ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

Ascertaining the Effectiveness of Print Media in Promoting HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaigns: A Case Study of DailyNation Newspaper Lusaka District

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Publication Date: 2026/11/20

Abstract: Despite sustained public health efforts, Zambia continues to record high HIV infection rates, particularly in urban areas such as Lusaka, highlighting gaps in the effectiveness of existing communication strategies and underscoring the need to reassess how prevention messages are disseminated. Print media remains an important channel for public health communication, yet its specific contribution to HIV/AIDS prevention in contemporary Zambia has not been fully examined. Guided by this gap, the present study sought to ascertain the effectiveness of print media in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns, focusing specifically on the Daily Nation Newspaper in Lusaka District. The objectives of the study were to evaluate the newspaper's role in reducing HIV-related stigma and to identify the strengths and weaknesses associated with using print media as a tool for HIV prevention. The research was anchored in the Agenda-Setting Theory, which posits that the media influences public priorities by shaping what audiences perceive as important. A mixed-methods case study design was adopted, integrating quantitative data from a structured reader survey with qualitative insights obtained through interviews with journalists and health communication officers. A total of 120 respondents participated in the survey, while 20 key informants provided in-depth qualitative perspectives, allowing for methodological triangulation. Results indicate that the Daily Nation Newspaper is widely perceived as a credible and influential source of information on HIV/AIDS, with substantial success in raising awareness and shaping public understanding. Notably, 66.7% of survey respondents reported that the newspaper's content positively reduced their negative attitudes toward people living with HIV, demonstrating a strong impact on stigma reduction. However, the translation of increased awareness into personal prevention behavior was moderate, with nearly equal proportions of respondents reporting behavior change and no change. Among those who reported behavior change, the most common actions were undergoing HIV testing and increasing condom use. Overall, the study concludes that print media remains a vital platform for enhancing knowledge, shaping attitudes, and supporting the broader public health response to HIV/AIDS. It is recommended that health communication stakeholders and media practitioners address structural limitations—such as limited reach and audience engagement—and integrate print campaigns with interactive or digital elements to maximize their direct behavioral impact in Zambia.

How to Cite: Matildah Zulu; Mirriam Zimba (2026) Ascertaining the Effectiveness of Print Media in Promoting HIV/AIDS Prevention Campaigns: A Case Study of DailyNation Newspaper Lusaka District. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(10), 3479-3490. https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

I. INTRODUCTION

➢ *Background*

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) remain among the most significant global public health challenges. According to UNAIDS (2024), approximately 39 million people were living with HIV globally by the end of 2023, with sub-Saharan Africa accounting for about 67% of these cases. In Zambia, HIV/AIDS continues to threaten public health and socio-economic development despite decades of awareness campaigns and interventions. The Zambia Statistics Agency (ZamStats, 2023) reports an HIV prevalence rate of 11.1%, with Lusaka Province among the most affected regions.

Globally and locally, mass media have been recognized as crucial partners in promoting HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. Print media, particularly newspapers, have historically been a powerful medium for communicating health messages to the public. Newspapers provide detailed and credible information, offering opportunities for both education and advocacy. Mc

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

This study therefore seeks to ascertain the effectiveness of the Daily Nation newspaper in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in Lusaka District. By doing so, it aims to contribute evidence-based insights into the continuing role of print media in Zambia's health communication landscape.

➢ *Problem Statement*

Despite sustained media campaigns and public health interventions, Zambia continues to record a high rate of HIV infections, especially in urban areas such as Lusaka. The persistence of new infections despite ongoing communication efforts suggests potential weaknesses in the current media strategies employed. Although the Daily Nation newspaper regularly publishes articles on HIV/AIDS prevention, there is insufficient empirical evidence on how these messages influence readers' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours.

Furthermore, the rapid shift toward digital information consumption has raised doubts about whether print media can still effectively reach and influence target audiences. Many young readers prefer online platforms, leaving newspapers with an older, narrower demographic. This knowledge gap necessitates a focused study on whether the Daily Nation's HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns are achieving behavioural change, reducing stigma, and contributing to national health goals. Understanding this will help determine whether print media remains a viable tool for HIV/AIDS communication in Zambia.

➢ *Research Objectives*

- *General Objective*

To ascertain the effectiveness of print media in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns, with a specific focus on the Daily Nation newspaper in Lusaka District.

- *Specific Objective*

✓ To evaluate the effectiveness of the Daily Nation newspaper's HIV/AIDS campaigns in reducing stigma.
✓ To identify the strengths and weaknesses of using print media, particularly the Daily Nation, in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention.
✓ To recommend strategies for enhancing the role of print media in HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in Zambia.

➢ *Reserch Questions*

- How effective are the Daily Nation newspaper's HIV/AIDS campaigns in reducing stigma among readers in Lusaka District?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of using print media, particularly the Daily Nation, in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention?
- What strategies can enhance the effectiveness of print media in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in Zambia?

➢ *Theoretical Framework*

This study is guided by the Agenda-Setting Theory, developed by McCombs and Shaw (1972). The theory posits that the media influences the public by determining which issues receive attention and how prominently they are featured. It suggests that frequent and prominent coverage of a topic can make audiences perceive it as more important.

In the context of HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns, Agenda-Setting Theory provides a useful lens through which to examine the role of the Daily Nation Newspaper in shaping public discourse and awareness. If the newspaper frequently features HIV/AIDS-related content such as stories about prevention, testing, treatment options, and stigma reduction it can significantly influence public attention and attitudes toward the disease.

This theory is particularly relevant in Zambia, where traditional media such as newspapers still hold influence over certain demographics, especially the literate urban population (Kalinda, 2020). By evaluating how often and how prominently HIV/AIDS issues are covered in the Daily Nation, the study can assess the newspaper's capacity to shape public concern and inform behavioural change.

Moreover, the theory helps explore whether the newspaper gives sustained attention to HIV/AIDS campaigns or only provides episodic coverage. This is important because consistent and focused messaging is necessary to reinforce health behaviours and reduce stigma. It also allows the researcher to assess whether the Daily Nation aligns its editorial priorities with national health objectives and global HIV/AIDS prevention goals. Therefore, Agenda-Setting Theory offers a robust foundation for analysing not only the visibility and framing of HIV/AIDS messages in print media but also their perceived importance among the public, ultimately influencing purblic health outcomes.

This study is significant for several reasons academically, socially, and professionally. It provides critical insights into the role of traditional media, particularly newspapers, in promoting public health communication in Zambia at a time when digital media platforms are increasingly dominant. Despite the expansion of online information dissemination, print media continue to serve as trusted and authoritative sources of information for many Zambians, particularly in urban areas such as Lusaka. This research therefore fills an important gap by empirically assessing the continuing influence and effectiveness of print media in HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns.

From a policy perspective, the findings will assist government agencies such as the Ministry of Health, the National AIDS Council (NAC), and other health communication stakeholders in understanding how to design more effective and evidence-based communication strategies. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of print media campaigns, policymakers can make informed decisions about resource allocation, message framing, and integration between traditional and digital communication platforms. This will contribute to the development of more comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention frameworks that leverage all available communication channels effectively.

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

For the media industry, particularly the Daily Nation newspaper and other print outlets, the study will provide valuable feedback on how their coverage and messaging influence readers' awareness, attitudes, and behaviors toward HIV/AIDS prevention. The insights derived will help media practitioners enhance the relevance, appeal, and clarity of health communication content. This could encourage collaboration between media organizations and health institutions in producing high-quality, audience-centered messages that resonate with different demographic groups.

From an academic standpoint, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on communication for development (C4D) and public health communication in sub-Saharan Africa. It will serve as a reference for future researchers interested in exploring the intersections between mass media, behavior change communication, and public health outcomes. The study's application of the Agenda-Setting Theory also strengthens theoretical understanding of how media coverage influences public perception and agenda formation regarding health issues.

On a societal level, the research will benefit the general public by promoting a more informed and health-conscious society. By highlighting how effective communication can influence positive behavior change, the study indirectly contributes to national efforts aimed at reducing new HIV infections and combating stigma.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter apter presents a comprehensive review and critical analysis of the existing literature concerning the role of print media in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. The primary aim is to examine how newspapers, magazines, and other print platforms contribute to raising awareness, shaping public attitudes, and influencing preventive behaviors in the context of HIV/AIDS. The review situates the discussion within broader debates on the effectiveness of mass communication as a public health tool, drawing evidence from global, regional, and local studies. By systematically analyzing past research, the chapter provides a foundation for understanding the mechanisms through which print media can facilitate behavioral change and reduce the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS.

The literature review is organized thematically around the three main objectives of the study: the effectiveness of print media in raising HIV/AIDS awareness, its role in influencing public attitudes and behaviors, and the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in current communication strategies. The first theme addresses the general impact of mass media on public health, emphasizing global perspectives on communication campaigns. Scholars such as Bertrand et al. (2006) and Noar et al. (2009) demonstrate that well-designed media interventions—especially those that are repetitive, emotionally engaging, and culturally relevant—can significantly improve knowledge and encourage safer sexual behaviors. This body of literature underscores the potential of print media to act not merely as a channel for information dissemination but as a tool for social influence, capable of shaping norms and encouraging collective action against HIV/AIDS.

The second theme focuses on regional evidence from sub-Saharan Africa, where print media, alongside radio and television, has played a central role in public health communication. Studies conducted in countries such as Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria indicate that newspapers have contributed to enhancing awareness about HIV transmission, preventive strategies, and available treatment options (Mogambi, 2013; Myburgh et al., 2012; VISION Project, 2006). However, scholars such as Parker (2019) argue that the impact of print media is often underestimated in the contemporary digital era, even though print continues to hold influence among literate urban populations. The review highlights that, while print media can effectively convey detailed, factual, and culturally contextualized information, its lack of interactivity compared to digital platforms can limit engagement and the translation of awareness into behavioral change.

- *Thematic Area Developed from Objective One: Effectiveness of Print Media in Reducing HIV/AIDS Stigma*

Globally, mass media has long been recognized as a crucial tool in public health communication, particularly in addressing epidemics such as HIV/AIDS. Researchers consistently emphasize that mass media campaigns are instrumental in shaping public attitudes, reducing stigma, and promoting preventive behaviors (Bertrand et al., 2006). Well-designed campaigns have the potential to reach large audiences, making information about HIV transmission, prevention, and treatment accessible to diverse populations. For instance, Bertrand et al. (2006) demonstrated that strategically crafted media interventions, which incorporate culturally appropriate messaging, can significantly increase awareness about HIV/AIDS and promote safer sexual behaviors, such as consistent condom use. This evidence suggests that mass media is not merely an informational tool, but also a mechanism for social influence, capable of reinforcing normative behavior and fostering community-wide awareness.

In sub-Saharan Africa, mass media remains a cornerstone of HIV/AIDS communication, given the high levels of radio listenership and newspaper readership, as well as the growing penetration of television (UNAIDS, 2022). Studies show that radio, television, and print media collectively contribute to improving knowledge about HIV transmission and preventive measures, including condom use, voluntary counseling and testing, and antiretroviral therapy. However, despite these gains in awareness, Parker (2019) argues that the influence of print media is frequently underestimated, especially in an era dominated by digital and social media platforms. Print media, while traditional, continues to hold sway among literate urban populations, particularly those who prefer detailed, factual reporting and in-depth coverage of public health issues. This presents a unique opportunity for print newspapers to complement digital campaigns by providing nuanced, reliable, and context-specific information about HIV/AIDS.

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

Within the Zambian context, print media has demonstrated a notable impact on public knowledge about HIV/AIDS, although its effect on actual behavior change is more complex. Banda (2020) examined the role of mainstream newspapers, including the Times of Zambia and Daily Nation, in HIV communication and observed that these publications have significantly improved public understanding of HIV prevention strategies. By providing accurate reporting and educational content, newspapers contribute to demystifying the disease and addressing misconceptions. They play an important role in reducing stigma, as articles often feature real-life stories of people living with HIV, highlighting resilience, treatment adherence, and the possibility of living a healthy life despite the diagnosis. Such narratives not only inform readers but also humanize the issue, encouraging empathy and reducing discriminatory attitudes.

- *Thematic Area Developed from Objective Two: To Strengths and Weaknesses of Using Print Media in HIV/AIDS Communication*

Print media plays a crucial role in shaping public awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS prevention, particularly through the dissemination of accurate, consistent, and culturally relevant health information. Newspapers and magazines are not only sources of news but also tools for educating communities about disease prevention, treatment options, and health-promoting behaviors. Globally, research demonstrates that access to reliable health information through print media significantly contributes to reducing misinformation, dispelling myths, and fostering informed decision-making (UNAIDS, 2023). By providing detailed reporting, editorials, and educational features, print media can reach wide audiences and encourage reflection, discussion, and action among readers.

Across Africa, the influence of print media in HIV/AIDS communication has been both significant and context-dependent. In South Africa, Chanda and Mwewa (2018) found that newspaper campaigns improved public knowledge of HIV testing services and antiretroviral therapy (ART), demonstrating the potential of print media to increase awareness and facilitate health-seeking behavior. Nevertheless, the study also highlighted disparities in impact, noting that limited newspaper access in rural areas constrains the reach of print campaigns. Similarly, Okigbo and Ekeanyanwu (2020) in Nigeria observed that newspapers are particularly credible sources of information among urban and literate populations, helping to demystify misconceptions surrounding HIV/AIDS and promoting acceptance of preventive measures. These findings indicate that while print media is a powerful tool, its effectiveness is influenced by factors such as literacy, geographic accessibility, and the availability of complementary media channels.

In Zambia, print media continues to play a relevant role despite the rapid growth of digital communication platforms. Research by Banda (2021) illustrates that newspapers such as the Daily Nation, Times of Zambia, and Zambia Daily Mail consistently publish content on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and stigma reduction. Such publications contribute to public understanding and awareness by providing readers with factual and culturally contextualized information. However, Banda notes that the translation of awareness into behavior change is not automatic; message retention and adoption of preventive behaviors are shaped by readers' education levels, media exposure, and the frequency with which they engage with content. Mwansa (2022) similarly emphasizes that consistent print coverage helps shape national dialogue on HIV/AIDS, particularly in urban areas where readership is higher, reinforcing preventive practices and encouraging health-seeking behaviors.

- *Thematic Area Developed from Objective Three; Strategies for Enhancing Print Media Effectiveness in HIV/AIDS Prevention*

Despite the critical role of print media in health communication, several challenges continue to hinder their effectiveness in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. These challenges are multifaceted, encompassing financial, institutional, technological, social, and cultural factors that affect both message production and audience reception. Understanding these limitations is essential to improve the efficiency and sustainability of HIV/AIDS communication initiatives in Zambia.

Globally, studies have shown that the sustainability of print media as a communication channel is under significant threat from the rise of digital technologies and declining newspaper readership. According to Obregon and Waisbord (2019), many newspapers across the world face financial constraints that limit their capacity to fund dedicated health reporting sections or long-term public awareness campaigns. This economic pressure often results in reduced publication of health-related content or reliance on sponsored messages that may not align with public health objectives. Moreover, in many developing countries, print media coverage of HIV/AIDS tends to decline after major donor-funded projects end, revealing an overdependence on external funding (UNAIDS, 2022).

- *Establishment of Research Gaps*

The review of existing literature on the effectiveness of print media in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns reveals several key research gaps that justify the need for the present study. While considerable attention has been given to the role of media in public health communication, limited empirical evidence exists on how traditional print outlets—particularly newspapers—contribute to reducing HIV/AIDS stigma and promoting behavioral change in the Zambian context.

Firstly, there is a contextual gap. Much of the research on HIV/AIDS communication has been conducted in countries such as South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria, where the media landscape and health communication structures differ significantly from those in Zambia. Although international findings provide useful insights, they may not accurately reflect the social, cultural, and economic dynamics influencing media consumption in Lusaka District. Few localized studies have focused specifically on the Daily Nation newspaper, despite its wide readership and active

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

involvement in national awareness campaigns. Therefore, this study seeks to generate Zambia-specific evidence on the role and effectiveness of print media in HIV/AIDS prevention.

Remains largely untested, particularly in print media contexts. This study responds to this gap by examining the relationship between message exposure, audience perception, and behavioral outcomes among readers in Lusaka District.

Fifthly, there is a theoretical gap in the literature. A significant number of studies on HIV/AIDS communication lack a solid theoretical foundation to explain how media influence public perception and action. By applying the Agenda-Setting Theory, this research provides a conceptual lens for understanding how the Daily Nation shapes public priorities and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS issues. This theoretical integration enhances the explanatory power of the study and contributes to broader communication scholarship.

Lastly, the literature reveals a sociocultural gap, particularly concerning the intersection of stigma, cultural taboos, and gender dynamics in media communication. Few studies have investigated how cultural beliefs and social attitudes affect the interpretation of HIV/AIDS messages in print media. The current research explores these cultural and demographic factors to better understand their influence on message reception and effectiveness.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➢ *Research Design*

A mixed-methods case study design was adopted, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The case study design allows for an in-depth understanding of the Daily Nation's communication practices, while the mixed-methods approach enables triangulation between numerical and descriptive data.

The choice of this design was motivated by the need to capture both measurable patterns and rich descriptive insights. The quantitative component will help assess variables such as audience reach, exposure frequency, and behavioral change indicators, while the qualitative component will explore message interpretation, content quality, contextual influences, and perceived credibility of the newspaper 's HIV/AIDS campaigns.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), mixed-methods research enables triangulation of data, ensuring that findings from different sources complement each other, thereby enhancing the validity, reliability, and depth of the results.

➢ *Quantitative Component*

The quantitative aspect of this study employed a descriptive survey design using a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of readers of the Daily Nation Newspaper within Lusaka District. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and scaled questions aimed at measuring:

- Frequency of exposure to HIV/AIDS articles
- Levels of awareness and knowledge retention
- Attitudes and behavioral changes related to HIV prevention

The data collected was statistically analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (such as percentages, means, and correlations) to identify trends and relationships between print media exposure and HIV/AIDS awareness outcomes.

➢ *Qualitative Component*

The qualitative dimension involved in-depth interviews and content analysis. Key informants will include:

- Daily Nation editors and journalists involved in health reporting
- Public health officials or communication officers working with HIV/AIDS campaigns
- Selected readers who actively engage with health-related newspaper Content The interviews will use semi-structured guides, allowing flexibility to explore emerging themes. The data will be analyzed through thematic analysis to identify patterns, perceptions, and insights that explain how HIV/AIDS messages are framed, interpreted, and acted upon by readers. Additionally, content analysis of selected newspaper editions will be conducted to assess:
- Frequency and placement of HIV/AIDS articles
- Types of messages (educational, preventive, advocacy-oriented)
- Use of images, headlines, and language tone Justification for Mixed-Methods
- The integration of both methods allows for a complementary perspective:
- The quantitative results will show the extent of media influence, while
- The qualitative findings will explain why and how that influence occurs.

This design is particularly useful in media and communication research, where understanding the relationship between message exposure, audience interpretation, and behavioral outcomes requires both numerical evidence and narrative explanation.

➢ *Target Population*

The target population for this study comprises all individuals and groups directly or indirectly engaged with the Daily Nation newspaper in Lusaka District. This includes regular readers, newspaper vendors, editorial staff, journalists, and public health communication experts affiliated with HIV/AIDS awareness programs. The population also extends to representatives from government institutions such as the Ministry of Health, National AIDS Council, and relevant NGOs that partner with the media to promote HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns.

The Daily Nation has a diverse readership base that includes students, professionals, business owners, and civil

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

servants. According to the Zambia Media Council (2024), the Daily Nation newspaper has an estimated circulation of approximately 25,000 copies per day, with Lusaka District accounting for more than 60% of its readership. This makes Lusaka an ideal setting for assessing audience awareness, attitudes, and behavioral responses to HIV/AIDS messages published in the newspaper.

The inclusion of both media practitioners and readers provides a balanced understanding of message creation and reception. Media practitioners (editors, reporters, and layout designers) offer insights into how messages are framed, prioritized, and disseminated, while readers provide feedback on how they interpret and act upon these messages. This dual perspective strengthens the validity and comprehensiveness of the study findings.

The study's target population can therefore be categorized into two major groups:

- Media Personnel: Editors, journalists, and communication officers from the Daily Nation newspaper and partner institutions involved in HIV/AIDS communication campaigns.
- Readers and Audience Members: Individuals residing in Lusaka District who regularly read the Daily Nation newspaper and have been exposed to its HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns.

This population is ideal for the research because it provides both the supply-side (message creation) and demand-side (message reception and interpretation) perspectives necessary for evaluating the effectiveness of print media in health communication.

➢ *Sampling Design*

This study will adopt a mixed sampling design combining both probability and non-probability sampling techniques to ensure that the selected respondents accurately represent the target population and provide diverse perspectives relevant to the research objectives. The design will align with the mixed-methods approach of the study, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies.

For the quantitative component, stratified random sampling will be employed. This technique is appropriate because the Daily Nation readership is heterogeneous, comprising individuals from various demographic categories such as age, gender, occupation, and education level. Stratified sampling allows for the division of the population into distinct subgroups (strata), ensuring that each segment of the readership is proportionally represented. Within each stratum, participants will be randomly selected to minimize selection bias and enhance the generalizability of findings.

For the qualitative component, purposive sampling will be used to select key informants. This approach is suitable for identifying individuals with specialized knowledge or experience related to HIV/AIDS communication and print media operations. The purposively selected participants will include editors, journalists, health communication officers, and representatives from government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. These participants will provide in-depth insights into message development, framing, and dissemination strategies, which are critical for understanding media effectiveness.

The rationale for using a mixed sampling design is to combine the strengths of both probability and non-probability techniques ensuring representativeness in the quantitative survey while capturing expert perspectives through qualitative interviews. This approach enhances the study's credibility, validity, and reliability by enabling data triangulation.

➢ *Sample Size Determination*

The sample size for this study consisted of 140 participants, comprising 120 newspaper readers and 20 key informants, these 15 were journalists, editors, and 5 were communication officers involved in HIV/AIDS awareness initiatives. This sample size has been carefully selected to achieve a balance between quantitative representativeness and qualitative depth, ensuring that both numerical data and detailed insights are adequately captured.

The 120 readers provided quantitative data that reflect the general audience's awareness, attitudes, and behavioral responses toward HIV/AIDS prevention messages published in the Daily Nation newspaper.

The 20 key informants were selected purposively based on their professional experience and involvement in print media or HIV/AIDS communication. These participants include Daily Nation journalists, editors, health communication officers, and representatives from organizations that collaborate with the media on HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. Their insights will provide qualitative depth by explaining institutional practices, editorial challenges, message design processes, and the perceived impact of print media on public behavior.

The chosen sample size aligns with the study's mixed-methods approach, which emphasizes both statistical relevance and interpretive understanding. A relatively small but focused sample enables in-depth data collection while remaining manageable in terms of time and resources. Furthermore, the sample size is consistent with similar studies conducted on media effectiveness and health communication, which often employ moderate sample sizes for balanced data richness and practicality.

➢ *Triangulation*

The study employed methodological triangulation, combining data from structured questionnaires administered to readers with insights from semi-structured interviews conducted with key informants, including journalists, editors, and health communication officers. Questionnaires will provide measurable evidence on readership patterns, knowledge retention, attitudes, and reported behavioral changes related to HIV/AIDS prevention. Interviews, on the

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

other hand, yielded qualitative insights into the newspaper's editorial practices, message framing, dissemination strategies, and perceived impact on the target audience. By comparing and cross-validating results from both approaches, the study reduced potential biases and ensure that conclusions reflect the true dynamics of media influence.

Triangulation also strengthens the interpretive power of the study by enabling the researcher to capture different dimensions of media effectiveness. Quantitative results may reveal patterns of readership and behavioral change, while qualitative findings can explain the reasons behind these patterns, such as message clarity, cultural relevance, or emotional engagement. Integrating these insights provides a holistic understanding that would not be possible using a single method alone.

IV. RESULTS/FINDINGS

➢ *Presentation of Results on Background Characteristics of Respondents*

Table 1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
16–25	30	25.0%
26–35	45	37.5%
36–45	25	20.8%
46–55	12	10.0%
Above 56	8	6.7%
Total respondents: 120		

Source: Primary Data 2025.

The majority of respondents fall within the 26–35 age range, showing that young adults are the dominant group in the study. The representation of individuals between 16 and 25 also highlights a strong participation of youth, indicating that the study draws insights largely from people in their most active and productive years. Middle-aged respondents between 36 and 45 form a smaller yet substantial portion, suggesting a balanced but youth-leaning sample. Those aged 46 and above are fewer, which might mean the perspectives captured may lean more toward younger and mid-aged adults rather than the elderly.

Table 2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	54	45.0%
Female	65	54.2%
Total respondents: 120		

Source: Primary Data, 2025.

Females slightly outnumber males in the respondent pool, creating a near balance between genders that strengthens representativeness. This distribution implies that gender bias in responses is minimal and both male and female perspectives are well captured. The very small number identifying as "other" means this category has minimal influence on the overall outcomes but still adds inclusivity. The balance between male and female respondents helps ensure any findings relating to gender differences are reliable and can provide meaningful comparisons between the two groups.

Table 3 Education of Respondents

Education level	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	6	5.0%
Primary	18	15.0%
Secondary	45	37.5%
Post-secondary/Certificate	15	12.5%
Diploma	10	8.3%
Bachelor's degree	20	16.7%
Postgraduate	6	5.0%
Total respondents: 120		

Source: Primary Data 2025,

The educational background of respondent's shows a generally educated population, with secondary education being the most common level achieved. The majority having attained at least secondary school or beyond suggests the group is literate and likely to understand complex topics within the study. Respondents with higher qualifications,

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

such as bachelor's and postgraduate degrees, indicate an informed segment capable of providing analytical insights. Meanwhile, the smaller number with only primary or no formal education reflects limited representation from less-educated groups, which might slightly affect the range of perspectives on education-related question.

Table 4 Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	28	23.3%
Employed (formal)	34	28.3%
Employed (informal/self-employed)	30	25.0%
Unemployed	18	15.0%
Homemaker	6	5.0%
Other	4	3.3%
Total respondents: 120		

Source: Primary Data, 2025.

The employment profile shows a fairly mixed population, with both formally and informally employed individuals forming a significant proportion of the sample. The presence of many students is consistent with the youthful age distribution, while the unemployed group represents a meaningful share that may reflect economic challenges or transitional phases among respondents. Homemakers and others form a smaller fraction but contribute to diversity in life situations represented. This varied occupational structure allows the study to capture insights across different economic and social experience

Table 5 Household Size

Household size	Frequency	Percentage
1 person	6	5.0%
2 persons	18	15.0%
3 persons	34	28.3%
4 persons	38	31.7%
5 persons	16	13.3%
6+ persons	8	6.7%
Total respondents: 120		

Source: Primary Data,2025.

Most respondents live in households with three or four members, showing a predominance of medium-sized family units. Smaller and larger households are less common, which may indicate a trend toward nuclear rather than extended family living arrangements. This household pattern suggests relatively manageable dependency ratios for most respondents, potentially influencing responses to questions about income, spending, or resource allocation. The small proportion of very large households might still provide useful insights into multigenerational or collective living conditions.

- *Presentation of Results Based on Thematic Area Developed from Objective One*

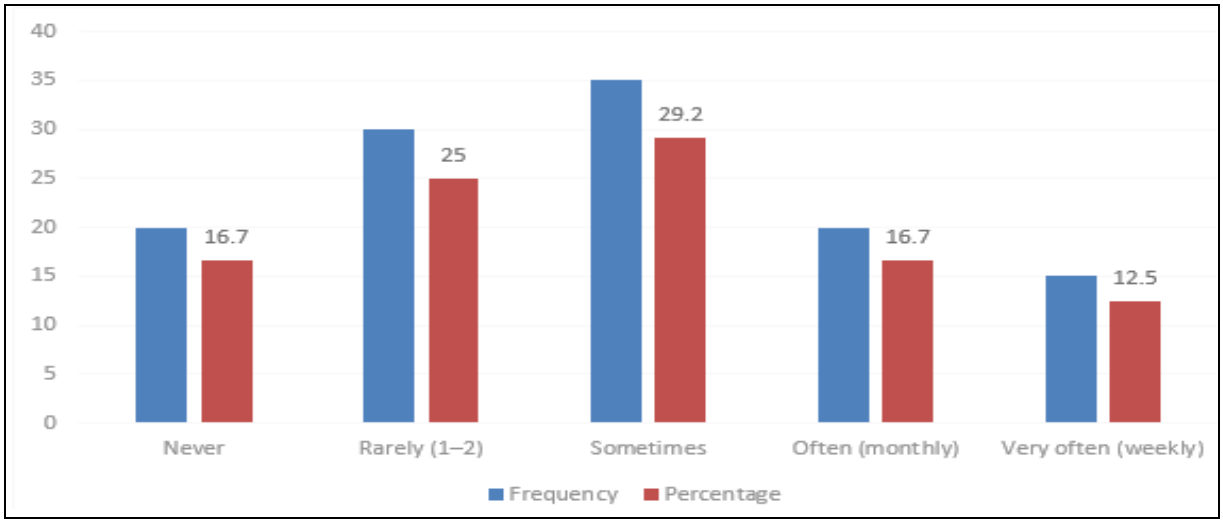


Fig 1 Frequency of Reading HIV and AIDS Articles in the Daily Nation (Past 12 Months)
Source: Primary Data 2025.

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

The distribution for how often respondents read HIV/AIDS content in the Daily Nation shows that most people encounter such articles at least occasionally. Sometimes (every few months) was the modal response with thirty-five respondents, followed by Rarely at thirty respondents and Never at twenty; frequent readers (Often or Very often) are smaller groups. This pattern suggests that while the paper reaches a wide audience, regular weekly engagement with HIV content is limited to a minority. When considering communication strategies, this means one-off articles reach many but may not reinforce messages often enough for sustained behavior change among the larger grou

- *Presentation of Results Based on A Thematic Area Developed from Objective Two*

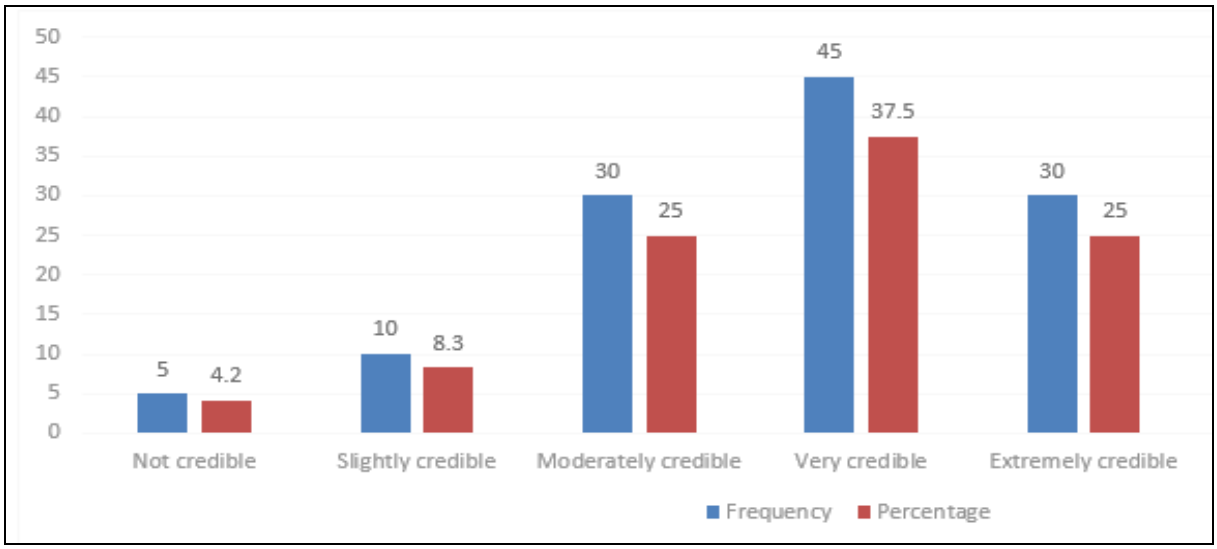


Fig 2 Perceived Credibility of the Daily Nation as a Source of HIV and AIDS Information
Source: Primary Data 2025.

Credibility of the Daily Nation as a source of HIV/AIDS information shows that most respondents view it positively. Thirty respondents rated it as extremely credible, forty-five as very credible, and thirty as moderately credible, meaning over eighty percent perceive strong trustworthiness in its reporting. Only a small minority found it slightly credible or not credible. This indicates that the publication has successfully built a reputation for accuracy and dependability on health-related issues, likely through consistent sourcing from professionals and organizations working in HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Such credibility is essential for ensuring that health messages are accepted and acted upon by readers, as trust remains a vital determinant of public engagement with media content

- *Presentation of Results Based on a Thematic Area Developed from Objective Three*

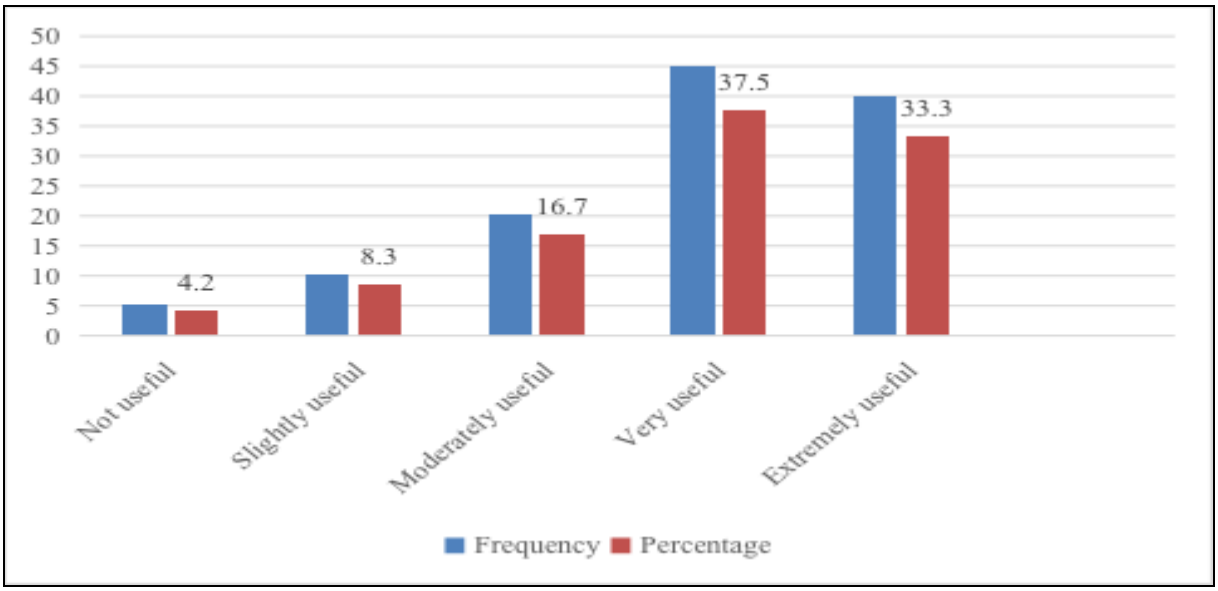


Fig 3 Perceived Usefulness of Translating HIV and AIDS Messages into Local Languages for Print Media
Source: Primary Data 2025.

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

Respondents overwhelmingly supported the translation of HIV/AIDS information into local languages, with forty-five finding the approach very useful and forty calling it extremely useful. Only a few described it as moderately, slightly, or not useful, showing strong consensus on the importance of linguistic inclusivity in improving message reach and understanding. This pattern highlights that language remains a major barrier to effective communication in public health, particularly for those who rely on vernacular languages in daily life. Translating messages would not only enhance comprehension but also foster greater trust and cultural relevance in HIV prevention communication

- *Discussion of Research Findings*

The findings revealed that the Daily Nation plays a significant role in shaping public awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS issues in Lusaka. Across discussions, respondents highlighted that the newspaper has established itself as a reliable and trusted source of health information, often praised for its professionalism and credibility. Many described its HIV/AIDS coverage as balanced and factual, suggesting that its consistency over the years has helped normalize discussions about the disease. One senior editor emphasized that the newspaper's mission has always been to "report with dignity and empathy," pointing out that such an approach allows readers to connect emotionally with people living with HIV rather than view them as statistics. Similarly, a public health officer explained that the publication's factual accuracy and careful sourcing "have made it one of the few print outlets that health professionals actually rely on." This confidence in the paper's credibility has encouraged readers to regard it as an important reference for HIV-related knowledge and stigma reduction.

Respondents widely agreed that the newspaper's coverage has had a positive effect on public attitudes toward people living with HIV. By featuring personal stories and community-based examples, the publication has succeeded in shifting the narrative from fear and discrimination to understanding and support. One reader explained that stories that "show people living positively with HIV remind us that life goes on," reflecting how exposure to empowering narratives can influence perceptions. Opinion pieces, features, and testimonials were singled out as especially effective in changing attitudes because they combine factual reporting with human emotion. However, participants also noted that while coverage is impactful, it often fluctuates, intensifying around key events like World AIDS Day but becoming less frequent afterward. This pattern, they felt, reduces the long-term consistency needed for behavior change and attitude transformation. Regular, sustained coverage was described as critical if the paper is to maintain its influence in shaping community attitudes.

There was also strong recognition of the challenges that journalists face in reporting on HIV/AIDS. Limited newsroom resources, lack of specialized health training, and pressure to attract readers were cited as recurring obstacles. Several editors acknowledged that sometimes "health stories compete with politics or crime for space," resulting in limited attention to preventive education pieces. The use of technical medical terms was another issue raised; while accuracy is vital, it can alienate readers with low health literacy. Many felt that stories needed to be written in simpler language and, where possible, translated into local dialects to ensure inclusivity. Respondents also observed that stories occasionally fall into sensationalism in attempts to attract readership. They stressed the importance of responsible reporting that balances appeal with sensitivity, especially in headlines and imagery.

When discussing the strengths of the Daily Nation, respondents emphasized credibility, journalistic rigor, and detailed reporting. The newspaper's capacity to feature expert opinions and its commitment to verifying facts were considered major advantages. Its long-standing presence in Zambia's media landscape and its urban distribution network have made it a dependable channel for disseminating accurate HIV/AIDS information. On the other hand, weaknesses included limited use of visuals, minimal engagement with rural audiences, and dependence on the English language. Several participants pointed out that "many people in rural communities cannot easily access or afford a newspaper," suggesting a need for the paper to find ways of reaching underserved populations. Additionally, the layout and presentation of HIV/AIDS stories were viewed as somewhat static and less appealing to younger readers accustomed to interactive and visual content found on digital platforms.

When comparing print media to other platforms, respondents noted that newspapers provide unmatched depth, permanence, and credibility. Printed articles can be revisited, shared, or used in schools and community programs as educational material. However, print alone was seen as insufficient in today's fast-paced media environment. "Print tells the full story, but social media carries it further," remarked one participant, summarizing the need for integration rather than competition between media types. This recognition reflects a growing understanding that combining traditional journalism with digital tools could help reach wider audiences, especially the youth

Capacity building for journalists was repeatedly mentioned as a critical need. Respondents argued that continuous training on health communication, ethics, and the use of non-stigmatizing language would improve both the quality and consistency of reporting. One editor noted that "covering HIV responsibly requires more than just writing skills—it needs empathy and understanding." The suggestion for regular workshops and mentorship programs was common, as these could strengthen journalists' ability to handle sensitive topics and interpret complex health information accurately. The participants emphasized that empowering reporters would have a ripple effect, leading to better-informed readers and a more empathetic society.

V. CONCLUSION

This study examined the effectiveness of the Daily Nation newspaper in promoting HIV and AIDS prevention

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct632

campaigns in Lusaka District, with a particular focus on how print media contributes to awareness, knowledge dissemination, and stigma reduction. The findings demonstrated that while print media continues to hold an important place in public health communication, there are several areas where improvements can significantly enhance its impact. Drawing from the analysis presented in Chapter Four, this conclusion synthesizes the major insights, reflects on how the research objectives were achieved, and highlights the broader implications of the study for media practitioners, policymakers, and public health stakeholders.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, a series of detailed recommendations are proposed to enhance the role and effectiveness of print media, particularly the Daily Nation newspaper, in promoting HIV and AIDS prevention campaigns. These recommendations address content, communication strategies, professional development, and collaborative efforts that can collectively strengthen the impact of the newspaper's health communication agenda and contribute to sustainable behavior change in the community.

The first recommendation is for the Daily Nation to increase both the frequency and the consistency of HIV and AIDS coverage throughout the year. The study revealed that most of the paper's health reporting is concentrated around specific commemorative periods such as World AIDS Day, leaving large information gaps during the rest of the year. Consistent coverage helps maintain public awareness and reinforces key prevention messages over time. The newspaper should therefore consider establishing a dedicated weekly or biweekly health column that focuses specifically on HIV and AIDS issues. This section could feature a mix of expert interviews, prevention tips, and human-interest stories that make health communication relatable. Regular updates would help normalize the conversation around HIV and ensure that it remains part of public dialogue rather than being limited to special occasions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to the successful completion of this research.

My deepest appreciation goes to my supervisor, Mrs Mirriam Zimba, For her invaluable guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback throughout the course of this study. Your patience and academic support have been instrumental in shaping the quality of this work.

I also extend my thanks to the health professionals at the university teaching hospital who generously shared their insights and experiences, your cooperation and openness provided a foundation upon this research was built and a special thanks to my lecturers and staff of the Media and Communications Department , whose knowledge and support created an environment that made this research possible. Finally, I wish to acknowledge my family for their motivational, moral and financial support, and understanding and believing in me throughout my research.

To all of you, I am sincerely thankful.

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