Abstract:

This study was carried out to establish how various factors affect the use of mass media in HIV and AIDS communication targeted at the youth. The factors studied included, media use, source likeableness, youth attitude, risk perception and social cultural ties. On media use this study held the view that the liberalization of the media which has led to a significant increase in the number of mass media outlets could have fragmented their audiences. This study sought to establish whether this was true and if so whether mass media could still be a suitable medium of HIV and AIDS campaigns. The study also sought to establish whether the youth feel at the risk of HIV and AIDS. In line with the health believe model, this is an important aspect in behavior change communication because the youth, would only give audience to HIV and AIDS communication if they felt they were at risk. The study further sought to establish the attitude of the youth towards the solution offered in HIV and AIDS campaigns. It was premised that a positive attitude towards these solutions would place campaign messages within the audiences' 'zone of acceptance' and heighten the possibility of the adoption of the proposed behavior. On social cultural ties, this study attempted to gauge whether the respondents feel there is social support (among peers) for the solutions given in HIV and AIDS mass mediated campaigns. The study held the view that as members of groups, individuals in youth audiences would be more likely to adopt behaviour which they feel has the support of peers. The study also looked at the languages and actors used in HIV and AIDS communication and gauged whether these were acceptable to youth audiences. It was premised that use of actors and languages which are credible to the youth would increase the chance of their adopting the proposed behaviour. Data on this study was collected by means of a survey on school going youth aged between 10 and 14 years. Conclusions were then inferred from an analysis, of the data. Appropriate recommendations have then been given for the benefit of policy makers, campaign planners and researchers.