Purpose: African American women continue to experience higher rates of sexually transmitted infections when compared to women of other race/ethnicities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). In one southern state in the United States, African American women ranked 8th in rates of primary and secondary syphilis and 7th and 14th in rates of gonorrhea and HIV (Johnson, 2018). Controlled safe sex is a concept used globally with women to give them control over their sexual lives. Yet, the concept of controlled safe sex has not been examined by researchers in the conceptualization of a mobile app that could be used to provide sexual safety among women. The purpose of the study was to examine African American women’s perceptions of controlled safer sex to guide the development of a safer sex mobile app.

Methods: Guided by the theory of empowerment (Kanter, 1993) we conducted an exploratory study to examine how the concept and antecedents of controlled safer sex could be used in the development of a mobile app for African American women. A sample of 17 women, 18 to 45 years of age, and involved in heterosexual relations participated in semi-structured interviews to examine their personal risks involved with controlled safer sex behaviors. Each interview was conducted by one moderator in a medical clinic in North Carolina. Each interview was audio taped and transcribed. Data were coded for content analysis using the components of Kanter's theory of empowerment.

Results: The women identified attributes, antecedents, and consequences (positive and negative) of controlled safer sex that resulted in a feeling of control, empowerment, and safety. Based on Kanter's theory participants provided examples of how to - access information, access support, assess resources, access opportunities to grow and learn, and learn informal and formal power skills with controlled safer sex behaviors. These findings will be used in mobile app development.

Conclusion: Researchers can begin to identify how women keep themselves safe among risks of sexually transmitted infections including HIV in real time. Globally women can be empowered to take control of their sexual health by using technology to increase their knowledge of reproductive health, enhance body awareness, increase self-efficacy with protective barriers, and competency with sexual negotiations.

Keywords:
African American Women, Controlled safer sex and STD/HIV
References:


Abstract Summary:

By attending this session, the participant will gain an understanding of the concept of "controlled safer sex" based on the perceptions of African American women. Findings from this study will be used to develop an app that will allow women to take control of their sexual health.

Content Outline:

1. Background and Significance
   a. Stats of rates of STD infection in the state of North Carolina

2. Purpose
   a. Theory of empowerment

3. Method
   a. Sample
   b. Setting
   c. Consent and interview process

4. Results
   a. Attributes
   b. Antecedents
   c. Consequences

5. Discussion
   a. Content for Mobile app development

6. Implications
   a. Locally, nationally and globally
First Primary Presenting Author

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Cornelius has expertise in the area of HIV prevention with African American adolescents and at risk women. She completed her PhD at Rush University Medical Center. Additionally she has completed post doctoral training at the University of Pennsylvania, American Nurses Association Ethnic Minority Program, American Psychological Association Cyber Mentoring Program and with the Center for AIDS Prevention Research at the University of California at San Francisco.

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**Author Summary:** N/A will not be presenting- although she was involved with the design and conceptualization of this study. She is a co-worker of Dr. Cornelius who has been a mentor to her.

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**Author Summary:** With over 10 years of university instructional, community and professional training experience in the areas of cultural diversity and inclusion I will offer tangible skills and methods that will improve Diversity and Inclusion Health of your organization. My passion is assisting organizational communities in creating space for brave conversations about inclusion that will lead to meaningful solutions with in companies.