

Edutainment works wonders ... *when done well*

HFPA-World Bank Global Forum “*Global Challenges require Global Solutions: Innovative Partnerships between the Entertainment and Development Sectors*”

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Entertainment
Education

Global challenges

Worldwide:

- **1.5 million people** became infected with HIV in 2020.
- **1 in 3 women** have experienced sexual or physical violence in their lives.
- **1 in 20 of all deaths** of 15-29 y.o. are attributable to alcohol use.

Edutainment to the rescue?

- Entertainment media is part of the problem... But can also be part of the solution.
- Media is everywhere
 - >5.4 billion television viewers
 - >5 billion smartphones users
 - 2.5 hours/day on social media
- *Homo narrans* ('storytelling human') makes sense of world through stories.

So, can entertainment narratives positively shape beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of global audiences?

Going beyond good intentions

- Programs need to be evaluated before they are scaled. Audiences may follow the behaviors of the bad guy.
- I will present evidence of World Bank randomized control trials (RCTs) of edutainment programs in Nigeria, India and Mexico.
- RCTs follow the same statistical logic of clinical trials for testing new drugs or vaccines.

Working in the world's Hollywoods



Farhan Akhtar



Ali Nuhu



Nigeria, the 2nd country with greatest number of HIV+ people.



- We evaluated the 3rd season (~3 hours) of MTV Shuga.
- The TV drama broadcast in >60 countries, 720 million estimated audience.
- Golden Globe winner Lupita Nyong'o was part of cast in the initial seasons.

MTV SHUGA



Weki's teammates discover his HIV medicines. While they are supportive, their parents ask the coach to kick Weki out of the team. Weki quits the team.



Nigeria: MTV Shuga study

(Banerjee, La Ferrara and Orozco-Olvera, [2019a](#) & [2019b](#))

Treatment



Control



Study design

- Cluster RCT (n=4,986; 18-24 y.o. men and women in urban areas)
- Follow up survey: 8-10 months
- Collected objective measures of behavior change



After 8-10 months...

- HIV testing **doubled**
- Sexual concurrency **halved**
- STI **halved**
- Likelihood decreased for
 - Sexual violence by **a third**
 - Physical violence **by half.**



8-10 months later...

- HIV Knowledge and Attitudes towards people improved by 0.10-0.13 stand. c

These effects were even larger for viewers who reported:

- (i) Greater program immersion &
- (ii) Greater identification with characters.

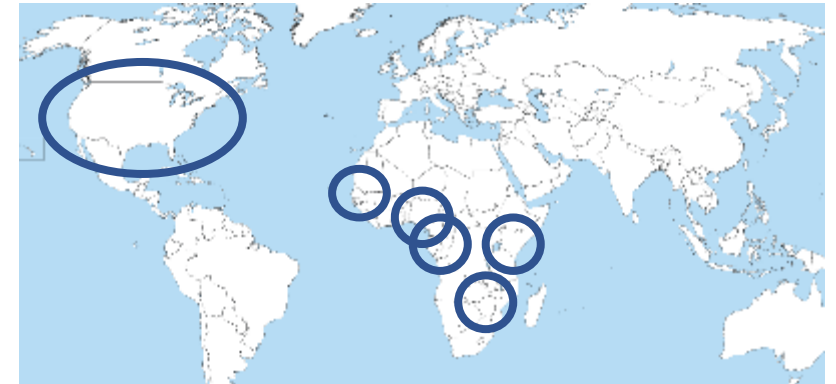
- Likelihood decreased for reporting
 - Sexual violence by **a third**
 - For physical violence **by half**.



Copyright, MTV Shuga, MTV Staying Alive Foundation

Meta-analysis: Edutainment narratives to promote safer behaviors among youth (Orozco-Olvera, Shen, Cluver [2019](#))

- MTV Shuga results are not a fluke.
- **Study design (Meta-analysis):**
 - N= 10 studies (5 in USA and 5 in sub-Saharan Africa)
 - n= 23,476 aggregated sample



▪ Results

- Decrease in **number of sexual partners** (0.17 standardized mean difference)
- Decrease in **unprotected sex** (0.08 SMD)
- Increase **STI testing and management**(0.29 SMD).
- However, no effect on inter-generational sex. *Structural challenges remain important hurdles.*

Can edutainment work in adverse settings?

In northern Nigeria

- Sharia Law is the law of the land.
- Highly adverse attitudes towards girl education.
 - >35% girls are married before turning 15
 - >50% children don't attend primary school
- Low levels of literacy
 - Among Grade 3 students, scoring zero in literacy tests is very common.



Credit: Laura Costica

Nigeria: Edutainment Narratives

- The docu-series/animation “My Better World” is used in *classrooms* and *broadcast on TV* in multiple SSA countries.
- Winner of the *United Nations award* at the New York Film Festival. *2020 Telly Award* - Silver Winner for Social Impact for TV.



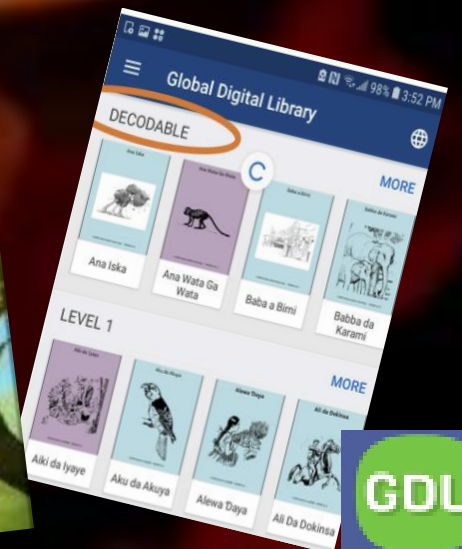
Fatima, the first female pilot of Kano State, inspires girls and their parents to dream.



Animated characters show how families can overcome adverse social norms.

Nigeria: Edutainment Narratives + Mobiles Apps

- Narratives may not be enough to teach a child to read. Children need resources like teachers and books.
- The game app Feed The Monster and the Global Digital Library are based on “Learning by Playing” principles and have been translated to >100 languages.



Nigeria: Movies & Mobiles study

(Orozco-Olvera and Rascon-Ramirez, [2022](#))

Intervention

- 5-day intervention targeting 6-9 y.o. children and their parents (~8 hours in total).

Study design

- Cluster RCT (n=9,300 households in rural areas)
- Follow up survey: 12 months
- Surveys and literacy/numeracy tests for 6-9 y.o. children and older siblings.



12 months later...

- **0.46-0.63 standard deviations increase** in literacy/numeracy for 6-9 y.o.
- Similar learning impacts for **older siblings**.
- **42% decrease** in out-of-school children.
- Aspirations of parents & siblings improved:
 - **14% decrease** underage employment
 - **13% decrease** in teenager pregnancy



12 months later...

- 0.46-0.63 standard deviations increase in literacy/numeracy for 6-9 y.o.

▪ Similar

▪ 42%

5th out of 74 education interventions in terms of learning impacts.

- Aspirations of parents & siblings improved:
 - 14% decrease underage employment
 - 13% decrease in teenager pregnancy



India: Social media gender study

(Donati, Orozco-Olvera and Rao, [2022](#))



- 1 in 4 married women in India experienced violence in the last year.
- 7 in 10 Indian youth use Facebook.
- **Intervention:** Short-videoclips delivered through Facebook, for a total of 25 minutes.



Study design

- RCT (n=619; 18-24 y.o. youth living in New Delhi and six other northern cities).
- Surveys and objective measures for online behaviors
- Follow up surveys: 1 week and 4 months later

India: Dramas and Docu-series



T1: The TV show Sex ki Adalat (Court of Sex) discusses gender and reproductive health issues often in a humorous manner. The series was directed by Feroz Abbas Khan.



T2: The WEvolve docu-series, a partnership between development agencies and Bollywood, aims to raise awareness of gender-based violence in India.

Short dosages also work

After 1 week

- **Twice as likely** to visit the UN Women website and **spend 5 times more** time on that website.
- Treated users became more progressive on their attitudes related to gender and gender-based violence (**0.20 stand. dev**).



Short dosages also work

After 1 week

- **Twice as likely** to visit the UN Women website and **spend 5 times more** time on the website.
- Treated users became more progressive on their attitudes related to gender and gender-based violence (**0.20 stand. dev**).

After 4 months

- Most effects dissipated, highlighting the need for reinforcers for low-dosage campaigns.
- However, users that watched the docu-series were **91% more likely** to add the “End VAW” banner to their Facebook profile picture.



Mexico

- We tested an interactive movie designed to prevent teenager addictions. The movie is widely distributed in the country.
- The plot mostly takes place in the US and the educational goal is explicit.



Mexico, a cautionary tale

(Costica, Leight, Orozco-Olvera, 2022)

Study design

- Cluster RCT (n=7,262 middle-school students)
- Follow up survey: 9 months
- We experimentally delivered the interactive movie in movie theatres (T1) and in schools (T2).

Normalizing bad behaviors

- In both movie-theatres and middle-schools, the movie improved knowledge about the risks of consuming drugs.
- However, it also increased the consumption of alcohol and tobacco, especially boys.



Takeaways from our Global Tour

- 1. High-quality edutainment works wonders for promoting safer sexual behaviors, gender-equality and education.** High-quality is achieved by (i) working with professional storytellers and (ii) adapting content to target audiences through extensive formative research.
- 2. Scale and quality matters.** Innovative partnerships between the entertainment and development sectors are needed to produce at-scale, high-quality edutainment, much needed to achieve the SDGs.
- 3. Good intentions are not enough.** Impact evaluations can (i) help minimize adverse effects of edutainment or (ii) maximize its effectiveness by testing different formats or complementary interventions.

Thank you!

¡Gracias!

شكراً لك!

Merci!



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