Title:

Learner Based Assessment of HIV and AIDS Printed Information Materials Their Effectiveness and Appropriateness as Used in Dodoma Region, Tanzania, from 2013 to 2015

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Abstract:

Despite the notable and commendable efforts such as those in condom use campaigns, the relentless national wide struggle to combat and contain the deadly and notorious HIV and AIDS pandemic is still to make full use of the printed visual media. The printed visual media such as posters, bill boards, wall charts, flipcharts, fliers, stickers, leaflets as well as books and booklets can only contribute tremendously in education when they are researched, designed and used meaningfully. These visual media are apparently not fully given their respectable role and place in the current HIV and AIDS campaigns in Tanzania. In urban Tanzania (let alone the rural side) public places such as pubs, restaurants, liquor stores and supermarkets are filled with fiercely contesting market promotion

printed visual media and very few, if any, are for the HIV and AIDS campaigns. Why? It is true that many efforts have and are being made through various governmental and non-governmental initiatives to use the printed visual media in HIV and AIDS campaigns. But the application of these materials is not widely visible. Coca cola and Pepsi, alongside many brewery companies, together with numerous producers of other consumer products make excellent use of the printed visual media to win their customers. The HIV and AIDS campaign could effectively do the same to help influence and trigger change in peoples' minds towards positive attitudes in fighting and containing HIV and AIDS!! The printed visual media, when effectively used alongside other means of information dissemination such as the radio, television, drama, video and the social media can very successfully reinforce educational campaigns. But as for the Tanzanian situation such printed visual media are hardly seen in many of the places where they could be expected to be actively used.

The study, which was essentially conducted through qualitative approach, helps to unveil the current state of printed visual media materials as applied in HIV and AIDS educational campaigns in Dodoma region, Tanzania. The study made use of an open ended questionnaire, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews to collect data. The assessment was essentially learner/user based. The assessment was done in the learner/user's point of view and not the researcher's. The learner/user freely assessed the materials with the help of designed instruments. Visual media materials and literature found in the field were informally but keenly considered to support/verify the learner/user based data. The study reveals that printed visual media materials are playing an important role in educating people concerning HIV and AIDS. Respondents' views and other data analyses indicate that despite the fact that the materials are positively helping in information dissemination for HIV and AIDS, they are faced with numerous technical and cultural drawbacks that limit their meaningful role. The study is set to inform various stakeholders and national Policies on the state of current utilization of printed visual media materials in enhancing educational campaigns in Tanzania and elsewhere.