Fighting HIV/AIDS with Edutainment: “An Exploratory Study of the Use of Edutainment by the MTV Shuga Campaign”

Damie Omole
Kennesaw State University
INTRODUCTION
AND
BACKGROUND
BONGI’S STORY

MTV SHUGA DOWN SOUTH

“...I am out of condoms and I think we should wait till we get some...”
-Colstove

“...you tested for HIV right? And you are negative?”
-Bongi

“...When my ex and I got serious we got tested and we were both negative, so we stopped using condoms...”
-Colstove
BACKGROUND

➔ People are constantly surrounded by and constantly consume entertainment through TV programs, advertisements, music, and YouTube.

➔ Organizations have turned towards non-traditional these non-traditional mediums to share their messages just like MTV shared the message of sex and safe sex habits with Bongi’s story.

➔ Research conducted by (Wakefield, Loken & Hornik, 2010) revealed that messages passed through traditional mediums are often overlooked and considered passive. So what then makes a person stop to actively listen to a particular message?

➔ Evidence from studies show that embedding messages in entertainment programs, particularly soap operas have expanded the distribution and reach of the messages.
CASE STUDY: MTV SHUGA CAMPAIGN

SOUTH AFRICA

➔ An international campaign that focuses on HIV prevention, promoting safer lifestyle choices, fighting stigma, funding innovative youth-led programs.

➔ Purposefully designs and implements a media message to both entertain and educate—a strategy known as edutainment.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: What edutainment strategies did the MTV Shuga campaign in South Africa use?

RQ2: How did the edutainment strategies contribute to change?
EDUTAINMENT AS A PR STRATEGY

“Edutainment can be defined as a strategic process to design and implement a communication form with both entertainment and education elements to enhance and facilitate change. It is a powerful influencing tool used to change audiences’ knowledge, attitude and behavior” (Tufte, 2012).
EDUTAINMENT ELEMENTS

➔ The more the audience connected with characters, plots and settings, the more likely they were to be more open and engaged with the themes and messages highlighted. (Tufte, 2002)

➔ As the audience engage in conversations about the entertainment content and characters with others, they bring up conversations about certain themes that shine light on private controversial issues. (Sood, 2002)

➔ The audience tend to develop emotional attachments to the characters. and construct representations connections to the story and characters in their minds. (Sangalang et al, 2013).
The effectiveness of edutainment strategies are largely based off communication and behavioral change theories.

A key theory here is the social learning/cognitive theory. Singhal and Rogers state that “learning can occur through observing media role models, and that this vicarious learning is usually more effective than direct experiential learning” (Singhal & Rogers, 2001)
METHOD
METHOD

➔ A comprehensive content analysis

➔ The first review of the episodes helped understand the main storyline of the series.

➔ The second review was to help recognize the main themes and objectives of the Shuga series.

➔ The third review was needed to further help generate codes, review themes and define the major themes.

➔ For the third review there was the need to review the Shuga polls and resources on the Shuga multimedia components related to the episodes.
RESULTS
MTV SHUGA EDUTAINMENT MODEL

→ The characters offer opportunities for emotional identification and role modeling. The good characters are rewarded and the bad characters are punished.

→ Television and radio programs are combined with more interactive interventions at individual, community and society levels, such as; through youth clubs or discussion groups.

→ The use of carefully crafted stories that include social issues and statistics.

→ Appeal to the viewers’ minds and emotions, developing multi-layered storylines inspired by people’s daily lives.

→ The use of music, art and popular culture.

→ Maintaining long-term contact with their viewers, exposing them to different aspects of the same theme over several months or years.
MTV SHUGA KEY THEMES & MESSAGES

KEY MESSAGES

**Key Messages on HIV/AIDS were:**

➔ HIV/AIDS is not a death sentence
➔ Always get tested
➔ Condoms and safe sex practices is critical to prevent getting HIV/AIDS
➔ You can get HIV/AIDS through unprotected sex
➔ You can live positively with HIV

**Key Messages on sex and safe sex practices were:**

➔ Un-protected sex can lead to unwanted pregnancies and STDs
➔ Always use a condom even if you are on contraceptives
➔ No means no
➔ Love is not equal to sex
# Key Messages & Tools of Edutainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>HIV/AIDS</th>
<th>TEEN PREGNANCY</th>
<th>SEXUAL VIOLENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHARACTERS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bongi has unprotected sex and gets HIV</strong></td>
<td><strong>Femi’s HIV Story</strong></td>
<td><strong>Khensani gets pregnant at 15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shuga Poll</strong> Is it ok not to use a condom?</td>
<td><strong>Shuga Poll</strong> PreEP is an option for HIV + &amp; HIV – partners for extra safety. Should Shiea take PreEP?</td>
<td><strong>Shuga Poll</strong> Is Khensani naive for thinking she is too young to get pregnant?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMOTIONAL APPEAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bongi breaks up with Celestove after getting HIV</strong></td>
<td><strong>Femi proposes to Sheila</strong></td>
<td><strong>Khensani finds out her teacher dies not love her &amp; she is heartbroken</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENTERTAINMENT</strong></td>
<td><strong>Music</strong></td>
<td><strong>Street Art</strong></td>
<td><strong>Celebrity features</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION
In conclusion,

**Key Messages**
- Characters
- Music & Art

**Engagement**
- Connection
- Modeling

**Impact**

**Change in Attitude**
- Learning
- Open Discussion
QUESTIONS

CONTACT

Damie Omole
damiomole@hotmail.com
oomole1@students.kennesaw.edu
REFERENCES


