Original

# Metaphors Undergraduates of Jimma University Communicate by: Conceptualizations of Gender and Promiscuity [1]

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*Abstract*

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*The study attempted to assess how the language undergraduates of Jimma University (JU) use in sex discourse shapes their perception of gender and promiscuity. Qualitative data were gathered from 4 focus group discussions, 35 key informants (20 males, 15 females), selected through snow-ball sampling.  Content analysis was used to analyze the data. The analysis revealed that respondents mainly use metaphors not only to construct men as dominating and women as dominated class in sexual relationships, but also to perpetuate promiscuity.  The study concluded that language use is a critical factor to aggravate undergraduates' risky sexual behavior.  The study recommended programs that foster safer sex in college context to emphasize gender focused communication activities that could help young students question their assumptions of gender, promiscuity, and language use.  Future research on sex discourse and intervention among undergraduates should seek more on how language use in sexual communication positively shapes their perception of gender and promiscuity.*

*Keywords*: Gender / Metaphor / Promiscuity

## 1. Introduction
### 1.1 Background to the Study

Despite much awareness raising campaigns and stabilized status of the pandemic in the past decade, risky sexual practices such as multiple sexual partnership and inconsistent use of condoms are still widely practiced (FDRE, 2010).  Such behavioral change problems may indicate that HIV/AIDS prevention is still a serious challenge to deal with.  Health communication scholars (like D'Silva, Walker, and Hart, 2008) agree that prevention efforts must take cultural and intercultural differences into account in attempting to bring behavioral changes.  College young males and females, who are the

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focus group of this study, have their own culture of sexual practices such as multiple sex partnerships. To escape the stigma attributed to the cultural taboo, they communicate such practices using their own different language or terminologies—metaphors and jargons. To gain an understanding of their sex culture, for example, how they conceptualize or perceive promiscuity and gender, it is important to analyze the language they use in their communication about sexual matters, which is the focus of this study.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Among youngsters in Ethiopia, the most exposed group to HIV/AIDS are between the ages 15 to 24 (FMOH, 2006; see USAID, 2012), which comprises one-fifth of the entire population of the country (Getinet, 2009). Most undergraduates, the focus group of this study, are in their early twenties. Compared to those with lower schooling, students from secondary or higher education are much more vulnerable to the pandemic. As compared to young men, young women are particularly susceptible to HIV infection (FDRE, 2010; EDHS[4], 2011; USAID, 2012).

The practice of having multiple sexual partners, which is attributed to culture, is the main cause, among many underlying factors, to the speedy prevalence of the pandemic among the youth in Ethiopia (MOH, 1998, as cited in Govindusamy, Aklilu, & Hailom, 2002, p. 4; Rahel et al. 2003; See also EDHS, 2011). "In Africa, the stereotyped sexual norms and peer pressure encourage young males to prove their manhood and to enhance their social status by having multiple sex partners" (Haddas & Egamberdi, 2007, p.11). Further, there is inadequate or insufficient behavioral change communication about sexual matters, which in turn is attributed to sensitiveness of the issue and …cultural taboos around openly discussing sex and sexuality" (HCP, 2007, p. 7). The findings of Niguisse et al. (1999) and Getinet (2009) show that young people dislike openly discussing sexuality because such discussions maybe considered taboo in their cultures.

The culture especially socialized young women to be submissive and not to discuss sex openly, which discourages them from refusing sex or insisting on condom use (Haddas & Egamberdi, 2007, p. 11). So, to escape the stigma attributed to the cultural taboo, young people communicate sexual matters indirectly, using their own different language or jargons (Selikow, 2004; Undie, Crichton, & Zulu, 2007; Getinet, 2009). But, as far as the researcher's knowledge is concerned, how their language use/preference shapes their perception of promiscuity and gender is understudied. Thus, understanding the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS problem and the existing gap with respect to data on language use on sexual matters, this study aims to achieve the following main objective:

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[4] Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey

### 1.3  Main Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate how language use (e.g. metaphors, jargons, etc.) in sex discourse shapes Jimma University undergraduates' perception of gender and promiscuity.

### 1.4  Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

i.    to reveal the students' perception of gender through the terminologies they use in sex discourse.

ii.   to uncover the students' perception of promiscuity through the terminologies they use in sex discourse.

### 1.5  The Scope of the Study

The study is delimited to investigate terminologies Jimma University undergraduate regular students of year one to four in the academic year of 2012 use to describe promiscuous male and female students.

## 2.  Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Metaphor Theory of Lakoff and Johnsons frames the study.  The fundamental tenet of the theory is that metaphor operates at the level of thinking; they *reveal thinking* (Lakoff & Johnsons**,** 1980).  Metaphors link two conceptual domains, the 'source' domain and the 'target' domain.  The target domain (which is relatively abstract) is understood in terms of the source domain (which is relatively concrete) (Kovecses, 2002).  According to the theory, to understand how metaphors are used to assign meaning, it is important to see the shared attribution between the two domains.  For instance, in the context of HIV/AIDS, the shared attribution to both *HIV/AIDS* [target domain] and *fire* [source domain] is that both are destructives.  Likewise, the shared attribution to both *females* and *flower* is that both are soft.  Therefore, it may be possible to say, in these examples, metaphorically, that HIV/AIDS IS FIRE and WOMEN ARE FLOWERS.  The metaphor thus establishes a bi-directional relationship between the two conceptual domains (Rata et al.*,* n.d.; Kobia, 2008).  The source domain enables us to get an insight in to how people perceive HIV and females, in these examples.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory is used to frame this study for three main reasons.  For one thing, it gives an insight into what college students think about gender and promiscuity.  Moreover, metaphors can help people to talk about difficult, emotionally intense or uncommon experiences, and to make indirect reference to topics that are not openly discussed.  In African societies as sex is a tabooed subject "speakers tend to use existing metaphors or create new ones where they are not readily available" (Kangira, Mashiri, & Gambahay, 2007, p. 32). Furthermore, metaphors echo the voice of marginal groups by disclosing the gap between the dominant (e.g. men) and dominated or belittled groups (e.g. females), and just to put it in Altman's (1990, p.504) words: "Metaphors […]

are part of a power structure (or struggle), part of the way in-groups of various sorts delineate [define] their discursive boundaries, name and expel the other, express and reinforce their bonds, their sense of being 'at home' with each other".

For example, in a conceptual metaphor a WOMAN IS FOX, fox is a source domain and woman is target domain. Among others, one shared attribution to both could be that they are hunted. "The fox is an animal that men chase, and hunt, and kill for sport. If women are conceived of as foxes, then they are conceived of as prey that is fun to hunt" (Baker, 1981 as cited in Rodriguez, 2009, p. 91). Men hunt them for sex, and sex is concealed in terms of hunting. Hence, SEX IS HUNTING" (Chamizo & Sa'nchez, 2000 as cited in Rodriguez, 2009). Therefore, the conceptual metaphor "WOMAN IS FOX" indicates women's subordinate position in sexual relationships, a marginal group.

Further, in a conceptual metaphor WOMEN ARE PLANTS, women are conceptualized as a soft flower, but not as big tree, "because the flower features mapped onto women are perceptually enjoyable for men (beauty, softness of touch, etc.)"(Rata et al., n.d. p.797). Here, the "social value" given to women is that they are objects of enjoyment for men.

What is more, it is important to note that some researchers (e.g., Kobia, 2008) used this theory to study metaphors on HIV/AIDS in the context of Africa (Kenya). Hence, in this study, the conceptual metaphor approach is potentially very enlightening as a tool for identifying terminologies undergraduates use to portray sexually active (especially promiscuous) males and females, and for understanding the underlying meaning of these expressions.

## 3.    Methods

### 3.1  Participants

The focus group discussion (FGD) participants were 35 informants (20 males, 15 females), from first year to fourth year. Most of them were residing in the university. The mean age for the men and the women were 21.6 and 20.6 respectively. They were from different regions: Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, SNNPR[5], Addis Ababa, and Diredawa. They were affiliated to religions such as Orthodox Christianity, Protestant Christianity, Jehovah's Witness and Islam, and. They were from five colleges: College of Medicine and Public Health, College of Social Sciences and Law, College of Natural Sciences, College of Engineering and Technology, and College of Business and Economics. Students from College of Agriculture and Kito-Furdisa campus did not participate in the study because of their relative remoteness from the main campus. They were also from urban and rural. Most of the subjects were active participants during the FGD. Reportedly and implicitly, majority of the male and some of the female participants were sexually active (experienced), and this strengthens the dependability of the data. Content analysis was used to identify patterns and themes from the transcripts of the group interview. For

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[5] Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State

further information on procedure of data analysis, the FGD, inclusion and exclusion criteria, dependability, data collection procedure,  please see Appendix A.

## 4.  Results

This section analyzes the FGD data.  It uncovers how metaphors are used to construct marginalized social group (female) and dominating social group (male), in sexual relationships, which underpin promiscuity among college students.

### 4.1 Animate and Inanimate Metaphors to Portray Woman as Inferior to Man (emphasizes on promiscuous females)

#### 4.1.1  Animate terms to describe women who are desired and less preferred for sexual relation

Among Jimma University undergraduates, females who are desired for sex are often conceptualized as animals of some sort, like chicken.  "In English the very word bird is defined as a girl or a young woman …, and commonly used as a term of endearment … and associates with symbol of love", says Rodriguez (2009, p. 86). According to Oxford Advanced Dictionary (2006), a chick refers to a baby bird, especially a baby chicken, a way to refer to a young woman.  Participants of both sex (males and females) in the FGDs repeatedly used the word "chick" to refer to females who are in sexual relationship or desired for sexual relationship.  Male respondent08, from Male FGD01 observes: "He [my friend] advised me not to make sex without condom, even in rural areas if I get a *chick...*" (Italics mine)**.**  This shows that females are seen as small domestic animals.  Chick (young bird) is powerless, easily slaughtered and maybe roasted to satisfy the hunger of their slaughterers who are more powerful than them.  Hunger is a drive for food, and desire is hunger (Lakoff, 1987).  So, to satisfy their sexual desire (hunger) men enjoy females.  The underlying assumption is young females, particularly who are powerless, are subjects of sexual pleasure to satisfy the sexual desire of males.

On the contrary, to portray a philanderer female who is less preferred for committed sexual relationship, college students use the term *zebra* ("የማዳ አህያ" /jəmedaahj:a/, in Amharic).  As it is well known, wild donkeys (zebras) perform sex in savanna, a treeless land.  The female zebra advertizes herself publicly without shame when she desires sex.

> Zebra performs sex publicly. It does not care. It is uncivilized or uncontrolled. There is no shame with it. Likewise, if anybody asks her for sex anywhere, she [such a woman] says ok. *[Resp16, Male FGD02]*[6]

Similarly, a promiscuous woman who is not desired for committed sexual relationship is associated with *bitch*, a female dog.  This animal, unlike domestic or pet

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[6] Respondent 16, Male Focus Group Discussion, group 2

animals (e.g. cats), does not enjoy a privileged position in most parts of Ethiopia, may be for its lusty (or licentious) sexual behavior. During dogs' mating season, it is common to see a female dog being escorted by a large number of male dogs. Likewise, among JU students, a female student with different sexual partners is perceived as a bitch. She is interpreted as a malicious, spiteful, coarse woman.

> **[IntM01[7]]**: *What does it mean when a woman is called a 'bitch'?*
> [**RespM02**]: It means a female student who practices sex with different males, [who] is easily accessible at any time by any man. It means she is a prostitute. *[Male FGD01]*

In addition to animal metaphors, FGD participants also reported using *inanimate* metaphors to describe promiscuous females. The metaphors indicate that women in such a relationship are labeled differently, as those who are: *much desired*, *available for men with higher status, available for all men, easy to come easy to go, with higher sexual desire, and less/or not preferred.*

### 4.1.2 Inanimate terms to describe women who are desired for sexual relation

#### a. Inanimate terms to describe women who are much desired for sexual relationship

To describe females who are highly desired for sexual relationship, college male students use different terminologies such as **"iPhone"**. Hence, such females are perceived as *mobile phone*. The latest mobile phone with a high-resolution display takes attention of people. Those who possess it feel proud and different, when people admire it. By the same token, males who are seen with well dressed attractive females feel different and proud. Evidence, with its flavor, comes from male participant01.

> For example, if I can afford a good 'iPhone', I want to have it. If I had had an 'i Phone' a year before, everybody would have turned back to glance at it. Everybody does not have that 'iPhone', does it? Likewise [while you are walking with] a well dressed woman, even if she were ugly, everybody would turn back and look at her. I do not think there is anyone who hates that attraction. *[Respondent01, Male FGD01]*

The other expression college male students use to describe a sexually attractive female is **chocolate** (all informants agree)**.** Here the female is linked to chocolate which is chew and eaten as a sweet candy. She is portrayed as a flavor that is added to cakes or other foods. So the sex practiced with a woman of one's desire is a flavor to males' life. Hence, females are portrayed as flavors that add pleasure to the life of males.

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[7] Male interviewer (code 01)

### b. Inanimate terms to describe females who are available for men with higher status

Some women involve in multiple relationship may be because of their desire of riches and high status. Such a woman who cheapens herself, by selling herself especially to sugar daddies, men who are by far older than herself, is perceived as *materialist, friends with benefit,* and *a woman with two fathers.*

> **[RespM19]:** A woman who dates out with sugar daddies is called 'materialist' and **'**friend with benefit'. What she wants is not love, but the money and the status of the men. *[Male FGD02]*
>
> **[RespF14]:** If she hooks out with sugar daddies, she is said that 'she has two fathers'. One is her biological father. *[Female FGD02]*

Females who prioritize money in (multiple) relationships are also perceived as a *sack of grain.* A sack erects when it gets something inside and cannot stand by itself otherwise. Mapping this characteristic to a female who stays in a relationship when she gets money, but dampens her partner when he encounters economic problem, they compare her to a **sack of grain**.

> **[RespM16]:** A female and a sack do not erect unless they possess something. Tomorrow she dampens you if you do have nothing. *[Male FGD02]*

### c. Inanimate terms to describe females who are available for all men

Some women involve in multiple relationship may be because of their basic needs. To label a woman who is easily accessible for sex, college students use different inanimate terms such as *single dinner, ten bucks, public, common course*, and other metaphors. Single dinner is one of the terms used to describe a female who is easily accessible to have sex at a low price. The report given by participant03, from Female FGD01, reveals this. She explains: "[They call her] And-erat ("አንድ እራት" /ʔ$^{and}$ ʔ$^{rat}$/), that means **single dinner**. A man can do whatever he likes by inviting her only one dinner".

The other similar expression that is used to depict easily accessible women as a cheap commodity is **ten bucks**. With such a female, a male can have sex by giving her a little amount of money. One of the female participants says: "Ten bucks/dollar means she is cheap, easily accessible". *[RespondentF01, Female FGD01]*

**Public** is the other metaphorical expression used to portray a woman with many sex partners or who is accessible to every man. Something public is a thing that may not be given care, respect, and easily available. In JU, a female student that is assumed to be having sex with many males in and out of the campus is called **public**. This woman is disrespected by both sexes. Her end is like used— and— thrown public property, which is less wanted and preferred. The evidences from two male FGD participants support this claim:

> **[IntM01]**: *How is a woman with more than one sex partner perceived among JU Students?*

**[RespM06]***:* A woman with many boyfriends is [also] called 'public'. For example, if   someone says that 'I like this girl', the other one says, 'please leave her, she is public'. *[Male FGD01]*

 **[RespM13]:** If someone wants to gratify his sexual desire [and is looking for a partner], it is said that 'give her a call, she is public'. *[Male FGD02]*

By the same token, a woman in multiple sexual relationships is perceived as **common property of two friends.** There is a time when two friends share one female. This happens especially when they are intoxicated.  In such a context, there is a possibility of having unsafe sex which can result in anxiety.  Illustrating this danger is the experience of some students:

**[RespM17]:** Once, I and my friend had sex with one woman.  Then we were intoxicated.  We argued a lot about whom to f**k her first.  Since I had only one condom, I said I have to f**ck her first; he also said that he had to be the first to f**k her.  However, I did it first using a condom, but he did it without, because he did not have sensation.  After that he worried a lot. *[Male FGD02]*

**[RespM01]:** I know two friends who had sex with the same female; I think they took the leaf (hashish) of Shashmene. *[Male FGD01]*

**[RespM16]:** When I tell my closer friend about her (my partner's) beauty and sexually toughness, he tried his best to roast her.  I left her for him because our relationship is not a committed one. *[Male FGD02]*

Another term college students use to depict a woman who is available to every man comes from academic course.  She is associated to a **common course** that is taken by all undergraduates and can be added anytime.  This can be seen from the explanation given by a participant from Female FGD01, to a female interviewer who is coded as **[IntF02]**.

**[IntF02]**: *Why is she called common course?*

[**RespF03**]: To show that everybody takes her just as common course.  If I[he] cannot get her now, I [he] will add her next semester.  That means she can be accessed any time. *[Female FGD01]*

The other inanimate expression that is used to show that women are passive subjects, easily accessible, and controllable is '**pole**.' Someone can bet that s/he can find a pole any time where it is stationed.  Likewise, a female student who is seen standing with different male students and is easily accessible any time one wants her for sex is called a pole.  The data given below shows this.

**[IntF02]**: *How is a woman with more than one sex partner perceived among JU students?*

**[RespF05]**: As a pole.  Pole means a woman who stations at one place with every man. Every man can go and stand there [nearby a pole].  Even there are male students who bet on her.  A student bets on her to show that he can stop [while she is walking] and talk something to her.  To undermine that all women are easily controllable, powerless, and they are under the power of men, they bet for stopping her. *[Female FGD01]*

**Everywhere** is an additional term used to describe a woman who is accessible to every man, as was reported by another participant from female FGD01. The term shows how such a woman is perceived as easily accessible for sex at any place, for everyone. A female respondent02 says: "They also call her everywhere". *[Female FGD01]*

There is also another term that degrades women who involve in multiple partnerships or who are accessible to every man. College students, especially who come from rural areas, associate such females with roasted grain on a tray or serving dish (yesefedkolo, *የሰፈድቆሎ*$^{/jəsəfedk'ɔlɔ/}$). As roasted grain can be easily accessible to any person, so is such a woman. This is beautifully put in the poem of male respondent16, from Male FGD02:

እወድሽ ነበር/ʔ$^{wədəʃənəbərə}$ አሁን ጠላሁሽ/ʔ$^{aʊnt'əl:aʊʃə}$
Ewedish nebere aun telaush,
እንደ ሰፈድ ቆሎ/ʔ$^{ndəsəfed/k'ɔlɔ}$ ማንም ዘገነሽ$^{/manəmzəgənəʃə/}$
End sefed kollo manim zegnesh. *[MaleFGD02]*

Meaning, I used to love you, but I hate you now, because everybody has swept you like roasted grain on a tray.

**[IntM01]:** *How is she associated to roasted grain on a tray?*
**[RespM16]:** Because everybody stretches his hand and sweeps it from a tray [so is she]. *[Male FGD02]*

Easily accessible females in short term or non-committed relationship are also perceived as **non-fasting food**. During non-fasting season, the followers of Ethiopian Orthodox Church, for example, enjoy meat, but during the fasting time, for example the days before Easter or "Lent", which are believed to be days on which Jesus Christ suffered, they abstain from eating meat and other animal products. Likewise, students consider Monday to Friday and exam weeks/days as fasting days [suffering or tension days] because they are very engaged with academic activities; as a result, they run short of time to practice sex. Therefore, these busy days are perceived as fasting season for sex. But the weekend days or days after exam are perceived as non-fasting days. As the Orthodox Christianity followers enjoy meat when the fasting days are over, college students enjoy sex during the weekends and after exam. Hence, when male students want to have sex during these days, with easily accessible woman, they say "lifesigibat" (*"ልፈስግባት"*$^{/^i'fəs:igib:at/}$) to mean let me enjoy her. This shows how a female student is perceived as an edible meat to satisfy the sexual desire of males. Male respondent06 explains:

For example, on Saturdays and after exam days, when students want to have sex, they say ልፈስግ ('lifesig'). Since they are busy or get frustrated the other days [Monday to Friday], to release the tension they say 'ልፈስግባት' ('lifesigibat', to mean let me enjoy her). *[RespM06, Male FGD01]*

### d.  Inanimate terms to describe easy to come easy to go females

Some women change sex partners very frequently maybe primarily because they are sick of being confined to one partner. Such women are labeled as easy to come and

easy to go. It seems that for such women "variety is a spice of life". Terms used to describe such women include **berari** ("በራሪ"/bərari/), to mean flyer, for example. As a flyer or leaflet moves frequently to a large number of people in a short period, an easy to come and easy to go female frequently practices sex with different men.

> **[RespF13]:** They call her 'berari'(flyer). *[Female FGD02]*
> [**RespM06**]: To mean she wanders here and there. *[Male FGD01]*

**Pendulum** is the other inanimate term used to portray easy to come and easy to go females, with multiple sex partners. Pendulum moves to and fro; it is restless, does not stay at a place. Similarly, a female student who does not stick to one partner, or who has many sex partners, in short time, is labeled as pendulum:

> **[RespM16]:** She is seen as a pendulum. *[Male FGD02]*
> **[RespF02]**: They call her pendulum. *[Female FGD01]*
> **[RespM06]:** Unstable woman, who wanders here and there or does not stay with one partner, inclines by calculating her benefit. *[Male FGD01]*

Additionally, to portray an easy to come and easy to go female who has a chance of reaching different partners, students use the term **lottery**.

> A woman in a multiple relationship rolls like a lottery that reaches different people. One man may get her once, but she can get many men. *[RespM16, Male FGD02]*

**'Kindbwanyelachech'**("ቅንድቢን የላጨች" /k'indibwanjəlac':əc:/), literarily, someone who has shaved her eye-brow, is an additional expression college students use to describe an easy to come and easy to go female, who is never ashamed of being involved frequently in multiple relationships or changing partners frequently.

> Kindbwanyelachech (ቅንድቢን የላጨች) means she is uncontrolled; she does not care about anybody [when dating out with different partners]. *[RespM16, Male FGD02]*

### e. *Inanimate terms to describe females with high sexual desire*

Some women involve in multiple relationships maybe primarily because of their higher or extraordinary sexual desire. As almost every respondent agrees, such a woman is called **kortamit** (*"ቆርጣሚት"*/k'ɔrt'amit/) means a woman who chews well (demands more during love making) until she gets satisfaction. They also call her **ateramash** (*"አተራማሽ"* /ʔatəramaʃ/) to mean one who messes up by making love with different sex partners. These expressions connote a woman who is not easily satisfied with one sex partner. The explanations are evident in the following data:

> **[RespM 02]**: They use the term 'kortamit'. *[Male FGD01]*
> **[RespF12]:** She is called 'Ateramash' (who messes up). *[Female FGD02]*
> **[IntM01]:** *What does it mean?*
> **[RespM06]:** To mean that she is very active during sexual episode. She does not get satisfaction with one man. She wanders here and there [for the sake of getting more satisfaction]. *[MaleFGD01]*

### *f. Inanimate terms to describe less preferred and not preferred females*

College students also have degrading inanimate terms to portray women who are less or not preferred for sexual relationships. Females who are less preferred in multiple relationships are perceived as *bench*, a metaphor that is taken from sport. For example, in soccer, a reserved player sits on a bench and waits to substitute someone, in case there is a need for change. Similarly, a less important sex partner that is reserved for a rainy season (reserved for another time when a real need comes) is called bench. When responding to the question: *What does it mean by 'she is a bench'?*

> [**RespM02**]: She is an exchange or extra sex partner. When one of the partners becomes reluctant to continue in the relationship or when they quarrel or when their relationship comes to its end, they say: 'I think you do have a bench. It is why you feel overconfident'. *[Male FGD01]*
>
> [**RespF11**]: They call her 'bench' to show that she is a reserved partner. *[Female FGD02]*

Further, for describing females who are not desired or preferred for sex, college students use expressions such as borko (*"ቦርኮ"/bɔrkɔ/*). Students apply such terms especially to a female student who does not respect herself.

> [**IntM01**]: *What is more?*
> [**RespM06**]: Borko.
> [**IntM01**]: *Meaning?*
> [**RespM06**]: It means a careless person who does not respect herself. She is 'borko' means she does not refuse [any] sexual invitation. You do for her what she wants and then have sex with her. *[Male FGD01]*

Moreover, to depict a woman in multiple sexual relationships, but not desired for sex, college students use the term **'popo'** (*"ፖፖ"/pɔp:ɔ/*)— toilet and urine bucket. As a toilet and urine bucket have a very pungent odder that deters people, so is a female with many partners. Put simply, she is perceived as a repulsively untidy woman, as a bucket of sperm, garbage of dirt that repels males from visiting her.

> [**RespM19**]: A woman with multiple partners is perceived as toilet and urine dish, a bucket of sperm. *[Male FGD02]*
>
> [**RespM13**]: If a woman has many sex partners they call her urine bucket (popo, ፖፖ). They say this because all men go and urinate in her, everybody uses her. This expression degrades her. *[Male FGD02]*

There is also another term given to a woman in multiple relationships, but not desired for sex—condom wearer (**condom lebash**, *"ኮንዶም ለባሽ" /kənədamləbaʃ/*). The term discourages multiple relationships and condom use, but encourages committed relationships, according to the participants. Such a female student assumes lowest social status and is often received with hostility by other females and males in the university.

> They, her female friends, call her condom lebash (ኮንዶም ለባሽ) because going out with many partners compels her to wear condom. They say to her: 'instead of

being tensed with condom, why do you not have just one faithful friend?' Such expression discourages them from wearing condom. *[Resp16, Male FGD02]*

What is more, there are some other women who are not desired to have sex with. They are categorized into three groups—married[8], pregnant[9], and those who induced abortion[10]. Humiliating Amharic expressions used to describe them involve: (see foot note).

Such expressions could fragile such women's self-respect or safer sex negotiation confidence. Most participants from Male FGD02 agree with both participant16 who said that the terms could have psychological impact- discourage them, worsen their situation, and male participant18 who adds: "It discourages her [them]; weakens' her [their] confidence. And to overcome such heartening influence, building self confidence is important. Male respondent19 suggests: "These terms are discouraging, but to resist such pressure, personal confidence is important". *[Male FGD02]* Many students ignore and stigmatize them. As a result, such women leave the campus and become prostitute; they do not go to their parents, according to most participants of Male FGD01.

### 4.2 Animate and Inanimate Metaphors to Portray Man as Superior to Woman

In the preceding analysis, we have seen how college students (males and females) use metaphors to perceive or construct women as powerless, weak, and subordinate class. The terms reveal students' (males and females) negative attitude towards promiscuous women. Now, the analysis will switch to show how college students use metaphors to portray promiscuous males as powerful agent to control women—in short to construct dominant group. Unlike the women, promiscuous male students are perceived positively by both male and female students, overall. The data generated from the FGDs indicate that college students use metaphors primarily to empower men to form multiple sexual relationships. Put simply, they use animate and inanimate metaphors to portray promiscuous men as desired for sexual relationships.

### *4.2.1   Animate metaphors to describe promiscuous men*

College students label men in multiple relationships as powerful agents to access women of their desire and as powerful predators with voracious sexual appetite that can easily make game on women.

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[8] Arogitwa ("አሮጊቷ" /arᵊgitwa/) , **mammy** ( "ማሚ" /mami/) to mean 'the old woman, **shntuakeskezual** ( "ሽንቱአቀዝቀዛል" /ʃintwakᵊzk'izwa'/) to say her sexual desire has declined.

[9] **kufbilalech** ( "ኩፍቢላለች" /kuf:bilalᵊc:/) that is she is swollen as risen dough, she is doing her further degree, **Quatralech** ("ቋጥራለች" /kwat'ralᵊc:/) to mean she has tied a fetus in her womb, "ጫነች" /c'anᵊc:/ to say she **uploaded**, and **yabekalat** ("ያበቃላት" /jabᵊk'al:at/) to mean useless.

[10]   **Motor aworedech** ("ሞተርአወረደች"/mᵊtᵊrᵃwᵊr:ᵊdᵊc:/), **aragfach** ("አራገፈች"/ᵃr:ag:ᵊfᵊc:/), and **asfenterech** ("አስፈነጠረች"/asfᵊnᵊt':ᵊrᵊc:/), that is to say she has removed or ejected defective motor, to mean fetus.

i)    *Animate terms used to describe men who easily get access to / attract several women*

*Mysterious.* Among college students, a man who has access to any woman he desires for sex is perceived as mysteries or supernatural, for example magic.  Magic is a term given to a man who can attract any woman he desired for sex.  As a magical person is believed to have an extraordinary power to apparently influence the course of events by using mysteries, a man who hangs out with many partners is perceived as having an extraordinary power to attract women.  This presupposes that women are portrayed as deceptively controlled or attracted objects to powerful men.  A participant reports: "They also call him magic"**.  [RespM20, Male FGD02]**

*Scientist (researcher).* A womanizer or a philanderer who has access to different women is exalted, according to the FGD participants.  He is portrayed as a scientist who studies about chicks or young women.  He is named "chickologist", where "ology" is a study.  A scientist or a researcher always or usually investigates different aspects of a topic under a study.  After answering one research question, he proceeds to another.  Here it is presupposed that women who are used for sex are like field of study that can be manipulated or exploited as wanted by males.  Conversely, when a woman has more than one partner, she is undermined, despised, and considered boring.  A participant from male FGD01 states:

> A man who knows many chicks is called 'chickologist', a man who studies about females.  When a man has more than one partner, the girls scramble for him.  They assume that he has something special, an expert of sex.  He feels proud, but the woman [who has many sex partners] loses her respect.  *[RespM02, Male FGD01]*

*Nosey and shooter.*  Womanizers are portrayed as having an extraordinary sense of smell, to detect different women who can satisfy their sexual desire.  College students call such a partner using the expression he has long nose (**rajimafinchaalew**, *"ረጅም አፍንጫ አለው" /rədʒimafincʼaal:əw/*).  Further, men who have access to many partners are called **shooter** (**atki**, *"አጥቂ" /atʼkʼi/*).  The connection is that, as shooters shoot as many balls as they can to get high scores, womanizers date out with many females to get many sex partners.

> **[RespM15]:** If a man dates out many women, he is said that 'he has long nose' ('rajimafinchayalew', *"ረጅምአፍንጫአለው"* ).
> **[IntM01]:** *Why he is named that way?*
> **[RespM15]:** [Because] he gets many women using smelling.  *[Male FGD02]*
> **[RespM19]:** When a foot ball player shoots many goals, he is called 'shooter'.  By the same token, a man who dates out many women is called 'shooter' ('atki', 'አጥቂ').  *[Male FGD02]*

*Tebash/roaster.* This is another term given to male students who easily access different women.  Roasted meat is sweet and good for health.  The roaster (agent) has a power on the food (object) he roasts or fries.  The food cannot protect itself from being roasted. When male students have sexual intercourse with females, they say **'tebeskuat'** (*"ጠበስኳት" /tʼəb:əskwat/*), just to say "I cooked her", and his friends call him "Tebash"*/tʼəbaʃ/*,

to mean roaster/cook. Here, it is thought that females are like food or meat to be roasted/cooked, to satisfy the sexual desire of men, as desire is [a drive for] hunger. Consider the question and answer between an interviewer and a female participant.

> **[IntF02]**: *How is a man with more than one sex partner perceived among JU students?*
> **[RespF05]**:'Tebash' to mean that he is a cook. He cooks many women. *[Female FGD01]*

*Broker/persuader/JOKA.* Brokers have access to several customers. Most of the time, they act on the behalf of the seller. They also trade on behalf of their own account. By the same token, to portray a male student who can reach (get) many women for others and his own sexual desire, college students use the expression "broker" (delala$^{/dəlala/}$ ), and the meaning is shared by all male FGD participants. The expression also likens women with a commodity for sale.

> **[RespM16]:** He is called a 'broker'. When a man is seen with different women it is said that he arranges [them] for himself. *[Male FGD02]*
> **[RespM05]:** I know one experience. Once, my dorm-mate who loves but fears a female student gave much money to his friend and sent him to mediate (endijnijin, እንዲጅኒጅን$^{/ʔndidʒnədʒin/}$) them. After repeatedly communicated and spent time with the woman, instead of mediating, he [the mediator] took her for himself (loud unanimous group laughter). *[Male FGD 01]*

College students also use the term **JOKA** to refer to a man with more than one sex partner. Literally, the word means gifted woman ('a Hebrew word'). But, from the females' FGD, it was noticed that it is a male that is perceived as gifted to persuade women for having sex with. This presupposes that women are perceived comparatively weaker in their persuasion ability as far as sexual negotiations are concerned. Consequently, they are more likely to be exposed to sex related risks. The evidence comes from female participant02 (most Female FGD 2 members agree with the meaning):

> **[IntF02]:** *What do the males call him?*
> **[RespF03]:** 'Joka' to mean he is talkative. He can have access to a woman whom other males could not. He gets respect among men. He is exalted. *[Female FGD01]*

*Man as a cock.* A cock is polygamous. One of its roles is mounting hens for private or dual sexual benefit. It does this with as many hens as it can. Similarly, a man who is shared by many females in a multiple relationships is conceptualized as a **cock**, among college students.

> If he has got more than one sex partner, they call him cock (አውራዶሮ$^{/a:wuradɔrɔ/}$).
> *[RespF19, Female FGD02]*

### ii)     Animate terms to describe men with voracious sexual appetite

A man with voracious sexual desire is described as powerful and fear-inspiring predators that can easily hunt and enjoy their games, to satisfy their hunger, as shown below.

*Man as a shark and an eagle.* Shark is one of the most fear-inspiring marine animals. Its attack on its prey including humans is fatal. It is easily capable of swallowing a man. This gentle giant feeds on big and small fish, to satisfy its voracious appetite. Escaping from it is less likely, for its prey. Similarly, a man who hunts for different women, to satisfy his voracious sexual hunger, is portrayed as frightening carnivorous fish. He has a power to easily have access to women to satisfy his voracious sexual desire; as sexual desire is hunger (Lakoff, 1987). Likewise, eagles are portrayed as powerful raptors that easily seize their prey including small birds and fish with their strong feet and kill entirely with their beaks, to satisfy their ravenous desire for food. They hunt for food primarily via flight, using their keen senses, eyesight. By the same token, men with high sexual desire, who prey on women to gratify their sexual hunger, are portrayed as powerful birds which can easily snatch their prey, to satisfy their big appetite. Conversely, women are depicted as tiny fish and small birds that cannot escape from their predators, and as edible meat to satisfy the sexual hunger or appetite of the ferocious predator— man. Male participants from MaleFGD02 unanimously agree with respondent16:

> **[IntM01]:** *Why is a man in multiple relationships compared to shark and bird?*
> **[RespM16]:** Shark is a dangerous [marine] animal; it eats whatever it gets to satisfy its hunger. A bird also snatches (yetelfal, ይጠልፋል /jt'əlfal/) whatever it finds. *[Male FGD02]*

*Man as a wolf (tekula, "ተኩላ" /təkwlɑ/).* The other powerful hunter whose character is mapped to a womanizer with voracious sexual appetite is a **wolf**. Wolves are opportunistic predators that hunt large and small game such as deer and bison to satisfy their hunger, thanks to their large packs. Similarly, a man, with gluttonous sexual appetite, who is capable of going out with different women, is perceived as a wolf (all Male FGD02 members agree with the meaning). The presupposition is that women are portrayed as small game or hunted animal, for instance deer. Hence, the wolf metaphor shows the higher social hierarchy college male student belongs to in sexual relationship.

> A wolf hunts for sheep. Likewise a man with multiple partners hunts for different women. *[RespM17, Male FGD02]*

The other related metaphor is wolfam ("ዎልፋም"/wɔlfɑm/). Maybe it is the derivation of wolf, an animal perceived with extra ordinary sexual desire. The meaning of the word to the participant students is a man who is addicted to sex, a person who regularly practices sex. The term can also be applied to sexually addicted woman.

> They call him 'wolfam' ('ዎልፋም') to mean that he is addicted to sex. If a person regularly practices sex, he is enthusiastic about sex. For example, when the time for a night party, a time for 'wolf', arrives and students are ready to go to 'Genet

Hotel' and 'Elshadi Hotel', they say: 'the time for wolf has arrived'. If it is 1P.M., it is called 'AIRE' (taken from radio program). *[RespM06, Male FGD01]*

**[IntM01]:** *What is that?*

**[RespM04]**: 'AIRE' is a time for chat chewing or cigar smoking, in the afternoon, for addicted chat chewers and smokers. When it is said 'the time for AIRE has arrived', it means that chewers are ready to go for chewing chat. Likewise, time for the 'wolf' is a time for night party, time for sex for sexually addicted students'. *[Male FGD01]*

### 4.2.2   Inanimate metaphors to describe promiscuous men

#### i)   Inanimate terms for describing men who easily have access to several women

A powerful man who has an access to different women is also portrayed as powerful inanimate things such as fire and vehicle, for example.

*Man as a fire.* One of the inanimate metaphors given to a man in multiple relationships is **fire.** A little fire has the potential to multiply and consume so great wood land. When mapped to a man who has an access to several women, this character means that he is capable of adding and adding his sex partners, and to show his ability of doing so, college students portray him as a fire. By implication, as firewood facilitates the expansion of the fire, women empower their partner to add partner over partner hence they (females) are conceptualized as fire wood. Most participants, from Male FGD02, are in line with male respondent17:

They also call him fire (esat, እሳት/ʔˢɑt/). A few fires multiply and cover large area. Likewise, when one man practices sex with different women, he is called fire. *[RespM17, Male FGD02]*

*Man as a car with four wheels.*   An additional inanimate term given to a university male student who easily accesses many sex partners is **a car with four wheels**. Compared to a walking person, cars are faster to reach many places in short time. Likewise, to describe a swift male student who hooks out with many sex partners in short time, college students use the term a car with four wheels.

**[RespM19]:** A car with four wheels is fast. It does not lag, and so is such a man, I think so. *[Male FGD02]*

**[RespM20]:** Once while I was walking with my friend, participant19, we saw a beautiful woman walking in front of us. When we harassed her, she said: 'A campus student means a car with four wheels'. *[Male FGD02]*

*Man as a magnet.* Magnet is known for its power of attracting iron or steel. Metaphorically the word is used by college students to express a man that has a powerful attraction to opposite sex, as agreed by Male FGD02 participants. The expression presupposes that women are objects that are controlled by or attracted to powerful men. Male respondent20 reports: "They also call him magnet. He easily attracts women"**.** *[Male FGD02]*

As shown in the preceding analysis, college students use several animate and inanimate metaphors for appreciating promiscuous male students. Conversely, as is shown next, they lack of terminologies that undermine such behavior. This is not surprising, because peer pressure encourages young men to demonstrate their manhood and enhance their social status by forming multiple sexual relationships. Even if there is criticism, it comes from a few females. Females who hate males in such relationship call them **nomad** ("ዘላን"/zəl:ɑn/), to mean a person without good manners.

Basically, nomads are people or part of community who move from place to place with their animals to look for food. The term is used to label a male student that chases after different females. This presupposes that while males are perceived as food (sex) searchers to satisfy their sexual desire, as "sex is desire", females are conceptualized as food to satisfy the sexual desire of males. Female respondent01 states:

> In addition to his female friends, I think, it is important to know about his male associates, because, if his male friends have three or four sex partners, nothing makes him different. If they are zelan ("ዘላን"/zəl:ɑn/) [to mean womanizers/ philanderers, people without manner], so he is. *[Female FGD01]*

As the forgoing descriptions underscore, college students use several positive and negative terminologies to portray males and females in non-committed relationships. Such degrading terminologies can have both positive and negative influence on the sexual behavior of females and males in general, and females who are involved in multiple relationships in particular. This claim is evident in the view of male respondents 16 and 13.

> **[IntM01]:** *How do such terms influence them?*
> **[RespM16]:** Terms like toilet, sperm dish (popo, ፖፖ/pɔp:ɔ/), and zebra discourage them from practicing risky sexual behaviors. Conversely, it pressurizes them to practice safer sex. The terms criticize and ridicule them. Moreover, hearing something bad about her declines your sexual desire for her; so such terms promote safer sex. *[Male FGD02]*
> **[RespM13]:** I think some women with such conduct may attempt to show change of behavior. Some others may join the life of prostitute. When they see their friends make 200/300 birr per night, they may be tempted to join that life. *[Male FGD02]*
> **Group:** Nodded their heads with agreement.

The views of some female participants support the view of male respondent 13. For example, according to female respondent04, from Female FGD01, if a female student who is involved in multiple sexual relationships feels proud of her practice, such degrading terms may not as such influence her to show change of behavior. But if she feels embarrassed of her risky behavior, according to female respondent15, who is from Female FGD02, the terms may discourage her from practicing such a risky sexual behavior.

Such humiliating expressions could also zip females' mouths from expressing their sexual desire or experience. From the descriptions given above, sexually active females especially those with many sex partners are stigmatized, silenced, dehumanized,

and their future of getting life-long partner is jeopardized. Such silence can expose them to risks related to sex, and the silence could be attributable to culture. This is evident in the narration of a male informant:

> As I think, students who do not discuss safe sex are more likely exposed to risky sexual practices. Even most of our 'chicks' do not tell saying 'we have boy friends', even if they do have. From the very beginning a woman wants the relationship not to be revealed; she wants it to be concealed. Whatever happens, they want it to be established without others knowledge. Because [in our case], the culture and the way people speak do not guarantee privacy. If the privacy is not confidential, it is damaging. In the Western countries people are open and the risk is less. However, in our context, only a few are open. *[Respondent 01, Male FGD01]*

Respondent01's saying can be strengthened by the following data: "After sex, American women say 'thank you', French women say 'please do it again', and Ethiopian women say 'please do not tell anybody'". *[Respondent02, Male FGD01]*

From the data, we can see how much free and open are American and especially French women to express their sexual pleasure or satisfaction. On the contrary, from the data as well as the stereotype, a lot can be said about Ethiopian women's anxiety in relation to communicating their sexual practices.

Yet, as the male FGD01 revealed, women express their feeling freely at one instance—during sexual episode or intercourse. The language they use during such event reveals how much they become open. Male respondent02 seasons with salt or flavor his narration:

> I know one joke. A husband and wife have seven dark [colored] children. Once, the friend of the wife told her the secret of producing light [colored] children, saying: 'If you have non-penetrative sex, at the entrance of the vagina, you will have light [colored] baby'. The wife told the revealed secret to her husband and he agreed to have a non-penetrative sex. Then, while the couple were having non-penetrative sex, at the mouth of the vagina, and when the woman's feeling reached maximum, she changed her mind and said: አጥቁረው /ɑt'ik'urəw/, አጥቁረው /ɑt'ik'urəw/, አጥቁረው /ɑt'ik'urəw/ (atikurew, atikurew, atikurew), [literally 'make it black, make it black, and make it black']. The implication is that, once the sexual intercourse has been started, females are free to express their feeling. They need to quench/satisfy or reach orgasm since their sexual desire takes longer time. *[Respondent02, Male FGD01]*

## 5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the language undergraduates use in sex discourse shapes their perception of gender and promiscuity. The finding clearly shows that college students use metaphors to construct two different classes—the dominator class (men) and the dominated class (women). Women are conceptualized or signified as powerless animates (animals) and inanimate (commodities) through the

vehicle of metaphorical terms or expressions. On the other hand, males are perceived as powerful agent to control women, dominant group in sexual relationships, as powerful predators with voracious sexual appetite that can easily make game on women. The subordinate and inferior position given to females, and exalted and dominating position assigned to males not only encouraged the latter to indulge in risk behavior, but also gave them the privilege of perpetuating risky sexual practices such as promiscuity as well as HIV, and the former to be victims of these practices— unwanted pregnancy, abortion, as well as HIV. The finding agrees with Rata et al. (n.d.), Lakoff (1987), Haddas and Egamberdi (2007), and Rodriguez (2009) who reported that men use metaphors to dominate women. The finding is also in line with Amaro (1995) and Amaro and Raj (2000) who argued that sexual relationship between men and women is established on inequality. The finding's implications are twofold. For one thing, such unequal power relationships impact significantly on the ability of women to avoid unsafe sex. For the other thing, fighting the pandemic requires balance of gender power in sexual relationship.

Previous community based research (Hailom et al., 2004) reported that multiple sexual relationships are widely practiced in secret in Ethiopia. Using metaphors the subjects of the study communicate by, this study revealed the underling factor behind the practice. Such risky sexual practice is attributed to their perception of promiscuity. For the subjects of the study men's promiscuity is perceived as risk free, normal, and pleasure that desired or attractive gentle men hunt for, and men who are not involved in such relationship are perceived as abnormal—a person who has missed one of life's great pleasures. The finding agrees with Selikow (2004), who reported that a man who is not involved in multiple sexual relationships is perceived not as a "real man". The finding also supports Haddas and Egamberdi (2007, p.11) who said: "In Africa, the stereotyped sexual norms and peer pressure encourage young males to prove their manhood and enhance their social status by having multiple sex partners". The finding explains why young men do not easily show change of behavior as far as promiscuity is concerned.

Conversely, females' promiscuity is viewed as a cause of shame and embarrassment, an abnormal condition, ugliness or unattractiveness/repulsiveness. The study supports Campbell and MacPhail (2002) in Getinet (2009) who said that women who demonstrate some interest in sex and assertiveness are labeled as "bitches", "sluts", or "whores" whereas young men with such qualities are applauded. The finding also agrees with other existing literatures on metaphors of sexuality (e.g. Selikow, 2004; Baider & Gesuato, 2005; Haddas & Egamberdi, 2007; Getinet, 2009).

## 6. Conclusion

The study identified language (metaphors) as a factor influencing college male and female students' perception of gender and promiscuity—men as a dominant and females as a dominated class in sexual relationships. Metaphors also shaped the subjects' perception of promiscuity. Men's, but not females' promiscuity is perceived as normal, risk free, pleasurable and desirable sexual practice. Such perception of masculinity, femininity, and promiscuity ideologies seem to be underpinning sexual behavior of young college students. That is to say metaphors play a double edged sword role—they

promote stigma, promiscuity, and gender inequality—they encourage males to involve in multiple sexual relationship and females to be passive object in negotiating safer sex. The implication is that language use is a critical factor to aggravate undergraduates' risky sexual behavior—promiscuity. The finding also explains why males in general involve in multiple sexual relationships and women in particular are more vulnerable to sexual risks.

The investigation made by some scholars in sexual communication appeared to incline to safer sex communication. Besides, the approach used by some scholars in analyzing the language used by males and females in sexual discourse is more of sociological, anthropological, and philosophical (e.g. feminist philosophy). Over all, the role language plays in perpetuating promiscuity that exposes promiscuous students to HIV appeared to be under investigated. This study has filled the gap to some extent, from the perspective of applied linguistics, by taking in to account college students' culture of sexual practices such as multiple sex partnerships. Hence, by understanding the terminologies used in students' interactions on sex discourse, the study would contribute to identifying the gaps that need to be considered in health education, particularly in the development of HIV/AIDS communication materials. It would also give insights to future research in health communication. The amount of research done in the area is scanty and health communication remains less informed by research findings. Hence, the finding indicates the importance of doing further research that explores the language college students use in sex discourse.

## 7. Recommendations

As is revealed by the study, gender role perceptions are important for health interventions in college contexts. Therefore, the study recommends programs that foster safer sex in such settings to emphasize gender focused communication activities that could help young men and women question their assumptions of gender and promiscuity. It is also important to teach males how to manage their sexual desire, how to treat females with dignity in their sexual relationships, how to change their attitude towards females, and how to mind their language use. This could be done through drama and role play. Future research on safer sex communication and intervention among college (males and females) students should seek more on how language use in sexual communication positively shapes their sexual behavior.

College students describe not only students who practice unsafe sex or multiple sexual relationships, but also the practice of safer sex (e.g. abstinence and condom use) which may be considered in the next issue of this journal.

### Acknowledgments

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Appendix

*Research Design:* The study is cross-sectional descriptive qualitative research.

*Data Collection Procedure:* The qualitative data (FGDs) collection process involved two phases. Phase one was carried out during the pilot study. During this stage the FGD guidelines for the male group [Male FGD01] were administered two times, within a week gap, with nine participants. The first and the second FGDs took 1.30 and 1.45 hours respectively. The female FGD01 was carried out with six female students only once, for 1.30 hours. The discussions were carried out on 5/03/2011 and 12/03/2011 with males and on 17/04/2011 with females.

Phase Two was carried out during the main study with eleven males and nine females, two times with each group. The FGD consumed four hours (two hours for stage1 and two hours for stage 2) for males, and three hours for females (1.30 hours for stage 1 and 1.30 hours for stage 2). The FGDs were conducted (in Amharic) on weekends, Saturdays and Sundays (10-11/03/2012 for males and 24-25/03/2012 for females). Discussions were terminated when it appeared that the data has saturated (when respondents would add no new data). When issues that needed clarification appeared, other follow-up discussions (informal) were conducted with some individuals who were assumed to be concerned with issues that needed explanation. Before conducting the FGD, for two half days, for each phase, the main researcher and the facilitator of Female FGD, had discussed the focus of the interview together.

*Data collection method*: FGD was used as a main tool to collect data from four FGD groups- two male groups (Group One 9 and Group Two 11 members) and two female groups (Group One 6 and Group Two 9 members). The FGD questions which were prepared in Amharic and in English by the researcher were checked for validity by four (two Amharic and two English) instructors (male and female). The questions asked the research participants to tell terminologies college students use to call male and female students in multiple sexual partnerships.

*Dependability:* To maintain *dependability*, the qualitative data were collected by two trained data collectors (1 man and 1 woman); the data were recorded using quality recorder and documented (Flick, 2006). The main researcher transcribed the data first in Amharic, and then translated it to English. Finally, the translation was proof read by two English lecturers to maintain both dependability and transferability. Further, to check whether the research participants shared similar meanings with others, feedbacks were sought from individuals who were not part of the study.

*Inclusion exclusion criteria:* As inclusion and exclusion criteria, sampled students, from first year to fourth year, in the academic year of 2012, who were willing to participate in the FGD, were included in the study. Students who were not willing to participate in the study, who could not speak and listen, and who were under 18 years were excluded. They were selected through snow-ball sampling. Interested and outgoing research participants were recruited through instructors and students who know or have access to sexually active (have experienced sexual intercourse) and communicative (participate freely in sexual discussion) students, for the FGD.

*Procedure of Data Analysis*: The qualitative data analysis involved lower and higher levels (for data collection procedure see Appendix A). The lower level involved

five different stages. In the initial stage of the analysis, the transcript of the hard copy (translated from Amharic to English) was read repeatedly and carefully to identify and code as many issues as possible (e.g. metaphors). When something that contained apparently interesting or relevant information (to the research question) was seen, a brief note was made in the margin about the nature of the information noticed (for example, type of metaphor: animal, plant).

At stage two, looking through the margin notes, a list of different types of information was made using highlights (different colors for each small category, e.g. **black** to code animal related metaphors, **gold** to code metaphors of money) from the word processor to categorize the data according to what it is about.

At stage three, some of the (small) categories which bear some relationship to each other were placed under a larger category. To illustrate, all animal metaphors of promiscuous females/males (e.g. bitch, cock) were linked in some way to form major categories or themes (e.g. animal metaphor). To illustrate, all inanimate metaphors of promiscuous females/males (e.g. bench, fire) were linked in some way to form major categories or themes (e.g. inanimate metaphor). Where an item seems to belong in two categories (e.g. animal category, inanimate category), it was listed under both. This continued until eventually   new categories ran out, and as a result, three categories were formed: animal, plant, and inanimate.

At the fourth stage, major themes were formed. At this stage, all the extracts that have been put into one category were collected (through copy and paste strategy on a new word document). The range of categories that seemed to fit together to form a major theme were put under one major category. For example, categories of animal metaphor (major category) and categories of plant metaphors (another major category) were re-categorized as animate metaphors and those out of these categories as inanimate metaphors.

At the fifth level, to check whether any previously excluded data fits any category, the original copy of the transcript were referred back to (the ones where initial notes in the margins were made). After looking at data that seemed irrelevant and hence were not highlighted at initial coding but now appeared relevant were included where they belonged under the already had been identified categories.

After passing through these stages of the lower level analysis, what comes next (final) is the higher level, interpretative or latent level. "The higher level of analysis is interpretative: it is concerned with what was meant by the response, what was inferred or implied. It is sometimes called the latent level of analysis" (Hancock, 2002, p.17). Accordingly, data was interpreted based on the theoretical framework reviewed earlier. Such kind of analysis accords with other studies in a similar area. For example, to study metaphors on HIV/AIDS discourse, Kobia (2008) applied Conceptual Metaphor Theory as an interpretive tool.

*Ethics:* Since participation in the FGDs is voluntary, respondents were informed of their right to decline participation at any time and to refuse to answer any question they find uncomfortable. They were also promised that the information they share would be kept confidential. During the discussion instead of real names of informants number codes were used.