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published by the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. A free, open access, expedited, peer-reviewed journal of the population sciences, published regularly on the web since July 1999.

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Volumes

Articles

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Information for **Authors**

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Sexual behaviour patterns in South Africa and their association with the spread of HIV: insights from a mathematical model

Date Received: 18 Feb 2009

Date Published: 10 Sep 2009

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VOLUME 21 - ARTICLE 11

PAGES 289 - 340

http://www.demographic-research.org/volumes/vol21/11/

doi: 10.4054/DemRes.2009.21.11



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21-11 Appendices

웹 21-11 SupplementaryData

Abstract

This paper aims to quantify the effects of different types of sexual risk behaviour on the spread of HIV in South Africa. A mathematical model is developed to simulate changes in numbers of sexual partners, changes in marital status, changes in commercial sex activity and changes in the frequency of unprotected sex over the life course. This is extended to allow for the transmission of HIV, and the model is fitted to South African HIV prevalence data and sexual behaviour data. Results suggest that concurrent partnerships and other non-spousal partnerships are major drivers of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa.

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Keywords
AIDS/HIV, sexual behavior, simulation model, South Africa

Word count (Main text) 11030

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[Back to previous page]