

***Indigenous Media Communication Techniques and Behaviour Change on
HIV/AIDS Prevention among Female Sex Workers in Calabar Metropolis in Cross
River State, Nigeria***

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Abstract

The study investigated the extent to which indigenous media communication techniques can influence behaviour change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers in Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria. One null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study, while stratified and accidental sampling techniques were used in selecting 380 respondents. A 26-item questionnaire titled: Indigenous Communication and HIV/AIDS among Female Sex Workers Questionnaire (ICHAFSWQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated and the reliability estimate using Cronbach Alpha coefficient method ranged from .76 to .94. Using one-way analysis of variance, the null hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance. The result showed that indigenous media communication technique and behaviour change has a significant influence on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers in the study areas. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made among others that indigenous communication approaches are acquired by federal, state and local government at the grassroots level in the fight against HIV/AIDS scourge.

Keywords: Indigenous, media, communication, behaviour, HIV/AIDS, sex, workers.

Introduction

Communication has become a potent tool or medium where messages are disseminated today. To change the behaviour of people, including female sex workers, across the globe, there is need to adopt different communication techniques. These communication techniques range from traditional, print media, mass media, interpersonal and peer communication techniques etc. Communication influences everyone in the society and has been accepted as a source of new information order. This has brought to the fore the need for developing countries to make a scientific study of communication and its process within their immediate environment and its contribution to human society (Bergin, 1997).

Communication is also considered as a very powerful and effective instrument for achieving organizational goals. It is seen as a potent tool in shaping public opinion. The influence of communication is so vital that hardly will you see an individual in this world who has never been touched by communication dissemination and development of information which is essential in all human endeavours across the society. Rogers (2000) refers to communication as the oil that lubricates the world and makes it a better place for all to live. Communication is orderly and people oriented, because it helps to bring about information and development that shapes the whole fabrics of human existence. In the fields of education, agriculture, health, social activities, culture, tradition, social interactions, human relations, family planning, sex education etc, behaviour is changed through effective communication.

Communication could be seen as two-way mechanism circulating knowledge and information between the people, government and among various communities. Every form of information that could arouse public interest to collect and analyze their opinion with the aim of feeding the government in order to respond to their yearning is articulated through effective communication. Just as the HIV/AIDS pandemic constitutes one of the greatest health challenges of our time. By the end of 2005, Nigeria was adjudged to have had the third highest burden of HIV/AIDS in the world after South Africa and India.

Cross River State is one of the HIV/AIDS burden states in Nigeria. The HIV/AIDS prevalence in Cross River State showed a fluctuation between 1992 and 1999 and

was either below or similar to the national estimate. However, from 1999, the HIV prevalence in the state assumed an upward trend above the national and zonal prevalence. The pattern of increase in keeping with the zonal trend built was consistently higher than the average zonal prevalence. A peak of 12% was however, noted in 2003 with 50% drop in 2005 to 6.1% (ERP, 2009). The prevalence rose again to 8% in 2008 and due to the scale up of intervention in the state, there seems to be a decrease in the prevalence rate which dropped slightly to 7.1% in 2010 (ERP, 2009).

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Cross River State is complex with substantial heterogeneity in HIV/AIDS prevalence across different sub-populations. The HIV/AIDS prevalence among brothel based sex workers was 20.7%, non brothel based sex workers was 8.3%, men who have sex with men 2.4% and injecting drug users (IDU) 3.3% (CRACA, 2010). The Cross River State epic appraisal (CRACA, 2012) puts the total active spots for female sex workers (FSWs) at 672, Men Sleep with men (MSM) at 15 and IDU at 10 spots. The report also estimates the average number of FSWs at 9838, IDU 54 and MSM at 276. Based on the realities on ground, it is most appropriate for review of the current situation as regarding mapping and size estimate. Within this period of estimation, people who inject themselves with drugs were categorized as men or women who have injected drugs for non-therapeutic purposes. Those who have self-injected medicines for medical, purposes were excluded.

Female sex workers are defined as females who receive money or goods in exchange for sexual services, either regularly or occasionally. Although an average number of female sex workers could be involved in this estimate per weekly, yet it is a known fact that HIV/AIDS is prominent among the sex workers as a result of patronage from those who sees sex as a way of life. Female sex workers are one of the most prominent key populations that exist in some parts of Cross River State as well as a number of topologies that also exist here and there.

Indigenous media communication is a form of media expression conceptualized, produced, and circulated by indigenous peoples around the globe as vehicles for communication, including cultural preservation, cultural and artistic expression, political self-determination, and cultural sovereignty. Indigenous communication includes the transmission of entertainment, news announcement, and social

Indigenous Media Communication Techniques and Behaviour Change on HIV/AIDS Prevention among Female Sex Workers in Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria

Ekpenyong David Oboqua, Ph.D; Bessong Columbus Deko & Bessong Napoleon Osang

exchanges of every type. It is an important aspect of culture and the means by which a culture is preserved, handed down, and adapted. Indigenous media communication techniques is the process often used to disseminate relevant information which borders on behavioural change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers. Indigenous media communication is the traditional method of mobilizing the rural populace for grassroots development (Akpama, 2002).

Leo, Ezekiel and Chinelo (2013) carried out a study on HIV/AIDS media campaigns and knowledge of high risk factors among female sex workers in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The main purpose of the study was to ascertain whether the numerous media campaigns on HIV/AIDS have positive influence on female sex workers. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection. The sample size was 300 female sex workers drawn purposively from three cities in South-South Nigeria namely Asaba, Port Harcourt and Uyo. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for the study. The finding of the study revealed that female sex workers still engage in high risk behaviour of the scourge. The study therefore concluded that media campaigns on HIV/AIDS have not been effective on female sex workers in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The study recommends re-structuring of campaigns strategies in order to make the campaigns in HIV/AIDS more effective.

Hagos (2017) conducted a study on indigenous communication forms and their potential to convey food security messages in rural Ethiopia. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study was rural populace. The study findings showed that there are no explicitly designed rural food security communication strategies, but food security messages are communicated through frequent public meetings. The findings also showed that indigenous communication forms are widely practiced in eastern Tigray, which rural people distinguish as potential conducts to convey different messages.

Onyeneho (2009) conducted a study on HIV/AIDS risk factors and economic empowerment needs of female sex workers in Enugu Urban, Nigeria. The basis of the study was that success were recorded in the developed world with respect to HIV/AIDS control but the dream of having and reversing its spread seemed a mirage in most parts of the developing world. The study used structured interview on a total

of 135 FSWs from four most popular brothels in Enugu. The researcher found among others, that condom use among sex workers depended on the client choice and that misconceptions existed among FSWs on mode of transmission as perceptual factors played great role in their attitude toward HIV/AIDS than demographic differences. The study concluded that commercial sex workers remain a major source of HIV/AIDS transmission in Nigeria.

Udoh, Mantell, Sandfort and Eighmy (2009) conducted a study which was premised on the fact that HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Niger Delta of Nigeria was generally attributed to concurrent sexual partnerships and weak public sector health care and educational system. The major aim of the study was to examine the likelihood of additional factors, such as the intersection of widespread poverty, migration and sex work as contributory channels of HIV/AIDS transmission in the oil-rich region. The researchers adopted a Delphi survey method with 27 experts to formulate consensus about the impact of poverty, migration and commercial sex on AIDS in the Niger Delta. Findings of the study revealed that the high HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region was caused by structural factors such as poverty, transactional sex, concurrent sexual partnership, and intra-regional migration. Because of high infection rate and large numbers of sexual partners, sex workers have been considered as a core group for the transmission of HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) (Ndoye, 2003).

In addition, men who have both commercial and none commercial sex partners play a major role in bringing HIV/AIDS infection into the general population. The regular partners or non-commercial partners of sex workers are another important core group (Ngugi, 2006). Many projects have found that HIV/AIDS prevention activities among sex workers, their clients and partners, are most effective when the intervention package contains at least three elements:

1. Communication information and behaviour change messages.
2. Condoms and other change messages like abstinence.
3. Sexual health services (Ngugi, 2006).

Moses (2002) stated that if intervention programmes targeting core groups are to succeed, they must be undertaken in full partnership with the targeted population. The success and sustainability of projects also depend on involving a range of

people who influence commercial sex activity, either directly or indirectly. Networking of projects targeting sex workers is also important for sharing information about effective approach between organizations that provide services to sex workers, their clients and their partners, so that informed decision would provide opportunity for discontinuity. Political approaches to prostitution have an impact on and are frequently inseparable from control programmes. Three special approaches dealing with specific problems of HIV prevention and care of sex workers are discussed in the sense that, sex workers are sometime directed by the rigors of life to take un-participatory decisions in their life that could cause social damage to them. Overlapping risks of injecting drug use and commercial sex are some of the variables that cause sex workers to continue their trade on the streets. A number of lessons learnt and commendation are presented, which supports targeted interventions to reduce transmission of HIV/AIDS in sex workers, their clients and partners.

In response to rising HIV/AIDS prevalence rates among female sex workers, began sensitization and adverse communication in the full scale of HIV/AIDS prevention, intervention using peer education. HIV/AIDS prevention strategies centered on female sex workers have dramatically done extensively well on setting up a micro-credit cooperative to assist sex workers to developed their own businesses and savings as well as developing HIV/AIDS and violence prevention intervention for the growing number of sex workers across the country. Different communication and negotiation skills are needed with the noncommercial partners of sex workers. For example, 100 percent of the sex workers surveyed in Dominican Republic reported that use of condom is very essential if the rate of HIV/AIDS transmission must decrease to the barest minimum (Sanchez, 2003). Although the level of general knowledge about HIV/AIDS was high, 36 percent of the clients believed that HIV/AIDS could be caused by a high rate of sex activities by sex workers. Access to condoms is therefore essential for effective prevention behaviour among sex workers, their clients and partners. Sex workers with many clients per day may complain of vaginal irritation and pain when using condoms (Family Health international, 2001).

Umzurike (2005) carried out a study on HIV/AIDS prevention and the option of using the female condom, if clients refused or were instructed to use male condom

consistently. A proposed group of male sex workers were given instructions on the use of male condoms, a group of sex workers were given the option of using the female condoms too, to elaborate the study consciously, some female clients refused to make use of the condoms while some made use of it for better prevention purposes. This study also shows that offering female sex workers an additional choice may result in better protection (Umozurike, 2005).

Family Health International (2001) conducted a survey on two different groups using male condom and female condom; the proportion of unprotected sexual acts was reduced by 17 percent in the group that had the female condom option. There was also a 24 percent reduction in the incidence rate of HIV/AIDS in this group. Offering of condoms to the female sex workers as additional choice may result in better protection. Other female controlled methods should be tested for efficiency and acceptability. Some clinical trials with vaginal spermicidal result in significant reductions in HIV/AIDS rates, but their protective effect against HIV/AIDS is still being studied. Diaphragms have many potential advantages as they can be re-used, require no waiting time after insertion, fit nearly all women and may require no negotiation. But they have a portion of the vagina unprotected and their microbes including HIV/AIDS that can be transmitted through sites other than cervixes need further study (Umozurike, 2005).

Sex workers have attracted a lot of interest from well-meaning individuals around the world because of the perceived consequences on society's health. It is viewed by many as one of the fastest growing ways of the spread of the dreaded Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) which is ravaging mankind today (Nyakato, 2012). Sanchez (2003) reported that HIV/AIDS sufferers in the world and that the number of people living with the disease in South Africa now total nearly 6 million low of a population to include an estimated 2.8 million premature deaths at the peak of the scourge averaging 700 deaths per day, over 1 million children under the age of 18 who had lost their mothers to AIDS, and among South Africa adults aged 15-49. 17% were HIV positive which more than triple the rate for the whole of Sub-Saharan African. The paper reported that the blade South Africans were the handiest hit with 13% of their total of all ages been HIV positive. Nyakato (2012) reported a study conducted between January 2008 and June 2011 involving 99,898 female sex workers (FSWs) in 50 countries of the world (14 in Asia, 4 in Eastern Europe, 11 in Latin American and

Indigenous Media Communication Techniques and Behaviour Change on HIV/AIDS Prevention among Female Sex Workers in Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria

Ekpenyong David Oboqua, Ph.D; Bessong Columbus Deko & Bessong Napoleon Osang

the Caribbean, one in the Middle East and 20 in Africa), The four year survey funded by the World Bank and United Nations Population Fund and led by Dr. Stefen Baral of US based John Hopkins school of public health ranked Uganda as one of the countries where female sex workers had a higher HIV prevalence than other women. The study reported that the women who sell sex in Uganda came sixth among the 20 African countries after Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya and Benin and that an average of four sex workers in 10 would have HIV. Findings of the study showed that this rate was about five times more than other women of reproductive age, who had 7.7% prevalence. The study further found that the likelihood of new HIV infection among sex workers stand at 15%. The study also revealed that out of the prostitutes in these countries, those in sub-Saharan Africa had the highest HIV prevalence and that in most of Africa, sex workers had substantially higher levels of HIV than other women, positing more than 20% of prevalence. If this situation is left unchecked, the effect on the female sex workers and entire society could be devastating. It becomes imperative that proper investigation be carried out to unravel the factors that could explain the behaviour change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State. It is based on this background that this study examined the extent to which indigenous media communication techniques influence behaviour change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

This study investigated the extent to which indigenous media techniques influence behaviour change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research questions: How do indigenous media communication techniques influence behaviour change on HIV/AIDS prevention of among female sex workers?

Ho1: There is no significant influence of indigenous media communication techniques on behaviour change of HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers.

Methodology

The ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The study population comprised of 760 female sex workers in Calabar Metropolis. A sample of 380 respondents was randomly drawn from 20 hotels in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State. Stratified random sampling was adopted to classify the local government areas in the study area. Accidental sampling technique was used to select 380 respondents to participate in the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Indigenous Communication and HIV/AIDS among Female Sex Workers Questionnaire (ICHFSWQ) designed by the researchers. The instrument had two sections A and B. Section A had respondents' demographic information while section B had 26-item in the form of modified four-point Likert type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD), with scores 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was duly validated and its reliability estimate established at 0.76 to 0.94 using Cronbach alpha reliability method. The reliability coefficient was considered high enough to justify the use of instrument for the study. The copies of the questionnaire were administered personally by the researchers with two research assistants trained for the purpose. At the end of the exercise, all the copies of the questionnaire were collected back by the researchers and the research assistants. The data collected was analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance.

The dependent variables was classified as being highly, averagely and lowly influenced. Respondents that scored above the mean were considered as having highly behaved changes on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers; those that scored within the mean were considered as being averagely behaved on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers, while those who scored below the mean were considered as being lowly behaved in HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers. Based on this categorization, one-way analysis of variance test statistic was employed in testing the hypothesis.

Presentation of results

Ho1: There is no significant influence of indigenous communication techniques on behaviour change in HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is indigenous communication techniques while dependent variable is behaviour change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers. Result of the analysis in Table 1 revealed that the calculated F-ratio of 185.564 is greater than the critical f-ratio of 3.03 at 0.05 level of significance with 2 and 377 degree of freedom. This means that there is a significant influence of indigenous communication technique on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers; based on this result the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate upheld. Since the results were significant, a post-hoc comparison among group means was conducted to determine which of the pair wise group means differences was responsible for the significance influence. Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) method was used in carrying out the analysis. Results of the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Summary of one-way ANOVA of the influence of the indigenous communication technique on HIV/AIDs prevention among female sex workers

Indigenous communication technique	N	\bar{x}	SD	
Lowly	158	12.06	2.484	
Average	86	13.76	2.180	
Highly	136	18.48	3.649	
Total	380	14.74	4.074	
Source of variance	SS	df	MS	F
Between groups	3120.915	2	1560.457	185.564
Within groups	3170.293	377	8.409	
Totals	6291.208	379		

Significances at 0.05 level, df = 2 & 377; critical f = 3.03

Result of Fisher's test analysis in Table 2 shows significant pair-wises comparison as follows: Lowly prevented versus averagely prevented ($t = 4.369$; $p < 0.05$), lowly prevented versus highly prevented ($t = 18.941$; $p < 0.05$) and averagely prevented ($t = 8.198$; $p < 0.05$); the results indicate that female sex workers who were highly prevented do better in communication technique in the area of indigenous communication than their counterpart who were averagely and lowly prevented.

Table 2: Fishers LSD of the influence of indigenous communication technique on HIV/AIDs prevention among female sex workers

Variables	Level of HIV/AIDS prevention	Low (n = 158)	Average (n = 86)	High (n = 136)
Indigenous communication	Lowly	12.06 ^a	1.699 ^b	6.421
	Averagely	4.369 ^c	13.73	4.722
	Highly	18.941*	8.198	18.48

(MSW = 8.409)

Significances at 0.051level

- a. All group means are along the principal diagonals
- b. Differences among group means are above the principal diagonals
- c. T = values are below the principle diagonals

Discussion of findings

The result of this study revealed that indigenous media communication technique significantly influenced behavioural change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers in Calabar Metropolis. This result is in agreement with (Akpama, 2002) who stated that indigenous media communication techniques is the process often used to disseminate relevant information which border on behavioural change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers.

The result also corroborates Leo, Ezekiel and Chinelo (2013) who investigated HIV/AIDS media campaigns and knowledge of high risk factors among female sex workers in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria, and reported that the finding revealed that female sex workers still engaged in high risk behaviour of the scourge. The study therefore concluded that media campaigns on HIV/AIDS have not been effective on female sex workers in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The study recommends re-structuring of campaigns strategies in order to make them more effective.

Similarly, also the result is in consonant with Onyeneho (2009) who conducted a study on HIV/AIDS risk factors and economic empowerment needs of female sex workers in Enugu Urban, Nigeria. The researcher found among others, that condom use among sex workers depended on the client choice and that misconceptions

Indigenous Media Communication Techniques and Behaviour Change on HIV/AIDS Prevention among Female Sex Workers in Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria

Ekpenyong David Oboqua, Ph.D; Bessong Columbus Deko & Bessong Napoleon Osang

existed among FSWS on mode of transmission as perceptual factors played great role in their attitude toward HIV/AIDS than demographic differences. The study concluded that commercial sex workers remain a major sources of HIV/AIDS transmission in Nigeria.

The result is also in agreement with Moses (2002) who stated that intervention programmes targeting core groups are to succeed, they must be undertaken in full partnership with the targeted population. The success and sustainability of projects also depends on involving a range of people who influence commercial sex activity, either directly or indirectly.

Conclusion

Based on the result of the study, it was concluded that indigenous communication technique do significantly influenced behaviour change on HIV/AIDS prevention among female sex workers. The findings of this study conclude that the various media campaigns on HIV/AIDS have not been effective on sex workers in the Calabar metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria because sex workers still engage in very high risk behaviours. It is also pertinent to add that sex workers could be a major source of HIV/AIDS infection and spread in the study area, and indeed in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Indigenous communication approaches should be utilized by federal, state and local government at the grassroots level in the fight against HIV/AIDS scourge.
2. Town criers should be used as information dissemination channels on HIV/AIDS education, when and if the sex workers remain trainable.
3. Government should address the fundamental structural issues that tend to facilitate sex workers such as unemployment and poverty. This will enable sex workers to consider other opportunities rather than continue in the infamous sex business.

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Indigenous Media Communication Techniques and Behaviour Change on HIV/AIDS Prevention among Female Sex Workers in Calabar Metropolis in Cross River State, Nigeria

Ekpenyong David Oboqua, Ph.D; Bessong Columbus Deko & Bessong Napoleon Osang

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