

## **Access and Utilisation of Internet-Mediated HIV/AIDS Messages among Students of the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines how students of the University of Maiduguri access and utilise Internet-mediated HIV/AIDS messages and what impact the messages have on them. The study used survey, with questionnaire as the major instrument for data collection. Findings from the study show that Internet-mediated HIV/AIDS messages could be useful in mitigating the spread of the disease but that such messages alone cannot create adequate advocacy against the scourge. This explains why HIV/AIDS has continued to increase in the study area despite the plethora of media campaign messages against it. Based on this, we conclude that the mere presentation of HIV/AIDS advocacy campaign messages through the Internet or ICT would not be enough to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS in the study area. It is therefore recommended that other familiar interpersonal communication strategies should be applied to further convince people to adopt the desired attitudinal change necessary for preventing the spread of the disease.

**Keywords:** Access, Utilisation, Internet, Mediated Message, Students, HIV/AIDS.

## **Introduction**

Concerns over the increasing threat to life posed by the rising cases of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, and Nigeria in particular have reached alarming proportions to the extent that nearly all sections and sectors of the Nigerian society are being mobilised to be part of the global war on the deadly disease called HIV/AIDS. It appears some communities, by virtue of their occupational callings and cultural life, may be more vulnerable to the scourge than others. It also appears that some specific channels of communication can be better utilised for achieving the goals of HIV/AIDS control, especially among some selected communities. In this case, the role of ICT in the enhancement of HIV/AIDS mitigation activities among the Northern Nigerian youth will be investigated.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic remains one of the greatest health challenges facing the world today (Chanda, Mchombu and Nengomasha, 2008). HIV infection has spread rapidly across the globe. In Africa, HIV is predominant among young people as they constitute larger percentage of the society. McCain (2002) opines that two things are growing fast in Nigeria: Religion and HIV/AIDS. Nigeria's socio-economic status, traditional social ills, unemployment, illiteracy, cultural myths on sex and large population living in the rural areas make its citizens extremely vulnerable to the HIV/AIDS (Ajayi and Omotayo, 2010).

Umar (2010) maintains that the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa is becoming so alarming that societies and communities are mounting stringent control measures. This level of attention to the scourge has been unprecedented. According to him, Statistical figures of infected persons, being released by governments, NGOs and health centres, have been multiplying as each year, the figures keep rising. This is inspite of the intense global effort to control its spread. Worst of all is the fact that there is yet to be a universally effective cure for HIV/AIDS to date. Through the efforts of the UN and its agencies, most member states of the UN have been mobilised to join the war against HIV/AIDS. Emphasis has been placed on prevention largely. Anti-retroviral treatments and lately, some traditional treatments exist. Of particular importance, however, is the strategic advocacy against the social stigma, which has been yielding some results already. For the first time, persons living with HIV exhibit a level of confidence in their daily lives (Umar, 2010).

However, the widespread diffusion of the Internet and related ICTs has focussed increasing attention on their role in many sectors, including everyday life (Dutton *et al.*, 2004). For many decades before the Internet's arrival, academics and experts speculated on the social impact of a networked society (Castells, 1996).

The role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in human development has received growing attention among development practitioners, policy makers, government and civil society in recent years due to the growing proliferation of the Internet, convergence in IT and telecommunications technologies and increasing globalisation. While issues of access and the adoption of new ICTs

have tended to revolve around utopian themes of empowerment and the development potential of ICT, it has also raised the accompanying issue of digital divide and the challenges for developing countries to participate in the global information society. This, according to Franchesco (2011) alludes to the fact that while ICT has the potential to redress development goals in areas such as HIV/AIDS awareness, education, youth and gender empowerment and rural development, it is also accompanied by concerns that unless it is adopted effectively, existing socio-economic divides in terms of people's access to basic human needs may be further accentuated. ICT for development is therefore characterised by a range of human, infrastructural, institutional and technological challenges which are determined by the socio-economic context in which ICTs are introduced.

Much analysis of the social importance of new technology examines the effects of technological innovation in people's everyday lives. Does the new technology lead to a qualitative shift in the way people run their lives – making it more efficient, more fulfilling, richer or, of course, possibly the reverse of all of these? But the findings of some research hint at a more fundamental social change, of the emergence of a new form of society where the new technologies are held to variously erode, create, rework, but alternatively simply *transform*, for good or ill (and sometimes simultaneously), the way people perform many important aspects of their lives (Franzen, 2003; Gershuny, 2003).

Information and Communication Technology has, within a very short time, become one of the basic building blocks of modern societies. Many countries now regard understanding Information and Communication Technology as a critical aspect of their daily lives. Addressing the goals and visions of the ICT in society, Haftor and Mirijamdotter (2011) aver that ICT in society can be formulated as policy statements to guide daily career and domestic activities. These goals they said include, but not limited to: information access for all, well-being and quality of life for all, enriched social contact between people, integration and respect for diversity, greater autonomy for the individual, prevention of various types of overload and stress, deepening of true human qualities, deepening and broadening of democracy, e-cooperation and peace; and sustainability in a broad sense, including the environment, economy, and human side.

According to Adigun (2005), the proliferation of technology especially that of ICT seemed to have changed the social order and interpersonal relationship. Yet, the flexibility and advance of this technology has proved its role as the supportive measures in human's life activities in the quest to promote productivity. Elaborating on its tremendous power and ability, Adigun (2005) argues that it offers a rapidly growing collection of information with topics ranging from medicine to science and technology. It features exhaustive material for students and coverage of recreation, entertainment, sports, shopping, and employment opportunities (Musa, 2012).

This study seeks to examine the access and utilisation of HIV/AIDS mediated

messages on ICTs by University of Maiduguri Students for their advancement purposes and for societal development in general. This will be done by making clear the conceptual and empirical relationships between ICT-mediated HIV/AIDS messages and students' knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS in order to ground the hypothesis that youths access and utilisation of ICTs assist in increasing their HIV/AIDS knowledge and awareness in concrete terms.

### **Communication: An Agent for Social Change**

The central role of communication in the global war on HIV/AIDS has been very obvious. Since the outbreak of the epidemic in 1978, communication or the media in particular have played key roles in awareness creation, enlightenment, motivation, education, and persuasive advocacy among others. Communication is widely acknowledged as a powerful force for positive change. It is a very powerful tool for fostering learning as well as a tool for enhancing the process of human/social development. It has the potential of enhancing people's quality of life, help protect fragile environments and create a knowledge-based society that is more responsive to development of students. It can facilitate the means to establish favourable social attitude and behaviour towards a more sustainable social and economic life. Communication is vital in helping to foster acceptance of policies and programmes among students in University of Maiduguri, likewise in mobilising them for participation and action as well as in conveying information for education and training purposes.

Information has always played a very important part in human life. However, in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the role of information increased immeasurably as a result of social progress and the vigorous development in science and technology (Ogunsola and Aboyade, 2005). The Internet and its technology continues to have a profound effect in promoting the sharing of information especially in academic world, making possible rapid transactions among businesses, and supporting global collaboration among individuals and organisations. Learning resource centres now often contain learning materials published on CD-ROM and most colleges are connected to the Internet. These technologies have the potential to develop “virtual campuses” and thus increase student access and participation. Information technology provides access to mainstream materials and enables students to express their thoughts in words, designs and activities despite their disabilities. World Wide Web can be described as a library of resources available to computer users through the global Internet. It enables users to view a wide variety of information, including magazine, archives, public and college library resources, and current world and business news (Ogunsola and Aboyade, 2005).

The students, most of whom are youth, occupy an important position in any nation's socio-cultural, economic, political, and spiritual development. The place of the students in the context of complex international cultural pressures and domination

needs critical assessment and examination. The youth are the leaders of tomorrow; in other words, they are the nation's future (Makhu, 2008). The nature of youth problems according to Makhu (2008) arises from the media mediating process in the lives of the youths. Considering the scope and wide spectrum of ICT space in our socio-political setup, students are subjected to manifold, exploitative, and destructive vicissitudes in ICT related violence such as cybercrime, cyber-terrorism, etc.

Media in all its facets constantly beguile the youths with a false impression of glamorised world and influence which does not usually come on a platter of gold for all seekers to take. On television and the Internet and pornographic magazines are displayed disorienting and mind bugling alien cultural practices, assertive and punitive in content and decimatory in terms of their immoral posturing (Makhu, 2008). In this regards, some aspects of ICT are tools for cultural hegemony.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out how the students of the University of Maiduguri access and utilise ICT-mediated messages on HIV/AIDS.
2. To find out the extent to which students of University of Maiduguri put ICT-mediated HIV/AIDS messages into use
3. To determine how ICT-mediated HIV/AIDS messages help in HIV/AIDS awareness among students of University of Maiduguri

### **Research Questions**

1. How do students of the University of Maiduguri access and utilise ICT-mediated messages on HIV/AIDS?
2. To what extent do students of University of Maiduguri put ICT-mediated HIV/AIDS messages into use?
3. Do ICT-mediated HIV/AIDS messages help in HIV/AIDS awareness among students of University of Maiduguri?

### **Literature Review**

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) generally refer to an expanding assembly of technologies that are used to handle information and aid communication. These include hardware, software, media for collection, storage, processing, transmission and presentation of information in any format (i.e. voice, data, text, and image), computers, the Internet, CD-ROMs, email, telephone, radio, television, video, digital cameras etc. The advent of personal computers, the Internet and mobile telephone during the last two decades has provided a much wider choice in collection, storage, processing, transmission and presentation of information in multiple formats to meet the diverse requirement and skills of people.

ICTs are believed to bring about social and economic development by creating an enabling environment. Almost every single activity in the modern world

is becoming more dependent on the application of ICTs for one use or another. The benefits of ICTs reach even those who do not themselves have first-hand access to them. Through ICTs, for example, a doctor in a rural village can get up-to-date information regarding certain diseases and can use that information to advice and treat patients (Asenso-Okyere and Mekonnen, 2012).

The importance of ICTs in development process was long recognised and access to ICTs was even made one of the targets of the Millennium Development Goal No. 8 (MDG 8), which emphasises the benefits of new technologies, especially ICTs in the fight against HIV/AIDS, poverty, child and maternal mortality, etc (Asenso-Okyere, and Mekonnen, 2012). The recent World Bank report on ICT for Development observed that “connectivity, whether the Internet or mobile phones, is increasingly bringing market information, financial services, and health services to remote areas, and is helping to change people's lives in unprecedented ways” (World Bank, 2009).

Information and Communication Technologies have not only made the world a global village like McLuhan predicted, but has indeed transformed the world into a borderless territory. By definition, ICT connotes handling of information by electronic means, particularly in relation to its access, storage, processing, transportation or transfer and delivery (Saleeman, 2009). This presupposes the involvement of computers, satellites, fax machines, fibre optics, digital networks and ultimately the Internet. These are variously called New Communications Technologies (NCTs) or New Information Technologies (NITs), which make possible computer mediated communication and the information super highway (Okunna, 2004).

ICTs according to Saleeman (2009) is concerned with improvements in human and organisational problem-solving endeavours, through the design, development and use of technologically based systems and processes that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of information in a variety of strategic, tactical and operational situations. Technologies have made the world smaller by the day, especially of aviation, mass communication, telecommunications and transportation. Again, the increasing tendencies for economies to depend more on information for their growth have led to the notion of information societies or economies. Concerning this, Tehranian (1996) observes that information society is thought to be an inescapable stage in universal pattern of progressive transformation from industrial to post-industrial society – a phenomenon induced by the development and spread of new information technologies. He further observes that the critics of information society point to the predominant notions of bipolarity within and outside nations. This dualism is said to create, on the one hand, countries that are rich and suffused with information, and on the other hand, poor countries starved of information. Privatisation, concentration and exploitation of information resources by multinational companies widen this gap (Batta, 2008).

To this issue, McQuail (2005) adds that the effects of new communication technologies are the trend towards internationalisation of mass communication. To bring home the point, McQuail states that the new media, particularly the Internet, transgresses the limits of the print and broadcasting models by:

1. Enabling many-to-many conversation
2. Enabling the simultaneous reception, alteration and redistribution of cultural objects
3. Dislocating communicative action from the posts of the nations, from the territorialised spatial relations of modernity.
4. Providing instantaneous global contact, and
5. Inserting the modern/late modern subject into a machine apparatus that is networked.

What McQuail is emphasising is that the ICTs allow information, whether simple or complex, to be generated and sent instantly and speedily to receivers who have the capacity to receive immediately wherever they may be and have the ability to utilise, modify and resend. Technologies with these capacities abound for use in creating awareness about HIV/AIDS has since made in roads to the doorsteps of a majority of the world's population. Again with the coming on stage of satellite technology, wireless telephones, digital camera, the Internet, the computer and all the video text, video conferencing, teletex, doctors, medical scientists, pharmacists, laboratory technologists have generated and sent medical information on HIV/AIDS across the globe. They have conducted collaborative research between continents and have been able to deploy equipment to improve the diagnosis of ailments (Batta, 2008).

In furtherance of this discourse, Ajayi, Garba and Ozohu-Suleiman (2008) have documented the use of ICTs in contemporary healthcare delivery. They have specifically mentioned Electronic Patient Record (EPRS), Electronic Bulletin Board (EBB), the Internet, extranet, intranet, telemedicine, telecare, the World Wide Web, cable television, direct broadcast satellite, two-way television, and the global system for mobile communication (GSM).

The term HIV/AIDS could be described as a household name in Nigeria and indeed, sub-Saharan Africa (Nwabueze, 2007). The dreaded pandemic is preponderant in this region and the entire continent, stirring up massive sensitisation/awareness campaign against the disease. As at the end of 2004, 29.4 million people in sub-Saharan Africa were said to be living with HIV/AIDS, out of which 5.8 million are Nigerians (Popoola, 2005). The figures have continued to increase across the globe till date.

After the dreaded disease first came to limelight in the early 80s, massive sensitisation campaigns about HIV/AIDS have adopted various social and intellectual dimensions. In Nigeria for instance, these information or awareness campaigns include organised seminars, rallies, radio and television jingles, brain

storming conferences and paper presentations, use of posters, billboards, drama presentations on radio and television, among others. These campaigns have penetrated homes and permeated individuals in one way or the other, leading to the earlier description of the HIV/AIDS as a household name in Nigeria. As Olakulehin (2004) puts it, there is no shortage of knowledge and information on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the only thing that is lacking is the unwillingness to undertake responsible social and sexual behaviours.”

Experts assert that HIV which leads to AIDS could be contacted through unprotected sex, the use or sharing of unsterilised sharp objects and through any form of blood transfusion, especially if unscreened blood is involved. However, unprotected sex ranks high as the most common way of contacting the dreaded disease. Research evidence has revealed that more than 80% of HIV/AIDS victims in Nigeria got it through sexual intercourse (Radio Nigeria, 2003). This is why most HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns stress responsible sexual behaviour as a key way of eradicating the disease. Much as people of all age groups are at risk of contacting the HIV/AIDS disease, youths especially school age youths, bear the heavier burden of the unfortunate phenomenon. Ejiogu (2005) observes that HIV/AIDS is ravaging the productive age group as well as the 15-24 (age group) successor generations of Nigerians. A recent research work carried out in three higher institutions across three senatorial districts in Delta State showed that out of every 80 students, 20 were HIV/AIDS carriers (Ogbolu, 2008).

Students of tertiary institutions have also been accused of harbouring the most irresponsible high-risk sexual behaviour despite their seeming exposure to HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. Olakulehin (2004) has this to say about sexual life of tertiary institution students in relation to the HIV/AIDS information campaigns:

There is no student in any tertiary institution in Nigeria today who can claim total ignorance of HIV/AIDS. Yet the most irresponsible sexual practice is found among the members of this subsector of our society. They flagrantly engage in what is known as 'high-risk sexual behaviour.' Although cases of sexual freedom have become part of life in the secondary and intermediate institutions and there is a growing concern for the sexual behaviour of this group as well. The incidence of multiple sexual partners is most rife in institutions of higher learning, where many students are victims of high-level promiscuity and prostitution, deriving from peer pressures.

The point here is that, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a threat to the entire human race but the focus of this work is on the youths are seemingly more active than other categories of humans and are more susceptible to contacting the disease through its highest mode of transmission- sex. The numerous awareness campaign programmes seem to be insufficient as the HIV/AIDS scourge looks unruffled largely due to the fact that people are yet to religiously manifest their knowledge of the dreaded nature of the pandemic in their life style and actions. As Olakulehin (2004) observes:

It is quite unfortunate that in spite of so many jingles in the media, a larger number of publications on the subject, both attractive and recondite and the plethora of public lectures in which so many experts have solemnly warned against the consequences of underestimating the disease, many are still living in complete ignorance of the disease while several others claim that it is actually a farce. In majority of cases where people are very much aware of the hazards associated with the malaise, they have been unable or unwilling to match this knowledge with responsible behaviour.

The situation is not better in the case of students of tertiary institutions. Theirs is that they are aware of the campaigns, as was earlier noted, but have continued with activities capable of spreading the dreaded disease, apparently as a result of peer pressure or influence. A study carried out by Okoye (2001) further confirmed that university undergraduates are sexually active with a quarter of those studied having more than one sex partner. The study further discovered that more than half of the sexually active respondents engage in unprotected sex. In a related study conducted by Nwabueze (2007), the result revealed that despite the massive campaign against HIV/AIDS on ICT which students are mostly aware of, their attitude, approach to, or view about sexual life seems not to be affected significantly. The findings of the Nwabueze (2007) study suggested that a large segment of the public could be moved or influenced more by the HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns on ICT if images of people dying of the disease are contained in the messages.

There is generally a dearth of relevant research findings on ICT-mediated HIV/AIDS campaign at the local level. This is largely due to low-level of budgetary allocation to the sector. Sankey (2004), in a UNICEF sponsored survey of Narayi Area of Kaduna, found that HIV/AIDS is a major disease claiming lives and spreading rapidly in the squatter settlement of Narayi, Kaduna. According to her; social behaviour and the nature of settlement and the idleness of the youths are not helping. There is also much ignorance and denial of the disease by many in the society. They would rather attribute such deaths to witchcraft or to some other demonic forces. Furthermore, the study found that the number of children losing one or both parents is increasing rapidly which is compounded by poverty and ignorance. About four out of every ten children orphaned by AIDS in the poor community of Narayi are stigmatised, denied education, adequate food, or medicine and are mostly over-worked.

### **Methodology**

This study utilised great deal of primary data. The survey design was adopted. This is because it is used to collect large amount of data with relative ease from variety of people and investigate problems in a realistic settings. For this study, however, the population was the entire students of University of Maiduguri. The total number of students of the university is 27,000. However, a sample of 394 was scientifically

selected from a population frame of 27,000 students of the University using the Taro Yamane's axiomatic formula. This is expressed thus:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{N}{n} &= N(e)^2 \\ &= \frac{27,000}{27,000 \times 0.0025} \\ N &= 1+67.5 \\ N &= \frac{27000}{68.5} \\ N &= \underline{394.} \end{aligned}$$

The cluster sampling technique was used to select group of participants across the faculties in University of Maiduguri. This study randomly selected clusters of students from...faculties namely Arts, Management Sciences, Engineering, Education, Law, Agriculture, Health Sciences and Veterinary Medicine. A total of 394 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the randomly selected cluster of participants. As chance would have it, 390 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved. This represent 99% return rate.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Table 1: Relevance of Internet Mediated HIV/AIDS Messages**

<b>Response Category</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>
HIV/AIDS Prevention Awareness	115	29.5%
Awareness against Social Stigma	98	25.1%
Awareness on Anti-retroviral Drugs	57	14.6%
Facilitates Interaction among People Living with HIV/AIDS	84	21.5%
All of the above	36	9.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Field Survey, 2017**

**Table 2: Extent of Access to Internet Mediated HIV/AIDS Messages**

<b>Response Category</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>
High	56	14.4%
Low	78	20%
Average	221	56.6%
Not at all	35	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Field Survey, 2017**

**Table 3: Internet Mediated HIV/AIDS messages help in Advocacy**

<b>Response Category</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	98	25.1%
No	292	74.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Field Survey, 2017**

Respondents were asked what they use ICTs for, 63(47.7%) said to socialise, while 34 (25.8%) said to keep in touch with the world, 18(13.6%) said to while away time and only 17(12.9%) said to inform and be informed.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study were quite revealing. From the findings, a significant proportion of respondents were of the opinion that ICT mediated HIV/AIDS messages are relevant for HIV /AIDS prevention awareness among the students of University of Maiduguri. Prevention remains very germane in mitigating the snag of HIV/AIDS. To corroborate this, Umar (2010) asserts that through the efforts of the UN and its agencies, most member states of the UN have been mobilised to join the war against HIV/AIDS, emphasis has been placed on prevention largely. In addition, a number of students believed that Internet mediated HIV/AIDS messages are useful anti-social stigma awareness. This is buttressed further by the findings of Umar (2010) that of particular importance is the strategic advocacy against social stigma, which has been yielding some results already. The Internet mediated HIV/AIDS

messages have made persons living with HIV exhibit high level of confidence in their daily lives given the impact of the anti-retroviral therapy. Hence, this has enhanced their interaction with other members of the society. It is cheap to capitulate that Internet mediated HIV/AIDS messages are useful in mitigating the snag of HIV/AIDS among students. Thus, one may infer that the students are utilising the messages.

However, the study depicted an average level of access of Internet mediated HIV/AIDS messages by students constituting 56.6%. A supportive finding by Franchesco (2011) alludes to the fact that while ICT has the potential to redress development goals in areas such as HIV/AIDS awareness, education, youth and gender empowerment and rural development, it is accompanied by concerns that unless it is adopted effectively, existing socio-economic divides in terms of peoples access to human needs may be further accentuated. Nevertheless, with the average level of access the students have in Internet mediated HIV/AIDS messages; one can infer that they are utilising the messages.

Meanwhile, another revelation from this study is that Internet mediated HIV/AIDS messages do not help in advocacy against the spread of HIV/AIDS. Many of the respondents argue that the messages do not help in advocacy (74.9%). Based on this, we conclude that the mere presentation of HIV/AIDS advocacy campaign messages through the Internet or ICT would not be enough to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS in the study area and among the youths. It is therefore recommended that other familiar interpersonal communication strategies should be applied to further convince people to adopt the desired attitudinal change necessary for preventing the spread of the disease.

## **Conclusion**

The study has revealed three major things thus: One, students have access to ICTs. Two, they hardly access HIV/AIDS messages purposely but accidentally and three, they agreed that it creates adequate awareness, but they have not been able to move from the realm of only knowing to the stage of applying what they know, which should eventually lead to altitudinal change. This explains why HIV/AIDS has continued to spread across the country especially among the youths who were the focus of this study. Sadly, the undergraduate students who should know better are merely concerned about the social benefits of ICT tools, choosing only to socialise with technology instead of using it to help curb the menace of the deadly HIV/AIDS. More efforts need to be put in by the anti-HIV/AIDS campaigners with a view to augment the messages with other relevant strategies possibly through repetitive

approach using interpersonal communication strategies. This is supported by Ochonogor (2005) who argues that most communication scholars are of the view that mass media information should be reinforced with interpersonal communication sources which people have developed and used over the years to ensure popular acceptance and participation.

### **Recommendations**

From the results obtained in this study, concerted efforts must be taken by the anti-HIV/AIDS campaigners to be able to produce thought-provoking awareness campaign messages on the various ICT platforms that students use. These messages must be reinforced regularly through creative repetition and the use of other interpersonal communication strategies, film shows, documentaries, drama etc to force the expected or positive attitudinal changes in the affected individuals. In the light of this argument, it is recommended that:

First, if images of people dying of the disease could be contained in the messages, a large segment of the youth could be moved or influenced more by the HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. Various media channels should be engaged for this purpose. The effort should not be restricted to the new media like mobile phones, computers and Internet but also include the mainstream media such as television, billboards and posters. The faces of the victims could be covered for ethical reasons or use actors to simulate the same circumstances.

Second, HIV/AIDS campaigners should think of laying more emphasis on the strategy of interpersonal communication as noted above and monitor to find out whether greater results could really be achieved through it.

Finally, group discussions on HIV/AIDS through workshops, seminars or symposia in tertiary institutions should also be emphasised. This strategy is probably adopted by HIV/AIDS campaigners but what is being advocated here is more emphasis on the strategy.

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