

The results suggest the main means of communication of STDs information is verbal communication from health professionals, family members and friends because they are trustworthy and also readily available. Students received STDs information in different ways depending on their availability. The most easily accessible sources were verbal from the health centre followed by meetings, posters, memos, and print media. For example, posters were placed in many locations in the university, e.g. on walls, buildings, notice boards. The university often distributes information in print form such as booklets, brochures, leaflets, among others. This makes it possible for the information to reach a large number of students or target group. University students are often disseminated with STDs information through reading, printed sources, watching television, listening to radio and attending lectures conducted by resource persons. According to Namaru et al (2009), university students prefer visual format followed by magazines, radio, television, books, friends, and health officials. The above mode of communication are preferred by students because they are open, provide detailed information, and are easily available.

The available types of ICTs through which students accessed and were provided with information were: mobile phone (80%), desktop computers (78%); and laptops (74%) internet (73%), Television (72), among others. As revealed in the study, most students received STDs information orally at the university health centre. This means that a lot of electronic resources are underutilized because ICT infrastructure is low making it difficult to access electronic resources. This goes to show that even with the adoption of ICTs in the Kenyan universities, oral communication still remains an important media of communication. The internet was the other major source for most students with the exchange of information via websites and email. Mwangi (2006) supports this that email increases the avenues by which information can be shared worldwide, which is crucial to have ready and available up to date information. This enables students to make timely and informed decision making as well as efficient allocation and mobilization of resources to treat, prevent, and control STDs. As a result, the use of the internet has significant potential to improve healthcare decision making, enhance health management, and produce better patient outcomes among students.

Majority of the respondents in this study reported that they had knowledge and skills to use ICT in their daily activities. This corresponds to a study by Gatero (2010) where most respondents had adequate ICT skills to utilize ICT tools and services effectively. This could be attributed to a majority of the respondents being of younger generation and in college. A few respondents in this study had ICT training intergrated in their basic healthcare course. The results show that 62% respondents lacked adequate skills to use various ICTs. This is in line with Mwangi (2006) that medical doctors and nurses lack skills to effectively exploit ICT services and facilities as computer courses and training was not part of the curriculum of medical studies. However, efforts to strengthen ICT knowledge and skills through training are likely to result to improved ICT utilization in the treatment and prevention of STDs.

It was also revealed that the level of ICT use is limited, occasioned largely by inadequate provision of requisite resources and infrastructure, inadequate involvement of stakeholders in use of ICT, lack of physical access to ICTs, as well as lack of an overall ICTs culture among stakeholders. This confirms that low and middle income countries including Kenya continue to benefit less from the potential of electronic technologies due to high costs, low levels of skills, and absence of effective operational and regulatory frameworks (ITU, 2012). These findings help in indicating potential solutions to problems of ICT use in accessing information. Ouma and Herselman (2008) in their study on e-health in rural Kenya note that health workers were positive to e-health initiatives if only infrastructure, training, cross-sector linkages and government policy are addressed.

A key finding is that there are factors that impede access to and utilization of ICTs which include: lack of technical infrastructure, such as electricity, telephone, and the technical capabilities of the students who use ICTs. There is also inadequate funding of libraries by parent organizations thus making it difficult to avail timely information to students. The National Information & Communications Technology Policy of Kenya (2006) based on four guiding principles: infrastructure development, human resource development, stakeholder participation and appropriate policy and regulatory framework aims at addressing the lacuna in the previous laws and among its policy framework. It aims at Ensure affordability and access to ICT nationally and addresses issues of privacy, e-security, ICT legislation, cyber crimes, ethical and moral conduct, copyrights, intellectual property rights and piracy. However the policy is beset by challenges: investment in ICTs, Network versatility, training, ethical dilemmas (protection of personal data), and legal/regulatory gaps.

8. Conclusion

This study concludes that undergraduate students at the College need different kinds of information on treatment, symptoms, prevention, control, management and care of STDs, among others. They used various communication channels such as word of mouth, memos, and circulars, and so on. Students had general awareness of the common STDs including HIV/Aids but their knowledge about use of ICTs in scaling up, prevention, and control was limited. They used various ICTs such as mobile phone, desktop computers, laptops, internet and TV to access information on STDs. This enabled them to access and be provided with information in their bid to scale up the treatment, control, and prevention of STDs. Although students got some information from the available communication channels and available types of ICTs, the information provided to them was not adequate enough in scaling up the prevention, treatment, and control of STDs. Thus, if students in public universities could get access to sufficient information in an appropriate format they can strengthen their ability to solve problems, make decisions and choices, and take desired actions in scaling up the treatment, prevention, and control of STDs. This can also increase their knowledge of STDs, by enabling them to complete their studies well, perform

their activities more efficiently, leading to empowerment and consequently improved health outcomes.

The study concludes that management of the university should provide ICTs and internet resources to the students and with basic computer skills and training to access adequate information in scaling up treatment, prevention, and control of STDs. It is clear from the study results that students require adequate, timely and relevant information in order to control and understand how vulnerable they are when they engage in risky sexual behavior. The study also notes that there is room for ICT to be used optimally at the college of Health sciences to enhance the provision of information to students. The conclusion draws its strength from students who are still young and therefore should be able to use ICTs to access and be provided with information.

9. Recommendations

The results suggest that students do not access adequate information in scaling up the treatment, prevention and control of ICTs. It is recommended that the University College of Health sciences should review the STDs programme that disseminates information to students to increase their knowledge. This will enable students to access information through various ICTs to satisfy their information needs in the treatment, prevention, and control of STDs. The results also show that students lack ICT skills to access STDs information. The implication here is that students may not access adequate and be provided with quality information. It is thus recommended that staff and students should be equipped with ICT skills to enable them access STDs information. The university should raise awareness amongst staff and students of the importance of ICTs in providing information in scaling up and prevention of STDs. Thus, it is imperative that young people are informed about the dangers of STDs and how they can keep themselves safe. There is need to strengthen the channels of communication in the university which can increase awareness and the risks involved in casual sex and sensitize students on the dangers of careless and sexual activities and to improve healthcare quality and safety, thereby scale up the treatment, prevention, and control of STDs amongst students.

Use of various ICTs hold great potential in solving problems of capture, storage and communication of information for STDs prevention, control, and care. The implication here is that this can facilitate quick and informed actions that can enable students to build social networks on prevention, treatment, control, management, and care services. It is thus recommended that ICT training should be integrated in the basic healthcare course curriculum, to equip students with knowledge and skills to be able to utilize ICT applications in healthcare.

The study reveals that the university college lacks proper policies so as to ensure the availability of the necessary STDs information. It is recommended that the university should formulate policies on provision of STDs/HIV/AIDS information. To be more effective in the struggle against HIV/STDs, the potential offered by ICT is for this information to be repackaged and disseminated to different

target groups of students in the prevention and control of STDs. ICT should be introduced in the curriculum of every basic health professional course. Moi University should develop appropriate ICTs infrastructure, implement ICTs education and training programme for staff, and involve all stakeholders in decision-making. The university should also strengthen information management committees, encourage innovativeness among all students in the university and build social support networks. This could increase efficiency of STDs treatment and care and at long last scale up the prevention, treatment, and control of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

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