

Accessibility and Utilization of HIV / AIDS Information by Moi University Undergraduate Students

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ABSTRACT

University students indulge in dangerous sexual behaviour that put them at risk of contracting HIV virus. This is largely attributed to lack of information to equip them with knowledge and skills to avoid dangerous behaviour. This study investigated the accessibility and utilization of HIV/AIDS information by Moi University undergraduate students.

The specific objectives of the study were to determine the kind of information needs Moi University students have in relation to HIV/AIDS; determine the use of available information services on HIV/AIDS by students; determine the problems that affect communication of HIV/AIDS information to the students; establish the various HIV/AIDS information sources available to the students and the extent to which they are accessible to serve their information needs; establish the various channels used to communicate HIV/AIDS information to students; assess the effectiveness of the channels used by students in accessing HIV/AIDS information; and establish the problems that hinder effective communication of HIV/AIDS information to students and suggest possible solutions.

Survey method was used for this research to collect data. Systematic sampling technique was used to obtain a representative sample. Two hundred and fifty seven students participated in the study and were drawn from three campuses of Moi University; namely the Main Campus, Chepkoilel and College of Health Sciences. The nominal rolls at respective campuses were used as sampling frames for respondents. Data was collected by use of questionnaires and interviews and a total of 257 undergraduate students were interviewed. Documentary sources were utilized as a complimentary method of data collection. Data collected were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Tables were used to enter specific types of data in order to show relationship between variables.

The findings from the study indicated that the provision of HIV/AIDS information in Moi University was not effective. Several reasons can be advanced for this phenomenon. These include: lack of well-defined policies stipulating how HIV/AIDS information should be provided by the university; lack of appropriate HIV/AIDS information by mass media; lack of trained resource persons and restricted location of HIV/AIDS information resources.

It was concluded that Moi university students need to be informed about HIV/AIDS information resources available in order to address some misconceptions that they hold as well as influence their behaviours to avoid HIV infection. The study recommends that the university should formulate policies on provision of HIV/AIDS education to university students, giving guidance and counseling to the university students on HIV / AIDS, promote use of peer group counseling, health professionals, AIDS patients, religious leaders,

professional counselors, parents and use of mass media to provide HIV/AIDS information to students. HIV/AIDS awareness clubs and performing arts/ information role-play should be utilized to disseminate HIV/ AIDS information.