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Awareness and Education on Viral Infections in Nigeria Using Edutainment

Awareness and Education on Viral Infections in Nigeria Using Edutainment

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Abstract

Researches in clinical and medical science have shown that Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B, and to some extent Hepatitis C viruses, constitute a major public health challenge in the Sub-Saharan Africa. This is without prejudice to the Ebola virus disease (EVD) that is more deadly than the other three put together, and had affected some countries in West Africa- Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. There is little awareness and education via the mass media on some common viral infections in Nigeria like Hepatitis compared to HIV. Therefore, there is dire need for information, sensitisation and education on the viruses, means of transmission, preventive measures and also therapy. Edutainment is the fusion of education into entertainment programming which can come in form of drama, music, poetry and lots more, and it had been used as a platform to

create awareness for positive reproductive health and HIV/AIDS by leading health organisations like WHO, USAID, DFID, SFH, and UNFPA. This paper therefore, examines why edutainment should be used and how it can be used to educate media audience in Nigeria on some viral infections that pose serious health risks and how they can live healthy lives.

Chapter Preview

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Theoretical Underpinning

British psychologist, Stephenson (1967) as cited by Folarin (2005, p. 170), divides man's activities into work and play; the former meaning reality and production, while the latter deals with entertainment, relaxation or self-satisfaction. He further says that the audience use the mass media (both old and new) for play- pleasure and entertainment than for information and serious work. This has led to a constant criticism of television and radio in Nigeria, on its focus on entertainment more rather than on development purposes (Folarin, 2005). Rather than just criticise the media, it will be profitable to maximise its emphasis on entertainment by juxtaposing it with the educational function to promote positive social behaviour that will lead to positive social change.

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