

## Assessing Acceptability and Preference of Printed Posters on COVID-19 Related Stigma: A Post-Test Study Among HIV-Focused Health Workers in Greater Accra Region of Ghana

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**Abstract :** Background: Acceptability and preference of social and behaviour change (SBC) materials by target audiences is an important determinant of effective health communication outcomes. In Ghana, however, pre-test and post-test studies on acceptability and preference of specific SBC materials for specific audiences are rare. The aim of this study was therefore to assess the acceptability and preference of printed posters on COVID-19 related stigma as suitable SBC materials for health workers to influence behaviours that promote uptake of HIV-focused services. Methods: A total of 218 health workers who provide HIV-focused services were purposively sampled in 16 polyclinics where the posters were distributed in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. Data was collected in March 2021 using an adapted self-administered questionnaire in Google forms deployed via WhatsApp to participants. The data were imported into SPSS version 27 where chi-square test and regression analyses were performed to establish association as well as strength of association between variables respectively. Results: A total of 142 participants (physicians, nurses, midwives, lab scientists, health promoters, diseases control officers) made up of 85(60%) females and 57(40%) males responded to the questionnaire, giving a response rate of 65.14%. Only 88 (61.97%) of the respondents were exposed to the posters. The majority of those exposed said the posters were informative [82(93.18%)], relevant [85(96.59%)] and attractive [83(94.32%)]. They [82(93.20%)] also rated the material as acceptable with no statistically significant association between category of health worker and acceptability of the posters ( $X = 1.631$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=0.898$ ). However, participants' most preferred forms of material on COVID-19 related stigma were social media [38(26.76%)], television [33(23.24%)], SMS [19(13.38%)], and radio [18(12.70%)]. Clinical health workers were 4.88 times more likely to prefer online or electronic versions of SBC materials than nonclinical health workers [AOR= 4.88 (95% CI= 0.31-0.98),  $p=0.034$ ]. Conclusions: Printed posters on COVID-19 related stigma are acceptable SBC materials in communicating behaviour change messages that target health workers in promoting uptake of HIV-focused services. Posters are however, not among the most preferred materials for health workers. It is therefore recommended that material assessment studies are conducted to inform the development of acceptable and preferred materials for target audiences.

**Keywords :** acceptability, AIDS, HIV, posters, preference, SBC, stigma, social and behaviour change communication

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