**HEARD seeking study participants**

**HEARD are looking for UKZN female students who have been or who are in a relationship with a ‘Blesser’ to participate in a qualitative research study**

HEARD is undertaking research exploring the nuances that render the relationships between a ‘blesser’ and ‘blessee’ as an indicator of social shifts within South African society and the social meanings and aspirations attached to the recently conceptualised, controversial and often times misunderstood phenomenon. In so doing, the following broader four open-ended research questions will be explored using in-depth interviews with willing participants:

1. What is the nature, extent and distinctive characteristics of a ‘blesser’ and ‘blessee’ relationship?
2. What are the aspirations and motivations for young women to enter into these relationships?
3. What are women’s experiences of the ‘blesser relationship’ (actual) and how do women perceive and enact agency in such relationships?
4. What are the familial and social expectations concerning ‘blesser relationships’ that foster or discourage the arrangement?

HEARD is therefore looking to recruit female students who have had or who are currently involved in a relationship with a ‘Blesser’.

**Study Details**:

* This research study has been granted ethical approval from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSS/1745/016). Should you wish to contact them their contact details are: 031 260 4769 or 031 260 3587.
* The research study is being conducted by researchers from the Health Economics and HIV and AIDS Research Division (HEARD) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.
* We would like you to participate in a one-on-one interview with a researcher from HEARD, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal or an alternative suitable venue.
* The interview will take roughly 60 minutes in duration and will be conducted at an agreed upon venue. The researcher will ask your permission for the interview to be recorded with an audio recorder.
* If you participate in the study, you will be allowed to participate on an anonymous basis. This means you will not give us your name or any identifying details. We will not share any information you provide us to any third party. The research reports and publications from this study will not reveal any identifying characteristics of those who participated in the study, as, again, we will not collect identifiers such as your name. The recordings from the interviews will be stored in a secure location and only the study researchers will access them.

**Female students interested in participating in this study or who have any questions or queries about the study should please contact the researcher, Dr Gavin George on 083 331 3070 (cell/whatsapp) or email:** [georgeg@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:georgeg@ukzn.ac.za)