

EFFECTIVENESS OF CAMPAIGN AGAINST ACQUIRED
IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

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ABSTRACT

AIDS is an abbreviation used for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS as defined by the centre for disease control (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia, USA is a new complicated and fatal illness characterised by more than one indicator disease plus laboratory evidence of human immune deficiency virus infection. This virus causes a secondary immune deficiency by attacking the sophisticated structure of immunity leaving the victim susceptible to organisms which he had previously lived in relative harmony and to the development of cancers like kaposi sarcoma and lymphomas.

AIDS is a social, economic, political as well as medical problem. It is spreading fast and is already a world wide epidemic. It threatens all countries and individuals regardless of sex, race, age or status.

Presently there is no cure for AIDS and no vaccine have been developed for it. The key to stopping transmission of the AIDS virus lies in prevention. Because specific behaviour transmits the AIDS virus, specific changes in behaviour can stop its transmission.

The campaign against AIDS is a well articulated programme of the federal government aimed at educating the massive public on how to cope with sexual and other activities without falling victims to the deadly disease. Although huge sums of money was committed to it, the government is not sure of the extent to which the programme achieved its objectives. The specific problems to address include the following:

1. What is the level of awareness enjoyed by the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis about AIDS?
2. What are the effects of the warnings on their sexual life styles
3. How often do most inhabitants of Enugu metropolis take precautionary measures to gratify sex.

The objectives are:

1. To determine the level of awareness enjoyed by the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis about AIDS
2. To findout the major effect of the warnings on their sexual life styles
3. To ascertain how often most inhabitants of Enugu metropolis gratify sex with recommended precautionary measures; and

4. To make recommendations in line with our observations.

The research was purely empirical. The questions were made for the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis. The study population is 384. Three hundred and eight four questionnaires were distributed and out of these only three hundred and ten were correctly filled and returned and so three hundred and ten is used for analysis. Relevant data based on the scope of the study were collected through structured questionnaire as our main instrument. The questionnaire contains thirty-two questions. The questionnaire was highly structured and open ended as necessary. It is implied here that the questions as well as the responses were standardised to facilitate the comparism of responses and to secure good control of the questions. The questions were designed to secure information on the "Effectiveness of the campaigns against AIDS among the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis.

Our findings are:

1. The level of awareness enjoyed by the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis about the devastating effect of AIDS is unsatisfactory.

2. Warnings on the menace of AIDS has effect on the sexual life styles of the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis . Most people reported that the frequency of their sexual activities declined.
3. The frequency with which sex is gratified by the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis with recommended precautionary measures is unsatisfactory. The study revealed that only 29.03% relied on condom for protection while 70.97% did not
4. Fear of contacting AIDS has led many inhabitants of Enugu metropolis to reduce the number of sex partners which they hitherto maintained and also to reduce their frequency of having sex
5. Newspapers and other mass media influence the awareness of the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis of the campaign against AIDS but they provided insufficient information.

From the findings we therefore conclude that the campaign against the Acquired Immune deficiency syndrome among the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis is not very effective. Most inhabitants of Enugu metropolis do not

have proper knowledge of the meaning of AIDS, its causative organism, modes of transmission modes in which it is not transmitted, its severity and devastating effects and methods of preventing it. We also conclude that the frequency of their sexual activities also declined as a result of the warnings on the menace of AIDS. Most of them reported that as a result of warnings on the menace of AIDS, they had to reduce both the number of their sex partners and the frequency with which they had sex. We also conclude that the frequency with which sex is gratified with recommended precautionary measures by the inhabitants of Enugu metropolis is unsatisfactory. The use of condom was relatively low and this has implication for their potential of contracting sexually transmitted ^{diseases} /of which AIDS is one. Thus an urgent, intensive, extensive and effective health education campaign to combat AIDS targetted to both health and non health professionals at all levels regardless of education, occupation and religion is recommended.