



OneLove Campaign: Youth perceptions on the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches featured in Fema TV Talk Show



Feedback Study Report

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Acronyms

FG	Focus Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
MCP	Multiple Concurrent Partnership
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

1.0 Background

The OneLove Campaign is a 4-year regional campaign which aims to reduce HIV prevalence in 9 Southern African countries by reducing multiple concurrent partnerships (MCPs). The countries are Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. The strategy is to use mass media (including television drama, radio drama, and print booklets in multiple languages) combined with face to face education, social mobilization, and advocacy. The campaign aims to stimulate public discourse and debate around culture and gender and challenge harmful practices that promote MCPs, whilst promoting protective practices. It is being rolled out across the region in 2008, with Tanzania being the first country to launch in October 2008, and will run until 2011. The campaign grew out of the Soul City Regional Partnership, which is a partnership between Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication in South Africa and 8 local NGOs from 8 Southern African countries. Formed in 2002, the partnership has been involved in regional health communication activities which include television, radio, print materials, social mobilization, and advocacy.

1.1 Communication Strategies

Given the generalized nature of the epidemic across the region, the OneLove campaign aims to target the public at large. Secondary audiences include: couples, community leaders, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and policy makers.

The campaign focuses on the following core message: Having multiple concurrent relationships puts you and your loved ones at risk of getting infected with HIV. A safe relationship means:

- there are no secrets and lies;
- communicating effectively with each other;
- challenging cultural practices that support MCP; and
- there is respect and equal rights for and between men and women.

The campaign strategy for the region combines mass media with social mobilization as two mutually reinforcing interventions which seek to impart knowledge, shift attitudes

and social norms, and increase individual and community efficacy. The campaign also includes advocacy initiatives which aim to bring about healthy public policy and create an environment that facilitates social and behavior change. This represents a dynamic integration of existing models of social and behavior change – such as social learning theory, diffusion of innovation, and the stages of change model. Thus the intervention aims to impact on collective efficacy, social norms, interpersonal discussion, dialogue and debate as well as knowledge and awareness, attitudes, intentions, and individual behavior.

The mass media radio and television education interventions will be based on edutainment. These will be complemented by print materials which reflect the characters from the radio and television dramas.

2.0 Introduction

Since July 2008 each episode of the Fema TV Talk Show has included a sketch with Bwana Ishi. As from October 2008, the character Tuli was introduced and since then Bwana Ishi and Tuli have both appeared on each show.

The sketches centre on partner communication and deliver messages from the OneLove campaign about staying faithful and refraining from MCPs. The characters talk about their relationship and communicate the message ‘Mlinda, Mheshimu, Mhushishe’ – Respect, Protect, and Connect.



Viewers are exposed to the characters Bwana Ishi and Tuli and their confrontational and sometimes intimate conversations about issues such as health, trust, alcohol, safe sex, fidelity, abortion and materialism. They learn about the important role that partner communication can play in a healthy relationship. Lack of partner communication has been cited in research as one of the drivers behind MCPs. In this way the vignette positions itself as an HIV prevention campaign within the OneLove campaign.

Bwana Ishi and Tuli are not a perfect couple. They quarrel as normal Tanzanian couples do, but they represent a relationship that survives and thrives on the message of the OneLove tagline: “Mlinde, Mheshimu, Mhusishe”.

An important segment of the OneLove campaign’s target group is youth between 15 and 30 involving both in-school and out-of-school youth. In order to determine the relevance of the OneLove vignette among youth Femina HIP has conducted a small study based on Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) and a small questionnaire.

2.1 Objectives

Three objectives were formulated to guide the study:

1. To understand how the messages in the vignette are understood by the target audience
2. To find out how the audience relates to the characters Bwana Ishi and Tuli (are they role models, can the audience relate to their problems?)
3. To find out whether the vignette is religious or culturally sensitive (too adult?)

2.2 Research need

Femina HIP has not yet had the opportunity to test how the messages delivered in the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches are received among our viewers. Therefore a study was designed in order to investigate how the content of the sketches is understood by the target group. Knowing how frequent youth watch Fema TV Talk show would also help determine the effect of the OneLove campaign.

Furthermore, Femina HIP is considering using the Bwana Ishi and Tuli characters in a film production in 2009. Knowing the characters' status among viewers is an important factor when deciding whether Bwana Ishi and Tuli should star in the film.

Finally, Femina HIP is facing a decision on whether to produce new episodes of Bwana Ishi and Tuli for a season of repeats during spring 2009.

3.0 Methodology

Audience reception of the sketches was assessed through FGDs guided by an interview guide (cf. appendix 2). The FGDs were complemented by a small questionnaire (cf. appendix 1). This allowed the study to complement the qualitative information from the FGDs with some quantitative data. The



main purpose of the questionnaire was to investigate how culture, religion, gender and school status affect the perceptions of the sketches.

The FGs watched twelve OneLove sketches to establish a common point of departure and familiarize FGD participants with the content of the vignettes. After watching the sketches, they were asked to fill in the questionnaire followed by a FGD facilitated by Femina HIP staff.

For sampling purposes, a total of 40 participants were identified from 2 out-of-school Fema Clubs and 2 in-school Fema Clubs. Gender balance was a prerequisite for the FGs and in order to assess religious aspects a group of out-of-school youth from an area with high Muslim population was intentionally selected.

3.1 Study Questions (FGD)

1. Do Bwana Ishi and Tuli reflect reality?
2. Do Bwana Ishi and Tuli discuss taboo issues?
3. Are Bwana Ishi and Tuli too intimate?
4. Are the youth comfortable watching the vignette with their parents?
5. How often do you watch the vignette?
6. What do you think the OneLove campaign is all about?

4.0 Findings

Femina HIP regards Fema TV Talk Show; and particularly the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches; as a crucial element of the Tanzanian OneLove campaign. Femina HIP believes that the sketches play an important role in delivering the core campaign messages: Refrain from MCPs and protect yourself against HIV/AIDS. Therefore, this study seeks feedback from audience to understand whether youth are sensitive to the messages and whether they capture the relevance of the vignette.

Based on the questionnaires and FGDs, the study shows that the sketches have considerable impact on the viewers indicating that youth are sensitive to the program messages. FG participants appreciate the sketch and its quality. At the same time, however, there are indications that parents are not very good at separating between traditional norms, practices and traditions, and the contemporary challenges facing youth.

These findings are important and should be integrated in Femina HIP's future communication and behavior change strategies and included in life skills and sexuality education for adolescents.

Do Bwana Ishi and Tuli reflect reality?

The feedback study intends to determine the relevance of the vignette in the course of implementing the OneLove campaign. The study tests whether the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches mirror contemporary Tanzanian youth's attitudes to relationships. It is important

that the sketches reflect the reality and everyday life of Tanzanian youth in order for them to relate to the sketches and understand the messages. Ultimately, realism is a prerequisite for the sketches to have an impact on behavior.

In general, the FG participants' responses were straightforward and expressed appreciation of the approach and creativity used within the edutainment methodology whose strength is to portray communities and suggest solutions. Realism combined with powerful messages make youth embrace the sketches and feel represented by them.

The FGDs revealed that young Tanzanians are aware of the entertainment element in the sketches, but they do not watch *Bwana Ishi* and *Tuli* only to be entertained. Rather, they watch the sketches because they discuss controversial but relevant topics and provide youth with answers and solutions to problems they face in their everyday lives.

“The message we get is valuable, for example, when they talk about alcohol. Bwana Ishi likes taking alcohol but his partner doesn’t. She tries to persuade him that alcohol is not good and leads people to unprotected sex. When you get drunk it is not very easy to remember using a condom you may therefore contract HIV/AIDS. We get the message that alcohol is not always good, it can also lead you into problems”.

The necessity to promote and change traditions and norms seems to be an important issue for the FG participants and they appreciate the open discussions about conflicting cultural issues. The sketches offer a platform where youth concerns are raised and offer youth a point of departure to make changes to their lifestyles.

However, the FG participants also expressed some critique. First of all, they would like for the sketches to have more realism. They would like *Bwana Ishi* and *Tuli* to move out of the studio and see them in a ‘real-life’ setting. This wish might reflect that viewers identify strongly with the characters and that they are curious to learn more about them.

“What they act is not new, from this we learn challenges on how to involve one another as partners. I request for more time for the vignette. I think they only use the studio, they should move to other locations, like Bwana Ishi finding Tuli washing utensils outside.

We are talking about reality things, there are people who can't be comfortable without the influence of alcohol, but like Bwana Ishi did, you can go out and have fun without taking alcohol. The problem is that men don't give wives chances to communicate to them".

Do Bwana Ishi and Tuli discuss taboo issues?

In order to determine the cultural and religious impact of the vignette, the FGDs explored norms of right and wrong in the eyes of the young viewers. The purpose was to investigate whether the sketches are perceived as culturally or religiously offensive.



Due to time limits, this discussion was confined to sexual taboos. As expected, the FGDs show that open discussions and debates around sexual practices are culturally seen as taboos. Some sexual behaviors have become taboos because of their perceived negative or harmful effects. Some behaviors have been taboo throughout history and remain so today. These include behaviors such as incest and rape. Other sexual behaviors that were once taboo but no longer are - though they may not be as accepted as other behaviors - include

masturbation, open talk about sexuality and condom use. This change can in part be attributed to society's gradual acceptance of what constitutes normal and harmless sexual experiences between consenting adults. Generally, the FG participants were open to discuss cultural norms and sexual taboos. This openness is promising –

especially for the effect of sexuality and life skills education as means to bring about social change.

“I personally can say that it is a conversation that builds up someone when it comes to partner communication. As a man if you listen to Bwana Ishi talking, it builds you and makes you stronger, even a woman; if she listens to Tuli talking sharing ideas helps her know how to communicate with men.

Some girls are shy and it is hard for them to communicate so they learn from Tuli, Bwana Ishi has sweet words but it helps girls to anticipate that from men, and become ready to respond effectively”.

As illustrated in table 1, the respondents’ views on whether the sketches are culturally offensive correlate with gender. 20% of the female respondents feel that the sketches are culturally offensive – the same is only true for 5% of the male respondents. This indicates that culture is a more influential factor for young women than young men, but the study sample is too small to make decisive conclusions.

Table 1: Respondents’ views on whether the vignette is religiously or culturally offensive examined by gender

	YES		NO		DON'T KNOW	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
DOES THE SKETCH OFFEND YOUR RELIGION?	10%	5%	86%	95%	4%	0%
DOES THE SKETCH OFFEND YOUR CULTURE?	5%	20%	90%	80%	5%	0%

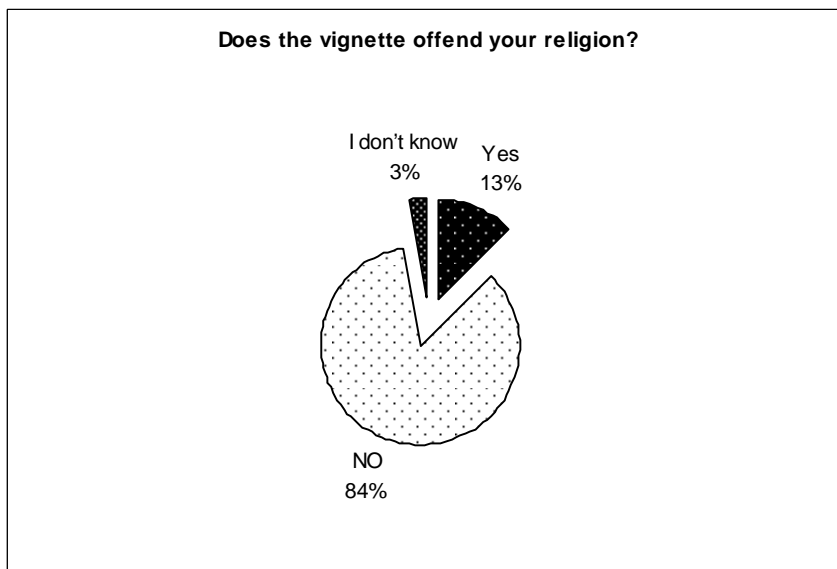
Femina HIP is operating in a multicultural environment with different ethnicities and religions. The differences between local communities make it a challenge to design messages and communication approaches that target everybody. The messages in OneLove campaign and the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches are expected to be differently perceived by the two major religions in Tanzania. Therefore, the sampling of this study included both Muslims (60%) and Christians (40%).

Traditionally, condom use has been a taboo for many religions; some religions condemn condoms because they do not harmonize with sex as a reproductive act. Others have connected condoms to sinful practices increasing infidelity among young people.

Contrary to this, the FG participants have a positive view on condoms and try to use them in their lives as also promoted in the sketches. However, the FGDs point to the fact that condom use often put youth in a conflict of interests with religious aspects on one side and the more modern values on the other. This not only slows efforts for social change but may also affect young Tanzanian's enthusiasm and confidence in making informed choices.

“On religious perspective, leaders such as priests and sheikhs think that condoms do not prevent STDs and HIV/AIDS. They perceive condoms as the source of HIV and not prevention. They think the application of condoms is the source of problems not the solution to HIV. The fact that HIV/AIDS prevalence persists religious leaders don't take condoms as a protective measure. I think many people are not well educated about HIV/AIDS. The word of God says that it's a sin to kill a single sperm/seed..... ”.

Fig 1: Respondents' views on whether the vignette is religiously offensive



As shown in figure 1, a large majority of 84% of the respondents do not think that the sketches are religiously offensive. There is, however, a minority of 13%, who do feel offended by the sketch.

As shown in table 1 and 2, these figures are however, sensitive to gender and religion.

Male respondents tend to perceive the sketches as more religiously offensive than women. Furthermore, Muslims view the sketches as more offensive than Christians.

21% of the Muslim respondents think that the sketches offend their religion – while none of the Christian respondents feel offended by the sketches.

Table 2: Respondents' views on whether the vignette is religiously offensive examined by religion

	MUSLIMS	CHRISTIANS	TOTAL
NOT OFFENSIVE	79%	94%	85%
OFFENSIVE	21%	0%	13%
DON'T KNOW	0%	6%	2%

Are Bwana Ishi and Tuli too intimate?

Partner communication is a cornerstone in the OneLove campaign and to the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches. Most people seem to define intimacy as two people engaged in passionate sex. In fact, the experience of physical connection between two people is really the culmination of all that is intimate between them. It includes how they relate outside of the bedroom as much as what they do inside of it and partner communication is central.

Nevertheless, it seems that many remain oblivious to intimacy being anything other than satisfying one's own sexual needs. Perhaps this seemingly widespread misconception provides a partial answer as to why there are so many failed relationships, unhappy couples, and MCPs. Transparency and open discussions around sexuality in Tanzania can fuel conflicting norms and perceptions between youth and adults.

“I personally think that it is educating, but parents associate the vignette with unethical type of behavior. Bwana Ishi and Tuli discuss openly about sex and condoms, sometimes they kiss each other of which elders are strongly against. I stay with my grandmother, when she sees it she feels like switching off the TV and ironically asks what I learn from the vignette. To be frank, grandmother doesn't want to hear anything about globalization”.

Are the youth comfortable watching the vignette with their parents?

What young people watch on TV is bound to have an impact on them. When parents are concerned about the effects of TV, they should consider a number of things: what TV offers the youth in terms of information, knowledge, and the impact of sex. It is important that parents manage their youth's TV viewing so that it can be a plus rather than a minus in the family situation.

Femina HIP's response to this challenge is to address what concerns youth rather than what interests the older generations. Urbanization as well as globalization has culturally affected Tanzania. Traditions and norms are adjusting and alternative norms are gaining ground. The OneLove sketches expose Tanzanian youth to controversial issues, generate open debate, and create awareness around important issues relating to partner communication, MCP and HIV/AIDS. Through openness, the sketches thus promote modern norms and help youth to change mindsets and practices when it comes to risky sexual behavior.

“The first day I watched the vignette the whole family was there, I had time to tell them the importance of this. Every one seemed to understand except father who kept quite all the time. “

“There are parents who can't tell their children about bodily changes as they mature but Femina HIP does, this has made youth understand about themselves and their surroundings”.

Traditionally, the home is where values and norms are passed on to children. The majority (93%) of the respondents watch the vignette at home where family members share a single TV set. This suggests that parents and guardians acknowledge Femina HIP's efforts to address youth issues.

Table 3: Respondents' views on whether they are comfortable to view and discuss the vignette with parents examined by gender

	YES		NO		DON'T KNOW	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
CAN YOU WATCH THE SKETCH WITH YOUR PARENTS?	86%	58%	14%	37%	0%	5%
CAN YOU DISCUSS THE SKETCH WITH YOUR PARENTS?	81%	74%	19%	26%	0%	0%

Most respondents can both watch and discuss the vignettes with their parents. However, when the data is cross examined by gender it becomes clear, that male respondents are more comfortable watching and discussing the sketches with their parents, than female respondents. 86% of the male respondents say that they are comfortable *watching* the sketches with their parents; the equivalent figure for female respondents is 58%. The same tendency is valid when it comes to *discussing* the sketches with parents; 81% of the male respondents feel free to discuss the sketches with their parents; 74% of the female respondents feel the same way.

What do you think the OneLove campaign is all about?

The majority of the FG participants were aware of the ongoing regional OneLove campaign. In order to test whether the respondents understand the messages from the campaign they were given a number of statements about the campaign; some of them correct, some not (cf. appendix 1). The respondents were asked to choose the statements that reflected the messages from the campaign. An analysis of the responses shows that 80% of the respondents know and understand the general messages of the campaign. Respect, protect, involve; avoid MCPs; and be faithful were the statements that most respondents identified with the campaign. This indicates that youth understand the messages in the campaign and that they perceive MCP as a risky behavior.

How often do you watch Fema TV Talk Show?

The respondents were also asked how often they watch Fema TV Talk Show. Generally, a majority of the respondents watch the show every week. A few watch it every two weeks or every month while none of the respondents said that they never watched the

show. If the data is cross examined by gender and school status is becomes clear that school status but not gender is significant for the frequency of viewing.

Table 4: Overview of how often respondents watch Fema TV Talk Show examined by gender and school status

	WEEKLY	EVERY TWO WEEKS	ONCE A MONTH	NEVER
MALES (ALL)	76%	14%	10%	0%
FEMALES (ALL)	78%	11%	11%	0%
OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH	63%	21%	16%	0%
IN-SCHOOL YOUTH	90%	5%	5%	0%

Table 4 illustrates that a very large majority of in-school students (90%) watch the TV Talk Show every week. The out-of-school youth view less frequently; 63% states that they watch the show weekly. In accordance with this, the out-of school youth are more prone to watching the show every second week (21 %) or every month (15%) compared to the in-school youth, where 5% watch the show bi-weekly or monthly respectively. This doesn't necessarily mean that the sketches are less appealing to the out-of-school youth. The FGDs did not point in this direction and the difference is most likely linked to the group's access to TV.

5.0 Conclusion

The study of youth's perceptions on the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches has provided valuable insight into how the messages from the OneLove campaign are being received among the target group.

First of all, viewers appreciate the sketches and seem to identify with the characters Bwana Ishi and Tuli. The problems and dilemmas that the characters face are relevant to the viewers and reflect their reality. Viewers find the sketches entertaining but do not only watch them to be entertained but to get answers and solutions to challenges that they face in their everyday life. The viewers follow the storyline and watch the show frequently – most of them weekly.

Secondly, the FG participants expressed a wish to see Bwana Ishi and Tuli move out of the studio and into a 'real life' environment. Even though this does not seem feasible with existing production budgets it is a strong argument for letting Bwana Ishi and Tuli star the OneLove TV drama that will be produced later in 2009 where the characters will move out of the studio.

However, the study also had a number of limitations. Most important, the sample of 40 FG participants is too small to make generalized conclusions. Furthermore, all FG participants are from Dar es Salaam. The study thus reflects the views of urban youth but it is likely that rural youth could have different perceptions of the sketch. All FG participants were sampled from Fema Clubs. This means that they were affiliated with Femina HIP and might be more open to Femina HIP values. Finally, the study did not include gatekeepers. As parents decide what is being watched on the family TV set their perceptions of the sketches would have been valuable.

The study has provided valuable information when it comes to how gender, school status and religion affect perceptions of the sketches. School status does not seem to have a significant impact. Gender, however, is important, especially when it comes to whether young people are comfortable viewing and discussing the sketches with their parents. Girls are more cautious and timid whereas boys find it easier to discuss these



topics. Gender is also significant when it comes to cultural sensitivity. Girls are more prone to being culturally offended by the sketches than boys. Contrary, religion seems to be a more decisive factor for boys than girls. Finally,

the study also indicates, that Muslim youth find the sketches more religiously offensive than Christian youth.

The study confirms that there exists a clash between the norms and values of young Tanzanians on one side and their parents' generations on the other. This can be a hurdle when working with communication for social change as parents continue to be important gatekeepers. Finally, the study also confirms that the Bwana Ishi and Tuli sketches stimulate public discourse and debate around MCP and gender, culture and norms. The sketches are widely appreciated among youth viewers and represent a valuable source of information about sensitive issues that they otherwise find difficult to assess.

6.0 Recommendations

- Bwana Ishi and Tuli are very popular characters. The vignette production should continue and the characters would be a good choice for the upcoming OneLove drama production
- The findings of the feedback study could benefit from including rural youth and gatekeepers
- Consider the possibility of moving the characters out of the studio and into a 'real life' setting
- The vignette's script writers could benefit from working with gate keepers
- Consider prolonging the sketches from the current three minutes to have more elaborated discussions

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1) How old are you? _____

2) What is your sex?

- Male Female

3) Are you

- In school Out of school

4) What is your religion?

- Christian Muslim
 Hindu Other

5) How often do you watch Fema TV Talk Show?

- Every week Every two weeks Once every month
 Every now and then Never

6) Where do you watch Fema TV talk show? (you can choose more than one)

- At home At school In my Fema Club
 At a friend's house At a family member's house
 In public places (restaurants etc.) I don't watch Fema TV Talk Show

Other: _____

7) Who do you watch the show with? (you can choose more than one)

- Friends Parents Siblings
 Other relatives Teacher

Other: _____

8) Are Bwana Ishi and Tuli a real couple?

- Yes No Don't know

9) Who do you think the vignette is most interesting / appropriate for:
(you can choose more than one)

- Teenagers Adults

10) Does the vignette contradict with your religion?

- Yes No Don't know

11) Does the vignette contradict with your culture?

- Yes No Don't know

12) Would you feel comfortable watching the vignette with your parents?

- Yes No Don't know

13) Can you discuss the issues from the vignettes with your parents?

- Yes No Don't know

14) What is the OneLove campaign about? (choose the right answers)
(you can choose more than one)

- Being faithful
- Protect, respect and talk with/involve your partner
- Promoting sexual relationships among youth
- It is dangerous to have many partners
- Encouraging couples to talk more to each other
- Talking with your partner is enough to protect yourself from HIV
- To prevent HIV, it's more important to be faithful than use condoms
- Everybody should have a partner
- You reduce the risk of getting HIV/AIDS by reducing the number of partners
- It is impossible for teenagers to have only one partner
- I don't know
- Other: _____
-

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

- What are the main messages in the Bwana. Ishi and Tuli vignette?
- Can you relate to these messages? Do you recognize them from your own life?
- What do you learn from Bwana. Ishi and Tuli?
- Do you see them as role models? Why / why not?
- Is Bwana Ishi and Tuli a real couple?
- (What do you think about the fictional sketch within the factual / documentary show?)
- How old do you think Bwana Ishi and Tuli are?
- Do you think Bwana Ishi and Tuli behave like a real couple? Why/ why not
- Are the problems / issues they talk about real? Do they reflect reality?
- Are the problems they talk about too provocative / taboo? Why / Why not?
- Do you like the way they talk openly about their relationship / their sexuality? Why / why not?
- Do you think couples who talk to each other the way B&T do are more likely to be faithful?
- What do you think about Bwana Ishi and Tuli sometimes touching each other on the show?
- Would you feel comfortable watching the vignette with your parents / family?
- Do you think the vignette is most interesting / appropriate for teenagers or adults?
- Do you think that the vignette can be offending in a religious perspective? Why / why not?
- Do you think the vignette can be offending in a cultural perspective? Why / why ?