

ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE ON TERMINATION
OF PREGNANCY BY TEENAGERS IN NYALENDA INFORMAL
SETTLEMENT, KISUMU COUNTY - KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Globally, Sub-Saharan Africa leads with 143 per 1,000 girls aged 15–19 years giving birth annually. In Kenya, 17.7% of 19-year-olds have begun childbearing; with 27% of adolescents in Nyanza by 2010. The study involved 71 teenagers aged between 13 and 19; specifically, The unit of analysis was teenage girl who lived in the Informal Settlement, had terminated pregnancy, and were active on social media for at least 4 years. The study established; incidences of pregnant teenagers; information contribution on pregnancy termination; knowledge and attitude on pregnancy termination; and pregnancy termination practices. Worked with community based psychosocial support groups as link points (purposively sampled), snowball was latter applied to identify other respondents. Social Learning Theory guided the research. Findings included the fact that a total of 73.2% of teenagers had terminated pregnancy, with 63.4% at the first trimester. 71.9% acknowledge four social media applications, 94.4% favored Facebook; with an average of 150 friends. It also revealed that 81.7% met new people, found old friends, shared pictures, videos, and games in their network, 81.7% confirmed their selfie were most favorable uploads, targeting boyfriend, and pregnant teenagers, while 73.3% indicated their selfies encouraged peers to terminate pregnancy. Up to 93% of teenagers who contemplated termination chatted most with peer on how best to terminate pregnancy, 69.1% learnt of safe methods, and related health complications, thereafter, 76.1% planning to termination at early stage under expertise care. After termination, 53.5% started using contraception, and talked about safe termination methods. 67.6% encouraged their network on contraception for unwanted pregnancy. Social media platform proved to be an emerging health information and communication avenue for pregnant teenagers in informal settlements. As a result, health care workers and non state health service providers should incorporate structured social media-based pregnancy termination information and communication packages in reproductive health programs targeting teenagers in informal settlements.