

The Effects of Advertisement Messages: The Case of HIV and AIDS Awareness Campaign in Nigeria

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Abstract

In Nigeria, governments, non-government organizations (NGOs), associations, among other concerned bodies have always tried to get the masses (re)awakened to the existence and the effect of HIV and AIDS. To this effect, series of messages on the existence and danger of the disease were always consciously captioned to capture the masses' minds and attention using the mass media. Mass media serve as the appropriate means of quickly getting the masses informed about innovations, developments - positive or negative (Biagi, 2003; Bitner, 1989). In most of these awareness messages transmitted, People Living with HIV and AIDS – PLWHA are usually engaged to voice the message. Notably, in most cases, people of the lower class cadre in the society are always engaged. This conclusion is drawn probably because of their look (on television) and the way they sound (on radio). Thus, these set of people cannot be linked to the high-class cadre. This then raised some questions: first, does it mean that only the people in the lower class live with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria? Second, if some of those in the higher class (well to do) live with the disease too, why would they not be portrayed in these adverts? Third, is there any rationale behind the selection of personalities for HIV/AIDS adverts? Last, do personalities portrayed for production of the adverts have any effect on the audience? These are the concerns of this study. To achieve this objective, the survey research methodology was adopted. Hence, questionnaire and interview were used to get people's views and perceptions on the subject matter.

Keywords: mass media, media adverts, advert campaign, PLWHA.

1. Introduction

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa with a population of about 180 million people is not ruled out of countries facing and suffering under the dangerous claws of HIV and AIDS. Owing to this, there came the need to get the masses more sensitized on how to curb the spread of the disease and if possible, what to do with the cooperation of government and non-government agencies to totally obliterate the disease from the societies. Notably, HIV/AIDS has emerged as one of the greatest public health challenges that has proved difficult to stop in spite of the public health community having dramatic success in other areas of disease prevention (Bertrand 2004). With the way the disease is spreading and killing victims, it has become a

menace that must be tackled using all available and reachable means. Thus, in line with this, Letamo (2005:2) posits, “there is really a dire need to do everything possible whether through education or what have you, to work on peoples psyche on the ideas they tend to hold about the disease.” Owing to this, at least to some extent, various tools have been put in place to fight the deadly disease by Nigerian government even with the help of foreign donors. Worthy of note, over the decades, HIV/AIDS became a disease that has thrown the entire globe into confusion and an all night and day (re) search to put a stop to its spread and killing. Pertinently, one of the major tools among others used by the Nigerian government and other concerned agencies within the country is the mass media. The media is believed to be the most appropriate channel through which the far-flung heterogeneous peoples within the country could be reached as quickly as possible and subsequently informed and/or educated about the disease and what is needed to prevent, curb, and hopefully totally overcome it. Thus, the importance of the mass communication media is obvious. In line with this, Annan in Singh, 2009, puts it this way:

When you are working to combat a disastrous and growing emergency, you should use every tool at your disposal... Broadcast media have tremendous reach and influence, particularly with young people, who represent the future and who are the key to any successful fight against HIV/AIDS. We must seek to engage these powerful organizations as full partners in the fight to halt HIV/AIDS through awareness, prevention and education...

When a disease is a multifaceted malady, which impacts and affects a society, remedies have to be multi pronged. More so, when the disease defies treatment, cure has to precede and be synchronous with efforts to identify treatment. Such can be the process to combat and control the menace of HIV/AIDS. Thus, media is one of the instrumentalities, which facilitates and gives a directional thrust to the efforts to cure the disease if not to treat it. If medicine can treat HIV/AIDS, media is capable to prevent it with an ultimate goal to cure it through its capabilities to impart education through entertainment. (Singh, 2009; Vidanapathirana et. al, 2006).

It has been noted that HIV/AIDS are no longer public health issues rather it has become a serious socio-economic and developmental concern that need quick and intensive check. It could be seen as the worst epidemic humanity has ever faced. The intensity of the growth and effect of the disease has made it imperative for the mass media to be involved.

In Nigeria, involving the mass media has been viewed from the right perspective especially through the number of HIV/AIDS adverts that run on the mass media on daily basis. However, it has been noted that most of the advertisements transmitted through the media to the masses carry some questionable features especially with regards to the personalities portrayed. Although there is the portrayal of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), which is not a bad idea at all, at least to create a real picture of what it looks like to be a victim and probably to register the advertisement messages in the minds of listeners and/or viewers. Without mincing words, it could be said that the major objective of running these advertisement messages is to get the masses aware of the disease and subsequently to reduce the level of contracting the disease and/or outright stoppage of tendencies of contracting the disease. A look at the idea of the questionable features of the personalities portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts based on peoples assumption as mentioned earlier and the aim of establishing if the assumption is true or false is the major concern of this study.

2. Study Objectives

Discussions on the issue of HIV/AIDS across the globe had been in the fore because of its inherent effect and danger to humanity. For this study, the core objective is concerned with the masses' perception of the personnel portrayed in the HIV/AIDS advertisements that run on radio and television and the effects of the the messages on the masses. Thus, the study sets to reveal if there are reasons why advertisers would select a particular set of persons to be portrayed in adverts and the reason(s) that are behind such decisions, if any. The reason for this is anchored on the fact that there have been whispers that most times it is the low cadre set of Nigerians living with HIV/AIDS that are usually engaged in most of the HIV/AIDS advertisements run on the selected media sources. Could this be true?

The researcher's selection of media personnel, advert professionals and persons engaged in the advertisements concepts and production on the chosen media would hopefully help to answer the questions raised for the study.

3. Methodology: Study Design

Survey research methodology was adopted to gather data for this study. The survey research instruments that is, questionnaire and interview were subsequently adopted for the study. These instruments helped the researcher gather data to give adequate answers to the questions raised for the study that is, is it only the people in the lower class live with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria as portrayed in the adverts? Second, why would those in the higher class (well to do) not portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts? Third, what are the rationales behind the selection of personalities for HIV/AIDS adverts? Last, do personalities portrayed for the production of HIV/AIDS adverts have any effect on the audience?

Thus, questionnaire was purposively administered on the selected recipients that is, the frequent users of the media; who are conversant with HIV/AIDS advertisements on both media sources chosen for this study – radio and television, advertising professionals, health workers, and people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). In the selection, those who fall under the categories stated above and are willing to complete the questionnaire were picked. The purposive selection of recipient was because the researcher decided to channel the study to focus on People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), those who are in one way or the other working with them and the masses who are abreast of the subject matter. In other words, those with directly contact such as health workers, counselors, consultants were engaged among others. On the other hand, media/adverts personnel, masses, among others, were also picked as elements and engaged. The young people who fall between the ages of 18 and 45 years old made up the majority of the target recipients for the study. This is because a high percentage of people living with HIV/AIDS are the young people.

Further, people living with HIV/AIDS and producers of HIV/AIDS adverts messages were interviewed. The reason for these selections was that the researcher is interested in letting the people who are directly or indirectly involved as mentioned earlier share their ideas on the subject matter. In all, the researcher believes that these will constitute a representative sample with respect to the research purpose.

Hence, a total amount of one hundred and sixty (160) questionnaire with twenty-six (26) items, of a mixture of close and open-ended items were administered on selected recipients. On the other hand, a total number of eight (8) interviewees were also purposively picked based on their revelation of access to the media and in-depth understanding of the subject matter as professionals. They include five (5) media/adverts personnel and three (3) health workers/counselors. Hence, they were interviewed using an interview guide of nine (9) structured questions by the researcher.

4. Literature Review and Theoretical Frame Work

4.1. Mass Media and HIV/AIDS Advertisement Messages

Over the ... decades, HIV prevention programmes around the world have used mass media campaigns to increase testing and improve people's knowledge of their HIV status. (Don Operario, 2006:4).

Since the exposure of the existence of the Human Immune Virus (HIV) and the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), the mass media in a way have been involved in spreading educative information about the menace in our societies, developed and under-developed. In Nigeria, for example, one form among others through which this information about HIV/AIDS is disseminated is through the placement of advertisements on radio and television. Series of advert messages of HIV/AIDS are created and packaged in ways that they are easy to understand; appeal to the people; and subsequently, the hope to change their beliefs, behaviours, and attitudes towards the HIV/AIDS issues.

Outside of the medical circle, media campaigns have dominated health communication and behaviour change interventions, using a variety of strategies to reach the audience. Close contacts with the focal individuals also referred to as opinion leaders contribute to effective campaigns. This is sometimes a two-step process

with mass media influence at the national and community level as well as motivating personal influencers or opinion leaders (Atkin 2001; Rogers 1995). Prevention is the main goal of various HIV/AIDS communication interventions. Since the early 1990s, national AIDS programmes worldwide use media campaigns to disseminate the information about the epidemic (Myhre and Flora 2000).

Obviously, the mass media have largely effectively created room for interventions to increase the knowledge of HIV transmission, to improve self-efficacy in condom use, to influence some social norms, to increase the amount of interpersonal communication, to increase condom use and to boost awareness of health providers, among others. This has been consciously done to help put the spread of the disease under control just as scientists are simultaneously and unrelentingly working round the clock with the aim of producing medications that will cure the disease if contracted.

Globally, the effect of the disease is obvious. The latest statistics of the global HIV and AIDS were published by the United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) in November 2009, and refer to the end of 2008. The reports estimated that about 33.4 million people are living with HIV/AIDS in 2008 (a range of 31.1-35.8 million) and more than 25 million people have died of AIDS since 1981 (a range of 1.7-2.4 million) (<http://www.avert.org/worldstats.htm>).

In the words of Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary General: "HIV/AIDS is the worst epidemic humanity has ever faced. It has spread further faster and with more catastrophic long – term effects than any other disease. Its impact has become a devastating obstacle to development..."

To all those who are concerned about fighting the menace, getting the masses educated was the first step taken. This step can only be achieved using the mass communication media channels because of their advantage of simultaneous reach to the people. In line with this assertion, Kofi Annan further states that:

...broadcast media have tremendous reach and influence, particularly with young people, who represent the future and who are the key to any successful fight against HIV/AIDS..." We must seek to engage these powerful organizations as full partners in the fight to halt HIV/AIDS through awareness, prevention and education...

According to reports, it is obvious that majority of those effected with the disease are the young people (youths). The use of the mass communication media therefore, is focused on reaching especially these set of people and others too with the aim of (re) sensitizing them.

Bertrand & Anhang's (2006: 205-241), highlighting the findings got from some other studies in their study, note that:

based on these findings, the authors conclude that mass media programmes - particularly those that are comprehensive - can be valuable in influencing HIV-related outcomes among young people ... They note that campaigns, which include television require the highest threshold of evidence, yet they also yield the strongest evidence of effects. They also observe that - when comparing interventions that use radio together with other media, on the one hand, and those that use radio and television together with other media, on the other – for most outcomes, the two types of interventions showed a surprisingly similar pattern... It might be tempting to conclude that radio used with other media can produce the same results as radio and television used with other media.

Further, they postulate with emphasis on adolescents' use of the mass media thus: "Given that adolescents are so attuned to mass media for information and cues about how to behave, the media have tremendous potential for reaching them with messages about HIV and AIDS..." These studies among others and the comments noted above show that the mass media's effect of the masses is palpable.

Moreover, in Nigeria there has been series of HIV/AIDS adverts placed on radio and television among other media. These most often, theatrical adverts, run concurrently on both media (television and radio). Some of these adverts include 'AIDS no dey show for face', 'Zip up', 'Use condom', 'AIDS is real', 'Imagine a world without HIV/AIDS?' All of those media contents packaged inform of adverts are used to create more awareness in the minds of the people whether in government or outside government.

For this study, two mass media theories would be discussed. First, is the agenda-setting theory and second, the Uses and Gratification theory. The reason for this is because they are theoretical related and addresses

issues based on the purpose of this study. Worthy of note, research shows that the mass media actually set agenda on issues (such as the HIV/AIDS issue) and that most a time, media users gain gratification from the media they choose at one time or the other. Thus, gratification sought most times were gratification obtained.

4.2 Agenda Setting Theory

In Nigeria, the use of the mass media in creating awareness about the HIV/AIDS syndrome has really helped majority of Nigerians to know about the disease and how to prevent its spread. In doing this, the mass media are seen as setting agenda on the issue. In other words, transmitting messages about the issue through their channels make them play the agenda-setting role. The frequency of transmission of media contents would also have a role to play in this order.

In trying to paint a picture in the minds of his readers on agenda setting, Akpabio (2005: 173 - 176) posits:

There can be doubt about the fact that there is more news everyday than the media can possibly accommodate. It is equally true that there could be a dearth of news to much so that what on a good day would not even merit a mention could make headlines. However, because the former scenario is the reality, media gatekeepers using news judgment criteria pick and choose what constitutes the day's news.

It would have been noted that a growing number of studies such as that of Akpabio among others have attempted to construct integrative models that relate media coverage on issues such as HIV/AIDS and so on. Various scholars have highlighted different ways the effects of the mass communication media reflect in the lives of the people. As Akpabio clearly stated above, actually, media people through their professional judgment choose what should constitute the day's news. Media researchers in their support for this notion, have at one time or the other stressed that the mass media set agenda on issues/events in our societies. In other words, it is believed that the media set agenda through the various ways they package and disseminate the news, information and entertainment (which include advertisements) contents to their far-flung heterogeneous mass audience.

Actually, McCombs and Shaw coined the term agenda setting in 1972 with a core idea that the media emphasis on an issue influences the audience to also view the issue as important (McQuail, 2000:512). Then, one could submit that Agenda setting is viewed as the power of the media to structure issues and plant them in the minds of the people such as the HIV/AIDS advert messages. Thus, the media, by focusing repeated and major attention on an event or set of related events such as news, information and/or advert messages on HIV/AIDS transferred the event into an issue that is highly discussed by the masses across the country especially because of its rate of spreading and danger. Placement, size and frequency of appearance of stories are ways through which the media attach certain weights to news stories of any sort.

Agenda setting posits that audiences learn these salient issues from the news media, thus incorporating a similar set of weights and importance into their own personal agenda. In agreement to the above, Folarin (1998:75-76) puts it this way:

the mass media have an impact on agenda setting in that they have the ability to choose or emphasize certain topics thereby causing the public to perceive the issues or topics as important. This implies that the mass media pre-determine what issues are considered as important at a given time in a given society.

To Soverin and Tankard (1992:207), agenda setting is an idea that "the news media by display of news, come to determine the issue that public think and talk about". To Lang and Lang in Soverin and Tankard (1992:210), "the mass media force attention to certain issues. They build up public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think and talk about." More so, Sandman et al. (1976:19), see agenda setting as "the editorial decision that a particular event is not news if the news media ignores it or says so."

Laying credence to the above, the Nigerian media in giving emphases through their packaging, framing, and dissemination of information about various issues on HIV/AIDS to the masses made them play the agenda-setting role. They have really made debates and discussions on this issues spread across the rank and

file (that is, from medical, to socio-cultural, religious, and to the academic fields, and even among the market men and women, among others). This is seen to be true as more Nigerians are informed and sensitized about the HIV/AIDS disease. Thus, helping them raise questions at different forum.

From the foregoing, the fact still remains that viewing the theory and/or model of the mass media effect, it would be noted that they would always in considerable ways affected the masses' behaviour to a large extent, as they most times set agenda on issues thereby making people think and talk about such events or issues. Therefore, if actually the mass media succeeds in causing people to think towards a particular direction depending on the topical issues of the moment, then people's beliefs can be altered too that is, making them tilt either (a little) to the right or to the left based on how much the media succeed in capturing their minds. For example, until the media was aggressively used in educating Nigerians on the fact that tuberculosis has a connection with HIV/AIDS, Nigerian were not aware. Today, majority now know that if anyone is coughing for a very long time without cure, the fellow would need to quickly visit the hospital for proper check up. More so, peoples' belief and attitude towards sex were altered compared to their initial sex life without the fear of contracting HIV/AIDS. Presently, the use of preventives such as condoms among others during sexual intercourse has increased tremendously over the years.

4.3 Uses and Gratification theory

The second theory that would be discussed in this study is Uses and Gratifications theory, which is a popular approach to understanding mass communication. The theory places more focus on the consumer, or audience, instead of the actual message itself by asking, what people do with media rather than what media does to people. Thus, it assumes that members of the audience are not passive but take an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. The theory also holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their needs. The approach suggests that people use the media to fulfil specific gratifications. In other words, people would choose the media that meet their expectations. For example, if people want to know more about the HIV/AIDS disease, they would choose any of the media that have more programmes on HIV/AIDS. Though there may be other sources through which masses can get information about the disease, but they may most likely use the media especially when it sure that their needs (gratification sought) would be met by choosing the particular media. This theory would then imply that the media compete against other information sources for viewers' gratification (Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. 1974). Thus, the uses and gratifications theory is an audience-centered approach. When an audience actively seeks out media, they are typically seeking it in order to gratify a need. For example, in social situations, people may feel more confident and knowledgeable when they have facts and stories from media to add to conversation such as conversations on health matters among others.

In the view of Grant et al., (1998):

The media dependency theory, has also been explored as an extension to the uses and gratifications approach to media, though there is a subtle difference between the two theories. Peoples' dependency on media proves audience goals to be the origin of the dependency while the uses and gratifications approach focuses more on audience needs.

Actually, the fact remains that people will depend on the media that meet their expectations. However, this may have a link to the topic under discussion. In other words, a particular media organization may not meet people's gratification on every field of life at the same level. A particular media organization may meet up with peoples' expectations on health issues and may not meet their expectations on political, social, et cetera issues. This submission would be explained through the model below as it takes lead from other models:

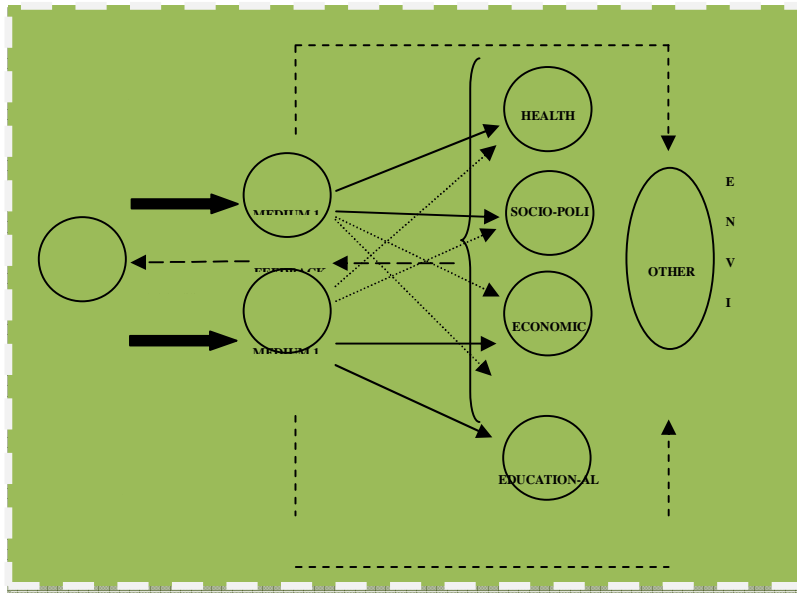


Fig.1: Individual's choice of mass media use based on gratification sought (GS) and gratification obtained (GO).

The model shows how an individual in his environment can make a choice of gaining gratification through the choice of the medium/media he feels would give the gratification needed at one time or the other based on his normative expectation that the information obtained through the chosen medium/media would meet his needs in connection to the interest and value he attach to the information. For the individual as shown in the model above for instance, he has chosen two different media sources for gaining gratification on various issues of concern in the society. This choice was because of his knowledge on which medium gives what is expected. With access to 'Medium 1', he gets gratifications sought on health and political issues. His choice for 'Medium 2' was because he needed gratifications from the mass media on economic and education issues that Medium 1 could not give but could be got using Medium 2. Note that the media available (M1 and M2) cover all the issues noted as shown in the model. However, they meet the individuals' gratification depending on how their programmes are framed and packaged and the individual's normative expectation on the value attached to their content (s). It may not be that Medium 1 does not cover economic and education issues as indicated with the *tiny dotted line arrows* but the individual prefers to use Medium 2 because it gives him his desired gain. On this note, it is possible for the individual to continue to maintain this dependence for as long as the gratification sought and got remains constant. In addition, the *broken line angle arrows* show that it is likely for this individual to get access to other programmes on other issues using any of the available mass communication media as shown in the model, which will invariably depend on interest in and interpretation given to the media contents. More so, the *straight broken line arrow* shows how it is likely for the individual to receive feedback on any of the issues through any of these media chosen for as long as he continues to have access to them and vice versa.

The reason(s) why a particular media will (may) not be able to meet individuals gratification sought in all fields seem to be a question to be paid a little more attention to in the field of mass communication/media studies. Could it be said that this is caused by the way different mass communication media package, frame, disseminate reports?

Viewing the uses and gratification and media dependency theories, Rubin, (1982), says, “both theories agree that media use can lead to media dependency.” In addition, the media dependency theory states that the more dependent an individual is on the media to fulfill needs, the more significant the media becomes to that person. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1976) illustrate dependency as the relationship between media content, the nature of society, and the behaviour of audiences. People would become more dependent on media that meet a number of their needs than on media that touch only a few needs. The numbers of sources open to an individual influences dependency on a certain medium. Individuals are usually more dependent on available media if their access to media alternatives is limited. The more alternatives there are for an individual, the less is the dependency on, and influence of, a specific medium. (Littlejohn, 2002).

The hypodermic needle model however, claims that consumers are strongly affected by media and have no say in how the media influences them. Conversely, the main idea of the Uses and Gratifications model is that people are not helpless victims of ‘all-powerful media’, but use media to fulfill their various needs. Really, these needs serve as motivations for using media.

Furthermore, Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch in a study in (1974: 15-17) gave five basic assumptions as follows. They provide a framework for understanding the correlation between media and audiences, thus:

1. The audience is conceived as active, that is, an important part of mass media use is assumed to be goal oriented. In other words, patterns of media use are shaped by more or less definite expectations of what certain kinds of content have to offer the audience member.
2. In the mass communication process much initiative in liking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member ... individual and public opinions have power vis-à-vis the seemingly all-powerful media.
3. The media compete with other sources of need satisfaction. The needs served by mass communication constitute but a segment of the wider range of human needs, and the degree to which they can be adequately met through mass media consumption certainly varies.
4. Methodologically speaking, many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves- i.e., people are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives in particular cases, or at least to recognize them when confronted with them in an intelligible and familiar verbal formulation.
5. Value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms.

Based on all the ideas and concepts discussed above, for any user of the media, it is therefore pertinent to note that choices are made based on prior motivation got from the media chosen. In other words, if a medium chosen has been perceived to be at its best at meeting up with audiences’ expectations on HIV and AIDS issues for example, the choice of using it would definitely remain constant and may increase the particular media audience. There are tendencies that the initial users would inform others who would by choice join in the use of the medium and continue to use it if their expectations are continually met. The power accorded to the media therefore has a relationship with their contents, manner of framing, and the masses normative expectations that the mass media operations are proportionate to their hopes and aspirations of getting what they want from the chosen media especially when they want it.

4.4 Available HIV/AIDS Prevention Approaches

A number of strategies are deployed globally to achieve the goals of fighting the HIV/AIDS menace tooth and nail and hope are that the battle shall be won. These may include application of interactive approaches and life planning skills to enable behaviour change and ensure repetition of key messages by using multiple channels. The channels may include group setting and aim to address deeply-entrenched behaviours. Aside, the mass media is also deployed to reach a broad audience and introduce new desirable behaviours. Other approaches include combining education with entertainment to engage young people and also connecting youth with parents or other role models, schools, communities and religious groups. In addition, other approaches include the following strategies thus: change sexual and drug-using behaviours; promote correct

and consistent use of male and female condoms; reduce the number of sexual partners; improve the management of sexually- transmitted infections; broaden access to HIV testing and counselling; increase access to harm-reduction programmes for drug users; promote medical male circumcision and ensure effective infection control in health care settings.”

Studies show that majority of the menaces’ victims are the young people. If about 40% of new HIV infections are among young people, then this should not be a surprise because this is an age group that has the highest rates (over 500,000 infections daily) of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), excluding HIV. Young people, therefore, need to be placed at the centre of the response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic (Wangulu, 2008). This is actually one of the basic reasons why most of the respondents for this study fall under this category of people living with HIV/AIDS. However, others such as the adults are also targets because the problem cuts across the general global population.

Further, to Wangulu (2008: 2),

the starting point is behaviour change interventions that will empower them to reduce high risk behaviour in their midst, easily access VCT services and use condoms effectively. There is a need to advocate for increased access to treatment for young people who are living with HIV and AIDS and enhance support and care for those who are already infected and affected by HIV and AIDS through advocacy and the promotion of human rights.

In the view of Piot, in Wangulu (2008: 4),

the fight is not an easy one and this is only the beginning. Twenty-seven years into the epidemic, AIDS continues to challenge all of our efforts. Today, for every two people who start taking antiretroviral drugs, another five become newly infected. Unless we take urgent steps to intensify HIV prevention we will fail to sustain the gains of the past few years, and universal access will simply be a noble aspiration.

In his submission, Wangulu states, “we will even fail in a big way if we do not place young people at the centre of the response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

On this note, viewing the Nigerian setting, the adoption of the approaches mentioned above with the attitude of efficiently and effectively using the mass media channels in spreading the messages will to a very large extent reduce the rate of the diseases’ spread especially among the youths in the country.

5. Study Population and Sample Size

The population of this study consists of mass media/advertising personnel, medical professional, people living with HIV/AIDS and other recipients who use the media and have deep understanding of the HIV/AIDS and adverts run through the mass media on HIV/AIDS especially the young people (including university students and graduates). The convenience sampling technique was adopted to select the study elements to complete the questionnaire and those who were interviewed.

In all, a total amount of one hundred and sixty 160 (100%) questionnaire was administered on selected recipients. The breakdown are as follows: twenty-five (0.16.%) media practitioners; twenty-five (0.16%) advertising professionals, ninety-five (0.59%) recipients of other fields majority of who were young people but with a reasonable knowledge of the subject matter and fifteen (0.09%) people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). The PLWHA were reached by engaging the medical doctors/consultants at the University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan. The reason was that the researcher could not meet these recipients one-on-one to administer the questionnaire due to time constraint as effort to meet them was to no avail. Another reason was that stigmatization level in the society is still rampant making the PLWHA find it a little difficult to disclose their identity. In addition, a total number of eight (8) interviewees were purposively picked based on their professional experience but six (6) were finally got and interviewed. Precisely, they are recipients in the media and advertising agencies. As mentioned earlier, these recipients were purposively chosen based on the researcher’s judgment and because they constitute a representative sample with respect to the research purpose.

6. Limitations to the Study

Carrying out a study in this area is always viewed as sensitive because of the believe people attach to the HIV/AIDS menace. Until recent times, majority of Nigerians believed that the disease is contracted only through sex. For this reason, anyone discovered to be living with HIV/AIDS is seen as promiscuous and should not be pitied. Owing to this, PLWHA do not always want to be known. In the cause of this study, the researcher had to (re)assure those to be interview and fill the questionnaire especially in the medical field that all information divulge would be handled confidentially, only for use of the study and that it is not intended to be used negatively.

This challenge as mentioned above, created bottlenecks for the researcher to get all the information that is needed for the study as quickly as possible.

7. Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This paper has examined the effects of advertisement messages, the case of HIV and AIDS awareness campaign in Nigeria with special attention on the personalities portrayed.

With analysis on the data gathered using the selected survey methodology instruments – questionnaire and structured interview, results were got and shall be discussed in line with the questions raised for the study.

The tables below show results got from the questionnaire administered on recipients and was complemented by responses got from the interviewee's responses in the discussions.

Table 1(a): Respondents' Responses on if they pay attention on the Personalities Portrayed in the HIV/AIDS Adverts.

Yes	No	Not Sure	Invalid	Total (%)
58 (0.60%)	15 (0.15%)	20 (0.21%)	4 (0.04%)	97 (100%)

Table 1(b): Respondents' Responses on if it is only the Low Class Masses are Involved in the HIV/AIDS Adverts.

Positive	Neutral	Negative	Invalid	Total (%)
32 (0.33%)	21 (0.22%)	28 (0.29%)	16 (0.16%)	97 (100%)

To answer the first question raised for the study that is, does it mean that only the people in the lower (popular) class live with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, tables 1a and 1b were used. As discussed earlier, the question was born out of the researchers' curiosity to empirically establish if the peoples' opinions that those portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts are usually poor people are true or not. Based on the data gathered and analyzed, using table 1a, it was discovered that majority of the people who watch or listen to the adverts, pay attention to the personalities portrayed in the adverts. Thus, 58 respondents scoring 0.60% say they pay attention of the personalities engaged in the adverts. This has a very high margin with those not sure that is, 20 respondents scoring 0.21%. With this, it can be established that people actually pay attention to and/or have some understanding about the personalities portrayed in the adverts, which might have led to their submission that it is usually the poor people that are usually portrayed. More so, looking at table 1b with the hope of giving deeper revelation on if truly it is only the poor (low/popular class) masses in Nigeria are usually engaged in the production of the HIV/AIDS Adverts, it was discovered that majority of the respondents believed that really, it is the poor PLWHA that are usually engaged in the production of the HIV/AIDS adverts. Looking at the categorization, 32 respondents scoring 0.33% out of 81 respondents fell under the 'positive', 28 on the other hand fell under negative scoring 0.29% while respondents who are neutral scored lower than the two latter categories with 21, scoring 0.22%.

However, with the responses got from the recipients interviewed, majority especially two medical and one of the mass media practitioners emphatically noted that it would not have been that the personalities portrayed are poor people judging by the way they look (on TV) and/or sound (on radio). They noted that mere being told that they are positive to HIV/AIDS alone is killing, which can deteriorate their health (physical and otherwise) within hours. One of the major reasons noted for this is the news that the disease has no cure,

stigmatization that most a time ends in neglect, rejection and what have you. According to them, however, presently the problems are being minimized as more people have come to understand that the disease is not only contracted through sexual intercourse but through other means such as using unsterilized sharp objects (blades, needles, pins, clippers, etc). More so, HIV/AIDS may likely not be the gateway to death if properly handled.

Therefore, being careful of not pushing aside the masses opinions but going by the submissions of more learned people in the field that is, the medical practitioners and mass media/adverts professionals since they are usually in one way or the other closer to the HIV/AIDS victims especially on a one-on-one contact on daily basis, it would be submitted by this study that it is not really true that those usually portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts are the poor people. One of the media/advert personnel noted that there are always a mix in the class of people portrayed to help drive down the intended purpose of disseminating such information through adverts. Further, she said that it may be pertinent to determine what class of people the masses are referring to. He emphasized, “the very rich like our politicians, or which one?” It is hoped that this classification will be the focus of yet another study in this area.

To further reveal the truth behind the masses believe about the portrayal of personnel for the HIV/AIDS adverts, question was raised as regards the rationales behind the selection of personalities for HIV/AIDS adverts? To answer this question, the questionnaire items No. 20-21 were used for measurement.

Table 2: Respondents’ Responses on the Rationales behind the Selection of Personalities for HIV/AIDS Adverts Production.

Positive	Neutral	Negative	Invalid	Total (%)
24 (0.25%)	27 (0.28%)	25 (0.26%)	21 (0.21%)	97 (100%)

Table 2 above shows the breakdown of respondents’ responses on the subject matter. Going by the categories, it would be noticed that majority of the respondents do not really know much about the issue of rationales when it comes to adverts. A good reason could be that they are not part of the in-house adverts managers who know the reason(s) for choosing ‘who’ for ‘what’; ‘what’ for ‘whom’, and so on in the course of producing an advert for HIV/AIDS or any other phenomenon or products. However, the question was raised by the researcher to help establish richer answers from respondents for the study as regards their deep knowledge on the research problem and not to rely only on professionals’ knowledge in this area. Owing to this, it would be seen that more respondents were neutral that is, 27 respondents scoring 0.28% fell under this category, this is followed by 25 respondents (0.26%) with negative responses while 24 respondents (0.25%) scoring less aside the invalid category gave positive responses. More so, it was on this table that the highest invalid was scored that is, 21 (0.21%) compared to other tables generated for the study.

Further, with responses got from the adverts personnel interviewed, it was revealed that the only rationale that are most times applied among others especially for the HIV/AIDS adverts was to go directly for PLWHA depending on the message being packaged. It was noted that it was usually not very easy to reach these people but that the help of medical practitioners, Government/NGOs who run assistance programmes for PLWHA among others, breaks the bottlenecks and paves ways to reach them. Thus, engaging these people would make the advert messages create the desired impact on the target audience.

Therefore, the answer to the second question raised for the study based on the analysis of data gathered was that there are rationales behind the selection of personalities portrayed but that these rationales were not applied to play down a particular group or set of people in the society in any way. Rather, they are meant to make the adverts reach their heterogeneous target audience and cause the pre-meditated positive effect on them.

In addition, it was also asked if the personalities portrayed for the production of HIV/AIDS adverts have any effect on the message. In other words, do they determine the effectiveness of the Adverts messages on the audience? Data on Table 3 (a and b) below and responses got from the recipients interviewed were also used to explain the answer to the question.

Table 3(a): Respondents’ Response on the Effectiveness of Personalities Portrayed in the HIV/AIDS Adverts Messages on the Audience.

Yes	No	Don’t Know	Invalid	Total (%)
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55 (0.57%)	10 (0.10%)	23 (0.24%)	9 (0.09%)	97 (100%)
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Table 3(b): Respondents' Response on the Extent to which Personalities Portrayed in the HIV/AIDS Adverts Messages Affects Audience's Understanding and Perception of the Messages Received.

Very Great Extent	Great Extent	No Extent	Very Little Extent	Little Extent	Invalid	Total (%)
21 (0.22%)	27 (0.28%)	8 (0.08%)	5 (0.05%)	4 (0.04%)	32 (0.33%)	97 (100%)

Generally, respondents who believe the effectiveness of the personalities portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts are more than those who do not believe and who do not know respectively. In all, 55 respondents said 'yes' scoring 0.57% while those who could not establish the effectiveness were 23 scoring 0.24%. On the other hand, only 10 respondents with 0.10% said 'no'. Nine (9) of the questionnaire administered were invalid with 0.09%. Looking at the extent of the effectiveness of the personalities portrayed on the message, 27 respondents agreed that it is to a 'very great extent' scoring 0.28%. This is followed by 'very great extent' having 21 respondents scoring 0.22%, 8 respondents say it is to 'no extent' with 0.08%, 5 respondents say it is to a 'very little extent' with 0.05%, while 4 respondents say that the effectiveness is to a 'little extent' with 0.04%. Surprisingly, 32 of the questionnaire administered were invalid scoring 0.33%. Notwithstanding, the media/advert personnel interviewed revealed that in any advert disseminated, the choice of personalities that would always be engaged are connected to those whose appearance/voice would help in effectively and in the most efficient way pass the desired message to the target audience. This they said was the reason why in most of the adverts, PLWHA are engaged except in few such as the 'AIDS no dey show for face' advert meaning, a person's look or countenance cannot be used to determine if he/she is HIV positive or not, among others.

In all of these, it would be established that there is actually an effect of the personalities portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts on the messages packaged and disseminated to the masses. Thus, it helps in getting the advert messages send the right feedback to those who sent them that is, if the messages were effective or not.

Table 4(a): Respondents' Response on the Positive Effects of the HIV/AIDS Adverts Messages on the Audience Notwithstanding Personalities Portrayed.

Yes	No	Don't Know	Invalid	Total (%)
73 (75.3%)	Nil (0.00%)	17 (17.5%)	7 (7.2%)	97 (100%)

Going by table 4(a) above, it obvious that all the respondents agreed to the fact that the HIV/AIDS adverts messages disseminated have positive effects on the people. In all, 73 respondents representing 75.3% ticked 'yes' while 17 respondents representing 17.5% ticked 'don't know'. On the other hand, only 7 of the questionnaire administered representing 7.2% were invalid, while none of the respondents ticked 'no'. Based on responses got from the interviewees, it was also generally agreed that the adverts largely are effective. Some of them noted that quite a good number of Nigerians now have at least a reasonable knowledge of the disease, its danger and how to prevent being a victim. This according to them has helped in the control of the spread of the disease at least to some extent.

Table 4(b): Respondents' Response on the Extent of the Positive Effects of HIV/AIDS Adverts Messages on the Audience Notwithstanding Personalities Portrayed.

Very Great Extent	Great Extent	No Extent	Very Little Extent	Little Extent	Invalid	Total (%)
29 (29.9%)	46 (47.4%)	1 (1.0%)	3 (3.1%)	8 (8.3%)	10 (10.3%)	97 (100%)

Table 4(b) helped to complement the result obtained in table 4(a) revealing the positive effects of HIV/AIDS adverts messages on the audience notwithstanding personalities portrayed. More respondents agreed that the adverts messages effects notwithstanding personalities portrayed are to a great extent, scoring 47.4%. This is followed by 29 respondents scoring 29.9% as against others who do not think the adverts messages are positively affecting the people. In summary, it would be submitted that in Nigeria, HIV/AIDS advert

messages so far have had positive effects on the masses. This could be confirmed in the responses given by the recipients interviewed. They all noted that the dissemination of advert messages on HIV/AIDS culminating in the agenda setting role of the mass communication media, has had positive effects on Nigerians just as mentioned earlier that most people now know a little more about the HIV/AIDS menace, its danger and how to play safe.

8. Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions

8.1 Conclusion

Globally, HIV and AIDS issues have actually attracted all the available institutions be it government or non-government. In other words, the disease has become a menace that all the arsenals of public, private and even religious institutions have been engaged to obliterate it. One of the major ways applied out the scientific research processes is through effective and efficient information dissemination about the disease. This made the mass communication media a major stakeholder in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

This study has actually looked at some issues as they concern masses' beliefs, those involved in HIV/AIDS adverts and the effects of the messages packaged as adverts and disseminated to the Nigerian masses. Basically, one of the means through which the menace has been tackled is through educative advert placements on the mass communication media, which sometimes are theatrical in nature or otherwise with the sole aim of educating the masses on the danger of the disease and ways to reduce its spread until a cure is found. Reports have however shown that for now, AIDS has no cure. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, it would be established that:

- i. it is not only the people in the popular class (the poor) that are portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts in Nigeria. They might not be looking too good probably because of the effect of their belief as regards the disease;
- ii. there are rationales behind the selection of personalities portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts in Nigeria.
- iii. the selection of personalities portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts in Nigeria is not aimed at running down any set of the citizenry (high, middle or in the lower classes). Rather it is aimed at making the messages effective on the target audience.
- iv. that the personalities portrayed for the production of the HIV/AIDS adverts in Nigeria are effective on the message thereby making the adverts positively effective to the masses. Thus, the selection of People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) paints a better picture of the intended meaning and makes the messages more meaningful to the target audience and
- v. that the advert messages have to a large extent had positive effects on the people notwithstanding the personalities portrayed in the adverts.

8.2 Recommendations

Based on the foregoing, it would therefore be recommended as follows, that:

- i. stakeholders involved in the production of HIV/AIDS adverts in Nigeria, should endeavour to organize public enlightenment programmes to explain to the masses what it takes to produce such adverts and possibly explain all the process for better understanding. It should first be noted that nothing will be too much to put into helping all and sundry to understand all that go in and around the HIV/AIDS being a very sensitive issue and its adverts and second, that the most important thing is for the target audience to receive the messages with positive minds so that the desired effect would be achieved. If these are carefully and effectively done, it will reduce the rate of negative whispers and rumours among the people.
- ii. HIV/AIDS advert messages should continue to be disseminated through the mass communication media and all other means available more frequently than can be noticed at the moment. In other words, government, NGOs and all other stakeholders should not relent their efforts in creating more opportunities for the creation of more creative adverts with depth on HIV/AIDS.

- iii. the masses should also note that the fight against HIV/AIDS is a fight for life. They should also do all they can to support government, NGOs and other stakeholders in the field to fight the menace until it is completely obliterated from our societies, globally rather than viewing whatever they see as a slant against any set of persons in the society.

8.3 Suggestions

This study has hopefully empirically shed light on the questions raised as regards people's views especially about personalities portrayed in the HIV/AIDS adverts sent to the masses through the mass communication media in Nigeria. Answers were adequately given based on data collected, sampled and analyzed within the limit of the study.

It would be noted that the questionnaire administered were administered on recipients not minding their status, class, et cetera. In other words, anyone who falls under the category set by the researcher was allowed to respond to the questions raised using the questionnaire items. However, further related studies could take a step beyond this study by stratifying the respondents into at least three classes that is, the high class; middle class and the popular class (the poor). This hopefully will independently help reveal what each class feels about the subject matter and will subsequently enrich results got. In addition, the Focal Group Discussion (FGD) could also be added to the research instruments to get more data for the studies.

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