

IMAGE ANALYSIS OF AN OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST HIV/AIDS IN BRAZIL: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

ANÁLISE DE IMAGEM DE CAMPANHA OFICIAL CONTRA HIV/AIDS NO BRASIL: UM ESTUDO QUALITATIVO

ANÁLISIS DE IMÁGENES DE UNA CAMPAÑA OFICIAL CONTRA EL VIH/SIDA EN BRASIL: UN ESTUDIO CUALITATIVO

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Objective: to analyze the image of the posters published by the Brazilian Ministry of Health in the campaign to fight AIDS in carnival, in the light of the perspective of gender studies. **Method:** qualitative study of image and social media analysis. The posters of the official campaign against AIDS/HIV were performed during Carnival of 2018, based on the steps of Penn's image analysis. **Results:** photographs and illustrations of human figures, clothes, carnival props and phrases were identified in the denotative inventory. The photographs occupy a central place and the illustrations occupy the surroundings of the image. Sentences occupy the center and bottom of the image and bring vertical-oriented messages. The topics addressed were the prevention of human immunodeficiency virus. **Conclusion:** there is an ambiguity of discourses, in which a horizontal-oriented language based on the strategy of combined prevention coexists with a vertical-oriented language expressed in verbs in the imperative.

Descriptors: HIV. Government. Poster. Sexual and gender minorities. Health education.

Objetivo: analisar a imagem dos cartazes veiculados pelo Ministério da Saúde do governo brasileiro na campanha em combate a AIDS no carnaval, à luz da perspectiva dos estudos de gênero. *Método:* estudo qualitativo e de análise de imagem e em mídias sociais. *Realizou-se análise dos cartazes da campanha oficial contra AIDS/HIV no Carnaval de 2018, com base nos passos da análise de imagem de Penn. Resultados:* no inventário denotativo identificaram-se fotografias e ilustrações de figuras humanas, roupas, adereços de carnaval e frases. *As fotografias ocupam lugar central e as ilustrações ocupam o entorno da imagem. As frases ocupam a parte central e inferior da imagem e traz mensagens verticalizadas. Os temas abordados foram a prevenção do Vírus da Imunodeficiência Humana. Conclusão:* existe uma ambiguidade de discursos em que coexistem uma linguagem horizontalizada embasada na estratégia da prevenção combinada e uma linguagem verticalizada expressa nos verbos no imperativo.

Descritores: HIV. Governo. Pôster. Minorias sexuais e de gênero. Educação em saúde.

Objetivo: analizar la imagen de los carteles publicados por el Ministerio de Salud del Gobierno brasileño en la campaña de lucha contra el SIDA en carnaval, a la luz de la perspectiva de los estudios de género. *Método:* estudio cualitativo y análisis de imágenes y en redes sociales. *Los carteles de la campaña oficial contra el SIDA/VIH se realizaron en*

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Carnaval 2018, basándose en los pasos del análisis de imagen de Penn. Resultados: fotografías e ilustraciones de figuras humanas, ropa, accesorios de carnaval y frases fueron identificados en el inventario denotativo. Las fotografías ocupan un lugar central y las ilustraciones ocupan el entorno de la imagen. Las oraciones ocupan el centro y la parte inferior de la imagen y traen mensajes verticales. Los temas abordados fueron la prevención del virus de la inmunodeficiencia humana. Conclusión: existe una ambigüedad de discursos en los que coexiste un lenguaje horizontal basado en la estrategia de prevención combinada y un lenguaje vertical expresado en verbos en el imperativo.

Descriptor: VIH. Gobierno. Póster. Minorías sexuales y de género. Educación para la salud.

Introduction

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) corresponds to the infection by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), whose transmission can occur among people through unprotected sexual relations, sharing of contaminated syringes, vertical transmission (from mother to child during pregnancy), breastfeeding, and/or in the absence of appropriate prevention measures⁽¹⁾. In 2019, among HIV-infected men, there was a predominance of exposure by homo/bisexuals (40.3%), surpassing the number of heterosexuals (38.7%) and exposure to injectable drugs and sharing of syringes and needles⁽¹⁾.

Knowledge of prevention methods becomes important to consolidate health promotion actions between different social, gender, sexual orientation and age groups, for example. Government agencies, by using advertising and their means (posters, pamphlets, billboards, videos), act in the dissemination of health knowledge and can act as health promoters⁽²⁾. In this sense, the importance of advertising is important to encourage, disseminate, inform and educate on topics related to health care, using written texts and image texts⁽³⁾. Thus, in addition to being advertising, the government campaign needs to be educational in health through written and image texts.

The image text is a visual project that contemplates a distributed relationship between colors, verbal and nonverbal themes. The image text derives from an image, which, in turn, can be expressive or communicative. Thus, it is possible to admit that one image always constitutes a message to the other, even when this other is

ourselves⁽⁴⁾. Therefore, what stands out is the use of resources that explore the meaning and give meaning to the visions about a particular plane that projects the image.

In Brazil, the AIDS-Fighting National Program focuses on actions to combat the disease and began operations in 1988. In 1999, the Campaign for HIV/AIDS Prevention in Carnival was created, which, in its initial idea, was directed to the entire population in order to enable an objective message in relation to prevention methods⁽⁵⁾. During the trajectory of carnival campaigns, the focuses were on prevention and awareness sometimes directed to the female figure, women over 50 years, gays and young people⁽⁶⁾.

However, ministerial advertising, by promoting knowledge and disseminating health promotion behaviors, was restricted to only informing the use of male condoms, leaving gaps, such as way of life, detection and follow-up of cases⁽⁶⁾. In 2012, the cover of the ministerial campaign presented as an official poster two young gay men embraced, which was initially vetoed by the Chamber of Representatives⁽⁵⁾, thus constituting an action against health promotion actions that are inclusive, since they should be aimed at all people.

In carnival of 2018, the Ministry of Health adopted and released the Combined Prevention method in the official images of the HIV/AIDS prevention campaign⁽⁵⁻⁶⁾. Combined Prevention is a strategy that encompasses the simultaneous use of different prevention approaches (biomedical, behavioral and social-structural) applied at multiple levels (individual, partnerships/relationships, community, social), to respond

to the specific needs of certain audiences and certain forms of HIV transmission⁽⁷⁾.

Therefore, the association of comfort or discomfort produced through virus infection impacts the individual and his/her relationships, in order to directly reach his/her worldview and behavior before it⁽⁸⁻⁹⁾. The strategy also allows identifying and treating HIV in different forms. Some strategies are based on the early diagnosis and treatment of people with HIV or sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or those already living with the disease, as well as the use of male, female condoms and gel, distributed free of charge, in regular testing for HIV, STIs and Viral Hepatitis (VH), pre-exposure prophylaxis, post-exposure prophylaxis, prevention of vertical transmission and immunization for hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human papilloma virus (HPV)⁽⁸⁾.

In view of the above, there arises the need to explore the characteristics of the official campaigns of the Federal Government regarding the dissemination in social media of health promotion actions, in order to provide a greater amount of information from the combined prevention methods, as well as to highlight the power relations existing between the groups that master information.

With this, the following question arose: What contents are published in an official carnival campaign in written and image texts on HIV prevention?

The aim of this study was to analyze the image of the posters published by the Brazilian Ministry of Health in the campaign to combat AIDS in carnival, in the light of the perspective of gender studies.

Method

This is a qualitative study of image and social media analysis carried out by the analysis of posters of the AIDS-Fighting National Program. Image analysis comprises the selection and analysis of written and image texts, aiming to investigate the elements of meaning and, with

this, identify the particularities that compose it, that is, articulating the texts (written and image) to the sociocultural context⁽⁴⁾.

The analysis took place between May and November 2018. The sample included posters of the campaign to fight AIDS in carnival of 2018, published on the social media Instagram. The justification for this time frame was the adoption of the combined prevention strategy, recommended by the United Nations Joint Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) since 2010. For data collection, a form with all phases related to image analysis was used. Image analysis is done in five stages. In the first, there is the selection of the textual corpus. In the present study, the textual corpus comprised the official posters of the Ministry of Health in 2018. In the second stage, entitled denotative phase, the existing components are distinguished, reporting the types of images used: drawing(s), illustration(s), photograph(s) or painting(s)⁽⁴⁾.

In the third stage, called connotative phase, there is the recognition of the characterized images (animals, human figures or objects) and linguistic signs (phrases, words, sentences and hashtags), to interpret the content of the transmitted message and the target audience. In the fourth stage, the image analyst recognizes the themes presented, and, in the fifth stage, the principle of widespread knowledge and/or the myth that underpins the sociocultural construction of the image⁽⁴⁾. The data were discussed in the light of concepts of feminist theorists, such as Jean Scott, and concepts related to the constitution of the Unified Health System (UHS), such as integrality, equity and universality.

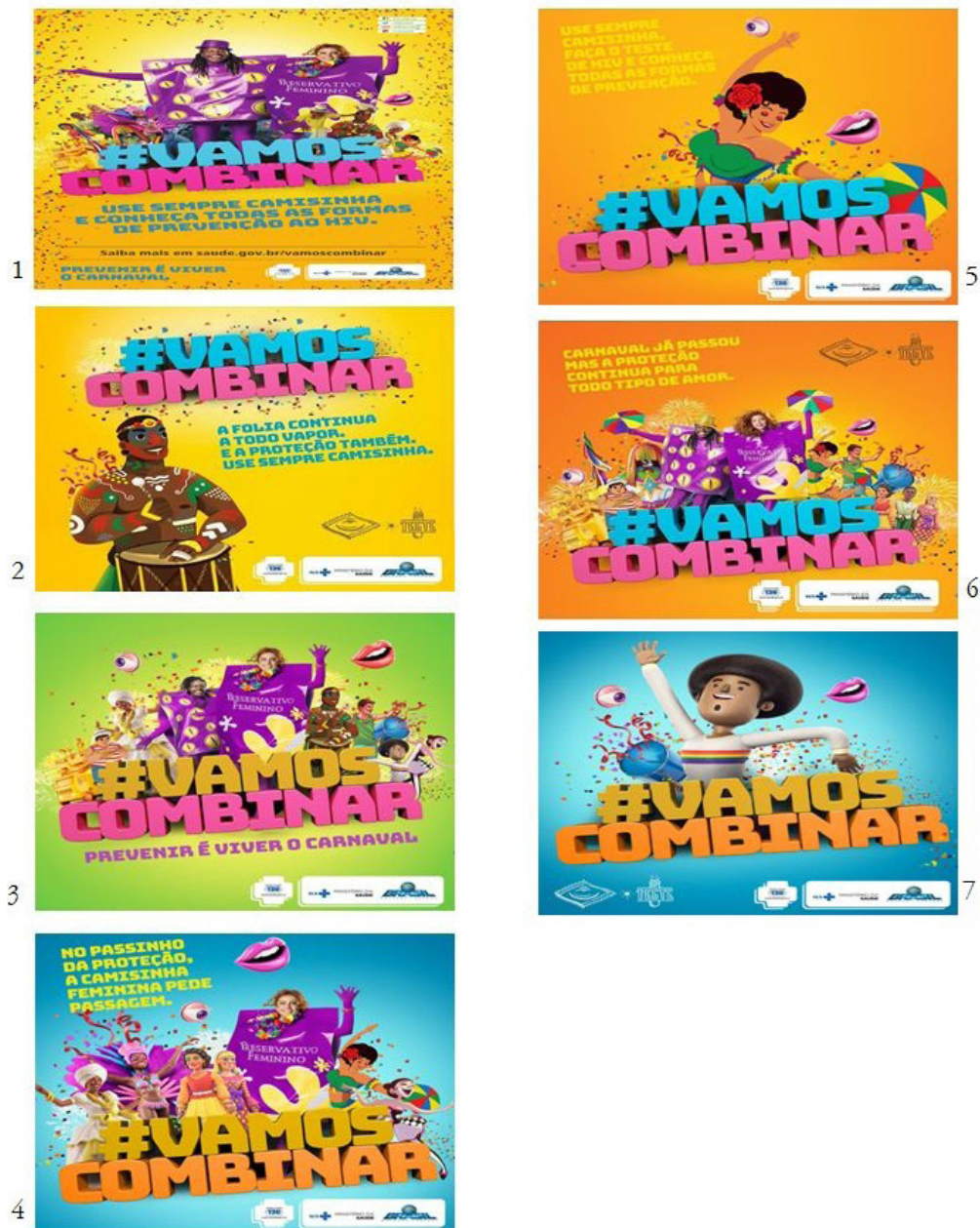
In the case of this research, the content analysis occurred based on the themes identified in the last analysis phase that generated the categories of analysis⁽⁴⁾. Image analysis does not presuppose submission to the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) because it analyzes data (posters) publicly available on social media (Instagram).

Results

The images analyzed were seven official posters released by the Ministry of Health, Brazil,

in 2018, as observed in Mosaic 1.

Mosaic 1 – Official posters of the Ministry of Health’s campaign, Brazil – 2018



Source: Created by the authors.

The analysis of the images allowed constructing the significant elements, adapting the particularities that compose them and

articulating the written text to the sociocultural context (Chart 1).

Chart 1 – Connotative and denotative phase of the campaign posters in the fight against AIDS.

N.	Denotative phase	Connotative phase
1	A Photograph (occupies a central place on the poster and highlights the male and female gender). An Illustration (occupies a central place, however around the photograph).	A photograph with two human figures; nine illustrations of human figures; an illustration of a festive globe, an electric trio and a lip-and-teeth-shaped figure and confetti on the edges.
2	An Illustration (occupies the left side position in the image).	There is only one illustration of the male gender representing African matrices in the image; a drum.
3	A Photograph (occupies a central place on the poster and highlights the male and female genders). An Illustration (occupies a central place, however around the photograph).	A photograph in the center of the image with two human figures; six illustrations of human figures; an electric trio; an eye-shaped figure and a lip-and-teeth-shaped figure, as well as confetti on the edges of the image.
4	A Photograph (occupies a central place on the poster and highlights the female gender). Six Illustrations (occupy a central place, however around the photograph).	A photograph in the center of the image with a human figure; six illustrations of human figures; an eye-shaped illustration; a lip-and-teeth-shaped illustration, as well as confetti in the outline of the image.
5	An Illustration (occupies a central place in the image and highlights the female gender).	An Illustration in the image center showing the female gender, a frevo umbrella, a lip-shaped illustration; an eye-shaped illustration plus confetti in the outline of the illustration.
6	A Photograph (occupies a central place on the poster and highlights the male and female gender) Seven Illustrations (occupy a central place, however around the photograph).	A photograph of 2 human figures; seven illustrations of human figures; an electric trio, a lip-and-teeth-shaped figure, confetti on the edges; an eye-shaped illustration; two frevo umbrellas and a drum.
7	An Illustration (occupies a central place in the image, highlighting the male gender).	An illustration of the male gender occupying the image center; a drum, an eye illustration and an illustration of lips, and confetti in the outline of the illustration.

Source: Created by the authors.

Regarding the themes and the principle of knowledge of the posters of the campaign to combat AIDS, all posters presented contained as themes the combined prevention and the prevention of diseases. In the axis of the principle of knowledge, the identification of health promotion is the main focus of the seven posters presented. However, the relationship between genders on the covers of the images presented shows prevention as a one-way focus and only the female figure.

In the denotative phase, 52 illustrations were identified (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) and 7 photographs (1, 3, 4, 6). Illustrations are defined as graphic

expressions that imply in denotative and connotative meanings of images that deepen into informative details; on the other hand, photographs are the documentary and affective links that perpetuate memory⁽¹⁰⁾. In relation to the colors of the background, yellow (1, 2, 5, 6), blue (4 and 7) and green (3) were used, while the colors of the campaign title (“LET’S COMBINE”) were combinations of the colors blue and pink (1, 2, 5, 6), brown and orange (4 and 7), and brown and pink (3). The most used colors, therefore, were: pink (1, 2, 3, 5, 6), blue (1, 2, 5, 6), brown (3, 4, 7) and orange (4 and 7). In colors, the amount of pinks and blues already reinforces the

archaic tone of a culture that evidences color as a symbol of distinction between the sexes and appropriation to certain genders.

In the construction of health education actions (such as government advertising campaigns), photographs have greater power of identification with people in relation to other types of images. In this sense, this research reveals the use of the image as a form of discussion to ensure the rapid interpretation of the reader in texts (advertising, official, entertainment).

The data identified in the connotative phase were 10 photographs of human figures (1, 3, 4, 6), 28 illustrations of non-human figures (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7), and 20 non-human figures (festive globe, electric trio, lips, eye, frevo umbrella, drum, confetti), thus predominating non-human figures (52) over human figures (10). It is important to highlight the predominance, among the figures presented in the posters, of those most related to the female gender, representing the disparity in the health-versus-disease, care-versus-disinformation and prevention-versus-disease-susceptibility relationships, in view of the low adherence to images of figures that approach the male interlocutor.

In the linguistic signs, nine elements were identified, of which eight were phrases or terms and one was a hashtag. The most used signs, however, were hashtags, because the same hashtag was used seven times, followed by the term "female condom" used four times, and the word "test" that was applied three times. The verbs operated were in imperative (use, do, know) and infinitive (to prevent). The associations established between verbs in the imperative and the expression male condom establish a link of power or order that subjugate the female figure by perpetuating a language of belonging, often adapted to the real world.

Therefore, there was a predominance of linguistic signs, such as words, terms, hashtags and verbs used in a short and direct way. The "#vamoscombinar" ("#letscombine") indicates an idea of action, refers to biomedical, behavioral and structural interventions applied at the level of individuals and their relationships. Nevertheless,

it does not exemplify that the campaign presents the population with different methods of HIV prevention and does not mention what they are.

In the connotative phase, therefore, the most used elements were the 39 image texts (photographs and illustrations of human and non-human figures) in relation to the stricter use of only 9 written texts (words, terms, hashtags and verbs). In this sense, the greater load of information depended on the image texts and not on the written texts. In the connotative phase, 10 human figures, 28 illustrations of human figures, and 20 non-human figures are observed.

There was a prevalence of four female human figures to the detriment of three male figures. As for the illustrations of human figures, there were 17 female and 13 male. The relationship between images and texts denotes the construction of the female image as directly linked to health care or weakness, already inferring that women are more contaminated than men and, therefore, would be in the foreground. In addition, the macho and patriarchal culture is emphasized by showing the distancing of man from health care.

In the knowledge principle domain, the posters were qualified for Health Promotion purposes in all propagating means. The observed themes unveiled the emphasis given to classical biomedical interventions, especially the use of male condoms to the detriment of more contemporary approaches, such as the use of pre-prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure (PEP).

Discussion

There was an expressive amount of illustrations of human figures, because the illustration or composition of media outside a historical context, the specific data about the event do not necessarily need to be analyzed and indexed⁽¹⁰⁾. Nonetheless, the various connotative meanings that will be seen and felt by the receivers need to be understood and indicate the central idea, which, in this case, points only to the Brazilian cultural representations.

The illustrations have matrices linked to the multicultural aspect of Brazilian society. In the

lower planes of the images, figures are used as a demonstration of different cultures and carnival. The electric trio symbolizes the landmark of the street blocks. These figures bring a historical contribution that show different cultures with a unique way of celebrating.

The character of *Maracatu Rural* appears in some images. This character emerged in the state of Pernambuco where his players were the sugarcane cutters, who had in their activity, a moment of leisure, of playing, of expressing beliefs and customs, contained in daily life and in the experiences lived⁽¹¹⁾. The figure of the black woman in fancy clothes symbolizes the carnival marked by the samba schools, the movement in favor of expression, body and action as a way of valuing the objects introjected in culture, without forgetting what was already foreseen in the roots of the movement, such as the samba-songs, characteristic of the carnival in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

The samba also represented on the poster by the male figure is a point that reinforces the musicality, the way and the expression. Samba was formatted at the beginning of the 20th century in Rio de Janeiro, and eventually became, for various reasons, a peaceful point in our society as one of the cultural agents that best represents the Brazilian ethos. The axé, shown through the male figure, the black one with marks on the body and drum, the woman, with white clothing symbolizing Bahian culture, is a specific culture of the region of Bahia, coined in 1987, and was an attempt to identify the music originally produced in Salvador, also receiving the name of “Bahian music”. A market label used to classify a strand of Bahian music that makes use of a fusion of rhythms, such as Caribbean, African and “electric”, in a pop-rock clothing to constitute itself as the wrapper of the “Bahia” product⁽¹²⁾.

And finally, of the musical styles, the frevo, made visible by the white woman and with specific costume clothes. Also originating in Pernambuco, frevo refers to an ecstasy of the body movement that leads to the excitement pinnacle. The poster also includes a mouth with

a sense of liberal kiss in carnival and a globe behind the characters, which is a symbol of party and excitement⁽¹³⁾.

The colors used were: blue, purple, green, red, pink, yellow, black, orange and white. Strong colors, such as purple and orange, which draw the interlocutor’s attention to the focus of the campaign, were used. The use of blue in “let’s” and in the effect phrases scattered on the poster resemble an action, an initiative to the detriment of color, which is socially known as the one that best suits the male sex, as well as green. The rose is more delicate, proper to space to dialogue, conversation, and the promotion of strategies fostering the individual from the perspective of knowing and socializing. This color refers to a stereotype associated with the female gender and represents delicacy⁽¹⁴⁾. In the same logic, the second most used color was blue, which also has an immediate connection with the male gender and ideas of domination, control and power⁽¹⁴⁾.

The stages of image analysis allowed identifying that the most used color was pink, the text written most used in hashtag was “female condom”, and the verbs used were all in imperative mode. There are, therefore, signs in the written and image texts that point to a context that reinforces stereotypes of female gender because the most frequent color in the image text was pink, which is a color with a strong symbolic load that is connected to the idea of feminine as a docile, romantic, subservient, passive and dominated gender⁽¹⁵⁾.

In relation to the most commonly used hashtag reporting to the female condom, while pointing to an aspect of female empowerment, it may not be the most practical option in the context of a street party, because the technique of using this contraceptive requires some care that is difficult to adopt outside the home, such as opening the condom carefully (without using teeth or sharp objects and using a condom in each relationship). The use of verbs in the imperative reinforces the message of imposition of behaviors, conducts and standardized attitudes and under others’ eyes and not of the woman herself. There is,

therefore, a message that corroborates the idea of control of the female body, which is the way patriarchal, macho and misogynistic societies operate⁽¹⁵⁻¹⁶⁾.

The discourse develops with lexical formations varied in relation to the text expression. Verbs are presented through the imperative, casting a voice of authority in the “use” in which the use of verbal flexion allows a stimulus to the interlocutor’s adherence. “Combine”, “prevent” and “come” pay attention to the receiver’s decision-making and have the initiative to support and be part of the campaign proposed by the issuer, the Ministry of Health⁽¹⁷⁾.

In the themes of the images, the analysis found two main focuses: the prevention of the disease, four times, and the dissemination of information, three times. What is seen is the emitter “theming” its need. In this aspect, it sought, in different image bases, to persuade the interlocutor, having as parameter not only the object theme of its research, but several related themes under which it intends to inform the message⁽¹⁰⁾.

In this sense, the themes are related to the combined prevention by the use of the phrases “female condom”, “condom” and “test”. When the information conveyed is related to the illustrative, containing the theme of the campaign against AIDS in carnival and in the prevention of diseases, it is related to “#let’s combine” and “condom”. The message scenario directs the combination of contraceptive and diagnostic methods offered by the Ministry of Health.

The strategies of combined prevention can be divided into: classical biomedical interventions – which employ methods of physical barrier to the virus, already widely used in Brazil (condoms and gels) – and biomedical interventions based on the use of antiretrovirals (ARV), PrEP and PEP⁽¹⁸⁾. These interventions will be strategic points of help and care for both prevention and disease containment, an integrated and participatory network⁽¹⁸⁾.

Health promotion is a strategy of the health sector that reiterates the principles of the UHS, integrating itself in the fight for the construction

of a model of public, universal and integral, equitable and quality health care, based on investment in autonomous and supportive subjects, which deepens the democratic management of health services and strengthens intersectoral strategies to improve the quality of life of the population⁽¹⁹⁻²⁰⁾.

By reiterating the principles of the UHS, health promotion resumes integrality, equity and universality. In this respect, the campaign has a vertical, prescriptive nature of communication, because it uses verbs in the imperative and with the sense of order. Thus, it negatively influences the interlocutor and hurts the individual’s autonomy, because this configuration corroborates the relationship of dominator and dominated, to which the population does not usually subjugate.

Thus, the campaign contents should promote health based on the perspective of gender equity, emphasizing the co-responsibility of both genders. However, what is observed is a message that points to the greater accountability of the female body before sexual practices, which can make carnival, instead of fun, another space of women’s body control and excess responsibility.

In the health fields, universality to services occurs through the promotion and the individual’s ability to come into contact with the necessary care levels. Nonetheless, the subjectivity of genders in relation to care is not only related to access, but also to the guarantee of their rights, without historical repression experienced by sexual bodies and by the longitudinality of an unequal difference also perpetuated in the images of carnival campaigns.

The continuity of access at the different care levels with the problem-solving capacity or treatment of its comorbidities is a right of every citizen, provided for by the basic principle of the UHS, which is integrality. This continuity permeates the concept of gender, mainly because it is perceived as a constitutive element of human relations, above all historical, because women were limited from their rights for a long time, including health. Gender is an open question that is not limited to what the male or

female intervenes or proposes, but an attempt to collectivize a fantasy that aims at the family structure⁽²¹⁻²²⁾.

In addition to not persuading in a reflective and positive way, the campaign only outlines inaccurate information about prevention, and, in the subjective understanding, it builds a hierarchical view that corroborates intimidation and non-adherence to combined prevention practices. Thus, it is not sex that determines genders, but this is the key to interpret, in fact, a non-normative consciousness of reality⁽²¹⁾.

The study presented limitations regarding the availability of images published in the carnival campaign by the official means of the government. The research contributes to science by identifying gender overlap in campaign posters and, mainly, rescuing the focus of decision-making, which is not only centralized in condoms, since there are other methods of prevention against the HIV virus and that are not contemplated in social media, disfavoring the health education process.

Conclusion

The symbols are used on the poster as a form of allusion to AIDS prevention. The use of illustrations and photographs lead to a context close to reality, however, this implies the forms and behaviors required by this attitude. The photograph reveals the embracement and visibility of the contraceptive method, but still generates insecurity and fear in the population, who does not see effective protection measures or simulates a reality far from the disease, besides deficient knowledge transmitted by facial expression on the face of human figures focused on the female condom.

The use of the electric trio, congada, rural maracatu, samba, Bahians and frevo reveal the respect and statements about the historical and cultural contribution that Brazil contains. It affirms, therefore, the carnival origins and bears witness to this effective relationship to the present day. The campaign launches the appeal “let’s combine”, which, in addition to being a ministerial initiative, is a call for attention

to dialogue between the participants of the relationship, and is wedged in the biomedical forms of prevention already disclosed by the government. On the other hand, the imperative denotative sense of “always use condoms and know all forms of HIV prevention”, refers to a space of order in which no other preventive forms are highlighted in the poster and imposes a voice on subordinates (interlocutors) for prevention.

The poster also draws attention to the decision-making of the interlocutor. Sexual minorities, who have vulnerabilities in relation to exposure to the virus, are not included in the poster, believing that there are no socially vulnerable audiences, when, in fact, it is the population most affected by contamination.

Furthermore, the most used colors reinforce gender stereotypes based on a dichotomous and sexist view, which can compromise the health education process, which is, in short, the goal of every governmental educational campaign.

Therefore, there is an ambiguity of discourses, in which a horizontal-oriented language based on the strategy of combined prevention coexists with a vertical-oriented language expressed in verbs in the imperative.

Collaborations:

1 – conception, design, analysis and interpretation of data: João Cruz Neto and Joseph Dimas de Oliveira;

2 – writing of the article and relevant critical review of the intellectual content: João Cruz Neto and Joseph Dimas de Oliveira;

3 – final approval of the version to be published: João Cruz Neto and Joseph Dimas de Oliveira.

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