	9%
Don't have phone	12%

Table 15: Primary use of mobile phone

More than 42% of the young people indicated that they are on the internet for more than three hours per day, again as indicated in the table below.

Time period	Percentage
Under 1 hour	32%
1 hour	13%
2 hours	8%
3 hours	5%
More than 3 hours	42%

Table 16: hours spend on internet per day

Taken together, the above findings indicate that social media and communication platforms are in significant use by South African young people and provide a great opportunity to extend the work of MTV Shuga.

6. Key considerations for South African schools and MTV Shuga Season 5

This report speaks to the experiences of 3618 young people watching MTV Shuga Season 4 and the contextual situations of their lives related to HIV, health, relationships and sexual behaviour.

a. Thoughtful process

Methodologically, work in high schools requires important front-end investments to be successful. For MTV Shuga to be used in schools and by teachers, these investments are about building relationships with everyone in the schools and showing them that using MTV Shuga is not an additional responsibility but a tool through which their main tasks can be made easier and more effective. Within this, we understand that principals are key gatekeepers to any school and their personal buy-in and enthusiasm is essential. We suggest creating a specific multi-media and personal campaign that builds excitement for the use of MTV Shuga Season 5 in South African schools that touches teachers, learners, parents and entire communities.

b. Boys and sexually active status

In Gauteng and KZN, 61% of the boys reported that they have already been sexually active, while that number was a much lower 21% for girls. Common sense says that MTV Shuga Season 5 should intentionally address this large number of high school boys who are already having sexual relations, particularly in light of polling results that show 44% of boys turn to

pornography to learn about sex and only 9% look to their parents as a source of sexual information.

c. Condoms and prevention

45% of males, females and others reported that they did not use condoms at their last sexual encounter. This is a clear indication that MTV Shuga Season 5 needs to campaign for condom use to become a norm among sexually active high school youth. The need is made all the greater by the finding that 61% of the polled youth report that their teachers have NOT spoken with them about condoms and birth control. Access to condoms remains a challenge for South African high school youth according to the polling results. 54% do NOT keep condoms at home or carry them with them. Factoring in the 15% pregnancy rate, it is clear that risk behaviour is high and needing direct attention.

d. HIV Counselling and Testing

Despite recent UNAIDS data, 34% of the polled youth reported that they have tested for HIV. This number is close to the total percentage of males and females who report being sexually active and if accurate, reflects some success on the government's work promoting HIV testing among youth. Testing as a theme should be reinforced in MTV Shuga Season 5.

e. Pregnancy

In Gauteng, Western Cape and KZN samples, 15% of the girls reported that they have been pregnant. 27% of the boys in Gauteng and KZN reported that they have made a girl pregnant. 19% of the 14 year old respondents reported they had either been pregnant or made someone pregnant. This figure rises steadily with the 38% of the 19 year-olds reporting that they had been pregnant or made someone pregnant. The implication of this finding is the need for work to be done with male and female youth age 14 and under to prevent pregnancy. This argument is strengthened with the figure that while 14-year-olds are sexually active, only 21% have been for HIV testing compared to 53% of 19 year-olds who have had an HIV test.

f. Abortion

Abortion seems to be a potentially important theme for Season 5. In Gauteng and KZN samples, 46% of the youth reported to know at least one girl who has had an abortion and 19% know more than five girls who have had abortions. 39% of the youth believe that girls go to illegal sources for abortion services.

g. Sexual coercion

25% of the boys indicated they have forced someone sexually. 18% of girls indicate they have been forced sexually by a boyfriend. Sexual coercion is an important theme for MTV Shuga Season 5. The disparity in figures has been noted in adults, explained as females not

being aware of when they are being forced and think that force and violence is just part of the norm of sexual relations. One should wonder if the 25% figure reported by boys is actually higher as scientific literature points out that many young people do not know that what they are doing sexually is sometimes legally defined as rape. That 27% of the 'other' group said they either forced themselves on someone sexually or were forced indicates their particular high risk situation.

32% of youth know at least one person who has been sexually forced against their will. The same percentage know at least one person who has forced someone sexually against their will.

Of those who have faced being forced sexually, 69% were able to repel the attack while 31% were 'sometimes' or 'never' able to repel their attacker.

The findings from this report highlights the fact that sexual coercion and violence is real among high school youth and needs to be a significant part of MTV Shuga Season 5 in South Africa. If 18% of the overall girls polled in Gauteng and KZN indicated they have been sexually forced by a boyfriend, and 21% of the girls report that they have been or are sexually active, a red flag can be raised about how girls are experiencing sexuality and if indeed 86% of girls who are or have been sexually active have been forced by their boyfriends. One can imagine the appropriate behaviour of 'boyfriends' being a theme for MTV Shuga Season 5.

A further educational role for Season 5 can be envisioned because of the finding that 36% believed that Leo did not understand that Sophie felt she was being violated in Season 4, 32% felt that Sophie did not have a right to ask Leo to stop kissing her and 33% said Leo's use of alcohol excused his sexually aggressive/abusive behaviour.

h. Sexual expectations

56% of boys report that they 'expect' oral sex from girls when they take them out on a date. 45% of boys report that they pressure girls for anal sex. Added to this sexting and demands to sext are themes that have also emerged very strongly from polling. MTV Shuga Season 5 needs to figure out just how explicit sexual activities and expectations will be addressed. The issue of expectations is key here, however. Expectations disempower girls and they end up doing things with their bodies they do not want to do. It is also a male-centred view of sexual pleasure that dominates, with the degree of male pleasure that will be attained central to the expectations. What about girls? Are they to expect pleasure? Does their pleasure matter? Do their bodies matter? Season 5 of MTV Shuga could challenge this male-centric view of sexuality and introduce the notion of female rights to pleasure and having 100% control of their own bodies. This challenges the locus of control and the dominant construction of sexuality that puts girls and women at risk for multiple harm and excludes them from pleasure, choices and control.

i Gender identity and sexual identity

The 7% of youth reporting their gender identity as 'other' are consistently at high risk for harm throughout the questions asked of them. While this indicates the importance of MTV Shuga Season 5 having a LGBT character, this should be thought through carefully in terms of who and what that character represents. Youth in the Western Cape overwhelmingly supported there being a gay or lesbian character in Season 5. How to do this with strict attention to how high school youth construct gender difference vs. how adults construct LGBT characters is important. High school youth in South Africa these days seem less willing to adopt strict sexual identities and see their sexualities as more fluid, less fixed. Many high school youth are exploring their sexualities more than being settled in them. Perhaps the theme of exploration can connect with sexual orientation.

j. HIV Stigma

MTV Season 4 has done a wonderful job at countering stigma toward people with HIV as reflected in the discussion above. While those willing to be in a romantic relationship with someone who has HIV rose from 22% to 38%, there is a long way yet to go. There are many young people with HIV in South Africa and their journey to figure out love and relationships was well captured by Weki in Season 4. With over 7 million people having HIV in South Africa currently, the theme seems important to continue in Season 5.

k. Sources of sexual knowledge and SRH support

From the lengthy discussion above, the question of where young people learn about sexuality, HIV and SRH is troublesome. Teachers and parents are not fulfilling their roles as guides and, particularly for boys, internet pornography is a first-stop for learning about sex. Two considerations result from this discussion: 1) MTV Shuga is able to fill a large gap created by so many people busy NOT educating South African youth about sexuality, HIV and SRH. Young people report they want to learn more. Given the mixed results of teachers and parents, and in particular the number of boys who do NOT look toward parents for such guidance, MTV Shuga can play a large educational role simply because the young people are engaged by MTV Shuga and like watching the episodes; and, 2) MTV Shuga has a role to play in South Africa by providing and reinforcing general knowledge about HIV, sexuality and SRH that young people are not always receiving.

l. Final comment

The level at which youth engaged with the episodes in Shuga Season 4 holds great potential for the use of the South African season with young people in schools, family and community settings. Consistent with the previous four seasons of MTV Shuga, a well scripted series 5 with believable, recognisable characters and a rich storyline will be key to the success of the South African leg of the series. The key considerations put forward in this report are a step

in this process to creating a series that will allow for deep engagement, self-reflection and the right level of emotional expressiveness on the part of boys, girls and, very importantly, youth whose self-identify as 'other'.

MTV Shuga Season 4 polls as a huge success in South Africa and you should be proud of the work the MTV Staying Alive Foundation continues to do with the MTV Shuga series. MTV Shuga viewing automatically raises questions for young people. The challenge in the South Africa season(s) will be to respond to young people's questions and concerns that are, according to this polling, being met by silence too often by the individuals and institutions of society (teachers, schools, parents, family, community) that are meant to guide the development of young people as sexual beings. MTV Shuga already partially fills this silent space through thoughtful characters and real, recognisable themes and situations.

Paramount on the list of what contributes to South African young people being at risk for HIV and other harms are sexual coercion; the diversity of sexual identity and stigma toward those who fail to conform to a heterosexual norm; silence of too many teachers; silence of parents and within families; the predominance of male centred constructions of sexuality and pleasure that are reinforced and promoted by internet pornography and negate girls own sexual development while placing their bodies at risk; the continuing presence of stigma toward those who are HIV+; and the many ways that South Africa society is not really responding to the high rates of teenage pregnancy while at the same time blaming girls for becoming pregnant. On this last point, the Shuga 3000 polling shows the absence of youth friendly SRH services for young people and the unwillingness of many teachers to talk about contraception, while significant numbers of young girls become pregnant and use the services of illegal abortion providers. In many ways, South Africa is failing its youth, particularly its girls. It is our sincere hope and belief that a comprehensive MTV Shuga Season 5 campaign in South Africa will go a long way to righting what continues to be wrong.

Thank you for allowing us to work with MTV Shuga Season 4 and poll 3618 young people using the episodes. It has been a delight working with the episodes, the young people and, most of all, the entire MTV Staying Alive Foundation.

We wish you only success in moving MTV Shuga into a South African Season 5 and beyond.

With respect for all your work,

Jim Lees
Joachim Jacobs