ANALYSIS OF TELEVISION CAMPAIGNS ON HIV/AIDS: INTERFACES BETWEEN BRAZIL AND ANGOLA

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Objective: to analyze the advertising campaigns of Brazil and Angola on HIV/AIDS and to reflect on socio-cultural aspects related to this disease that has direct influence on its conception by human beings. Method: a descriptive and exploratory study, of a qualitative nature. The search for the audiovisual material was carried out on the YouTube video-sharing platform. The data were analyzed based on Bardin’s content analysis. Four thematic categories emerged: “Protection methods addressed in the advertisements”; “Protagonists of the advertisements”; “Embedded behavioral appeals”; “Cultural aspects addressed”. Results: the different cultural contexts have a direct influence on the advertising campaigns, for while in Brazil the actions are aimed at the use of condoms in the carnival period, in Angola the focus covers extramarital relations and fomite sharing. Final considerations: advertisement campaigns are important means of social transformation, and they can promote improvements in behavior changes of the individuals in the prevention of health problems and diseases.


Objetivo: analisar as campanhas publicitárias do Brasil e da Angola acerca do HIV/AIDS e refletir sobre os aspectos socioculturais relacionados à doença que possuem influência direta na sua concepção pelo ser humano. Método: estudo descritivo, exploratório e de caráter qualitativo. A busca do material audiovisual foi realizada no sítio de compartilhamento de vídeo YouTube. Os dados foram analisados com base na análise de conteúdo de Bardin. Emergiram quatro categorias temáticas: “Métodos de proteção abordados nas propagandas”; “Protagonistas das propagandas”; “Apelos comportamentais incorporados”; “Aspectos culturais abordados”. Resultados: os diferentes contextos culturais influenciam diretamente nas campanhas publicitárias, pois, enquanto no Brasil as ações são voltadas para o uso do preservativo no período carnavalesco, em Angola a ênfase engloba as relações extraconjugal.
Introduction

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a pathology that affects the immune system. It is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which has the capacity to invade the defense cells (CD4+ T lymphocytes) and replicate its RNA, multiplying and entering other cells. With the defense system weakened, the individual affected by this disease becomes more susceptible to opportunistic infections and may even die.

By the end of 2018, data from the United Nations (UN) indicate that 37.9 million people lived with HIV in the world. The African continent is one of the most affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, especially the Lusophone countries, such as Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. Epidemiological data on HIV in Brazil reveal that, over the years, the number of people affected by the virus continues to increase. It is estimated that there were approximately 900,000 people with HIV in the country in 2018, of which 44% were not on antiretroviral treatment.

Most HIV infections occur through the genital or rectal mucosa during unprotected sexual intercourse. Due to the fact that there is no cure yet, the focus is on primary prevention, by the adoption of safe sexual intercourses, which are spread and reinforced to the population by means of educational actions and health campaigns.

In the media scene, television advertisements have great prominence in forming new ideas and opinions, as they are communication means with great influence potential over the attitudes of individuals, being possible to store the information passed on in the memory with greater ease. In Brazil, the use of this medium for the prevention of HIV transmission in the carnival period became usual due to the increase of sexual intercourses, often unprotected and with more than one partner, boosting the chances of contamination both by the HIV and by other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

The advertising campaigns fit into the field of social marketing, in which several issues emerge, from the use of the condom, encouragement for diagnosis and early treatment, the importance of undergoing tests, to the representations of the subjects, sexuality, and combat against prejudice. In this way, the advertising media become of paramount relevance for the change of paradigms and social imaginary about the disease.
The World AIDS Day became an effective opportunity for disseminating these campaigns. In the meantime, several communication strategies are adopted in order to inform the population about the HIV/AIDS preventive measures. In addition, the video format serves as an important tool for targeted information and can be used in different ways to reach people from the most diverse social and educational levels.

Given the aforementioned context, and as AIDS is a global problem, reaching especially the populations from Brazil and Angola, in Africa, the need to comprehend how the disease has been addressed in the television advertisements emerges, considering the high dissemination level they have in the collectivity.

Thus, this study aims to analyze the advertisements campaigns from Brazil and Angola and to reflect on the socio-cultural aspects related to the disease which have a direct influence on its conception by human beings.

Method

This is a descriptive and exploratory study, of a qualitative nature that has as its purpose to analyze, interpret and know the similarities and differences between two institutional advertisements on HIV/AIDS conveyed in the television media from Brazil and Angola, identifying relevant points in the strategies and in the target audiences to which they were intended.

The conception of this article emerged based on the Qualitative Methods subject of the Academic Masters in Nursing at Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (Unilab), which has as its mission to promote the integration between the Portuguese speaking language countries.

It is important to highlight that both countries take part in the Portuguese Speaking Language Countries Community (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa, CPLP) and are linked by the South-South cooperation, which aims at support means for development, the strengthening of political, economic, and cultural bonds, and the sharing of technological and educational tools.

For the selection of the audiovisual material, a search on governmental websites and on the YouTube video sharing website was initially performed. The choice for this website is due to the great dissemination among Internet users, covering countless easy-to-access materials. In addition, in Brazil, in 2019, YouTube became the most used social network, with over 1 billion active users and more than 1 billion hours of videos viewed daily.

The search for the videos took place from May to June 2017. The keywords “AIDS” and “HIV” were used for the research, associating them with the names of the eight countries that make up the CPLP: Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and East Timor. Inclusion criteria: governmental videos in the advertising style, in the Portuguese language, and most recently published in each country. Materials produced by other types of institutions were excluded, in addition to documentary-style videos with a duration of more than 60 seconds.

The analyses of the video is an important methodological choice, as it allows for the understanding of a complex phenomenon which involves several elements such as texts, pictures, and sound that help with the transmission of knowledge and make the process of knowledge promotion dynamic.

Based on the inclusion criteria, the video from the Department of STD, AIDS and Viral Hepatitis campaign, of the Ministry of Health of Brazil, from 2017, was chosen, referring to the carnival, entitled “Use a condom and live this great party”, and the institutional video from Angola referring to 2009, entitled “Infidelity”.

The videos were downloaded to be analyzed. The analysis was carried out by describing the images and audios, allowing for discussion and reflection by the researchers. To guide this stage, the following categories were elaborated: protection methods addressed in the advertisements; protagonists of the...
advertisements; behavioral appeals embedded; and cultural aspects addressed.

The concepts of content analysis were employed, which, as a method, is defined as a set of communication analysis techniques, aiming to obtain, by systematic procedures and objectives of message content description, indicators that allow for the inference of knowledge related to production conditions and reception of these messages.

Results and Discussion

The first video analyzed was the 2017 campaign from the Brazilian Ministry of Health which presents the slogan “Use a condom and live this great party”, alluding to the carnival period, in which, traditionally, the Brazilian campaigns gains more emphasis. In 31 seconds, data about the number of HIV infected individuals in Brazil are presented, both those who are aware that they are infected with the virus, but do not undergo the proper treatment, and those who ignore their condition. The pictures in the video demonstrate the festive atmosphere of the Brazilian carnival, exposing revelers, in streets and beaches, which encourage the use of male condom during the revelry.

The Angolan ad from 2009, which addresses “Infidelity” as theme, is 60 seconds long, and has its beginning marked by the message “The risk of infection by HIV in our daily actions is real!” In this context, daily life situations are presented in which HIV can be transmitted, such as sharing nail pliers, toothbrushes, and in relation to unprotected sexual intercourses, by individuals who do not get tested to diagnose the disease. In addition, the ad presents blood donation as a means of discovering the disease and emphasizes prevention as the only way for people to protect from AIDS.

Protection methods addressed in the advertisements

The Brazilian ad focus on the use of the male condom as a means of prevention against HIV infection, while the Angolan video addresses several prevention means besides the practice of sexual intercourses using a condom, such as not sharing sharps, exemplified by the nail plier, and toothbrushes.

We can thus perceive that different practices and approaches result in the infection of individuals by HIV and all of them deserve special attention to the educational and preventive campaigns.

Considered an effective barrier method in the prevention of HIV/AIDS and in the prevention of non-planned pregnancies, the male condom is extremely disseminated in the Brazilian preventive campaigns. It also presents other advantages, such as the absence of systemic effects and rare contraindications to its use.

We know that the female condom is also a barrier method with the same purposes as those of the male one; therefore, it is of similar efficacy and, contrary to what many imagine, it does not cause discomfort during sexual intercourses. However, its use is still very little observed due to the greater difficulty in handling it and also by the lack of information about its efficacy. Although being offered for free by primary health care, the absence of familiarity of women with this condom results in dissatisfactory effects, and can lead to using it mistakenly and to a reduction in the method efficacy.

The shared use of sharps is a factor that increases the chances of the individuals contracting HIV, in addition to other infectious diseases. Despite the little publicity in Brazil, sharing toothbrushes, as well as other items of personal hygiene, can also lead to the transmission of Hepatitis C and HIV. In contrast, the Angolan ad has evidenced the precaution of AIDS prevention not only in one specific period of the year but also in the daily life activities of human beings and their most elementary life habits.

The seasonality of the Brazilian campaigns on prevention against STDs/AIDS, especially during Carnival, hinders the consolidation of an informative and educational proposal on sexual practices. Given that, a question emerges on the reason for, in Brazil, the prevention
of a severe infection and with no cure being exalted in a very short period of the year such as Carnival, even if it is known that in this period, the increase in promiscuity of unprotected sexual relations goes high. Thus, we ask: Why not also invest in prevention through other practices that may have an equal or greater effect regarding prevention in the Carnival period? There were already health actions aimed at myths and truths on the contamination by HIV in Brazil, but they remain more institutionalized and directed to the primary care scope, not disposing of a so vehement investigation regarding the use of condoms.

It can inferred that neglecting other ways of prevention against AIDS can be as negative as not investing in the promotion of any information on barrier methods, since the number of infected individuals in Brazil remains practically with no reduction in the last years.

**Protagonists of the advertisement**

During the exhibition of the Brazilian video, people of different sexes, races, and genders appear, which allows for the comparison with the wrong concept disseminated in the previous decades that only homosexuals used to contract HIV/AIDS. The insertion of several characters refer to the idea that anyone who has sexual intercourse without a condom is likely to get infected by the virus, regardless of their gender, sex, skin color or social class.

Angola’s advertising campaign is restricted to the sphere of family and friendships. Initially, the video addresses “The risk of HIV infection in our daily live actions [sic] is real!” It presents the initial characters, both female, sharing personal use objects (nail pliers and clippers), reinforcing that they have never been tested for HIV. However, as one of the women was seropositive, she transmitted the virus to the other, unaware, who ends up infecting her sister by sharing a toothbrush; this latter infects her boyfriend, as they do not use a condom during sexual intercourse. The transmission cycle is extensive, even infecting the boss of the boyfriend of the aforementioned character and also her husband, due to extramarital relationships.

The means of HIV transmission occur in the most varied forms. In this way, the Angolan video focuses on alerting about the means of transmission; however, it emphasizes more the extramarital relationships than the prevention methods themselves. In this context, the conception of homosexuality is not addressed. This can be associated with the fact of the prejudice still being strong in the African countries, a result of a sexist society, which appreciates the distribution of positions according to gender, about which many assert that this reality does not belong to their culture or to their nation.

If, on one hand, not addressing homosexual couples in an advertisement against HIV/AIDS conveys the impression of the nonexistence of the prejudice that has been established in society, when associating the disease as exclusive of this group, on the other hand, it can lead to the idea that transmission only occurs in heterosexual groups which practice infidelity. In this way, the inclusion of several characters, with regard to gender, as is the case in the Brazilian ad, represents the importance of making all individuals aware, regardless of their specificities.

**The behavioral appeal addressed by the advertisements**

The Brazilian Ministry of Health addresses the importance of using the male condom during sexual relations for the prevention of HIV contamination. In addition, when needed, HIV tests can be performed for diagnostic purposes.

As already described, the Angolan appeal covers attitudes beyond the sphere of sexual relations, addressing the simplest actions of daily life that have the capacity of increasing the individuals’ chances of protection against HIV.

Condom use has been a worldwide issue since humanity had the conception of HIV as a serious disease. Its incorporation into people’s routine has been widespread from adolescence, a period when the first sexual relations usually take place. However, many times, its use is
dispensed due to the belief in invulnerability, trust established in the relationship, refusal by one of the partners, use of alcohol and other drugs, or by the fact of not liking it (17), apart from the fact that people who maintain stable relationships have greater difficulty in maintaining the use of condoms (18). In addition, in one study on the vulnerability to HIV/AIDS among university students of several areas, it can be perceived that, even with deep knowledge of the infection and its transmission means, there was still low adherence to condom use (19).

Based on this knowledge, reflections on how human behavior can change in their relationships with the other emerges, and if health neglect occurs in social groups that have relative knowledge about the consequences of HIV, since individuals who do not have such knowledge are even more exposed to contracting the disease.

The Rapid Tests (RTs) have the possibility of expanding the HIV diagnosis, since they can be done in several environments, such as Primary Care, laboratories, and other health segments. As they use the oral mucosa, the risks of contamination of the health professional who collects decreases, in addition to minimizing the waiting time of the patient, then reducing the chances of not returning to the unit to receive the result (4).

The encouragement for the population to take frequent tests is intended to early diagnose the disease, so the proper treatment can begin and the possibility of diseases can decrease, increasing the expectation. In addition, by having an HIV positive diagnosis, the health professionals can, through active listening and patient guidelines, prevent virus transmission to other people.

More than clarifying the people with HIV about their responsibility of discontinuing the transmission chain of the virus, health professionals should welcome them to encourage them to take the adequate treatment. In Angola, for example, many people refuse to take their medications because of the feeling of denial which they do not want to give up (20).

Because of this, they should be guided on how to face the prejudice against the disease, as the HIV individual can live in full social coexistence, do their work and leisure activities, attend any type of environment that pleases them and be an example of life and resilience for the society. The latter, in turn, should be prepared to break paradigms and welcome any and every person, regardless of their health condition. This can also occur by the influencer role in the media that is capable, when disclosing myths about virus transmission, of empowering individuals, leading them to reflect on the prejudice.

The behavioral appeals demanded by Angolan society, although simpler, tang to the point of socio-cultural habits that must be reviewed, such as the sharing of personal objects. For being a country that was recently declared independent, diverse social aspects emerge, such as the financial conditions of the people, a fact that can be responsible for the need to share a toothbrush, for example. However, it is up to the government to be attentive to these particularities, in order to reduce the number of people infected with HIV, by raising awareness and providing individual materials, such as those for hygiene. These campaigns can also be taken to manicures and people in general who have the habit of using the same nail pliers.

In what concerns unprotected sexual relations in Angola, the influence of polygamous models can be seen. In such cases, by neglecting condom use, the HIV transmission cycle can extend, affecting more and more people. Habits like these should be discouraged. By the fact of the known difficulty to change the culture of a given society, harm-reducing actions such as the use of condoms, regardless of the partners being married or not, should be debated and exposed to the population. This problem is not intrinsic only to this country or only to African countries, Brazil being an example of the same type of behavior. In this way, the empowerment of the individuals is essential, regardless of what culture they are adept at.
Cultural aspects addressed

The cultural aspects portrayed in the videos show how HIV infection is approached in each country. It is noticed that, in Brazil, all the relationships are established in the ad campaign, in addition to being directed to protection and prevention methods, more specifically to the use of the male condom. This concern is also evident in the opening of the video which, in the form of a samba school plot, makes the following call: “There comes AIDS prevention, folks!”

In turn, in Angola, notions of protection against AIDS are more directed to non-sharing personal use objects, such as nail clippers and pliers, and also toothbrushes. It also emphasizes the fact that two characters have not undergone the HIV test and the importance of fidelity for AIDS prevention, according to what is described in the excerpt “be faithful and have only one partner”.

Non-sharing personal and hygiene objects can be exemplified in the passage of the video in which the following guideline is given: “Do not share a toothbrush”. Although sharing the toothbrush with relatives is not the most common route of infection, transmission can also occur. This is a common practice in Angola, especially among low-income families.

Therefore, it is perceived that the way of facing AIDS occurs in distinct ways in the two countries, and these approaches can be understood by the political and social contexts of each. It should be noted that the civil war was a factor that contained the expansion of AIDS/HIV in Angola, as the movement was restricted to small areas of its territory.

The media in Angola on HIV/AIDS is increasingly reduced and issues of financial and political will compromise the implementation of prevention campaigns. Because of this, the prevention means in the ad campaign implemented by the Angolan government do not contemplate the main route of infection by HIV, which is sexual intercourse without the use of a condom, considered an important way of preventing HIV transmission.

Another necessary reflection is on the issues concerning extramarital relationships. These relationships can be put as the main focus, as polygamy is still common in Angola, a practice that diminishes the social value of women, assigns them only the responsibility of being mothers and wives, and impose to them a condition of inferiority when compared to the male gender. Without a doubt, this will be a hindrance to the fight against HIV infection and its dissemination to future generations.

On the other hand, the campaign held in Brazil seeks to raise awareness of male condom use through images. It is also important to point out that the Brazilian government’s proposal is directed at both heterosexual and homosexual couples. In this way, gender issues are addressed in different ways.

Despite the different approaches, the social representations justify the behavioral appeals of the ad campaigns, in which a reality that integrates values, social contexts, and affective, mental, and social elements is built, associating language and communication.

Therefore, the cultural issues directly interfere with the advertising campaigns, especially in the notions of prevention and health promotion. Therefore, attention must be paid to the fact that AIDS is not a transmission disease that occurs only during Carnival or exclusive to people who practice infidelity.

This study has limitations related to the minimal number of videos that were analyzed. Although more materials were not found which would meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria, it is really important that more studies can analyze other materials about the theme in the Lusophone countries, as well as it is up to these countries to promote and disclose HIV/AIDS prevention actions that go beyond health institutions’ borders.

Final considerations

The campaigns for combating AIDS are an important tool for data collection in qualitative research, but there are limitations, such as
duration and ethical issues, which are extremely important for the study construction. In this context, the analysis of videos allowed for a better understanding of the AIDS/HIV epidemic and of the way government institutions have sought to raise awareness among the population through media and advertisements.

When the different views of the issues were analyzed, many challenges to be faced in the combat against this disease were perceived, which involve, among other issues, social representations, gender issues, and, especially, protection measures. Advertisement campaigns are important means of social transformation; however, it was perceived that many were the differences between the campaigns carried out in Brazil and those produced in Angola, especially related to the protection methods and gender relations.

Although it is known that it is not possible to address all the socio-cultural aspects in 60-second-long videos, the need is evident for a reformulation and disclosure of these media in constant periods, not being restricted to a specific time of the year. These can be complemented by means of educational actions in Primary Health Care Units, schools, and other collective means. In this regard, the main changes should be directed to face and change the attitude before HIV, by the identification of problems related to the infection means and how people can live with quality of life while facing the chronic process of HIV/AIDS.

Collaborations:

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