

Percepticide in the game of death: HIV & AIDS in the shadows of COVID – 19

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Statement of the Problem: The advent of the COVID – 19 pandemic has seemingly created ‘selective amnesia’ in relation to disease perception, in which case the former has ‘suppressed in collective consciousness’ the still dire ravages of HIV & AIDS, with the latter being reduced to ‘second fiddle status in the game of death.’ The systematic marginalization of HIV & AIDS during the COVID – 19 pandemic is glaringly noticed through ‘information and statistics overload’ skewed towards the latter, thereby creating a cognitive distortion of ‘magnification of COVID – 19, and a minimization of HIV & AIDS.’ The purpose of this concept paper is to describe the phenomenon of percepticide during the ongoing COVID – 19 pandemic, in which people are frightened by ‘infobesity and successive and devastating waves’ of the pandemic into not seeing, not hearing, and not talking about the still ever present ravages of HIV & AIDS.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: The methodology was basic research and the theoretical framework was Critical Theoretical Analyses articulated around cognitive psychology, psychodynamic theory, and behaviorism.

Findings: Percepticide during the ongoing COVID – 19 pandemic is characterized by cognitive distortions, negative defense mechanisms, de-memorization, de-sensitization, accommodation, indifference, and pseudo-fearlessness in relation to HIV & AIDS, with the likelihood of rising irresponsible sexual behaviors and still to be documented rising prevalence.

Conclusion & Significance: This concept paper postulates that percepticide in relation to HIV & AIDS ravages during the COVID – 19 pandemic will not ‘magically shoo away’ the former, which still remains contextual, topical and as current as the latter. Recommendations are made for ‘psychological or perceptual reintegration’ of HIV & AIDS alongside the COVID – 19 pandemic, as two pandemics which humankind is concomitantly experiencing.

Biography

Ilongo Fritz Ngale has his expertise in psychology of education and counselling. He is also a creative writer and his research interests include; philosophies of education, workplace bullying, dispute management and conflict resolution, gender based violence, and African counselling approaches.