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## Perceptions of University students regarding transactional sex and its effects on health, South Africa

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Transactional sex which is characterized by exchange of money or gifts for sexual relationships is considered sexual risk behavior because it exposes people engaging into this type of relationship to sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies and other health risks. Transactional sex is increasingly becoming common amongst students at tertiary institutions of learning. The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of university students regarding transactional sex and its effects on health in South Africa. A qualitative approach which was exploratory, descriptive and contextual in nature was used to understand the perceptions of students regarding transactional sex. Purposive sampling technique was used to select participants. Data was collected using in-depth interviews and data saturation occurred after interviewing 18 participants. The findings revealed that university students perceive transactional sex as a material based relationship, prostitution, immoral behavior and abusive relationship. The findings further revealed that factors such as socio-economic status and peer pressure influence students to engage in transactional sex. The youth are regarded as a vulnerable group and therefore transactional sex has far reaching public health consequences. It is of utmost importance for the communities and the government to promote sex education from early childhood at schools, churches, community gatherings and households.

### Biography

N S Mashau has completed her PhD at the University of Venda in 2014. She is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Health - University of Venda. She has published more than 15 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as an Editorial Board Member of Repute.

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