

A 2-decade experience of AIDS publicity and education via TV short announcement (API) in Hong Kong

VSC Kwong, RLM Ho, SC Cheng, YL Wong, KH Wong

Issues

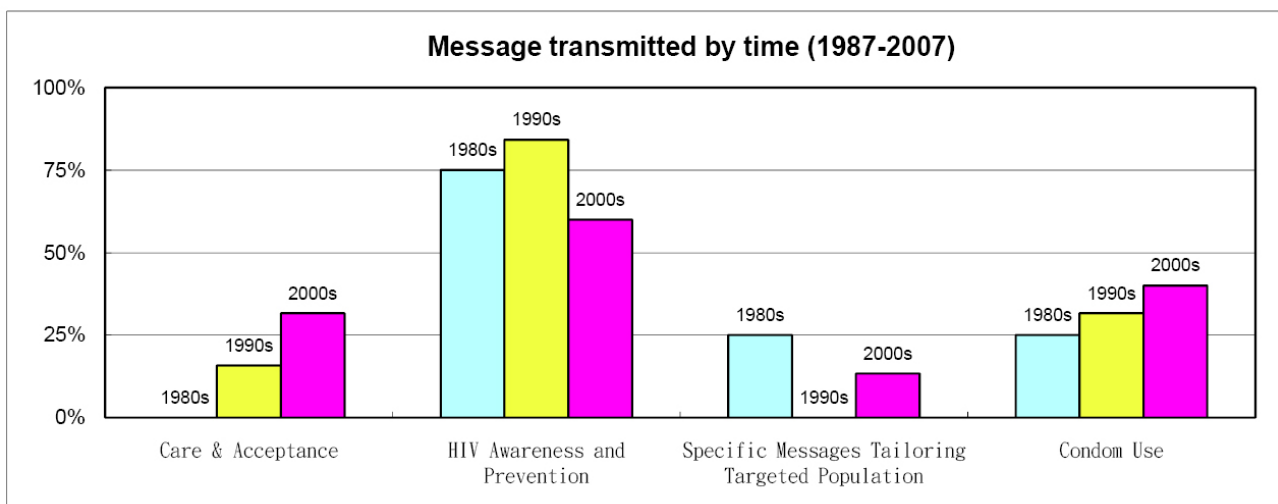
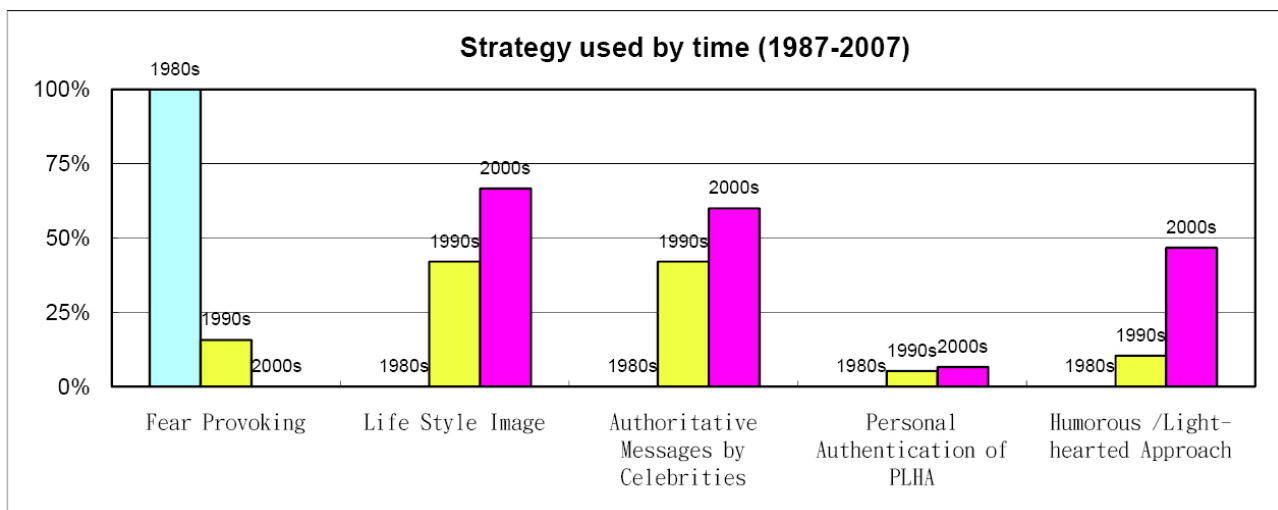
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Project

To review the work of captioned APIs produced in Hong Kong between 1987 and 2007 in five aspects - grouping, strategy used, message to be conveyed, parallel activities, and evaluation.

Results

Forty-two APIs were examined and can be categorised into (a) targeting high risk populations, (b) raising general awareness, and (c) promoting care and acceptance. Initially, a fear-provoking strategy was adopted, entirely for the API produced in 1980s. Subsequently, life-style images, authoritative messages by celebrities, personal authentication of PLHA and humorous / light-hearted approaches were used. Message transmitted included care and acceptance, HIV awareness and prevention, and specific messages tailoring targeted populations. In recent years, message of condom use was intensified. Parallel activities such as carnival, exhibitions, internet / giant wall banners, posters in mass transportation were launched around World AIDS Day. Telephone surveys, opinion surveys, and aggregate impact of awareness campaigns were used for evaluation.



Lessons Learned

Strategy uses in conveying theme and intended messages is largely based on local HIV epidemiology and social climate. The scare tactic adopted in the eighties, though been heavily criticized in perspective, could have served some purposes in the initial phase of HIV epidemic. With the advent of antiretroviral treatment, HIV has been turned into a chronic disease rendering PLHA who are in productive age healthier. Reintegration to the society and modification of behaviours such as consistent use of condoms for safer sex will not be possible without the creation of an environment supportive of changes. Life style image, use of celebrities and light-hearted approach strategy could create such supportive environment in promoting acceptance to PLHA. Nonetheless, it serves as a backdrop for targeted prevention of at risk populations.

The Government played an important role in enhancing AIDS awareness that formed a crucial factor behind an effective AIDS programme. Media was a specific forum specializing in communicating with the public; and publicity greatly contributed to disseminating information to a discrete or general audience.