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Exposure of African youths to imagery of Addictive Tobacco in musical videos: A five years retrospective review

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Aim: Tobacco advertisement has been banned in mainstream media, however, contents endorsing smoking are still accessible to people, mostly adolescents, through uncensored online media platforms. This research aimed at evaluating tobacco content in Nigerian musical videos.

Method: Top 50 videos of each year from 2014 to 2018 were reviewed independently by four researchers who checked for parameters including: antismoking message, imagery of male, female or group smoking, and imagery of soft-core sexual content associated with cigarette smoking. A total of 250 videos were reviewed. The videos were sourced from YouTube according to ratings by Africa Charts. Africa Charts rates videos based on TV and radio airplay, record sales, streaming platforms, social media, song and video downloads from top African entertainment sites, as well as YouTube and Dailymotion views.

Results: About 36 (14.40%) and 9 (3.6%) videos, with over 397 million combined views had imagery of male and female smoking respectively. Videos containing male smoking


imagery increased by 150% between 2014 and 2018. Three (1.2%) videos had imagery of smoking associated with sex appeal while 8 (3.2%) videos contained people smoking in groups. Only 2 videos (0.8%) with about 16 million views contained antitobacco smoking message. A female artiste featured smoking imagery the most.

Conclusion: Smoking imagery is contained in few Nigerian musical videos; however, its appearance is on the increase. Given the wide acceptance of Nigerian music among African youths, it may be necessary to regulate smoking imagery content of the musical videos to contain its impact on the youths, who are easily influenced by their celebrity heroes.

Speaker Biography

Adeosun Abayomi is a pharmacist and a public health specialist. His research works span tobacco cessation, global health security, and reproductive health. He is the director of Strategy and Communication for Lighthouse Global Health Initiative. He is presently on a Diploma Course in Basel, Switzerland.

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