

# Assessing the Impact of Public Communication Campaign for Infectious Diseases on the Cognition and Behavior of the General Population – Nationwide and Local Evaluations

Abstract:

**Objectives:** (1) To examine the effectiveness of public communication campaign for HIV/AIDS, enterovirus, dengue, and TB, and the general public's overall awareness of the major role and function of the Center for Disease Control over a one-year period. through a one-year-interval comparison of impact analysis, (2) To investigate the nature of campaign exposure to public communication campaign for HIV/AIDS and dengue and its impact on the local populations.

**Methods:** (1) A previously used instrument was modified and used to conduct the present one-year-after nation-wide telephone survey and the analysis was focused on pre- and post comparison. (2) Another telephone survey was carried out among the population in Taoyuan county, Kaohsiung City and County, and Pingtung County.

**Results:** Valid responses from 2014 (response rate=99.7%) and 2417 (response rate=96.8%) participants were obtained through nation-wide and three-county telephone surveys, respectively. Major findings are: (1) The extent of campaign exposure and KAP of the general public toward the four infectious diseases have maintained stable within one year. Yet there's still plenty of room for KAP enhancement. (2) Exposure to campaign slogans, symbols and terms developed particularly for each of the four diseases were still very limited. Moreover, the awareness of "DOTS" and "Harm Reduction," the two large scale national programs that cost a great amount of resources, was extremely poor, and the same situation was also found among the populations in the three study counties. Both pre- and post- analyses have shown the potential validity of the exposure indicators, i.e., its association to KAP, in this study. (3) In the post analysis, the percentages of participants who reported Internet and health care organizations/professionals as the source they were most willing to consult to obtain information regarding infectious diseases have increased dramatically but the percentage for mass media has decreased significantly. The locally developed campaign methods, mostly belonging to the ground strategy, were effective for controlling disease which was epidemic in local areas, such as dengue. (4) The

percentage of participants who have heard of “Center for Disease Control” has greatly mounted within one year, being up to 96%. However, people’s grasp of the CDC’s major role for the prevention and control of infectious diseases was relatively inadequate.

Conclusion: (1) Regular public communication campaign focused on the four major infectious diseases should be implemented continuously. The development and use of special communication slogans, symbols and terms is encouraged but assessments should be made regularly for their effectiveness. (2) Effective campaign methods and strategies which are sensitive to the local conditions should be developed to control for infectious disease epidemic in the local areas. (3) In response to the special communication needs of large scale national programs such as DOTS and Harm Reduction, the goal of communication campaign to the general public should be determined beforehand to develop effective campaign strategies. (4) Resources should be invested in channels that were most preferably consulted by the general public. (5) The Center for Disease Control should “market” the institute’s role and function to the general public to build up its credibility in the prevention and control of infectious diseases.

Key words: Center for Disease Control, Impact Evaluation, Public communication campaign, HIV/AIDS, enterovirus, dengue, TB