

Indigenous languages and the perception of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria

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The paper investigates the perception of HIV/AIDS among speakers of the three major languages of Nigeria (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba). This is done on the basis of questionnaires administered to select groups of speakers of these languages, wherein they were asked to simply write out the names by which HIV/AIDS are referred to. These names are then analysed and categorized into different groups, indicating the attitude of each group towards the pandemic. The study reveals that although attitudes revolving around the issues of sexuality and morality can be identified in the three groups, some divergences can, nevertheless, be detected. On the basis of this we propose that this may have something to do with differences in the understanding of morality as part of social life and whether sexuality is viewed differently within these groups.